"Let Us Go to Him":
The Story of Faith and the Faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews

Matthew C. Easter

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To my wife
Andrea

and

our daughter
Evelyn

Ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης … καταρτίσαι ὑμᾶς ἐν παντὶ ἀγαθῷ
εἰς τὸ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ (Hebrews 13:20-21)

Abstract

This thesis investigates faith and the faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews. Preceding studies have understated the christological dimension of faith or have made Jesus the object of faith. Furthermore, while Käsemann emphasized the corporate motif of the travelling people of God for Hebrews, most interpreters still operate with a largely individualistic concept of faith. I argue that faith in Hebrews is manifested in four dimensions: christological, eschatological, ethical, and ecclesiological. That is, faith is exemplified and enabled by Jesus (christological dimension), who in faith endured suffering to death (ethical) in hopes of postmortem life (eschatological). Humans exercise this faith by persevering with the travelling people of God (ecclesiological).

I read Hebrews with an eye to story, and the thesis is organized with these narrative concerns in view. Chapter 2 lays the exegetical and philosophical foundations for such an approach to Hebrews, arguing that Hebrews operates with stories and that human identity is itself a story. Our treatment of Hebrews deals with the two narrative identities the author presents, which are laid out succinctly in Heb 10:39: "but we are not (story 1) of timidity unto destruction (ὑποστολῆς εἰς ἀπώλειαν), but (story 2) of faith unto the preservation of the soul (πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς)." I discuss these two stories in parts 2 and 3 of the thesis.

Part 2 of the thesis (chapters 3-5) addresses "the default human story." We find that the default human story is characterized by unfaithfulness and concludes assuredly in death. Although God intended glory, honor, and dominion for humanity (Heb 2:6-8), we do not at present see this divine intention fulfilled. Instead, humans are shackled by a guilty conscience and are inherently unfaithful. The assured conclusion of death holds true even for Israel's heroes of faith, who did not receive the promise and are not made perfect (11:13, 39-40). Although these chapters do not address faith *per se* they are necessary pieces to fill out the whole vision of the understanding of faith in Hebrews. To understand "faith" fully, we need to understand "unfaith."

Part 3 of the thesis (chapters 6-8) discusses the story rewritten in Christ. This story, lived out perfectly by Jesus, is characterized by faith in the face of death and concludes assuredly in postmortem life. Hebrews depicts Jesus in martyrological terms, whose faith is associated with endurance through suffering in hope of postmortem reward. The conclusion to the story of faith is assured because the *pioneer* of faith is also the *perfecter* who successfully realized life after death.

Part 4 of the thesis (chapter 9) addresses how human beings exercise faith. The question of *how* a person *first* participates in the story of faith is difficult, since the author of Hebrews never speaks to this question directly. However, looking at how the author expects humans to exercise faith *after* they are "in" may offer a glimpse into the way humans can "get in." I argue Jesus' faithfulness in sacrifice enables humans to exercise faith, and we subsequently follow the model of Jesus' faith (christological dimension), moving forward in hope of postmortem life (eschatological). In the present, faith entails endurance to the end (ethical), and this endurance likely involves suffering. Ultimately, we find that the author of Hebrews expects humans to join together with others being faithful (ecclesiological dimension), "going to Jesus outside the camp, bearing his reproach" (13:13).

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Abbreviations

Unless otherwise noted, all abbreviations follow Alexander, P. H. et. al. *The* SBL *Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999.

Other abbreviation used:

NETS Pietersma, Albert and Benjamin B. Wright, eds. *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Preface

This project bears the fingerprints of many. I am thankful to three New Testament professors from my undergraduate and graduate work who prepared me for this undertaking: Rodney Reeves, Richard B. Hays, and Douglas Campbell. Over the span of four years at Southwest Baptist University, my eight courses and many conversations with Rodney Reeves had an instrumental role in shaping both my reading of the Bible and the formation of the right posture for approaching Scripture. His course on Hebrews was my first foray into many of the exegetical conundrums in the book. At Duke Divinity School, Richard Hays and David Moffitt (his graduate student at the time) led a seminar on Hebrews, which taught me how to ask the right questions of this intriguing "word of exhortation." Douglas Campbell facilitated an independent study project on the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate in Paul, which prepared me for an investigation into faith and the faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews. I am thankful to many other professors from SBU and Duke, particularly Mike Fuhrman, Bing Bayer, Scott Langston, David Steinmetz, and Curtis Freeman.

My doctoral supervisor, Paul Trebilco, deserves my deepest thanks. He is a model supervisor who consistently showed an interest in my study. He provided valuable words of advice and insight, and displayed a remarkable attention to detail. More than this, he is genuinely kind and exceedingly capable, exemplifying the type of scholar I wish to emulate.

A number of others have supported me throughout the thesis. I am thankful to John Barclay, who during a 9-month sabbatical in Dunedin took time to meet with me on different occasions. Matthew Scott, a pastor at Dunedin City Baptist Church who completed a PhD under Professor Barclay, showed an immediate and continued interest in my scholarship. My colleague Mark Gingerich took out valuable time from his own thesis on Reinhold Niebuhr and Søren Kierkegaard to proofread mine on Hebrews. I am also thankful to the three scholars who examined the thesis and offered insightful comments: Chris Marshall, Scot McKnight, and Steve Motyer. Of course, any remaining weaknesses in the thesis are my own.

My family has been an unfailing support. My parents have lovingly urged me in my academic pursuits from an early age, instilling in me an appreciation of

learning. Despite living on the other side of the world for three years and (as they like to remind me) keeping their granddaughter from them too, we still cherish our closeness. My wife, Andrea, and I met in university. I have been a student since the day we met, and she has faithfully worked to support us financially. She has been a constant companion who gracefully endured many conversations about Hebrews and proofread the thesis in the end. This grace was perhaps demonstrated no more clearly than on 1 September 2010 when our daughter, Evelyn, was born. Andrea asked me to tell her a Bible verse to distract her from labor pains. Given that the night before I had worked on Hebrews 5:7-9, I was able to recall only the worst verse to encourage her in this stressful situation: "In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, *with loud cries and tears*, to the one who was able to *save him out of death*." With loving understanding, she let me be and took it on herself to quote Philippians 4:4-6! Evelyn has been a delightful distraction from the tedium that can sometimes accompany scholarly work. She is a marvelous blessing and the perfect souvenir to take home from New Zealand. I am also grateful for the church families that have supported me throughout the years: Canaan Baptist Church in St. Louis, Missouri; First Baptist Church, Durham, North Carolina; and Dunedin City Baptist Church in Dunedin, New Zealand. The saints at these fellowships have reminded me of the immense importance of appropriating insights from the academic study of Scripture to the life of the Church.

Most of all I am thankful to God, who has sustained and guided me throughout this entire process. It is to God that I give all the glory.

Matt Easter
Christmas Eve
Dunedin

Part 1:

Introduction and Methodology

Chapter 1

Introduction

I. INTRODUCTION

The book of Hebrews, authored by an unknown person[1] at an unknown time[2] to an unknown group of people[3] in an unknown place,[4] offers readers tantalizing insights into the theology of the early church. Hebrews is famous for its discussion of Jesus' high priesthood, its warnings against apostasy, its re-introduction of the enigmatic figure of Melchizedek, and its encomium on faith in chapter 11. Neglected for years, Hebrews has experienced a flood of renewed scholarly interest. This thesis, which investigates faith and the faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews, aims to add a small contribution to the growing conversation on this important NT book.

II. ΠΙΣΤ- WORDS

II.1. Πιστ- Words in Hebrews

A study of faith and the faithfulness of Jesus will revolve in great part around the use of πιστ- words. The πιστ- word group is significant in Hebrews. Forms of

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[1] I do not wish to make any assertions as to the identity of the author of Hebrews, but I do follow the common practice of using a masculine pronoun for the author. This grammatical decision is in the interest of brevity and follows the lead from Heb 11:32, where the author uses a masculine participle (διηγούμενον) self-referentially. For a recent argument against this reading of 11:32 and for a female author (namely, Priscilla), see Ruth Hoppin, "The Epistle to the Hebrews is Priscilla's Letter," in *A Feminist Companion to the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 147-70.

[2] Attridge's broad range of 60 to 100 CE will suffice (Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 9).

[3] I consistently refer to the audience of Hebrews as "the hearers" rather than "the readers." I do this in view of the likelihood that Hebrews was read aloud to (and not read by) a community. On one implication of the orality of Hebrews, see Cosby's study on the anaphora in Heb 11, where Cosby argues that "The author composes it in such a way as to *sound* persuasive to his audience" (Michael R. Cosby, *The Rhetorical Composition and Function of Hebrews 11: In Light of Example Lists in Antiquity* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1988), 4, italics his).

[4] That Hebrews was written to a specific community in Rome is quite possible. See the discussions in Attridge, *Hebrews* 9-10; Knut Backhaus, *Der sprechende Gott: Gesammelte Studien zum Hebräerbrief* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 37-40; and Kenneth Schenck, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Hebrews: The Settings of the Sacrifice*, SNTSMS 143 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 193-98.

the verb πιστεύω appear twice (4:3; 11:6). God, not Christ, is the object of πιστεύω in both cases. God as the object of πιστεύω in 4:3 is not immediately evident (as it is in 11:6), but the wider context makes it clear that the one who is believed is none other than the one whose voice we[5] are to hear (3:7, 15) and into whose rest we are to enter (4:1, 9-11).

The adjective πιστός appears five times (2:17; 3:2, 5; 10:23; 11:11)[6] in Hebrews, and in every case but one God or Jesus is the one who is faithful. In 10:23 and 11:11 the author speaks of the one who promised as being faithful. Since God is the promising one elsewhere in Hebrews (6:13; 12:26), the faithful one in 10:23 and 11:11 is likely God and not Christ.[7] The two cases that refer certainly to Jesus are 2:17, where Jesus is called the merciful and faithful high priest, and 3:2, where Jesus is said to be faithful to[8] the one who appointed him.

The only time πιστός is used in reference to another human appears in 3:5, where Moses is faithful in all God's house as a servant (θεράπων). Still, the author describes Moses as πιστός in order to highlight Jesus as πιστός. Moses was faithful as

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[5] I approach Hebrews theologically as Scripture and as the normative word for the church. Hebrews is an inherently theological text, and so welcomes a theological approach. As Vanhoozer puts it, "The superiority of a theological interpretive interest follows from the theological interest of the biblical texts themselves" (Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Imprisoned or Free? Text, Status, and Theological Interpretation in the Master/Slave Discourse of Philemon," in *Reading Scripture with the Church: Toward a Hermeneutic for Theological Interpretation*, ed. A. K. M. Adam , Stephen E. Fowl, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, and Francis Watson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 62 n. 28). This theological approach to Hebrews will be manifested in the grammar of the thesis. As Hays suggests, theological exegesis is a "self-involving discourse" where we do not approach Scripture as outsiders looking into a text of historical interest only, but as persons "addressed and claimed by the word of God that is spoken in the text, and we understand ourselves to be answerable to that word" (Richard B. Hays, "Reading the Bible with Eyes of Faith: The Practice of Theological Exegesis," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 1, no. 1 (2007), 12. For this reason, I make regular use of first-person pronouns. I do this less in surrender to linguistic laziness than in an interest to maintain as best as possible a theological posture when approaching Hebrews. This follows Hays' observation: "A strictly third person form of discourse lends itself to the mode of pure description, in which the author may stand apart, uninvolved in the text's world. Theological exegesis, however, draws us into the world of the text and demands response" (12). Following a theological approach to Scripture, the exhortations in Hebrews are as much a word for us as for the original hearers – *we* are the ones who need to "enter the rest" (4:11), *we* are the ones who need to "hold fast the confession of our hope" (10:23), and *we* are the ones who are called to love one another while renouncing greed (13:1, 5).

[6] See also the elision in Heb 3:6.

[7] For an argument for Jesus as the faithful one (πιστὸς ὁ ἐπαγγειλάμενος) in 10:23, see Scott D. Mackie, "Confession of the Son of God in Hebrews," *NTS* 53 (2007), 125.

[8] For πιστός in 3:2 as "faithful to" rather than "trustworthy" or "reliable" (contra Dennis Hamm, "Faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Jesus Factor," *CBQ* 52, no. 2 (1990), 282; Albert Vanhoye, "Le Christ, grand-prêtre selon Héb. 2,17-18," *NRTh* 5 (1969), 463), see Todd Still, "Christos as Pistos: The Faith(fulness) of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *CBQ* 69 (2007), 749.

a servant *in* God's house (πιστὸς ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ ὡς θεράπων) (3:5), while Jesus is faithful (ellipsed) as a son *over* God's house (ὡς υἱὸς ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτου) (3:6). The language of Moses as servant is not derogatory, but laudatory. In Num 12:6-8 [LXX] God chides Aaron and Miriam: "Hear my words: If there is a prophet of you for the Lord, in a vision I will be known to him, and in sleep I will speak to him. Not so my attendant [θεράπων] Moyses; in my whole house he is faithful. Mouth to mouth I will speak to him, in visible form and not through riddles. And he has seen the glory of the Lord. And why were you not afraid to speak against my attendant [θεράπων] Moyses?" (NETS) God's servant Moses was entrusted with God's entire house, and as such was permitted to speak clearly with God face to face. This faithful servant had a special relationship with God. Jesus, however, has an even closer relationship, as one who is faithful as a *Son over* the house. This passage, therefore, is not a denigration of the faithfulness of Moses,[9] but an accentuation of the faithfulness of Jesus. As a result, we see that this occurrence of πιστός in Hebrews is concerned with the faithfulness of Christ.

By far the greatest frequency comes in the noun πίστις, which appears 32 times in Hebrews. Of these 32, 24 occurrences of the noun πίστις appear in Heb 11, most of which are part of the anaphora formed by the recurring πίστει. Outside of Heb 11, πίστις appears only in hortatory sections.[10] In Heb 4:2, the first time πίστις appears, the author urges his hearers to be united in πίστις instead of following the negative example of the wilderness generation. The noun appears again in 6:1, where the author intends to press on to maturity while not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν. This is the only place in Hebrews where the noun πίστις has an explicit object (θεόν). The author wishes for his hearers to imitate the πίστις of their local leaders (13:7) and those who διὰ πίστεως and patience (μακροθυμίας) inherit the promises (6:12). In 10:22, the author urges his listeners to draw near with a sincere heart ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πίστεως. Later in chapter 10, the author quotes Hab 2:4 (ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται; Heb 10:38), and

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[9] Indeed, as Scott notes, had the author of Hebrews wished to portray Moses in a negative light, he could have spoken of Moses' unbelief (οὐκ ἐπιστεύσατε) at Meribah (Num 20:10-12) (Brett R. Scott, "Jesus' Superiority Over Moses in Hebrews 3:1-6," *BibSac* 155 (1998), 209).

[10] See also Thomas Söding, "Zuversicht und Geduld im Schauen auf Jesus: Zum Glaubensbegriff des Hebräerbriefes," *ZNW* 82 (1991), 215-16.

holds out hope that he and his community are not ὑποστολῆς εἰς ἀπώλειαν but πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς. Finally, Jesus is famously described as τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν in 12:2.

II.2. Defining the Πιστ- Words?

II.2.1. Πιστ- Outside of Hebrews

Ancient authors used the πιστ- word group with a wide range of meanings.[11] Πιστεύω, πίστις, or πιστός in the LXX is typically the rendition of the Hebrew אמן,[12] and encompass a number of meanings in the LXX: [πιστεύω] "to trust," "to put faith in," "to believe in," "to believe that," "to admit the reality of;" [πίστις] "faithfulness," "honesty;" [πιστός] "trustworthy," "worthy of credit," "reliable," "faithful," "lasting," "dependable," "unfailing," "plentiful."[13] Liddell-Scott find that the verb πιστεύω is the act of "trusting," "putting faith in," "relying on" a person, thing or statement, "believing," or "complying."[14] The noun πίστις can mean "trust," "faith," "persuasion (of a thing)," "confidence," "assurance," "trustworthiness," "honesty," or "credence;" πίστις can also be something that gives confidence ("an assurance" or "a guarantee"), something that gives reasons for believing ("an argument" or "a proof"), or something that is entrusted to someone else ("a trust").[15] The adjective πιστός can be used passively of a person or thing, signaling that person as "faithful," "trusty," "trustworthy," "worthy of credit," "genuine," or "credible." Used actively, πιστός

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[11] See the full discussion in Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC 34 (Edinburgh: T &T Clark, 1921), 475-85.

[12] Muraoka lists the following words translated to πιστ- in the LXX (number times in parentheses): πιστεύω - אמן (2); שׁמצ (15); בטח (1) / נצר (1) / πίστις - אמון (1); אֱמוּנָה (2); אָמְנָה (2); אֱמֶת (6); תַּהְפּוּכָה (1); צַדִּיק (4); אמן (4); אֱמֶת (1); אמון (4); אֱמוּנָה (4); אֱמֶת (30); אמן / πιστός - אמן (1) (Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Greek ≈ Hebrew/Aramaic Two-Way Index to the Septuagint* (Louvain: Peeters, 2010), 96). Forms of אמן are translated into a number of other Greek words (see Muraoka, 149), but πιστ- is typically translated from a form of אמן and not another word. On אמן in the Hebrew Bible and the difficulties with respect to understanding πιστ- in this light, see James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), esp. 8-20, 161-205. See also Silva's historical review of the question of Hebrew thought behind Greek translation in Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, Revised and Expanded ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 56-68.

[13] Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie, *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint, Revised Edition* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003), 493-94.

[14] LSJ, 1407-1408.

[15] LSJ, 1408.

refers to a person's act of "believing," "relying on" something, "obedience," or "faithfulness."[16] Josephus and Philo also use πίστις in a variety of ways. Hay and Campbell summarize the meanings of πίστις in Josephus and Philo thusly:

Hay[17]	Campbell[18]
Josephus	*Josephus*
Pledge (29.7%)	Pledge (31%)
Loyalty (32.3%)	Fidelity (38%)
Trust (10.8%)	Trust (8%)
Evidence (10.3%)	Proof (11%)
Belief (9.2%)	Belief (12%)
Other (7.7%)	
Philo	*Philo*
Pledge (7.1%)	Pledge (10%)
Loyalty (6.4%)	Fidelity (20%)
Trust (9.6%)	Trust (2%)
Evidence (52.6%)	Proof (55%)
Belief (12.8%)	Belief (8.5%)
Other (11.5%)	
	"Faith" as "a super virtue" (5%)

In summary, πιστ- can mean a number of things, but typically refers to "trust/to trust," "belief/to believe," "faithfulness/to be faithful," or "evidence/to give evidence." This brief study has established the lexical boundaries of what πιστεύω, πίστις, and πιστός may mean.

II.2.2. Semantic Cautions

Nevertheless, the usefulness of a word study of πιστ- outside of Hebrews is limited by four significant issues.

First, as noted above, the πιστ- words have a wide range of meanings in the LXX and in literature generally contemporary to Hebrews. The words are not self-defining, and interpreters cannot simply pick the meaning of πιστ- that appears most commonly, and then force the rest of the occurrences of πιστ- to fit this definition. It is, therefore, disingenuous at this stage to define πιστεύω, πίστις, or πιστός on the

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[16] LSJ, 1408.

[17] David M. Hay, "*Pistis* as 'Ground for Faith' in Hellenized Judaism and in Paul," *JBL* 109 (1989), 463.

[18] Douglas A. Campbell, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel: A Suggested Strategy*, JSNTSup 274 (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 181.

basis of its usage outside of Hebrews and then impose this meaning of the word onto the rest of the study.[19] The word study above simply offers some boundaries for the possible meanings of the πιστ- words.

Second, the meaning of a word is contingent upon its use within context.[20] A word's meaning can be affected by various features, such as its case, its pairing with articles or adjectives, or its inflection.[21] The word itself carries less meaning than the use of the word within its context. As Barr writes, "Theological thought of the type found in the NT has its characteristic linguistic expression not in the word individually but in the word-combination or sentence."[22] Similarly, Silva explains, "The point is that we learn much more about the doctrine of sin by John's *statement*, 'Sin is the transgression of the law,' than by a word-study of ἁμαρτία."[23] For this reason, the meaning of πιστ- outside of Hebrews informs our study only tangentially. Context within Hebrews is more significant.

Third, it is important to avoid succumbing to "illegitimate totality transfer."[24] That is, "any one instance of a word will not bear all the meanings possible for that word."[25] For example, the English word "pitch," when used as a noun, can refer to a sound ("I wish they would turn off her microphone because she is way off pitch"), to an area where sport is played ("the rugby pitch"), to an action of throwing the ball in baseball ("the batter awaits the pitch"), to a marketer's sales effort ("I like your sales pitch, but I do not have the money"), and much more. It would be inappropriate to assume that when someone says "pitch," this person is referring to every possible

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[19] So rightly Marshall with respect to faith in Mark: "To begin with some general definition of faith and then find places in the gospel which express this idea, would not only risk importing non-Markan meanings, but would also make it difficult to limit the scope of the study" (Christopher D. Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's narrative*, SNTSMS 64 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 30).

[20] Indeed, to do a proper study of the meaning of πιστ- words generally (i.e. investigating fully every occurrence of a πιστ- word in its context) would require a number of books.

[21] Barr gives the example: "The use of ὁ λόγος with the article in the very special case of John 1 is really a special meaning which cannot be mingled indiscriminately with other cases simply because they also contain the word λόγος. In other words a simple syntactic relation like the adding of the definite article and the absence of other qualification can establish a different semantic field just as well as the transition to another word can" (Barr, *Semantics*, 222; also quoted in Silva, *Biblical Words*, 26).

[22] Barr, *Semantics*, 233. Similarly later: "It is the sentence (and of course the still larger literary complex such as the complete speech or poem) which is the linguistic bearer of the usual theological statement, and not the word (the lexical unit) or the morphological and syntactical connection" (263).

[23] Silva, *Biblical Words*, 28 (italics his).

[24] Barr, *Semantics*, 217-18.

[25] Silva, *Biblical Words*, 22.

meaning of "pitch" when she uses the word. The fact that we call a marketer's effort at making a sale "a pitch" has nothing to do with the fact that we call a grassy area where we play rugby "a pitch." Similarly, Barr notes how ἐκκλησία can refer to the Church as "the Body of Christ," "the first instalment of the Kingdom of God," "the Bride of Christ," and more. In this sense, it is fair to say that the meaning of ἐκκλησία in the whole of the NT is the totality of these explanations. However, when an interpreter approaches a particular use of ἐκκλησία (such as in Matt 16:18), this interpreter errors if he or she loads the total meaning of ἐκκλησία in the NT onto this particular use of the word.[26] Therefore, interpreters should not invest all possible nuances of πιστ- into an interpretation of the word in each case.

Fourth, it is important to note that a study of a theological concept like faith in Hebrews is not necessarily limited to the use of πίστις, πιστεύω, or πιστός in the book. The author of Hebrews may wish to convey the concept of "faith" without using a πιστ- word. Silva gives a helpful example:

> if we wanted to study Kant's epistemology, it would not occur to us to examine Kant's use of the word *wissen*, for we would encounter many passages where a theory of knowledge was the last thing in the philosopher's mind. But further, examining Kant's use of *wissen*, and then concluding our investigation, would leave us with a distorted picture. In fact, it is not hard to imagine the possibility that a relevant chapter from one of his *Critiques* may not contain the word at all; missing that chapter, however, might be disastrous for our conclusions.[27]

It is for this reason that I do not organize the thesis as a word study on πιστ- words, but as an investigation into the larger theological context within Hebrews.[28] I am less

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[26] Barr, *Semantics*, 218.

[27] Silva, *Biblical Words*, 27.

[28] With Hays against Matlock, I agree that the meaning of πίστις (or of the Pauline πίστις Χριστοῦ) cannot be "detheologized." On the inescapability of theological assumptions and argumentation for such a study, see Hays' response to Matlock: "the attempt of Matlock to 'detheologize' the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate is a sure prescription for misinterpretation. Paul is, after all, using this language in the context of *theological* arguments, and there is no way to understand the sense of the terminology without attempting to understand the shape and coherence of the argument." (Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, 2nd ed. (Orig. Pub. 1983; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), xlvi, italics his; cf. R. Barry Matlock, "Detheologizing the ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Debate: Cautionary Remarks from a Lexical Semantic Perspective," *NovT* 42 (2000), 1-23).

concerned with the definition of πιστεύω, πίστις, and πιστός *per se*, but rather with how these words function in the story that the author of Hebrews tells.[29]

II.3. "Faith" as a Working Translation

Before moving forward, a quick word on English translation is in order. While I do not wish to define πιστ- narrowly at this point and then undertake the following study with such a definition in view, an operative English word will help avoid unnecessarily repeating an obtuse discussion of the various possible meanings of πιστεύω, πίστις, and πιστός. The word I propose to use is the word most commonly used for πίστις: "faith."

Campbell has advised using the translation of "faith" "with caution … if we don't actually abandon it."[30] "Faith," for Campbell, is unduly broad.[31] In English, "faith" can connote "belief" or "trust." That is, "I have faith" is usually understood either as "I believe" or "I trust." However, English speakers often use "believe" and "trust" differently, with "trust" usually functioning as a more specific subset of "belief." A person's "trust" is usually justified on the basis of the integrity of the object being trusted. For example, Samantha may "believe" that her dad will pick her up from school today, but she will only "trust" him to do so if he has proven so far to be a *trustworthy* character. Campbell explains, "It turns out, then, that 'trust' and 'trusting' are a quite specific subset of the broader semantic field of 'belief' and 'believing.' *The latter are clearly a necessary condition for the former* – trusting involves believing certain things – but 'trusting' is by no means *reducible* to 'believing.' *They are not simply the same*."[32] Therefore, as Campbell notes, an English translation of "faith" "lacks precision. If we denote an action by Abraham in terms of 'faith,' it is not immediately apparent whether we mean an action of 'belief'

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[29] I address "story" with respect to Hebrews in the next chapter.

[30] Campbell, *Quest*, 189.

[31] Campbell, *Quest*, 189. Campbell also notes "faith" leaves open misunderstandings on the basis of later Christian language of "the Faith" in creedal statements, and is weighed down by the "justification by faith" model in Protestant theology and by the modern connotation of faith as "an interior, individual, and mental activity" (Campbell, *Quest*, 189-90).

[32] Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 385 (italics his).

or one more specifically of 'trust.' 'Faith' is such a broad designation that it covers both these senses immediately."[33]

"Faith" may also extend to concepts of "faithfulness." Campbell explains, "If someone trusts over time, and especially under duress, we would probably denote these additional elements in English by speaking of that person's 'steadfastness,' 'endurance,' 'fidelity,' or 'faithfulness.' "[34] These terms can be related to "belief" or "trust," but not necessarily in every case. Campbell's examples are helpful:

> "Andrew *trusted* that Louise would not reveal his dark secrets to the rest of the church."
> "In spite of her long absence, Andrew *trusted* that Louise would return from her missionary work in Guatemala."
> "Louise served *faithfully* as a missionary in Guatemala for ten years."[35]

In the first case, Louise's trustworthy character has presumably given Andrew ample reason to trust her to keep his secrets secure. In the second case, Andrew's trust extends across time and distress ("in spite of her long absence"). Andrew demonstrates "faithfulness" by continuing to "trust" despite the passing of time and the distress this entails; Andrew "trusts faithfully." In the third case, Louise does not "trust faithfully," but "serves faithfully." As Campbell explains, " 'Fidelity' seems to be predicable of many different actions and not merely of trusting. (It will of course involve certain beliefs.) 'Trust' over time and through difficulty consequently can segue into 'fidelity,' or 'faithfulness,' but that category seems to exceed the boundaries of 'belief' and 'trust.' And consequently both the postures of 'trust' and 'fidelity' should be distinguished, if necessary, from one merely of 'belief.' "[36]

However, precisely because of Campbell's reasons, I use "faith" as the English translation of πίστις in this study of Hebrews. As Campbell has demonstrated, "trust" or "belief/believe" are more precise terms than "faith," and "faith" may also connote the sense of "faithfulness." Indeed, we will find that πίστις in Hebrews does connote active "faithfulness," which forces me to use the language of "exercising faith" or "faithfulness" at many points throughout the thesis. We will

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[33] Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 385.
[34] Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 385.
[35] Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 385 (italics his in the first case, added in the second two cases).
[36] Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 386.

revisit this dynamic of active faithfulness at the end of the study.[37] At this stage, the broadness of the English translation of "faith" allows us to wait for Hebrews to clarify the meaning of "faith" for us. Only after completing our extensive study of faith in Hebrews can we prune the language of "faith" to depict more precisely what faith means in Hebrews. I also continue to use "faith" in view of the fact that other interpreters of Hebrews use the same language. Still, by using "faith" (or, at times, "exercising faith" or "faithfulness"), I wish to keep ever in mind the various possible dimensions of "belief," "trust," "faithfulness," and the many other nuances the πιστ-words may carry.

III. STUDIES ON FAITH AND THE FAITHFULNESS OF JESUS IN HEBREWS

III.1. Introduction

Few interpreters have devoted extended treatment to faith in Hebrews. Commentaries and other studies of Hebrews address the meaning of faith when it arises in a given passage of inquiry, but only Grässer and Rhee have written monographs on the topic, and a scant few other studies have addressed faith in the book.[38] For the most part, I have chosen to survey only those studies that intentionally address the meaning of faith, unfaith, or the faithfulness of Christ in the whole of Hebrews.[39] The exceptions below are Käsemann, Marohl, and Thomas, none of whom devote their studies to faith *per se*, but all of whom propose a reading of Hebrews that impacts how one might understand faith in the book. I do not survey commentators' views on faith below, as I interact closely with them throughout the thesis.

In the review of studies on faith in Hebrews, I will be using four terms, none of which are mutually exclusive (indeed, I will make the case in chapter 9 that all four

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[37] Chapter 10, section II.1.

[38] Christopher Richardson has recently completed a PhD thesis at Aberdeen on Jesus' faith with respect to Israel's history in Hebrews, but has placed a hold on his thesis, and so I cannot access it.

[39] For my survey of faith in Paul with special attention to the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate, see Matthew C. Easter, "The Pistis Christou Debate: Main Arguments and Responses in Summary," *CBR* 9, no. 1 (2010), 33-47. For another recent survey of faith in Paul, see Benjamin Schliesser, *Abraham's Faith in Romans 4: Paul's Concept of Faith in Light of the History of Reception of Genesis 15:6*, WUNT 2/224 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 7-78.

dimensions are in play in Hebrews): christological, ethical, eschatological, and ecclesiological.

By "christological," I mean to say that the understanding of faith is inseparable from Jesus. This, as we will see in the review below, can take the form or forms of Jesus as enabler, model, content, and/or object of faith. A reading of faith that simply says that Jesus also exercised faith is not christological under this terminology. For example, interpreters may understand faith in "ethical" terms of endurance, and Jesus may exercise this endurance, but this does not make faith itself inseparable from Jesus. Jesus could be one of many human beings who demonstrated faith, but this does not necessarily make faith christological, as I define it. To the contrary, the christological reading of faith posits that faith in Hebrews is understood fully only when we see that faith is either enabled or modeled by Jesus, and (for some interpreters) directed toward Jesus as object.

By "ethical," I refer to an active dimension of faith. "Ethical" in this sense should not be confused with "ethics" in terms of how to live or behave in community (see esp. Heb 13:1-5), even though these ethical exhortations may conceivably play a role. Interpreters who highlight the ethical dimension of faith emphasize the characteristics of obedience, endurance, and/or perseverance.

By "eschatological," I mean to say that faith is directed in hope to the eschaton. Some interpreters see a spatial eschatology, whereby believers hope to enter the heavenly homeland, while others see a temporal eschatology, whereby believers wait in hope for the future world God is ushering in. I use "eschatological" in both cases.

Finally, by "ecclesiological," I refer to a corporate dimension of faith. Of everyone surveyed below, Käsemann makes the most of this dimension, and I think he is right to do so (I develop my ecclesiological reading of faith in chapter 9). Käsemann never uses the language of "ecclesiological," but prefers "the wandering people of God." However, I choose to use "ecclesiological" because it is succinct and does not limit the corporate dimension to "wandering" only.[40]

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[40] For example, Hofius argues that instead of "wandering," the people of God in Hebrews are "waiting" (Otfried Hofius, *Katapausis: Die Vorstellung vom endzeitlichen Ruheort im Hebräerbrief*, WUNT 11 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1970), 144-51). I address this in detail in chapter 9, section III.

The following survey will show how these four dimensions have been represented in the work of a number of interpreters. Some interpreters highlight one or more dimensions with the purposeful exclusion of the others, while others highlight a dimension without making reference to other possibilities. No interpreter, however, has brought all four dimensions into conversation. We will also see how although many interpreters address the faithfulness of Christ in Hebrews, none in my view adequately explore how Jesus' faithfulness and the result of his faithfulness relate to human faith.

III.2. Ernst Käsemann (1939)

Käsemann's famous study *The Wandering People of God* (translation of *Das wandernde Gottesvolk*), written from a Nazi prison,[41] is not a treatise devoted to faith in Hebrews, but his discussions of faith in Hebrews nevertheless have much to offer to our present study. Käsemann argues that Gnostic myths underlie much of the argumentation and metaphors of Hebrews,[42] and scholars have rightly critiqued this aspect of the book.[43] However, ignoring references to Gnostic myths, Käsemann's work still offers important and instructive insights for our study of faith in Hebrews. Käsemann demonstrates an understanding of faith in Hebrews that encompasses three

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[41] In his preface to the second edition, Käsemann explains, "Material for this book was gathered during brief holiday weeks in 1936. A first draft followed in the leisure of a prison cell in autumn of 1937" (Ernst Käsemann, *The Wandering People of God*, trans. Roy A. Harrisville and Irving L. Sandberg (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1984), 15). Near the end of his life, he wrote a retrospective (dated July 1996) that explains more of what he meant by "the leisure of a prison cell": "The almost twenty-five days I spent in jail before being released without a hearing were actually restful. I did not have to rush daily from one house to the other, or at night give communion to the dying. No one said an evil word to me. The prison inspector got me a box of Brazilian cigars and allowed books, excerpts, and paper to be sent to me so that I could finish my study on Hebrews, *The Wandering People of God*. Now and then a guard visited me in the evening to ask how a pastor could get himself behind bars, and how I happened to be the first in the history of Gelsenkirchen. On Sunday morning the brass band from the hospital opposite the jail played 'Wach auf, wach auf, du deutsches Land, Du bist genug geschlaffen" [Wake, wake, O German land; you've been long enough abed] and other rousing stuff. Only the fish bones in the herring soup on Wednesdays and the anxiety at being arrested by the Gestapo on the prison steps after my release disturbed my peace" (Ernst Käsemann, *On Being a Disciple of the Crucified Nazarene: Unpublished Lectures and Sermons*, ed. Rudolf Landau and Wolfgang Kraus, trans. Roy A. Harrisville (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), xx).

[42] Käsemann makes this case throughout, and so we need not belabor this point. One quote will suffice: "On the basis of the preceding investigation we may even assert that *both the drafting of the entire theme and the Christology of the letter in particular were possible only on soil made ready by Gnosticism*" (Käsemann, *Wandering*, 174, italics his).

[43] For convincing rebuttals to Käsemann's theory of Gnostic backgrounds to Hebrews, see Hofius, *Katapausis*, 22-115; and Jon C. Laansma, *"I Will Give You Rest": The Rest Motif in the New Testament with Special Reference to Mt 11 and Heb 3-4*, WUNT 2/98 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 17-158.

dimensions described above (ethical, eschatological, and ecclesiological), and he addresses the christological dimension briefly as well. However, he does not bring these dimensions into conversation, and I will suggest that he does not emphasize enough the faithfulness of Christ as the model of what faith entails.

For Käsemann, the guiding image for Hebrews is that of a wandering community of God's people who persevere in faith as they move toward the heavenly homeland. Despite the English connotations of "wandering" as "aimless" or "meandering," Käsemann is clear that the "wandering" he envisions is one directed toward an eschatological goal: "From beginning to end, the entire Christian wandering occurs in view of the heavenly Jerusalem."[44] Faith includes suffering in hope of a blessed future: "in Hebrews the obedience of faith is fulfilled when, in trusting the divine promise, one is willing to be led patiently through the present time of suffering into the heavenly future."[45] Faith, therefore, is *a confident wandering*[46] that moves forward in perseverance: "*Just as faith finds its own true character in perseverance, so sin finds its own in slackening.* Just as ὑπομονή is the eschatologically oriented persistence under the earthly load, so ὑποστολή retreats before this burden and leads to drooping hands and weak knees (12:12)."[47]

The corporate dimension of wandering extends to faith and obedience: "we may deny to Hebrews any 'private Christianity,' and describe faith as well as obedience as the true attitude of the community."[48] For Käsemann, faith and sin are understood in corporate terms: "The decision is for πίστις or ἁμαρτία, that is, for obediently abiding under the promise and wandering with the people of God already begun, or disobedience toward and apostasy from the promise, from wandering, and from the people of God."[49] Käsemann, therefore, brings together corporate and ethical dimensions of faith in his image of the wandering people of God.

Käsemann also recognizes that Jesus is a model for the community. Jesus is the example for the children who are growing weary in their wandering. The wandering people of God hear the call to hold fast the confession (ὁμολογία) as one

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[44] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 54.
[45] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 39.
[46] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 44 (italics his).
[47] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 46 (italics his).
[48] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 22.
[49] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 48.

which "*summons the people of God to the discipleship of Christ as* ἀρχηγὸς τῆς πίστεως. Only in such discipleship does it preserve its original ὑπόστασις. At the same time, the cultic ὁμολογία guarantees to the Christian community that such discipleship will bring it to its goal, since the perfecter of faith has already achieved it."[50] Similarly, he writes, "the motif of discipleship signifies that the disciples go the way of Jesus, receiving a share in his sonship and thus in a certain measure become like him."[51] However, Käsemann emphasizes that the way of Jesus does not give expression to what faith itself entails: "When Hebrews adopts this motif [of discipleship], it does not do so because the nature of faith finds in it its most adequate expression. *Rather, Hebrews employs this motif with paraenetic intent*, in order by it to spur on the wearied community."[52] Here he introduces a false dichotomy between "the nature of faith" and "paraenetic intent." It is quite possible that the author of Hebrews employs the motif with paraenetic intent, but this does not disqualify this motif from giving expression to the nature of faith. Indeed, I will argue particularly in chapters 7-8, that Jesus' suffering to the point of death is precisely what faith looks like. While Käsemann recognizes the faithfulness of Christ in Hebrews, I will suggest that the faithfulness of Christ takes a more central role in Hebrews' understanding of faith than he allows.

III.3. Erich Grässer (1965)

The earliest monograph devoted to faith in Hebrews is Grässer's *Der Glaube im Hebräerbrief*.[53] Grässer is particularly interested in how faith in Hebrews can serve as a test-case for studying the early[54] church's central Christ proclamation, its

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[50] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 173-74 (italics his).

[51] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 180.

[52] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 181 (italics his).

[53] Although he does not develop the point in as much detail as Käsemann, Grässer also sees Gnosticism underlying Hebrews. See, for example: "Im ersten Teil seines Briefes (1, 1-6, 20) arbeitet Hb mit Hilfe des gnostischen Urmensch-Mythos die 'Analogie' von Erlöser und Erlösungsbedürftigen heraus. Eine prägnant gnostische Terminologie (κεκοινώνηκεν, μετέσχεν, ὁμοιωθῆναι, οὗ οἶκός ἐσμεν ἡμεῖς, μετριοπαθεῖν, τελειοῦν) tritt dabei an die Stelle des sonst üblichen πιστεύειν εἰς, um die für die Soteria konstitutive Relation zwischen Heilsbringer und Heilsempfänger auszudrücken. Diesen grundlegenden Sachverhalt gibt Hb also keineswegs auf; er variiert lediglich in der Terminologie!" (Erich Grässer, *Der Glaube im Hebräerbrief*, Marburger Theologische Studien 2 (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1965), 216; see also 71).

[54] Grässer sees the author of Hebrews as a theologian spanning primitive Christianity and the post-apostolic age: "Der Autor des Hb ist damit der Theologe auf der Schwelle vom Urchristentum zur nachapostolischen Zeit" (Grässer, *Glaube*, 184).

understanding of justification and revelation, and the extent to which salvation is the center of its testimony.[55]

Grässer argues that the author of Hebrews does not express a uniquely Christian understanding of faith. Unlike Paul and the Synoptic Gospels, which understand faith in christological terms, Hebrews shows no such indication: "Der spezifisch christliche ("christologische") Glaube findet im Hb keine Fortsetzung, weder in der reflektierten Weise des Apostels Paulus, noch in der unreflektierten der Synoptiker."[56] Faith in Hebrews is unlike the understanding of faith in Paul's epistles, where faith is placed in Christ and is inseparable from salvation: "Kurz: Pistis steht bei Paulus in einer unaufgebbaren Relation zu jenem Heilsereignis, das Christus selber ist. Überspitzt ausgedrückt: der Glaube kennt Christum und sonst nichts!"[57] Similarly, faith in Hebrews bears no relation to the saving faith in the Synoptics:

> Hb reflektiert mit Pistis nicht auf jenes Geschehen, durch welches das durch die Sünde gestörte Verhältnis des Menschen zu Gott wieder recht wird. Sündenvergebung und Rechtfertigung sind nicht zu ihr in Beziehung gesetzt. Die für die Synoptiker typische Formel ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε (Mk [sic., see Mt] 9, 22) hat im Hb keinerlei Analogiebildung. Auch Hb 12,2 heißt es gerade nicht Anführer und Vollender eures bzw. unseres Glaubens, sondern einfach nur des Glaubens. D.h.: auf eine personale Relation Glaube und Jesus im Sinne der Synoptiker hebt diese Stelle nicht ab.[58]

Rather than a faith in Christ that saves the person or establishes a personal relationship with Christ, faith in Hebrews is an ethical virtue.[59] But Grässer does allow for Jesus as model of faith in Hebrews. Jesus, numbered with the cloud of

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[55] "[W]ir haben im Glaubensbegriff jeweils einen deutlichen Index dafür, wieweit in einer apostolischen oder auch frühkirchlichen Schrift die 'zentrale Christusverkündigung', die 'Rechtfertigung des Sünders', die 'Offenbarung', das Heilsgeschehen als 'Mitte' des Zeugnisses" (Grässer, *Glaube*, 2).

[56] Grässer, *Glaube*, 79.

[57] Grässer, *Glaube*, 66.

[58] Grässer, *Glaube*, 78.

[59] Grässer constricts his study to the πιστ- words, which appear only in the paraenetic sections of Hebrews. Hughes suggests that had Grässer expanded his study to the whole of Hebrews, he would have found more of the soteriological and religious ideas he found lacking with the πιστ- words. Hughes writes, "That Grässer should have failed to find this has been, presumably, because he began with, and never moved beyond, the essentially simple lexical study of the πίστις words, even though the uneven distribution of these placed the inquiry in so much jeopardy from the start" (Graham Hughes, *Hebrews and Hermeneutics: The Epistle to the Hebrews as a New Testament Example of Biblical Interpretation*, SNTSMS 36 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 137-42, here 140).

witnesses from Heb 11,[60] models a steadfast faith.[61] This faith, however, is still not

uniquely christological, but is best understood in its Hellenistic context[62] as a virtue[63]

similar to the virtues in Philo, where πίστις is synonymous with βεβαιότης.[64] Faith,

then, is closely associated with the ethic of endurance. Grässer writes, "Pistis im Hb

ist eine eminent ethische Kategorie. Sie ist die der ἐπαγγελία angemessene ἀρετή.

Glaube ist Standhaftigkeit."[65]

  Faith in Hebrews, as an ethic of endurance, is a journey[66] that does not look

back upon what God has already done, but forward in hope: "Vor allem aber – und

das ist der sachliche Hauptunterschied –: die paulinische πίστις εἰς... 'blickt primär

auf das, was Gott getan hat, nicht auf das, was er tun wird.' Im Hb ist der Glaube

dagegen zukunftsgerichtete Haltung."[67] Salvation is a purely future hope, and faith in

the present is one of hopeful travelling toward the invisible world, fitting the

Hellenistic character of faith:

> Theologisch bedeutet die Identität von Pistis und Elpis im Hb, daß das Heil
> vorwiegend hinsichtlich seiner noch ausstehenden Zukünftigkeit fixiert ist.
> Wie die Hoffnung immer auf ein dann erst zu Erwartendes gerichtet ist, so ist

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[60] For Jesus as a member of the cloud of witnesses in Heb 12:1, see Grässer, *Glaube*, 57.

[61] Grässer, *Glaube*, 60-62, 123-24. Contra Rhee, who says of Grässer, "For Grässer faith in Hebrews has nothing to do with Christ, neither as the model nor as the content of faith; it is simply a moral character of steadfastness" (Victor (Sung-Yul) Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews: Analysis within the Context of Christology, Eschatology, and Ethics*, Studies in Biblical Literature 19 (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 35).

[62] Grässer also suggests that faith in Hebrews is similar to אמן (which he understands as faithfulness) in the OT (Grässer, *Glaube*, 44, 79, 85, 217), but he maintains that the OT and Qumran backgrounds do not explain Hebrews' understanding of faith as sufficiently as does Alexandrian philosophy (94). He writes later, "Ohne das Medium des Alexandrinismus und des von ihm bewahrten griechisch-hellenistischen Erbes führt kein Weg zum Verständnis des Glaubensbegriffes im Hb" (144).

[63] On faith as a virtue, see esp. Grässer, *Glaube*, 117-25. He concludes: "Σπουδή und μίμημα als typische Termini des sittlichen Bemühens und der Selbstvervollkommnung im Sinne der helln. Philosophie signalisieren deutlich das Bemühen, den Prozeß der Umsetzung des Glaubens in eine Haltung mit den Vorstellungseigene Zeit verständlich zu machen. Daß der Gegenstand der so umschriebenen Pistis von der Sache und vom Inhalt des Kerygmas her ein anderer, aus bestimmten Terminologie und die damit gesetzte Bedeutungsverschiebung im Verständnis der Pistis nicht auf. Man sieht schon im Hb jene spätere Epoche sich abzeichnen, da der Glaube als ἀρετή sich nahtlos in die christlichen Tugendkataloge wird einreihen lassen" (125).

[64] "Aber niemand hat sie mit solcher Intensität zum eigentlichen Wesensmerkmal der Pistis erklärt wie Philo: Πίστις und βεβαιότης sind Synonyma" (Grässer, *Glaube*, 144, see also 18). For Grässer, a study of Hebrews will reveal that πίστις is also synonymous with ὑπόστασις, ἔλεγχος, ὑπομονή, ἐλπίς, παρρησία, μισθαποδοσία, κατέχειν, κρατεῖν, and μένειν; while ἀπιστία is synonymous with ὑποστολή, παράβασις, ἀπείθεια, παραχοή, ἁμαρτία, ἀποστῆναι, παραπίπτειν, and ἁμαρτάνειν (63).

[65] Grässer, *Glaube*, 63.

[66] So Grässer: "Hb versteht die christliche Existenz wesentlich als Glaubenswanderschaft" (Grässer, *Glaube*, 181).

[67] Grässer, *Glaube*, 66-67; see also 68.

man nun auch mit der Pistis in eine Bewegung hineingenommen, die noch nicht abgeschlossen ist. Glaube ist Wanderschaft. Und zwar zielgerichtete Wanderschaft, nämlich εἴσοδος τῶν ἁγίων. In der Terminologie und in der Durchführung (Wanderung aus der Welt des Vergänglich-Sichtbaren in die himmlische Welt des Unsichtbar-Unvergänglichen) ist diese Thematik hellenistisch konzipiert.[68]

For Grässer, the author of Hebrews has predominately a spatial, and not temporal, eschatology: "Unser Vf bewegt sich nicht – oder vorsichtiger ausgedrückt: nicht primär in der Linie horizontaler Zeitlichkeit und der durch sie bedingten Fragehinsicht 'Jetzt-Später', sondern im Schema vertikaler Räumlichkeit, und zwar in der charakteristischen Form einer Diastase von Irdisch-Himmlisch."[69] Nevertheless, even as Grässer suggests that Hebrews reflects the Hellenistic idea of a transcendent world, Christian existence still involves travelling forward as well as upward: "das Ziel der Glaubenswanderschaft liegt nicht nur oben, sondern auch vorne."[70]

In summary, Grässer understands faith in Hebrews as an ethical quality of firmness, endurance, constancy: "Standhaftigkeit."[71] This endurance involves moving forward while looking to the heavenly world in hope of God's fulfillment of promise. People enter this world by means of faith.[72] Grässer allows that Jesus can be a model of faith, but the faith he models is not specifically christological. That is, faith is the ethical virtue of endurance, which can be understood apart from the story of Jesus.

III.4. Gerhard Dautzenberg (1973)

Dautzenberg responds to Grässer. Dautzenberg accuses Grässer of measuring faith in Hebrews in light of an understanding of faith in Paul. Dautzenberg cites Grässer: "Glaube ist für Paulus immer Glaube an … Das ist er im Hb nur ein einziges Mal, und zwar als missionsterminologischer Allgemeinplatz – als Glaube an Gott

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[68] Grässer, *Glaube*, 117; see also 171-84.

[69] Grässer, *Glaube*, 175. Grässer offers the following as expressions of Hebrews' spatial eschatology: κατάπαυσις (3:11, 18; 4:1, 3, 5, 10, 11); οἰκουμένη μέλλουσα (2:5); αἰὼν μέλλων (6:5); (heavenly) πατρίς (11:14); (heavenly) πόλις (11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14); heavenly Jerusalem (12:22); κληρονομία (11:8); ἐλπιζόμενα and τὰ οὐ βλεπόμενα (11:1); μισθαποδοσία (10:35; 11:26); βασιλεία ἀσάλευτος (12:28); τὰ μὴ σαλευόμενα (12:27); and ἐπαγγελίαι (11:13, 39). Adjectives that potentially indicate temporality (such as αἰώνιος [5:9; 9:12, 14, 15; 13:20], μέλλων [2:5; 6:5; 10:1; 13:14], and μένων [10:34; 13:14]) are not pure concepts of time, but instead indicate stability and duration (174).

[70] Grässer, *Glaube*, 181.

[71] *passim*. See, for example, Grässer, *Glaube*, 63, 218.

[72] "Die untrügliche Zugangsart von jener zu dieser ist der Glaube" (Grässer, *Glaube*, 144).

(6,1; vgl. 11,6)!"[73] Dautzenberg responds in two ways. First, he argues that it is a
misreading of Paul to say his understanding of faith is always an inner belief which
can be expressed as "faith in." Dautzenberg writes: "Die Reduktion des paulinischen
Glaubensbegriffs auf 'Glauben an ...' unter Ausklammerung seiner vorgängigen
intentionalen Beziehung auf Gott als den Grund des Glaubens und des paulinischen
Wissens um den Glauben als eine menschliche Haltung verkennt die geschichtliche
und d. h. biblische Dimension des Glaubensbegriffs bei Paulus und macht ihn zu
einem theologischen Kunstbegriff."[74] Second, he suggests that it is inappropriate to
measure faith in Hebrews in light of faith in Paul, since both can represent different
strands of thought: "Der Vergleich zwischen Paulus und dem Hebr ist immer
fruchtbar, aber es ist ein Fehler, den Hebr an Paulus zu messen. Beide stellen
verschiedene Ausprägungen einer breiten biblischen Tradition über den Glauben
dar."[75] Dautzenberg wants to allow that the author of Hebrews could be developing a
concept of faith that is not an adulteration of a pure (i.e. Pauline, as it seems from
Grässer) understanding of faith as inner belief ("faith in"), but one that is
commensurate with other strands of Jewish thought.

       Dautzenberg sees faith in Hebrews in predominately eschatological and ethical
terms. For Dautzenberg, faith in Hebrews is a hopeful trusting in God and God's
promises. He explains, "Glaube ist *Vertrauen*, Vertrauen auf Gott und auf seine
Verheißungen," and "Vertrauen und *Hoffnung* liegen eng beieinander."[76] Therefore,
he reads belief, trust, and hope similarly, as he sees Paul doing in Rom 4: "Ja,
während das Substantiv 'Glaube' erst seit der Begegnung mit dem Hellenismus im
Judentum Anwendung findet, bilden sich schon im atl [*sic*.] Sprachgebrauch die
anschaulicheren Substantive 'Vertrauen' und 'Hoffnung'. Der fließende Übergang
zwischen Glaube, Vertrauen und Hoffnung läßt sich gut an Röm 4,18 illustrieren."[77]
He suggests that faith and hope in Hebrews are almost interchangeable, and the author
seems to choose different words for stylistic reasons: "Im Hebr rücken Glaube und
Hoffnung wenn möglich noch enger zueinander, so daß die beiden Begriffe an

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[73] Grässer, *Glaube*, 66, quoted in Gerhard Dautzenberg, "Der Glaube im Hebräerbrief," *BZ* 17, no. 2 (1973), 166.

[74] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 166.

[75] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 166.

[76] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 163 (italics his).

[77] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 163.

manchen Stellen fast austauschbar und nur aus stilistischen Gründen abwechselnd gebraucht erscheinen."[78]

Dautzenberg's general understanding of faith in Hebrews is similar to Grässer in two significant ways. First, like Grässer, Dautzenberg concludes that faith for Hebrews is characterized by endurance rooted in hope: "Zusammenfassend läßt sich die dem Hebr eigene Ausrichtung des Glaubens also dahingehend beschreiben, daß er den Glauben als ausharrende Treue und als unbeirrbare und vorwegnehmende Orientierung des Gläubigen auf die von Gott verheißene Zukunft hin auffaßt."[79] Even more significantly, Dautzenberg agrees with Grässer that Hebrews' concept of faith is not inherently christological. He explains: "Dem heutigen christlichen Leser des Hebr wird es bei der im Hebr gegebenen Inhaltsbestimmung des Glaubens allenfalls auffallen, daß nur die Wirklichkeit Gottes in dieser Bestimmung begegnet, dagegen alle Beziehungen zur Christologie, wie Glauben an den Herrn Jesus, daß Gott ihn von den Toten auferweckt hat, usw., fehlen."[80] Dautzenberg denies the presence of any clear indication of Christian traits with regard to faith in Hebrews: "Obwohl der Hebr unzweifelhaft eine urchristliche Schrift ist, hat sein Glaubensbegriff keine eindeutig christlichen Züge."[81]

Therefore, both Grässer and Dautzenberg argue that faith in Hebrews is not necessarily Christian or christological, but rather refers to an ethic of perseverance that would be applicable to non-Christian people without reference to Christ. Where Dautzenberg differs from Grässer is in linking this ethic to strands of Jewish thought (rather than Gnostic) and in emphasizing more strongly the coordination of faith and hope in Hebrews. Their non-christological reading of faith is the most enduring legacy of these studies.

III.5. Dennis Hamm (1990)

Responding to the previous works of Grässer and Dautzenberg, Hamm finds that faith in Hebrews is thoroughly christological. According to Hamm, in Hebrews "Jesus is presented as a model and enabler of Christian faith and, in some ways, even

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[78] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 164.
[79] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 171.
[80] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 166.
[81] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 171.

as object of faith."[82] Hamm's explanation for Jesus as the object of faith appears in his conclusion: "After the death and exaltation of Jesus, faith in God is implicitly faith in Jesus."[83] He does not discuss how precisely this is the case for Hebrews or what it means for Christians to have faith in Jesus.[84]

Hamm offers a stronger explanation of Jesus' status as model and enabler of faith. Hamm roots this observation predominately in 12:1-2 and in the pesher on Ps 39 LXX in Heb 10. Hamm reads 12:2, where Jesus is called ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις, as evoking two images. On the one hand, given the coordination of the αρχ- and τελ- stems, Jesus is "beginner and ender." The sense of "beginner and ender" "would emphasize Jesus as enabler of faith."[85] At the same time, Hamm also wants to allow for ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής as "leader and perfecter." Jesus is the leader who is our forerunner and perfecter "in the sense that he models to perfection the imperfect faith exemplified by the ancestors just praised in the previous passage."[86] If we grant both of these meanings of ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής (both "beginner and ender" and "leader and perfecter"), the "titles of v 2, then, speak of Jesus both as model and enabler of faith."[87] Hamm does not adequately defend a both/and reading of ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής, and his reading of 12:1-2 would be strengthened by greater attention to how both senses are in play.

Hamm also sees Jesus as enabler of faith in 10:1-18, where Jesus demonstrates his obedience to God's will by offering his body as a sacrifice. This sacrifice ushered in the new covenant, in which God will write his laws on human hearts (8:10, from Jer 31:33). Hamm writes, "The self-giving of Jesus, then, facilitates the heart-obedience of believers."[88] Hamm elsewhere connects obedience to faith,[89] and so by enabling obedience, Jesus enables faith.

Hamm's study does well to situate faith christologically, but his short study does not allow ample space to develop his reading or explain fully how human faith

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[82] Hamm, "Faith," 272.
[83] Hamm, "Faith," 291.
[84] I respond to Hamm's suggestion that Jesus is object of faith in chapter 9, section II.3.2.
[85] Hamm, "Faith," 287.
[86] Hamm, "Faith," 287.
[87] Hamm, "Faith," 287.
[88] Hamm, "Faith," 284.
[89] See esp. 289.

relates to Jesus' faith. He also maintains that Jesus is the object of faith, despite the lack of explicit language of such in Hebrews.

III.6. Thomas Söding (1991)

Söding begins his study by naming three anomalies with respect to faith in Hebrews:

> 1. Der Hebr redet nur im Rahmen paränetischer bzw. besser: parakletischer Mahnreden vom Glauben. Bei Paulus und Johannes findet sich das Glaubensmotiv hingegen zumeist in christologisch-soteriologischen Kontexten.
> 2. Der Hebr spricht kein einziges Mal vom Glauben *an* Jesus Christus. Bei Paulus und Johannes ist dies jedoch die typische Redeweise.
> 3. Der Hebr stellt Jesus ausdrücklich selbst als Glaubenden vor. In Hebr 12,2 wird er "des Glaubens Anführer und Vollender" genannt. Das ist im gesamten Neuen Testament singulär, so sehr man auch an der einen oder anderen Stelle die Figur des Glaubens Jesu als Hintergrundmotiv erkennen mag.[90]

In view of these anomalies, Söding sets out to explore (1) the relationship between faith, soteriology, and ethics, and (2) the association of Jesus Christ with faith.

With respect to the first question, Söding finds that faith in God links soteriology and ethics. For Söding, faith is endurance motivated by and enabled by faith in God. Faith in God (6:1) is not only recognizing the existence of God or acknowledging God's nature (11:6), but is confidence that flows out of God's saving activity as the One who revealed the Son:

> Es geht beim "Glauben an Gott" nicht nur um eine Anerkenntnis der Existenz wie des Wesens Gottes, sondern um eine Bejahung, die vom Vertrauen auf sein Heilshandeln getragen ist und sich in der dienenden Hingabe des ganzen Lebens bewährt; und es geht nicht nur um ein allgemeines monotheistisches Bekenntnis, das als solches auch philosophischer Reflexion zugänglich wäre (so sehr sich der Hebr um eine philosophische Validität seiner Gedankengange bemüht); es geht vielmehr letztlich um die Bejahung Gottes als dessen, der sich eschatologisch in seinem Sohn offenbart (1,1 f.) und dadurch die Möglichkeit des Glaubens eröffnet (vgl. 10,19-25).[91]

Παρρησία and ὑπομονή are related to the confident ethic motivated by faith in God's saving activity. Both παρρησία and ὑπομονή are expressions ("Ausdrucksformen") of

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[90] Söding, "Zuversicht," 215.
[91] Söding, "Zuversicht," 221.

faith, and the proper responses to the persecution the hearers were undergoing.[92]

Παρρησία and ὑπομονή coordinate with the eschatological tension in Hebrews – παρρησία is possible because God promised the eschatological hope, and ὑπομονή is necessary because God has not yet ushered in this hope.[93] Both παρρησία and ὑπομονή result from trust in God:

> Die Korrelation zwischen der Situation (vgl. 10,32ff.) und der Intention der Glaubensparaklese ist nicht zu übersehen. Glaube, als Einheit von unerschrockener Zuversicht und hoffnungsvoller Geduld verstanden, mithin als Treue, die aus dem Vertrauen auf Gott wächst, – solcher Glaube verschafft jene Standfestigkeit, Zielstrebigkeit und Ausdauer, die das auf seiner irdischen Pilgerschaft begriffene Gottesvolk am dringendsten braucht.[94]

The correlation he finds between enduring faith and faith in God (i.e. faith in God's character and saving activity motivating and enabling enduring faith) suggests for Söding that distinguishing too sharply between soteriological and ethical dimensions of faith in Hebrews introduces a false dichotomy. He explains:

> Diese soteriologische Relevanz kommt dem Glauben gerade in dem Maße zu, wie er sich im Stehen unter dem Erhofften, im Sich-Überführen-Lassen von der unsichtbaren Heilswirklichkeit Gottes als Zuversicht und Geduld ausformt. Insofern scheint eine Dichotomie zwischen „soteriologisch" und „ethisch" in der theologischen Welt des Hebr problematisch, so wenig der Primat des Heilshandelns Gottes zu relativieren ist. Es geht dem Hebr entscheidend um die Ermöglichung von Gotteserfahrungen, die überhaupt erst die Wirklichkeit des geschenkten Heiles aufgehen lassen.[95]

For Söding, therefore, the saving work of God directly impacts our ethical expression of faith: the salvation that God offers through faith enables and motivates believers to persevere in faith in expectation of the eschatological hope God offers.

With respect to the second question, Söding acknowledges that Hebrews never speaks of "faith in Jesus," but he contends that interpreters are mistaken if they fail to see a christological element of faith in the book. For Söding, Jesus is the model of faith and the exalted high priest to whom believers look for encouragement:

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[92] Söding, "Zuversicht," 223.

[93] Söding writes: "παρρησία ist möglich und notwendig, weil Gott sich selbst für den verheißenen großen Lohn verbürgt, der in der Teilnahme an der Feier des eschatologischen Sabbats besteht (4.9; vgl. Ps 95,11); ὑπομονή ist möglich und notwendig im Hinblick darauf, daß dieser Lohn noch aussteht und die Gegenwart eine Zeit der Bedrängnisse und irritierenden Kontrasterfahrungen ist" (Söding, "Zuversicht," 223-24).

[94] Söding, "Zuversicht," 224.

[95] Söding, "Zuversicht," 235.

> Der Hebr spricht nicht vom Glauben *an* Jesus Christus. Gleichwohl gehört zur Pistis eine intensive personale Beziehung zu Jesus, dem „Anführer und Vollender des Glaubens". Pistis vollzieht sich als *imitatio Christi.* Mehr noch braucht sie das *Schauen* auf den Hohenpriester Jesus Christus, das genaue Hinblicken auf seine Erniedrigung, sein συνπαθεῖν mit den angefochtenen Menschen, sein Sterben für die Sünder, seine Erhöhung zur Rechten Gottes, sein Vorangehen durch den Vorhang des Tempels und sein fürbittendes Eintreten für die ihm Nachfolgenden. In diesem Schauen, dem die Heilsbedeutung Jesu einleuchtet, wächst der Glaube.[96]

Söding does not see Jesus as the object of faith, but as the model and encouragement of faith.

In summary, Söding advocates a view of faith that is christological (in the sense of Jesus as model), eschatological, and ethical. In many ways, faith is theocentric, as faith in God's saving activity motivates enduring faith. At the same time, however, faith has a definite christological dimension, as it is Jesus who models this faith and as Jesus is the Son through whom God's saving activity in the world is enacted.

III.7. Ian Wallis (1995)

Within his larger project on the faith of Jesus Christ in early Christian traditions, Wallis tackles the question of Jesus' faith in Hebrews. He starts his study with the observation, "The Letter to the Hebrews furnishes us with the most explicit references to Jesus' faith in the New Testament."[97] Wallis roots his discussion of Jesus' faith in the language of Jesus as πιστός (2:17; 3:2, 6) and in Jesus as the ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις (12:2). He argues that πιστός with regard to Jesus denotes both his inherent trustworthiness and his faithfulness to God, and Jesus is πιστός on account of his continuing high-priestly ministry.[98]

Unlike Hamm, Wallis never suggests that Jesus is the object of faith, but like Hamm, Wallis understands Jesus' faith as enabling human faith. Wallis writes, "as a faithful and trustworthy mediator, he makes salvation available and, in this way, provides the context for human response to God."[99] Wallis makes clear later that this

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[96] Söding, "Zuversicht," 234 (italics his).
[97] Ian G. Wallis, *The Faith of Jesus Christ in Early Christian Traditions*, SNTSMS 84 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 145.
[98] Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 148-49.
[99] Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 150.

human response is faith: "Within this passage [Heb 10:19-25] God is described as πιστός; and we have seen how the author considers that Jesus' faithful and trustworthy high-priestly ministry (cf. πιστός in 2.17; 3.2, 6) provides the definitive expression of this divine characteristic and creates the opportunity for faith (πίστις) in others."[100] For Wallis, therefore, Christ's sacrificial death and ongoing priesthood "mediates not only God's initiative of salvation, but also human response to that initiative."[101]

Wallis posits a multivalent reading of 12:2, so that Jesus is the enabler,[102] source,[103] and exemplar[104] of faith. Jesus' ability to enable faith is owed to his appointment to the high-priestly office, while his fitness as exemplar is owed to his endurance in the face of suffering.[105] Wallis does not discuss human faith in detail, except to note, "the recipients of the letter, like many of the exemplars mentioned in chapter 11, are challenged to live by faith in the face of oppression, temporality and other manifestations of hopelessness; but in living by faith, they are able to transcend these difficulties through participating in God's eternal, ever-hopeful reality."[106]

Wallis' study, also short like Hamm's, adequately demonstrates the theme of Jesus' faith in Hebrews. Faith in Hebrews, for Wallis, is thoroughly christological. Wallis demonstrates how Jesus' faithfulness in his high-priestly role enables human response to God, but he does not adequately demonstrate what human faith in practice looks like. Nevertheless, given that his interests lie in the faith of Jesus (and not faith in general) in Hebrews, we should not expect him to be much more explicit than he is. Wallis, therefore, leaves much room for fuller discussion.

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[100] Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 151.

[101] Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 161.

[102] "Jesus is, thus, the first to reach faith's heavenly goal and, as a result of the way in which this was accomplished, has enabled others to follow in his footsteps" (Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 157).

[103] "Within this framework of τελειωτής, Jesus can also be described as ἀρχηγός in that, by initiating its fulfilment, he has become the source of faith for others" (Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 157).

[104] "Jesus constitutes the ultimate exemplar (τελειωτής) of faith and, as such, is its leader or forerunner (ἀρχηγός) as well as its source" (Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 158).

[105] Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 158-59.

[106] Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 154.

III.8 Gerd Schunack (1999)

Schunack emphasizes the way in which faith in Hebrews relates to God. For Schunack, faith is both directed to and based on God: "Der Glaube ist im Verständnis des Hebr auf Gott gerichtet und bezogen."[107] Faith in God is most clearly expressed in 11:6 and in 6:1, where πίστις ἐπὶ θεού is numbered among the fundamental doctrines.[108] Faith in God is equivalent to a monotheistic commitment: "Glaube an Gott hätte somit mehr oder weniger dieselbe Bedeutung wie das (monotheistische) Bekenntnis zum einen und wahren Gott."[109] Similar to Söding (addressed above), Schunack also understands faith in God as the basis for present action. For instance, with respect to 12:1-3, Schunack writes, "Daß der Existenzsinn von Glaube Gottesgewißheit ist und in dieser seiner Heilsbedeutung grundlegend im hohenpriesterlichen Sein und Werk Jesu Christi offenbar geworden ist, erweist sich endgültig in 12,1-3. Auch hier ist Glaube nicht intentionaler Gehalt der Paraklese, sondern deren Beweggrund."[110] This is the faith that Jesus models, as he trusts God (Heb 2:13) and does God's will on the basis of this trust (Heb 10:7-9).[111] Therefore, for Schunack, *faith* is not an ethical quality (such as endurance or obedience) but the *motivation* for such action.

III.9. Victor (Sung-Yul) Rhee (2001)

Rhee's monograph, *Faith in Hebrews: Analysis within the Context of Christology, Eschatology, and Ethics*, is the longest treatment of faith written in English. Rhee argues that "faith in Hebrews is both Christologically and eschatologically oriented."[112] For Rhee, christological faith envisions Jesus "as both the model and the object of faith as in other books of the New Testament,"[113] but he mostly emphasizes Jesus as object (more on this below). "Eschatological" faith, in

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[107] Gerd Schunack, "Exegetische Beobachtungen zum Verständnis des Glaubens im Hebräerbrief," in *Text und Geschichte: Facetten theologischen Arbeitens aus dem Freundes - und Schülerkreis - Dieter Lührmann zum 60 Geburstag*, ed. Stefan Maser. Marburger Theologische Studien 50 (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1999), 212.

[108] Schunack, "Exegetische Beobachtungen," 212-13.

[109] Schunack, "Exegetische Beobachtungen," 213.

[110] Schunack, "Exegetische Beobachtungen," 231. Schunack similarly concludes his discussion of Heb 11 by noting, "Der Existenzsinn von Glauben ist Gottesgewißheit" (229).

[111] Schunack, "Exegetische Beobachtungen," 231-32.

[112] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, xv.

[113] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, xv.

Rhee's estimation, is orientated temporally toward the present and future rather than spatially toward visible and invisible realities.[114] He allows for an ethical dimension of faith, but this dimension of faith is understood rightly only in view of the christological and eschatological elements in play.[115] Rhee spends substantially more time on the christological dimension than the eschatological.[116]

To demonstrate his understanding of faith in Hebrews, Rhee sets out to "utilize the following methods of study: (1) exegesis, (2) biblical theology, (3) literary device of chiasm, and (4) alternating structure of doctrine and parenesis"[117] (more on these methods of study below). His exegetical chapters each investigate the relationship of a doctrinal section to a paraenetic section: 1:1-14/2:1-4; 2:5-18/3:1-4:16; 5:1-10/5:11-6:20; 7:1-10:18/10:19-39; and 11:1-40/12:1-29. For reasons he does not explain, he has no treatment of chapter 13. When investigating the relationship between these sections, he tries to keep these questions in mind: "The doctrinal section will answer the questions: (1) what is the basis for the literary unit? and (2) what is the Christological teaching that the author intends to convey?; in the parenetic section: (1) what is the basis for the literary unit? and (2) what is the relationship between the Christological teaching in the doctrinal section and the exhortation to be faithful in the parenetic section?"[118] Curiously, Rhee speaks of "the exhortation to be faithful in the parenetic section." The language of "to be faithful" sounds more like an ethical dimension of faith, but he does not develop why he chooses to use the language of "faithful" in this case.

Although Rhee allows that Jesus is a model of faith in Hebrews,[119] he insists that a true christological understanding of faith is one which sees Jesus as object of

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[114] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, xv. He explains later: "the eschatological orientation of faith in Hebrews is not a spatial, but a temporal one. To be more specific, eschatology in Hebrews involves both the present and the future" (63).

[115] Rhee explains: "However, it is also to be realized that one cannot totally ignore the contribution made by the proponents of the ethical view. The importance of the ethical dimension of faith should not be minimized because these are the very characteristics of faith. They include steadfastness, fidelity, perseverance, hope and confidence in God's promise, obedience, and reliability. These qualities are true characteristics of faith in Hebrews and must be discussed in the context of the author's intended view of Christology and eschatology" (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 63).

[116] Rhee addresses the eschatological dimension predominately in his treatment of Heb 11 (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 180-220).

[117] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 12.

[118] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 65.

[119] See, for example, Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 94-96, 126-28.

faith. For example, he writes, "Generally speaking, the proponents of the ethical view tend to de-emphasize the Christological orientation of faith. They argue that in Hebrews Jesus is not presented as the content (or the object) of faith. Some are willing to go so far as acknowledging Jesus as the model of faith, but not as the content of faith."[120] Again, he writes elsewhere, "By explaining Jesus simply as the model of believers' faith, he [Lindars] tends to minimize the Christological aspect of faith in Hebrews to a certain degree, and instead, emphasizes the ethical aspect."[121]

Rhee's monograph is hamstrung by a legion of debilitating problems. For one, as noted above, Rhee curiously calls "chiasm" a method: "The third method I will employ to develop my thesis in this book is the rhetorical structure of chiasm."[122] Readers of Rhee may question whether "chiasm," a literary structure, is rightly called an interpretive method. Instead, it seems that the true method being employed is an interpreter's efforts at finding chiasms and making arguments on the basis of chiasms supposedly present. Rhee devotes four pages to chiasm, and addresses criteria for identifying chiastic structures in only one paragraph,[123] where he summarizes Blomberg's nine criteria.[124] Rhee notes that he will not follow Blomberg's list of criteria closely, but as a guideline.[125] However, by distancing himself from any firm criteria, Rhee undercuts the spirit of Blomberg's cautionary criteria.[126] Rhee finds chiasms throughout Hebrews,[127] and often finds chiasms within chiasms,[128] but he

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[120] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 29.

[121] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 32-33.

[122] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 13.

[123] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 13-17. For a stronger treatment of chiasm and the criteria for identifying chiastic structures, see Antoninus King Wai Siew, *The War Between the Two Beasts and the Two Witnesses: A Chiastic Reading of Revelation 11.1-14.5*, Library of New Testament Studies 283 (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 37-53.

[124] Craig L. Blomberg, "The Structure of 2 Corinthians 1-7," *CTR* 4 (1989), 5-7.

[125] Rhee: "However, these criteria should not be considered as absolute rules; rather they are to serve as guidelines for identifying chiasm. In the analysis of Hebrews not all these rules may be applied in all the passages. I will use these criteria as helpful guidelines to guard against calling what is not chiasm as chiasm" (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 17).

[126] To be sure, Blomberg does not require that *every* criteria be met for a chiasm to be present, but the more criteria present, the more believable the proposed chiasm: "These nine criteria are seldom fulfilled *in toto* even by well-established chiastic structures, so it would seem these controls might actually be too rigid. But granted that some exceptions should be permitted, the more of these criteria which a given hypothesis fails to meet, the more sceptical a reception it deserves. Conversely, a hypothesis which fulfills most or all of the nine stands a strong chance of reflecting the actual structure of the text in question" (Blomberg, "Structure," 7).

[127] For Rhee's chiasms, see pages 67-68, 71, 91, 98, 102, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 142, 146, 147-48, 148-49, 150, 150-151, 157-58, 167, 172, 173, 175, 176, 183, 184-85, 187-88, 189, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196 (twice), 197, 204, 209, 211, 212, 225, 232, 234, 236.

never returns to Blomberg's criteria to test his proposed chiasms. Indeed, Blomberg's first criteria for identifying chiasms should cause Rhee more pause:

> There must be a problem in perceiving the structure of the text in question, which more conventional outlines fail to resolve. This criterion singlehandedly casts serious doubts over many recent proposals. If a more straightforward structure can adequately account for the textual data, recourse to less obvious arrangements of the material would seem, at the very least, to risk obscuring what was already clear.[129]

Rhee rarely explains in detail how his interpretations rely on the chiasms he finds. As a result, Mason's critique of Rhee is on target: "Even if the chiasms are accepted, it is hard to see why they are worth looking for; no conclusion is drawn from the pattern."[130]

A significant oversight is Rhee's comparison of faith in Hebrews to (an understanding of) faith in Paul. Rhee often admits that Hebrews does not feature language of "faith in Christ," "believing in Jesus," or "trusting in Jesus," but that Paul in fact does.[131] For example, Rhee writes, "the idea of Jesus being the object of faith is imbedded throughout the epistle, although it is not expressed with Pauline terminology."[132] Rhee never shows an awareness of the important πίστις Χριστοῦ debate in Pauline studies, and never discusses in detail – nor does he cite a Pauline scholar in support of – his understanding of faith in the Pauline corpus. Related to this, Rhee never questions *why* Hebrews never uses the language of "faith in Christ."[133] This, it seems, would be a significant question to explore given his insistence that Hebrews has such a concept of faith.

Rhee also commonly begs the question in his treatment of the relation between doctrinal passages with christological emphases and the paraenetic sections that follow. Rhee assumes that if a christological teaching is present in the immediate context, then "faith" must be faith in the Christ who is described in the doctrinal

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[128] Rhee sees the whole of Heb 11 as a chiasm, filled with several sub-chiasms (see pages 183-221). For other examples, see pages 137, 145-48, 173, 175, 176, 234.

[129] Blomberg, "Structure," 5.

[130] John S. Mason, "Review of Victor (Sung-Yul) Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews: Analysis within the Context of Christology, Eschatology, and Ethics*," *RBL [http://www.bookreviews.org]* (2003).

[131] See, for example (italicized pages are where he mentions Paul): *xv, 62, 79,* 100, 114, 155, 163, 179 (twice), *203, 224,* 230, *242, 252.*

[132] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 62. See also 59, 125, 171, 229, and 252.

[133] This point is also noted by Mason in his review of Rhee.

sections. He operates under the assumption: "the stylistic alternation between doctrines and parenesis implies that Jesus is to be considered the object of faith as in other books of the New Testament."[134] This assumption appears in his treatments of many passages in Hebrews. For example, even though "faith" is not explicitly present in Heb 2:1-4, he writes:

> An examination of the key words in 2:1 demonstrates that 1:1-14 and 2:1 are structurally and thematically related to each other. The author intends to encourage the readers to continue in faith by reminding them of the Christological teachings which he expounded in 1:1-14. In other words, in Hebrews the doctrine necessarily leads to exhortations, and exhortations are based on the doctrines. In this sense, it may be said that Jesus is viewed as the object of faith for believers, even if it is not expressed with phrases, such as "faith in Jesus" or "believe in Jesus."[135]

Rhee does not consider other explanations for this relationship, such as Hamm's and Wallis' descriptions of Jesus as enabler or model of faith. Rhee makes a similar move with respect to the opening verses of Hebrews chapter 6:

> It is true that the author of Hebrews does not express faith in terms of "faith in Christ" or "believing in Jesus." However, this does not necessarily mean that 6:1b-2 has no reference to Christ. The discussion of the phrases 'the beginning principles about the word of God' and 'the beginning teaching about Christ' clearly demonstrates that they refer to the fundamental doctrines of Christ which the readers received when they were first introduced to Christianity. In this sense, it may be said that Christ is construed as the object and the content of Christian faith in Hebrews even if the author does not use the phrase "faith in Christ."[136]

He does not adequately demonstrate why fundamental doctrines about Christ in a preceding verse means that Christ is the object of human faith. Likewise, Rhee makes a similar connection with respect to Heb 10:19-22:

> An examination of the participial clauses both in 10:19-21 and in 10:22 reveals that they have Christological implications: while the former emphasizes the finished work of Christ as the high priest, the latter stresses the response of believers to the work of the high priesthood of Christ. In this sense, it may be concluded that the exhortation to draw near with a true heart in assurance of faith in 10:22a is Christologically oriented. Even if the author does not use the phrase such as 'faith in Christ,' the context and the literary

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[134] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 64-65.
[135] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 75. See also pages 79 and 90.
[136] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 114.

structure make it evident that the concept of faith in this passage has Jesus as the object.[137]

We may grant Rhee that the paraenetic sections of Hebrews and whatever concept of faith therein are predicated on the christological teaching in the surrounding contexts, but this does not prove that faith involves "faith in" the Christ described in these contexts. Indeed, the author may wish to depict Christ in a certain way for a purpose other than to encourage his hearers to have faith *in* Jesus.

Finally, even if we grant that faith in Hebrews entails "faith in Christ" (and I will argue in chapter 9[138] that we should not), Rhee still does not explain what "faith in Christ" actually entails. He speaks of Jesus as the "object of faith" and the "content of faith," and occasionally seems to equate the two. For example, he writes, "I will analyze the passage with one question in mind: 'Is the concept of faith in Hebrews Christologically oriented?' or more specifically, 'Is Jesus construed as the object (or content) of faith for believers?' "[139] He never gives readers an idea of what precisely he means by "object" or "content" of faith, nor how human beings exercise such faith.

In view of these numerous debilitating issues in Rhee's monograph, his study offers little help to our present investigation. Rhee's most helpful observation is that the doctrinal sections of Hebrews (which, as he demonstrates, consistently address Christology) are related to the paraenetic sections, but interpreters of Hebrews have noticed this phenomenon before.[140] I address Rhee's arguments for Jesus as object of faith in more detail in chapter 9.[141]

III.10. Todd Still (2007)

As the title suggests ("*Christos* as *Pistos*"), Still's article focuses on the faithfulness (πιστός) of Christ. Still emphasizes Jesus' faithfulness as one which enables humans to become part of God's house and to approach God. He writes:

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[137] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 163.
[138] Section II.3.
[139] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 158.
[140] See, for example, Söding: "Christologie und Paraklese sind nach der Intention des Verfassers auf das engste miteinander verbunden. Der Christologie fällt eine parakletische Funktion zu; die Paraklese wächst aus der Christologie" (Söding, "Zuversicht," 219). See also George H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 140-45; Frank J. Matera, "Moral Exhortation: The Relation between Moral Exhortation and Doctrinal Exposition in the Letter to the Hebrews," *TJT* 10 (1994), 169-82. Rhee does not interact with Söding or Matera.
[141] Section II.3.4.

it is in light of Jesus' merciful dependability before his Father as well as his steadfast trust in his Father that the letter's author and recipients can picture themselves as the house of God over which Jesus serves as high priest (3:6b). Additionally, because Jesus is a tested, yet trustworthy, high priest, not only can they boldly approach the Son's heavenly throne of grace expecting mercy, but they can also approach God through him and anticipate acceptance (see 4:14-16; 7:19, 25; 10:19-22).[142]

Still does not devote space to exploring what human faith looks like or how Jesus' faithfulness as high priest enables humans to approach God. We might expect him to make the same move as Hamm, connecting Jesus' willing self-sacrifice that ushered in the new covenant to Jesus as πιστός, but Still does not make this connection clear. Still's short study, therefore, provides a succinct introduction to the theme of Jesus' faithfulness in Hebrews but it does not adequately flesh out the details or implications of this theme.

III.11. Matthew Marohl (2008)

Marohl uses a social identity approach to try to decipher the identity of the audience of Hebrews. He demonstrates an ecclesiological understanding of faith. The audience, he argues, is categorized by "faithfulness" as the "us" group, against the "them" group categorized by "unfaithfulness." For Marohl, this dynamic is particularly evident in Heb 4:2: "good news came to *us* just as to *them*; but the message which *they heard* did not benefit them, because it did *not meet with faith* in the hearers."[143]

Marohl's project is helpful in that he identifies "faithfulness" as a social marker of group identity. He unfortunately does not, however, offer any extended reflections on what "faithfulness" for Hebrews actually is or entails.[144] He devotes only one paragraph to describe his understanding of faith in Hebrews, and so I quote all of it:

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[142] Still, "Christos as Pistos," 750.

[143] Matthew J. Marohl, *Faithfulness and the Purpose of Hebrews: A Social Identity Approach*, PTMS (Eugene: Pickwick, 2008), 106 (italics his).

[144] Reviewers have rightly critiqued his book for this failure. See Gabriella Gelardini, "Review of *Faithfulness and the Purpose of Hebrews: A Social Identity Approach*," *CBQ* 71, no. 1 (2009), 187; Patrick Gray, "Review of *Faithfulness and the Purpose of Hebrews: A Social Identity Approach*," *Int* 64, no. 1 (2010), 103; and David W. Kuck, "Review of *Faithfulness and the Purpose of Hebrews: A Social Identity Approach*," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 37, no. 1 (2010), 60.

But what does "faith" mean in Hebrews? The author of Hebrews is consistent with his use of the term. "Faith" is best understood as *loyalty*. This is most clearly seen in the comparison of the ingroup and the outgroup. The outgroup heard the word of God, but were rebellious (3:15-16). They heard the word of God, but were disobedient (3:18). The image of such rebellion is the "wilderness generation." The word of God was not met with loyalty, but rather was met with rebellion. In contrast, the addresses [*sic*.] heard the word of God and received it with loyalty. Faithfulness, then, is behavior which is consistent with loyalty. Perhaps the modern, popular use of "faithfulness in marriage" is similar to the author's use of "faith" in Hebrews. When we say that we are faithful to our spouse, it does not indicate that we "believe" in them or that we are adhering to some type of creedal statement. Rather, this use of "faith" implies loyalty. Faithfulness, then, is behavior that displays such loyalty.[145]

Marohl's language of faith as "loyalty" and "faithfulness" coordinates with the ethical dimension of faith we have seen particularly in Grässer's work. Marohl also argues that the group's faithfulness is understood in light of Jesus' faithfulness,[146] but he does not describe the nature of Jesus' faithfulness. He finds that "the addressees, while faithful, are repeatedly asked to consider the prototypical faithfulness of Jesus. He is the supreme and perfect example of faithfulness,"[147] but he does not demonstrate exegetically in what way Jesus is the example or what Jesus' faithfulness entails. Marohl also uses the language of "story" with regard to faith, but he does not develop this terminology in satisfactory detail.[148] For example, he writes, "the author describes the witnesses, the addressees, and Jesus to be members of the same house, the same race, members of the same story of faithfulness."[149] This is helpful, but needs to be developed.

Marohl's monograph is a good application of social identity theory to the book of Hebrews, adequately showing how the author of Hebrews wished for his hearers to understand themselves as "the faithful."[150] The study, however, is consistently thin

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[145] Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 110 (italics his).

[146] Marohl's chapter on the faithfulness of Jesus finds that "*Jesus served as the prototype of faithfulness, the identity descriptor of the addressees*" (Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 146, italics his).

[147] Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 147.

[148] For his engagement with Cinnirella and Cornell with regard to narrative identity, see 126-29.

[149] Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 147. See also: "the author integrates both Jesus and the addressees into an ongoing story of faithfulness" (148).

[150] He writes, "Therefore, it is possible to answer the question, 'Who were the addressees of Hebrews?' The addressees would have provided the following answer, 'We are the faithful' " (Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 124).

exegetically and does not explore the nature of faith in sufficient detail. As a result, Marohl leaves much room for fuller discussion and improvement.

III.12. C. Adrian Thomas (2008)

Thomas sets out to prove that Hebrews is written to a mixed audience consisting of genuine believers and those who merely profess faith in Christ:

> Thus, we will argue that what is threatened by these warnings is indeed the loss of eternal salvation. But the objects of the threat are not genuine believers; instead, the threat is to *anyone* in the community who merely professes faith in Christ without necessarily possessing genuine faith, one whose profession of faith in Christ when tested proves false and empty.[151]

Faith, by Thomas' reading, is a profession of faith in Christ that is verified by perseverance. For Thomas, "the criterion of a genuine faith is that it perseveres," and so "profession is not necessarily a sign that one possesses saving faith."[152] In Thomas we see the introduction of a concept of "saving faith" versus "profession": "For the author, saving faith is persevering faith and any kind of faith that retreats or atrophies indicates false profession."[153] Thomas also operates with an understanding of Jesus as object of faith. For example, Thomas writes, "The call to 'hold fast' to the confession in Hebrews (4:14; 10:23) is a call to persevere in the faith professed in Jesus as the Son of God."[154]

Thomas' monograph suffers from being too loose with his language of "faith." Thomas consistently introduces "faith" into passages where the author makes no

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[151] C. Adrian Thomas, *A Case for Mixed-Audience with Reference to the Warning Passages in the Book of Hebrews* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 16 (italics his). Thomas admits that his work "is not an entirely new proposal. In fact, to a large extend, this position represents the so-called traditional Calvinistic position" (17). He intends "to strengthen this position, but primarily from an exegetical point of view" (17-18). Steyn rightly recognizes Thomas' approach as "defense" and the paucity of exegetical engagement with Hebrews as a weakness: "One would have expected a more exegetical approach (see his intention on 18-19), wrestling with the primary texts themselves, rather than a positioning within scholarship from the outset of the study and merely 'defending' that position by seeking supporting evidence" (Gert J. Steyn, "Review of C. Adrian Thomas, *A Case for Mixed-Audience with Reference to the Warning Passages in the Book of Hebrews*," *RBL* [www.bookreviews.org] (2009)).

[152] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 16.

[153] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 252.

[154] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 199. See also Thomas on 12:1-2: "As 'pioneer and perfecter of faith,' Jesus becomes the perfect exemplar of the life of faith. In Jesus, therefore, the portrayal of the life of faith comes to a climax, and for this reason all eyes must be fixed on him. In this way, Jesus curiously becomes the supreme model and ultimate object of faith" (259-60). I respond to Thomas's suggestion that Jesus is object of faith in chapter 9, section II.3.1.

mention of faith. As noted earlier, a given passage does not necessarily need to feature a πιστ- word in order for a concept of "faith" to be present, but Thomas fails to offer cogent explanations for why he sees a concept of faith in the passages he discusses. Instead, he starts out his study with a preconceived concept of "genuine faith" and "false faith," and so introduces the idea of "false faith" when the author of Hebrews speaks of an undesirable action. For example, Thomas comments on 2:1:

> the language of 'drifting away' warns against a kind of disengaged faith that is inattentive to the message heard … To speak of a faith that 'drifts away' is not to imply that genuine faith may somehow be eroded to the point of being lost, as though one were in a position of true faith and then drifted away from such a position. Rather, *in light of our interpretive paradigm*, the drifting away reveals the kind of faith involved.[155]

However, the language of "faith" is absent in Heb 2:1; the noun πίστις does not appear until two chapters later. While the concept of faith is conceivably present here, Thomas must make the case that it is. Similarly, Thomas reads 10:37-39 as an "explicit depiction of two kinds of faith (or faith-responses) along with their respective consequences in 10:37-39. That is, the author distinguishes between a kind of faith that atrophies or shrinks back from initial commitment and one that endures."[156] Still, once again, the author of Hebrews never speaks of *faith* shrinking back, but of *us* shrinking back: "but *we* are not of timidity (shrinking back) unto destruction, but of faith unto the preservation of the soul" (10:39). For the author of Hebrews, *faith* does not shrink back, but is actually antithetical to timidity. Thomas' work, therefore, leaves substantial room for improvement and for clarity on how the author of Hebrews conceives of faith.

III.13. Dennis Lindsay (2008)

Lindsay wishes to situate πίστις in Hebrews among uses of the word in Philo, Josephus, the LXX, and the NT, as well as among uses of *'emunah* in the Hebrew Scriptures.[157] He finds a number of parallels between πίστις in Hebrews and Philo,

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[155] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 253 (italics added).

[156] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 210. See also his comment on Heb 3-4: "The kind of faith that the author recommends is not the kind that forsakes the living God (the wilderness community) when difficulties arise, but the kind that endures the affliction suffered by the people of God" (256).

[157] Dennis R. Lindsay, "Pistis and 'Emunah: The Nature of Faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al.

but concludes, "for all the similarity of verbiage, it would be a mistake to equate the concept of faith in Hebrews with Philo's understanding of faith."[158] Hebrews differs most significantly from Philo by understanding faith as an eschatological hope, which further contributes to Hebrews' understanding of faith as associated with suffering rather than present happiness.[159] Hebrews' concept of πίστις is even more distinct from Josephus' concept. Lindsay writes, "Josephus' overall use of faith terminology bears even less resemblance to the concept of faith in Hebrews in particular, nor am I aware of anyone who has ever advocated any similarity between πίστις in Josephus and Hebrews."[160]

Lindsay presses for understanding faith in Hebrews in light of the πιστ- word group in the LXX and the Hebrew *'aman* root. With regard to the adjective πιστός, he notes that God as a faithful promise keeper (Heb 10:23; 11:11) parallels God's faithfulness as a covenant keeper (Deut 7:9) and as one who is faithful in his words (Ps 144:13 LXX). Similarly, Jesus is a faithful high priest (Heb 2:17), which parallels God's promise to raise up a faithful priest (1 Sam 2:35). Jesus and Moses are faithful above and in God's house (Heb 3:2-6), which the author of Hebrews shows by quoting Num 12:7. Lindsay suggests that the author of Hebrews draws upon the language of Isa 52-53 in his uses of πίστις and πιστεύω in Heb 4:2-3. Lindsay points to Hebrews' language of "the word of hearing" (ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς) (4:2). He suggests that ἀκοή is used technically in the NT and is shaped by the LXX of Isaiah. Isa 52:7 speaks of feet that bring a message of peace (ἀκοὴν εἰρήνης) and Isa 53:1 coordinates πιστεύω with ἀκοή: "κύριε τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν." Since Heb 4:2-3 also features these words, Lindsay concludes:

Library of New Testament Studies 387 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 160. For his larger treatment of πίστις and πιστεύω in secular Greek, the LXX, Jesus ben Sirach, Philo, and Josephus, see Dennis R. Lindsay, "The Roots and Development of the πιστ- Word Group as Faith Terminology," *JSNT* 49 (1993), 103-18 and Dennis R. Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith: ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ as Faith Terminology in the Writings of Flavius Josephus and in the New Testament*, AGJU 19 (Leiden: Brill, 1993).

[158] Lindsay, "Pistis and 'Emunah," 162. See also Williamson: "Our conclusion, therefore, to this study of faith in Philo and Hebrews and of the whole subject of Chapter Eleven must be that while there are some similarities of form and matter, the similarities of form are slight and insignificant and the similarities of matter no less insignificant and furthermore completely outweighed by fundamental differences" (Ronald Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, ALGHJ 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 372).

[159] Lindsay, "Pistis and 'Emunah," 162-63. See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 313.

[160] Lindsay, "Pistis and 'Emunah," 163.

It seems very likely that the author of Hebrews also draws upon the language – and the theology – of Isaiah 52-53 when here in 4.2-3 he links ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς with both the noun πίστις and the verb πιστεύω. Given the significance of Isaiah's understanding of ἀκοή as, in effect, the equivalent of εὐαγγέλιον, the Christological focus of πίστις in Hebrews should not be underestimated.[161]

Lindsay attempts "to demonstrate that the concept of faith in Hebrews is not completely foreign to the concept of faith elsewhere in the Bible,"[162] and he gives adequate rationale to consider this point to be true. He does not, however, offer any substantial insights into the nature of faith or the faithfulness of Christ in Hebrews beyond demonstrating the possibility that Hebrews' concept of faith may not be wholly unique within Scripture.

III.14. Jason Whitlark (2008)

Whitlark offers the most extensive treatment of "unfaith" in Hebrews. Whitlark tackles the question of empowerment for fidelity in Hebrews, namely, "whether fidelity in Hebrews is secured through indebted gratitude, that is, the dance of reciprocity, or whether fidelity is the result of an ongoing divine enablement that is necessitated by a pessimistic anthropology."[163] The first interpretive option – modeled most consistently in deSilva – is rooted in Greco-Roman mores of benefactor-beneficiary relationships, where the beneficiary reciprocates grace received by behaving in such a way as to show gratitude to the benefactor.[164] Whitlark argues that such a system operates with an optimistic anthropology, so that the human beneficiary is capable of reciprocating such behavior.[165] It is on these grounds that Whitlark is most concerned to challenge deSilva's reading. For Whitlark, Hebrews carries a pessimistic anthropology that requires humans to be divinely-enabled to be faithful.

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[161] Lindsay, "Pistis and 'Emunah," 167.
[162] Lindsay, "Pistis and 'Emunah," 168.
[163] Jason A. Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God: Perseverance in Hebrews in Light of the Reciprocity Systems of the Ancient Mediterranean World*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), 127.
[164] Thus deSilva's commentary title: *Perseverance in Gratitude*. For Whitlark's response to deSilva specifically, see esp. 138-46.
[165] See esp. Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 54-68; 97-125.

Whitlark argues that the author of Hebrews depicts God as initiator. Whitlark suggests that "Hebrews is rich with election themes,"[166] and that this election theme bolsters his thesis. For example, he points to Heb 2:11, where the children being led to glory are called "the ones being sanctified (οἱ ἁγιαζόμενοι)" and Jesus is called – in line with OT terminology for God – "the one who sanctifies (ὁ ἁγιάζων)."[167] For Whitlark, this language of sanctification has an elective connotation in such passages as Lev 22:31-33 LXX (Whitlark's translation):

> Keep my commands and follow them. I am the LORD. Do not profane my holy name. I must be acknowledged as holy by the Israelites. I am the Lord who sanctifies you (ὁ ἁγιάζων ὑμᾶς) and who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I am the LORD.

Interestingly, Whitlark translates the first occurrence of ἁγιάζω in the passage (v. 32: ἁγιασθήσομαι, of God) not as "sanctified," but as "acknowledged as holy." He does not highlight this linguistic similarity. Perhaps this inconsistency is an attempt to cover up a parallel that can run contrary to reading the participial form of ἁγιάζω as a reference to election. While God clearly appears as the phrase's subject ("the one who sanctifies"),[168] humans in the LXX are also said to be the ones who sanctify,[169] and God is occasionally the one who is sanctified.[170] Therefore, while the passages Whitlark chooses do indeed have election themes wrapped up with sanctification, he probably overstates the case when he claims, " 'Sanctifying' (ἁγιάζων) is a reference to that choice being enacted in time by God so that God's choice of Israel is now apparent to all those who have been consecrated by Jesus Christ or chosen by him in order to serve God (cf. 9:14)."[171] While Heb 2:11 and the ἁγιάζω phrases therein may have an elective connotation, the presence of ἁγιάζω alone does not make this immediately clear. Indeed, ἁγιάζω may carry a different connotation, perhaps alluding to purification – as is more likely the case in 9:14 – rather than election.[172]

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[166] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 148.
[167] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 148.
[168] See Gen 2:3; Exod 20:11; 29:43-44; 31:13; Lev 21:8, 12, 15, 23; 22:9, 32, Num 3:13; Jer 1:5; Ezek 20:12; 37:28; Zeph 1:7.
[169] In Exodus alone, see 13:2, 12; 19:14, 22 [the priests of themselves], 23; 20:8; 28:38, 41; 29:1, 27, 36-37; 30:29-30; 40:13.
[170] Cf. Lev 10:3; Num 20:13; Deut 32:51; Isa 8:13; Ezek 20:41; 28:22, 25; 36:23; 38:23.
[171] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 149.
[172] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 149.

Similarly, he points to Heb 12:23, which speaks of the coming to the assembly of the firstborn who have been enrolled in heaven. Whitlark, citing Koester, connects the passive voice ἀπογεγραμμένων ("have been enrolled") with God's initiative. To go as far to claim that "[s]uch an initiative implies the *divine election* of those inscribed in the heavenly registry"[173] may be a bit strong, but God as the initiator is still clear. He concludes, "the foundation of the benefits the Christian pilgrims receive through Jesus Christ reside in the elective will of God."[174]

Having established God as the beginner of the Christian's pilgrimage, he argues further that God's election also "extends to the Christian's ongoing faithfulness."[175] Whitlark insists that God enables humans to be faithful. The new covenant, as "the primary metaphor for the divine-human relationship in Hebrews,"[176] depicts God as the one who writes his law on people's hearts and forgives sins (10:16-17).[177] God is the initiator and enabler. Similarly, in the benediction (13:20-21) the author of Hebrews prays that God would equip the people to serve him and do good work.[178] The enabling work of God is also apparent in the sacrificial work of Christ who cleanses the human conscience.[179] Heb 9:14 is a key text. Whitlark rightly highlights the logical connection in 9:14 between the cleansing of the conscience and service to God: "The believer is cleansed *so that* he or she may serve God."[180] Furthermore, this enablement extends to the ongoing life of the believer. Insinuated by the future tense καθαριεῖ (cleanse) in 9:14, Jesus' work of purification continues.[181] Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice perfects forever those who are being sanctified (10:2, 14).[182] Whitlark summarizes:

> [O]ngoing divine enablement is the source of the believer's faithfulness in Hebrews. It is grounded in Jesus' high priestly ministry, which effects abiding transformation through the purification of the conscience. This purification

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[173] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 150 (italics mine).

[174] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 152 (brackets mine).

[175] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 152.

[176] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 146.

[177] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 147.

[178] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 147.

[179] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 152-56.

[180] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 156 (italics his). He suggests further, "Whereas the old covenant cult only provided an *outward* purification of the 'flesh' (9:13), Jesus' high priestly ministry and the new covenant based upon it bring about *inward* transformation through the cleansing of the 'conscience' (9:14)" (156, italics his).

[181] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 157.

[182] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 157-58.

empowers the believer's approach to God out of which he or she receives ongoing enablement for fidelity to the relationship – an empowering that is sufficient for any trial or temptation.[183]

Whitlark identifies a paradox in Hebrews with regard to divine enablement and human responsibility: "God's salvific action in Christ is necessary for *ongoing* human fidelity to the relationship while at the same time the author existentially feels the real possibilities of falling away or living in a manner pleasing to God."[184]   Unfortunately, he devotes only a page and a half to this paradox in Hebrews.[185]   More explicit exegetical work in Hebrews would have been helpful.

Whitlark argues for a pessimistic anthropology in Hebrews. He suggests three points that further demonstrate Hebrews' pessimistic anthropology (the universal need for purification, the subjection of humanity to death, and the history of Israel as a history of infidelity), but he spends fewer than three pages on this point.[186]   As a result, Whitlark leaves much room for exegetical expansion. I treat Hebrews' understanding of unfaith (which I call "the default human story") in part 2 of the thesis. This will put into relief the understanding of faith I will advance later in parts 3 and 4.

IV. INTRODUCING A MERGED ACCOUNT: FAITH, STORY, AND HEBREWS

The survey above has demonstrated that interpreters of Hebrews often understand faith in Hebrews as christological (Jesus as enabler, model, and/or object of faith), ethical, eschatological, and ecclesiological. None of the studies, however, adequately bring all four of these dimensions into play and set them within the wider theological understanding in Hebrews. Furthermore, no studies have examined Hebrews' understanding of "unfaith" in addition to faith. I have also suggested in preliminary form a response to those who posit Jesus as object of faith. Beyond

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[183] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 163.

[184] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 167 (italics his).

[185]   Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 166-68. This has left him open to critiques such as this from Chivington: "I … question whether the study's conclusion can be predicated so strongly based on the apparent paradox and lack of explicit attention given to a pessimistic anthropology in Hebrews" (Ryan D. Chivington, "Review of Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God: Perseverance in Hebrews in Light of Reciprocity Systems in the Ancient Mediterranean World*," *RBL* 7 (2009), 5).

[186] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 164-66.

responding to this claim, my thesis is less a corrective to these foregoing studies than an effort to bring the christological, ethical, eschatological, and ecclesiological dimensions of faith in Hebrews into conversation with more clarity.

To achieve this clarity, I investigate faith in Hebrews in terms of story and narrative identity. I establish what I mean by "story," "narrative identity," and why these are appropriate categories for Hebrews in the next chapter. In part 2 of the thesis, I explicate "the default human story of Hebrews," and I argue that this story is one characterized by unfaithfulness (chapter 3), ending assuredly in eschatological death (chapter 4), even for the heroes of faith from Israel's tradition (chapter 5). While "faith" *per se* is not our main subject of inquiry in these chapters, they are necessary to set up the meaning of faith that we will discover particularly in parts 3 and 4 of the thesis. Part 3 of the thesis focuses on the re-written narrative in Jesus. We will discover that Jesus realized the hopeful conclusion of eschatological life unrealized up until then (chapter 6), and that Jesus realized this hope on the basis of his faithfulness: enduring even unto death (chapter 7). It is particularly in chapter 7 where we see the first three dimensions of faith in Hebrews come into clear view: Jesus, the faithful one *par excellence* (christological dimension), demonstrated faith by enduring to the point of death (ethical dimension) and so realized postmortem life (eschatological dimension). In chapter 8, I will investigate Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38, and make the case that the author of Hebrews uses this OT quotation to place the two narratives (the default human story of unfaith and the rewritten story of faith) into stark contrast. We will find, as with the faithfulness of Jesus in chapter 7, that faith involves endurance in the face of death. In part 4 of the thesis (chapter 9), I turn to investigate the nature of human faith in Hebrews, and will argue that in addition to the three dimensions demonstrated in chapter 7, human faith is evidenced most clearly by remaining faithful with the travelling people of God who are enduring Jesus' suffering (the ecclesiological dimension). I will also offer some reflections on how a person "gets in" in chapter 9.

In the end, we will see that the author of Hebrews invites his hearers to join with a group of faithful ones and "go to Jesus outside the camp, bearing his reproach, seeking the city to come" (Heb 13:13-14).

Chapter 2

Hebrews, Faith, and Narrative Identity

I. INTRODUCTION

The temptation to claim no hermeneutical methodology is indeed strong, but ultimately self-deceptive.[1] All interpreters – even those who claim to follow no particular theory – are bound to favor one approach at the expense of others. Theories of hermeneutics and meaning are voluminous, and we cannot give due attention to every possibility.[2]

In this thesis I am not blazing a new hermeneutical trail, but rather trying to read Hebrews through the lens of narrativity.[3] Admittedly, Hebrews is not a traditional narrative in the vein of the Gospels or the Pentateuchal dramas. Still, as Hays[4] and others[5] have demonstrated in Paul, and as Schenck[6] and others[7] have

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[1] For some debate on this matter, see Fowl's and Vanhoozer's responses in A. K. M. Adam and others, *Reading Scripture with the Church: Toward a Hermeneutic for Theological Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), esp. 125-6; 133-4. See also Eagleton: "Hostility to theory usually means an opposition to other people's theories and an oblivion of one's own" (Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), x).

[2] For this I rely on Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998); and, more recently, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005).

[3] I use "story" and "narrative" as synonyms. The "story" of Jack and the Beanstalk is the same as the "narrative" of Jack and the Beanstalk in the vocabulary of this thesis. I also use "narratival" as an adjective or adverb to describe a story-informed or story-shaped approach to reading a text. "Narratival" does not suggest that the text's actual discourse or narration is a narrative (more on these terms below), but that reading the text narrativally will illuminate storied aspects of the passage. So, when I speak of a "narratival reading of faith in Hebrews," I mean to say that we read the language of faith with an eye to the story that faith recalls. See also Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 15-29.

[4] See esp. *Faith of Jesus Christ*.

[5] Longenecker offers an extended treatment of the interest in narrative in Paul in Bruce W. Longenecker, ed., *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 3-16. The essays that follow in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul* feature a number of helpful essays on narrative in Paul. See also Norman R. Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul: Philemon and the Sociology of Paul's Narrative World* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985); and Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994).

[6] Kenneth Schenck, *Understanding the Book of Hebrews: The Story Behind the Sermon* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003); *Cosmology*.

[7] Luke Timothy Johnson, "The Scriptural World of Hebrews," *Int* 57, no. 3 (2003), 237-50; James C. Miller, "Paul and Hebrews: A Comparison of Narrative Worlds," in *Hebrews: Contemporary*

shown for Hebrews, narrative elements can undergird the non-narrative discourse of a text.[8]

    This methodological approach follows a commitment to a text-focused reading of Hebrews. The limits of historical-criticism are perhaps most amplified when reading a work such as Hebrews. Given the anonymity of the author and the audience, and the persistently unanswered questions about date, location, and provenance, honest interpreters must admit to some level of ignorance with regard to most typical historical-critical concerns. We could offer some guesses, but these hypotheses must arise from rather than give rise to our reading of the text.[9] As a result, our study focuses predominately on the text of Hebrews and will not treat historical-critical questions in great detail.

    In this chapter, I address two interrelated points to bolster my narratival reading of faith in Hebrews. First, we will see that even though Hebrews is not a narrative in the vein of the Pentateuchal dramas or the Gospels, the author operates with stories. This will establish the possibility of finding story in Hebrews. Second, I will speak to human identity as storied. This will establish the philosophical foundation for understanding theological concepts such as faith as stories in which human beings can find themselves.

Methods - New Insights, ed. Gabriella Gelardini. Biblical Interpretation Series 75 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 245-64.

[8] Wright offers perhaps the most extended attempt at reading the whole of Scripture with a view to narrative in *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992).

[9] For a helpful chart summarizing proposals for historical backgrounds of Hebrews, see Richard W. Johnson, *Going Outside the Camp: The Sociological Function of the Levitical Critique in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, JSNTSup 209 (London: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 18-20. See also Marie E. Isaacs, *Sacred Space: An Approach to the Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, JSNTSup 73 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), 22-45; Scott D. Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, WUNT 2/223 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 9-17; and Iutisone Salevao, *Legitimation in the Letter to the Hebrews: The Construction and Maintenance of a Symbolic Universe*, JSNTSup 219 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 121-49. For recent hypotheses, both of which progress in a methodologically-responsible manner, see Schenck, *Cosmology*, 190-98; and Pamela M. Eisenbaum, "Locating Hebrews within the Literary Landscape of Christian Origins," in *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods - New Insights*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 213-37. While I will not offer any extensive reflections on historical backgrounds to Hebrews, I would essentially agree with Schenck in seeing Hebrews written to Gentiles in Rome sometime after the destruction of the Jewish Temple.

II. HEBREWS AND STORY

II.1. The Appropriateness of a Narratival Reading of Hebrews

Croy closes his review of Schenck's *Understanding the Book of Hebrews* by suggesting, "A narrative analysis of Hebrews … is neither an impossible nor a detrimental task, but neither is it the most fruitful. S[chenck]'s analysis casts some light on Hebrews, but the illumination is greater when we employ tools specifically designed for the genre in question."[10] Croy's suggestion to "employ tools specifically designed for the genre" can be problematic, however.[11]

Genre is a slippery distinction. Readers can do a disservice to a text and limit their interpretation by using the lens of only one genre. Generic designations arise from more than a text, but also from the interpretation of the text, so the choice to read a text as a certain genre can both "describe a generic reality *and* participate in constructing it."[12] Committing to a genre of a given text can illuminate details in the text, but these same decisions can likewise cloud the vision of other pertinent issues in the passage. Pyrhönen explains:

> each time we classify a given text as an instance of a given genre, we cannot help but identify in the text features that this classification deems pertinent … [T]he law of genre suggests that a generic classification invariably under-determines a text, because it lifts out only some relevant textual traits at the expense of others. A generic classification never covers the global text.[13]

Pyrhönen's suggestions cut in two directions. On the one hand, interpreters should try not to bias their reading of texts by relying on tools employed only for the genre of their choice (contra Croy). On the other hand, given that preliminary decisions about genre can sway the interpretations that follow, and given that every interpreter is forced to make some decisions with regard to genre, we do well to admit these generic

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[10] N. Clayton Croy, "Review of Kenneth Schenck, *Understanding the Book of Hebrews: The Story Behind the Sermon*," *CBQ* 67 (2005), 358-59. For a critique of a narrative approach to Paul, see R. Barry Matlock, "The Arrow and the Web: Critical Reflections on a Narrative Approach to Paul," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), esp. 44-54.

[11] Identifying the genre of Hebrews is a difficult task in itself, but it is likely a sermon, a "word of exhortation (τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως)" (13:22). See esp. William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, WBC 47A (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), lxix-lxxv.

[12] Heta Pyrhönen, "Genre," in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. David Herman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 114 (italics hers).

[13] Pyrhönen, "Genre," 114.

assumptions as we try to read a text afresh. So, Matlock is correct to assert that "A 'narrative' reading of Paul [and, I would assume, also of Hebrews] is both a type of approach and a type of *argument*."[14] Likewise, we may add, relying on other tools designed for other generic distinctions is both an approach and a type of argument. In full admission of this, we can start to move forward. Hebrews has rarely been read narratively (and faith in Hebrews never so), and so here we see an opening for a fresh approach with new insights that may have otherwise been clouded by previous generic assumptions.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the non-narrative discourse of Hebrews does not preclude a narrative reading of faith in Hebrews. "Discourse" or "narration" is not the same as story, but instead describe the way in which a story is told. As Chatman describes it, "In simple terms, the story is the *what* in a narrative that is depicted, discourse the *how*."[15] Likewise, Abbott sees significance in the distinction between "story" and "narration" (or "discourse" under Chatman's terminology). For Abbott, this distinction is "an implicit acknowledgment that a story is understood as having a separate existence from its narration. As such, it can be told in different ways by different narrators."[16] Therefore, Mark's Gospel or the story of Joseph and his brothers are narratives at the discourse level; Hebrews is not. Still, as I am arguing, the author of Hebrews relies on story in his non-narrative discourse. As Miller argues for Hebrews, since stories can be retold in non-narrative form, our narrative investigation into these non-narratively discoursed texts is still appropriate: "Because such non-narrative descriptions remain inseparable from the narrative whose essence they describe, it is both legitimate and possible to ask about the narrative in which such a statement is rooted."[17]

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[14] Matlock, "Arrow," 53 (italics his).

[15] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 19 (italics his). Later, he describes story as the "content plane" and discourse as the "expression plane" of a narrative (146). For more treatment of the distinction between story and story as discoursed, see pages 19-22 in Chatman. Similarly, Abbott describes the story's narration as "the process of telling" (H. Porter Abbott, "Story, Plot, and Narration," in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. David Herman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 39).

[16] Abbott, "Story, Plot, and Narration," 39.

[17] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 248.

II.2. An Older Approach: Structuralism and Greimas' Actantial Model

An older narratival approach that biblical scholars employed was that of structuralism in general and Greimas' actantial model specifically.[18] Greimas' actantial model proposes six actants around which a story can be structured:

$$\text{Sender} \longrightarrow \text{Object} \longrightarrow \text{Receiver}$$
$$\uparrow$$
$$\text{Helper} \longrightarrow \text{Subject} \longleftarrow \text{Opponent}^{[19]}$$
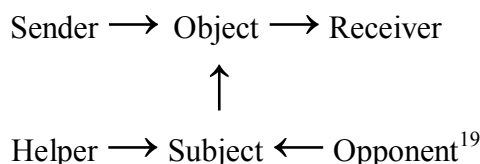
The model is helpful in that it makes readers slow down and analyze a story more closely. The model puts in concrete presentation the interrelatedness of storied events. The model also puts into stark contrast the role of characters, highlighting subject/object power differentials such as gender.[20]

The model has its sure limits, too.[21] Stories are complex and so cannot be pressed into a singular model. While this model can give the illusion of scientific objectivity,[22] the model is the product of interpretation. The actual events (or plot) of the story may be the same, but the way we analyze it is itself an act of interpretation that is open to subjectivity. The model, therefore, is certainly not a scientific method of reading stories.

Biblical scholars have largely moved past structuralism and the actantial model, even though some recent narratival approaches to Scripture still make use of the model.[23] Hays distances himself from structuralist approaches in his second

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[18] For examples where Greimas' model is used, see Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ, passim.* and Wright, *New Testament and People of God*, 74-75, 221-23.

[19] A. -J. Greimas, *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method*, trans. Daniele McDowell, Ronald Schleifer, and Alan Velie (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966; reprint, 1983), esp. 197-221 (the diagram of the model appears on page 207). In the context of NT studies, one of the more lucid explanations of Greimas' model (using Little Red Riding Hood as an example) is Wright, *New Testament and People of God*, 69-77. For a more technical treatment of Greimas and biblical exegesis, see Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts: Greimas's Structural Semiotics and Biblical Exegesis*, SBL Semeia Series (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990).

[20] As noted in Ruth Page, "Gender," in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. David Herman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 194-96.

[21] For a discussion of the gains and shortcomings of structuralism, see Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, 92-109.

[22] Structuralism has been touted as a quasi-objective scientific approach. See Thiselton's treatment and critiques of structuralism and Greimas (Thiselton, *New Horizons*, 486-499).

[23] See, for example: Edward Adams, "Paul's Story of God and Creation: The Story of How God Fulfils His Purposes in Creation," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 19-43, esp. 21, 31-32; Schenck,

introduction to *The Faith of Jesus Christ*.[24] Thiselton speaks of structuralism as a fading methodology[25] and suggests the "*arbitrariness* of certain semiotic or structuralist categories came to be seen as precisely what they were: socio-historically conditioned conventions of reading, which represent only one possible network of generative conventions among others."[26] Dunn is blunt: "I confess that when I see a Greimasian diagram laid out in preparation for the analysis of a text I groan inwardly."[27] In keeping with recent trends in biblical study and literary theory, I do not use Greimas' structuralist model.

II.3. Narrative Moving Forward

The fall of structuralism and the actantial model does not discredit narrative approaches in general. Narrative approaches to Scripture can still yield productive insights moving forward, as Hays continues to insist.[28]

The meaning of "narrative" is elusive. Literary critics are still debating what constitutes a narrative.[29] With respect to biblical studies, Campbell suggests interpreters not insist on a rigid definition of narrative before applying it to the biblical text, given the ever-changing definitions of narrative and the differences between ancient and modern stories.[30] Campbell's warning is well-taken, but some preliminary conditions of narrativity – even if very broad – can nevertheless be helpful organizing boundaries of narrativity. It is better to start with some preliminary

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Understanding (2003), esp. 25, 36-37; and Schenck, *Cosmology* (2007), esp. 52-54, 78, 93-94, 104, 109.

[24] Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, xxvii.

[25] Thiselton, *New Horizons*, 486-489.

[26] Thiselton, *New Horizons*, 496.

[27] James D. G. Dunn, "The Narrative Approach to Paul: Whose Story?," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 220.

[28] Hays reaffirms the central thesis of his dissertation, namely that "Paul's theology must be understood as the explication and defense of a gospel whose fundamental character is *narrative*" (Richard B. Hays, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology: What Is at Stake?," in *Proceedings of the One Hundred Twenty-Seventh Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting Held in Kansas City, Missouri 23-26 Nov 1991*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 715, italics his).

[29] For recent discussions, see David Herman, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. David Herman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3-11; Marie-Laure Ryan, "Toward a Definition of Narrative," in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. David Herman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 22-35; and Rick Altman, *A Theory of Narrative* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

[30] Douglas A. Campbell, "The Story of Jesus in Romans and Galatians," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 99.

observations on narrativity in general and then see how these preliminary observations coordinate with our reading of the text.

The nature of a narrative can only be described by distinctions within or arising from the text. Marie-Laure Ryan offers a description of a narrative that does not dictate properties that every narrative must include, but which features "a fuzzy set allowing variable degrees of membership, but centered on prototypical cases that everyone recognizes as stories."[31] Her description of narrative features eight "conditions of narrativity" under four organizing dimensions. Quoting Ryan:

> Spatial dimension
> (1) Narrative must be about a world populated by individual existents.
>
> Temporal dimension
> (2) This world must be situated in time and undergo significant transformations.
> (3) The transformations must be caused by non-habitual physical events.
>
> Mental dimension
> (4) Some of the participants in the events must be intelligent agents who have a mental life and react emotionally to the states of the world.
> (5) Some of the events must be purposeful actions by these agents.
>
> Formal and pragmatic dimension
> (6) The sequence of events must form a unified causal chain and lead to closure.
> (7) The occurrence of at least some of the events must be asserted as fact for the storyworld.
> (8) The story must communicate something meaningful to the audience.[32]

In addition to these eight descriptors, she lists eight elements that are not categories for defining a narrative. Again quoting Ryan, her conception of narrative:

> (1) eliminates representations of abstract entities and entire classes of concrete objects, scenarios involving "the human race," "reason," "the State," "atoms," the brain," etc.
> (2) eliminates static descriptions.
> (3) eliminates enumerations of repetitive events and changes caused by natural evolution (such as aging).
> (4) eliminates one-of-a-kind scenarios involving only natural forces and non-intelligent participants (weather reports, accounts of cosmic events).
> (5) (together with 3) eliminates representations consisting exclusively of mental events (interior monologue fiction).

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[31] Ryan, "Toward a Definition of Narrative," 28.
[32] Ryan, "Toward a Definition of Narrative," 29.

(6) eliminates lists of causally unconnected events, such as chronicles and diaries, as well as reports of problem-solving actions that stop before an outcome is reached.

(7) eliminates recipes, as well as texts entirely made of advice, hypotheses, counterfactuals, and instructions.

(8) eliminates bad stories.[33]

Ryan's eighth point is particularly interesting. She admits that it is a controversial condition of narrativity (and even a condition to which she is not completely committed), but she suggests that if we adopt it, "then narrativity is not an intrinsic property of the text, but rather a dimension relative to the context and to the interests of the participants."[34] Ryan gives the example of a sequence of events: "Mary was poor, then Mary won the lottery, then Mary was rich." This by itself would not necessarily make for good story content, but "it becomes very tellable if it is presented as true fact and concerns an acquaintance of the listener."[35]

Hebrews contains a number of (intersecting) stories that fit Ryan's conditions of narrativity. Given that the rest of the thesis will expound further on Hebrews and the story of faith, in this section I reserve comment to only a few brief examples in order to illustrate the presence of story in Hebrews.

All eight of Ryan's conditions appear in Heb 1:1-4. Setting aside questions about the source or possible hymnic form of the passage, these opening verses read like the opening scene of a story that sets the hearers in the context of an ongoing narrative: "Long ago, at many times and in various ways, God spoke to the ancestors by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also made the worlds" (1:1-2). All but condition 6 of narrativity are addressed in these first two verses. (1) The narrative is populated by individual existents, such as God, the Son, the audience, and the ancestors. (2 and 3) The world is situated in time (long ago; these last days), and is affected by the non-habitual event of God speaking through a Son. (4 and 5) The author leaves no question that characters in the story are intelligent agents who acted purposefully. (7 and 8) The author tells the story as meaningful fact (i.e., not a bad story under Ryan's eighth eliminated distinction) that speaks in the context and to the

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[33] Ryan, "Toward a Definition of Narrative," 29-30.
[34] Ryan, "Toward a Definition of Narrative," 30.
[35] Ryan, "Toward a Definition of Narrative," 30.

interest of the audience. Only condition 6 (a sequence of events forming a unified chain with closure) remains. The closure appears in 1:3-4, where Jesus makes purification for sins, sits down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and becomes much superior to angels by inheriting a more excellent name. Closure is still in the air for the hearers, as the rest of Hebrews will bear out. Heb 1:1-4 carries all eight of Ryan's conditions of narrativity, and so suggests that the author of Hebrews operates with story.

After lamenting that humanity has not yet received glory, honor, and dominion (2:5-8),[36] the author of Hebrews points to Jesus as one who became human, endured suffering, and received glory and honor (2:9-10). All eight conditions of narrativity appear in 2:9-10. (1) The narrative is populated by individual existents (Jesus, God, children, angels). (2 and 3) The world is situated in time (a little while), and is affected by the non-habitual event of Jesus' incarnation, suffering of death, and being made perfect. (4, 5, 7, and 8) As in Heb 1:1-4, here the author of Hebrews leaves no question that characters in the story are intelligent agents who acted purposefully, and he tells the story as meaningful fact that speaks to the interest of the audience (who are here are numbered among the many children brought to glory, 2:10). (6) This story ends with Jesus being crowned with glory and honor, having been made perfect through suffering.

Similarly, all eight conditions appear in Hebrews 5:7-10. (1) The narrative is populated by individual existents (Jesus, God). (2 and 3) The world is situated in time (in the days of his flesh), and is affected by the non-habitual event of Jesus' incarnation, suffering of death, and being made perfect. (4, 5, 7, and 8) Again the author of Hebrews leaves no question that characters in the story are intelligent agents who acted purposefully, and he tells the story as meaningful fact that speaks to the interest of the audience (Jesus became the source of eternal salvation to all who believe him, 5:9). (6) This story ends with Jesus' perfection and high priesthood.

We can find other examples of stories fulfilling Ryan's conditions of narrativity in Heb 3-4; 7:1-10; 10:5-14; 11; and 12:1-3, but the presence of stories within Hebrews is established well enough by this stage as not to warrant further discussion on this point.

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[36] I argue for this reading of Ps 8 in Heb 2 in chapter 3, section II.

Therefore, we find sufficient reason to pursue a narratival reading of Hebrews. Even though Hebrews is not narrated like the Gospels or the stories in the Pentateuch, the author is clearly operating with stories, as we saw in the brief examples above.

II.4. Studies on Hebrews and Narrative

Three recent studies have given attention to the narrative world of Hebrews and offer helpful insights for our present study.[37] The fruitfulness of these foregoing studies helps justify a narrative approach to Hebrews.

II.4.1. *Luke Timothy Johnson (2003)*

Luke Timothy Johnson does not take an explicitly narratival approach, but he seeks to describe the "Scriptural world" of Hebrews. He starts with the assumption that "Literary compositions, after all, do not simply report on the world that produces them; they also produce a world."[38] The interpretation of Scripture, therefore, is a process of engaging with the world imagined by Scripture.[39]

Johnson sees the author of Hebrews using the LXX citations in such a way as to imagine the prophets of the past speaking to the audience in the present. The author usually introduces LXX passages with a present tense verb of speaking. This, in effect, gives Scripture a fresh voice: "Scripture, in other words, is not simply a collection of ancient texts that can throw light on the present through analogy; it is the voice of the living God who speaks through the text directly and urgently to people in the present."[40] Furthermore, Johnson suggests that the indirect allusions to the LXX may offer even more strength to the sense of Scripture's speaking in the present, "because scripture's language is not bracketed off as something 'other' but is appropriated as the author's own language without explanation or apology."[41] He suggests further, "And if the author and reader (or speaker and hearer) all understand

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[37] See also Wright: "Underneath the poetic sequence of Hebrews, then, lies a clear implicit narrative sequence. The story of the world, and of Israel, has led up to a point, namely, the establishment of the true worship of the true god. This has now been achieved, not through the Jerusalem Temple and its high priesthood, but through Jesus. … [T]he underlying story [in Hebrews] corresponds to what we found in the synoptics and Paul. Jesus has brought Israel's story to its paradoxical climax" (Wright, *New Testament and People of God*, 410).

[38] Johnson, "Scriptural World," 238.

[39] Johnson, "Scriptural World," 239.

[40] Johnson, "Scriptural World," 240-41.

[41] Johnson, "Scriptural World," 241.

the diction of scripture and catch every subtle textual allusion, then surely they dwell within the same scriptural world."[42] Ultimately, this author's use of the LXX creates a world in which the hearers of Hebrews can dwell, a world that is "entirely and profoundly scriptural."[43]

Johnson's study offers three important insights with regard to the narrative world of Hebrews. First, Johnson's picture of the Scriptural world has implications for the hearers' point of view in the narrative. As people who are receiving the words of Scripture afresh, spoken directly to them in the present, the hearers are invited to see themselves *within* the wider story of Israel. They are not outsiders looking in, but actual characters within the narrative.[44] Second, Johnson's study highlights how the author's use of and introduction to LXX passages and themes is itself a creation. The author of Hebrews does more than call on the LXX to argue; he calls on the LXX in the process of creating a world. Johnson is correct that Hebrews invites us into the world of Scripture, and the author furthermore creates his version of the Scriptural story world by the passages he uses and the way he introduces them. Third, Johnson highlights the thoroughly Scriptural dimension to the world that Hebrews creates. The imagery of Hebrews is inundated with Scriptural images and exhortations. This continual reliance on Israel's Scripture creates a narrative world that is not a new invention, but a world situated in the larger world of the LXX.

II.4.2. James Miller (2005)

James Miller's essay compares the narrative worlds of Hebrews and Paul. He speaks in terms of plot and subplots. With regard to the large plot in Hebrews, Miller suggests, "The most comprehensive narrative reflected in Hebrews concerns the God who spoke in the past, speaks in the present, and will once again speak in the future."[45] That is, Hebrews' "story is of a world created, upheld, called to account, and carried to its end by God 'speaking.' "[46] The larger plot of God speaking is set up

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[42] Johnson, "Scriptural World," 241.

[43] Johnson, "Scriptural World," 247.

[44] This point could be all the more significant if a number of the original hearers were Gentiles, which is likely. See the discussion in David deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle "to the Hebrews"* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 2-7.

[45] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 249. Although he does not make the connection, Miller's reading of the way God speaks agrees in essence with Johnson's reading of the Scriptural world of Hebrews.

[46] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 250.

by the opening verses of Hebrews. Miller writes, "What often passes unnoticed is the thoroughgoing narrative character of this statement. Here we find events and actions, characters and characterization, all set within a temporal framework. In other words, when the author of Hebrews defines the terms framing his argument, he narrates the history of God's speaking."[47] Furthermore, Miller suggests four subplots behind the main plot: "the story of the first and second covenants; the story of Jesus; the story of God's people in the past; and the story of God's people in the present."[48]

Miller's suggestion to speak in terms of a larger plot with various subplots is a helpful clarification, but may not be the best way forward methodologically. Starting with a general large plot (such as God speaking) before studying in more detail the characters and subplots of the book can leave an interpreter vulnerable in two ways. First, the interpreter, having already decided on the large plot of the book, may ignore or read differently other subplots. Second, the previously-determined large plot may prove too anemic, not taking into account other salient features of the sermon's narrative world. This, in fact, seems to be a problem with Miller's construal of the larger plot. While God speaking is clearly a theme in Hebrews, to accord it the distinction of the main plot may not be wholly appropriate.

Like Johnson, Miller sees the author of Hebrews placing his readers into a Scriptural or narrative world. The hearers of Hebrews are characters in Hebrews' story. As characters in the story, the hearers in Hebrews find themselves standing in eschatological tension between the dawn of the new age and their present setting: "Jesus has entered into God's presence, going to a place where the faithful will soon follow. Yet they must first navigate the time between their present setting and the next scene of the divine drama."[49] Miller picks up on a piece of Hebrews that plays large in Schenck's project (addressed below): "Although we hope for Jesus' coming reign, when we will experience *glory and honor*, our experience has not matched our hopes."[50] In the present, we are still subject to death and we still experience hardships. We have become weary, "longing for the comfort that familiarity over

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[47] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 245.
[48] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 251.
[49] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 252.
[50] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 253 (italics mine).

time has bred with the system of purification specified under the first covenant."[51] We are poised on the brink of the new age, but we are in danger of falling into the same error as the negative examples of the past. Salvation is reserved for another time and place (the future and the heavenly realm), but Jesus' priestly work and presence at God's right hand make salvation certain for those who remain faithful.[52] By highlighting the hearers' eschatological tension, Miller paints a fuller picture of the hearers' place in the narrative world of Hebrews.

II.4.3. Kenneth Schenck (2003; 2007)

Kenneth Schenck offers the most thorough inquiry into the narrative dimension of Hebrews. He operates with the assumption: "Hebrews … does not 'look' like a story any more than Paul's letters do. Its discourse … is a sermon that makes arguments. Yet it is important to realize that *all its arguments are based on a story*."[53] Here we focus on Schenck's accounts of the settings and plots of Hebrews.

II.4.3.1. Settings

Schenck's larger monograph (2007) focuses on the settings of Hebrews. His title, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Hebrews: The Settings of the Sacrifice*, aptly summarizes his project. For Schenck, Hebrews features settings on spatial and temporal levels.[54] With regard to cosmology, Hebrews operates with an earthly and a heavenly setting. Schenck sees "the central event of salvation's plot" in "two realms."[55] First, Christ physically suffered outside of the earthly Jerusalem. Second, the offering of the sacrifice involves Christ in the heavenly holy of holies, which coordinates with Christ's exaltation to the right hand of God.[56] With regard to eschatology, Hebrews has two overlapping temporal settings, which correspond to the two covenants.[57] The two temporal settings stand in an "already, but not yet" tension:

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[51] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 253-54.
[52] Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 254.
[53] Schenck, *Understanding*, 2 (italics his).
[54] See also Miller: "The settings of this world need to be considered from two inter-related perspectives: the spatial and the temporal" (Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 250).
[55] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 115.
[56] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 115. According to Schenck, "This death/exaltation sequence constitutes the central event of salvation history."
[57] The cosmological and eschatological settings also coordinate. According to Schenck, the author of Hebrews "was able to explicate the overlap of the two ages cosmologically, with the old age tied

"These two epochs overlap, for the old covenant is only near to its disappearance. In addition, while the new covenant is decisively here, it has not fully arrived."[58]

Schenck labels the two temporal settings "acts," and breaks down these two acts into three "stages": "yesterday," "today," and "forever." Act 1 has only the one stage, "yesterday," which was the time of the old covenant.[59] Act 2 features both "today" and "forever." The "today" is the "last days" of Jeremiah's prophecy. It is in this act that Jesus is granted his indestructible life and leads the sons and daughters to glory (which humanity was destined for in the beginning, but was blocked from attaining by death and by the power of the devil over death). The audience of Hebrews finds themselves living in the "today," but also moving toward the "forever."[60] "Today" is "a time in which the full impact of Christ's work has not reached its completion," and "forever," the final scene, which "will come when Christ has 'appeared a second time' (9:28)."[61] In the "forever" scene, God will shake the visible setting, leaving only the heavenly reality. Humanity finally attains its glory and enters the rest.[62] Schenck offers a summary of these three stages: "[W]e might say that the plot consists of the 'yesterday' leading up to the sacrifice of Christ, the 'forever' after Christ has 'appeared a second time', and 'today', the eschatological present in which old and new coincide."[63]

II.4.3.2. Plots

We turn now to Schenck's discussion of the plots of Hebrews. These plots play out in the cosmological and eschatological settings. Schenck makes steady use of Greimas' actantial model, and we can follow his understanding of the plots of Hebrews by looking at his structuralist diagrams. He structures the initial sequence:

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inextricably to the earthly, visible realm and the new tied to the spiritual and heavenly dimensions of existence" (Schenck, *Cosmology*, 116).

[58] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 110.

[59] Schenck summarizes the narrative world of Hebrews in Schenck, *Cosmology*, 183-90. For Act 1, see pages 184-86.

[60] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 186-89.

[61] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 111.

[62] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 189-90.

[63] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 116.

$$\text{God} \longrightarrow \text{Glory, Honour} \longrightarrow \text{Humanity}$$

$$\uparrow$$

$$? \longrightarrow \text{Creation} \longleftarrow \text{Devil, death}^{64}$$
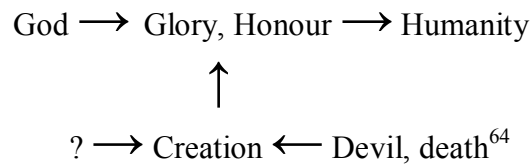
Humanity was intended to have glory and honor, which God contracted[65] to send via creation. The Devil, with the power of death, is the main opponent of this contract.[66] Following Miller's concepts of the plot and subplots, we might call humanity's lack of and eventual grasp of glory and honor the larger plot in Schenck's narrative construal.

Hebrews 2:6-8 is a key text for Schenck's emphasis on glory and honor with regard to humanity. He takes the Ps 8 quotation as a reference both to Christ and to humanity.[67] Should this be the case, then all of humanity was destined for glory and honor like Christ, and all of humanity was destined to rule over all like Christ.

However, humanity at this stage is unable to attain glory and honor. Everything is not yet in subjection to a glorified humanity (2:8), but "another person made lower than the angels for a little while, namely, Jesus, … makes it possible for the sons to come to the glory intended them in God's purposes (2:10)."[68] By this reading, Schenck suggests, "Indeed, it becomes possible to see Christ's glory as a solution to the problem of humanity's failed glory."[69] Therefore, the final sequence is:

$$\text{God} \longrightarrow \text{Glory, Honour} \longrightarrow \text{Humanity}$$

$$\uparrow$$

$$\text{Christ} \longrightarrow \text{Unshakeable Kingdom} \longleftarrow \text{Devil, death}^{70}$$

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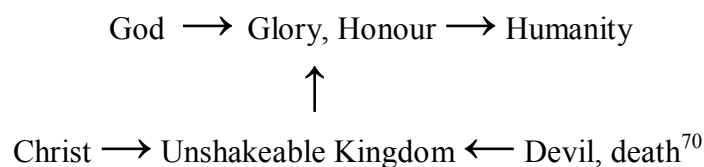
[64] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 53.

[65] Schenck uses the language of contract: "God thus makes a 'contract' with humanity to 'send' them glory and honour by way of the creation" (Schenck, *Cosmology*, 53). Schenck may have been better advised to use language of "covenant," which is more familiar to Hebrews (8:6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13; 9:1, 15, 18, 20; 10:16, 29; 12:24; 13:20).

[66] Quoting Schenck: "The Devil proves to be the principal opponent to the fulfillment of this contract. Although Hebrews nowhere clarifies for us exactly what this opposition was (or is), Heb. 2:14 makes it clear that the Devil plays this role in the sequence. The Devil has the power of death, which implies that death also stands in some way as a further opponent to the completion of the contract" (Schenck, *Cosmology*, 53).

[67] I treat this passage in more detail in the next chapter (chapter 3, section II).

[68] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 58.

[69] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 55.

[70] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 54.

In this final sequence of the plot, God delivers glory and honor to humanity via the unshakeable kingdom, as helped along by Christ. Schenck admits to a level of the unknown on this final sequence, especially with regard to creation, which is said to be removed in some way (12:27).[71] Still, Schenck suggests, "Whatever its relationship to the eschaton, Hebrews tells us that humanity will participate in a βασιλεία ἀσάλευτον (12:28)."[72]

Thusly, Schenck thinks of humanity's attaining glory and honor as the object of both the initial and final sequences. This movement was initiated by God, but it failed because of the Devil and death. Therefore, Christ had to destroy the devil. Schenck diagrams this sequence:

$$\text{Christ} \longrightarrow \text{Destruction} \longrightarrow \text{Devil}$$
$$\uparrow$$
$$\text{God} \longrightarrow \text{Indestructible Life} \longleftarrow \text{death, temptation}^{73}$$
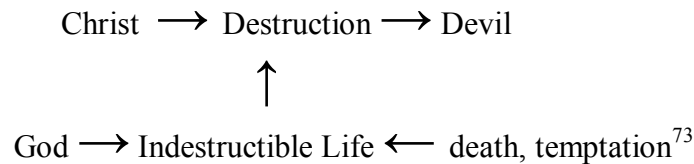
By this structure, Christ destroys the devil, who had the power of death. Jesus did this with the power of an indestructible life, with God as the helper in the model. Christ's defeat of the devil in this key sequence sets up the final sequence above.

Schenck sees the created realm as another significant barrier to humanity's realization of glory and honor. According to Schenck, "Hebrews looks for a penultimate sequence of judgement that eliminates the final vestiges of the 'problem' standing between humanity and glory, thus enabling the final attainment of glory sequence."[74] Schenck diagrams this sequence of the plot:

$$\text{God} \longrightarrow \text{Shaking} \longrightarrow \text{Created Realm}$$
$$\uparrow$$
$$\text{definitive power} \longrightarrow \text{Voice} \longleftarrow ?^{75}$$
$$\text{and authority}$$

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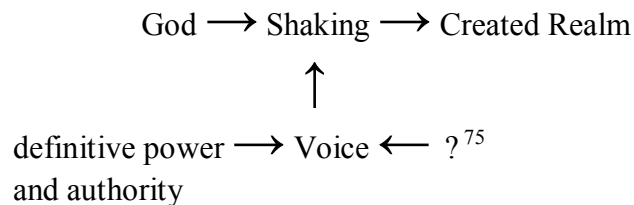
[71] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 54.
[72] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 54.
[73] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 78.
[74] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 108.
[75] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 109.

By this structure – which Schenck bases on 12:25-29 – God shakes the created realm (the earthly setting), thus removing any final obstacle to humanity's glory and honor.

II.4.3.3. Summary

Despite using what is becoming an increasingly outdated structuralist analysis of narrative, Schenck's actantial diagrams of his reading of Hebrews adds to our discussion of the narrative world of Hebrews. With these models, Schenck strengthens our suggestion that we can read Hebrews narratively. Schenck demonstrates how every level of argumentation in Hebrews is storied. His models also help put into stark presentation his reading of these stories in Hebrews. This is perhaps the most valuable role of the actantial model in narrative study: it forces interpreters to be explicit and precise about their readings of texts. Unfortunately, not every text can be read through the lens of these models, and this may explain Schenck's question marks (?) in places in his diagrams. My reading of the narrative world of Hebrews will share much in common with Schenck's. In this thesis I wish to highlight the story of faith and how it fits into the larger narrative of Hebrews, a dimension Schenck does not explore.

II.5. Conclusion

Our discussion of the merits of reading Hebrews narratively and our survey of studies that have done so establishes good reason to take a narrative approach to Hebrews. Distinctive from previous treatments of story and Hebrews, in this thesis I wish to develop an account of the author's concepts of the human story, faith, and how human beings can identify with the story of faith. For this thesis, story is more than the stories the author tells, but the narrative identity of which human beings find themselves a part. So, before moving forward, we should establish the philosophical and theological foundations for human identity and story.

III. HUMAN IDENTITY AND STORY

Various philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, and theologians have argued that a way[76] human beings conceive of their identity is in terms of story; human beings have a "narrative identity."[77] For our purposes, this recent definition of narrative identity will suffice: "We use the term *narrative identity* to refer to the stories people construct and tell about themselves to define who they are for themselves and for others. Beginning in adolescence and young adulthood, our narrative identities are the stories we live by."[78]

David Horrell suggests rooting a narrative study of Paul in the concept of wider human stories.[79] Hays dismisses the thought that all humans "live 'within stories.' " According to Hays, "If all discourse were rooted in story, it would be rather

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[76] It is worth noting that narrative is not necessarily the only possible way to understand oneself, but may in fact cooperate with other factors. Neisser's comments are instructive: "Self-knowledge depends on perception, conceptualization, and private experience as well as narrative … Self-narratives are *a* basis but not *the* basis of identity" (Ulric Neisser, "Self-narratives: True and False," in *The Remembering Self: Construction and Accuracy in the Self-Narrative*, ed. Ulric Neisser and Robyn Fivush (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1).

[77] On human identity and story, see among others: Michael W. DeLashmutt, "Paul Ricoeur at the Foot of the Cross: Narrative Identity and the Resurrection of the Body," *Modern Theology* 25, no. 4 (2009), 589-616; Anthony Paul Kerby, *Narrative and the Self* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1991), esp. 32-64; Anthony Paul Kerby, "The Language of the Self," in *Memory, Identity, Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*, ed. Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001), 125-42; Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 1981), esp. 197-203; Donald E. Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988), 146-55; Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), esp. fifth and sixth studies (113-68); Marya Schechtman, *The Constitution of Selves* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), esp. 93-135; Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). For our purposes in this thesis, I only describe the general theory of narrative identity in order to establish a background for our study of Hebrews. As a result, I do not engage with alternative theories of self-identity or with those who challenge narrative identity. For two challenges to narrative identity, see John Christman, "Narrative Unity as a Condition of Personhood," *Metaphilosophy* 35, no. 5 (2004), 695-713 and Galen Strawson, "Against Narrativity," *Ratio* XVII, no. 4 (2004), 428-52.

[78] Dan P. McAdams, Ruthellen Josselson, and Amia Leiblich, "Introduction," in *Identity and Story: Creating Self in Narrative* ed. Dan P. McAdams, Ruthellen Josselson, and Amia Leiblich (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2006), 4 (italics theirs). Adolescence or adulthood may in fact be a bit late. As Miller has illustrated, "personal storytelling is an important means by which young children [as young as 2-1/2, she finds], together with family members, experience and reexperience self in relation to other" (Peggy J. Miller, "Narrative Practices: Their Role in Socialization and Self-Construction," in *The Remembering Self: Construction and Accuracy in the Self-Narrative*, ed. Ulric Neisser and Robyn Fivush (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 173).

[79] David G. Horrell, "Paul's Narratives or Narrative Substructure? The Significance of 'Paul's Story'," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 168-71.

pointless to single Paul out as an instance of this universal truth."[80] Horrell, however, suggests that the work of scholars such as Milbank and Hauerwas point to a "broader conviction about the ubiquity of 'story,' " within which a study of the narrative substructure in Paul is valuable.[81] Hays feared that admission of "the ubiquity of story" (to use Horrell's terminology) would make an investigation into the narrative substructure of Paul unnecessary. Horrell, on the other hand, writes, "This conviction may make it less significant to identify Paul as a writer whose thought has a narrative basis, but it does not render investigation of that narrative basis 'pointless'; in fact, it is quite the opposite."[82]

Horrell's approach to narrative in Paul has an identity-shaping dimension. Paul's narrative becomes a story in competition with other stories – all of which "construct a sense of human identity and shape human interaction."[83] Horrell writes, "Exploring and narrating the Pauline story can be a means to articulate a counternarrative, a challenge to this (and other) dominant narratives, a means to envisage human communities in which a different story constructs a different sense of identity and undergirds different patterns of community practice."[84] Given the growing awareness of the role of story in human identity, this mode of investigation into Scripture is, as Horrell suggests, "of critical value."[85]

In this section, I will not develop a theory of narrative identity, but defer to other larger works for this point. Here I will instead offer a few rationales for understanding human identity in storied terms and for using this as a presupposition informing our study of Hebrews. The usefulness of narrative identity for our purposes will be tested throughout the rest of the thesis in our exegetical treatment of Hebrews.[86]

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[80] Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 20 (also quoted in Horrell, "Paul's Narratives," 169).

[81] Horrell, "Paul's Narratives," 169.

[82] Horrell, "Paul's Narratives," 169.

[83] Horrell, "Paul's Narratives," 170.

[84] Horrell, "Paul's Narratives," 170.

[85] Horrell, "Paul's Narratives," 170.

[86] In this way, I follow Rowe: "In order to make some sense of Luke's use of κύριος, this study will adopt what is essentially a narrative methodology but will leave the majority of the theoretical reflection in the background at the level of informing presuppositions. The animating conviction here is not that theory matters little, but rather than an exegetical work is most compelling when it moves actual exegesis up from an after dinner mint to the main course of the meal" (Christopher Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke*, BZNW 139 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 9).

III.1. Story and Consciousness

Cognitive narratologists equate narrative with thought itself.[87] For example, Damasio writes, "Consciousness begins when brains acquire the power, the simple power I must add, of telling a story."[88] Similarly, Turner argues for story as a basic principle of the human mind: "Story depends on constructing something rather than nothing. A reportable story is distinguished from its assumed and unreportable background. It is impossible for us to look at the world and not to see reportable stories distinguished from background."[89] Turner credits the human ability to predict, recognize, and imagine to the literary mind. He gives the illustration of a stone.[90] If we see someone pick up a stone and vengefully look at us with arm cocked, we know to duck. We do not have to wait for the stone to hit us to know the rest of the story. We duck because we know that the typical completion of this narrative pattern is to be hit by the stone. Our literary mind lets us make this prediction. Likewise, our literary mind allows us to recognize. Continuing with Turner's illustration of the stone, if we see a stone hit and break a glass window, we know to look in the general direction from which the stone was thrown. Or, if we see someone holding a stone with his arm cocked, followed by the sound of crashing glass, we can imagine that the person we saw holding the stone was the culprit. Thusly, our literary mind is connected with our imagination.[91]

Ryan fears that if we follow cognitive narratology "the task of defining narrative becomes both superfluous and impossible: superfluous, because it is no longer necessary to differentiate narrative from any other manifestation of human thought, and impossible, because it is inseparable from a complete theory of mind."[92] If, however, cognitive narratologists are correct, then a scientific reason may underlie our observations on human identity and story. Contrary to Ryan's fears, that the mind

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[87] See also Kerby, who connects emotions to story: "Much of our emotional life, for example, is bound up with the way we narrate experiences. It would be difficult to imagine someone experiencing guilt, joy, or anxiety without having cognizance of the stories to which these are responses. Narrative, I want to claim, is not a simple description but rather an interpretation – it is an important way in which our lives are understood" (Kerby, "Language of the Self," 131).

[88] Antonio Damasio, *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1999), 30.

[89] Turner, *Literary Mind*, 145.

[90] Turner, *Literary Mind*, 19-20.

[91] Turner, *Literary Mind*, 20.

[92] Ryan, "Toward a Definition of Narrative," 28. See also Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 20.

is story-oriented does not make the narrative task superfluous and impossible, but rather logical and necessary. That is, if human beings are wired to think in terms of story, then we do well to investigate further the place of story with regard to human identity.

III.2. Story and Ethnic Identity

Stephen Cornell, in his work among Native American groups, found that story underlies ethnic identity. He offers three main arguments with regard to narrative and ethnicity:

> The first is that narrative lies at the heart of many ethnic identities; that is, that many such identities often take a narrative form. The second point is that the narrative form of ethnicity becomes most salient in periods of rupture, when the taken-for-grantedness that characterizes most collective identities is disturbed. The third point is that the narrativization of ethnicity is intimately bound up in power relations, albeit in particular ways.[93]

By these three points, Cornell does not suggest that every person has a conception of their ethnic story in mind at all times, but rather that a story underlies ethnicity (and often comes to the surface during times of trouble or when the ethnic identity is questioned).[94] These identity narratives and their production are bound up with power with respect to (1) "*who gets to narrate whom*" and "*whose version of an identity narrative gains currency where*"[95] and (2) "*what an identity narrative claims.*"[96] Hays suggests "Paul's letters may be read as running arguments with opponents who draw different inferences from the same story,"[97] and Schenck sees this as "one of the most generative ideas in Hays' entire study."[98] In light of Cornell's treatment of narrative as power, we may modify Hays slightly, so that Paul's letters (and Hebrews) are running arguments with opponents about *what* story to tell and how that applies to their present situation.

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[93] Stephen Cornell, "That's The Story Of Our Life," in *We Are a People: Narrative and Multiplicity in Constructing Ethnic Identity*, ed. Paul Spickard and W. Jeffrey Burroughs (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 41-42.

[94] Cornell, "Story," 45.

[95] Cornell, "Story," 47 (italics his).

[96] Cornell, "Story," 48 (italics his). Cornell fleshes out these two points on pages 47-49.

[97] Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 7.

[98] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 15.

While Cornell's essay deals with ethnicity, his arguments can apply to our study of Hebrews. The author of Hebrews is not making an ethnic argument, but he does make arguments about identity. And, as Cornell would expect, the author of Hebrews makes these arguments by referring to stories. For example, in Heb 3-4 the author narrates his hearers into the story of Israel in the wilderness.[99] After citing Ps 95 (94 LXX), the author reflects back on the psalm and concludes, "So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief" (3:19). In the following verse, the author places his hearers in the same predicament: "Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest is still open, let us take care that none of you should be deemed to have failed to reach it" (4:1). The author narrates the hearers' present experience into the story of the wilderness generation: the hearers now find themselves at the threshold of the Promised Land and they must enter God's rest. The wilderness generation is no longer only "they," but "us." This story affects the hearers' perception about their present circumstances such that they have to fear lest they finish their story in the same manner as those whose bodies fell in the wilderness (3:17). Likewise, the author narrates the hearers' identity into the stories of Israel's heroes of faith. In 11:39-40, the author seems to suggest that the hearers are so bound up with the story of these heroes of faith that their outcome depends on the hearers' present faithfulness: "Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect." As Esler comments with respect to Heb 11, "The fact that the Hebrews author has chosen a narrative form to tell, in his highly selective fashion, the history of Israel is testament to the widespread use of narrative by human groups to encapsulate the story of their origins and identity."[100]

I give more attention to these stories in the rest of the thesis, but these two quick examples strengthen the suggestion that the way the author of Hebrews uses these stories is itself an argument. As Cornell writes, "To narrate an identity is to argue: it is to make an assertion about the scope or nature or meaning of that

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[99] Cornell's comments on narration and power may apply here, albeit (presumably) in a more positive manifestation in the case of Hebrews.

[100] Philip F. Esler, "Collective Memory and Hebrews 11: Outlining a New Investigative Framework," in *Memory, Tradition, and Text: Uses of the Past in Early Christianity*, ed. Alan Kirk and Tom Thatcher. SemeiaSt 52 (Atlanta: SBL, 2005), 161.

identity."[101] The author of Hebrews is narrating his hearers into these stories, thereby creating a narrative identity to which the hearers are to relate. Story is at the heart of this re-imagining, as Cornell suggests: "When people take on, create, or assign an ethnic identity, part of what they do – intentionally or not – is to take on, create, or assign a story, a narrative of some sort that captures central understandings about what it means to be a member of the group."[102] Ultimately, the author of Hebrews is asking his people to perceive themselves in a new way and this involves adopting a new narrative.

III.3. The Scriptural Story and Communal Identity

James McClendon makes similar arguments about how we in the present ought to read Scripture. While he does not push his arguments into how the biblical authors intended their hearers to perceive themselves, McClendon's hermeneutical vision parallels the way the author of Hebrews narrates his hearers into Israel's and Jesus' stories.

McClendon suggests reading the Scriptural narrative with a "this is that" and "then is now" vision, "binding the story now to the story then, and the story then and now to God's future yet to come."[103] Under McClendon's "prophetic (or baptist) vision,"[104] readers adjust their vision when reading Scripture and their present situations:

> disciples learn to see the present under the form of the biblical past, so that their present 'is' that past, but to see it also under the form of the prophetic future, so that the future 'is' also coming *now*. […] By this vision, disciples live by the faithfulness of the Christ who *was* and *is* and *is to come*, the First and the Last.[105]

Applying McClendon's prophetic vision to Hebrews, we see the author of Hebrews similarly pressing his hearers to understand themselves in light of Scripture's

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[101] Cornell, "Story," 51.

[102] Cornell, "Story," 42.

[103] James Wm. McClendon, *Systematic Theology; Volume 2: Doctrine* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 45.

[104] McClendon explains his choice of terminology: "I have called it 'the prophetic vision,' because it is much used by the prophets. Especially in the postbiblical application, I call it 'the baptist vision' after the sixteenth-century Christian radicals. Neither Catholic nor Protestant, spurned by both sides, they called themselves simply 'brothers and sisters,' or *Täufer*, 'baptists' " (McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 45).

[105] McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 92 (italics his).

narrative. As we saw in the two examples above (Heb 3-4; 11:39-40), the author of Hebrews calls on his readers to re-imagine their present stories in light of the stories of Israel's past (the "this is that" of McClendon's vision). So also, the author holds out a "then is now" vision in such passages as 12:28, where the hearers are said to be "receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken" and so should give thanks. This blessed future is breaking into the present, and this fact should affect how hearers perceive their identity.

IV. CONCLUSION: PARTICIPATING IN A NEW STORY

In view of the narrative elements within Hebrews and the work of others demonstrating a narrative understanding of human identity, our study of Hebrews will attempt to discover the stories in play with regard to human identity in general and faith in particular. I will argue that two main stories emerge: (1) the default human story, characterized by unfaithfulness, concluding assuredly in eschatological death (part 2); and (2) the story of faith in the face of death, concluding assuredly in postmortem life (part 3). Throughout the thesis I will be arguing that the author of Hebrews invites us to adopt the new narrative identity of faith.

The question of *how* we can adopt a new story is difficult to answer precisely. Essentially speaking, we adopt a new story by re-imagining our narrative identities. The author of Hebrews gives us a new story, and invites us to view ourselves in light of this story and so become new characters. We re-imagine our narrative identities by telling this new story about ourselves. As Ricoeur explains, "The narrative constructs the identity of the character, what can be called his or her narrative identity, in constructing that of the story told. It is the identity of the story that makes the identity of the character."[106] The story can thus shape our identity. So, for example, Ayometzi has explained how undocumented Mexican migrant workers appropriated "the witness story" "to sustain a collective identity of having a full-fledged 'Christian' membership." She explains:

> The witness story gave those enacting it the opportunity to fit their individual
> conversion stories into a pattern that satisfied the sanctioned doctrinal
> discourse of their religious group. This discourse form was a story of each
> individual's conversion being fitted within a story line of a new religious

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[106] Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 147-48.

profession of evangelical fundamentalism, which they came to adopt as they accepted a new identity within their community. Most importantly, the identity that this story contained was accessible to all members of the community, somehow detached from any particular individual, yet flexible enough to be mastered or appropriated by all of them. […] This story provided an alternative identity to that of being an undocumented immigrant, and therefore gave them a more desirable standing within this small Texas community.[107]

By telling "the witness story" about themselves, these migrant workers re-conceptualize who they are. Similarly, Fasulo has shown how recovering heroin addicts in psychotherapy meetings orient themselves to a "narrative template" of the whole therapeutic path.[108] By re-telling the narrative template of recovery, ex-heroin addicts can extract details of their lives and place themselves in the recovery storyline.[109]

Along these lines, we will see that the author of Hebrews presents the story of Jesus as the paradigmatic story of faith. The story of Jesus is not a story that we are asked to emulate, but a story in which we are to conceive of our identity. The story of faith seen paradigmatically in Jesus becomes the story we tell of ourselves. Put in another way, my reading of Hebrews sees the author urging us to find our identity in the story of faith as told perfectly in Jesus. Participating in a new story has a definite social component. That is, we participate in the story of faith by participating in a community who are also part of this story. I will make the case that faith in Hebrews has an ecclesiological facet in more detail in chapter 9,[110] but it is worth noting at this stage the social dimension of adopting a new story. As Ayometzi demonstrated with respect to the migrant workers, the story they told of themselves aligned with the religious group of which they have become a part. This social dimension is also expressed in the language a person may use of herself vis-à-vis the group. The group is now "we," and the prior history of this group – the stories members of the group tell

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[107] Cecilia Castillo Ayometzi, "Story as becoming: Identity through the telling of conversion," in *Selves and Identities in Narrative and Discourse*, ed. Michael Bamberg, Anna De Fina, and Deborah Schiffrin. Studies in Narrative 9 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), 43.

[108] Alessandra Fasulo, "Theories of Self in Psychotherapeutic Narratives," in *Selves and Identities in Narrative and Discourse*, ed. Michael Bamberg, Anna De Fina, and Deborah Schiffrin Studies in Narrative Vol 9 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), 328. She outlines two variations of the plot on page 329.

[109] Fasulo, "Theories of Self," 344.

[110] Section V.

among themselves – become "my" story, even if I were not a part of these prior experiences.[111]

In our treatment of Hebrews that follows, I will attempt to describe the default human story (part 2), the re-written story in Christ (part 3), and how the author wishes for his hearers to see themselves as a part of this new story (part 4). Faith, we will find, is a key thread. The default human story is one characterized by unfaithfulness, while the re-written story in Christ is one characterized by faith. As we will see, the author of Hebrews expects his hearers to participate in the new story of faith by enduring with the travelling people of God who are "going to Jesus outside the camp, bearing his reproach" (13:13).

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[111] This language of "we" is also illustrated in the sporting world. For example, when I (an American) join with my Kiwi friends to watch the New Zealand rugby team play, the All Blacks (as the team is called) suddenly become "we." I speak as if "we" scored a try, the referee made a bad call against "us," or "we" won the game. I speak this way even though I am neither a Kiwi nor a rugby player! I adopt the language of "we" precisely because I am in fellowship with others for whom the All Blacks – very much a marker of New Zealand national identity – are "we."

Part 2:

The Default Human Story

Chapter 3

The Pessimistic Human Story

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the theological anthropology of Hebrews. The historical situation of the original hearers is not the main focus, but rather how the author depicts humanity. In our narrative terms, we are concerned here with how the author of Hebrews conceives of the default human story. By "default human story" I refer to a human existence lived automatically unless otherwise influenced. Much as computer programs come with pre-set options that will not change unless manually changed, so also the default human story is a general standard that if left alone will hold true to the typical human existence. I use "story" because, as I argued in the previous chapter, the author of Hebrews operates with stories, and human beings have a "narrative identity." In this chapter, I argue that the default human story is one of unfaithfulness, and in the next chapter we will find that this story ends with the assured conclusion of eschatological death. However, as I will argue here and in more detail in later chapters, this default human story was not God's original intention and is not an inescapable story.

II. HUMANITY'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE UNFULFILLED: PSALM 8:4-6 AND HEBREWS 2:5-9

How we interpret Ps 8:4-6 in Heb 2:5-9 is instrumental to our understanding of the author's anthropology.[1] The psalm asks, "What is ἄνθρωπος that you are mindful of αὐτοῦ, or υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, that you care for αὐτόν?" (Ps 8:4 in Heb 2:6), but the author of Hebrews never specifies directly who this person is (or who these people are).[2] The author envisions this person or group of people as briefly lower than

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[1] In Koester's outline of Hebrews, Heb 2:5-9 is the proposition: "the principal issue to be addressed in the speech" (Craig R. Koester, "Hebrews, Rhetoric, and the Future of Humanity," *CBQ* 64 (2002), 110). Similarly, Schenck reads Ps 8 as "the ultimate goal of the plot" in Hebrews (Schenck, *Cosmology*, 58).

[2] The singular ἄνθρωπος and υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου can be collectives referring to a plural group, and so need not refer only to a single person. The pronoun use has made this a battleground passage in the

angels, crowned with glory and honor, and intended to rule the coming world (2:5-8). However, the world is not presently in subjection to this person or group of people (2:8). The author mentions Jesus explicitly in 2:9, but not before this in the immediate context.

This passage can be read christologically as a reference to the incarnate Jesus or anthropologically as a reference to humanity in general. I will survey the merits and shortcomings of both possibilities while arguing that the author reads the psalm (in 2:6-8) anthropologically within a wider christological framework (2:9-16). The psalm quotation, I will argue, is wholly anthropological, but the author adopts it into a christological context. That is, the author expects *humanity* to receive its divinely-intended glory, honor, and dominion (as expected in Ps 8), but the means by which they will receive this is via the *fully human Christ*. My reading is not properly called a both/and, since I am arguing for a wholly anthropological reading of the psalm itself.[3]

Under the anthropological reading, the author of Hebrews uses Ps 8 in Heb 2:5-8 to demonstrate (1) God's original good purposes for humanity, (2) the present

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inclusive language debate for Bible translations (see especially Blomberg's response to Poythress in Craig L. Blomberg, "'But We See Jesus': The Relationship Between the Son of Man in Hebrews 2.6 and 2.9 and the Implications for English Translations," in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. Library of New Testament Studies 387 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 88-99 and Joslin's response to Blomberg in Barry Joslin, "'Son of Man' or 'Human Beings'?: Hebrews 2:5-9 and a Response to Craig Blomberg," *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 14, no. 2 (2009), 41-50). For a collective translation, see the NRSV: "What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them?" The ESV maintains the singular: "What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him?"

[3] For example, Koester offers a both/and reading of the psalm itself: "When applied to the exalted Christ, the psalm describes his present glory; when applied to the beleaguered people of God, the psalm promises future glory (1:14; 2:10)" (Koester, "Rhetoric and Future of Humanity," 111; see also Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews*, AB 36 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 215). See also deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 109-10; Erich Grässer, *An die Hebräer: 1. Teilband (Hebr 1-6)*, EKKNT XVII/1 (Zürich: Benziger, 1990), 112-13; Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 90; Claus-Peter März, "'…Nur für kurze Zeit unter die Engel gestellt' (Hebr 2,7). Anthropologie und Christologie in Hebr 2,5-9," in *Von Gott Reden in säkularer Gesellschaft. Festschrift für Konrad Feiereis zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Emerich Coreth, Wilhelm Ernst, and Eberhard Tiefensee ETS 71 (Leipzig: Benno, 1996), 29-42; Eric F. Mason, *"You Are a Priest Forever": Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, STDJ 74 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 20; David M. Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, NovTSup 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 119-42; Schenck, *Cosmology*, 54-59; Kenneth J. Thomas, "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews," *NTS* 11, no. 4 (1965), 306; Walter Übelacker, "Anthropologie und Vollendung – Perspektiven im Hebräerbrief," in *Anthropology in the New Testament and Its Ancient Context: Papers from the EABS-Meeting in Piliscsaba/Budapest*, ed. Michael Labahn and Outi Lehtipuu (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 218.

frustration of these good purposes, and (3) how God through Christ brings these purposes to fulfillment. I deal in more detail with (2) in the rest of this chapter and with (3) in chapters 6-7. This section, therefore, serves to establish (1), introduce (2), and suggest in preliminary form the need of (3).

II.1. Christological

Under the christological reading, the author of Hebrews adapts the psalm as a reference to the incarnate Christ.[4] Βραχύ in 2:7 and 2:9 could probably be read temporally ("for a little while") in reference to the time of Christ's incarnation rather than comparatively ("just a little lower than"): "You made him [Christ] for a little

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[4] For supporters of the christological reading, see Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, trans. Chrysostom Baer (South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine's Press, 2006), 53-59; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 69-77; Herbert Braun, *An die Hebräer*, HNT 14 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1984), 53-55; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Revised ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 72-75; George Wesley Buchanan, *To the Hebrews*, AB 36 (New York: Doubleday, 1972), 27-9; Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1959), 188; Kevin DeYoung, "Divine Impassibility and the Passion of Christ in the Book of Hebrews," *WTJ* 68, no. 2006 (2006), 43-46; James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: An Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, Second ed. (London: SCM Press, 1989), 108-11; Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 150-52; Pauline Giles, "The Son of Man in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *ExpTim* 86 (1975), 328-32; Randall C. Gleason, "Angels and the Eschatology of Heb 1-2," *NTS* 49 (2003), 98, 101; George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 946-47; George H. Guthrie and Russell D. Quinn, "A Discourse Analysis of the Use of Psalm 8:4-6 in Hebrews 2:5-9," *JETS* 49, no. 2 (2006), 235-46; Donald A. Hagner, *Hebrews*, A Good News Commentary (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 24-26; Donald A. Hagner, "The Son of God as Unique High Priest: The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Contours of Christology in the New Testament*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 252-54; Joslin, "'Son of Man' or 'Human Beings'," 41-50; Käsemann, *Wandering*, 126; Aquila H. I. Lee, *From Messiah to Preexistent Son: Jesus' Self-Consciousness and Early Christian Exegesis of Messianic Psalms*, WUNT 2/192 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 221-23; William R. G. Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Christologie des Hebräerbriefes*, WMANT 53 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), 29-38; Martin Luther, *Luther's Works: Lectures on Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Walter A. Hansen, trans. Walter A. Hansen (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 125-26; David Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection: An Examination of the Concept of Perfection in the 'Epistle to the Hebrews'*, SNTSMS 47 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 51-55; Sidney G. Sowers, *The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews: A Comparison of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in Philo Judaeus and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Basil Studies of Theology 1 (Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1965), 80-1; Ceslas Spicq, *L'Épitre aux Hébreux II - Commentaire*, EBib (Paris: Gabalda, 1953), 31-32; Gert J. Steyn, "A Quest for the Assumed LXX *Vorlage* of the Explicit Quotations in Hebrews" (D.Litt. diss., Stellenbosch University, 2009), 137-41; Stefan Nordgaard Svendsen, *Allegory Transformed: The Appropriation of Philonic Hermeneutics in the Letter to the Hebrews*, WUNT 2/269 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 95; Hans-Friedrich Weiss, *Der Brief an die Hebräer*, KEK 15 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 194. Asensio finds the christological interpretation of Psalm 8 in the NT typical of the early church as well (Félix Asensio, "El protagonismo del 'Hombre-Hijo del Hombre' del Salmo 8," *EstBib* 41, no. 1-2 (1983), 17-51).

while lower than the angels."[5] Supporters of the christological reading commonly call upon three observations: (1) the contrast to angels in 2:5; (2) a probable association with Psalm 110:1; and (3) the christological overtones of "son of man."

First, the author of Hebrews introduces the psalm as a contrast to angels: "for [God] did not subject the coming world, concerning which we are speaking, to angels" (2:5). The unnamed one to whom God has subjected the coming world in 2:5 is clearly the "him" (αὐτοῦ/αὐτόν/αὐτῷ) of 2:6-8. Christ is strongly contrasted to angels in Heb 1, as well as in the exhortation in 2:1-4 (where the angels declare the word and Christ declares salvation).[6] We do not, therefore, need to skip over the exhortation to find a contrast between Christ and the angels, as Blomberg suggests.[7] Given the contrast between Christ and the angels in Heb 1:5-2:4 and the mention of angels in 2:5 in a contrasting manner, Christ may be the unnamed one to whom God has subjected the coming world. Although Christ is not named explicitly until 2:9, if he is this unnamed figure introduced in 2:5, then the author introduces him before the psalm quotation in 2:6-8.[8]

Nevertheless, Christ vis-à-vis angels is not the only topic in the context. Humanity is clearly in view as well. Indeed, as Blomberg highlights, 1:14 focuses on the angel's ministry to human beings, and 2:1-4 is an exhortation to humans to pay greater attention lest they drift away.[9] Furthermore, the author contrasts angels with the seed of Abraham (clearly humans and not Christ, since Christ is said to be the helper of those of the seed of Abraham) in 2:16: "For it is surely not angels that he helps, but he helps the seed of Abraham."[10] Therefore, while the context of Christ and the angels may inform 2:5, the context of humans as the beneficiaries of angelic help (or the beneficiaries of Christ's help over against angels) may just as well inform

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[5] If the quotation of this psalm is a reference to the incarnation, then it strengthens Guthrie and Quinn's discourse analysis of 1:5-2:18, which they read as a progression of discourse from the exaltation of Christ (1:5-14), through a transition with both elements of exaltation and incarnation (2:5-9) to the incarnation (2:10-18) (Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 246).

[6] This point of contrast is missed by many, but Schenck notes it (Schenck, *Cosmology*, 56).

[7] "[T]here is no necessary reason why the original audience of Hebrews, hearing 2.5 read aloud, would automatically have skipped back over 2.1-4 and thought that the author was resuming the contrast between Christ and the angels" (Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 92).

[8] See esp. März, who makes much of the christological context (März, "...Nur für kurze Zeit," 31-34).

[9] Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 91-92.

[10] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 57.

2:5. The appeal to context does not seal the argument for either reading. Context can support both readings.

Second, the author of Hebrews appears to associate Ps 8:4-6 (Heb 2:5-9) with Ps 110:1 (Heb 1:13).[11] Both psalms refer to the submission of something under the feet ("all things" in Ps 8:6 and "the enemies" in Ps 110:1). Given the clear reference to Christ as the one awaiting the subjection of his enemies under his feet in Heb 1:13, the one intended to rule over all things in Heb 2:8 may be Christ as well.[12] Furthermore, the author uses similar language of subjection in the introductory formula[13] in 2:5. If this language of subjection recalls Ps 110:1 (with its christological referent) while looking forward to Ps 8:4-6, then we have an allusion to Christ earlier than 2:9.[14]

However, while Ps 8 and Ps 110 share the language of submission under the feet, they differ with regard to when this submission takes place. In Ps 110:1 as cited in Heb 1:13, Christ sits at God's right hand "*until* I make your enemies a footstool for your feet" (emphasis mine). Christ's enemies have not yet been placed into submission, and so he must wait until God brings this to pass. On the other hand, in the introductory formula in 2:5 and in Ps 8:6 as cited in Heb 2:8, all things are *already* under submission to the referent (be this Christ or humanity).[15] Both Heb 2:5 and 2:8 use aorist indicative forms of ὑποτάσσω for "subjection." Although aorists are notoriously difficult with regard to time, an aorist in the indicative "usually indicates *past* time with reference to the time of speaking."[16] Whether the aorist here "is most naturally interpreted as a simple past event"[17] is not completely clear, but it likely indicates some sort of past event. Whatever the force of the aorist tense in Heb 2:5

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[11] See a similar association in 1 Cor 15:25-27, where Ps 8:6 is clearly read christologically. Eph 1:20-22 also includes language of all things being put under Christ's feet.

[12] Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 238; Schenck, *Cosmology*, 55. Dunn, who reads Ps 8:6 as "*a ready vehicle for Adam christology*," suggests, "The most effective use of Ps. 8.5f. as an expression of Adam christology is Heb. 2.8f." (Dunn, *Christology*, 109, italics his).

[13] I get this term from Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 239-40.

[14] Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 239. Guthrie and Quinn read the quotation of Psalm 8:4-6 in Hebrews "*as reinforcing the statement concerning submission in the IF* [introductory formula]" (240-41, italics theirs).

[15] I address the language of God not submitting "the world to come" to angels in our treatment of the anthropological reading below.

[16] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 555 (italics his). See also A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919), 824-25.

[17] Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 92.

and 2:8, it is most likely not a future, as is the expectation of the subjection in 1:13. Therefore, the psalms differ temporally: submission in Ps 8 (Heb 2:8) is already accomplished while submission in Ps 110 (Heb 1:13) is yet to come.[18] Guthrie and Quinn – supporters of the christological reading – note this temporal contradiction, and attribute it to "the tension between the 'already' and 'not yet' realities of the new covenant community."[19] However, while an inaugurated eschatology may be used in support of the christological reading (so that Christ reigns but not yet), it can just as easily apply to the anthropological reading (so that humanity sees a foretaste of dominion in Christ, but have not yet received their divinely-intended dominion in its fullness).

Finally, if υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, which appears in Heb 2:6 (Ps 8:4), is a christological title, then the whole quotation may be a reference to Jesus.[20] Guthrie and Quinn offer three points of evidence for υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου as a christological title in Hebrews.[21] First, Hebrews uses the singular form of υἱός consistently as a reference to Christ.[22] Second, υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου is used elsewhere in the NT as a christological title. Third, Guthrie and Quinn find "a common tradition between Hebrews and the Stephen speech of Acts 7, and that tradition included the messianic use of 'son of man.' "[23]

Υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου as a christological title is probably the weakest of the three arguments in favor of the christological reading.[24] This argument has four weaknesses. First, υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου in the OT generally referred to "a mere, puny

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[18] Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 92. Blomberg adds that the author makes it clear that the subjection of creation to Christ is wholly future in Heb 10:13 (94).

[19] Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 242.

[20] Koester suggests that "son of man" refers both to Christ and human beings (Koester, *Hebrews*, 215).

[21] Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 243-44; Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 113-14. Cullmann takes the christological interpretation of Ps 8 in Heb 2 for granted, and uses the quotation in Hebrews as proof of the author's knowledge of the christological Son of Man: "Hebrews applies the psalm to Jesus as the Son of Man. The author's interpretation of the citation indicates that he apparently had quite precise information about the Son of Man doctrine" (Cullmann, *Christology*, 188). For a defense of Cullman's position, see Giles, "Son of Man," 328-32.

[22] As in 1:2, 5, 8; 3:6; 4:14; 5:5, 8; 6:6; 7:3, 28; and 10:29. The only times a singular form of υἱός appears in reference to someone other than Jesus is in 11:24 (of Moses) and in 12:5-7 (a quotation from Prov 3:11-12 and the author's reflections on the quotation).

[23] Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 244.

[24] See Attridge who, while supporting the christological reading, is more cautious with υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου. He concludes, "It is quite possible that the author [of Hebrews] simply did not know the Son of Man tradition" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 74).

mortal."[25] The famous Dan 7:13 mention of "one like a son of man (ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου)" may be an exception, but given that the author of Hebrews makes no direct quotation from Daniel (thus limiting how much we can say of the author's knowledge of this use of "one like a son of man" in Dan 7:13),[26] the more common meaning of "son of man" in the OT is to be preferred.[27] Furthermore, the synonymous parallelism of "man (ἄνθρωπος)" with "son of man (υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου)" in Ps 8:4 makes υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου as a mere mortal even clearer.[28] Second, depending on the date of Hebrews (broadly, 60-100 CE),[29] the Gospels (wherein we find the "son of man" as Jesus tradition and used of Jesus uniquely) had either not been written or had not been circulating for much time. Furthermore, even if the Gospels had been circulating or if "son of man" was an established piece of oral tradition, we have no way of knowing which parts of the Jesus tradition the author or hearers of Hebrews would have recognized or received.[30] Third, υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου as a christological title in the Gospels is consistently articular (except for John 5:27), while it is anarthrous here in Hebrews.[31] Fourth and finally, υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου appears nowhere else in Hebrews (nor in the Pauline corpus or the other General Epistles), which should give pause to

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[25] Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 94. For more on Son of Man, see Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate: A History and Evaluation*, SNTSMS 107 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Adela Yarbro Collins, "Son of Man," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible; Vol. 5: S-Z*, ed. Katharine Doob Sakenfeld et al. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 341-48 (on Psalm 8 in Heb 2, 342); and George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Son of Man," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman Vol 6: Si-Z (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 137-50 (on Ps 8 in Heb 2, 148).

[26] Dunn agrees: "Heb 2:6 is a quotation of Ps 8:4, with no hint of an allusion to Dan 7:13" (James D. G. Dunn, "The Danielic Son of Man in the New Testament," in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception, Volume Two*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 539). Heb 11:33-34 may have allusions to narratives in Daniel in the mention of shutting the mouths of lions and quenching the power of fire.

[27] Koester notes that "son of man" also appears messianic in *1 En.* 46:3; 48:2; 69:27-29; 70:1; 71:14, 17, but concludes: "Other Jewish sources use similar imagery, but they do not use 'son of man' for an eschatological figure, making it difficult to claim that it was a common messianic title in the first century" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 215).

[28] So Lane: The author of Hebrews "understood that the parallel expressions ἄνθρωπος, 'man,' 'humankind,' and υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, 'son of man,' 'mortal,' were perfectly synonymous and were to be interpreted in terms of that fact (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 47). See also Koester, *Hebrews*, 215.

[29] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 9.

[30] Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 94. The hearers of Hebrews received Jesus teaching from eyewitnesses (2:3), and the author of Hebrews cides them for not subsequently teaching others (5:12), thereby indicating points of contact to oral tradition (noted also in Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 306; James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, Christianity in the Making 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 176, 178). The *content* of this oral tradition, especially with regard to the son of man tradition, is less certain.

[31] Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 94; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 47.

those who would claim with R. T. France, "It is hard to imagine that any Christian, particularly a Greek-speaking Christian, after the middle of the first century could have heard the phrase υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου without thinking of Jesus."[32] Jesus as "the son of man" is clearly a strong tradition in the Gospels, but we have insufficient evidence to suggest that it was a significant tradition in the whole of early Christianity. Therefore, while our Gospels-trained mind may immediately connect υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου with Jesus, we cannot be certain that the earliest hearers of Hebrews would have made the same connection. The presence of υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου does little to advance an argument for one reading over the other.

II.2. Anthropological

We turn now to the anthropological reading of the psalm quotation.[33] By this reading, the author uses the psalm to show the tragedy of the human story: humans were appointed by God to have dominion and to receive glory and honor (2:6-8a), but this is an unfulfilled reality (2:8b). In addition to the responses to the christological

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[32] R. T. France, "The Writer of Hebrews as a Biblical Expositor," *TynBul* 47, no. 2 (1996), 262 n. 29; also cited in Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 243. See also Bruce, who admits the evidence to the contrary, but still insists on the christological connotation: "It is true that in the psalm 'the son of man' stands in a relation of synonymous parallelism with 'man' in the preceding line; but then it is equally true that 'one like a son of man' in Dan. 7:13 simply means 'one like a human being.' The fact remains that, ever since Jesus spoke of himself as the Son of Man, this expression has had for Christians a connotation beyond its etymological force, and it had this connotation for the writer to the Hebrews" (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 73).

[33] For supporters of an anthropological reading of the psalm in Hebrews, see: Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 88-99; Ardel B. Caneday, "The Eschatological World Already Subjected to the Son: The Οἰκουμένη of Hebrews 1.6 and the Son's Enthronement" in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. Library of New Testament Studies 387 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 35-36; Brenda B. Colijn, "'Let Us Approach': Soteriology in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *JETS* 39, no. 4 (1996), 572; Johannes Heinrich August Ebrard, *Biblical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, in Continuation of the Work of Olshausen*, Clark's Foreign Theological Library 32 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1853), 70-79; L. D. Hurst, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought*, SNTSMS 65 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 110-11; L. D. Hurst, "The Christology of Hebrews 1 and 2," in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird*, ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 151-64 [esp. 153-54]; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 43-50; Kevin B. McCruden, "Christ's Perfection in Hebrews: Divine Beneficence as an Exegetical Key to Hebrews 2:10," *BR* 47 (2002), 42-45; Stephen Motyer, "The Atonement in Hebrews," in *The Atonement Debate: Papers from the London Symposium on the Theology of Atonement*, ed. Derek Tidball, David Hilborn, and Justin Thacker (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 142-43; Stephen Motyer, "The Psalm Quotations of Hebrews 1: A Hermeneutic-Free Zone?," *TynBul* 50, no. 1 (1999), 21; Grant R. Osborne, "The Christ of Hebrews and Other Religions," *JETS* 46, no. 2 (2003), 259; Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 83-84; Thomas G. Smothers, "A Superior Model: Hebrews 1:1-4:13," *RevExp* 82 (1985), 339; Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek Text with Notes and Essays* (Orig. Pub. 1889; Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 41-45; Norman H. Young, "Suffering: A Key to the Epistle to the Hebrews," *AusBR* 51 (2003), 54.

reading (as discussed above), the anthropological reading is supported by four other observations: (1) clear references to humanity's glorious destiny in the immediate context; (2) the anthropological reading as the prevailing pre-Christian and extra-Christian interpretation of the psalm; (3) the "coming world" as the inheritance in the introductory formula in 2:5; and (4) the author's climatic shift to Christ in 2:9.

First, the author of Hebrews is clear that humanity is destined for glory within the immediate context in Heb 2. Under the anthropological reading, humanity's God-intended realization of glory and honor has been frustrated, and Christ is the answer to this unfulfilled reality.[34] God intended glory and honor for humanity, and although this good purpose is frustrated, the human Jesus was "crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death" (2:9), and is "bringing many sons and daughters to glory" (2:10). The author is clear, therefore, that humanity ("many sons and daughters") is destined for glory in Christ.[35] The anthropological reading, therefore, does not deny Christ's presence in the context. Indeed, he is the means by which humanity's God-intended purposes can find fulfillment;[36] but the anthropological reading finds in the author's use of the psalm at this point in Heb 2 a statement of God's original good purposes for humanity.

Second, it is worth noting that Ps 8 in its OT context, and nearly every pre-Christian or extra-Christian reading of the psalm, is anthropological.[37] As suggested above, "son of man" in the OT generally carried no messianic overtones, but referred simply to a human being.[38] For example, Kraus, who reads Ps 8:4-6 in Hebrews christologically, writes, "However, in Psalm 8 there is not even a trace of this eschatological-messianic message of the NT."[39] Likewise, Goldingay states that Ps 8

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[34] So Westcott: "The sovereignty of this order was not prepared for angels (v. 5). It was promised to man (6-8a); and the promise was fulfilled in 'Jesus' (8b-9)" and "Jesus is not the 'man' of the Psalmist, but He through whom the promise to man has been fulfilled and is in fulfilment" (Westcott, *Hebrews*, 41 and 45).

[35] Furthermore, human beings are said to rule with Christ in 1 Cor 6:2-4, 2 Tim 2:12, and Rev 20:6 (cited in Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 240).

[36] I address this point in more detail in chapter 6.

[37] So Blomberg: "The lack of any demonstrable pre-Christian Jewish exegesis that takes this Psalm in a Messianic sense and the persistence of the literal interpretation into the rabbinic era (when a few hints of a Messianic interpretation do begin to appear) likewise favor the anthropological interpretation" (Blomberg, "'But we see Jesus'," 93).

[38] This point is argued most clearly in Yarbro Collins, "Son of Man," 341-48.

[39] Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1-59*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald, CC (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 185-86 (here, 186).

in the OT "does not refer to the Messiah but places a responsibility on and makes a promise to humanity."[40] The Qumran "Community Rule" has a possible allusion to an anthropological reading of Ps 8, when it claims, "He created man to rule the world" (1QS 3:17-18a).[41] Likewise, the author of 2 Esdras laments that although the Lord had said that it was for his people that he created the world, other nations now domineer over them: "If the world has indeed been created for us, why do we not posses our world as an inheritance? How long will this be so" (2 Esd 6:59)?[42] Both 2 Esdras and Hebrews struggle with the apparent untruth of Ps 8: everything is supposed to be in subjection to humanity (or to Israel, as in 2 Esd), but it is not yet the case.

Third, the language in the introductory formula (2:5) of God not submitting to angels "the coming world" (τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν) pushes for an anthropological reading. We discussed above in the treatment of Ps 110 and Ps 8 the temporal difference between the two, wherein Christ waits *until* God makes his enemies a footstool (Ps 110 in Heb 1:13) while God has *already* subjected all things to the referent in the past (Ps 8 in Heb 2:5 and 2:8). On the one hand, the language of the coming world may support the christological reading, given that the author indicates Christ's need to wait until God places his enemies into subjection. The world to come may be associated with this later time when God so acts.

However, the overwhelming sense in Hebrews is that the coming world is intended for humanity. Τὴν οἰκουμένην in 2:5 alludes back to τὴν οἰκουμένην in 1:6, where God "leads the firstborn into the world" (τὴν οἰκουμένην).[43] God "leads (εἰσαγάγῃ) the firstborn [Christ] into the world" in 1:6, and he "leads (ἀγαγόντα)

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[40] John Goldingay, *Psalms; Volume 1: Psalms 1-41*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 161.

[41] Translation from Florentio García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 6. Furthermore, Yarbro Collins finds a generic "human being" reading of Son of Man in the Qumran literature (Yarbro Collins, "Son of Man," 343).

[42] Guthrie and Quinn note this parallel: "This parallel is striking for two texts that may have been written at about the same point in history" (Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 242-43). However, this parallel does little to advance their christological reading of the psalm, since the psalm is clearly read anthropologically in 2 Esdras.

[43] Noted also in P. C. B. Andriessen, "La Teneur Judéo-Chrétienne de He I 6 et II 14B-III 2," *NovT* 18, no. 4 (1976), 294; Caneday, "Eschatological World," 28-36; Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 114; Koester, *Hebrews*, 213; Moffitt, *Atonement*, 45-144 esp. 58-63; Kenneth Schenck, "A Celebration of the Enthroned Son: The Catena of Hebrews 1," *JBL* 120, no. 3 (2001), 478; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 163-64. I speak to the οἰκουμένη in 1:6 in more detail in chapter 6, section III.

many sons [and daughters] to glory" in 2:10.[44] Christ's coming into the world is on
account of his being human, the firstborn of many sons and daughters. So, Moffitt
rightly notes, "The Son's invitation to sit where no angel has ever been invited to sit –
his elevation in the οἰκουμένη to a royal status above the position of the ministering
spirits – is explained by his being a blood-and-flesh human being."[45] "The coming
world" in 2:5, therefore, is a human inheritance. This aligns with elsewhere in
Hebrews where humans are said to be inheritors (as in 1:14, 6:12, 9:15, and 11:8).
Like those desiring "a better country, that is, a heavenly one" (11:16), "we seek the
city that is to come" (13:14). We have begun to experience this eschatological hope
already (6:5), but it is not yet complete (13:14).[46] Christ will also have glory, honor,
and dominion, but only because he is the firstborn of the sons and daughters.
Schenck, therefore, is correct: "When the author goes on to note in 2:5 that he has
been speaking about 'the coming world', surely this 'world' is none other than the
place of salvation and glory to which Christ is leading the sons. The angels are only
servants for the sons until they inherit salvation, for the coming world is not subjected
to them, but to Christ and the sons."[47] In view of Hebrews' insistence that humanity
will be inheritors with and through Christ, this language of "the coming world" being
subjected in 2:5 supports the anthropological reading.

Fourth, the author climactically introduces Christ in 2:9, and subsequently
depicts Christ as the one who brings the psalm to fulfillment. Following the lament
that humanity has not yet received its divinely-intended glory, honor, and dominion,
the author introduces Jesus, but after some delay. The NRSV eliminates the
anticipation with "but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the
angels."[48] However, the author of Hebrews leaves Jesus until the end: "τὸν δὲ βραχύ

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[44] Caneday, "Eschatological World," 36.

[45] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 142. Moffitt goes to great lengths to demonstrate Jesus' corporeality as the necessary condition for his entry into the heavenly realm (see esp. 47-53; 119-44). For example, he writes: "the Son's humanity *serves as the explanation* for how the Son became eligible to be exalted to the divine throne and receive the worship of the angels. Specifically, the Son became like his peers, the descendants of Adam and Abraham, the heirs of God's promises. Jesus' ascension into heaven and the assumption of the heavenly throne can therefore be identified with the entry of *the* representative of God's people into the eternal promised land" (142, italics his).

[46] Guthrie and Quinn rightly associate the coming world with the coming age of 6:5 and the city to come of 13:14 as an already but not yet reality (Guthrie and Quinn, "Discourse Analysis," 239).

[47] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 57.

[48] See also the KJV, RSV, NJB, and NIV.

τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἠλαττωμένον βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν" ("but we see one who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus"[49]). In so doing, the author surprises us with a new character in the mix.[50] This character did not receive glory and honor on account of divine intention, but on account of "the suffering of death" (διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου). That this dramatically-appearing Jesus in 2:9 is not the same referent as that in the Psalm is perhaps strengthened further by the author's repetition of being made lower than the angels (ἠλάττωσας αὐτὸν βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους [2:7] and τὸν δὲ βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἠλαττωμένον [2:9]). As mentioned above, βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἠλαττωμένον can mean "a little lower than the angels" (a comparative sense) or "for a little while lower than the angels" (a temporal sense). The author may be making a play on words, so that the divinely-graced humanity in 2:7 is only slightly lower than angels (comparatively), but their divinely-intended glory, honor, and dominion is secured by Jesus, who was lower than the angels for just a little while (temporally).

II.3. Conclusion

Therefore, we find the anthropological reading to be most convincing. Following the anthropological reading of Ps 8 in these verses, the human story reads as one with a hopeful beginning. Our anthropological reading of Ps 8 found the psalm directed toward human beings and fulfilled in Christ. God intended glory, honor, and dominion for humanity, but these good intentions are presently frustrated: "at present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him [humanity]" (2:8). Humanity presently faces obstacles so significant that the happy ending to this hope can no longer be assured. This story of hope has become a story of desperation. We turn now to this default human story.

III. THE PRESENT DEFAULT HUMAN STORY

Despite God intending dominion, glory, and honor for humanity, the default human story in the present is one dominated by sin. Humans do not exercise dominion, but are rather enslaved to the fear of death (2:15). The author of Hebrews

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[49] As in the NASB and ESV.
[50] So Lane: "The unusual word order is calculated to arouse attention; it conveys an element of surprise as well as emphasis" (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 48).

has a pessimistic anthropology when it comes to humanity in the present, as demonstrated by three points: (1) the ubiquity of sin in the human story; (2) the requirement of divine help; and (3) the need for continual forward movement. Here I will discuss each of these points in turn. In the next chapter I will explore the inevitable conclusion to this default human story.

III.1. Sin and the Human Story

Sin enters the picture in Hebrews as early as 1:3, where Jesus makes purification for sins before sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Humanity's struggle with sin appears throughout the rest of the book, and the author makes it clear that the human story itself is one of a constant struggle with sin. The author uses other words beyond "sin" to describe a behavior that he finds unacceptable. Most of these appear in the so-called[51] warning passages, broadly identified as: 2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39; and 12:14-29[52]:

"Sin" in Hebrews where the word "sin" does not appear	
Passages	*Key Greek Words; Terms or Descriptions in English*
2:1	παραρρέω; lest we drift away
2:2	παράβασις, παρακοή; transgression, disobedience
2:3	ἀμελέω; neglect so great a salvation
3:8 (quoting Ps 95)	σκληρύνω; harden your hearts as in the rebellion
3:10 (quoting Ps 95)	πλανάω, go astray in their heart
3:12	πονηρός, ἀπιστία, ἀφίστημι; evil, unbelieving heart that falls away
3:13	σκληρύνω; hardened by the deceitfulness of sin
3:15 (quoting Ps 95)	σκληρύνω; harden your hearts as in the rebellion
3:16	παραπικραίνω; heard and yet rebelled
3:18	ἀπειθέω; disobedient

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[51] I say "so-called" because simply "warning passages" prejudges the nature and purpose of the passages. These passages may be as much (or more) about encouragement to obedience as about discouragement against disobedience. For this reason, "warning" may be a bit strong. For example, Smillie argues that language of the word of God as a two-edged sword in 4:12-13 should be interpreted not as a warning, but as an encouragement about the effectiveness of God's word to circumcise the heart: "Like a skillfully wielded scalpel in the hand of a practiced surgeon, the living and active Word of God sculpts away sclerosis of the heart that may have hitherto prevented belief" (Gene R. Smillie, "'Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ' in Hebrews 4:12-13," *NovT* 46, no. 4 (2004), 338-59 (here, 358)).

[52] Herbert W. Bateman IV, "Introducing the Warning Passages in Hebrews: A Contextual Orientation," in *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews*, ed. Herbert W. Bateman IV (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007), 27; McKnight includes the whole of chapter 12 (Scot McKnight, "The Warning Passages of Hebrews: A Formal Analysis and Theological Conclusions," *TJ* 13 (1992), 22); Guthrie narrows the warning passages down to 2:1-4; 4:12-13; 6:4-8; 10:26-31; and 12:25-29 (Guthrie, *Structure*, 135).

3:19	ἀπιστία; unbelief
4:6	ἀπείθεια; disobedience
4:7 (quoting Ps 95)	σκληρύνω; harden your hearts
4:11	ἀπείθεια; disobedience
5:11	νωθρός; sluggish of hearing
6:6	παραπίπτω, ἀνασταυροῦντας ἑαυτοῖς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ παραδειγματίζοντας; have fallen away, crucifying again the Son of God and holding him up to contempt
6:12	νωθρός; sluggish
10:25	ἐγκαταλείποντες τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἑαυτῶν; neglecting to meet together
10:28	ἀθετέω; set aside the law of Moses
10:29	ὁ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καταπατήσας, τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης κοινὸν ἡγησάμενος, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς χάριτος ἐνυβρίσας; spurned the Son of God; profaned the blood of the covenant; outraged the Spirit of grace
10:35	ἀποβάλητε παρρησίαν ὑμῶν; throw away your confidence
10:38 (quoting Hab 2:4)	ὑποστέλλω; shrinks back
10:39	ὑποστολή; shrinking back/timidity
11:6	χωρὶς πίστεως; without faith it is impossible to please God
12:3	κάμνω, ἐκλύω; grow weary, fainthearted
12:5	ἐκλέλησθε τῆς παρακλήσεως, ἐκλύω; forget the exhortation, grow weary
12:15	ὑστερέω, ῥίζα πικρίας; fails to obtain the grace of God, root of bitterness
12:16	πόρνος, βέβηλος; sexually immoral, profane (like Esau)
12:25	παραιτέομαι, ἀποστρέφω; refusing and rejecting the one who is speaking
13:2	φιλοξενίας ἐπιλανθάνεσθε; inhospitality
13:4	πόρνος, μοιχός; sexually immoral and adulterous
13:5	φιλάργυρος; love of money
13:9	παραφέρω; led away by diverse and strange teachings (includes a mention of foods)
13:16	εὐποιΐας καὶ κοινωνίας ἐπιλανθάνεσθε; neglecting to do good and share possessions

For our purposes, I will use "sin" as a catchall for these key words and images above. These words and images – all of which appear in the so-called warning passages and none of which are repeated in more than one passage – add to the sense that the author conceives of sin as a ubiquitous plague on humanity.

Sin in Hebrews is more than an occasional behavior of wrongdoing, but a universal behavior that affects all people's consciences. Humanity needs more than purification of wrongdoing, but purification of the conscience (συνείδησις) itself. Συνείδησις appears only twice in the LXX,[53] but it is commonly used elsewhere in the NT.[54] At a basic non-moral[55] sense, the conscience is used for one's innermost thoughts or general awareness (as in Eccl 10:20 and 2 Cor 5:11). Within Hebrews and the rest of the NT, the conscience usually carries a moral sense, so that it denotes "particularly the awareness of transgressions or the faculty for such awareness."[56] Everyone, in the mind of the author of Hebrews, struggles with a heavy conscience. Everyone needs purification of conscience, which suggests that "all humanity starts from a place of defilement, exclusion from God's presence, and subjection to God's judgment."[57] The author of Hebrews laments that the sacrifices performed under the previous covenant could not "perfect the conscience of the worshiper" (9:9). The yearly sacrificial ritual, perhaps due to its cyclical nature, did not remove from worshipers their consciousness of sin (10:2),[58] so the author looks to the blood of Christ as that which can "purify our conscience from dead works[59] to serve the living

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[53] Eccl 10:20 and Wis 17:11 [17:10 LXX]. For συνείδησις in the Hellenistic world, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 242 n 146 and Gary S. Selby, "The Meaning and Function of συνείδησις in Hebrews 9 and 10," *ResQ* 28, no. 3 (1985-86), 145-46.

[54] Acts 23:1, 24:16; Rom 2:15, 9:1, 13:5; 1 Cor 8:7, 10, 12, 10:25, 27-29; 2 Cor 1:12, 4:2, 5:11; 1 Tim 1:5, 19, 3:9, 4:2; 2 Tim 1:3; Tit 1:15; 1 Pet 3:16, 21. Pierce's study of the conscience in the NT remains the standard (C. A. Pierce, *Conscience in the New Testament*, SBT 15 (London: SCM Press, 1955).

[55] I take this terminology from Attridge, *Hebrews*, 242.

[56] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 242. See also Selby, who understands συνείδησις in Hebrews as "the internal faculty within man that causes him to be painfully aware of his sinfulness and, as a result, to experience a sense of guilt" (Selby, "Meaning," 148). For this use in Philo and Josephus, see Philo *Det*. 146; *Spec*. 2.49; *Virt*. 124; Josephus *Ant*. 16.103, 212; *J.W.* 4.193.

[57] Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 164.

[58] However, Eberhart rightly notes: "such a dimension of the elimination of sins is never intended in the sacrificial cult of the HB/OT. There the reality that human beings will always commit sins and become impure, and that they will be in need of forgiveness and purification at all times, forms the basis of the temple cult with its repetitive (in fact, daily) service. Hebrews' interpretation that this repetitiveness is a sign of inefficiency is, therefore, the result of the specific interest in continuous forgiveness" (Christian A. Eberhart, "Characteristics of Sacrificial Metaphors in Hebrews," in *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods - New Insights*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 60).

[59] "Dead works" here should not be shaded by a Pauline dichotomy of faith and works (and even whatever Pauline dichotomy may or may not be in play is heavily debated). In Hebrews, "dead works" is something from which we must repent (6:1), but the author never associates dead works with legalism, as a supersessionist reading of Hebrews may like him to. Given so little evidence in Hebrews ("dead works" appears only in 6:1 and 9:14), the most we can say about "dead works" is that they are something from which we must repent and which affect us at the level of the conscience.

God" (9:14). He encourages us to approach confidently the holy places (τῶν ἀγίων, 10:19) "with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience" (10:22). The author, therefore, presents sin as not only a universal behavior, but a universal behavior that affects everyone at the level of the conscience. Humans need more than purification from simply their sinful behaviors, but from their wounded consciences that are left behind. Sin is pervasive.

III.2. Hebrews 2:1-4 and the Need of Divine Help

Sin is so pervasive that the author cannot imagine humans being obedient without God's enablement. Those who are mature have been trained enough to distinguish between good and evil (5:14), and so by extension those who remain immature are unable to make such a distinction. Humans need the introduction of an external force in order to discern good and evil and so be faithful.

A close reading of Heb 2:1-4 shows the author using the metaphor of drifting away (παραρρέω)[60] as an image for the default human story of unfaithfulness and the need for divine enablement. In 2:2-4 the author employs a narrative of the angelic delivering of the "word" to warn against neglecting "so great a salvation." This "word" is most likely the words to Moses on Mount Sinai.[61] The word passed on by angels proved valid and transgressors who heard this word received their just punishment. As a result, the author implies that those who have heard about so great a salvation[62] from eyewitnesses of the Lord should likewise not expect to escape if

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[60] In Greek literature, παραρρέω is sometimes used in nautical contexts as "flow beside, by, or past" (LSJ, 1322), and so we may recognize a nautical overtone here: "do not drift away like a ship without an anchor" (for a discussion of the word see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 64 and Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 35). Ellingworth rejects the nautical metaphor altogether (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 137), and LSJ lists other uses of παραρρέω without nautical connotations: "slip off or out;" "to be careless;" "neglect;" "run off" (1322). Even if the word carries nautical connotations, Attridge is right that such a nautical metaphor is not fully developed in this passage (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 64). As a result, I do not try to develop any possible nautical connotations with παραρρέω.

[61] As in *Jub.* 1:27-2:1; Acts 7:38, 53; Gal 3:19. The NT references are confined to the law (νόμος in Acts 7:53 and Gal 3:19) or the living oracles to Moses (λόγια ζῶντα in Acts 7:38), while in *Jubilees* the archangel Gabriel relays the creation story. In Hebrews, the angels are never given a voice, and so we must look outside of Hebrews to discover "the word declared by angels."

[62] For the sake of readability, the NRSV starts a new sentence after σωτηρίας ("salvation"), and translates the pronoun ἥτις (which is usually translated "which") as "it": "*it* was declared at first through the Lord" (NRSV, italics mine). The Greek text is clear that this "it" in English translation is the salvation. Since the pronoun ἥτις in 2:3 is feminine, it modifies a feminine noun. The feminine σωτηρίας is the immediately preceding noun, and so the obvious option.

they neglect[63] such a great salvation. I argue that in Heb 2:1-4 the author depicts the word declared by angels as an impotent tool that cannot keep us from drifting, and so he points to the salvation declared by the Lord as the means by which we do not drift.

III.2.1. The Standard Interpretation: Qal wa-homer

Most commentators[64] take this passage as a classic example of a *qal wa-homer* interpretation, where if one thing is true for a lesser circumstance, then it is even more so the case for a greater circumstance.[65] Under the standard lesser-to-greater interpretation, the basic argument of Heb 2:1-4 is that we who have received the message of salvation should be *all the more afraid* of drifting away, since those who received the earlier word through angels received their just retribution for transgression and disobedience. In short: if transgressing the angelic word led to punishment, then how much more punishment must await those who transgress the Lord's word! Koester is a good representative of this interpretation: "The author insists that the consequences for disregarding the message of Christ will be even greater than those for disregarding the Law."[66] However, I suggest this is not the main point of this passage, and that the passage calls for a fuller reading beyond a mere amplification of warning to the present hearers.

Hebrews 2:1-4 lacks a key linguistic marker of a *qal wa-homer* argument. The author of Hebrews makes a lesser-to-greater argument elsewhere in Heb 9:13-14; 10:28-29; and 12:25. In each case, the author compares a lesser circumstance with a greater one by asking, "how much." If the blood of bulls and goats purifies the flesh, then "how much more" (πόσῳ μᾶλλον) will the blood of Christ purify the conscience (9:13-14)? If those who violated the Mosaic law died without mercy, then "how much worse" (πόσῳ … χείρονος) punishment must await those who spurn the Son of

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[63] Wallace calls ἀμελήσαντες here a "circumstantial participle," which implicitly signals conditionality. So, "if they neglect" is an appropriate translation (Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 687). See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 66; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 34.

[64] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 105; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 134; Hagner, *Hebrews*, 20; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 87; Koester, *Hebrews*, 209; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 34; James Moffatt, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1924), 18; Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 76.

[65] For a succinct summary of Hillel the Elder's seven rules of Scripture interpretation, see Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2005), 219-20.

[66] Koester, *Hebrews*, 209.

God (10:28-29)? If people could not escape the one who warned from earth, then "how much less" (πολὺ μᾶλλον) chance do we have of escaping the one who warns from heaven (12:25)? In each case, the author makes his argument with a comparative adjective (πόσος in 9:14 and 10:28; πολύς in 12:25). Heb 2:1-4, however, features no such comparison. The author asserts the fact of punishment for transgressing the angelic word (2:2), but he does not ask "how much more" (using πόσος or πολύς) punishment must await those transgressing the Lord's word of salvation. Instead, he simply asks "how" (πῶς) we can escape if we neglect a great salvation. He makes no lesser-to-greater comparison between the angelic word and salvation, which suggests that the author is making a different argument from the standard *qal wa-homer* reading. Therefore, a fuller interpretation of Heb 2:1-4 is in order.

III.2.2. The Ongoing Retributive Role of the Angelic Word

The author maintains an ongoing role for the word declared by angels. He describes the word declared by angels as "reliable" or "valid" (βέβαιος).[67] The author uses a form of βέβαιος three other times (3:14; 6:19; 9:17), and each case is in reference to something that cannot or should not be changed. The author gives us no reason to think otherwise of the word declared by angels in 2:2. Indeed, the "author accepts the validity of God's message to his ancestors" in 1:1.[68] The Sinaic covenant – or at least some aspect of it – continues to be valid. While the author is clear later on that certain aspects (such as the sacrificial cult) are found insufficient (more on this below), he never suggests a wholesale invalidation of the word declared by angels.[69] In Heb 2:2, the validity of the word declared by angels is associated with the language of punishment that follows: "the word declared by angels was valid, καὶ *every*

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[67] The aorist tense verbs in 2:2 (ἐγένετο and ἔλαβεν) cause no issue here, since aorists can but do not necessarily always signal a past completed action. See F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1961), 171-72; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 554-65.

[68] Hagner, *Hebrews*, 20.

[69] Heb 7:18 may be an exception, but here the author does not speak of setting aside the whole old covenant as weak and useless, but "an earlier commandment." In context, this earlier commandment probably refers primarily to the command for a Levitical priesthood.

transgression and disobedience received a just retribution."[70] The author maintains

that the word declared by angels proved an effective tool of retribution for every

transgression and disobedience, terms commonly used when discussing sin in the

NT.[71] It appears that at least one remaining facet of the validity of the angels' word is

its ability to determine and enforce punishment. This aligns with the author's

depiction of Jesus' death as one which redeems people "from the transgressions

committed under the first covenant" (9:15). This interpretation is grammatically

tenable as well. The conjunction καί linking the word's validity in the first half of the

verse with every transgression and disobedience in the second half can function as an

explanatory (or epexegetical) conjunction, offering additional information on the

preceding clause.[72] If καί is an explanatory conjunction, then 2:2-3 can be translated:

"For since the word spoken by angels was valid, *that is to say*, every transgression

and disobedience received a just retribution, how will we escape if we neglect so great

a salvation?"[73] By this reading, the latter half of the verse explains the first half. The

word declared by angels remains valid as an effective tool of retribution for sin, and

so we need salvation to escape this retribution.

However, as the author makes clear later in Hebrews, certain aspects of this

word are found lacking. The word declared by angels is *not* a reliable tool for

restoring or *enabling* humans to be faithful. The repetitive sacrificial cult could not

perfect people (7:19; 9:9-10), it could not permanently forgive sins (10:11), and it

could not cleanse the human conscience of memory of sin (10:1-4). Indeed, the

author states clearly in 8:7 that the first covenant was not faultless, and so it

demanded a second. The second covenant, as the author suggests in 8:8, is the answer

to the fault with *them*. The plural αὐτούς in 8:8 most likely refers to the people under

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[70] Attridge perceives a connection between βέβαιος and the language of "transgression and disobedience" that follows: "The implications of that validity are now made explicit in the notice that every 'transgression and disobedience' … will be punished" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 65).

[71] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 65.

[72] For this use of καί, see Blass, Debrunner, and Funk, *Greek Grammar*, 228; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 673.

[73] See also Hagner: "This message [from angels] was, of course, **shown to be true** in many ways … but the particular way that our author has in mind is in the reality of judgment upon those who **did not follow it or obey it**" (Hagner, *Hebrews*, 20, bold print his).

the first covenant.[74] The citation from Jeremiah looks forward to a covenant that will empower humans to be obedient. The new covenant will offer humans perpetual forgiveness: God will write his laws on human minds and hearts, everyone will know God, and God will remember people's sins no more (8:10-12). By establishing this new covenant, God has made the first one (the word declared by angels) obsolete. However, this first covenant has not completely disappeared, but is growing old and according to 8:13 *is near* its disappearance (ἐγγὺς ἀφανισμοῦ). Therefore, the author allows once again for an ongoing validity for the word declared by angels, even if limited. This word has no power to prevent humans from drifting away, but only to punish them for doing so.

III.2.3. *Enabling Salvation*

Given the previous word's limited reliability as only a tool of retribution, humans still find need to escape. The author asks in 2:3, "how shall we escape if[75] we neglect so great a salvation?" Escape here is almost certainly associated with God's judgment, as it is in Heb 12:25: "For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven."[76] The salvation declared by the Lord is the answer. On the one hand, salvation is future deliverance from judgment,[77] and the author is clear here that it is in neglecting this salvation that our hope of escape from judgment is ruined. At the same time, however, this salvation is not only our guarantor of escape from judgment, but our very enablement not to drift away. Under the salvation provided by the Lord

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[74] See also 2 Macc 2:7, where Jeremiah himself finds fault with the people (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 415). Lane follows the variant reading αὐτοῖς (dative) and associates it with λέγει, resulting in the translation: "For God finds fault when he says to them" (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 199). Lane suggests, therefore, that God in 8:8 finds "fault not simply 'with them' (i.e., the people) but with the first covenant" (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 202). However, as Koester shows, Lane's reading does not fit the style of the author, who often introduces OT citations with a form of λέγω without an indirect object (as in 2:6, 12; 3:7, 15; 4:3, 7; 6:14; 9:20; 10:5, 15; 12:5, 26) (Koester, *Hebrews*, 385).

[75] Although Heb 2:3 does not include εἰ or ἐάν, the conditional "if" is implied. On Heb 2:3 as a conditional clause, see Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 633, 687.

[76] See also Luke 21:36; Rom 2:3; and 1 Thess 5:3.

[77] So Attridge: "Salvation clearly involves preservation from the eschatological judgments that await sinners" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 66). See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 139; Erich Grässer, "Das Heil als Wort, Hebr. 2:1-4," in *Neues Testament und Geschichte: Historisches Geschehen und Deutung im Neuen Testament. (O. Cullmann Festschrift)*, ed. Heinrich Baltensweiler and Bo Reicke (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1972), 262; Koester, *Hebrews*, 210. I address the nature of God's judgment in more detail in chapter 4, section IV.2, and salvation in Hebrews in chapter 5, section II.1.1.

in the new covenant, Christ "purifies our conscience from dead works in order to serve (εἰς τὸ λατρεύειν) God" (9:14);[78] God writes his law on people's hearts and forgives sins (10:16-17); and God equips people to serve him and do good work (13:20-21). Based on the perpetual life of Christ (7:23-25) and his once-for-all sacrifice (7:26-27), this salvation has the power to cleanse the conscience and perfect humans (10:2, 14), and it too is valid.[79] Therefore, the saving work of Christ is the means by which humans within the pessimistic anthropological framework of Hebrews can be faithful.

The salvation of which the author speaks in Heb 2:3 is an enabling salvation. This conclusion is confirmed by the nature of the exhortation in 2:1. The author does not say, "do not drift away," but rather, "we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard (δεῖ περισσοτέρως προσέχειν ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσιν)." It is in obedience to this exhortation – to pay closer attention to what we have heard – that we do not drift away. This salvation was declared not by angels but by the Lord himself (the one who is greater than angels in Heb 1). The wordplay in the passage should not be missed. The word declared by angels was valid (βέβαιος) in 2:2, and this message from the Lord was validated (βεβαιόω, related to βέβαιος) by those who heard in 2:3. God added his testimony,[80] affirming the message with signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is in this word that we have heard from the Lord that we find our enabling not to drift away.

The need for this enabling salvation is clear: humans need this enabling because their default mode of existence is one of unfaithfulness. If left alone to their own devices, humans will drift away. Just as dogs bark, birds sing, and roosters crow, humans drift away. While the word declared by angels is the reliable agent for punishing those who drift away, God's salvation is (to use the metaphorical language of 2:1-4) the reliable anchor[81] for keeping humans from drifting away.[82]

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[78] Whitlark, as noted in the introduction, highlights the logical connection in 9:14 between the cleansing of the conscience and service to God: "The believer is cleansed *so that* he or she may serve God" (Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God*, 156, italics his). He suggests further that this enablement extends to the ongoing life of the believer, as insinuated by the future tense καθαριεῖ (cleanse) in 9:14, so that Jesus' work of purification continues (157).

[79] The word declared by the Lord was "validated (ἐβεβαιώθη) to us by those who heard" (2:3).

[80] For συνεπιμαρτυροῦντος as God corroborating the testimony, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 67 n. 59

[81] See also 6:19: "We have this hope, a sure and steadfast (βεβαίαν) anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain" (NRSV).

The hearers of Hebrews have heard the message, and so by implication, it is a falling back to a previous order of existence if they find themselves drifting away.[83] The issue for the author is not necessarily that we are drifting away *from something*,[84] but that we can drift away – we can find ourselves participating once again in the default human existence of unfaithfulness. The emphasis is on our propensity to drift away. If we were not prone to drift away, then we would not have to pay such close attention to what we have heard. But since humans are prone to drift, we must pay closer attention lest we slip back into the default existence.

III.3. The Need for Continual Forward Movement

Related to the exhortation to pay much closer attention, the author of Hebrews expects his hearers to be ever on the move in faithfulness[85] to avoid falling back into the default human story of unfaithfulness. Stagnancy is unacceptable.[86] This call is clear in two passages: Hebrews 3:7-4:11 and Hebrews 6:4-6.

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[82] The author of Hebrews does not address the question of how a person first appropriates this salvation and so stops drifting, or who causes this to happen. This is likely due to the probability that the author was writing to people who he believed were insiders. I address the question of how to "get in" in more detail in chapter 9, section V.3, where I will suggest an ecclesiological explanation.

[83] This account resonates with language of falling away elsewhere in Hebrews, which I address below.

[84] The NRSV translates verse 1: "We must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away *from it*" (Gk: Διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ περισσοτέρως προσέχειν ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσιν, μήποτε παραρυῶμεν). The NIV, NJB, and NET avoid this mistake. In adding the prepositional phrase "from it," which the Greek neither has nor requires, the NRSV translators have introduced a singular noun (a person, place, thing, or idea) that the hearers and author should not drift away from. This not only confines the interpretation to a drifting away from a singular person, place or thing ("from it"), but it also shifts the emphasis from our drifting away to the question of what we should not drift away from. The focal issue here in the text is simply, "lest we drift away."

[85] What I mean by "forward movement" will become clearer as we progress through this section and the rest of the thesis. In short, by "moving forward in faithfulness," I refer to progressing in spiritual maturity with the community of faith, as evidenced by continued obedience and participation in the community. The opposite of forward movement would be "neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some" (10:25).

[86] Schmidt argues that moral lethargy (and not the temptation to revert to Judaism) is the problem facing the hearers of Hebrews (Thomas E. Schmidt, "Moral Lethargy and the Epistle to the Hebrews," *WTJ* 54 (1992), 169). See also Backhaus: "Die Mattheit des Glaubens ist nach seiner Überzeugung Folge einer geistlichen Blutarmut. Die Glaubenspraxis seiner Gemeinde ist deshalb *ermüdet*, weil das Gottesbild *ermüdend* ist" (Backhaus, *Der sprechende Gott*, 81, italics his). While I would agree that the issue facing the hearers of Hebrews is not a pull to Judaism, I see the community struggling less with moral lethargy than with their temptation to be timid (Heb 10:39) in the face of persecution (see also P. C. B. Andriessen, "La communauté des 'Hébreux': Etait-elle tombée dans le relâchement?," *NRTh* 96 (1974), 1054-66). I treat the question of persecution in the next chapter (chapter 4, section II.2).

III.3.1. Hebrews 3:7-4:11 and the Wilderness Generation at Kadesh

III.3.1.1. The LXX Background: Numbers 13-14

In Heb 3:7-4:11, the author of Hebrews interacts with the story of Israel in the wilderness, particularly their experience at Kadesh as narrated in Num 13-14,[87] to exhort his hearers to forward movement. Although the author only quotes explicitly part of Ps 95 (in Heb 3:7-11), the story as narrated in Numbers is so clearly in the background that Lane can say: "It would appear that the writer had the Book of Numbers opened before him when he composed this section of the sermon."[88]

In Num 13, the Israelites encamped at Kadesh-barnea sent twelve spies into Canaan. Each spy was a leader (ἀρχηγός; Num 13:2, 3; 14:4)[89] from each tribe. Ten of the spies returning from the Promised Land did not believe they could overtake the Canaanites. Joshua trusted that "if the Lord is choosing us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us" (Num 14:8 LXX),[90] but the masses did not agree. So the fearful Israelites disobeyed God's command and refused to enter. This angered God, and prompted him to say to Moses, "How long is this people going to provoke me, and how long are they not going to believe me (ἕως τίνος οὐ πιστεύουσίν μοι)[91] amidst all the signs that I have performed among them" (14:11)? God was set on striking the Israelites with a plague, but Moses pleaded for their lives. God relented, but still swore not to allow anyone who witnessed God's glory and signs in Egypt and the wilderness to enter the Promised Land (14:20-23). The majority report from the spies was one of fear and unbelief, and the Israelites did not trust that God would give them victory in Canaan, so they refused to enter the Promised Land, "the rest."[92]

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[87] See also Hofius, *Katapausis*, 117-27; Laansma, *Rest*, 262-64; Bryan J. Whitfield, "Pioneer and Perfecter: Joshua Traditions and the Christology of Hebrews," in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. Library of New Testament Studies 387 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 82-83).

[88] Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 90. Enns suggests that Num 14:26-35 may have been in the psalmist's mind as well (Peter Enns, "Creation and Re-Creation: Psalm 95 and its Interpretation in Hebrews 3:1-4:13," *WTJ* 55 (1993), 266).

[89] Ἀρχηγός is also used of Jesus in Heb 2:10 and 12:2 – more on this below and in chapter 7, section II.3.1.

[90] This and the following quotes from Numbers are from NETS.

[91] This is one of only two instances of πιστεύω in Numbers (noted also in Hamm, "Faith," 273). In the other instance (20:12), the Lord chides Moses and Aaron for refusing to believe him and so also refuses them entrance into the Land.

[92] For a clear association between the rest (κατάπαυσις) and the promised land, see Deut 12:9.

III.3.1.2. The Rest as Motivation to Forward Movement

The author of Hebrews uses the rest (κατάπαυσις)[93] as a motivation for continued forward movement in faithfulness. I address the rest as an image of the eschatological hope in Hebrews in chapter 5.[94] Here our concern is not with what the rest *is*, but with what the rest *does*.[95]

Within the context of the wilderness generation narrative, the rest refers to the Promised Land.[96] The Ps 95 quotation ends with God's promise to refuse the rebellious Israelites entrance into God's rest (Ps 95:11 in Heb 3:11). Reflecting on the story, the author of Hebrews concludes, "So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief [ἀπιστία]" (3:19). The sin that kept the generation from entering the Promised Land was their refusal to believe God and so enter the Land when God told them to. They were refused entrance into the rest because they would not enter the rest. They were happy to remain stagnant, and for this they were punished. The "rest" is the motivation (as the goal into which they should enter) and the means of punishment (as the place into which they are refused entrance).

At the same time, however, the author is also clear that the eventual entrance into Canaan under Joshua (Ἰησοῦς)[97] was not actually entering the rest (4:8).[98] The author of Hebrews maintains that whatever they received upon entry into the Land was not the ultimate rest: God's Sabbath rest (σαββατισμός, 4:9).[99] God's rest has been available since the foundation of the world (4:3), and so could be entered into by human beings for all time. As Weiss suggests, "both God's evangelization of

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[93] Every occurrence of κατάπαυσις in Hebrews appears in chapters 3-4.

[94] Section II.1.5.

[95] So Wray: the rest is "an extended and effective sermon illustration" (Judith Hoch Wray, *Rest as a Theological Metaphor in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel of Truth: Early Christian Homiletics of Rest*, SBLDS 166 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 92).

[96] Attridge describes the rest in the land of Canaan as "an antitype of a more original type, the state of rest which God himself entered at the completion of the week of creation" (Harold W. Attridge, "'Let Us Strive to Enter that Rest': The Logic of Hebrews 4:1-11," *HTR* 73, no. 1-2 (1980), 284).

[97] Although this could be either Joshua or Jesus, Joshua is the better translation in light of the Promised Land narrative. Curiously, the book of Joshua claims the people of Israel did in fact find rest (Josh 1:13 and 23:1; Johnson, "Scriptural World," 246).

[98] Thiessen argues that the author of Hebrews maintains that the people never actually entered the Promised Land (Matthew Thiessen, "Hebrews and the End of the Exodus," *NovT* 49 (2007), 353-369).

[99] On σαββατισμός as "God's Sabbath celebration," see Hofius, *Katapausis*, 110; Laansma, *Rest*, 276-77; Andrew T. Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology in the New Testament," in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Investigation*, ed. D. A. Carson (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock, 1982), 213; and Herold Weiss, "Sabbatismos in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *CBQ* 58 (1996), 674-89.

succeeding generations and God's permanent rest are divine activities that transcend historical particularities and distinctions between the old and the new."[100] The community, therefore, must enter the rest "today," just as the wilderness generation had an opportunity "today" (4:7).

The wilderness generation narrative and the rest are hortatory tools to encourage faithfulness and discourage unfaithfulness. Like the wilderness generation, the present hearers have a promise of entering the rest (4:1), they have had good news preached to them (4:2), and they are faced with the option to enter the rest (4:11). The rest is something toward which they can move[101] even now.[102]

III.3.1.3. The Rest and Communal Forward Movement

Furthermore, as I will develop in fuller detail in chapter 9,[103] the author of Hebrews expects his hearers to move forward in community. This is clearest in 4:1-2: "Let us fear, therefore, while the promise of entering God's rest still stands, lest any of you might be deemed (δοκῇ)[104] to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not profit them, since *they were not united in faith* (μὴ συγκεκερασμένους τῇ πίστει)[105] with those who listened." This plural reading ("they were not united") highlights the author's call for corporate accountability. By this reading, the author recalls that the unfaithful Israelites were not united in faithfulness with Joshua, Caleb, and any other person who believed God

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[100] Weiss, "Sabbatismos," 683.

[101] On pilgrimage in Hebrews, see P. J. Arowele, "The Pilgrim People of God (An African's Reflections on the Motif of Sojourn in the Epistle to the Hebrews)," *AJT* 4, no. 2 (1990), 438-55; William G. Johnsson, "The Pilgrimage Motif in the Book of Hebrews," *JBL* 97, no. 2 (1978), 249.

[102] The present tense εἰσερχόμεθα in Heb 4:3 may suggest the possibility of entering the rest even now. More on this in chapter 5, section II.1.5.

[103] Section V.

[104] On this translation of δοκῇ, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 124.

[105] The understanding of this verse is compounded by the textual variant in 4:2, where the plural accusative συγκεκερασμένους also appears as the singular nominative συγκεκερασμένος. If the singular nominative συγκεκερασμένος is followed, then the subject of the participle would shift from the plural group ("they") to a singular "it" (most likely the "message they heard; ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς"). The resulting translation, then, would be: "but the message they heard did not profit them, since *it was not united in faith* in those who heard" (see RSV; NASB; NIV). However, the manuscript evidence strongly supports the plural accusative συγκεκερασμένους, attested in P[13vid], P[46], Codex Vaticanus, and a number of other uncial and minuscule manuscripts. The nominative singular συγκεκερασμένος appears in Codex Sinaiticus, but in no other uncial or minuscule manuscripts. Therefore, the verse is rightly translated "since they were not united in faith" (see NRSV; ESV; NJB). See also Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Second ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2002), 595.

to enter the Promised Land.[106] The community was not united in faithfulness so as to enter the land in obedience, and so their bodies fell in the wilderness (3:17). The community the author of Hebrews addresses should, therefore, make sure that no one has a heart of ἀπιστία (3:12) and encourage one another day after day (3:14). Only together can they move forward in obedience and enter the rest.

Therefore, the rest functions as a goal for the present community to strive to enter as a group, and it is a rest that must be entered "today." The Ps 95 citation (Heb 3:7-11) begins with "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion" (Heb 3:7), and the author says "today" four times after that (Heb 3:13, 15; 4:7 twice). The Israelites had the opportunity to enter the rest (the Promised Land) for one day, and so also the hearers of Hebrews have an opportunity to trust and be obedient to God's call "today." There is no guarantee that the promise will remain open forever, as the Num 14 account dramatically narrates. As Numbers tells it, the Israelites did not enter the Promised Land on the day that God told them to take it, but they tried to enter the next day. Moses warned that God's favor was not with them and that they would be struck down in Canaan if they went to battle (Num 14:40-43). They did not believe Moses, however, and attempted to enter the Promised Land only to be defeated by the Canaanites (Num 14:45). Their delay proved their undoing. Just like the Israelites at Kadesh-barnea, the hearers of Hebrews are at the point of great decision. Will they trust God and "enter the rest," faithfully finishing their course?[107] Or will they remain stagnant like the unfaithful generation, content in their own wilderness? The latter leads to death ("whose bodies fell in the wilderness," Heb 3:17), while the former leads to ultimate peace ("those who enter God's rest also

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[106] Contra Attridge: "The author is not saying that the ancient Israelites were not united to the faithful remnant, Caleb and Joshua, who heard the message. Rather, he says that they were not united to 'us' who do, he hopes, listen to the message" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 125-26). However, the author does not say that "we" (in the present) have listened to the message, but that the good news came to "us" just as to "them." The ones who heard the message appears with the aorist participle τοῖς ἀκούσασιν. The author never says that "we" are τοῖς ἀκούσασιν. The clear context of the Kadesh narrative suggests that τοῖς ἀκούσασιν are in fact the people in the wilderness generation who did not unite in faith with Joshua and Caleb, the faithful ἀρχηγοί in the story. See also Bryan J. Whitfield, "The Three Joshuas of Hebrews 3 and 4," *PRSt* 37, no. 1 (2010), 24-26.

[107] The call to move completely to the rest is strengthened by 3:12-14, which warns against an unbelieving heart and takes 3:6b a step further: "for we have become partakers of Christ, if indeed we might keep firm the confidence *until the end*" (3:14). Perseverance until the end is key; stopping at the edge of the Promised Land is not sufficient.

cease from their labors as God did from his," 4:10). There is no time to waste. They must persevere and faithfully "enter the rest" today, while there is still time.

The community stands at its own Kadesh, and they must unite and enter the rest today, following the faithful ἀρχηγός, Jesus. Jesus is already called the ἀρχηγός of humanity's salvation in 2:10, and later in 12:2 the author encourages his hearers to fix their eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith (τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν). Further, there is an echo in 3:7-4:11 of the ἀρχηγοί in the Kadesh account in Numbers. In the Septuagintal account of the wilderness generation, each of the spies sent into Canaan were said to be a leader (an ἀρχηγός in Num 13:2-3) of their respective tribes. The disobedient wilderness generation followed the leadership of ten of the timid ἀρχηγοί characterized by ἀπιστία and refused to enter the Land, and so subsequently died in the desert. But the author of Hebrews insists the community not follow these ἀρχηγοί to the grave, but enter the rest. They should, as the author will say later in 12:2, fix their eyes on the ἀρχηγός of πίστις, Jesus. The ἀρχηγός Jesus has already entered God's rest as the "great high priest who has passed through the heavens" (4:14).[108] Where the earlier ἀρχηγοί in the wilderness account were unfaithful and so led their people to death, the ἀρχηγός Jesus is a reliable pioneer to life.

The call to faithfulness in 3:7-4:11, therefore, is a communal call to move forward in trusting obedience, led by the faithful Son over the house of God (3:6).[109] As the author of Hebrews will say later, we should "lay aside every weight and the sin

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[108] See also Moffitt, *Atonement*, 128.

[109] This reading speaks indirectly to the question of supersessionism in Hebrews. For an example of a supersessionist reading, see Thomas: "From all indications, it seems more natural to us that the first readers (the original recipients) of the book of Hebrews were Jewish (or, at least, predominantly Jewish) converts to Christianity and that the author intended the main thrust of his argument as a polemic against Judaism" (Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 105). Later, Thomas writes, "This escalation of punishment [in the context of 10:26-29] is once again marked by the dwarfing and paling of the old era in the imposing shadow of the new era. For while in the old era Yahweh had sworn to vindicate his people (Israel) against their enemies, in an ironic twist of events brought about by the invasion of the new era, those who claim to be his people by abandoning his Son and returning to their mother religion now find themselves standing in the place of the enemies upon whom God is now obliged to execute his vengeance" (177). However, by the reading I have offered of Hebrews 3-4, the author is not necessarily worried about his readers falling back into Judaism, but is worried about them remaining spiritually stagnant. Keeping with the Kadesh-barnea imagery, the author is concerned less with them going back to Egypt (although this would also not be preferred), but he is worried about them failing to enter the Promised Land. Or, as Attridge writes, "It is not what they are drawn to but what they might give up that concerns our author" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 369). See also Clark M. Williamson, "Anti-Judaism in Hebrews?," *Int* 57, no. 3 (2003), 266-79.

that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus" (12:1-2). This, as we will address in chapters 6-8 in particular, is the narrative of faith: an active trusting obedience in the face of death, as lived perfectly by Christ. And, as we will also find, the assured conclusion to this story of faith is eschatological life.

Just as the author conceives of faithfulness as a corporate moving forward into God's rest, he considers unfaithfulness a stagnancy that does not keep in step with God's people. Unfaithfulness is remaining in the default human story. This becomes clear in light of the author's call for the entire community to work together. In 3:12 the author calls for the community to "watch out lest (μήποτε) there be in anyone among you an evil (πονηρὰ), unbelieving (ἀπιστίας) heart that falls away (ἀποστῆναι) from the living God." The propensity is not to fall toward God, but to fall away, and so the author insists that the community watch out for one another. This communal watching out can potentially keep others in the community from falling away. Μήποτε in 3:12 functions similarly to μήποτε in 2:1, where the author insists that paying closer attention to what had been heard is instrumental to not drifting away. So also here in 3:12, the community's watching out is instrumental for the faithful progress of others.

III.3.1.4. Conclusion

Heb 3:7-4:11 has a forward-looking quality: unfaithfulness fails to move forward. We cannot be certain what "failure to move forward" looked like for the original hearers,[110] but what is clear is that the author expects a way of life lived out by the community that seeks to be ever obedient to God "today."

The author of Hebrews offers two stories with two assured conclusions. Those who follow the story of unfaithfulness (which finds its paradigmatic expression in the wilderness generation) can expect only death.[111] Those with whom God was angry saw their bodies fall in the wilderness (3:17), and the author uses this frightful story to motivate his hearers to avoid making a similar mistake. On the other hand, if

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[110] I would suggest that "failure to move forward" involves a person abandoning the community of faith in the face of persecution. I will develop this suggestion more fully in chapter 9, section V.3.

[111] I speak to death in the next chapter.

we follow the story of faith (if we are united in faith and move forward to the rest following the faithful ἀρχηγός Jesus), we can expect life.[112]

In summary, our reading of unfaithfulness in 3:7-4:11 coheres with what we found in 2:1-4. In 2:1-4, we found that the author conceives of unfaithfulness as the default human story lived apart from God's enabling salvation. Here, we find unfaithfulness as disobeying God's command to enter the rest, thereby abandoning God's faithful people; it is remaining stagnant, fearfully refusing to align with the people of God and move forward in trusting obedience: a resignation to the default existence. In both cases, therefore, unfaithfulness is as much about the refusal to obey actively as it is about the activity of disobeying. Perhaps we can say that the author is worried less about people disobeying than he is about people not obeying. Those who refuse to obey remain in the default human story and can only look forward to this story's assured conclusion.

III.3.2. Hebrews 5:11-6:12 and the Pull to a Former Existence

Hebrews 5:11-6:12 offers another hint that stagnancy is symptomatic of the default human story. Similar to 3:7-4:11, in 5:11-6:12 the author exhorts us to maturity lest we fall away back into the default human story.

The dreaded warning of refused repentance in 6:6 is in the context of an exhortation to spiritual maturity.[113] This entire so-called warning passage is framed

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[112] I speak to life in chapter 5. Augustine's confession is appropriate here: "For Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee" (*Confessions* 1.1; Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. F. J. Sheed (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006), 3).

[113] The so-called warning passages (and 6:4-6 in particular) have been key battleground texts for centuries. Especially in Protestant circles, interpreters have used these passages to speak to the soteriological concerns of systematic theology: Does Hebrews teach that a person can lose his/her salvation? Can a true believer actually commit apostasy or is the believer eternally secure? On this debate, McKnight identifies four basic views: the hypothetical view [the warnings are real, but the sin has not and cannot be committed]; the phenomenological-false believer view [the warnings are directed to people who can commit the sin, but who are not actually believers, and so do not commit apostasy *per se*]; the phenomenological-true believer [the warnings are directed to true believers in danger of committing apostasy]; and the covenant community view [the warnings are to an entire community in danger of falling away] (McKnight, "Warning Passages," 23-25). The *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews* book includes chapters on: A Classical Arminan View (Osborne); A Classical Reformed View (Fanning); A Wesleyan Arminian View (Cockerill); and A Moderate Reformed View (Gleason). For a treatment of these five warning passages in defense of a theology of apostasy, see Dale Moody, *Apostasy: A Study in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in Baptist History* (Greenville, SC: Smyth & Helwys, 1991). Important as these systematic theological questions are, this is not our focus here. Here we are concerned narrowly with how the author of Hebrews conceives of the default human story and the consequences for remaining in that story.

by the image of sluggishness (νωθροί, 5:11 and 6:12),[114] which suggests "sluggishness" is a key problem to which the entire passage speaks.

Writing to active members of the community,[115] the author decries their immaturity. In 5:11-12 the author chides them that although by now they should be teachers, they are still only students who need to be re-taught the basic elements of God's oracles (presumably those listed in 6:1-2). They are not ready for solid food, but still need milk. Similar to those in the wilderness generation who refused to move forward in obedience, the author uses an image of stagnancy to describe those in 5:11: they have become "sluggish in hearing" (νωθροὶ γεγόνατε ταῖς ἀκοαῖς). He hopes to go with them beyond basic teachings and on toward perfection (6:1-3). From these hints, we see "sluggishness" as a condition of laziness that demonstrates itself in the stunted apprehension of Christian teaching. In 5:11, the hearers appear to be guilty of this condition, as they have already become (γεγόνατε, perfect indicative) sluggish in hearing.

"Sluggishness" (νωθρός) appears again in 6:12. However, this time the author does not accuse his hearers of already being sluggish (as he does in 5:11), but he imagines sluggishness as a possibility (γένησθε, aorist subjunctive). The hearers can presumably avoid becoming sluggish if they persist in their good work and love with the full assurance of hope, just like "those who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (6:10-12). Sluggishness, therefore, appears to be a condition that can be remedied. However, those who *remain* sluggish may not be so fortunate.

In service to his exhortation to maturity, the author gives a negative example of radical sluggishness (6:4-8). Just as the author used the narrative of the unfaithful generation at Kadesh[116] in 3:7-4:11, here he uses the image of a fully-incorporated Christian who has completely disavowed the work of Christ and his or her association with the community. Both of these negative examples assist the author's purpose: to

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[114] On this *inclusio* see Guthrie, *Structure*, 83-84.

[115] This is evidenced by two points: (1) the author uses the second person, and (2) the author insinuates that they have been in the community long enough to be teachers (5:12).

[116] On parallels between Heb 6:4-5 and Israel's wilderness experience, see Martin Emmrich, "Hebrews 6:4-6 - Again! (A Pneumatological Inquiry)," *WTJ* 65 (2003), 83-95; Dave Mathewson, "Reading Heb. 6:4-6 in Light of the Old Testament," *WTJ* 61 (1999), 209-25; and Noel Weeks, "Admonition and Error in Hebrews," *WTJ* 39 (1976), 78-79.

encourage his hearers to forsake stagnancy in favor of spiritual maturity, thereby refusing to remain in the default human story.[117]

Beginning in 6:4, the author shifts from first- and second- person language to a third-person description of people who "have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit and have tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the coming age." If these people were to fall away, it would be impossible for them to be restored to repentance. Some scholars take those addressed in this passage as professing, but not true believers.[118] However, most interpreters rightly understand the author to be speaking of true members of the community in danger of falling away.[119] More than the question of whether those described in 6:4-6 are "saved" or not, the main point of the passage is to encourage perseverance. Thielman is right: "Were these people 'saved' in the first place? Since the author speaks of salvation as a future experience toward which all believers are traveling on the pilgrim way, this question is not in his field of vision. He is simply concerned to warn his audience against turning back or turning aside from the path that leads to Mount Zion and to the heavenly Jerusalem."[120]

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[117] I do not suggest that the warning in 6:4-6 is merely hypothetical, but I do suggest that the warning is more to encourage spiritual maturity than it is to reflect on the eternal state of those considered in the negative example.

[118] Whether these descriptors refer to a full Christian or one who has only made a profession is debated in some circles. For a "false profession" reading, see Wayne A. Grudem, "Perseverance of the Saints: A Case Study from Hebrews 6:4-6 and the Other Warning Passages in Hebrews," in *Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace*, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), 133-82; Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, "Hebrews 6:4-6 and the Peril of Apostasy," *WTJ* 35, no. 2 (1973), 137-55; Mathewson, "Reading Heb. 6:4-6," 209-25; Roger R. Nicole, "Some Comments on Hebrews 6:4-6 and the Doctrine of the Perseverance of God with the Saints," in *Current Issues in Biblical and Patristic Interpretation: Studies in Honor of Merrill C. Tenney Presented by his Former Students*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 355-64; and Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, esp. 260-65. For a review of many of these pieces, see Robert A. Peterson, "Apostasy in the Hebrews Warning Passages," *Presb* 34, no. 1 (2008), 27-44.

[119] Those described in 6:4-6 have tasted fully the heavenly gift, the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come. This "tasting" is more than a quick taste-test, but a full experience, just as Jesus tasted death in 2:9. They have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, which probably entails a level of perseverance, given that the author speaks of becoming partakers of Christ if we hold the confidence firm until the end (3:14) (more on this verse in chapter 9, section IV.3). Despite the third-person language, these people are likely "insiders, those who have gained access to the favor and gifts of God" (David deSilva, "Exchanging Favor for Wrath: Apostasy in Hebrews and Patron-Client Relationships," *JBL* 115, no. 1 (1996), 116). For a strong argument for this reading, see McKnight, "Warning Passages," 43-55.

[120] Frank Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 607. McKnight also tries to nuance what he means by "believer" with the term "phenomenological": "the 'phenomenological' believer experiences faith so far as he or she is

Unlike what we found in the section above, where stagnancy was a refusal to obey actively, here the author narrates a situation where someone has quite intentionally disobeyed. Most interpreters see "falling away" as more than an unintentional sin or lapse in judgment. For example, Calvin writes, "the apostle is not talking here about theft, or perjury, or murder, or drunkenness or adultery. He is referring to a complete falling away from the Gospel, not one in which the sinner has offended God in some one part only, but in which he has utterly renounced His grace."[121] Likewise, Thielman suggests that "The author is concerned not with certain 'mortal' sins but with the one sin of apostasy from the faith. […] These are descriptions of people who have chosen to leave behind their initial commitment to the message of salvation."[122] This is no small thing, but "the ultimate expression of unbelief and disobedience."[123] Falling away is further described as "crucifying again the Son of God and putting him to shame." Once again, this appears to be more than an unintentional sin or lapse in judgment. The image of 6:4-6 is one of full participation reverting to complete disavowal.

The warning in this passage is dire: those who have fallen away have no hope of restoration to repentance because in falling away they are crucifying again the Son of God. The author is not clear about who is unable to restore to repentance those who have fallen away. No subject is given for the infinitive ἀνακαινίζειν ("to restore," 6:6). The subject of the infinitive could be anyone: the fallen one, someone else, or God. Oberholtzer worries that God as the subject compromises the sovereignty and omnipotence of God.[124] However, sovereignty and omnipotence are

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capable; however, this person also commits apostasy and so is eternally condemned, even though faith was formerly phenomenological. It will be argued in what follows that this 'phenomenological' faith is all that humans can experience in the present order of things; some of these believers persevere unto eternal life and others will not and so will be condemned. These former believers had a phenomenological faith but did not persevere; these latter believers had a phenomenological faith but did persevere and so had 'genuine' or 'true' or 'real' or 'saving' faith" (McKnight, "Warning Passages," 24-25 n 12). See also Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 595-96.

[121] John Calvin, *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second Epistles of St. Peter*, ed. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. William B. Johnston, Calvin's Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 74-75.

[122] Thielman, *Theology*, 606.

[123] Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 169.

[124] Thomas Kem Oberholtzer, "The Thorn-Infested Ground in Hebrews 6:4-12," *BSac* 145, no. 579 (1988), 323. See also Verlyn D. Verbrugge, "Towards a New Interpretation of Hebrews 6:4-6," *CTJ* 15, no. 1 (1980), 70.

slippery attributes. Omnipotence does not necessarily mean that God can do *everything*, but only everything that can possibly be done.[125] Indeed, even though the author of Hebrews seems to allow for God as omnipotent (1:3; 11:19), he also claims that God cannot do certain things, such as tell a lie (6:18). Perhaps restoring unto repentance a fallen one is another thing that even the omnipotent God cannot do.

In summary, with this dramatic image of falling away, the author emphasizes the need for maturity. Remaining stagnant, as with the wilderness generation, is potentially deadly, and those who remain stagnant so as to disavow the confession have no hope of restoration. "Full assurance of hope to the end" is the author's desire for his hearers (6:11). I interact with the agricultural metaphor in 6:7-8 in the next chapter,[126] but it is worth noting here that the author does not reserve the deadly consequence only for apostates, but for anyone who does not bear useful fruit. Death, as I will argue in the next chapter, is the assured conclusion for all who remain stagnant in the default human story. This stagnancy (which is, again, the refusal to progress in spiritual maturity and in obedience to God) is indicative of a pessimistic anthropology. If the author were happy with humanity's present condition, he would not be concerned that they keep maturing. Instead, the author wishes for his hearers to be on the move always and not remain in the default human story.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this chapter we found that the author of Hebrews operates with a pessimistic anthropology. God intended human beings to receive glory and honor as they exercise dominion, but this divine intention has at present not been realized. The default human story is one of a struggle with sin. Humans are unable to overcome this sin on their own, and so require divine enablement. They must cling to this enablement to avoid drifting away, and must always be on the move in faithfulness

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[125] So Aquinas: "[W]hen we say that God can do everything we are best understood as meaning this: since power is relative to what is possible, divine power can do everything that is possible, and that is why we call God omnipotent." For Aquinas, the possibility to which he refers is Aristotle's sense of "absolute possibility." He explains: something is "absolutely possible when a predicate is compatible with a subject (as in 'Socrates is seated'); absolutely impossible when it is not so compatible (as in 'Human beings are donkeys.')" (Summa Theologie, Question 25, Article 3 in Brian Davies and Brian Leftow, eds., *Aquinas: Summa Theologiae, Questions on God* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 274). And so, if the restoration of an apostatized person is absolutely impossible, then even the omnipotent God cannot (or will not) overcome this impossibility.

[126] Chapter 4, section IV.2.2.

lest they find themselves participating in the default human story once again. The default human story, therefore, is not a happy one. Those who remain trapped in the default story can only look forward to this story's assured conclusion, to which we now turn.

Chapter 4

Death as the Assured Conclusion

I. INTRODUCTION

For as much as Hebrews talks about death, Hebrews says very little about death. That is, death plays a large part in Hebrews, but the author says little about what the nature of this death actually is. In this chapter I explore death and the afterlife in Hebrews, with particular attention to the retributive afterlife of eschatological death (the positive eschatological vision is treated in the next chapter). I will argue that eschatological death in Hebrews is the assured conclusion to the default human story. Physical death is an expected outcome for all people, regardless of whether they are trapped in this default human story or whether they are participating in the story of faithfulness.[1] For those participating in the default story of unfaithfulness as detailed in the previous chapter, the author expects more than physical death, but a postmortem eschatological death as the assured conclusion.

First, I address physical death, neutrally speaking, in Hebrews. Second, I investigate in general terms the context of death in Greco-Roman and Jewish sources. Finally, I discuss the nature of the afterlife that the author of Hebrews expects for those trapped in the default human story.

II. PHYSICAL DEATH IN HEBREWS

II.1. Neutral Death

Physical death appears often in Hebrews, and it is not always a consequence of unfaithful behavior. The author of Hebrews expects all people to die (9:27). While death is a major hindrance to the earthly priests' ministries prior to Jesus (7:23-24), the author nowhere suggests that these priests' mortality was a punishment. The physical death of Jesus is a necessary element for human deliverance. The author is clear that the shedding of blood is necessary for forgiveness (9:22), and that those hoping to attain the promised eternal inheritance have this hope only because of the

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[1] I address the story of faith and how human beings can participate in this story in chapters 6-9.

death of Jesus, who redeems people from transgressions committed under the first covenant (9:15). In Heb 2, Jesus is the representative faithful human whose death is somehow efficacious for his brothers and sisters (more on this in chapter 6).[2] Jesus, the faithful high priest, has partaken of the same flesh and blood as humanity, so that through his death he might render powerless the devil who had the power of death.[3] In rendering the devil powerless, Jesus freed those who were held in slavery to the fear of death for all their lives (2:14-15). Here, death itself is not necessarily the enemy, but rather *the fear of death* is the foe, as Backhaus agrees: "Nicht die Sterblichkeit ist das Problem, sondern die Todesangst."[4] The author does not suggest that Jesus' death actually defeated physical death. Instead, Jesus' death frees humans from their slavery to the *fear of death*.[5] Death, therefore, continues as a viable (and even assured, as in 9:27) end of human life.

II.2. A Persecuted Community Facing Death

The original hearers of Hebrews were living in the face of their own possible physical deaths via persecution, either in actuality or in perception.[6] This is evidenced by four points.

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[2] Sections I.2 and II.

[3] The author does not explain in what way the devil had the power of death. Although τὸν τὸ κράτος ἔχοντα τοῦ θανάτου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸν διάβολον features a present participle [ἔχοντα] for the devil's holding of the power of death, the image of Jesus' defeat of the devil presses for a past-tense understanding of the devil's power of death, as so translated by the KJV, NASB, and NJB. The devil no longer has this power, but has been defeated as the power-holder. The author of Hebrews appears more concerned with the defeat of this power-holder than with what the power-holder's role was prior to this defeat. In this context, the author looks positively to the emancipation of humanity from their slavery to the fear of death (2:15). In returning to God the rightful ownership over death, Jesus has given humans the ability not to be afraid of death, because God can offer eschatological life (as we will discuss in chapters 5 and 6).

[4] Knut Backhaus, "Zwei harte Knoten: Todes- und Gerichtsangst im Hebräerbrief," *NTS* 55 (2009), 202-203. For the fear of death in the Greco-Roman tradition, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 93; Backhaus, "Zwei harte Knoten," 201-203.

[5] The significance of being freed from the fear of death will become clearer later, and I will speak to it in more detail in the following chapters that deal with the hope of life after death. At this stage it will suffice to say that something about death caused ample fear, and something about Jesus' death alleviates this fear. I argue in chapters 6-7 that Jesus' death alleviates this fear by re-writing a narrative wherein the conclusion of the story of faithfulness is one of assured life despite death.

[6] On perceived persecution, see Lane: "And while they may not have been under actual persecution at the time, the perception of persecution can be just as shaking to a community as persecution itself" (William L. Lane, "Living a Life of Faith in the Face of Death: The Witness of Hebrews," in *Life in the Face of Death: The Resurrection Message of the New Testament*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 248). See also Parker: "Like Revelation, Hebrews belongs in that category of Christian literature termed 'martyrology' – a handbook for strengthening and encouraging Christians so that they will not flee from death, but will willingly, yea, eagerly, accept mar[t]yrdom" (Harold M.

First, in 12:4, the author ominously says that the hearers have not yet resisted to the point of bloodshed in their struggle against sin. "Not yet" (οὔπω) appears emphatically as the first word in the sentence. There are two possible interpretations here. First, in light of the athletic imagery in the passage (the hearers being depicted as runners in a race in 12:1), this phrase could be a way of suggesting the hearers have not yet given their all: they are athletes, but have not yet applied themselves completely to the athletic pursuit.[7] The other option, the one which I follow, is to read this phrase as a reference to anticipated bloody persecution for the community.[8] This reading is strengthened by the immediate context depicting Jesus' endurance of the cross (12:2) and the author's call to look to Jesus as the pinnacle example of endurance through hostility as motivation (12:3). The language of struggling against sin to the point of bloodshed (μέχρις αἵματος) may also echo 2 Macc 13:14, where Judas Maccabees extols his troops to fight to the point of death (μέχρι θανάτου).[9] The "sin" against which we struggle is likely a periphrasis for the "sinners" from whom Jesus experienced hostility.[10]

Second, the author of Hebrews characterizes the hearers as a community that has faced persecution. In 10:32-33, the author reminds them of their former

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Parker, "Domitian and the Epistle to the Hebrews," *Iliff Review* 36 (1979), 38-41, here 38-39). Attridge writes similarly: "it might be fair to characterize the work not as the first *adversus Judaeos* tract but as the first exhortation to martyrdom" (Harold W. Attridge, "Hebrews, Epistle to the," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman Vol 3: H-J (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 100). For others finding persecution in Hebrews, see Andriessen, "La communauté," 1054-66; Braun, *Hebräer*, 408-409; John Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews*, SNTSMS 75 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 37; Patrick Gray, *Godly Fear: The Epistle to the Hebrews and Greco-Roman Critiques of Superstition*, SBL Academia Biblica Series 16 (Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 155-86; Elisabeth Fiorenza, "Der Anführer und Vollender unseres Glaubens: Zum theologischen Verständnis des Hebräerbriefes," in *Gestalt und Anspruch des Neuen Testaments*, ed. J. Schreiner (Würzburg: Echter, 1969), 262-81; Hagner, *Hebrews*, 155; Hans-Josef Klauck, "Moving in and Moving Out: Ethics and Ethos in Hebrews," in *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos in the New Testament*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, BZNW 141 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 436; Koester, *Hebrews*, 67-71; Craig R. Koester, "Conversion, Persecution, and Malaise: Life in the Community for which Hebrews was Written," *HvTSt* 61 (2005), 231-51; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, lvii, c; Salevao, *Legitimation*, 133-40; Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 118-20; Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 152; and Young, "Suffering," 47-59.

[7] The modern sports cliché, "Give 110%," comes to mind. Lane gives the example of Seneca the Younger, who said that the true athlete is the one who "saw his own blood" (Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 249). For proponents of this position, see Johnson, *Hebrews*, 319 and Koester, *Hebrews*, 525.

[8] For proponents of this position, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 360; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 342; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 645; Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 250-51; and Westcott, *Hebrews*, 398.

[9] Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 250. Lane points to 4 Macc 17:9-10 for similar language. Furthermore, 4 Maccabees also uses athletic imagery for Jewish martyrs (see 11:20; 13:15; 15:29; 16:16; 17:11, 13). More on this in chapter 7, section II.1.2.1.

[10] Andriessen, "La communauté," 1062; Braun, *Hebräer*, 409; Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 250-51.

circumstances, when after "being enlightened" they "endured a great conflict of sufferings, partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated." The author praises them for previously "showing sympathy to the prisoners and accepting joyfully the seizure of their property" (10:34). He encourages them to "remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body" (13:3). Those in prison could very well be members of the community or perhaps even the author himself.[11] Furthermore, the hearers may have examples of faith in the face of death in their own community. In 13:7, the author encourages the hearers to remember their former leaders and consider the outcome of their conduct (τὴν ἔκβασιν τῆς ἀναστροφῆς) and imitate their faith. This "outcome" (ἔκβασις) may well have been their deaths.[12] The author clearly paints his hearers as a group that has faced hardship in the past, and if we grant the second interpretative option in 12:4, he expects them to face even stronger hardship in the future.

Third, the author calls the community to costly discipleship. The hearers look to Christ as the paradigmatic faithful one (more on this chapter 7), and as participants in this narrative, they are called to live into Christ's story. The impact this has on their call to costly discipleship is clear in 13:13, where the author admonishes them to "go to Christ outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured."[13] This call may parallel the Synoptic Gospels' vision of carrying the cross of Christ (Matt 16:24, Mark 8:34, and Luke 9:23), who also had to "go out" (Mark 15:20-21 and John

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[11] We cannot be sure on this point, but the author may have been imprisoned. At the end of the book, he bemoans his delay to meet with them personally, and asks for their prayers. He claims, "We are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things" (13:18), and he believes that his ability to return to them is somehow contingent on their diligent prayers (13:19). Furthermore, both the author and the hearers know a common Timothy, "our brother," who has been "released (ἀπολύω)" perhaps from prison, and the author hopes to visit them with this Timothy (13:23).

[12] See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 392; Erich Grässer, "Die Gemeindevorsteher im Hebräerbrief," in *Vom Amt des Laien in Kirche und Theologie: Festschrift für Gerhard Krause zum 70ten Geburtstag*, ed. Gerhard Müller and Henning Schröer (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1982), 75; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 345-46; and Koester, *Hebrews*, 567.

[13] More on this in chapter 9, section V.4.

19:17).[14] Lane is correct: "As enunciated by Jesus, the call to discipleship is a call to martyrdom."[15]

Fourth, as we will discuss in further detail in the next chapter,[16] the author narrates the heroes of faith in Heb 11 as examples of faith in the face of death. This list of heroes culminates with Jesus as the ultimate example of faith in the face of death in 12:2. The heroes may have been so narrated to address the situation of the hearers. Lane summarizes the force of this observation: "In its listing of men and women of faith who were the addressees' forebearers [*sic*.], the chapter was designed to strengthen the men and women of the community in their resolve to be faithful to God – even in the event of martyrdom (cf. 12:1-4)."[17]

II.3. Conclusion

Death in Hebrews is a natural outcome experienced by all humans. The hearers of Hebrews in particular likely had death at the forefront of their minds, as the author depicts them as either actually facing or perceivably facing their own impending deaths via persecution. In these cases the author never connects this death to wrongdoing.[18] Death is not necessarily a negative consequence for unfaithfulness, but the author maintains that postmortem retribution will attend the unfaithful.[19] The default story of unfaithfulness finds its assured conclusion in eschatological death.

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[14] Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 253.

[15] Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 253. Lane reads the entire book of Hebrews as "a sermon on the cost of discipleship that seeks to call the church to endurance, certainty, and renewed hope" (247).

[16] Chapter 5, section III.1.

[17] Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 257.

[18] This is the case even in Heb 12:5-11, where the author tells his hearers that they are facing discipline. I address these verses in chapter 9, section II.2.1, where I argue that the discipline in view is educative and not punitive.

[19] A possible example in Hebrews where physical death is punishment for unfaithfulness comes with the Israelite wilderness generation narrative (3:7-4:11). Those who sinned – that is, they disoebeyed God (3:19) and refused to enter the Promised Land – saw their bodies fall in the wilderness (3:17). Even here, though, death in the wilderness is only a consequence of the actual punishment that is God's refusal to grant them entrance into the Promised Land.

III. HUMAN CONSTITUTION, DEATH, AND THE AFTERLIFE IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

By way of setting the context, we turn first to other views of the human constitution,[20] death,[21] and the afterlife in the Greco-Roman and Jewish worlds. I treat this topic only in summary here, and defer to other extended studies for fuller treatments.[22]

III.1. Greco-Roman

The immortality of the soul is the assumption in much of Greco-Roman (and more particularly, Platonic) philosophy.[23] Wright summarizes Plato's understanding of the human constitution:

> For Plato, the soul is the non-material aspect of a human being, and is the aspect that really matters. Bodily life is full of delusion and danger; the soul is to be cultivated in the present both for its own sake and because its future happiness will depend upon such cultivation. The soul, being immortal, existed before the body, and will continue to exist after the body is gone.[24]

The soul lives on in Hades, the Isles of the Blessed, or Tartarus, while the body remains in the grave.

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[20] I use "human constitution" to refer to what makes up a human: be it some combination or absence of body, soul, spirit, mind, and so on. This properly fits under the heading of anthropology, but since I used this term in the previous chapter when describing the author's vision of the human story, I use different terminology here to avoid confusion.

[21] On the link between understandings of human constitution and the afterlife, see Clark-Soles: "The discussion of the fate of a human being necessarily entails attention to anthropological considerations" (Jaime Clark-Soles, *Death and Afterlife in the New Testament* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 39).

[22] Among recently-published sources, see especially: Alan J. Avery-Peck and Jacob Neusner, eds., *Judaism in Late Antiquity, Part Four: Death, Life-After-Death, Resurrection and the World-to-Come in the Judaisms of Antiquity*, HO (Leiden: Brill, 2000); Clark-Soles, *Death and Afterlife*, 1-59; Casey D. Elledge, *Life after Death in Early Judaism: The Evidence of Josephus*, WUNT 2/208 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); Alan F. Segal, *Life After Death: A History of the Afterlife in Western Religion* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 204-81; Claudia Setzer, *Resurrection of the Body in Early Judaism and Early Christianity: Doctrine, Community, and Self-Definition* (Boston: Brill Academic, 2004), 1-20; and N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 3 (London: SPCK, 2003), 32-206.

[23] Not every Greco-Roman philosophical system believed in the immortality of the soul. For example, Garland notes in Homer that of the 240 deaths in the *Illiad*, only four are described in terms of the soul leaving the body, and in all four cases the dying person is a hero. For others, Homer uses 20 different descriptions for the physiological event of death (Robert Garland, *The Greek Way of Death* (London: Duckworth, 1985), 18). Epicurus denied the afterlife altogether, teaching instead the total annihilation of both body and soul upon death (Segal, *Life After Death*, 221-23).

[24] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 49. Wright suggests the same for Epictetus and Seneca (53-54). For more on Plato and the immortality of the soul, see Segal, *Life After Death*, 224-29.

Postmortem punishment or reward does not play heavily into Greek thinking, but neither is it wholly absent. Garland finds that in Homer, "with death all retribution ceases,"[25] but reward or punishment does attend the dead in other Greek sources.[26] Hades is not a place to be feared, but a pleasant experience where the soul, freed from the body, can finally flourish.[27] Death "is part of the goal of philosophy because it removes us from the biggest source of distraction [the body] to the philosophical enterprise."[28] However, Plato does expect postmortem retribution for those who do evil while alive: "We should really always believe the old and sacred stories which reveal to us that souls are immortal, and are judged, and pay the greatest penalties, whenever one is freed from the body. For this reason we should consider it a lesser evil to suffer much wrong and injustice that [*sic.*] to inflict it."[29] This retribution may be experienced in a subterranean prison or the virtuous may find reward in a celestial location.[30] The soul experiences these conditions for one thousand years (not eternally), when they are subsequently reincarnated until progressing eventually to purity.[31] Likewise, much later, Virgil's Hades is a place of retribution, but he also expects souls to return to earth for the rest of their rehabilitation.[32] Postmortem retribution was apparently popular enough to warrant a response from Lucretius, who, fitting with Epicurean philosophy, insists on the

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[25] Garland, *Greek Way of Death*, 60. See also J. Edward Wright, *The Early History of Heaven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 112-14.

[26] Garland identifies: the *Hymn to Demeter*, the Orphics' beliefs, the *Katharmoi* of Empedokles of Akragas, Pindar's *Olympian* 2, the *Supplaints* of Aeschylus, *Eumenides, Helen* of Euripides, and the Vision of Judgment in the *Gorgias* (Garland, *Greek Way of Death*, 61-66).

[27] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 49. See also Segal: "Besides the famous cases of Tantalus, Tityus, and Sisyphos and a handful of others, there are no real attempts to make Hades into a place of punishment or reward for a life deficient in happiness or virtue. Retributive justice was not the real function of Hades. […] Greeks apparently concluded that since death comes to all, Hades was the final destination for all" (Segal, *Life After Death*, 211).

[28] Segal, *Life After Death*, 226; so also Wright on Seneca (Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 54).

[29] Plato, "Seventh Letter" 335a (translation from R. S. Bluck, *Plato's Life and Thought with a translation of the Seventh Letter* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1949), 166. Noted also in Alan E. Bernstein, *The Formation of Hell: Death and Retribution in the Ancient and Early Christian Worlds* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 52. See also Segal: "[O]ne must not think that Plato completely denied any rewards and punishments after death. To the contrary, he suggests that justice and retribution do exist, though he can not demonstrate it with the same self-assurance as he achieves in proving the immortality of the soul" (Segal, *Life After Death*, 233).

[30] For Greco-Roman understandings of the astronomy of the heavenly realm, see Wright, *Early History of Heaven*, 99-107.

[31] Segal, *Life After Death*, 235-37.

[32] Segal, *Life After Death*, 242-44.

mortality of the body and soul.[33] On the place of punishment and reward in Greek thought, Garland concludes: "while belief in Hades as a place of punishment for certain crimes persisted from the time of Homer to the Classical period and beyond, criminally speaking the Greek underworld never became fully democratised: crimes of average venality excited neither dispraise nor retribution."[34]

Likewise, resurrection does not play into Greek thinking. We saw above that Plato and Virgil believe in reincarnation. However, this belief in reincarnation, which sees the soul moving closer to perfection via reincarnations, should be differentiated from resurrection, which sees the same body being raised only once. Resurrection should also be distinguished from a disembodied heavenly existence.[35] With regard to resurrection beliefs in the Greco-Roman world, Wright summarizes: "neither in Plato nor in the major alternatives just mentioned do we find any suggestion that resurrection, the return to bodily life of the dead person, was either desirable or possible."[36]

Death, as we have found generally speaking in the Greco-Roman world, should be joyfully anticipated as the soul's release from the bodily prison. Despite whispers, there is no strong anticipation of postmortem retribution or reward. Death should not be feared. However, as Wright correctly notes, that philosophers like Plato, Epictetus,[37] and Seneca belabor this point concerning death in these terms suggests that death at the popular level was still feared as "a catastrophe."[38] If not catastrophic, a popular Roman view of death was at least cynical, as suggested by the famous Epicurean tombstone inscription *NFFNSNC*: *non fui, fui, non sum, non curo* ("I was not, I was, I am no more, I don't care").[39]

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[33] Segal, *Life After Death*, 222.

[34] Garland, *Greek Way of Death*, 66.

[35] As Wright emphasizes throughout his work on resurrection, resurrection is "not a disembodied 'heavenly' life" but a "redescription or redefinition of death … death's reversal" (Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 83).

[36] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 53.

[37] Wright on Epictetus: "It is, indeed, one of Epictetus' great themes, that death is inevitable and therefore irrelevant: one should learn not to be troubled by death, either one's own or that of someone near and dear." Wright points to Epictetus *Disc*. 1.1.21-32 and 1.27.7-10 (Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 53).

[38] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 55.

[39] Clark-Soles, *Death and Afterlife*, 37; Segal, *Life After Death*, 223.

III.2. Jewish

III.2.1. Old Testament

Jewish understandings of human constitution, death, and the afterlife differ significantly from those surveyed above. Earlier texts in the OT do not conceive of a strict division between soul and body, and the immortality of the soul does not come into play.[40] Jewish thinking in the later Second Temple period appears to have adopted Greek notions of the separation of soul and body, so that the soul goes to Sheol while the body is laid in the tomb.[41] Nevertheless, Bauckham emphasizes that this is still different from Greek notions, since the soul is dead and not immortal; rather, resurrection into eternal life requires the re-unification of soul and body.[42]

In the OT, Sheol is the expected destination for all who die, be they righteous or unrighteous.[43] The imagery of Sheol is diverse. Sheol is sometimes death itself,[44]

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[40] For a succinct helpful treatment of the soul in the biblical witness, see Joel Green, "Soul," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible; Volume 5: S-Z*, ed. Katharine Doob Sakenfeld et al. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 358-59. For a recent review of major literature on the topic of human constitution in the Bible, see Joel Green, *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), 3-16.

[41] Bernstein finds this concept as early as Psalm 30:3: "O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit." Bernstein suggests, "This passage shows, further, that the part of the person which descends into Sheol at death is the *nephesh*, or 'soul.' When the person is rescued from the brink of death, it is the *nephesh* that comes back to reanimate him" (Bernstein, *Formation of Hell*, 141). However, the psalmist is probably taking poetic license here and not making an anthropological statement. Bernstein correctly reads the apparent resurrection in the verse as a poetic expression of gratitude for prevention of death. Given the poetic nature of this passage, the psalmist's language of his "soul" is likely a reference to his whole being, as we see often in the Psalms (for a few examples, see: 6:3; 7:2, 5; 17:13; 35:3; 57:1; 69:18; 130:5).

[42] Richard Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament: Collected Essays I*, WUNT 2/233 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 250-51. Some Jews believe in the immortality of the soul, such as Philo (Lester L. Grabbe, "Eschatology in Philo and Josephus," in *Judaism in Late Antiquity; Part Four: Death, Life-after-Death, Resurrection and the World-to-Come in the Judaisms of Antiquity*, ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck and Jacob Neusner. HO. (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 164-69; Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 144), the Essenes (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.154-58; John J. Collins, "The Essenes and the Afterlife," in *From 4QMMT to Resurrection: Mélanges Qumraniens en Hommage à Émile Puech*, ed. Florentio García Martínez, Annette Steudel, and Eibert Tigchelaar. STDJ 61 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 45-48; Wright, *Early History of Heaven*, 192), and Pseudo-Phocylides (115; Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 141). Pseudo-Phocylides still holds out eschatological hope for the body: "It is not good to dissolve the human frame; for we hope that the remains of the departed will soon come to the light (again) out of the earth; and afterward they will become gods" (103-104; translation from P. W. van der Horst, "Pseudo-Phocylides: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Volume 2*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 577-78).

[43] So J. Edward Wright: "Humans shared the same, inescapable fate – death and the netherworld. The netherworld (Sheol) was not a place for terrible punishments, at least not yet; it was simply a dark, dusty place where one continues in a shadowy form of one's life on earth" (Wright, *Early History of Heaven*, 97).

and other times it refers to a dark, deep, and dusty underworld existence,[45] often associated with "the pit."[46] Sheol is a place where the dead have no memories and are not remembered,[47] and yet Sheol is not always a place removed from God's presence.[48] Sheol can swallow up the living.[49] For some it is a hopeless place of no return,[50] while others consider God to be able to rescue people out of Sheol.[51] Sheol is sometimes considered a place of retribution,[52] but at other times it is poetically anticipated as a place of refuge.[53] Allowing for the diversity in play when accounting for such a large collection of writings as the OT, the most we can say about Sheol is that it is often a metaphor of death itself or a dark and dusty subterranean location where the dead exist. Sheol is the expected final destination for all people (righteous and unrighteous), leaving little hope thereafter.

Parts of the OT, however, have hints of postmortem reward and retribution. These hints are developed more fully in Second Temple Judaism. Still, although resurrection in the OT is "to put it at its strongest, deeply asleep,"[54] the texts of the OT have enough hints of resurrection to intrigue later Jewish and Christian interpreters. When I speak of resurrection, I follow Wright's emphasis on resurrection as re-embodied "life after life after death" over against resurrection as immortality:[55]

> Resurrection is not just another way of talking about Sheol, or about what happens, as in Psalm 73, 'afterwards', that is, after the *event* of bodily death.

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[44] Gen 42:38; 44:29, 31; 1 Kgs 2:6, 9; 2 Sam 22:6 (see also Ps 18:15); Ps 16:10; 49:14; 88:3; 89:48; 116:3; Isa 28:15, 18, 38:18; Hos 13:14.

[45] Gen 37:35; Deut 32:22; Job 11:8; 17:16; 21:13; Ps 55:15; Prov 9:18; 15:24; Eccl 9:10; Isa 5:14; 7:11; 14:9, 11, 15, 38:10, 18; 57:9; Ezek 31:15-17; 32:27 . Yet, Sheol is not always a place removed from God's watchful eye or presence, as in Job 26:6; Ps 139:8; and Prov 15:11.

[46] Job 33:18, 22, 24, 28, 30; Ps 28:1; 30:8-9; 49:9; 69:15; 88:4; Prov 1:12; Isa 14:15; 38:18; 51:14; Ezek 26:20; 31:14, 16; 32:18, 23-25, 29-30.

[47] Ps 6:5, 88:5. Although the fact that parts of the OT condemn (Lev 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deut 18:10-11; 26:14; 2 Kgs 23:24) or narrate accounts of (1 Sam 28:7-25; 1 Chron 10:13) interaction with the dead via mediums may indicate a more transient existence in Sheol (Bernstein, *Formation of Hell*, 137). Setzer rightly notes that no one in the OT declares these mediums ineffective (Setzer, *Resurrection*, 7).

[48] Job 26:6; Ps 139:8.

[49] Num 16:30, 33; Ps 55:15; Prov 1:12.

[50] Job 7:9.

[51] 1 Sam 2:6; Ps 30:3; 49:15; 86:13; Amos 9:2.

[52] Job 24:19; Ps 9:17; 31:17.

[53] Job 14:13.

[54] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 85.

[55] J. Edward Wright likewise does not find a hope of immortal life in heaven in the OT: "Heaven was not the postmortem destiny of humans. Heaven was for the gods, and humans were not welcome" (Wright, *Early History of Heaven*, 97).

It speaks of something that will happen, if it does, after that again. Resurrection means bodily life *after* 'life after death', or, if you prefer, bodily life after the *state* of 'death'. That is why it is very misleading – and foreign to all the relevant texts – to speak … of 'resurrection to heaven'. Resurrection is what did *not* happen to Enoch or Elijah. According to the texts, it is what *will* happen to people who are at present dead, not what *has already* happened to them.[56]

Isaiah 26:16-19 likely bears witness to "bodily life the other side of death."[57] Yahweh's people who are dead are expected to rise again (26:19), while those who lorded over Yahweh's people have no such hope (26:13-14). Here is not only a possible reference to bodily life after death, but also a separate expectation based on lives lived in the present.

Daniel 12:2-3 offers the clearest hope of resurrection:[58] "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever" (NRSV). Interestingly here in Dan 12:2-3, bodily resurrection is not a guarantor of a blessed future. Of the many who are raised from the dead, only some are raised to everlasting life, while others are raised to shame and everlasting contempt. Rescue from death, therefore, is not the ultimate hope, but rather a rescue from death into a blessed future. A fear of postmortem retribution remains along with the hope of postmortem life.

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[56] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 109 (italics his).

[57] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 118; see also Kevin L. Anderson, *"But God Raised Him from the Dead": The Theology of Jesus' Resurrection in Luke-Acts*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 56-58. Segal is less convinced that Isa 26 is a reference to literal bodily resurrection, but he does suggest that the metaphorical language here in Isa 26 (as well as in Ezek 37) becomes "the reservoir of images that illustrate what resurrection means" later in Dan 12 (Segal, *Life After Death*, 259-61, here 261).

[58] This point is widely acknowledged; see: Bauckham, *Jewish World*, 245; John J. Collins, "The Afterlife in Apocalyptic Literature," in *Judaism in Late Antiquity, Part 4: Death, Life-After-Death, Resurrection and the World-to-Come in the Judaisms of Antiquity*, ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck and Jacob Neusner. HO. (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 126; Segal, *Life After Death*, 262-65; Wright, *Early History of Heaven*, 97; Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 109. Setzer is not convinced that the resurrection in Dan 12:2-3 is any clearer than in Ezek 37 or Isa 26, since all three, in her estimation, could be read metaphorically or literally (Setzer, *Resurrection*, 9).

III.2.2. Second Temple

Postmortem expectation – both in terms of eschatological resurrection and eternal postmortem punishment or reward – develops further in later Second Temple Jewish thought.[59]

Some strands expect a future bodily resurrection. With respect to the Dead Sea Scrolls, Brooke writes: "Altogether there can be no doubt that there is ample explicit attestation in the non-sectarian compositions found in the Qumran caves of a belief in bodily resurrection."[60] For example, the image of the resurrection of dry bones in Ezek 37 is interpreted literally in 4Q385.[61] *Testament of Judah*[62] expects God's justice to prevail so that the martyrs will be raised: "And those who died in sorrow shall be raised in joy; and those who died in poverty for the Lord's sake shall be made rich; those who died on account of the Lord shall be wakened to life" (*T. Jud.* 25:4).[63]

Resurrection hope is clear in 2 Maccabees, which Wright suggests "provides far and away the clearest picture of the promise of resurrection anywhere in the period."[64] The nature of this resurrection is debatable. Kellermann and Powers maintain that the resurrection hope in 2 Maccabees is not for an eschatological

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[59] Some strands still maintain a common destiny for all who die, in keeping with earlier OT perspectives. So Ps.-Phoc. 111-113: "All alike are corpses, but God rules over the souls. Hades is (our) common eternal home and fatherland, a common place for all, poor and kings" (translation from van der Horst, "Pseudo-Phocylides," 578).

[60] George J. Brooke, "The Structure of 1QHᵃ XII 5-XIII 4 and the Meaning of Resurrection," in *From 4QMMT to Resurrection: Mélanges qumraniens en hommage à Émile Puech*, ed. Florentio García Martínez, Annette Steudel, and Eibert Tigchelaar. STDJ 61 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 18. He argues furthermore that the poet of 1QHᵃ XII 5-XIII 4 wrote "on the basis of a belief in a future bodily resurrection" (19-33, here 33).

[61] Brooke, "Structure," 17; Collins, "Afterlife in Apocalyptic Literature," 120.

[62] I mention the *Testaments* cautiously, since parts are Christian interpolations. Concerning this issue, Kee writes: "Apart from the Christian interpolations, which seem to have a special affinity with Johannine thought and probably date from the early second century A.D., the basic writing gives no evidence of having been composed by anyone other than a hellenized Jew" (H. C. Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Volume 1*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 777). Kee dates the *Testaments* to the Maccabean period (778).

[63] Translation from Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," 802. See also Setzer, *Resurrection*, 11. Segal finds similar logic earlier in Daniel. Segal roots Daniel's hope of resurrection in the context of the Maccabean persecution. Hope for future resurrection answered the theodicy question of God's care for the righteous: "If God was letting his faithful suffer, the very promises of the Bible are brought into doubt" (Segal, *Life After Death*, 265).

[64] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 150. More on resurrection in 2 and 4 Maccabees in chapter 5, section III.1.2 and chapter 7, section II.2.2.4.

resurrection, but an immediate resurrection *into heaven*.[65] The resurrection hope

expressed in 2 Macc 7, however, is not entrance into heavenly bliss, but a bodily

resurrection on earth. The martyred brothers express hope not of a life in heaven, but

that, as the second brother says, "the King of the universe will raise us up to an

everlasting renewal of life" (7:9, NETS). So also the fourth brother looks forward to

being raised again by God, while his torturers experience no such resurrection to life

(7:14). That this resurrection hope is an expectation of a future re-embodied existence

is strengthened further by the mother's words; she expects the one who created life in

her womb to breathe life back into her sons once again (7:22-23). She encourages her

youngest son to "accept death so that in his mercy I may get you back again along

with your brothers" (7:29, NETS). She does not expect to meet her sons in heaven,

but apparently in a resurrected re-embodied state on earth at some point in the future.

Other Second Temple Jewish texts expect reward or retribution without a clear

hope of bodily resurrection. Wisdom of Solomon expects the righteous, whose

reward is with the Lord, to live forever (5:15). *Psalms of Solomon* expect a day of

separation between the righteous and the sinner, where God will "repay sinners

forever according to their actions" (*Pss. Sol.* 2:34). The theme of eternal destruction

for sinners and eternal life for those fearing the Lord also appears in 3:11-12, 13:11,

and 15:12.[66] Although these texts do not explicitly mention bodily resurrection,

bodily resurrection may be an assumed step.

1 Enoch 22 envisions a temporary holding abode where the souls of deceased

persons await their final judgment. Here we see not only immortal souls,[67] but also a

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[65] So Kellermann: "In 2 Makk 7 entwickelt sich im Zusammenhang einer Märtyrertheologie und im Gespräch mit Dan 12 eine neue *Auferstehungsvorstellung von der besonderen himmlischen Auferstehung der Märtyrer unmittelbar nach ihrem Tod*" (Ulrich Kellermann, *Auferstanden in den Himmel: 2 Makkabäer 7 und die Auferstehung der Märtyrer*, SBS 95 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1979), *passim.*, here 19 (italics his)). See also Daniel G. Powers, *Salvation through Participation: An Examination of the Notion of the Believers' Corporate Unity with Christ in Early Christian Soteriology*, CBET 29 (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 204-206.

[66] Setzer, *Resurrection*, 13.

[67] So 4 Macc 13:15: "for great is the contest of the soul and the peril of everlasting torture awaiting those who transgress the commandment of God" (NETS). While the concept of the soul in 4 Macc is similar to that in Greek philosophy, Bauckham notes that when 4 Macc speaks of the immortality of the soul, this not a quality inherent to the soul, but a gift given to the martyrs (Bauckham, *Jewish World*, 252).

theology of postmortem reward and retribution.[68] The temporary holding abode may be a product of a corporate eschatological expectation. Bauckham demonstrates how eschatological hope in Second Temple Judaism is predominately a hope for God's salvific and righteous action in the world. The individual's hope is rooted in the hope of God's redemption of his people. Since those who have died must wait for the fate of the whole people, Sheol in Second Temple Judaism developed into an intermediate state for the dead, with separate compartments for the righteous and unrighteous (as in *1 En.* 22 and *4 Ezra* 7:75-101). Although the righteous and unrighteous have not yet met their respective fates, their anticipation of their fates to come is enough to provide bliss or torment.[69] This theme of two possible destinies continues in *1 En.* 103-104.[70] The souls of the righteous can rejoice in eternal life after death (103:4), while the souls of sinners can anticipate only severe judgment (103:5-8; see also 27:2-4). Here also we see the commitment to justice despite death as a motivation for postmortem retribution. The sinners may have died in glory with great wealth and prosperity (103:5-6), but absence of retribution in this life is no guarantor of a blessed continuing future (103:7-8). Likewise, although the righteous may have lived in toil and hardship and may have been tortured and destroyed (103:9-15), they can expect a blessed afterlife where their names will "be written before the glory of the Great One" (103:4; 104:1-6, here 104:1). In these texts we see a concept of postmortem retribution and reward without explicit notions of bodily resurrection.

Jewish resurrection hope by the first century CE was fairly common. Wright states:

> The evidence suggests that by the time of Jesus … most Jews either believed in some form of resurrection or at least knew that it was standard teaching. Comparatively few remained sceptical. Some held to a kind of middle position … in which a blessed, albeit disembodied, immortality awaited the righteous after their death. But there is widespread evidence that the belief which burst into full flower in Daniel 12 had become standard.[71]

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[68] Later, *4 Ezra* speaks of Gehenna opposite "the Paradise of delight" (7:36) and a division between a place of "delight and rest" and "fire and torments" (7:38).

[69] Bauckham, *Jewish World*, 251-52.

[70] The Epistle of Enoch (*1 En.* 92-105) likely dates to the first third of the second century BCE. See George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch Chapters 1-36; 81-108*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 440-41; George W. E. Nickelsburg and James Vanderkam, *1 Enoch: A New Translation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 12.

[71] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 129-30.

Bauckham adds "punishment after death for the wicked" as another belief held by "the vast majority of Jews."[72] That resurrection was by the time of the NT such a widely-accepted expectation is evidenced by the disagreement over the matter between Pharisees and Sadducees.[73] The Sadducees, following the Torah's perspective on the matter,[74] deny a resurrection (Acts 23:8). Josephus writes that the Sadducees do not conceive of an afterlife: "As for the persistence of the soul after death, penalties in the underworld, and rewards, they will have none of them" (*J.W.* 2.165).[75] That the Sadducees came to be identified by their denial of resurrection indicates that theirs was no longer the popular position. The Pharisees, however, maintain a hope of a future bodily resurrection, in line with the majority of Jews at the time.[76] Indeed, as Bauckham says, "Belief in resurrection distinguished Pharisees from Sadducees, but it did not distinguish Pharisees from most other Jews."[77]

Nevertheless, we must always take into account our access to limited evidence. While a survey of the extant texts has demonstrated beliefs in eschatological resurrection and beliefs in postmortem reward or retribution, we cannot assume that this is an adequate representation of the general populous' perceptions. As we found suggested by the Roman burial inscription above (*NFFNSNC*), the Jewish masses may not share the same afterlife hopes with the texts that have survived to the present. For example, Park, having studied a number of Jewish inscriptions, concludes: "it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that roughly between 200 B.C. and A.D. 400, a significant number of people who considered themselves to

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[72] Bauckham, *Jewish World*, 246.

[73] For an extended treatment of the Pharisees and Sadducees with respect to resurrection, see Setzer, *Resurrection*, 21-36.

[74] Wright makes an interesting observation: "[T]he contemporary instinct to see the Sadducees as the radicals, because they denied the resurrection, is 180 degrees wide of the mark. They denied it because they were the conservatives" (Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 131). Wright finds parallels to the Sadducees' afterlife beliefs in Sir 11:26f, 14:16f, 17:27f, 38:21-23, and 41:4 (136-37). Segal points to Ecclesiastes as another example: "Here, in Ecclesiastes, is the beginning of the position that Josephus and the New Testament associate with the Sadducees. This class comes from the highest level of the society but, by the first century CE, Josephus calls them boorish and too indifferent to the needs of their inferiors. Whatever their manners, their rejection of life after death is grounded in Scripture, particularly in the book of Ecclesiastes" (Segal, *Life After Death*, 254).

[75] Thackeray, LCL.

[76] Josephus says that the Pharisees believed in reincarnation (*J.W.* 2:163), but this is probably his way of translating the foreign concept of resurrection to his Gentile readers (Bauckham, *Jewish World*, 253). As Wright shows, the Pharisees probably believed in an intermediate state for the dead, where the dead are presently like angels or spirits. They are disembodied, and they will be re-embodied in the future (Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 132-34).

[77] Bauckham, *Jewish World*, 246.

be Jews either denied, or held to a minimal conception of, afterlife."[78] This agnostic possibility must remain ever in mind, but the extant texts demonstrate a belief in retributive or rewarding afterlives.

III.3. Conclusion

This brief survey of Greco-Roman and Jewish views of death and the afterlife has created a context for our inquiry into death and the afterlife in Hebrews. We found a number of issues in play: what makes up a human; what – if any – of that makeup will live on despite death; where do the dead reside (in the grave only, in a dark abyss, in a neutral Hades, in a heavenly bliss or retributive existence); and is there any hope of eschatological resurrection? We turn now to the nature of death and the afterlife in Hebrews.

IV. THE NATURE OF DEATH AND THE AFTERLIFE IN HEBREWS

IV.1. Human Constitution in Hebrews

As our survey above illustrates, one's understanding of what constitutes a human is a key element to one's vision of the afterlife. For this reason, we briefly look first at Hebrews' understanding of the human constitution and only after this to what the author expects in death and the afterlife.

Body, soul, and spirit all appear in Hebrews. Some variation of the first category, "body," appears 10 times in Hebrews: σάρξ (flesh) in 2:14, 5:7, 9:10, 9:13, 10:20, and 12:9; σῶμα (body) in 10:5, 10:10, and 10:22; and κῶλον (corpse) in 3:17.[79] "Body" is a clear marker of humanity. "The children" (human beings) share in blood and flesh (αἵματος καὶ σαρκός), and so Christ partook of the same (2:14). Jesus' time on earth is numbered as "the days of his flesh" (ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ) (5:7).

Soul (ψυχή) appears six times in Hebrews: in 4:12; 6:19; 10:38; 10:39; 12:3; and 13:17. Smillie insists that ψυχή is a reference to the spiritual part of a person,[80]

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[78] Joseph S. Park, *Conceptions of Afterlife in Jewish Inscriptions with Special Reference to Pauline Literature*, WUNT 2/121 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 202.

[79] Σῶμα also appears in 13:3 (as a reference to the community as a body) and in 13:11 (as a reference to the bodies of sacrificed animals), but these two occurrences do not apply to the present discussion.

[80] Smillie, "'Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ'," 343.

but ψυχή could instead be understood as a reference to "life" or "self" generally rather than to a component part of a person.[81] "Spirit" (πνεῦμα) as a component of a human appears only in 4:12. Another possible reference is "spirits of the righteous made perfect" in the heavenly assembly in 12:23, which I will address further below.

Soul and spirit appear together in 4:12, where the living and active word of God is said to be so sharp as to divide soul from spirit. Although the author does not develop his thought here, the three sets of distinctions in 4:12 suggest that soul and spirit are closely related: soul and spirit (ψυχῆς καὶ πνεύματος); joints and marrow (ἁρμῶν τε καὶ μυελῶν); and thoughts and intentions of the heart (ἐνθυμήσεων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας). In all three cases, the word of God can pierce between two generally indistinguishable pieces.[82] As a result, although the author may imagine a difference between the two, he still thinks of them as closely related.

The author of Hebrews appears to be operating with a concept of spiritual (soul and spirit) and bodily natures. For our purposes, two general possibilities exist: (1) the spiritual part of a human being is eternal and the body temporary (similar to the Greco-Roman vision discussed above); or (2) the body and spiritual natures are so intertwined that to remove one makes a person no longer human. Our decision here illuminates how the author conceives of death and life after death.

IV.1.1. A Temporary Body and Immortal Spirit?

Schenck makes the strongest case for the first option. In the middle of his bigger project on the heavenly and earthly realms, Schenck suggests that, for Hebrews, a human being is constituted by a temporary body and a superior eternal spirit:

> to be 'in the body' is a temporary state which does not represent the individual in his or her truest self. The 'fleshliness' of the Levitical priests and their sacrifices contrasts with the indestructible life and eternal spirit of Christ. God is the father of spirit, a far higher paternity than that of the fathers of flesh.

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[81] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 263. See also Luke 17:33: "Whoever seeks to save his ψυχήν will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it (ἀπολέσῃ ζῳογονήσει)."

[82] So Johnson: "In each pair of terms, the contrast suggests that which is interior and difficult to observe or locate precisely with any human instrument. The rhetorical point, then, is that God's word can penetrate precisely to those places where human knowledge cannot – what human can accurately distinguish between soul and spirit?" (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 134).

> The flesh is just another aspect of the corporeal, created realm which is destined to be destroyed.[83]

Schenck roots this interpretation in two observations. First, he suggests that the author of Hebrews views Jesus' sacrifice as superior because it purifies the inner person. Schenck writes:

> the author repeatedly argues for the superiority of Christ's sacrifice because it is effective in cleansing the *conscience* in contrast to the mere washing of the *flesh* which the Levitical cultus effected. The author does not feel the need to argue that such an 'inner' cleansing would be far more valuable to the readers that a mere outward cleaning. *He assumes that such an order of creation is self-evident and innate*.[84]

Schenck rightly observes that for Hebrews "cleansing of the flesh is not an effectual cleansing," but he wrongly concludes from this that the "important part of a human being is the spirit, which is that which is capable of reaching heaven."[85] As I argued in the previous chapter, "conscience" for Hebrews refers not to a person's innermost self, but to a person's awareness of sin.[86] Motyer is correct: "we must resist a dualistic interpretation which sees 'conscience' as belonging to a 'spirit' side of our fabric, divorced from the physical. This is because the 'dead works' which defile the conscience … illustrate precisely this 'cross-over' where sins of *the flesh* impinge with deadly effect on the realm of the sacred."[87] Human beings are burdened by the guilt of sin, attributable in part to the cyclical nature of the Levitical sacrifices (10:2-3). Jesus' sacrifice is superior in that it can cleanse the conscience (in part due to its once-for-all nature, as in 10:10-12). Schenck makes an unnecessary leap in saying that the superiority of Jesus' sacrifice indicates a superiority of conscience over body.

Second, Schenck suggests that every time "spirit" appears in Hebrews (except for 4:12), it carries a heavenly connotation, "limited to those righteous who have been 'perfected.' "[88] Along these lines, he reads "partaking of πνεύματος ἁγίου" in 6:4 as an image of conversion, whereby the "*heavenly* gift which is so exalted is a gift of

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[83] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 139.
[84] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 133 (italics his).
[85] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 134.
[86] Chapter 3, section III.1.
[87] Stephen Motyer, "'Not Apart from Us' (Hebrews 11:40): Physical Community in the Letter to the Hebrews," *EQ* 77, no. 3 (2005), 239 (italics his).
[88] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 134.

spirit, and holy spirit no less."[89]   Although Schenck speaks here of humans receiving a spirit upon conversion, he later says of this verse: "Their spirits have been empowered by holy Spirit."[90]   He is unclear, therefore, whether human beings prior to conversion have no spirit at all, or just a spirit that is not holy.   He is clearer with regard to his reading of 12:9.   Since God in 12:9 is described as the "father of spirits (τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων)," and the author of Hebrews is similarly clear that God is not the father of every human being (12:6-8), "Hebrews does not emphasize πνεῦμα in a general psychological sense with reference to all humanity."[91]   God's discipline leads to life (12:9), and so "the association of spirit with the heavenly realm is not a general correspondence but is limited to those who have partaken of the Christ."[92]   Schenck sees similar logic with regard to 12:23, where *spirits* of the righteous made perfect are gathered in the heavenly realm.[93]   For Schenck, therefore, the spirit is the eternal part of a person, while the body is the less important part that will not endure:

> This makes it clear that to the author the physical dimension of a person is not the truly significant aspect. The human body belongs to the realm of the transitory, material, earthly world. The important part of a human being is the spirit, which is that which is capable of reaching heaven, both in the present and in the coming world.[94]

I will argue that Schenck's reading is wrong on both accounts: both that the body is less important and temporary, and that the spirit is eternal.

IV.1.2. Embodied Humanity

Contrary to Schenck, Hebrews suggests that the body is an integral part of humanity, both now and in the eschaton. With regard to the present, the author of Hebrews is convinced that Jesus must share fully in flesh and blood in order to free humans from the fear of death (2:14-15) and make propitiation for sins (2:17). True humanity is embodied humanity, and so Jesus must share in embodied humanity in order to provide deliverance. The author is clear that Jesus did not give help to angels

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[89] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 134.
[90] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 135.
[91] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 135.
[92] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 135.
[93] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 136.
[94] Schenck, *Cosmology*, 134.

(the ministering *spirits* of 1:14), but to the human seed of Abraham (σπέρματος Ἀβραὰμ) (2:16).

Jesus is human like us in that he shares our identity as non-angelic. God created human beings "a little lower than the angels (ἠλάττωσας αὐτὸν βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους)" (2:7). So too Jesus was made lower than the angels for a little while: "but we see the one who for a little while was made lower than the angels: Jesus (τὸν δὲ βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἠλαττωμένον βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν)" (2:9). As I said in chapter 3, the author makes a play on words with βραχύ, which can mean either "a little lower" (comparatively) or "a little while" (temporally), by placing humanity "a little lower than the angels" (2:7) and Jesus "lower than the angels for a little while" (2:9).[95] In both cases, Jesus and human beings are contrasted with angels. Bauckham has argued that angels in Hebrews function as markers of divinity and humanity: "To be above the angels is to be God, to be below the angels is to be human."[96] By placing Jesus higher than the angels in 1:5-14 and lower than the angels in 2:9, the author establishes Jesus in the high realm of divinity and the lower realm of humanity, respectively.

While it is true that Jesus as non-angelic shows his humanity, an important aspect of his human nature in contrast to the angels' spiritual nature is his qualification to enter the heavenly realm. Jesus must be an embodied human being in order to enter the heavenly realm. This is made evident in Heb 1:7-9. As Moffitt identifies, the point of contrast in 1:7-9 is between the angels' spiritual nature and Jesus' exaltation to the right hand of God. In 1:7, the angels are described as πνεύματα, God's ministers who are flames of fire (τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πυρὸς φλόγα). On the other hand (δέ), the author describes the Son as one who possesses God's throne and exercises dominion (1:8). Jesus has been anointed "beyond [his] companions (παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου)" (1:9). Moffitt notes, "The contrast here is between the angels as 'ministering *spirits*' and the Son's invitation to sit on the throne at God's right hand."[97] Curiously, the author of Hebrews sees the angels' spiritual

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[95] Chapter 3, section II.2.

[96] Richard Bauckham, "The Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 23. See also Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 53.

[97] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 50 (italics his).

nature (πνεύματα; πυρὸς φλόγα) as a condition excluding them from sitting at the right hand of God's throne. What, then, qualifies Jesus to sit beside God's throne? The author does not root Jesus' right to exercise royal dominion in his eternal nature (as described in 1:2-3). The author of Hebrews says Jesus was anointed beyond his companions (παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου) (1:9), which suggests that Jesus was one of a number in his peer-group who could have received such dominion. That these peers were not angels is clear in 1:5 and 1:13, where the author introduces the psalm quotations with "to which of the angels has he ever said?" If Jesus were a peer with these angels, then Jesus' being called son (1:5) and being seated at God's right hand (1:13) would be instances of God doing what the author says he has never done: elevate an angel to the right hand of God.[98] Angels are not qualified candidates for the reception of glory, honor, and dominion, but are only ministering spirits (λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα) for those who will inherit salvation (1:14). Therefore, Jesus' peer group from which he was anointed is populated by human beings. Moffitt concludes: "the writer bases the fundamental contrast between the Son's invitation to sit upon the heavenly throne and the angels' lower position on the fact that the latter are *spirits*, while the former is a human being – blood and flesh (Heb 2:14)."[99] God intended glory, honor, and dominion for human beings (2:5-9),[100] and from among these companions Jesus was invited to sit at God's right hand. Jesus' embodied humanity qualifies him to enter the heavenly realm.[101] Therefore, Moffitt is correct:

> in order for the Son to be the one elevated to the heavenly throne at God's right hand, he had to have his humanity, i.e., his flesh and blood, with him in heaven. If he left the very constitutive elements of his humanity on earth to return to the heavenly realm as a spiritual being, a being like the angels who have no blood and flesh, he would have left behind the requisite qualifications he needed to be the one who could be elevated above the angels – his humanity.[102]

As a result, we see that embodied humanity is the mark of a human both in the present and in the eschaton. If a person is ever disembodied, this person is no longer a human

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[98] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 51-52.

[99] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 52 (italics his).

[100] As I argued in detail in chapter 3, section II.

[101] See also Heb 9:12, where Jesus enters the heavenly holy places "through his own blood (διὰ δὲ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος)." Noted also in Motyer, "Not Apart from Us," 239.

[102] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 143.

being, but a spirit, like the angels. Therefore, Schenck is incorrect to suggest that the body is a temporary lesser important part of humanity in comparison to the eternal superior spiritual part.

Furthermore, Hebrews offers adequate reason to question Schenck's suggestion that the spirit is the enduring part of a human being. Contrary to the Greco-Roman vision of an immortal soul, the author of Hebrews does not conceive of an immortal inner animating part of a human. This is illustrated clearly in 10:39, where there is a danger of destruction (ἀπώλειαν), and so the soul must be preserved (περιποίησιν ψυχῆς). If the soul is inherently immortal, then it would not be in danger of destruction. Similarly, although Schenck recalls the evidence of Heb 12:23, it is worth noting that the spirits gathered in the heavenly assembly are not simply spirits, but spirits *made perfect* (τετελειωμένων). As I argue in the next chapter, perfection for Hebrews often entails attainment of enduring life after death,[103] and so the spirits gathering in the heavenly realm are probably allowed to do so not on account of their being spiritual, but on account of having been made perfect.

IV.1.3. Conclusion

Hebrews is not a treatise on human constitution, and so gaps will invariably exist when reconstructing the author's vision of what constitutes a human. From the evidence we have in Hebrews, against the backdrop of Greco-Roman and Jewish sources surveyed above, we see that Hebrews operates with an understanding of the human constitution closer to the Jewish psychosomatic unity.[104] A human being has an animating quality (a soul/spirit), but this does not mean that the body is an unnecessary nuisance. For Hebrews, to be human is to be embodied. As such, Hebrews does not envision an immortal soul that lives on apart from the body. More in line with the Jewish sources, postmortem retribution or reward deals with the body as well as the soul/spirit. As we have seen in part here and will find in our subsequent

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[103] Chapter 5, section II.3.

[104] See also Green: "although space must be carved out for a certain pluralism at this point, generally speaking, Jewish perspectives on life-after-death continued to embrace a view of the human person as a psychosomatic unity, so that belief in resurrection typically did not entail the expectation of the liberation of the immortal soul from the mortal body" (Joel Green, "Resurrection of the Body: New Testament Voices Concerning Personal Continuity and the Afterlife," in *What About the Soul: Neuroscience and Christian Anthropology*, ed. Joel Green (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 91).

studies in this chapter and the next, the author's vision of the eschaton is one of an embodied humanity.[105]

IV.2. Postmortem Retribution in Hebrews

The author portrays *the fear of death* (not necessarily *death* itself) as the ultimate foe to which all of humanity was enslaved prior to the emancipating work of Christ (2:14-15). The author is not explicit as to what it is about death that they fear. It may be the fear of the pain related to death, the fear of the unknown element of what lies beyond death, or the fear of what the human expects after death. The author of Hebrews sees the threat of postmortem retribution as a reason to be afraid of death.[106] Indeed, as deSilva rightly notes, the author's warnings are designed in such a way as to ingrain fear in his hearers. They are to "be afraid" lest anyone is deemed to have failed to reach the rest (4:1), and the author warns of a "fearful expectation of judgment" (10:27), for "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (10:31).[107] That the author of Hebrews conceives of a postmortem judgment is clear in 6:2, where he lists both the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment (κρίμα)[108] among the elementary doctrines.[109] This postmortem retribution is the expected conclusion for all who remain in the default human story.[110] The precise nature of this postmortem retribution, however, is less clear.

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[105] I speak in more detail to the eschatological hope in the next chapter, where I will make the case that bodily resurrection is a necessary prerequisite to the attainment of the eschatological hope (see esp. chapter 5, section II.2).

[106] See also Backhaus, "Zwei harte Knoten," 212-17. Gray suggests that impending judgment is one source of the fear of death mentioned in 2:15 (the other being the demonic force active in death) (Gray, *Godly Fear*, 113).

[107] deSilva, "Exchanging Favor for Wrath," 114.

[108] Κρίμα appears only here in Hebrews. In this context in Hebrews, Westcott suggests that κρίμα "describes the sentence and not the process" (Westcott, *Hebrews*, 146).

[109] Johnson lists "the sense of a judgment that has eternal, that is, never-ending, consequences" as an option (the other being a simple reference to God's judgment), but he does not argue for one option over the other (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 160). Ellingworth reads "eternal judgment" to mean that the effects of God's judgment "will have no end" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 316). deSilva reads "eternal judgment" alongside *1 En.* 1:9; Dan 7:26-27; Matt 25:31-46; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 14:9-11, and 20:4-22:5 (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 218 n 17).

[110] Contra Powys, who suggests that Hebrews reserves judgment for lapsed believers only (David Powys, *'Hell': A Hard Look at a Hard Question: The Fate of the Unrighteous in New Testament Thought*, Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997), 404).

IV.2.1. Hebrews 9:27

The universality of judgment is evident in 9:27, where the author says, "… it is appointed to people to die once, and after this a judgment [κρίσις]." Powys wrongly reads the language of Christ's coming a second time in 9:28 onto the language of judgment here in 9:27, so that Christ's coming is his judgment. Powys writes: "The point of this [χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας in 9:28] is that Christ's second appearing will be oriented to salvation rather than to sin (v.28), and that his judgment will be salvific in purpose. It is unlikely that the 'judgment' referred to in verse 27 is a reference to Christ coming to deal punitively with sin."[111] Instead of punitive judgment, Powys finds the "writer's primary conception of judgment … to have been redemptive."[112] Powys' reading has two flaws. First, nowhere in these verses is Christ said to be the judge,[113] and so to introduce him as judge (to say that "his judgment will be salvific in purpose," as Powys says) is an unnecessary addition to the text. Second, these verses are not primarily a contrast between two types of judgment (where Jesus judges sin in his first appearance and judges with a salvific purpose in his second). Instead, the verses are in the context of an argument for the uniqueness of Christ, the one who did not have to offer sacrifices continually, but who "has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to annul sin by the sacrifice of himself" (9:26). Christ died once (9:26, 28), and all people die once (9:27). The contrast is between the human priests' need for continual sacrifices and Christ's once-for-all sacrifice at the end of the ages. Hebrews 9:27-28, therefore, is not an argument for redemptive over punitive judgment, as these concepts are absent. The concept of judgment, however, is still present. Judgment in 9:27 is more properly understood as an event that all humans experience after death.

That "judgment" in 9:27 carries more than only a negative connotation is clear given the universal experience of the judgment: all people die once and all people face this judgment. The author reserves judgment for those who continue sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth in 10:26-27: these people await "a fearful

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[111] Powys, *'Hell'*, 404.

[112] Powys, *'Hell'*, 404. Powys places the negative brunt of judgment on the person's foregone salvation and that person's shameful encounter with the author of that salvation. He summarizes: "Judgment's horror would seem here to have to do with shameful personal encounter rather than punitive consequences" (Powys, *'Hell'*, 405).

[113] God is the judge in Heb 10:30; 12:23; and 13:4.

expectation of judgment (ἐκδοχὴ κρίσεως) and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries." In 10:27, therefore, κρίσις clearly carries a negative connotation (more on this verse below). In 9:27, however, this κρίσις is experienced by all; it is not reserved only for the unfaithful or the apostate. Motyer's reading is right:

> 'It's appointed for human beings to die once, and then face judgment' – this sounds at first like the fundamental problem facing humanity. We have to face the Judge! But 'judgment' does not mean 'condemnation' here: it means 'scrutiny, division, verdict', with the implication that the verdict may be either further death, or life.[114]

By this reading, all humans die and face judgment after death, where they will face either death (retribution) or life (reward). Hebrews 9:27 does not add any more detail to the nature of this postmortem judgment beyond its universal applicability, and so we turn to postmortem retribution in the rest of the book.

IV.2.2. Hebrews 6:7-8

Hebrews offers a few other hints of postmortem retribution. Hebrews 6:7-8, where the author offers an agricultural metaphor following his warning against spiritual laxity (6:4-6, as discussed in the previous chapter),[115] may have a hint of eschatological retribution.[116] Land that receives rain poured on it in such a way as to produce a useful crop receives a blessing from God (6:7), but land that receives rain poured on it in such a way as to produce weeds is deemed worthless and will eventually be burned (6:8). Lane connects the fire in 6:8 "with the severity of the eschatological judgment that will consume the adversaries of God (10:27; 12:29; see 6:2)."[117] So also McKnight writes: "The image of being cursed by God, with its close association with fire, can only adequately be explained as an allusion to Gehenna or

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[114] Motyer, "Atonement in Hebrews," 149 n 8.

[115] Chapter 3, section III.3.2.

[116] Oberholtzer denies this connection, and instead reads the warning as a threat of loss of eschatological rewards in the millennial kingdom: "Theologically it is clear that present unfaithfulness will result in loss of reward at the judgment seat of Christ. The result for the believer is not loss of eternal salvation but a forfeiting of inheritance-rest, reward, and position in the coming millennial kingdom" (Oberholtzer, "Thorn-Infested Ground," 326; see also his reading of Heb 10:26-39 in Thomas Kem Oberholtzer, "The Danger of Willful Sin in Hebrews 10:26-39," *BSac* 145, no. 580 (1988), 410-19). However, given that Hebrews demonstrates no expectation of a coming millennial kingdom, this reading is not to be preferred. For a response to Oberholtzer, see deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 233 n 56).

[117] Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 143.

hell, an allusion to God's punishment and retributive justice."[118] That this burning in 6:7-8 is eschatological, and thus postmortem, is suggested by the interplay between near (ἐγγύς) and end (τέλος): the ground is *near* to being cursed,[119] and its *end* is burning.[120] Furthermore, the author expects better things for his hearers, "things that belong to salvation" in 6:9. If these "things that belong to salvation" are read against the burning in 6:8, and if salvation carries an eschatological sense, then burning may also be an eschatological experience apart from salvation. The author clearly connects spiritual stagnancy with retribution.[121] Remaining fixed in the default human story, thereby refusing to mature in Christ, leads inevitably to the conclusion of burning.

IV.2.3. Hebrews 10:26-31

Hebrews 10:26-31 offers perhaps the strongest warning of postmortem retribution for those in the default human story. The author's language of retribution remains in the future tense throughout this passage. Those who continue sinning deliberately have a fearful expectation (ἐκδοχή) of judgment and a fury of fire that will

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[118] McKnight, "Warning Passages," 35. See also Toussaint, who connects the image with "the future of the damned" (Stanley D. Toussaint, "The Eschatology of the Warning Passages in the Book of Hebrews," *Grace Theological Journal* 3, no. 1 (1982), 75). McKnight finds eternal damnation as a potential consequence for all of the warnings: "one is forced to conclude that the author is presenting eternal damnation as a potential consequence for those to whom he gives his warnings about sin and his exhortations to persevere" (McKnight, "Warning Passages," 34). On the real threat of eternal retribution in Heb 6:4-12, see also Brent Nongbri, "A Touch of Condemnation in a Word of Exhortation: Apocalyptic Language and Graeco-Roman Rhetoric in Hebrews 6:4-12," *NovT* 45, no. 3 (2003), 265-79.

[119] Some commentators connect the illustration in 6:7-8 with Gen 3:17-18, where God curses Adam with land that will produce thorns and thistles (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 172; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 143). However, in Heb 6:8 the ground is *close to* being cursed *if* it yields thorns and thistles. In Gen 3:17-18, on the other hand, the ground is *already* cursed because of Adam's sin, and the thorns and thistles are the *result of* the cursed land. Oberholtzer is correct, therefore, that this interpretation poses "a cause-and-effect inversion between the curse in Genesis and Hebrews" (Oberholtzer, "Thorn-Infested Ground," 325).

[120] Bing, who argues that "fire" refers to present judgment of believers and not postmortem retribution, curiously says that the *ground* is not burned, but the *thorns*: "The earth (the believer) is not burned, but the thorns (what the believer produces) are burned. … The words 'whose end is to be burned' refer not to the earth itself, but to the thorns and briars being burned off the earth, because the earth itself cannot burn. Thus it pictures a fire of judgment and/or purging that burns up what is useless" (Charles C. Bing, "Does Fire in Hebrews Refer to Hell?," *BibSac* 167 (2010), 353). However, Bing fails to note that the subject which is rejected and burned in 6:8 is consistently *singular* (ἐκφέρουσα, ἀδόκιμος, ἧς), clearly pointing to the singular γῆ in 6:7, which receives a blessing from God.

[121] Attridge sees here more than a restorative or disciplinary act of God, but "the punishment that awaits those condemned by God" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 173).

consume (ἐσθίειν μέλλοντος) the adversaries (quoting Isa 26:11).[122] Likewise, the one who has spurned the Son of God, profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace will deserve (ἀξιωθήσεται) punishment. Given the lesser-to-greater argument in play in 10:28-29 (those who transgressed the law of Moses were put to death, and so how much worse punishment for the one who has spurned the Son of God), "one must at least go beyond the death penalty to find such a punishment."[123] The Lord reserves vengeance, and he will repay (ἀνταποδώσω) (quoting Deut 32:35).[124] The author closes: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (10:31).[125] Indeed, "The ultimate danger that any human being could face is to encounter God, the judge of all, as an enemy."[126]

At first glance, the retribution in these verses appears to be reserved for apostates. In 10:26-27, the author writes in the first-person to people who are in the "in group:" "we" who have received knowledge of the truth will no longer have sacrifice for sins if "we" continue sinning deliberately (ἑκουσίως γὰρ ἁμαρτανόντων ἡμῶν μετὰ τὸ λαβεῖν τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, οὐκέτι περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἀπολείπεται θυσία). The "much worse punishment (χείρονος … τιμωρίας)" is deserved by the one who has "spurned the Son of God and profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified" (10:29). Bruce suggests physical death was the punishment for transgressing the law, while "spiritual death … lies in store for the apostate under the new order."[127] While certainly not denying that the author expects divine retribution for those who fall away, it is not immediately clear that this

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[122] For other examples of the unrighteous facing a fury of fire, see Isa 66:15-16, 24; Zeph 1:18; 2 Thess 1:7-8; Rev 11:5, 20:14; and *2 Bar* 48:39-40 (listed in Guthrie, "Hebrews, OT in NT," 979). This image of a fury of fire may also connect with Hebrews 12:29: "for our God is a consuming fire." We cannot be sure that this verse points to judgment, but this is a possibility (see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 383 and deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 477).

[123] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 351.

[124] Guthrie finds in this quote that "the author almost certainly has in mind eschatological judgment, similar to the use of the passage at *2 En.* 50:4" (Guthrie, "Hebrews, OT in NT," 981).

[125] This fear is probably reserved for those who deserve divine retribution, as the author elsewhere encourages us to draw near to God (as in Heb 4:16; 7:19, 25; 10:22; and 11:6). The author is clear, therefore, that it is not always a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

[126] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 352. With respect to this image, Bing writes, "Those who sin will not fall into hell, but 'into the hands of the living God' (Heb. 10:31). Though it is a 'fearful' prospect, at least they will be *in* His hands, not out of them" (Bing, "Fire," 355, italics his). However, if they are falling into the hands of the God who is the "judge" that reserves the rights of vengeance, as Heb 10:30 describes him, there is no guarantee that these people will *remain* in God's hands, as Bing seems to assume.

[127] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 262.

retribution is reserved only for such people. Indeed, it is quite possible that retribution attends the apostate because he has reverted to a story which ends inevitably in retribution. That is, the apostate is not punished for the act of returning to the default existence, but that in returning to the default existence, the apostate has realigned with the story that inevitably concludes in retribution.

Postmortem retribution in 10:26-31 is a strong possibility, but, as in 6:8, the language of judgment, fire, and punishment may be this-life consequences or physical death.[128] The case is not settled, but, once again, the connection between unfaithfulness and retribution is clear. Whether this retribution is doled out to all participating in the default human story, or whether it is reserved for the apostate is not as clear as it is elsewhere. What is clear is that "the point is inescapable: destruction will be the lot of those who shun salvation."[129]

IV.2.4. Hebrews 10:39

Another hint comes a few verses later in 10:39. I argue in chapter 8 that Heb 10:39 is a clear delineation of two narratives (the default human story of unfaithfulness and the story of faith) and their assured conclusions (postmortem death and life). I will reserve extended treatment for later, but I will speak here to the indication of postmortem retribution in 10:39. The author sets up a parallel contrasting construction:

> ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐσμὲν
>   ὑποστολῆς   εἰς ἀπώλειαν
>   ἀλλὰ
>   πίστεως   εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς

> But we are not
>   of timidity   to destruction
>   but
>   of faith   to preservation of the soul

This organization highlights the contrast between destruction and preservation of the soul. Those of timidity will be destroyed, while those of faith will be preserved.

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[128] For physical death as the punishment in view in Heb 10:26-31, see Randall C. Gleason, "The Eschatology of the Warning in Hebrews 10:26-31," *TynBul* 53, no. 1 (2002), 113-19. However, emphasizing physical death over against eschatological death may introduce a false dichotomy: physical death could precede postmortem retribution as part of the same package.

[129] Powys, *'Hell'*, 405.

The destruction promised to the timid may well be connected to God's vengeance. "Destruction" (ἀπωλείας) in Heb 10:39 may allude to Deut 32:35.[130] The author of Hebrews alludes to Deut 32:35 a few verses earlier in Heb 10:30, where the Lord lays claim to vengeance and repayment. Later in Deut 32:35, the Lord says, "near is the day of their destruction (ἀπωλείας)." That the author was aware of this phrase is strengthened by the latter half of Heb 10:30, where he quotes Deut 32:36: "the Lord will judge his people (κρινεῖ κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ)." The author of Hebrews likely knew all of Deut 32:35-36. Therefore, in Heb 10:39, the author takes his language of timidity (ὑποστολῆς) from Hab 2:4, which he quotes in the previous verse, and his language of destruction (ἀπώλειαν) from Deut 32:35, which he quotes in 10:30. If destruction is closely associated with the Lord's vengeance, then we can read destruction either as an action of God in retribution or perhaps an action of divine abandonment to destruction (as possibly in 6:8).

V. CONCLUSION

We have surveyed the evidence for postmortem judgment in Hebrews, and found that judgment is a universal experience after death. Postmortem retribution awaits all of those who remain trapped in the default human story as described in chapter 3, not only apostates. We cannot say with any level of certainty what the nature of this retribution is. Against the contextual background surveyed above, Hebrews falls in line with later Second Temple Jewish texts that expect different treatments of the righteous and unrighteous after death (unlike the universal destination of Sheol in the OT). Hebrews has no concept of a neutral Hades where the soul is freed from the body, as we surveyed in Greco-Roman traditions. The author of Hebrews does not suggest a locale of punishment (as in hell or Gehenna), but he still expects a retribution after death. Whether this retribution ends in total annihilation (such that the soul is not "preserved" as in 10:39) or whether this retribution continues into eternity is also not clear.[131] What is clear, however, is that whether the end is eternal postmortem retribution or total annihilation, the default

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[130] So also David M. Allen, *Deuteronomy and Eschatology in Hebrews: A Study in Narrative Representation*, WUNT 2/238 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 59-60.

[131] I would tentatively suggest that Hebrews expects total annihilation, but we cannot be sure of this.

human story ends in a most undesirable manner. The default human story concludes without any hope of a happy life after death.

Chapter 5

The Eschatological Hope Unrealized

I. INTRODUCTION

As we discussed in the previous two chapters, the assured conclusion to the default human story is postmortem retribution. All humans die and subsequently face judgment (9:27), and for those who remain in the default human story, they can anticipate only negative judgment. No hope of life after death awaits them. However, as I will address in detail in part 3 of the thesis, the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus as one who participated fully in humanity and yet did not experience the assured conclusion to that human story. Jesus in Hebrews writes a new narrative, one in which faith leads to the assured conclusion of eschatological life.

In this chapter I address the eschatological hope of Hebrews. By "eschatological," I refer to an enduring period of time after death when human beings participate more fully in the hope they have already begun to experience in life. According to Hebrews, we are already in the last days. Long ago God spoke to the ancestors through prophets, but in *these last days* God has spoken to us through a Son (1:1-2). Jesus' sacrifice occurred at "the consummation of the ages" (9:26). The old covenant has been made obsolete (8:13), and we are now in the days that were coming when the Lord "will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (8:8, quoting Jer 31:31). The author of Hebrews imagines us standing at the consummation of the ages: the coming Son has ushered in a new covenant, which was prophesied by Jeremiah. As we will see in more detail in this chapter, human beings can experience the eschatological hope in part, but they still must await the final consummation. In this way, Hebrews reflects the "already but not yet" eschatology that characterizes much of the NT, as Barrett notes: "The common pattern of N.T. eschatology is in Hebrews made uncommonly clear. God has begun to fulfil his ancient promises: the dawn of the new age has broken, though

the full day has not yet come. The Church lives in the last days, but before the last day."[1]

As I developed in the previous chapter, the author of Hebrews depicts his hearers as facing their own impending deaths by persecution,[2] and so the hope of eschatological reward after death is particularly apropos. At the same time, we will see in this chapter that no human being prior to Jesus had experienced this hope. Even the heroes[3] of faith from Israel's story (Heb 11) only foreshadow, but do not realize, the eschatological hope.

This chapter is organized into two stages. First, I demonstrate that the eschatological hope for Hebrews is one of an enduring life in the heavenly homeland. Second, I show how this eschatological hope was unrealized even by the heroes of faith in Israel's tradition. This chapter concludes our study of the default human story (part 2 of the thesis). This study of the unrealized eschatological hope furthers the tragic message of Heb 2:6-8: although God intended glory, honor, and dominion for humans, "we do not yet see everything in subjection to them" (2:8).

II. THE ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE OF HEBREWS

In chapter 3, I argued at length that Ps 8 in Heb 2:6-8 refers to human beings.[4] God originally intended humanity to receive glory, honor, and dominion, but these good purposes have been frustrated. The default human story at present is characterized by unfaithfulness and ends assuredly in eschatological death. The author gives hope that God's intentions for humanity will be fulfilled. Even though at present we do not see everything in subjection to humanity (2:8), we do see Jesus who received glory and honor on account of the suffering of death (διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου) (2:9). The fulfillment of humanity's glory, honor, and dominion will not be realized in this life, but must wait until after death. The author of Hebrews offers six images for what this postmortem eschatological hope will entail: salvation (1:14;

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[1] C. K. Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology: In Honour of Charles Harold Dodd,* ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 391. See also Jeffrey R. Sharp, "Philonism and the Eschatology of Hebrews: Another Look," *East Asia Journal of Theology* 2, no. 2 (1984), 289-98.

[2] Chapter 4, section II.2.

[3] On those in Hebrews 11 as "heroes," see Pamela M. Eisenbaum, *The Jewish Heroes of Christian History: Hebrews 11 in Literary Context,* SBLDS 156 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997).

[4] Chapter 3, section II.

2:10; 5:7, 9; 6:9; 7:25; 9:28); promise (4:1; 9:15; 10:36; 11:13, 39); reward (10:35; 11:6, 26); promised eternal inheritance (9:15); God's rest (4:1, 3, 9, 10, 11); and an enduring homeland to come (2:5; 10:34; 11:10, 14, 16; 12:22, 28; 13:14).[5] A study of these six images finds that the eschatological hope is one of an enduring homeland prepared by God, inhabited by enduring beings.

II.1. Images of the Eschatological Hope

II.1.1. Salvation

"Salvation" is a catchall for the other five images of the eschatological hope.[6] Indeed, I will come back to most of these passages on salvation in our treatment of the eschatological hope in this chapter and of Jesus' realization of enduring life in the next chapter. Nevertheless, it is worth noting at this stage that while salvation does have some present implications, salvation is for the most part a postmortem experience.[7]

Hebrews speaks of salvation (σωτηρία; σῴζω) in nine places. Only two of these cases speak clearly of salvation as a present experience. In 2:3, the author names salvation as a key to keep us from drifting away (as I argued in chapter 3).[8] In 11:7, Noah builds an ark for the salvation of his family (κατεσκεύασεν κιβωτὸν εἰς σωτηρίαν τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ). Here salvation is clearly a present experience of salvation *from* death, rather than *despite* death.

In the other seven cases, salvation is reserved for a time after death.[9] In 1:14, salvation is an inheritance for non-angelic beings. This inheritance is not yet here, but

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[5] These six images, I am suggesting, point to the same eschatological hope. See also Anderson: "'Land,', 'sabbath', 'rest', 'inheritance', 'homeland' (*patris*), a 'better and abiding possession' (10.34), and 'the things not seen' (11.1) all point to the one object of hope" (Charles P. Anderson, "Who are the Heirs of the New Age in the Epistle to the Hebrews?," in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joel Marcus and Marion L. Soards. JSNTSup 24 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), 259).

[6] See also Grässer, who connects σωτηρίας αἰωνίου in 5:9 with other images of the eschatological hope in Hebrews. He lists: οἰκουμένη μέλλουσα (2:5); κληρονομία (9:15; 11:8); κατάπαυσις (3:11ff); πατρίς (11:14); πόλις (11:10-16; 13:14); βασιλεία ἀσάλευτος (12:28) (Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 311).

[7] For more on this tension, see David M. Allen, "The Irrevocable Nature of Salvation: Evidences from the Book of Hebrews," *Testamentum Imperium* 2 (2009), 4-13.

[8] Section III.2.

[9] So rightly Marshall: "Salvation is a future, eternal state of affairs (9:28; 5:9) to which people can confidently look forward" (I. Howard Marshall, "Soteriology in Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 255-56.

is to come (μέλλοντας). Still, Marshall notes that since salvation is something people are "inheriting," "believers can be sure here and now that they will be finally saved."[10] In 2:10, Jesus is the ἀρχηγός of the children's salvation. Here salvation is associated with glory and perfection. God is leading many children to glory. As children who are still being led, they have not yet arrived and so do not yet possess salvation fully. To lead the children to glory, God made the ἀρχηγός of their salvation perfect through suffering. Similarly, salvation is associated with perfection in 5:9. Here, Jesus is made perfect and so becomes the source of eternal salvation for those who obey him (ἐγένετο πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ αἴτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου). Two verses earlier, in 5:7, Jesus cries out to God, the one who was able to save him out of death (πρὸς τὸν δυνάμενον σῴζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου). The author insists that Jesus' prayers were heard, which implies his resurrection (more on this in the next chapter).[11] Similarly, the salvation that Jesus offers in 7:25, as one who is "able to save forever (σῴζειν εἰς τὸ παντελὲς δύναται)," is likely a salvation beyond death (more on this verse below).[12] In 6:9, the author expects better things for his hearers, "things that belong to salvation (τὰ … ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας)." Salvation here is also eschatological, in view of its contrast to the eschatological retribution in 6:8. Finally, in 9:28, the author expects Christ to appear a second time for the salvation of those eagerly awaiting him (τοῖς αὐτὸν ἀπεκδεχομένοις εἰς σωτηρίαν). That salvation here refers to an experience after death is suggested by 9:27. In 9:27, the author mentions the universal expectation of judgment following death, and in 9:28, Jesus is expected to appear to save those awaiting him.[13]

II.1.2. Promise

The promise (ἐπαγγελία) in Hebrews is sometimes singular (4:1; 6:15, 17; 9:15; 10:36; 11:9, 39) and other times plural (6:12; 7:6; 8:6; 11:13, 17, 33), but the author of Hebrews does not necessarily make a clear distinction between the singular

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[10] Marshall, "Soteriology," 256.
[11] Chapter 6, section V.
[12] Section II.3.3.4.
[13] Mackie calls σωτηρία in 9:26-28 "an unrealized future hope" (Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 100). See also Motyer, "Not Apart from Us," 241-42.

and plural (compare 6:15 with 7:6 and 11:17). God is always the promise-maker (6:13; 10:23; 11:11; 12:26).

The author of Hebrews conceives of both temporal and eschatological promises.[14] Some promises are clearly received in this life. For instance, the author offers the illustration of Abraham, who received the promise (ἐπέτυχεν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας) of his descendant after patiently enduring (6:15). Abraham is elsewhere described as one who "had the promises (ἔχοντα τὰς ἐπαγγελίας)" (7:6) and who had "received the promises (ὁ τὰς ἐπαγγελίας ἀναδεξάμενος)" (11:17). However, even as the author describes Abraham as having received the promises already, he also numbers him among those who "all died in faith, not having received the promises (μὴ λαβόντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας)" (11:13). The author can say in 11:13 that Abraham died without receiving the promises, and yet say in 11:17 that he had indeed received the promises. Similarly, the author alludes to unnamed heroes of faith who "obtained promises (ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν)" (11:33), and yet insists soon after that "all these, though commended through faith, did not receive the promise (οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν)" (11:39). This is a clue to a promise yet to be realized.

Hebrews speaks in three places of a promise that is likely reserved for after death. The promise is eschatological in 9:15, where the author speaks of a promised eternal inheritance (τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν … τῆς αἰωνίου κληρονομίας).[15] The promise is also likely a postmortem reward in 10:36, where the author encourages his hearers to endure and so receive the promise (κομίσησθε τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν). I argue in chapter 8[16] that the end of Heb 10 depicts faithfulness in the face of death, and given this context, Heb 10:36 likely points to a postmortem experience. Finally, in 4:1, the author speaks of God's rest as a promise (καταλειπομένης ἐπαγγελίας εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν

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[14] On the understanding of ἐπαγγελία in Hebrews, see Christian Rose, "Verheißung und Erfüllung: Zum Verständnis von ἐπαγγελία im Hebräerbrief," *BZ* 33 (1989), 60-80, 178-91. As examples of current promises, Rose lists 6:13-15; 8:6; 11:9, 17, 33; as examples of eschatological promises, Rose lists 9:15; 10:36; 11:13, 39 (61).

[15] See also Rose: "In *9,15* schließlich ist mit ἐπαγγελία an das *eschatologische Verheißungsgut* gedacht; den Zugang ins himmlische Allerheiligste, der den berufenen Glaubenden der πρώτη wie der καινη διαθήκη durch das einmalige Selbstopfer Jesu wirksam und unwiderruflich eröffnet ist" (Rose, "Verheißung und Erfüllung," 80, italics his).

[16] Section IV.

αὐτοῦ).[17] God's rest, as I will discuss in more detail below,[18] is likely an eschatological celebratory experience that can be associated with other eschatological images for Hebrews.[19] In addition to these three clear examples, we can likely also add 11:13 and 11:39. I address these verses in more detail in the section below on Heb 11, where I will argue that the promise in 11:13 and 11:39 is a promise of enduring life in the God-built heavenly homeland foreshadowed and yet unrealized by the heroes of faith.[20]

Hebrews gives no further indication of what the promise is beyond showing that the promise has an eschatological dimension to it.

II.1.3. Reward

Hebrews speaks in three places of a positive reward for the faithful (10:35; 11:6, 26).[21] Hebrews 11:6, which extols us to believe in God as "the one who rewards" (μισθαποδότης), gives no hint as to whether the reward is temporal or eschatological. The other two rewards in Hebrews (10:35; 11:26) have a similar thrust: in both cases the reward is contrasted with earthly possessions. In 10:34, the hearers of Hebrews accepted the robbery of their possessions "knowing that [they] had a better possession and an abiding one." "Better" (κρεῖττον/κρεῖσσον; κρείττων/κρείσσων) in Hebrews often connotes a heavenly or enduring quality about the object it modifies (see esp. 6:9; 9:23; 11:16, 35). So also, "better" (κρείττονα) here "evokes once again the new and heavenly order inaugurated by Christ."[22] The author exhorts them to maintain such a confidence as they displayed in the past, because this confidence has a great reward (μεγάλην μισθαποδοσίαν) (10:35). This reward is likely the better possession of 10:34. Similarly, in 11:26, the author points to Moses as one who "considered the reproach of Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward (τὴν μισθαποδοσίαν)." Like the

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[17] Rose understands τὰς ἐπαγγελίας (6:12), τῆς ἐπαγγελίας (6:17), and κρείττοσιν ἐπαγγελίαις (8:6) as eschatological promises connected with the promised rest in 4:1 (Rose, "Verheißung und Erfüllung," 66-80). If this is correct, then these passages would be other instances of eschatological promises.

[18] Section II.1.5.

[19] I argued in chapter 3, section III.3.1 that the function of the rest is to encourage faithfulness, but the rest as such a hortatory tool does not preclude its eschatological reality for the author.

[20] Section III.2.

[21] The author uses "reward" negatively in 2:2, where transgression and disobedience receive a just "reward" (πᾶσα παράβασις καὶ παρακοὴ ἔλαβεν ἔνδικον μισθαποδοσίαν).

[22] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 331. See also Moffitt, *Atonement*, 187.

reward in 10:35, Moses' reward is better than material wealth. In both cases,

therefore, the reward is an eschatological reward, likely associated with the better and

abiding possession.

II.1.4. Promised Eternal Inheritance

The author of Hebrews speaks of a promised eternal inheritance (τὴν

ἐπαγγελίαν … τῆς αἰωνίου κληρονομίας) in 9:15. Jesus' mediation of the new

covenant secures the possibility that those who are called can receive this inheritance.

The author speaks of an inheritance five other times in Hebrews: once of Christ's

inheriting a more excellent name (1:4), three times clearly of an inheritance received

while on earth (6:12; 11:8; 12:17), and once of inheriting salvation (1:14). Three

clues suggest this inheritance relates to an eschatological hope. First, the inheritance

in 9:15 is described as "eternal (αἰώνιος)," which suggests an enduring eschatological

quality. Second, the inheritance may be associated with the inheritance of

"salvation," as in 1:14 (τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν), since Jesus' high

priestly work is elsewhere described as securing humanity's eternal salvation (5:9;

7:25; 9:12 [eternal redemption]). Third, although the author does not use the word

"inheritance" in 10:34, he depicts the better and abiding possession as a rightful

possession for his hearers. With the emphatic pronoun ἑαυτούς ("yourselves"), the

author stresses "the inalienable personal quality of this 'possession.' "[23] Since, as we

saw above, this better and abiding possession is an eschatological possession, and

given that the author depicts it as an inheritance for us, the promised eternal

inheritance in 9:15 may allude to the same hope.

II.1.5. God's Rest

In chapter 3,[24] I highlighted the pastoral function of the "rest" in Hebrews 3-4

and showed how the rest works as a tool to motivate the hearers of Hebrews to be

ever on the forward move in obedience to God. I connected the rest to the Promised

Land, which the unfaithful ones at Kadesh failed to enter when God commanded them

to do so. All of this still applies: the pastoral function of the rest and its situation

within the story of the wilderness generation does not exclude the rest from also being

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[23] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 300.
[24] Section III.3.1.

an image of the eschatological hope in Hebrews.[25] In this section, I address the rest as it pertains to this hope.

The author of Hebrews uses two words for the "rest" in Hebrews 3-4: κατάπαυσις (3:11, 18; 4:1, 3, 5, 10, 11) and σαββατισμός (4:9).[26] In each case of κατάπαυσις, the rest is not a generic place, but is always qualified as *God's* rest.[27] Therefore, when we speak of the κατάπαυσις in Hebrews, this is always God's κατάπαυσις. Σαββατισμός appears only here in the canon,[28] and the word alone gives little hint of its meaning. Two observations suggest that σαββατισμός is the same "rest" as God's κατάπαυσις.[29] First, the two words are used in a similar fashion in 4:6 and 4:9:

v 6a: ἀπολείπεται τινὰς εἰσελθεῖν εἰς αὐτήν [= τὴν κατάπαυσιν][30]
It remains that some are to enter it [=the rest].

v 9: ἀπολείπεται σαββατισμὸς τῷ λαῷ τοῦ θεοῦ
There remains a σαββατισμός for the people of God.[31]

Second, the author of Hebrews connects the σαββατισμός in 4:9 with God's κατάπαυσις in 4:10: "a σαββατισμός remains for the people of God" (4:9), "for (γάρ) whoever has entered God's κατάπαυσις has rested from his/her works" (4:10). The conjunction γάρ connects the two verses to clarify that the σαββατισμός is God's

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[25] To be sure, the author of Hebrews can use the eschatological rest to motivate the hearers.

[26] For κατάπαυσις, and σαββατισμός in Heb as rooted in Jewish eschatological-apocalyptic thought rather than Gnostic influences, see Hofius, *Katapausis*, 22-115. See also Laansma, *Rest*, 17-158. The debate on the religious-historical background of the rest motif is beyond the concerns of this thesis, but I find Hofius' and Laansma's treatises convincing.

[27] When quoting Ps 95, the rest is τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου (3:11; 4:3, 5); elsewhere the rest is τὴν κατάπαυσιν αὐτοῦ (3:18; 4:1, 10). Κατάπαυσις appears without a possessive pronoun twice. In 4:3a, τὴν κατάπαυσιν is clearly the same as τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου in 4:3b. In 4:11, the rest is ἐκείνην τὴν κατάπαυσιν, and ἐκείνην τὴν κατάπαυσιν in 4:11 is pointing back to τὴν κατάπαυσιν αὐτοῦ in 4:10.

[28] Outside of the canon and before Hebrews, σαββατισμός appears only in Plutarch *Superst.* 3.2.166a: "τῇ δεισιδαιμονίᾳ, πηλώσεις, καταβορβορώσεις, *σαββατισμούς*, ῥίψεις ἐπὶ πρόσωπον, αἰσχρὰς προκαθίσεις, ἀλλοκότους προσκυνήσεις (because of superstition, such as smearing with mud, wallowing in filth, *keeping of the Sabbath*, casting onself down with face to the ground, disgraceful besieging of the gods, and uncouth prostrations)" (text and translation from Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism; Volume 1: From Herodotus to Plutarch* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974), 549, italics mine).

[29] See also Lincoln, who sees σαββατισμός as a deliberate substitution for κατάπαυσις (Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology," 213).

[30] The antecedent of αὐτήν in 4:6 is τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου in 4:5.

[31] See also Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 101; Wray, *Rest*, 82.

κατάπαυσις.[32] I say more on the significance of the author's use of the word

σαββατισμός below, but at this juncture it is worth noting that the two words signify

the same concept.

Two questions to determine with regard to the rest are: when do we enter the

rest and what is the nature of this rest? The answer to the first question is directly

connected to the second.

With regard to when we enter the rest, three options are available: in the

present,[33] in the future,[34] or proleptically now but not fully until the future.[35] The rest

as a present experience is possibly supported by the present tense verbs for "entering"

and "believing" in 4:3: "εἰσερχόμεθα γὰρ εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν οἱ πιστεύσαντες"[36] and

by the author's recurrent mention of "today" from Ps 95 (3:7, 13, 15; 4:7).[37]

However, with respect to 4:3, Schunack suggests that the present tense verbs do not

signal a present entrance into the rest, but an assurance of salvation on the basis of

present faith:

> Die präsentische Aussage, daß "wir in die (verheißene) Ruhe hineinkommen",
> bezeichnet nicht einen gegenwärtigen "Heilszustand", sondern ist eine

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[32] Wray, *Rest*, 82-83.

[33] See Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 99.

[34] See Otto Bauernfeind, "ΚΑΤΑΠΑΥΩ, ΚΑΤΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament; Vol. III: Θ-Κ*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 628; Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 161-62; Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "The Promise Theme and the Theology of Rest," *BSac* 130, no. 518 (1973), 135-150. Laansma understands the rest in Heb 3-4 as wholly future, but admits that the wider eschatological perspective of Hebrews makes it conceivable that the author of Hebrews thinks it possible to enter proleptically in the present. For Laansma, Heb 3-4 does not give enough clues to point to an already, but not yet view of the rest: "The thrust of *this* passage points toward a future, corporate realization, but if the question of 'when' had been central to the thought of the passage and to the definition of the κατάπαυσις-idea then presumably it would have been made clearer" (Laansma, *Rest*, 305-310, here 310 (italics his)).

[35] See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 128; Barrett, "Eschatology," 366-73; Samuel Bénéteau, "Le repos du pèlerin (Hébreux 3,7-4,11)," *ETR* 78, no. 2 (2003), 203-23; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 110; Randall C. Gleason, "The Old Testament Background of Rest in Hebrews 3:7-4:11," *BSac* 157 (2000), 281-303; Hagner, *Hebrews*, 49; Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology," 210-12; R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 154; Weiss, "Sabbatismos," 674-89.

[36] Lane, for example, suggests this verse "implies more than proleptic enjoyment of what God has promised. The present tense of the verb is to be regarded as a true present and not simply viewed as future in reference. God's promise is predicated upon reality, and believers are already to enjoy the rest referred to in the quotation of Ps 95:11" (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 99). So too Montefiore: "the Greek text means neither that they are certain to enter, nor that they will enter, but that they are already in the process of entering" (Hugh Montefiore, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, BNTC. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1964), 83). See also Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology," 211-12.

[37] So Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology," 212.

personal applizierte Metapher des verheißenen, zukünftigen Heils (vgl. 6,10f). Das attributive Part. Aor. οἱ πιστεύσαντες hat konditionalen oder besser: modalen Sinn. Zur Sprache kommt also die präsentische Heilsgewißheit, daß "wir", die Christen, in Gottes verheißene Ruhe hineinkommen, indem wir solche sind, die sich als Glaubende erwiesen haben.[38]

Furthermore, deSilva rightly notes that the author of Hebrews never presents "today" as the day to enter the rest, but as "the day for responding to God's promise, to God's voice, with trust and obedience."[39] The author does not tell us to enter the rest "today," but he tells us that "today" is not the day to harden our hearts (3:7-8, 15; 4:7).

The rest as future is suggested in the context of 4:1-11, where the author says that the promise of entering God's rest still stands (4:1, 6, 9) and that we should continually strive to enter the rest (4:11). Like the wilderness generation who were faced with the opportunity to enter the rest, so too the hearers of Hebrews have the same opportunity before them and must continue toward the rest. A wholly future understanding of the rest does not, however, adequately account for the present tense verb in 4:3.

Rather than either wholly present or future only, the rest should be understood as an eschatological hope that we can approach in part in the present, but can enter into fully only in the future. By this reading, the present tense εἰσερχόμεθα in 4:3 indicates a continuous aspect, rendered "we who have believed *are entering* that rest."[40] As deSilva notes, "Such a reading allows the verse to impact the hearers with all the immediacy that the author desires, while at the same time not violating the future aspects of entering that rest which are so clearly indicated in the surrounding context."[41] We are in the process of entering, but have not yet entered fully. The idea of approaching the eschatological hope but yet not realizing it fully is echoed elsewhere in Hebrews (1:14; 9:28; 11:10, 13; 12:22). In the present, God's rest can be

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[38] Schunack, "Exegetische Beobachtungen," 217.
[39] David deSilva, "Entering God's Rest: Eschatology and the Socio-Rhetorical Strategy of Hebrews," *TJ* 21 (2000), 30.
[40] See also Attridge, who follows this translation (Attridge, "Rest," 280).
[41] deSilva, "Entering God's Rest," 32.

enjoyed in part while remaining ever in the future, motivating us to move forward in obedience and so enjoy the rest fully.[42]

Given the future-oriented dimension of the rest, what then is the nature of this rest? Heb 3-4 gives little hint as to the precise nature of the rest.[43] God's rest should be situated within the broader eschatological hope of Hebrews. The rest itself is not the full expression of this hope, but we can glean three broad insights about the eschatological hope from the discussion of God's rest in Heb 3-4.

First, God's rest is a *place* to be *entered* (3:11, 18, 19; 4:1, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11).[44] Although Heb 3-4 does not connect God's rest with the divine realm, the metaphor of movement elsewhere in Hebrews is often associated with the divine realm.[45] The author speaks elsewhere of our having confidence to enter the sanctuary (10:19).[46] Jesus has gone as our forerunner into the inner place behind the curtain (6:19-20; see also 9:12, 24).[47] Jesus, the one who has run the race before us, is now seated at the right hand of God's throne (12:2). Given that the notion of movement in Hebrews is elsewhere associated with entering into God's presence, and the κατάπαυσις in Heb 3-4 is consistently God's κατάπαυσις that we are urged to enter, the rest should be understood as a location in the presence of God.[48] Israel's eventual entrance into the Promised Land under Joshua was not a full realization of the rest precisely because the land was on earth, not in the heavenly presence of God.[49]

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[42] See also Barrett: "The 'rest', precisely because it is God's, is both present and future; men enter it, and must strive to enter it. This is paradoxical, but it is a paradox which Hebrews shares with all primitive Christian eschatology" (Barrett, "Eschatology," 372).

[43] Importing the concept of a millennial kingdom from dispensational theology is unnecessary, *contra* Kaiser Jr., "Promise," 135-50; Toussaint, "Eschatology," 67-80; and Thomas Kem Oberholtzer, "The Kingdom Rest in Hebrews 3:1-4:13," *BSac* 145, no. 578 (1988), 185-96. For a convincing rebuttal to the millennial kingdom reading, see deSilva, "Entering God's Rest," 33-38. See also Hughes, *Hebrews*, 161.

[44] See also Käsemann, *Wandering*, 68; Laansma, *Rest*, 277-79.

[45] This point also noted in deSilva, "Entering God's Rest," 38-39; Kiwoong Son, *Zion Symbolism in Hebrews: Hebrews 12:18-24 as a Hermeneutical Key to the Epistle*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs. (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005), 138-39.

[46] For the Temple as God's resting place, see: 1 Chr 28:2; 2 Chr 6:41; Ps 132:8; and Isa 66:1.

[47] So Attridge: "The Christians' 'entry into rest' parallels Christ's entry into the divine presence" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 128).

[48] See also deSilva, "Entering God's Rest," 40; Hofius, *Katapausis*, 53-54; Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology," 209. On the eschatological heavenly rest in Jewish apocalyptic literature, see Son, *Zion Symbolism*, 139.

[49] So Grässer: "Kanaan *kann* gar nicht die Katapausis sein, weil es *irdisch* ist" (Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 215, italics his). See also Knut Backhaus, "Das Land der Verheißung: Die Heimat der Glaubenden im Hebräerbrief," *NTS* 47 (2001), 171-88, here esp. 178.

Second, God's rest is a *condition* as well as a place. The author's use of

σαββατισμός (4:9) and the correlation of the rest with God's resting on the seventh day

of creation (4:4) says something about the attitude of those in the rest.[50] God's rest as

God's Sabbath celebration[51] pictures the eschatological place of rest as one of

participation through worship in God's activity.[52] God's rest as an experience of

worship is further substantiated by the opening verses of Ps 95. The author of

Hebrews quotes Ps 95:7b-11 in Heb 3:7-11. The first seven verses of Ps 95 are a call

to worship Yahweh.[53] In view of the wider context of the psalm, we hear the author

of Hebrews exhorting us to move forward obediently and "come into God's presence

with thanksgiving" (Ps 95:2).

Finally, the realization of the rest is not assured for all human beings. As I

discussed in detail in the previous chapter, the assured conclusion to the default

human story is eschatological death. More than that, the author seems to suggest that

no human being – past or present – has entered the rest.[54] The author is clear that no

one in the wilderness generation entered the rest, but he gives no indication that

anyone since this generation has entered either (4:8). Despite being available for

entry since the foundation of the world (4:3b), God's rest remains.

God's rest, therefore, offers a partial picture of the eschatological hope. The

rest can be enjoyed in anticipation now, but the full realization of God's rest comes

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[50] See also Exod 35:2.

[51] For σαββατισμός as God's Sabbath celebration, see Hofius, *Katapausis*, 110; Laansma, *Rest*, 276-77; Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology," 213; Weiss, "Sabbatismos," 674-89. As Laansma notes, understanding God's Sabbath as a celebration "accords both with Jewish conceptions of the Sabbath as a day not merely of cessation of activity but of *festive worship and praise*, and with Hebrews' picture of the future πανήγυρις (12,22), 'festive gathering,' in the heavenly Jerusalem" (276-77).

[52] So Attridge: "A foretaste of the eschatological sabbath festivity may be actualized in the worship of the community" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 131). See also Gleason: "the Old Testament concept of rest is best understood as the blessing of worshipping God in the safety of His presence" (Gleason, "Rest," 300-301).

[53] Gleason, "Rest," 301.

[54] Thiessen has argued effectively that the author of Hebrews depicts Israel's story as a people still in exodus, not having entered the rest (Thiessen, "Exodus," 353-69). Thomas is incorrect, therefore, to point to Heb 4:2 as evidence for Hebrews' mixed audience: "the author intends to make a distinction in the wilderness generation between those who heard the message in faith and those who did not hear it in faith. On the one hand those who heard the message in faith profited by entering God's rest. On the other hand, those who did not join in with those who heard it in faith forfeited the profit of God's rest" (Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 205). On the contrary, the author of Hebrews never speaks of a group from the wilderness generation that entered the rest, instead finding that *no one* entered the rest, as evidenced by Ps 95 speaking of a rest even after Joshua (4:8).

only in the future when we enter it. Once in the rest – in the presence of God – we enjoy the Sabbath celebration that has been available since the foundation of the world. Entrance into this rest is not guaranteed, however, and so in the present we must strive continually to enter the rest.

II.1.6. Enduring Homeland

The final image for the eschatological hope in Hebrews is that of an enduring, God-built homeland. Terminologically, I use "homeland" to account for a number of descriptions the author uses for an eschatological locale: coming world (2:5); city (11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14); homeland (11:14); country (11:16); and kingdom (12:26-28). I choose "homeland" as the description because the language of homeland also includes concepts of possession (10:34) and inheritance (9:15). The homeland in Hebrews is characterized in five ways.

First, the homeland is an enduring place. By faith Abraham lived in the land God promised to him, but he never settled completely: he lived as in a foreign land and he lived in tents (11:9). This nomadic existence in 11:9 is contrasted with the permanence of the city in 11:10. The city in 11:10 is "the city that has foundations (τὴν τοὺς θεμελίους ἔχουσαν πόλιν)." The image of nomadic existence continues in 11:13, where everyone who died in faith did not receive the promises, but looked forward to them from a distance, acknowledging that "having confessed that they are strangers (ξένοι) and exiles (παρεπίδημοί) on the earth" (11:13). These strangers and exiles were instead "seeking a homeland (πατρίδα ἐπιζητοῦσιν)" (11:14). Similarly, the eschatological kingdom in 12:26-28 is "a kingdom that cannot be shaken (βασιλείαν ἀσάλευτον)" (12:28). The city's permanence is also suggested in 13:14, where the city to come is contrasted with our existence, where "we have here no lasting city (οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ὧδε μένουσαν πόλιν)."

Second, the homeland is located in the heavenly realm. The faithful desire "a better country, that is, a heavenly (ἐπουρανίου) one" (11:16). The author of Hebrews qualifies the "city of the living God" as "the heavenly (ἐπουρανίῳ) Jerusalem" (12:22). This heavenly realm is likely the dwelling place of God. The cosmic

structure of Hebrews is a complex discussion,[55] but for our purposes can be simplified as the earth (1:10; 8:4; 11:13; 12:25-26), the heaven(s) (1:10; 4:14; 7:26; 11:12; 12:26), and the heaven(s) where God dwells (8:1; 9:23-24; 12:23-25).[56] The separation of the heaven(s) is evident in view of Jesus passing through the heavens (διεληλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανούς, 4:14); being exalted above the heavens (ὑψηλότερος τῶν οὐρανῶν, 7:26); and entering into heaven itself (εἰς αὐτὸν τὸν οὐρανόν, 9:24).[57] The vision of Jesus entering into heaven itself and the expectation of the eschatological hope as a city with foundations (as noted in the paragraph above) suggests that the dwelling place of God is not a spiritual ethereal existence, but a tangible abode in the presence of God.

Third, the homeland is designed and built by God. Like the rest, which has been available since the foundation of the world (4:3b), the enduring city is already prepared.[58] God is the designer and builder (11:10) who has prepared a city for the faithful (11:16). The city is "the city of the living God" (12:22). This image of the homeland being God's coordinates with God's κατάπαυσις in Heb 3-4.

Fourth, the homeland is a uniquely human hope. God did not subject the coming inhabitable world (οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν) to angels, but to humanity (2:5).[59] God intends for humanity to be crowned with glory and honor (2:7) with all things in subjection to them (2:8). Even though angels appear in the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22), the author makes clear elsewhere that angels exercise no dominion

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[55] A full discussion of the cosmology of Hebrews goes beyond the bounds of this study, but a precise understanding of Hebrews' cosmology does not affect the argument of this thesis. For recent treatments of the cosmology of Hebrews, see Edward Adams, "The Cosmology of Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 122-39; Jon C. Laansma, "The Cosmology of Hebrews," in *Cosmology and New Testament Theology*, ed. Sean M. McDonough and Jonathan T. Pennington. Library of New Testament Studies 355 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 125-43; Jon C. Laansma, "Hidden Stories in Hebrews: Cosmology and Theology," in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. Library of New Testament Studies 387 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 9-18; Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 157-68; and Schenck, *Cosmology*, esp. 115-83.

[56] The author uses both the singular and plural of οὐρανός to speak of either the visible created order (singular: 11:12; 12:26 / plural: 1:10; 4:14; 7:26) or the invisible dwelling place of God (singular: 9:24 / plural: 8:1; 9:23; 12:23, 25). As a result, the singularity or plurality of οὐρανός is not a reliable indicator of which heaven(s) the author is discussing. See also Adams, "Cosmology," 131 n 45.

[57] Adams, "Cosmology," 131.

[58] This is different from the Johannine vision, where Jesus goes *to prepare* a place for his disciples (John 14:2-3). For the author of Hebrews, God's place is already prepared.

[59] See also 13:14, where the city we seek is also "coming" (μέλλω): οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ὧδε μένουσαν πόλιν ἀλλὰ τὴν μέλλουσαν ἐπιζητοῦμεν.

(1:13; 2:5) but worship the Son (1:6) and serve the Son and humanity (1:7, 14). I address the οἰκουμένη in 1:6 in more detail in the next chapter, where I argue that the οἰκουμένη that Jesus enters is the heavenly realm at his exaltation.[60]

Finally, the homeland is the only satisfactory destination for the faithful. This is clearest in 11:9-16, where the patriarchs are depicted as nomads looking for the permanent homeland. If they had been looking for the earthly country from which they came they could have returned (11:15), but they desired only the enduring heavenly homeland (11:16).

II.1.7. Conclusion

The author of Hebrews uses a number of images for the eschatological hope for the faithful, but it can be summarized as an eschatological dwelling place in God's presence in the heavenly realm. This heavenly homeland will endure beyond the shaking of the heavens and the earth (12:26-28). The enduring homeland cannot be inhabited by non-enduring human beings. Death remains a significant obstacle to the realization of the eschatological hope, and so death itself must be overcome. It is to this point that we now turn.

II.2. Resurrection as Prerequisite

Resurrection in Hebrews is a rarely-noticed partner with the realization of the eschatological hope. The author lists "the resurrection of the dead (ἀναστάσεώς τε νεκρῶν)" as an elementary doctrine (6:2). The doctrines in 6:1-2 are grouped into three pairs: (1) repentance from dead words and faith toward God; (2) washings and the laying on of hands; and (3) resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.[61] Given that resurrection of the dead is paired with *eternal* judgment (κρίματος αἰωνίου), it is likely that both refer to an eschatological experience.[62] As such, this resurrection is more than a resuscitation of a life that will once again end in death, but a rising to an eternal life that cannot be ended.

The author speaks in two places of resurrection as resuscitation of life. First, in Heb 11:17-19, the author credits Abraham's faithfulness to offer Isaac to

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[60] Chapter 6, section III.
[61] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 163.
[62] See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 163 and Moffitt, *Atonement*, 184.

Abraham's consideration that "God was even able to raise someone from the dead" (11:19). This likely refers not to Abraham's hope of an eschatological resurrection, but to an immediate resuscitation to life. The implication here seems to be that Abraham expected that if he did have to kill his promised son, then God could bring him back to life again, as God did do "in parable (ἐν παραβολῇ)" (11:19).[63] Second, the author affirms that women received their dead back by resurrection (11:35a). The author may be alluding to the widow of Zarephat whose son was raised by Elijah (1 Kgs 17:17-24), the Shunammite woman whose son was raised by Elisha (2 Kgs 4:16-37), and/or the mother who expected the resurrection of her seven sons in the Maccabean literature (2 Macc 7).[64] In the case of the first two women, their sons' resurrections are clearly the restoration of life without any further eschatological implications; their sons presumably died again later in life. Similarly, the resurrection that the mother hopes for in 2 Macc is likely the restoration of her sons on earth: "Do not fear this hangman, but prove worthy of your brothers and accept death so that in his mercy I may get you back again along with your brothers" (7:29, NETS).[65] She likely expects to see her sons again in this life. Therefore, Hebrews' mention of women receiving back their dead by resurrection is likely not an eternal eschatological resurrection, but a resurrection in terms of resuscitation.[66]

The other place where the author clearly speaks to a hope of resurrection is in Heb 11:35c, where he recalls some people who were tortured and refused release "in order that they might obtain a better resurrection (ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν)." The fact that the author mentions another "resurrection" in the same verse, and calls this resurrection "better (κρείττονος)" clues the reader into a distinction between the two. This "better resurrection" in 11:35c, in contrast to the resurrections of 11:17-19 and 11:35a, is more than a restoration of life, but an eternal

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[63] See also Moffitt, *Atonement*, 186.

[64] On the first two parallels, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 349; Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 260; more on the narrative of the mother and her seven sons below in section III.1.2 and in chapter 7, section II.2.

[65] See also 2 Macc 7:22-23: "I do not know how you came into being in my womb. It was not I who gave you life and breath, nor I who set in order the elements within each of you. Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the origin of man and devised the origin of all things, will in his mercy give life and breath back to you again, since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws" (NETS). On this point, see also David deSilva, *Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, SBLDS 152 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 197 n 110.

[66] See also Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 262.

eschatological resurrection along the lines of that in 6:2. The "betterness" is this resurrection's enduring heavenly quality, just as κρεῖττον/κρεῖσσον and κρείττων/κρείσσων is used elsewhere in Hebrews (see esp. 6:9; 9:23; 10:34; and 11:16). Moffitt is correct: "the resuscitations do not result in eternally enduring life, while the better resurrection is *better* at just this point."[67] This enduring eschatological resurrection prepares human beings for their eternal inheritance, as they are no longer susceptible to death.

II.3. Perfection as Resurrected Enduring Life

"Perfection" is another expression of the hope of enduring life. Perfection in Hebrews encompasses five words: τελειόω (2:10; 5:9; 7:19, 28; 9:9; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:23); τέλειος (5:14; 9:11); τελειωτής (12:2); τελείωσις (7:11); τελειότης (6:1).[68] Although not in every case, I will argue that perfection in Hebrews often refers to the eschatological experience of enduring life after death, which allows embodied human beings to dwell perpetually in the eternal heavenly homeland.

II.3.1. *Perfection that is not Enduring Life*

To be sure, "perfection" is not a technical term for eschatological hope in every instance in Hebrews. For example, the author chides his hearers for their infantile reliance on spiritual milk while saying "solid food is for the mature (τέλειος)" (5:14). If people can be perfect in the sense of mature only in the eschaton, then the author would not have chided his hearers for their failure to ingest solid food. Heb 6:1 (the following verse) is related to this, as the author calls us to leave elementary doctrine and press on to maturity (τελειότης). Here also, in view of the surrounding context urging us to mature from our present infantile state and the author's expectation that "we will do this, if God permits" (6:3), "perfection" is likely a temporal rather than eschatological experience.

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[67] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 187 (italics his). See also Gareth Lee Cockerill, "The Better Resurrection (Heb. 11:35): A Key to the Structure and Rhetorical Purpose of Hebrews 11," *TynBul* 51, no. 2 (2000), 222; Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 262.

[68] For a survey of perfection in the Greek literature and a review of scholarly literature on the topic, see James Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest: Ps 110,4 as the Substructure of Heb 5,1-7,28*, European University Studies 693 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000), 220-27.

Likewise, perfection in Hebrews 9:9, 10:1, and 10:14 is likely not a postmortem perfection, but a relief from the burden of guilt. Conscience (συνείδησις), as noted in chapter 3,[69] is a person's awareness in general or awareness of sin in particular.[70] In Heb 9:9, it is a human's conscience that needs perfecting (συνείδησιν τελειῶσαι τὸν λατρεύοντα). The perfection of the conscience is likely a cleansing, as in 9:14 (καθαριεῖ τὴν συνείδησιν ἡμῶν) and 10:22 (ῥεραντισμένοι τὰς καρδίας ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως πονηρᾶς). Similarly, in 10:1-3, human beings struggle with the continual reminder of sins committed. The annual Levitical sacrifices cannot provide perfection (10:1) because they remain a constant reminder of sin (10:3), and human beings still struggle with a consciousness of sin (συνείδησιν ἁμαρτιῶν) (10:2). Jesus' single offering, however, does perfect continually those being sanctified (τετελείωκεν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς τοὺς ἁγιαζομένους) (10:14). Given its placement in the context of the repeated Levitical sacrifices that could not cleanse the conscience (10:1-11), the perfection that Jesus' single offering secures is likely a cleansing of conscience. Because of Jesus' offering, God remembers our sin no more (10:16-18) and so we can enter the holy places (10:19-22). Nevertheless, even though perfection in these cases is not directly associated with a postmortem enduring life in the heavenly homeland built by God, perfection is a prerequisite for entry into God's presence.

II.3.2. Perfection as a Heavenly Marker

Perfection language elsewhere in Hebrews has a heavenly quality. For instance, in 9:11 the author describes the tent which Jesus entered as "the greater and perfect tent (τῆς μείζονος καὶ τελειοτέρας σκηνῆς)." This tent, he explains, is "not made with hands, that is, not of this creation." The greater and perfect tent is heaven itself (9:24). Similarly, when the author describes the scene in the heavenly Jerusalem, he includes "the spirits of the righteous made perfect (πνεύμασι δικαίων τετελειωμένων)" along with the "assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven" (12:23). Lane suggests that the perfect participle τετελειωμένων "implies the

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[69] Section III.1.

[70] For the latter use, see Wis 17:10; Rom 2:15; Philo *Det*. 146; *Spec*. 2.49; *Virt*. 124; Josephus *Ant*. 16.103, 212; *J.W.* 4.193.

stable and definitive character of their condition."[71] It is likely that these righteous spirits' perfection is a prerequisite for their enduring presence in the heavenly realm. Although the author is not explicit on this point, it is conceivable that their perfection is a postmortem enduring life.

It is worth noting that the author does not insist that these spirits in Heb 12:23 will remain disembodied. As I argued in chapter 4 and am suggesting further in this section, the author of Hebrews does not operate with a strictly dualistic understanding of the human constitution, whereby human beings are composed of a temporary body with an eternal spirit. To be fully human is to be embodied. The author's vision of "the spirits of the righteous made perfect" coordinates with other contemporary Jewish texts, which envision spirits awaiting final vindication in resurrection (Rev 6:9; 20:4-5; *L.A.B.* 19:12-13; 23:13).[72] This vision in Heb 12:23, therefore, does not undo the argument we are making here: Hebrews expects the eschatological hope to be populated by embodied human beings made perfect and bodily resurrected to enduring life. The question of how these "spirits of the righteous made perfect" exist apart from the body prior to resurrection is a mystery that the author of Hebrews does not explore.

II.3.3. Postmortem Perfection

The eschatological character of perfection is evidenced most clearly in the three times Jesus is said to have been perfected (using τελειόω each time: 2:10; 5:9; 7:28).

II.3.3.1. Hebrews 2:9-10

Hebrews 2:9-10 reveals two points about perfection. First, perfection is associated with glory and honor. In 2:9, the author introduces Jesus as one who was crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death (διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου). This is paralleled in 2:10, where Jesus' perfection comes through suffering (διὰ παθημάτων). Furthermore, the author finds it fitting (ἔπρεπεν) that God would

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[71] William L. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, WBC 47B (Dallas: Word, 1991), 471.

[72] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 210-11. Note also Oberholtzer on 12:23: "They are referred to as spirits because they have not yet been united with their bodies in resurrection" (Thomas Kem Oberholtzer, "The Failure to Heed His Speaking in Hebrews 12:25-29," *BSac* 146, no. 581 (1989), 71).

bring many sons and daughters to glory by making the pioneer (ἀρχηγός) of their salvation perfect through sufferings. In the next verse, Jesus is named a brother with these sons and daughters, which suggests that he too was being brought to glory. The glory is equivalent to the perfection which Jesus experienced through suffering.[73] Therefore, perfection, glory, and honor likely point to the same general idea. Second, perfection (as well as glory and honor) comes through suffering. That this suffering is a suffering in death is clear in context.[74] Although it is not immediately clear that Jesus' perfection comes *after* suffering rather than *along with* suffering, it is likely that his perfection follows his death. This is evidenced by 2:9, where the author maintains that Jesus was crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death (διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου).[75] In this causal relationship, Jesus' glory and honor is the result of his suffering of death. Given the close similarity between glory, honor, and perfection in Heb 2:9-10, we see that Jesus was made perfect after his death.[76] deSilva is correct: "It is likely … that the audience will hear 'perfection' after sufferings as a parallel expression for his exaltation after death."[77]

II.3.3.2. Hebrews 5:9

Jesus' perfection is also associated with suffering in Hebrews 5:7-9.[78] Here the author does not say explicitly that Jesus was made perfect through suffering as he does in 2:10. Nevertheless, Jesus' perfection in 5:9 follows Jesus learning obedience

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[73] On the association between perfection and glory, see also Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 128; Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 228-29; John M. Scholer, *Proleptic Priests: Priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, JSNTSup 49 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 195-96. For parallels between suffering, exaltation, and perfection in Hebrews, see the chart in Moisés Silva, "Perfection and Eschatology in Hebrews," *WTJ* 39, no. 1 (1976), 66.

[74] In 2:9, the suffering is a suffering of death (τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου) and Jesus tasted death for everyone. In 2:14, Jesus destroys the one with the power of death through his death.

[75] On διά with the accusative as causal, see Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 369. See also Grässer, who understands διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου "als Voraussetzung der Erhöhung" (Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 121).

[76] This conclusion is also followed by Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 229.

[77] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 197. See also Joshua W. Jipp, "The Son's Entrance into the Heavenly World: The Soteriological Necessity of the Scriptural Catena in Hebrews 1.5-14," *NTS* 56 (2010), 570-71; Paul-Gerhard Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ: Der religionsgeschichtliche und theologische Hintergrund einer neutestamentlichen Christusprädikation* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1973), 300-301 and 300 n 42.

[78] On the association between suffering in 2:9-10 and 5:7-9, see Michael Bachmann, "Hohepriesterliches Leiden: Beobachtungen zu Hebr 5 1-10," *ZNW* 78 (1987), 255-56.

through suffering in 5:8.[79] The eschatological character of Jesus' perfection is indicated by three other points. First, Jesus' perfection is contrasted with "the days of his flesh," during which he learned through suffering.[80] "The days of his flesh" clearly refer to Jesus' days on earth, and so his perfection must refer to a time following his earthly life. Second, Jesus' perfection through suffering in 5:9 deals with eternal salvation: "having been made perfect, [Jesus] became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him." If perfection is something that humanity hopes to share in (as 11:40 suggests)[81], then this perfection may be associated with the eternal salvation that Jesus secures. Jesus as the source of eternal salvation in 5:9 recalls Jesus as the ἀρχηγός of salvation in 2:10, where he is the one through whom God is bringing many children to glory. Perfection, then, is closely associated with the eternal salvation that Jesus secures, as God is bringing many children to glory.[82] Third, if Jesus' being heard in 5:7 is a reference to his resurrection (as I argue in the next chapter),[83] and given that his perfection follows his suffering of death, it is possible to associate his resurrection with his perfection.[84]

II.3.3.3. Hebrews 7:28

The final reference to Jesus' perfection appears in Hebrews 7:28. The author makes it clear that Jesus' high priesthood is contingent upon his enduring life after death.[85] Hebrews 7 famously discusses the enigmatic figure of Melchizedek and

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[79] So rightly Moffitt: "He was made perfect only *after* his suffering had ceased" (David M. Moffitt, "'If Another Priest Arises': Jesus' Resurrection and the High Priestly Christology of Hebrews," in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. Library of New Testament Studies 387 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 74, italics his). See also Scholer: "παθεῖν (5:8) is immediately followed by the passive participles τελειωθείς and προσαγοπευθείς. This suggests that the consequence of his death (i.e. suffering) was the simultaneous perfection or entry into God's presence" (Scholer, *Proleptic Priests*, 196).

[80] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 198.

[81] More on 11:40 later in this chapter (section III.2.1).

[82] Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester*, 43.

[83] Chapter 6, section V.

[84] So also deSilva: "the passage is fully comprehensible if we allow 'having been perfected' to carry simply its formal sense of 'having been brought to the final goal' of that journey described in 5:7-8, namely, having entered the divine realm from which advantageous location he can secure divine benefits for his loyal clients" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 198-99). See also Jipp, "Entrance," 572; Koester, *Hebrews*, 290; Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 230; and Moffitt, "If Another Priest Arises," 74.

[85] For the most extended studies of this point, see Moffitt's PhD dissertation, "A New and Living Way: Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (Ph.D. diss., Duke

attributes Jesus' priesthood qualifications to his being after the order[86] of Melchizedek.[87] "It is evident (πρόδηλον)," our author says, that Jesus is descended from Judah (not Levi), and so is disqualified from being a priest on earth (7:14). Jesus' priesthood is not ratified on the basis of his genealogical lineage, but on the basis of his "indestructible life (ζωῆς ἀκαταλύτου)" (7:16). The author explains what he means by "indestructible life" with a quotation from Ps 110:4: "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek" (7:17). Melchizedek, who appears years before Levi or Aaron, is a priest of the Most High God (7:1) on the basis of his unending life (7:3). Unlike the earthly priests, whose ministries are cut short by their deaths, Jesus' priesthood continues because he lives forever. Hay writes, "The thought [in Heb 7] is evidently that the psalm proves that there exists an authentic priesthood independent of Aaron's to which only persons who never die may belong. Since Jesus is eternal, he may belong."[88] However, the author of Hebrews is clear elsewhere that Jesus did in fact die, and so an implicit step for Jesus' enduring life is his resurrection.[89]

In this discussion of Jesus' high priesthood and enduring life, the author of Hebrews again refers to Jesus' perfection: "For the law appoints men who are priests with weakness, but the word of the oath that came after the law appoints a Son who

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University, 2010) (published version: *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, NovTSup 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2011)) and his shorter study, "If Another Priest Arises."

[86] The author of Hebrews, from Ps 110:4, calls Jesus a priest "after the order of Melchizedek (κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισέδεκ)" in 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 17. He probably understands τάξιν as referring to a likeness between Jesus' priesthood and Melchizedek's given his paraphrase in 7:15: "κατὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα Μελχισέδεκ (after the likeness of Melchizedek)." See Paul J. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša*[c], CBQMS 10 (Washington DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981), 118.

[87] Despite the tantalizing mention of Melchizedek in the Dead Sea Scrolls (particularly 11QMelch), Kurianal has demonstrated effectively that there is no identifiable evidence of direct influence of Qumran on Hebrews' understanding of Melchizedek or of his Midrash on Ps 110:4 in Heb 7 (Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 161-97). See also Hay: "Thus in various ways Hebrews seem[s] to reflect and stand critically over against a variety of traditions concerning Melchizedek. To specify precisely which traditions … the epistle's author knew, and which he did not, is impossible" (David M. Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity*, SBLMS 18 (Atlanta: SBL, 1989), 143). For a more positive recent assessment, see Mason, who admits that while we can demonstrate no textual dependence of Hebrews on Qumran, we can see "hints of shared views" between the two (Mason, *Priest Forever*, 193; Mason develops these hints in 196-203).

[88] Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 147. Hay summarizes the force of Ps 110:4 in Hebrews nicely: "For this epistle's author, the meaning of Ps 110.4 was fundamentally 'You are a priest because – like Melchizedek – you are forever' " (147).

[89] See also Kobelski: "Jesus is 'in the likeness of Melchizedek' because, like him, he has become a priest not by the legal requirement of genealogical succession but by the power of his indestructible life (*kata dynamin zōēs akatalytou*), that is, through his resurrection" (Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 118). See also Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 265.

has been made perfect forever (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τετελειωμένον)" (7:28). Two observations demonstrate that Jesus' perfection here is one of an enduring life. First, Jesus' perfection is contrasted with the human priests' weakness. The human priests' weakness was not only their need to make sacrifices for themselves (7:27), but also their susceptibility to death (7:23). Unlike the human priests who die, Jesus has been made perfect forever. As deSilva notes, " 'Perfected' here would most likely be heard as 'removal from the sphere of liability to weakness,' that is, in his passing through to the heavenly, divine realm."[90] Second, as noted, Jesus' high priesthood in Heb 7 is contingent on his enduring life after death. As a result, the perfection of the Son appointed priest in this context is likely the enduring life he received by means of resurrection after death. Kurianal is correct: the perfection "must involve primarily that Christ was raised from the dead, glorified and lives forever. This is the most relevant aspect of the ideal state necessary for being declared High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. This perfection makes it possible for him to be a priest forever (7,24)."[91]

II.3.3.4. Hebrews 7:11, 19

Just as Jesus' perfection is an expression of the enduring life he receives after death, so also the perfection which the Levitical priesthood fails to secure in 7:11 and 7:19 is likely that of a postmortem enduring life. The author argues that perfection was not attainable through the Levitical priesthood (7:11), as the law made nothing perfect (7:19). At first glance, the author appears to be saying something similar to what he does in 9:9, 10:1, and 10:14. There, as I noted above, the author says that the Levitical sacrificial system could not cleanse human beings from their guilty conscience, due in great part to the constant reminder of sins caused by annual

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[90] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 199.

[91] Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 232. So also Moffitt: "If this is right, then the logic of the argument indicates that Jesus' perfection is the prerequisite that qualifies him to serve as the everlasting High Priest. Precisely because Jesus' perfection ensures that he will never forfeit his ministry to death, he can be appointed by God to serve in Melchizedek's eternal priestly order. Yet, since Jesus did in fact die, everything the writer has just predicated about Jesus' perfection and ministry can only apply to him *after* death. Before he died, Jesus was liable to the power of death. He was made like his brothers and sisters in every respect (cf. 2.17-18). Only at some point after he died, then, did he attain the state of perfection (i.e., possess the kind of life that is not liable to the power of death) and only then could he become the source of everlasting salvation" (Moffitt, "If Another Priest Arises," 75-76). See also Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Hebräer*, KEK 13 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1936), 62.

sacrifices. However, Heb 7 has no such discussion. Nowhere in Heb 7 does the author mention a struggle with conscience caused by perpetual sacrifices. When he does mention perpetual sacrifices (7:27), he does so to highlight the sufficiency of Jesus' one-time sacrifice in contrast to the daily offerings priests must make for themselves and others. The point of this (κεφάλαιον δὲ ἐπί τοῖς λεγυμένοις; 8:1) is not that these sacrifices remind us of sin, but that Jesus is the perfected high priest whose self-offering in the heavenly realm mediates a better covenant (8:1-6).[92] Although we cannot be as sure that the perfection in 7:11 and 7:19 is one of enduring life, three clues suggest that it is such an expression of the eschatological hope. First, given that Jesus' perfection only a few verses later in 7:28 is one of enduring life, and given that Jesus' enduring life is in view in the whole of Heb 7, the perfection in 7:11 and 7:19 may well take on the same meaning. Second, the author contrasts the Levitical priesthood's inability to secure perfection with Jesus' ability to "save forever" (σώζειν εἰς τὸ παντελὲς) (7:25). Σώζειν εἰς τὸ παντελὲς can be read qualitatively ("save to the uttermost")[93] or temporally ("save forever").[94] While both nuances may certainly be in play (indeed, to be saved "forever" could well imply being saved "completely"),[95] the eternality of the salvation should not be missed. The connection between σώζειν εἰς τὸ παντελὲς and enduring life is made evident in view of the other time the author uses σώζω, for in 5:7 the author uses σώζω for God's saving Jesus out of death.[96] Finally, in 8:6 the author describes Christ's ministry as more excellent than that of the old covenant on the basis that it is "better" (κρείττονός) and is enacted on "better" (κρείττοσιν) promises. As we have seen, "better" for Hebrews often connotes an enduring quality (see esp. 6:9; 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35).

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[92] On κεφάλαιον in 8:1 as referring back to the discussion of Jesus' perfection, see Albert Vanhoye, "La '*Teleiôsis*' du Christ: Point captial de la Christologie sacerdotale d'Hébreux," *NTS* 42 (1996), 322-24.

[93] This translation is followed by Attridge, *Hebrews*, 210; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 191; ESV; NET; NIV; KJV.

[94] This translation is followed by Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 391; Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 134; NRSV; NASB.

[95] So Lane, who translates the phrase "save absolutely," but intends to maintain both nuances of the phrase (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 176 note v). See also Koester: "The salvation provided by Christ is everlasting precisely because it is complete" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 365).

[96] This parallel noted by Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 134. More on this interpretation of Heb 5:7-9 in chapter 6, section V.

The "better" promises enacted by the new covenant Jesus mediates may well include an enduring life of perfection that the old covenant could not secure.

Similarly, the perfection that the heroes of faith failed to realize in 11:40 is likely associated with their enduring life after death. I make this case in more detail below.[97]

II.3.4. Summary

Perfection in Hebrews, while not in every case, is often associated with enduring life after death. In all three cases where Jesus is said to have been made perfect, this perfection is likely a postmortem experience of blessing. Jesus' perfection is an enduring life that follows death.[98] Likewise, the perfection which the Levitical priesthood failed to secure in Heb 7 is likely the perfection that Jesus experienced: an enduring life after death.[99] Other scholars connect perfection to an experience after death, but speak more in terms of entrance into the heavenly realms than of reception of enduring life. For example, Loader writes:

> Für die Menschen bedeutet τελείωσις Heil, Eintritt in die himmlische Welt vor Gott wie auch die Schaffung der Voraussetzung dafür. Für Jesus bedeutet τελείωσις Rückkehr in die himmlische Welt zu Gott. In beiden Fällen haben wir es mit einer Tat Gottes zu tun, und in beiden Fällen vollzieht sich diese Tat nach dem Tode.[100]

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[97] Section III.2.1.

[98] This may parallel Eleazar's perfection in 4 Macc 7:15: "O man of blessed age, venerable gray hair and law-observant life, *whom the faithful seal of death has perfected*!" This parallel also noted in S. K. Williams, *Jesus' Death as Saving Event*, HDR 2 (Missoula: Scholars, 1975), 239. More on 4 Macc in chapter 7, section II.2.

[99] For a possibly similar use of perfection language (which also features a discussion of humanity's divinely-intended dominion, as in Heb 2), see *Barn.* 6:18-19: "Now we have already said above: 'And let them increase and multiply and rule over the fish.' But who is presently able to rule over beasts or fish or birds of the air? For we ought to realize that 'to rule' implies that one has authority, so that the one giving orders is really in control. If, however, this is not now the case, then he has told us when it will be: when we ourselves have been made perfect and so become heirs of the Lord's covenant" (translation from Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 401). See also Eusebius of the martyr Marinus: "Standing before the judge he displayed still greater zeal for the faith; and straightaway, even as he was, was led away to death, and so was perfected (τελειοῦται)" (*Hist. eccl.* 7.15.5; translation from Loeb; also quoted in Bruce, *Hebrews*, 132 n 70).

[100] Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester*, 44-45. So too Walter Edward Brooks, "The Perpetuity of Christ's Sacrifice in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *JBL* 89, no. 2 (1970), 207-208; Charles Carlston, "The Vocabulary of Perfection in Philo and Hebrews," in *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honor of George E. Ladd*, ed. R. A. Guelich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 146-47; and Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 309. Brooks also sees the resurrection of Jesus in play in Heb 7, arguing that Jesus entered the priesthood "at the moment of the resurrection" (206). Käsemann offers another similar reading: "Completion of the righteous, as well as of the Old Testament witnesses of

Loader's conclusions are correct in linking perfection with the postmortem experience of blessing, but he misses the significant prerequisite of resurrection to enduring life for the reception of the eschatological hope. Without the perfection of enduring life that Jesus secures, human beings have no hope of living in the enduring homeland.

II.4. Conclusion

Ultimately, the eschatological hope is in service of seeing the realization of humanity's divinely-intended glory, honor, and dominion (as I discussed in detail in chapter 3).[101] Human beings finally realize the glory, honor, and dominion intended for them in being raised to an enduring life of perfection, entering God's rest, and enjoying life in the God-built enduring city. Before Christ, however, this eschatological hope is unreachable. Human death and subsequent postmortem retribution remain the assured conclusion to the default human story. The story of faith has not yet been told perfectly and no humans have experienced the resurrection to an enduring life so as to receive the promised inheritance. The inescapable reality is that "at present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to humanity" (2:8). The heroes of faith in Heb 11 make this clear.

III. FAITH'S CONCLUSION FORESHADOWED AND UNREALIZED IN HEBREWS 11

In Hebrews 11, as elsewhere in this word of exhortation (13:22), the author writes with a pastoral purpose. Heb 11 does more than list examples of faith from Israel's history. Heb 11 advances an argument. Two observations support this fact.

First, the author wishes to *sound* persuasive. Heb 11 famously lists heroes from Israel's tradition with the repetition of πίστει ("by faith"). Using the rhetorical tool of anaphora, where an orator repeats the same word at the beginning of consecutive statements, the author of Hebrews crafts chapter 11 to sound convincing to those hearing it read aloud. As Cosby writes, "The list is, therefore, far from a mere presentation of data. The author composes it in such a way as to *sound*

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faith, occurs through entry into heaven or through membership in the divine festal gathering" (Käsemann, *Wandering*, 141). Käsemann connects his reading to the Gnostic myth of the *Urmensch*, in which the redeemed Redeemeer returns to his heavenly home and guides souls to heaven (144).

[101] Section II.

persuasive to his audience."[102] The repeated πίστει gives the sense "that the author is drawing on an almost inexhaustible fund of *exempla*."[103]

Second, the author shapes the history he writes by the examples he chooses. History is never a full recollection of everything that happened, but is a selective presentation. As Petersen acknowledges, "History in the strict sense is a story about events, not the events themselves, or even a verbal representation of them, since it is impossible to represent the enormous mass of 'events' we perceive even in a given day."[104] If Petersen is correct that "history is always constructed, never *re-*constructed,"[105] then every constructor of history tries to create realities by the account of history he presents. As such, when the author of Hebrews points to figures of Israel's past in Heb 11, he does so for more reason than to highlight examples of faith. Instead, the author is constructing a history and a narrative of faith of which we are participants. He is constructing an identity, for the story the author imagines does more than simply describe a world, but rather places his hearers in this story and calls for action. History is inherently selective, and so also the figures the author chooses to highlight are the result of the author's decision process.

Given the selectivity of the author's heroes of faith in Heb 11, we can look for a unifying theme or themes in the chapter. Along these lines, Eisenbaum highlights how some of the examples of faith in Heb 11 are poor illustrations of faith (or at least not the best examples one could find in the OT).[106] Even when the author does cite an expected hero, he does not always list the deed for which the hero is best known. For example, the author of Hebrews makes no reference to Abraham believing in God and God crediting it to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6), which is one of Paul's key texts (Rom 4:9, 22; Gal 3:6).[107] Since the author does not always choose the best or most popular examples of faith in the OT, he appears to be operating with a specific purpose, inviting interpreters to look for a common thread.

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[102] Cosby, *Rhetorical Composition*, 4 (italics his).
[103] Michael R. Cosby, "The Rhetorical Composition of Hebrews 11," *JBL* 107, no. 2 (1988), 257-73, here 261.
[104] Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul*, 10.
[105] Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul*, 10 (italics his).
[106] Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*, 2.
[107] This example also noted in Attridge, *Hebrews*, 306.

This common thread, I will argue, is one of foreshadowing and yet not realizing the conclusion to the story of faith. In Heb 11 we find that the author presents heroes from Israel's story who exemplified faith in the context of death while looking forward to the eschatological hope of an enduring life in the God-built heavenly homeland.[108] None of these heroes realized this hope, however, and so serve only to foreshadow the conclusion of faith.

III.1. The Hope of Life Despite Death

The whole of Heb 11 is framed by associations of faith with life. In 10:39, the author reflects back on the quotation from Hab 2:3-4 and suggests confidently: "we are not of timidity unto destruction, but of faith (πίστεως) unto the preservation of the soul."[109] Likewise, in 12:2 the author recalls the story of Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, whose endurance of the cross ended in glorification to the right hand of God's throne.[110] The heroes' stories in Heb 11 demonstrate a triumph of life despite death:[111]

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[108] As I addressed in chapter 4, section II.2, the hearers of Hebrews were facing (or at least perceived themselves to be facing) persecution. As such, the depiction of the heroes in Heb 11 as examples of faith in the context of death serves a particular pastoral purpose. Morrison is correct: "The logic again implies that the situation of the readers is in some way analogous to the situations reviewed in Heb 11. The author does not highlight examples of people who had faith despite boredom, or faith despite lethargy. Rather, the examples are faith in a time of crisis, suggesting that the reluctance of the readers is due to external pressures" (Michael D. Morrison, *Who Needs a New Covenant?: Rhetorical Function of the Covenant Motif in the Argument of Hebrews*, PTMS (Eugene: Pickwick, 2008), 73). See also Andriessen, "La communauté," 1054-66.

[109] On the important contextual connection between Heb 10:37-39 and Heb 11, see Radu Gheorghita, *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews: An Investigation of its Influence with Special Consideration to the Use of Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38*, WUNT 2/160 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 181; Klaus Haacker, "Der Glaube im Hebräerbrief und die hermeneutische Bedeutung des Holocaust," *TZ* 39 (1983), 155; and Koester, "Rhetoric and Future of Humanity," 118.

[110] More on Heb 10:37-39 in chapter 8 and 12:1-3 in chapter 6, section VII and chapter 7, section II.

[111] This theme has been recognized by a number of interpreters: Alan D. Bulley, "Death and Rhetoric in the Hebrews 'Hymn to Faith'," *SR* 25, no. 4 (1996), 413-17; Cockerill, "Better Resurrection," 215-34; Pamela M. Eisenbaum, "Heroes and History in Hebrews 11," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders. JSNTSup 148 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 382-383; Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*, 178-79; Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 257; Motyer, "Not Apart from Us," 240; Schenck, *Understanding*, 66-68; James Swetnam, *Jesus and Isaac: A Study in the Epistle to the Hebrews in Light of the Akedah* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981), 86-89.

Death in Hebrews 11		
Hero	***Relation to Death***	***Verse(s)***
Abel	though dead, he still speaks	4
Enoch	taken up before death	5
Noah	prepared ark and so saved his household from death	7
Sarah	at an old age gives birth to Isaac through a man "as good as dead"	11-12
"All these"	died in faith without receiving the promises	13
Abraham	received Isaac back by resurrection, ἐν παραβολῇ	17-19
Isaac	invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau	20
Jacob	as he was dying, blessed his sons	21
Joseph	as he was dying, gave orders for his bones	22
Moses	saved from the king's death edict; kept the Passover, saving the firstborn from the Destroyer	23; 28
Israelites	escaped death at the Red Sea	29
Rahab	did not die with the rest in Jericho	31
Unnamed	shut mouths of lions; quenched the power of fire; escaped the sword; victorious in war; women received their dead by resurrection; endured torture (looking to gain a better resurrection); stoned; sawn in two; put to death by the sword	33-37

As the table above bears out, death is a key element in Heb 11. Some exhibit faith by accepting death (esp. 36-37), others by faith avoid death in the face of dangerous threats (esp. 7, 17-19, 23, 28, 29, 31, and 33-35), and still others in faith look beyond their own deaths to offer hope to the living (esp. 20, 21, and 22).

The heroes of Heb 11 who exemplify faith in the context of death look to the eschatological hope beyond death. The eschatological dimension of faith in Hebrews is clear in Heb 11. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, the sojourning patriarchs looked forward to a God-built heavenly homeland with foundations (11:10, 14-16) and those enduring torture hoped for a "better resurrection" (11:35). Although we cannot be sure, the description of God as "the one who rewards (μισθαποδότης) those who seek him" (11:6) may allude to this eschatological hope as well. Two other verses which also likely allude to the eschatological hope warrant a fuller discussion: Heb 11:1 and 11:3.[112] After addressing Heb 11:1 and 11:3, I will turn to the theme of

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[112] Since I have already covered the eschatological hope in 11:10-16 and 11:35 in detail earlier in this chapter and given that we can say little with certainty with regard to the reward in 11:6 beyond my

the eschatological hope unrealized in Heb 11, as particularly evident in 11:13-16 and 11:39-40.

III.1.1. Hebrews 11:1: Setting the Context of Faith's Eschatological Hope

Hebrews 11 begins with a dense and difficult verse: "now faith is the reality of things hoped for, the proof of things not seen (ἔστιν δὲ πίστις ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων)" (11:1). Two issues require discussion: (1) the meaning of the words ὑπόστασις and ἔλεγχος; and (2) the nature of the things hoped for (ἐλπιζομένων) and the things unseen (οὐ βλεπομένων).

III.1.1.1. Ὑπόστασις and Ἔλεγχος

The meaning of ἔλεγχος is not as difficult to decipher as that of ὑπόστασις. Ἔλεγχος is typically translated either as "conviction"[113] or "proof."[114] "Proof" is almost certainly the best translation, as it is the common meaning of the term and "conviction" "is simply not in the attested range of the term."[115]

Ὑπόστασις, which carries a number of meanings in Greek literature,[116] is typically translated in Heb 11:1 in either a subjective, psychological sense ("assurance" or "confidence")[117] or an objective, philosophical sense ("reality").[118] Koester finds support for the subjective sense in that ὑπόστασις "is based on roots meaning 'stand under.' "[119] Koester explains, "Hebrews has connected 'endurance' with 'faith' (10:36, 38) and now identifies faith (*pistis*) with the steadfast assurance

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treatment of "reward" in Hebrews earlier in the chapter, I will not address these verses here. Still, it is worth noting that these add to the eschatological flavor of Heb 11.

[113] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 277; NRSV; ESV; NASB; NET; RSV.

[114] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 310; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 384; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 276-79; Koester, *Hebrews*, 473; Helmut Köster, "ΥΠΟΣΤΑΣΙΣ," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament; Vol. VIII: T-Y*, ed. Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 586; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 326 note e; Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 216-17.

[115] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 310. LSJ lists the following as the most common definitions for ἔλεγχος: "argument of disproof or refutation;" "cross-examining;" "testing;" "scrutiny" (531).

[116] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 308. LSJ lists the following as the most common definitions for ὑπόστασις: "standing under;" "supporting;" "that which settles at the bottom;" "sediment;" "an accumulation;" "coming into existence;" "origin;" "foundation;" "substructure;" "ground-work;" "subject-matter;" "argument;" "plan;" "purpose;" "confidence;" "courage;" "resolution;" "steadiness;" "undertaking;" "promise;" "substantial nature;" "substance;" "actual existence;" "reality" (1895).

[117] Koester, *Hebrews*, 472; NRSV; ESV; NASB; NET; NIV; RSV.

[118] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 309-10; Johnson, *Hebrews* 276-79; Köster, "ΥΠΟΣΤΑΣΙΣ," 585-86; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 325-26 note b; Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 215.

[119] Koester, *Hebrews*, 472.

(*hypostasis*) that is the opposite of 'shrinking back' (*hypostolē*, 10:39) and 'abandoning' (*apostasis*, 3:12)."[120] Nevertheless, Koester opts for "assurance" as a translation in hopes of allowing for both the objective and subjective senses: "The word 'assurance' (NASB; NRSV) is useful because objectively it is a pledge or guarantee and subjectively it is a personal state of certainty."[121]

However, the objective sense ("reality") is to be favored for three reasons. First, "reality" (rather than subjective "assurance" or "confidence") aligns with the meaning of ἔλεγχος as "proof" that we established above. Second, the objective sense fits with the context of the preceding verses. In 10:32-36, the author recalls the hearers' loss of property, and in 11:1, the author encourages his hearers to know that faith is the "reality" of the things hoped for. Faith as the "reality of things hoped for" can encourage those who have lost their earthly goods.[122] Third, the objective sense aligns with my larger argument in this thesis, where we are seeing that for Hebrews eschatological life is the guaranteed conclusion of the story of faith. Therefore, I translate Heb 11:1 as "now faith is the reality of things hoped for, the proof of things not seen."

III.1.1.2. Things Hoped For and Things Unseen

Most interpreters agree that the "things hoped for (ἐλπιζομένων)" in 11:1a relates to the eschatological hope in Hebrews.[123] Within the context of Heb 11, ἐλπιζομένων likely refers to the promises that the heroes of faith hoped for (11:9, 10, 13, 24-26, 39).

Up for more debate is the referent of the "things unseen (πραγμάτων … οὐ βλεπομένων)" in 11:1b. The "things unseen" can refer either to (1) present realities in the unseen realm or to (2) future events to come that are presently unseen. The first option finds support in 11:27, where Moses acts on the basis of seeing God, who is

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[120] Koester, *Hebrews*, 472. See also Betz: "the ὑπόστασις of faith in Heb. 11:1 is the opposite of the ὑποστολή of unbelief in Heb. 10:39, which means the attitude of 'shrinking back', of cowardice, faithlessness" (Otto Betz, "Firmness in Faith: Hebrews 11:1 and Isaiah 28:16," in *Scripture: Meaning and Method; Essays Presented to Anthony Tyrrell Hanson for his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Barry P. Thompson (Hull: Hull University Press, 1987), 103).

[121] Koester, *Hebrews*, 472.

[122] See also deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 383.

[123] See, for example: Attridge, *Hebrews*, 310-11; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 277; Koester, *Hebrews*, 473; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 326 note c.

invisible (ἀόρατος). This first option reads the unseen in 11:1a in light of a Platonic spatial dichotomy between the visible and heavenly realms.[124]

The second option (that "things unseen" refers to future events to come) is more likely in view of two observations. First, "the things hoped for" in 11:1a and "the things unseen" in 11:1b are plausibly parallel, such that both refer to the same things.[125] Cosby argues that the two clauses are not synonymously parallel. He points to the immediately preceding verse (10:39) and suggests that both 10:39 and 11:1 represent the same construction:

10:39 ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑποστολῆς εἰς ἀπώλειαν

ἀλλὰ πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς.

11:1 ἔστιν δὲ πίστις ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις,

πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων.[126]

Cosby writes, "If Hebrews 11:1b were thus in parallel with 11:1a, the result would be a strong juxtaposition produced by immediately following the antithesis in 10:39 with synonymy in 11:1, moving directly from opposing statements to complementary ones."[127] However, Cosby fails to note the significant difference between the two verses, namely, the contrastive conjunction ἀλλά joining the two clauses in 10:39. The clauses in 11:1, even if not parallel at the word level, seem to offer parallel thoughts. If so, then the invisible things in 11:1b would refer to the same idea as the things hoped for, and so would refer to the eschatological hope. Second, in 11:7 the author of Hebrews credits Noah with acting on the basis of God's warning of "things not yet seen (τῶν μηδέπω βλεπομένων)." Here the unseen things are clearly the future events of the flood and the destruction it would bring.[128] Therefore, Lane is correct:

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[124] In support of this reading, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 311. Attridge comments on 11:1: "It is only because faith, in the footsteps of Jesus, is directed to that world that eschatological hopes can be realized" (311).

[125] Koester, *Hebrews*, 473; R. Walter L. Moberly, "Exemplars of Faith in Hebrews 11: Abel," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 354.

[126] Cosby, *Rhetorical Composition*, 31.

[127] Cosby, *Rhetorical Composition*, 31.

[128] This parallel noted also by S. M. Baugh, "The Cloud of Witnesses in Hebrews 11," *WTJ* 68 (2006), 121; Koester, *Hebrews*, 473; and Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 329. See also Heininger, who wishes to see a reference both to the ensuing judgment and to "the things unseen" of Heb 11:1 (Bernhard Heininger, "Hebr 11.7 und das Henochorakel am Ende der Welt," *NTS* 44 (1998), 117).

"The contrast implied in the phrase is thus not between the visible, phenomenal world of sense perception below and the invisible, heavenly world of reality above, as in Platonism … but between events already witnessed as part of the historical past and events as yet unseen because they belong to the eschatological future."[129]

As a result, the author begins his encomium on faith in 11:1 with reference to the eschatological hope. However, as we will see, even though faith is the "reality" and the "proof" of this hope, the heroes of faith from Israel's tradition still did not experience the hope. So, when Betz argues, "ὑπόστασις cannot be the 'reality' of things hoped for, because the Old Testament men of faith could not realise such a reality,"[130] he misses the angst that Heb 11 is developing, namely, that the heroes of faith did not receive the eschatological hope that faith by its nature *should have* realized.

III.1.2. Hebrews 11:3 and the Hope of Resurrection

Hebrews 11:3, the first in the list of anaphora (πίστει),[131] speaks not of an Israelite hero of faith, but of us: "by faith we understand (νοοῦμεν) that the worlds (τοὺς αἰῶνας) were prepared (κατηρτίσθαι) by the word of God, so that what is seen (βλεπόμενον) was not made out of visible things (φαινομένων)." Although this verse may not be advancing a doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*,[132] a belief in God as creator is clear. It is not immediately evident why the author begins his anaphora with reference to our understanding of God's creative power.

Hebrews 11:3 may develop "the theme of 'proving the unseen' enunciated in vs. 1."[133] Following this reading, Lane writes, "The logical connection of this assertion is not with the acts of faith of the attested witnesses but with v 1, for it is a statement about faith itself. The discernment of the unseen creative activity of God behind the visible universe exemplifies the capacity of faith to demonstrate the reality

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[129] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 329.

[130] Betz, "Firmness in Faith," 103.

[131] The anaphora continues until 11:32, where the author ends with a flurry starting with "and what more shall I say (καὶ τί ἔτι λέγω)?"

[132] For *creatio ex nihilo* in Heb 1:3, see Bruce, *Hebrews*, 279; Williamson, *Philo*, 313, 377-85. On the other hand, see Lane: "It is better to recognize that the clause is a negative assertion; it denies that the creative universe originated from primal material or anything observable. It does not make an unambiguous affirmation of creation out of nothing (Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 332). See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 569-70.

[133] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 315.

of that which cannot be perceived through sense perception, which is celebrated as the essence of faith in v 1*b*."[134] This interpretation accounts for the mention of God creating the seen out of the unseen (11:3b) and faith's nature as the proof of things not seen (11:1b), but it does not explain how this verse fits the larger encomium that follows. Lane denies that 11:3 is logically connected with the examples of faith that follow, but this does not adequately account for why the author begins his anaphora here.

While Lane rightly connects 11:3 to 11:1, I suggest he highlights the wrong aspect of 11:1. As I noted above, Heb 11:1 is thoroughly eschatological. Both "the things hoped for" and "the things unseen" refer to the eschatological hope. If we read 11:3 in view of this eschatological aspect, then 11:3 takes a different shape. Instead of this being a verse that "clearly indicates that the faith that issues in endurance is grounded in a fundamental *conviction about the nature of reality*,"[135] this is a verse that indicates that the faith that issues in endurance is grounded in a fundamental *hope in God's power*.[136] God's power is most evidently on display in the first half of 11:3, where the author points to God as the one who created the worlds by his word.

The case I am building for Hebrews 11 is that the author of Hebrews depicts heroes of faith in Israel's tradition as ones who foreshadowed the eschatological hope (enduring life in the God-built heavenly homeland). Heb 11:3, I argue, is about this eschatological hope: given God's creative power to create visible objects out of the unseen, we can trust him to raise us to enduring life.

Hebrews 11:3 parallels 2 Maccabees 7, where the hope of resurrection is based on God's creative power.[137] The mother and her seven sons in 2 Macc 7

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[134] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 330.

[135] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 315 (italics mine).

[136] Lane acknowledges this aspect, but makes nothing more of it: "The comfort derived from contemplation of God's creative power was relevant to the congregation of Christians addressed in Hebrews as well, who were experiencing adversity and testing" (Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 332).

[137] Kellermann finds resurrection as the dominate theme in 2 Macc 7: "So beherrscht der Auferstehungsgedanke schwergewichtig den Inhalt der Märtyrererzählung, die fast nur noch die Funktion eines Anknüpfungspunktes für die Entfaltung einer Lehre erfüllt" (Kellermann, *Auferstanden in den Himmel*, 39). I address the Maccabean martyrological narratives (2 Macc 6-7 and 4 Macc) in detail in chapter 7, section II.2, where I will argue that the depiction of Jesus in Heb 12:1-2 also finds parallel in the Maccabean martyrological texts. At this stage, I speak only to the hope of resurrection in the story of the mother and her seven sons in 2 Macc 7.

demonstrate a strong hope of resurrection.[138] The sons endure torture and accept
death, expecting God to vindicate them by raising them again after their deaths. The
second son confidently tells his torturer: "You accursed wretch, you dismiss us from
this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal
of life, because we have died for his laws" (7:9).[139] Likewise, the third brother
eagerly offers his tongue and limbs for removal (7:10), because he expects to get them
back again: "I got these from Heaven,[140] and because of his laws I disdain them, and
from him I hope to get them back again" (7:11). Likewise, the fourth son expects to
be raised: "It is desirable that those who die at the hands of human beings should
cherish the hope God gives of being raised again by him. But for you there will be no
resurrection to life" (7:14).

        For our reading of Heb 11:3, the mother's words are most relevant. The
mother of the seven sons roots her hope in God's ability to resurrect in an
understanding of God's creative power. The mother believes that the God who can
create life in the womb can re-create life again: "I do not know how you came into
being in my womb. It was not I who gave you life and breath, nor I who set in order
the elements within each of you. Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the
origin of man and devised the origin of all things, will in his mercy[141] give life and
breath back to you again, since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws"
(7:22-23). Similarly, the mother roots her resurrection hope in God's creation of all
things: "I implore you, my child, to look at the heaven and the earth and see
everything that is in them and recognize that God did not make them out of things that
existed.[142] And in the same way the human race came into being. Do not fear this

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[138] van Henten also notes that Razis committed suicide with the hope of being raised again: "with
his blood already completely drained from him, he tore out his entrails, took them in both hands and
hurled them at the crowd, calling upon the Lord of life and spirit to give them back to him again" (2
Macc 14:46, NETS) (Jan Willem van Henten, *The Maccabean Martyrs as Saviours of the Jewish
People: A Study of 2 and 4 Maccabees*, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 57
(Leiden: Brill, 1997), 116).

[139] This and all translations from 2 Macc 7 are from the NETS.

[140] Οὐρανός should be read as a metonym for God (van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 173).

[141] As van Henten notes, ἐν τῷ ἐλέει does not look forward to a future period when God will show
compassion, but to God's demonstration of mercy following the martyrs' deaths (van Henten,
Maccabean Martyrs, 174).

[142] This is arguably the first Jewish reference to *creatio ex nihilo*, but whether the text operates with
such a doctrine is uncertain. For *creatio ex nihilo* in this passage, see Segal, *Life After Death*, 270;
Robin Darling Young, "The 'Woman with the Soul of Abraham': Traditions about the Mother of the

hangman, but prove worthy of your brothers and accept death so that in his mercy I may get you back again along with your brothers" (7:28-29). Even though the torturers mutilate the bodies of the martyrs, the God who created the worlds can resurrect these destroyed bodies into a whole state. Bodily resurrection is clearly the martyrs' hope.[143] Segal summarizes nicely: "what is being stressed is God's power to do anything, even the seemingly improbable task of reconstituting a human being when there is nothing left of the corpse. The result of this assertion is the reassurance that God can certainly resurrect the righteous from dust, even from nothing, if nothing remains."[144]

The possibility that the author of Hebrews has the Maccabean martyrological narratives in mind in Heb 11:3 is strengthened by a number of parallels with the Maccabean martyrological literature (2 Macc 6-7 and 4 Macc) in the closing verses of Heb 11:[145]

Maccabean Martyrs," in *"Women Like This": New Perspectives on Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine. SBLEJL 1 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 71-72. For the absence of *creatio ex nihilo*, see Jonathan A. Goldstein, *II Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 41A (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 307-11.

[143] So Goldstein: "Those ancient Jewish writers who believed only in the immortality of the soul and not in the resurrection of the body had no need to believe in creation *ex nihilo*, nor did those Jews who held that the resurrected dead might be given, in whole or in part, some other body than the one they had had in life" (Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 308).

[144] Segal, *Life After Death*, 270. So too Nickelsburg: "God will heal what Antiochus has hurt; he will bring to life those whom Antiochus has killed. What God created, he will recreate – in spite of the king's attempt to destroy it (7:22-23, 28-29)" (George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism*, HTS 26 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 121).

[145] A number of these parallels are recognized by various interpreters: Bruce, *Hebrews*, 325-26; N. Clayton Croy, *Endurance in Suffering: Hebrews 12:1-13 in its Rhetorical, Religious, and Philosophical Context*, SNTSMS 98 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 38; Mary Rose D'Angelo, *Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews*, SBLDS 42 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 28; David deSilva, *4 Maccabees: Introduction and Commentary on the Greek Text in Codex Sinaiticus*, Septuagint Commentary Series (Leiden: Brill, 2006), xxxiii-xxxiv; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 419-20; Gheorghita, *Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, 96-98; Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 27; Harald Hegermann, *Der Brief an die Hebräer*, THKNT (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1988), 241; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 308; Bertold Klappert, "Erinnerung und Hoffnung (Hebr 11,32-40)," in *Israel im christlichen Gottesdienst: Predigten, Ansprachen, Begegnungen*, ed. Peter von der Osten-Sacken. Veröffentlichungen aus dem Institut Kirche und Judentum 10 (Berlin: Institut Kirche und Judentum, 1980), 195-99; Koester, *Hebrews*, 514; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 371; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 619; Young, "Suffering," 52-53.

Heb 11:25	Moses chooses mistreatment over the temporary (πρόσκαιρον) pleasures of sin
4 Macc 15:2, 8	the mother chooses religion over temporarily (προσκαίρου) preserving her seven sons
Heb 11:34	quenched the power of fire (ἔσβεσαν δύναμιν πυρός)
4 Macc 9:20	the heap of coals was being quenched (ἐσβέννυτο) by the drippings of gore
Heb 11:35	women received their dead back by resurrection
2 Macc 7:22-29	the mother expects her sons to be raised
Heb 11:35	were tortured (ἐτυμπανίσθησαν)
2 Macc 6:19, 28	the "rack" (τύμπανον)
Heb 11:35	refusing to accept release (οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν)
2 Macc 6:23-30	Eleazar refused release, even though he could have been saved from death (δυνάμενος ἀπολυθῆναι τοῦ θανάτου, 6:30)
2 Macc 7:2, 7-8, 24-30	the seven brothers refuse release
Heb 11:35	hoped to obtain a better resurrection
2 Macc 7:9, 11, 14, 23, 29	the seven brothers hope to be vindicated by resurrection
Heb 11:36	mocking (ἐμπαιγμῶν)
2 Macc 7:7	for the sport (ἐπὶ τὸν ἐμπαιγμὸν)
Heb 11:36	whipping (μαστίγων)
2 Macc 7:1	with whips (μάστιξιν)
Heb 11:36	chains (δεσμῶν)
4 Macc 12:2	chains (δεσμά)

Based on the preponderance of parallels, it is quite likely that the author of Hebrews is aware of the Maccabean martyrological narratives. As such, it is conceivable that one such parallel (the hope of resurrection in view of God's creative power) appears in Heb 11:3. Even though the Maccabean martyrs' hope is likely a hope for immediate resuscitation of life (as noted above)[146] and the "better resurrection" of Heb 11:35c is a hope for a resurrection to an enduring life, the martyrs' hope remains clearly

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[146] Section II.2.

connected to an experience of embodied life after death as rooted in God's creative power.

As a result, we can read Heb 11:3, the first in the list of anaphora, as putting forth resurrection as the hope of faith. Heb 11, which is permeated by examples of faith in the context of death, begins the anaphora by making reference to God's ability to re-create life via resurrection.

III.2. Faith's Conclusion Unrealized

Within Heb 11 we see a recurring theme of the hope of eschatological blessing following the death of the heroes. In no case, though, does the author suggest a hero receives the eschatological hope of an enduring life in the heavenly homeland. These heroes only foreshadow this hope and do not fully realize it. This point is most evident in Heb 11:39-40 and 11:13-16.

III.2.1. *Hebrews 11:39-40: Unrealized Perfection as Postmortem Enduring Life*

The clearest statement of the heroes' unfulfilled hope comes in 11:39-40. Here the author of Hebrews notes: "all these (οὗτοι πάντες), though *commended* (μαρτυρηθέντες) through faith, did not receive the promise (τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν) because God had provided something better (κρεῖττόν) for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect (τελειωθῶσιν)." "All these" (οὗτοι πάντες) likely refers to all of the heroes listed in the chapter, and not only to the final ones mentioned in 11:32-38. This is suggested by the parallel to 11:2, where the author introduces the list of heroes by saying that by faith "the elders received *commendation* (ἐμαρτυρήθησαν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι)."[147] In both cases, the heroes of faith are commended through faith. In 11:39, therefore, the author insists that all of the heroes of faith he enumerates from Israel's story died without receiving the promise. I have already noted earlier in this chapter that ἐπαγγελία in Hebrews often refers to an eschatological promise,[148] and κρεῖττον connotes an enduring heavenly quality to the term being modified (here, τι). Therefore, this promise is eschatological.

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[147] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 392; see also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 351-52; Koester, *Hebrews*, 516.
[148] See also deSilva, who equates the promise in 11:39 with the "'heavenly homeland' or 'unshakable kingdom' yet to be revealed" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 423).

Likewise, "perfection" in 11:40 is likely eschatologically-oriented: perfection in this case is a postmortem existence of enduring life. I argued earlier in this chapter that postmortem perfection is related to the eschatological hope: without an enduring life after death, humans cannot expect to inhabit the enduring heavenly homeland.[149] The perfection that Jesus realized after his suffering of death and the perfection that the Levitical system failed to secure is not a cleansing of conscience (as in 9:9, 10:1, and 10:14), but a postmortem experience of enduring life. Beyond the eschatological meaning of perfection elsewhere in Hebrews, two other observations suggest that the perfection that the heroes failed to realize was one of enduring life.

First, "perfection" in 11:40 parallels "the promise" in 11:39.[150] In both cases, "perfection" or "the promise" is something the heroes failed to receive:

Καὶ οὗτοι πάντες …
And all these …

        οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν (11:39)
        did not receive the promise

        μὴ … τελειωθῶσιν (11:40)
        should not be made perfect

If the promise in 11:39 is eschatological, then perfection in 11:40 is likely postmortem as well.

Second, the verses immediately following (12:1-3) deal with life after death. There, the author depicts Jesus as the faithful martyr who endures the cross and receives the reward of eschatological life beside God's throne.[151] The author exhorts his hearers to run this same race (12:1). If the prize we receive is essentially the same as Jesus' reward, then those who endure the race of faith will experience postmortem life. The connection between the perfection the heroes failed to realize in 11:40 and the postmortem life we hope to receive as reward in 12:1-3 is made evident by the shared destinies between the heroes and us. The heroes' perfection would not come "apart from us" (ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσιν) (11:40), and these same heroes now encircle us as we prepare to run the race (12:1).[152] These witnesses are more

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[149] Section II.3.

[150] Noted also in deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 202-203. See also Aquinas, who understands the promise in 11:39 as "glory, or the promised life, until the time of Christ" (Aquinas, *Hebrews*, 266).

[151] I speak more to 12:1-3 in chapter 6, section VII and chapter 7, section II.

[152] So also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 354; Koester, *Hebrews*, 535; and Westcott, *Hebrews*, 391.

than passive observers, but are "actively engaged spectators and witnesses."[153] As active spectators, they await the positive conclusion to our race, hoping to share in the eschatological reward with us.

Therefore, we have reason to consider the perfection that the heroes of faith failed to receive in 11:40 was that of an enduring life.[154] As a result, when the author of Hebrews says that none of the heroes of faith were made perfect, he closes the encomium on faith by admitting that none of the heroes received the eschatological hope of enduring life which they expected. All of the heroes in Heb 11 exemplified faith in the face of death, and yet none of them experienced the conclusion to the story of faith: none of them received an enduring life and so entered the God-built heavenly homeland.

III.2.2. Hebrews 11:13-16: Promises Seen and Yet Unrealized

The other key text to consider is Hebrews 11:13-16. Here the author interrupts his discussion of the faith exemplified by the patriarchs (11:8-12, 17-21) to say that "all these died in faith, not having received the promises (κατὰ πίστιν ἀπέθανον οὗτοι πάντες, μὴ λαβόντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας)" (11:13). "All these" (οὗτοι πάντες) in 11:13 could refer to the patriarchs in the immediate context or to everyone listed thus far (and so including Abel, Enoch, and Noah). Given that the author describes οὗτοι πάντες in 11:13 as "strangers and exiles on the earth," οὗτοι πάντες likely refers to the sojourning Abraham and those accompanying him (Isaac and Jacob in 11:9).[155] The author does not say explicitly what the promises (τὰς ἐπαγγελίας) are, but three observations suggest that the promises relate to the eschatological hope (which in this context is an enduring heavenly homeland).

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[153] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 58-62, here 61.

[154] See also deSilva: "The 'perfecting' of the OT worthies is the same as the 'perfecting' for which the addressees themselves wait – not the fitting of their conscience to come into God's presence but their actual entrance into the unshakable kingdom" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 424; see also his excursus on perfecting as consummation, 202-204).

[155] For "all these" as a reference to Abraham and those with him, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 329; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 356; Kurt Niederwimmer, "Vom Glauben der Pilger: Erwägungen zu Hebr 11,8-10 und 13-16," in *Zur Aktualität des Alten Testaments. Festschrift für Georg Sauer zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Siegfried Kreuzer and Kurt Lüthi (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992), 126. For "all these" as a general reference to everyone mentioned up to 11:13, see Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*, 160-61. Rhee posits a grand chiastic structure in Heb 11, with 11:13-16 at the center. On this basis, he sees "all these" as extending to the exemplars before (11:1-12) and following (11:17-40) in the chapter (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 186).

First, the promises in 11:13 parallel the promise in 11:39. Ellingworth notes similar content between 11:13 and 11:39, "skilfully masked by variation of form":

v. 13a	v. 39
a. κατὰ πίστιν ἀπέθανον	b. καὶ οὗτοι πάντες μαρτυρηθέντες
b. οὗτοι πάντες,	a. διὰ τῆς πίστεως
c. μὴ λαβόντες	c. οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο
d. τὰς ἐπαγγελίας	d. τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν[156]

The similar content between the two verses suggests that the promises (τὰς ἐπαγγελίας) of 11:13 refer to the same thing as the promise (τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν) in 11:39. Given the eschatological nature of the promise in 11:39, the promises in 11:13 are likely also eschatological.

The second clue to the eschatological character of the promises in 11:13 comes with the author's mention of other promises received. The immediate context names a number of temporal promises they *did* receive, and yet maintains that they died without receiving the promises. The author is clearest in 11:17, where he describes Abraham as "the one who received the promises (ὁ τὰς ἐπαγγελίας ἀναδεξάμενος)." The promises in this case are equated with the promise of numerous descendants, given that the author qualifies the promises further by describing Abraham as the one to whom it was said, "Through Isaac will your offspring be named" (11:18, quoting Gen 21:12). The author makes a similar claim to Abraham's realization of the promised descendants in 11:11-12, where he notes that "by faith Sarah received the power to conceive" and "from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven" (see also Heb 6:15). Given that the author clearly believes Abraham received the promises and yet at the same time maintains that he and others died without receiving the promises in 11:13, these promises in 11:13 must refer to something he failed to receive in life. The reason they failed to receive these promises is not because God is a poor promise-keeper who did not deliver on the earthly promises (as 10:23 and 11:11 say quite the contrary), but because the promises are reserved for the eschaton. The author of Hebrews maintains that they have not received these eschatological promises, but he still maintains hope that they will (insinuated especially by "apart from us" in 11:40).

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[156] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 634.

Finally, the author makes clear that the promises "all these" failed to receive was not a land on earth, but the heavenly homeland. He says that those who did not receive the promises "saw them and greeted them from afar (πόρρωθεν αὐτὰς ἰδόντες καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι)" (11:13). Πόρρωθεν ("afar") signifies distance, and while the word typically denotes spatial distance,[157] the distance may at the same time be a metaphor for temporal distance signifying the promises' eschatological character.[158] As I noted earlier in this chapter,[159] here the author depicts the patriarchs as sojourners who inhabited the land of promise, and yet remained unsettled and unsatisfied. Abraham was unsettled in the land of promise, living as a stranger there in tents as in a foreign land (παρῴκησεν εἰς γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας ὡς ἀλλοτρίαν ἐν σκηναῖς) (11:9). He was anticipating a city with foundations (11:10). The sojourning patriarchs desired "a better country, that is, a heavenly one" (11:16). So, while they received the promised land on earth in part, they looked forward to the eschatological homeland. However, the author maintains that they died in faith, without receiving the promises. If, as I have argued, these promises relate to this heavenly homeland which the patriarchs were seeking, then the author is here saying, as he does in 11:39-40, that the heroes of faith did not receive the eschatological hope after death.

III.3. Two Remaining Potential Challenges: Abel (11:4) and Enoch (11:5)

Before concluding this section on Hebrews 11, two remaining potential challenges should be addressed. I have argued that the heroes of faith in Heb 11 foreshadow the eschatological hope for the faithful, but nevertheless do not realize it. On the contrary, the author seems to suggest that Abel and Enoch did in fact realize this postmortem life.

The example of Abel offers a potential challenge to the thesis I am advancing, given that the author describes him as still speaking after death: "through faith he still speaks, though he died (δι' αὐτῆς ἀποθανὼν ἔτι λαλεῖ)" (11:4). Moberly writes of

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[157] 2 Kgs 20:14; Job 2:12; 39:25, 29; Isa 10:3; 13:5; 33:13, 17; 39:3; 43:6; 46:11; 49:12; Jer 5:15; 23:23; 38:3; Wis 14:17; Luk 17:12.

[158] So Lane: "The nuance in πόρρωθεν, 'from a distance,' accordingly, is temporal rather than spatial, and the perspective is eschatological" (Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 356).

[159] Section II.1.6.

this verse, "if Abel still speaks may it not be because he is alive with God?"[160] However, the text gives adequate reason to see Abel's speaking not as a sign of his reception of the "better resurrection" (11:35) to an enduring life in the heavenly homeland. Instead, Abel is here depicted as a righteous martyr who continues to speak out for vindication: "Le premier croyant fut ainsi le premier martyr."[161]

        Genesis 4:10 is clearly the source for Abel speaking after his death: "the voice of the blood of your brother is crying out to me from the ground (φωνὴ αἵματος τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου βοᾷ πρός με ἐκ τῆς γῆς)." Hebrews shows an awareness of this tradition in 12:24, where the author contrasts Abel's blood with Jesus' sprinkled blood, which "speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." Strands of Jewish tradition read Abel as a martyr whose blood cries out for vindication (Luke 11:49-51; *1 En.* 22:7; *Jub.* 4:3; see also Rev 6:9-10; 2 Macc 8:3; *1 En.* 47:1).[162] Lane acknowledges this possible interpretation, but dismisses it on the basis that Hebrews does not use βοάω for Abel's crying out (as in Gen 4:10), but λέγω. He further notes that nowhere does Hebrews use λέγω for our speaking to God.[163] Lane's reasons are inadequate, however. With regard to the first point, Hebrews nowhere uses βοάω, and so we cannot know that he would reserve this word for cries of vindication. With regard to the second point, Hebrews nowhere else pictures human beings speaking to God, and so we cannot know that the author would have used a word other than λέγω for Abel speaking to God. It remains possible, therefore, that Abel is here depicted as a righteous martyr, as he is also depicted in other ancient texts. As a righteous martyr, Abel through faith, though he died, continues to speak to God for vindication.[164]

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[160] Moberly, "Exemplars," 361. See also Rhee: "By making a contrast between 'although he died' (ἀποθανών) and 'he still speaks' (ἔτι λαλεῖ), the author implies that Abel is still living to this day. In other words, Abel's coming back to life from death is a type of those who will be resurrected through Christ in the future" (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 208).

[161] Spicq, *Hébreux II*, 343.

[162] The author of Hebrews also calls Abel righteous (δίκαιος), as martyrs are elsewhere described (Jas 5:6; 1 John 3:12; 4 Macc 15:10; 18:15).

[163] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 335.

[164] See also Ton Hilhorst, "Abel's Speaking in Hebrews 11.4 and 12.24," in *Eve's Children: The Biblical Stories Retold and Interpreted in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Gerard P. Luttikhuizen (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 123-26. The martyrological reading of Abel in Heb 11:4 remains faithful to the depiction of his blood in Heb 12:24. As Attridge suggests, "Our author may have understood him as the first martyr whose death, like that of other martyrs, had an atoning significance. If this is the point of comparison, then Christ's blood which effects true and lasting remission of sin speaks not in a 'different' but in a 'superior' way" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 377). I speak in more detail to the martyrs'

Therefore, the example of Abel does not overturn my argument, but instead coincides nicely with the case I am making. Abel, like all of the heroes of faith in Heb 11, has not received the eschatological hope awaiting the faithful. He too has not yet received the promise and has not yet been made perfect (11:39-40); even in death he speaks to the God who will bring his vindication. Abel remains an example of one who in faith continues to look forward to the eschatological hope.

The example of Enoch offers another potential challenge. Enoch was "translated (μετετέθη) so that he would not see death" (11:5). The author of Hebrews, however, never suggests that Enoch was transmitted into the heavenly homeland or was perfected.[165] Enoch did not see death, but this does not mean by necessity that Enoch received the enduring life which the author of Hebrews describes as the eschatological hope.[166] Indeed, since Enoch did not die, as humans typically do, he cannot be an example of life after death.[167] In view of the larger theme in Heb 11 of the heroes of faith failing to receive eschatological promises (11:13) and perfection (11:39-40), it is unlikely that the author would in 11:5 say that Enoch did in fact receive the enduring life in the heavenly homeland. Instead, we can read Enoch as one who avoided death, but, along with the other heroes of faith, still awaits the eschatological hope.

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atoning significance and other themes in the Maccabean martyrological literature in chapter 7, section II.2.2.

[165] There is a tradition in Jewish literature of Enoch's ascension into the heavenly realm (see esp. *1 Enoch*; Philo *Mut.* 38; Josephus *Ant.* 1.85), but the author of Hebrews does not develop this theme in Heb 11:5.

[166] See also *Mart. Asc. Is.* 9:9-18, which says that Enoch (and Abel!) have not yet received their crowns of glory, as they await the coming Christ. Given that this passage is likely a late first- or second-century CE Christian work, this parallel text is not likely a source for Hebrews, but perhaps "indicates one way in which the author of Hebrews might have responded to an objection that Enoch, not Jesus (cf. 10:20), was the first to enter heaven" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 575). On the date of *Mart. Asc. Is.* 6-11, see Robert G. Hall, "The *Ascension of Isaiah*: Community Situation, Date, and Place in Early Christianity," *JBL* 109, no. 2 (1990), 300-306; M. A. Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Volume 2*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 149-50; and Jonathan Knight, *The Ascension of Isaiah* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 21-23. For another parallel with *Mart. Asc. Is.*, see Heb 10:37 ("sawn in two") and *Mart. Asc. Is.* 5:11-14.

[167] Contra deSilva: "Enoch's example elevated the value of faith as a quality that brings one to the enjoyment of life beyond death and beyond this visible realm" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 389-90). However, in order for Enoch to be such an example of life beyond death, he must have died. See also Rhee's curious language of Enoch as "the first one who experienced the power of resurrection while he was alive" (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 209).

IV. CONCLUSION

We have found in this chapter that the eschatological hope in Hebrews is one of an enduring life in the God-built heavenly homeland. However, no human prior to Jesus experienced this eschatological blessing. The heroes of faith in Hebrews 11 are still awaiting divine vindication for their faith exemplified in the face of death, even though faith is "the reality" of this eschatological hope. The faithful ones from Israel's tradition are as of yet unable to attain the eschatological reward, numbered among the rest of humanity who have not yet received the glory and honor God intended for them. At present, they can only foreshadow the conclusion of faith. The realization of the conclusion to the story of faith is intertwined with the destiny of another human yet to come: Jesus.

Part 3:

The Rewritten Narrative

Chapter 6

Shared Destinies: The Hopeful Conclusion Realized in Jesus

I. INTRODUCTION

In part 2 of the thesis (chapters 3-5), we discovered that the default human story for Hebrews is a pessimistic one: God intended glory, honor, and dominion for human beings, but humans are currently trapped in a pathetic story characterized by unfaithfulness concluding assuredly in eschatological death. Even though faith is "the reality of things hoped for" (11:1), no one – not even the heroes of faith from Israel's tradition – has realized this hope.

In this chapter I wish to demonstrate Jesus' experience of the eschatological hope in general, and his resurrection in particular, as opening the possibility of the same for humanity. Scholars have noted the relative absence of the resurrection of Jesus in Hebrews when compared to other early Christian texts.[1] For example, Wright suggests: "All the major books and strands, with the single exception of Hebrews, make resurrection a central and important topic, and set it within a framework of Jewish thought about the one god as creator and judge."[2] Although the resurrection of Jesus is not as explicitly present in Hebrews as in other NT documents, I contend that Jesus' resurrection plays more of a central role than is immediately evident. The human Jesus, with whom human beings share a destiny, was raised and realized the eschatological hope, and so those who participate in the same story can expect the same conclusion. In this way, I am also responding to studies that overemphasize the contrast between Hebrews' concept of faith and the Pauline participatory faith. For example, Bacon writes:

> In Paul faith was the opposite of the Pharisaic καύχημα. It was the self-surrender by which dying to sin, to the law, to the whole struggle for a righteousness of our own, we participate ethically in the death of Christ; but also, receiving from God forgiveness and the life-giving Spirit, participate further in Christ's resurrection. In Hebrews this most characteristic as well as

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[1] For a survey of views on the presence or absence of the resurrection of Jesus in Hebrews, see Moffitt, *Atonement*, 3-40.

[2] Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 476. Wright nevertheless suspects the resurrection in Hebrews is "everywhere presupposed" (461).

most fundamental concept of Paul's Christianity has disappeared. Faith becomes the power of penetration to the ideal. It approximates dangerously to the Buddhistic-gnostic conception of 'enlightenment' or gnosis.[3]

To the contrary, I am arguing the author of Hebrews invests great hope in the resurrection of Jesus. I am not arguing that Hebrews operates with the same Pauline concept of participation, but I am suggesting that, for the author of Hebrews, the resurrection of the human Jesus offers hope of the same for those who share in the faith he "pioneered and perfected" (12:2).

I continue this discussion in the next chapter, where I will show how Jesus' experience of the eschatological hope is linked inextricably with his faithfulness: the faithful one *par excellence* was raised, thereby assuring the conclusion of resurrection to the story of faith. In chapter 9 I will investigate how human beings can participate in this rewritten narrative of faith.

I.1. Jesus' Humanity and Sacrifice: An Incomplete Account

An important aspect of Jesus' humanity relates to his fitness as a sacrifice for sin. Hebrews is rich with sacrificial imagery.[4] Jesus makes purification (καθαρισμός) (1:3) and atonement (ἱλάσκομαι)[5] (2:17) for sins. He is the high priest (2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11) who not only goes behind the curtain to make sacrifices (6:19-20; 8:2; 9:12), but is himself sacrificed (9:12, 14, 25-26, 28; 10:10; 12:24; 13:12). Perfection was not attainable through the Levitical priesthood (7:11, 19), but Jesus' eternal priesthood can save those who draw near to God through him (7:25). His death redeems humans from transgressions committed under the first covenant (9:15) and perfects for all time those who are being sanctified (10:14).

The clearest statement of the need for Jesus' humanity with regard to his sacrifice appears in Heb 2:17. Here the author says that Jesus "had [ὤφειλεν] to be made like [ὁμοιωθῆναι] his brothers and sisters in all things [πάντα], so that [ἵνα] he

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[3] Benjamin W. Bacon, "The Doctrine of Faith in Hebrews, James, and Clement of Rome," *JBL* 19, no. 1 (1900), 13-14.

[4] See Eberhart, "Characteristics," 37-64 and Richard D. Nelson, "'He Offered Himself': Sacrifice in Hebrews," *Int* 57, no. 3 (2003), 251-65.

[5] I use the more general term "atonement" rather than "expiation" or "propitiation" for ἱλάσκομαι in Heb 2:17. For a discussion of the meanings and merits of these terms, see Simon J. Kistemaker, "Atonement in Hebrews: 'A Merciful and Faithful High Priest'," in *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Historical & Practical Perspectives, Essays in Honor of Roger Nicole*, ed. Charles E. Hill and Frank A. James (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004), 163-67.

might become a merciful and faithful high priest offering sacrifice before God [τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν][6] to make atonement for the sins of the people." The ἵνα clause suggests that apart from being made like his brothers and sisters in all things, Jesus would be unable to make atonement. Without his humanity, Jesus would have no way of offering his own blood to secure eternal redemption (9:12). That blood is a marker of humanness is clear in 2:14, where he and the children (humanity) are said to share in blood and flesh (αἵματος καὶ σαρκός). The author does not abandon the principle that blood is needed for the forgiveness of sins: "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (9:22). As it is, though, the blood of animals cannot remove sins permanently and therefore cannot cleanse the conscience (10:1-4), and so Jesus offers his body. The author puts the words of Psalm 39:7-9 (LXX) on Jesus' lips: "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me" (10:5). It is in the offering of this human body that we have been sanctified (10:10). Since there is forgiveness of sins and no longer the need for further sacrifice (10:18), we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus (10:19) through the veil by means of his human flesh (10:20).[7] Furthermore, Jesus must be human to present the sacrifice to God. As Clifford and Anatolios rightly note, for Hebrews "Jesus, as a genuine priest, must be a human being, since a priest makes an offering *to* God."[8] The humanity of Christ, therefore, is intimately linked to his ability to make atonement.

Without denying the importance of Jesus' humanity with regard to his sacrifice (and it is a significant theme), a closer look at Hebrews demonstrates that

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[6] On this translation of τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, see Andrie du Toit, "Τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν in Romans and Hebrews: Towards Understanding an Enigmatic Phrase," *ZNW* 101 (2010), 249.

[7] On the veil in 10:20 as "the veil of the heavenly tabernacle into God's presence *by means of* his flesh" (rather than the veil *as* Jesus' flesh), see David M. Moffitt, "Unveiling Jesus' Flesh: A Fresh Assessment of the Relationship Between the Veil and Jesus' Flesh in Hebrews 10:20," *PRSt* 37, no. 1 (2010), 71-84 (here 72, italics his). For a contrary proposal, offering a fresh account of the veil as Jesus' flesh, see Mark A. Jennings, "The Veil and the High Priestly Robes of the Incarnation: Understanding the Context of Heb 10:20," *PRSt* 37, no. 1 (2010), 85-97.

[8] Richard Clifford and Khaled Anatolios, "Christian Salvation: Biblical and Theological Perspectives," *TS* 66, no. 4 (2005), 755 (italics theirs). See also Schlosser, who shows that a key aspect of Jesus' mediatorial role in Hebrews was his acting as humanity's representative to God (Jacques Schlosser, "La Médiation du Christ d'âpres l'Épître aux Hébreux," *RSR* 63 (1989), 169-81, esp. 177-79).

this is not a complete account. Sacrificial atonement[9] does not offer a complete explanation for the work of Christ and what secures humanity's hope. The author does not include sacrificial imagery in his list of elementary doctrines (6:1-2). Even though Jesus is said to be the great high priest in 4:14, we should hold fast our confession not because Jesus was sacrificed, but because this great high priest *has passed through the heavens*. So also in 4:15, the locus of encouragement is not in that Jesus as a high priest was sacrificed, but in that this high priest can *sympathize* fully with us, yet without sin. Jesus is the guarantor of a better covenant not simply because he is a priest, but because he is a priest *forever* (7:21-22). Further, the author says in 5:9 that it is not the sacrifice of Jesus that opens up the source of eternal salvation, but his being made perfect. Therefore, conceiving of the work of Christ in narrowly sacrificial terms does not account completely for Hebrew's vision.

I.2. The Human Jesus and Humanity's Shared Destiny

Hebrews includes a three-faceted element with regard to Jesus' sacrifice that distinguishes his death significantly from sacrificial atonement: (1) Christ's full participation in and shared destiny with humanity, (2) his faithful death, and (3) his life beyond his sacrifice.[10] With this added three-faceted element, we are dealing with something rather different from a better enactment of an OT model of the sacrifice of animals.[11] Animals did not participate in the human condition; they did not sacrifice themselves, but were sacrificed; and animals experienced no life beyond their death in

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[9] By "sacrificial atonement" I refer generally to Jesus' death as the sacrifice for our sins in a similar (yet complete and eternal) manner to the sacrifice of animals in the OT. The animal (and, if so applied, Christ) is not a substitution for a fate human beings should endure, but a purification for sins humans commit. So Nelson: "Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible was not a matter of substitutionary atonement or vicarious suffering. The animal was killed, not as a substitute for the donor of the sacrifice, but to provide blood for purification, food for the communal meal, and a gift to offer to God on the altar fire" (Nelson, "'He Offered Himself'," 253).

[10] Motyer suggests five ways in which the atonement under the new covenant is different from the old: (1) place [earthly; heavenly sanctuary]; (2) focus ["regulations for the body"; cleansing of conscience]; (3) scope [atonement for sins of ignorance; atonement for all sin]; (4) means [goats and bulls; Jesus' self-offering]; and (5) timing [repetitive; once] (Motyer, "Atonement in Hebrews," 138-139). He concludes: "So in all these crucial respects, the sacrifice of Christ is different from those of the old covenant. This means we cannot use the Old Testament to explain what God was doing in Christ. He has done something new" (Motyer, "Atonement in Hebrews," 139).

[11] So rightly Motyer: "So when it comes to Hebrews' theology of atonement, we cannot assume the author is simply importing Old Testament ideas and images drawn from the sacrificial cult, but our vital task is to hear the fresh thing he is doing with them because of the fresh revelation of Jesus" (Motyer, "Atonement in Hebrews," 137).

sacrifice. The author of Hebrews insists that the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins (10:4), but the sacrifice of Christ does more than take away sins successfully. Instead, as we will see in this chapter, Jesus participates fully in the human story, and by virtue of their shared destiny with him, human beings can hope to share in the eschatological hope he experiences.

Contrary to the proposal I am advancing, Käsemann suggests that Jesus is not a representative of humanity and so human beings do not share his destiny on this account:

> Nowhere in the New Testament is Jesus set on the same level with us in such fashion. Hence, nowhere is the result of his life and death transferred to us because he is a type of our race. And the Son of Man is not at all a representative of our world, but of the divine. Humankind may be included in the saving work of the Son of Man only where, in wake of the [Gnostic] myth, we understand the *Urmensch* as representative of those heavenly particles which have fallen and are in need of redemption.[12]

However, I will argue that it is precisely because of Jesus' humanity and his experience of life beyond his self-sacrificial death that his human brothers and sisters can hope for life beyond death.

Before discussing Jesus' experience of the eschatological hope, a word about the humanity of Jesus is in order. Hebrews begins with some of the highest Christology in the NT. Jesus is heir of all things, the Son through whom God spoke to us, and the agent of creation (1:2). He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact representation of God's nature (1:3a). He upholds the universe by the word of his power, and he sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high (1:3b). He is much better than the angels, as he has inherited a more excellent name (1:4). Nevertheless, although in Hebrews Jesus is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact representation of God's nature, the author of Hebrews is just as concerned to emphasize that Jesus is a human like us. Jesus' humanity *like us* is the main point. Hebrews does not emphasize Jesus' human nature at the ontological level as much as he speaks of Jesus' humanity in terms of his association with us.[13] The author speaks of Jesus as human like us in three ways.

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[12] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 126.

[13] I do not wish to impose a false dichotomy. Indeed, humanity at the ontological level could well also incorporate humanity at the existential level (i.e., a sharer in human nature is also a sharer in

First, Jesus is human like us in that he has fully participated in the human condition. Jesus was tempted in every way like us (2:18; 4:15), he suffered (2:9, 10, 18; 5:8; 13:12), and he died a real death (2:9, 14; 5:7; 13:20).

Second, Jesus is human like us in that he shares our identity as non-angelic. God created human beings "a little lower than the angels (ἠλάττωσας αὐτὸν βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους)" (2:7). So too Jesus was made lower than the angels for a little while: "but we see the one who for a little while was made lower than the angels: Jesus (τὸν δὲ βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἠλαττωμένον βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν)" (2:9). I developed this theme in more detail in chapter 4.[14]

Finally, Jesus is human like us in view of his shared familial relationship with humans. Even as the Son of God (1:5; 4:14; 6:6; 10:29),[15] Jesus is "the firstborn" (1:6) who is not ashamed to number human beings among his brothers and sisters (2:11).[16] Schenck argues convincingly that sonship in Hebrews does not apply to all human beings by virtue of their humanity, but "involves membership in the new age and future participation in the inheritance of the creation, as well as special knowledge of God."[17] Nevertheless, the author of Hebrews is clear that those being led to glory (2:10) are none other than the ones with whom Jesus has shared in blood

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human experience). Furthermore, Jesus as a human, ontologically speaking, also allows for his shared destiny with us. For example, Theodore of Mopsuestia comments on Hebrews: "But once for all heavenly things were made accessible to humans, when one of us humans was assumed and, according to the law of human nature, died and was raised from the dead in a marvelous fashion and, because immortal and incorruptible by nature, ascended into heaven. And he became high priest for the rest of humankind and the pledge for their ascension into heaven" (Erik M. Heen and Philip D. W. Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture New Testament X (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 52). For a recent interpreter emphasizing Jesus' and humanity's shared nature, see Bell: "the author of the letter to the Hebrews stresses the participation of Christ with the *nature* of human beings. Likewise, human beings do not so much participate *in Christ* but share with the redeemer *a common nature*" (Richard H. Bell, *Deliver Us from Evil: Interpreting the Redemption from the Power of Satan in New Testament Theology*, WUNT 2/216 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 299, italics his). Nevertheless, the author of Hebrews generally emphasizes Jesus' existential humanity and shows less concern with Jesus' human nature metaphysically speaking.

[14] Chapter 4, section IV.1.2.

[15] On Jesus' sonship as a marker of divine identity as well, see Bauckham, "Divinity," 19-22.

[16] Jesus and humanity are "from one (ἐξ ἑνὸς)" (2:11). The meaning of this phrase is unclear (as ἑνός could be masculine or neuter), but in this case it likely refers to their being from the one God, who the author describes in 2:10 as the one "for whom and through whom all things exist (δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα καὶ δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα)" (so Attridge, *Hebrews*, 88-89; deSilva, *Perservance in Gratitude*, 114; Koester, *Hebrews*, 229-30; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 58; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 50). For a discussion of the various implications of Jesus' brotherhood with humanity in Hebrews, see Patrick Gray, "Brotherly Love and the High Priest Christology of Hebrews," *JBL* 122, no. 2 (2003), 335-51.

[17] Kenneth Schenck, "Keeping His Appointment: Creation and Enthronement in Hebrews," *JSNT* 66 (1997), 100-104, here 104.

and flesh (αἵματος καὶ σαρκός) (2:14). So, even if Jesus is "the firstborn" (1:6) of only a specific group who are called "sons and daughters," Jesus must be a human being like these sons and daughters in order to be a brother (2:12). Heb 2:14, with the language of blood and flesh, is perhaps the clearest metaphysical statement of Jesus' humanity.[18] As Theodoret of Cyr notes: "How would it be possible to name him our brother or to call us sons and daughters properly if it were not for the nature – the same as ours – with which he was clothed?"[19] The author of Hebrews makes clear that when he speaks of Jesus, he is speaking of *one of us*.

Jesus' humanity creates a paradox. As we found in part 2 of the thesis, the author of Hebrews operates with a pessimistic anthropology such that the default human story is one of unfaithfulness concluding assuredly in eschatological death. Paradoxically, the author of Hebrews insists that Jesus is both human and yet faithful (as I will develop in more detail in the next chapter). This human like us has broken out of the default human story and has received the eschatological hope. In the following discussion of six sets of texts in Hebrews, we see that Jesus' reception of the eschatological hope offers the hope of the same for his human brothers and sisters.

II. HEBREWS 2:5-10: BUT WE DO SEE JESUS

II.1. Jesus' Reception of the Eschatological Hope

Humanity's shared destiny with Jesus is clearest in Hebrews 2,[20] a passage I have already addressed in detail elsewhere in the thesis.[21] In Heb 2, the author laments that despite being intended for glory and honor, humans do not presently see this divine intention fulfilled (2:5-9). Although we do not see at present all things subjected to humanity (2:8), we do see Jesus crowned with glory and honor (2:9a). However, Jesus' glory and honor comes not on account of a divine decree, but on account of the suffering of death (διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ

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[18] So also Peterson: "the κατὰ πάντα of 2:17 seems to refer to Christ's becoming like men *in all the experiences of life*, whereas 2:14 refers more specifically to *the adoption of human nature*" (Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 64, italics his).

[19] Theodoret of Cyr in Heen and Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, 44.

[20] See also Weiss, who sees in Heb 2:5-18 "die 'Schicksalsgemeinschaft' des 'Sohnes' und der 'Söhne' " (Weiss, *Hebräer*, 205).

[21] On Ps 8 in Heb 2, see chapter 3, section II; on Jesus' perfection in 2:10, see chapter 5, section II.3.3.1. I address 2:13 in chapter 7, section III.

ἐστεφανωμένον, 2:9b). The preposition διά with the accusative τὸ πάθημα suggests a causative relationship,[22] so that the crowning of glory and honor is on account of Jesus' suffering of death. I argue in the next chapter that Jesus' faithfulness in suffering is the paradigm of what faith entails and the conclusion to his suffering (here, being crowned with glory and honor) is the guarantor of the same blessed future for those who demonstrate similar faith. At this point, it is worth noting that Jesus receives the glory and honor divinely-intended for human beings.

II.2. Humanity's Shared Destiny

Jesus' reception of this glory and honor is intertwined with the hopeful future of humanity. The author says that Jesus tasted death for everyone (2:9c). Chrysostom compares this to a doctor who, although he does not need to taste-test the food that he gives a patient, does so to persuade the sick person to eat. So also humans are afraid of death (2:15), and so Christ tastes death – even though he does not have to – to persuade us not to fear death.[23] Chrysostom rightly reads the experience of Christ (death) as something that will be shared by all people. As we noted in chapter 4,[24] the author of Hebrews thinks physical death is an experience that all people – righteous and unrighteous – should anticipate. Chrysostom's interpretation would be strengthened by more attention to 2:10, where the author describes Jesus as "the pioneer of their [many sons' and daugthers', πολλοὺς υἱοὺς] salvation" (τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν). I argue in the next chapter[25] that ἀρχηγός in 12:2 carries the nuance of a pioneer blazing a new trail, and this meaning is also appropriate here.[26] Here in 2:10, this ἀρχηγός was perfected (τελειῶσαι)[27] through suffering (διὰ παθημάτων). So, in tasting death for everyone (suffering), the ἀρχηγός of salvation was perfected. That Jesus' experience of perfection and glory and honor through suffering is an experience that all humanity should expect comes precisely in the fact

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[22] Wallace lists two uses of διά with the accusative: (1) cause ("because of," "on account of," "for the sake of"), and in rare cases (2) spatial ("through") (Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 369).

[23] Chrysostom in Heen and Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, 40-41.

[24] Chapter 4, section II.1.

[25] Chapter 7, section II.3.1.

[26] "Pioneer" is the translation in the NRSV; NET; and RSV. Cf. the NIV and NASB ("author"); NJB ("leader"); KJV ("captain"); and ESV ("founder").

[27] Cf. Heb 12:2, where Jesus is the ἀρχηγός who is also the τελειωτής. In 12:2, πίστις is what is perfected.

that he is humanity's ἀρχηγός. Like the ἀρχηγοί of Num 13:2-3, Jesus has entered into the promises of God. The Father who is "bringing many children to glory" (2:10) has brought the Son, the ἀρχηγός of salvation, to glory. As the pioneer of the children's salvation, Jesus is the one who has endured sufferings and has experienced the blessed future to which God is leading the many children.[28] Jesus is the guarantor of this destiny, because his experience of glory and honor and perfection came because he is numbered among the sons and daughters. Lane is correct: "In Jesus the hearers are to find the pledge of their own entrance into the imperial destiny intended by God for them."[29]

III. HEBREWS 1:6: THE FIRSTBORN INTO THE ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΗ

Jesus' reception of the eschatological hope and our shared destiny is also apparent in Heb 1:6. Heb 1:6 is closely related to Heb 2:5-18. There are three key points of contact between Heb 1:6 and 2:5-18. First, both passages mention angels (God's angels worship Jesus in 1:6, the coming world is not subject to angels in 2:5, and Jesus did not come to help angels in 2:16). Second, both 1:6 and 2:5 mention the οἰκουμένη, a word the author of Hebrews uses only in these two verses. Finally, in 1:6 Jesus is called the firstborn (πρωτότοκον), and Jesus is six times numbered as a brother with humanity in Heb 2 (vv. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17).

III.1. Jesus' Reception of the Eschatological Hope

Hebrews 1:6, which speaks of God "bringing the firstborn into the world," can refer to Jesus' (1) parousia, (2) incarnation, or (3) exaltation into the heavenly realm. I will address each of these interpretive options in turn, and argue that the third interpretation is most convincing. That is, Heb 1:6 depicts Jesus' entrance into the heavenly realm, where he receives the glory, honor, and dominion that God intended for human beings. For our purposes in this chapter, this reading of Heb 1:6 presents another example of Jesus receiving humanity's destiny and thereby offering hope of the same for us.

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[28] See also Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ,* 300-301.
[29] Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 50.

III.1.1. Parousia Interpretation

The parousia interpretation makes much of πάλιν in Heb 1:6: ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ τὸν πρωτότοκον εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην.[30] Πάλιν can modify εἰσαγάγῃ ("when he again brings the firstborn into the οἰκουμένη") or it can serve as a coordinating conjunction with the previous verse ("and again, when he brings the firstborn into the οἰκουμένη"). Proponents of the parousia interpretation take the first sense of πάλιν and so read πάλιν as modifying εἰσαγάγῃ, such that Heb 1:6 refers to Jesus' second coming to earth: when God brings the firstborn into this world again, God's angels will worship him. However, even if πάλιν does modify εἰσαγάγῃ, the parousia interpretation is not the only possible reading. Indeed, if the οἰκουμένη into which the firstborn is brought again is not this world but the heavenly realm (as I will suggest below), then Heb 1:6 can still be interpreted as referring to Jesus' exaltation: the one who was in the heavenly realm prior to coming to earth is now brought into the heavenly realm again.[31] Nevertheless, given that πάλιν functions as a coordinating conjunction every other time the author uses the word with a Scripture quotation (1:5; 2:13 [twice]; 4:5; 10:30),[32] πάλιν in this case with a Scripture quotation likely functions in the same way: "and again, when he brings the firstborn into the οἰκουμένη." The parousia interpretation is therefore not to be preferred.

III.1.2. Incarnation Interpretation

The incarnation interpretation's[33] strongest support lies in the typical meaning of οἰκουμένη in the LXX as referring to inhabitable lands (as opposed to desiccated

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[30] For supporters of the parousia reading of Heb 1:6, see Braun, *Hebräer*, 36-37; Käsemann, *Wandering*, 101; Thomas Kem Oberholtzer, "The Eschatological Salvation of Hebrews 1:5-2:5," *BSac* 145, no. 577 (1988), 86-87; and Westcott, *Hebrews*, 22.

[31] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Eschatology in Hebrews*, 54; Andriessen, "La Teneur," 296-300.

[32] Πάλιν appears 10 times in Heb. Six of these are with Scripture quotations (1:5, 6; 2:13 [twice]; 4:5; 10:30). The other four times the author uses πάλιν in parenetic material to exhort or warn his hearers: God *again* appoints "today" to enter the rest (4:7); the hearers need to be taught *again* (5:12); the author does not want to lay *again* a foundation of elementary doctrines (6:1); and apostates cannot be restored *again* to repentance (6:6).

[33] For supporters of the incarnation interpretation, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 56; George B. Caird, "Son by Appointment," in *The New Testament Age: Essays in Honor of Bo Reicke*, ed. William C. Weinrich (Macon, GA: Mercer, 1984), 75-76; Robert P. Gordon, *Hebrews*, Second ed., Readings: A New Biblical Commentary (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), 60-61; Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 45-46; Spicq, *Hébreux II*, 17; and Antonio Vicent Cernuda, "La introducción del Primogénito, según Hebr 1,6," *EstBib* 39 (1981), 107-53.

lands) on earth.[34] If we understand οἰκουμένη as a reference to the inhabitable land on earth, and this is the land into which Jesus entered, then the most natural interpretation is to see this entrance as Jesus' incarnation. However, this interpretation falters on three points. First, as Andriessen notes, nowhere in Hebrews or elsewhere in the NT do we see angels worshipping the Son at his incarnation.[35] Instead, the author of Hebrews describes Jesus' incarnation as a time when he was lower than angels (2:9), not a time when he was worshipped by angels. Second, Heb 1:3-4 locates Jesus' exaltation at a time following his sacrificial death. Jesus receives the name more excellent than that of angels at his exaltation, not at the beginning of his incarnation.[36] Third, for reasons I will develop below, οἰκουμένη likely refers not to the earthly abode, but to the heavenly realm.

III.1.3. *Exaltation Interpretation*

Finally, the exaltation interpretation understands Hebrews 1:6 as a reference to Jesus' entrance into the heavenly realm.[37] This interpretation is contingent upon reading οἰκουμένη as the heavenly realm to be inherited by human beings, and there is good reason to understand the word thusly. Moffitt has demonstrated a number of instances in the LXX and Second Temple Jewish literature where οἰκουμένη is read eschatologically.[38]

Within Hebrews, οἰκουμένη appears elsewhere only in 2:5, where the author describes it in eschatological terms as τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν ("the coming

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[34] LSJ, 1205. See, for example, Exod 16:35; Isa 13:9; 14:17; 24:1, 4; 27:6.

[35] Andriessen, "La Teneur," 294. As Andriessen rightly notes, the angels in Luke 2:13-14 do not adore the newborn Jesus, but give glory to God (contra Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 44).

[36] Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 27.

[37] For proponents of the exaltation interpretation, see Allen, *Deuteronomy and Eschatology in Hebrews*, 52-58; Andriessen, "La Teneur," 293-313; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 56-58; Felix H. Cortez, "'The Anchor of the Soul that Enters within the Veil': The Ascension of the 'Son' in the Letter to the Hebrews" (Ph.D. diss., Andrews University; Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, 2008), 214-24; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 97; Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 77-78; Jipp, "Entrance," 562-63; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 79; George Johnston, "ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΗ and ΚΟΣΜΟΣ in the New Testament," *NTS* 10, no. 3 (1964), 353-54; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 27; John P. Meier, "Symmetry and Theology in the Old Testament Citations of Heb 1,5-14," *Bib* 66, no. 4 (1985), 507-11; Moffitt, *Atonement*, 53-144; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 214 n 19; Schenck, "Celebration," 477-79; Albert Vanhoye, "L'οἰκουμένη dans l'épître aux Hébreux," *Bib* 45 (1964), 248-53; and Weiss, *Hebräer*, 162-64. Loader combines the parousia and exaltation interpretations. Jesus is elevated above the angels, but the recognition of his Lordship (by both angels and human beings) comes with his Parousia: "Es geht um die Herrschaft Jesu, die er mit der Erhöhung aufgenommen hat und die bei der Parusie vor allen offenbart werden wird" (Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester*, 24-25).

[38] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 70-118.

world") that is not subject to angels, but to humanity. The author of Hebrews presents Jesus as the pioneering human being who entered this coming world and received the divinely-intended glory, honor, and dominion. If the οἰκουμένη in 1:6 is the same as the οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν in 2:5, then the οἰκουμένη which Jesus enters in 1:6 is precisely this place of promised inheritance.[39]

This reading is substantiated by a number of references to a coming hope in Heb 1-2: the Son's lasting dominion (1:8); Jesus' endurance beyond the perishing of the created order (1:10-12); Jesus' victory over his enemies, when they will be made his footstool (1:13); and humanity's inheritance of salvation (1:14).[40] Of these, 1:14 is particularly interesting, as in 1:6, 1:14, and 2:5 the angels are named as beings who serve or worship, but do not inherit. Heb 1:14 and 2:5 are also connected by the recurrence of a form of μέλλω. The angels in 1:14 are ministering servants for those about to inherit salvation (τοὺς *μέλλοντας* κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν), and the οἰκουμένη is τὴν οἰκουμένην *τὴν μέλλουσαν*. Furthermore, the author in 2:5 notes that τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν is the topic about which we are speaking (περὶ ἧς λαλοῦμεν). Περὶ ἧς λαλοῦμεν most likely refers back to the previous discussion in Heb 1:1-2:4 in general and to οἰκουμένη in 1:6 in particular.[41]

Therefore, we have good reason to understand the οἰκουμένη in 1:6 and the οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν in 2:5 as the same locales: the place of eschatological hope which Jesus entered after death and which awaits those about to inherit salvation.

III.2. Humanity's Shared Destiny

If we follow the exaltation interpretation of Heb 1:6, then the author of Hebrews points to Jesus as the one who has entered into the glory, honor, and dominion that God has intended for humanity. The resurrection of Jesus, although not explicitly discussed in 1:6, is an implicit condition for his entry into the οἰκουμένη, given that the οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν in 2:5 is subject to human beings.[42] By

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[39] On this connection see also Andriessen, "La Teneur," 294; Caneday, "Eschatological World," 28-36; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 97; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 79; Koester, *Hebrews*, 213; Moffitt, *Atonement*, 45-144 esp. 59-63; and Schenck, "Celebration," 478.

[40] Caneday, "Eschatological World," 35.

[41] Moffitt, *Atonement*, 62.

[42] So Moffitt: "If, in keeping with the contrast between the royal Son and the angelic spirits developed in Hebrews' discussion of Ps 8 in chapter two, the Son is appointed to reign over the

entering the οἰκουμένη as a resurrected human being, Jesus, the ἀρχηγός of humanity's salvation (2:10), has pioneered the hope of the same for human beings, who are still awaiting the inheritance of salvation (1:14) in the coming world (2:5).

IV. HEBREWS 13:20: THE RESURRECTED SHEPHERD

IV.1. Jesus' Reception of the Eschatological Hope

In Hebrews 13:20, the author describes God as "the God of peace who led up out of the dead [ὁ ἀναγαγὼν ἐκ νεκρῶν] the great shepherd of the sheep by the blood of an eternal covenant (namely our Lord Jesus)." While most interpreters agree that this is the clearest reference to the resurrection of Jesus in Hebrews,[43] others question whether this passage is in fact referring to Jesus' resurrection.

Attridge argues that Hebrews 13:20 refers not to Jesus' resurrection, but to his exaltation.[44] Attridge notes that the standard word for God raising Jesus from the dead is ἐγείρω (see also 11:19), not ἀνάγω. He suggests that the author's use of ἀναγαγών in 13:20 is "no doubt deliberate," and "conforms to the tendency of Hebrews, which has so consistently used language of exaltation not resurrection for the act whereby Jesus' sacrifice is consummated and he himself 'perfected.' "[45] However, even though ἐγείρω is commonly used of Jesus' resurrection, ἀνάγω is associated with leading out of death elsewhere in the LXX and NT (1 Sam 2:6; Ps 29:4; 70:20; 85:13; Tob 13:2; Wis 16:13; Rom 10:7).[46] Rom 10:7 is particularly significant, given that Paul uses ἀνάγω with ἐκ νεκρῶν for Jesus' resurrection: " 'who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead [ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν])." Therefore, the use of ἀνάγω rather than ἐγείρω is not sufficient reason to say the resurrection is not in view in Heb 13:20. As further support, Attridge points to Heb 2:10, where God is "leading (ἀγαγόντα) many sons and daughters to glory."

οἰκουμένη because of his humanity, then it is absolutely necessary that the Son have his humanity – his body of flesh and blood – with him when he ascends into heaven" (Moffitt, *Atonement*, 141).

[43] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 388; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 511; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 355; Koester, *Hebrews*, 579; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 561; Moffatt, *Hebrews*, 242; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 448.

[44] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 406. See also Loader, who suggests that 13:20 can refer as easily to Jesus' exaltation as to his resurrection, and so the author of Hebrews does not allow us to say with certainty that Jesus' resurrection is in view (Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester*, 49-54).

[45] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 406.

[46] See also Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 561 and Johnson, *Hebrews*, 355.

For Attridge, this is a clear use of ἀνάγω to describe God's salvific activity.[47]
However, Attridge must assume that God's salvific activity of leading many sons and
daughters to glory cannot entail resurrection. As I demonstrated in the previous
chapter,[48] the hope of resurrection is tied directly to the eschatological hope. In view
of this, it is quite likely that in leading many sons and daughters to glory, God also
leads them out of death by means of resurrection. Therefore, the standard
interpretation – that Heb 13:20 refers to Jesus' resurrection from the dead – is to be
preferred.

IV.2. Humanity's Shared Destiny

Hebrews 13:20 has two clues that suggest humanity's shared destiny with
Jesus' resurrection. First, the author calls Jesus "the great shepherd of the sheep (τὸν
ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων τὸν μέγαν)." Jesus, who is elsewhere described as the pioneer
of humanity's salvation (2:10), is here the shepherd of the sheep who is resurrected.
In calling Jesus a shepherd in this context, the author suggests that the shepherd who
was led out of the dead will lead his sheep to life as well.[49]

Secondly, the author of Hebrews says that God resurrected Jesus "by the blood
of the eternal covenant (ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου)." The NRSV takes ἐν αἵματι
διαθήκης αἰωνίου with καταρτίσαι (v. 21), so that "by the blood of the eternal
covenant" is not associated with Jesus' resurrection, but with the way in which God
completes us in everything good: "Now may the God of peace, who brought back
from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the
eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good."[50] By this translation, God
makes people complete by the blood of the eternal covenant. However, Hebrews'
word order makes this translation unlikely: "ὁ ἀναγαγὼν ἐκ νεκρῶν τὸν ποιμένα τῶν

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[47] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 406.

[48] Chapter 5, section II.2.

[49] So Bernstein: "when Hebrews 13.20 refers to a shepherd who is raised from the dead ('the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep'), one expects him to lead his flock out of death" (Bernstein, *Formation of Hell*, 252-53). See also Müller: "Die Titulaturen "Hirt" und "Anführer" bezeichnen die christologischen Funktionen des Heils- und Führungswillens Gottes, der den Sohn sendet, um die Söhne in die eschatologische Soteria zu führen. Diese Soteria besteht aber genau in der "Heraufführung aus den Toten" (13,20), die Jesus protologisch an sich selbst erfahren hat und die somit zum Ziel aller ihm Nachfolgenden geworden ist. Hoffnung auf den Anführer Christus heißt Hoffnung auf Auferstehung von den Toten" (Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ*, 299). Noted also in Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 267.

[50] See also ESV; NJB; and KJV.

προβάτων τὸν μέγαν ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου, τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ᾿Ιησοῦν."[51]
Given that the author of Hebrews places ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου after the
resurrection of the great shepherd and before "our Lord Jesus," ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης
αἰωνίου should be read with ὁ ἀναγαγὼν ἐκ νεκρῶν: "Now may the God of peace,
the one who led out of the dead the great shepherd of the sheep by the blood of the
eternal covenant, [that is,] our Lord Jesus, make you complete in everything good."[52]
᾿Εν can denote accompaniment ("with the blood") or, as most interpreters prefer,
denote instrumentality ("by the blood").[53] We cannot say with much certainty how
the blood of the eternal covenant is instrumental to God raising Jesus, but deSilva is
likely correct: "God, having accepted Jesus' death as the sacrifice that inaugurates the
new covenant, signifies this by raising Jesus from the dead and exalting him to his
right hand."[54] The covenant (διαθήκη)[55] Jesus secures is a covenant for human beings,
under which God "will be their God, and they shall be God's people" (8:10) and
through which human beings receive "eternal redemption" (9:12) and "the promised
eternal inheritance" (9:15). As such, it is possible that the sheep of the shepherd who
was raised by this covenant will also share in the life-giving covenant and so also be
raised. Therefore, Heb 13:20 demonstrates both the resurrection of Jesus and the
hope of the same for humanity. In this way, Heb 13:20 is another key text showing
the hope humanity's shared eschatological destiny with Christ.

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[51] Ellingworth agrees that a word order as in the NRSV is "very strained" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 728).

[52] So rightly the NASB: "Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing" (italics original).

[53] See, for example: Attridge, *Hebrews*, 404; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 387; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 508; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 727-28; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 352; Koester, *Hebrews*, 568; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 558). Westcott translates ἐν as "in" (445), but later offers an instrumental interpretation (448).

[54] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 512. See also Gordon: "This 'raising up' is said to have been in virtue of 'the blood of the eternal covenant', meaning that Christ's covenant-ratifying death had secured acceptance with God who accordingly raised him from the dead" (Gordon, *Hebrews*, 197-98).

[55] The new covenant in Hebrews is nowhere else described as the "eternal covenant" (διαθήκης αἰωνίου) as it is in 13:20, but the eternality of the covenant is insinuated (see esp. 8:6, 10-12; 9:12, 14).

V. HEBREWS 5:7-9: HE WAS HEARD

Jesus' resurrection and our hope of the same is also likely in view in Hebrews 5:7-9. Here the author interrupts his discussion of Jesus as a priest after the order of Melchizedek (5:5-6, 10) with words about Jesus' "days of his flesh" (5:7).[56] The author of Hebrews depicts Jesus offering prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him out of death (ἐκ θανάτου).[57] Surprisingly, the author says that Jesus' prayers were heard (5:7). Heb 5:8-9 reflects back on this occasion, and claims that Jesus learned obedience through suffering, and that he having been made perfect became the source of eternal salvation for those obedient to him.

V.1. Jesus' Reception of the Eschatological Hope

For our purposes in this chapter, we are concerned with the content of Jesus' prayers and supplications, the meaning and import of ἐκ θανάτου, and the way in which he was heard.[58] These points are interrelated. Jesus offers up (προσφέρω) "prayers and supplications" (δεήσεις τε καὶ ἱκετηρίας), but the author is not clear as to the content of these prayers and supplications. Our decision on this point will impact our understanding of ἐκ θανάτου and the way in which Jesus was "heard." The two strongest possibilities of what the content of Jesus' prayers that were heard are: (1) for the acceptability of his sacrifice (and God hearing Jesus by accepting his

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[56] That the author of Hebrews mentions Jesus' "days of his flesh" does not eliminate possible reference to Jesus' bodily resurrection in Heb 5:7-9. As Moffitt rightly notes: " 'In the days of his flesh' can be understood as the incarnate state, without requiring an absolute dichotomy between flesh/earth and spirit/heaven. Plainly the Son could not suffer before the incarnation, before having flesh. But to note that he suffered as part of the incarnation does not necessarily imply that once he overcame suffering and death, the incarnation also came to an end" (Moffitt, *Atonement*, 210).

[57] The reasons for my translation of ἐκ θανάτου as "out of death" (rather than "from death" as in most English translations) will become clearer as we move through this section. For others reading ἐκ θανάτου as "out of death," see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 150; Gray, *Godly Fear*, 192; Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 70; Moffitt, "If Another Priest Arises," 69-70; Christopher Richardson, "The Passion: Reconsidering Hebrews 5.7-8," in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. Library of New Testament Studies 387 (London: T &T Clark, 2008), 60; and Westcott, *Hebrews*, 124, 126. See also Backhaus, who reads ἐκ θανάτου as deliverance after death, but insists that resurrection is not present. Instead, Jesus is delivered from the power of death, as are human beings in Heb 2:14 (Backhaus, "Zwei harte Knoten," 207). For ἐκ θανάτου as resurrection elsewhere, see Sir 48:5: "He who raised a corpse from death (ὁ ἐγείρας νεκρὸν ἐκ θανάτου) and out of Hades by a word of the Most High" (NETS).

[58] I addressed the meaning of Jesus being made perfect (5:9) in chapter 5, section II.3.3.2, and I will address the way in which the author depicts Jesus' faithfulness in these verses in chapter 7, section IV.

sacrifice) or (2) for deliverance out of death (and God hearing Jesus by resurrecting him).[59]

V.1.1. Prayer for Acceptability of His Sacrifice

The cultic connotations of Jesus "offering" (προσενέγκας) prayers and supplications in 5:7 make the first option possible. Hebrews uses forms of the same word in 5:1, where high priests offer (προσφέρῃ) gifts and sacrifices for sins, and in 5:3 where the high priest must offer (προσφέρειν) sacrifice for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people (see also 8:3, 4; 9:7, 9, 14, 25, 28; 10:1, 2, 8, 11, 12; 11:4). Since the author of Hebrews describes Jesus offering these prayers and supplications with the same word as the priests' sacrificial offering, Jesus' prayers could be related to his sacrificial offering.[60] If this is the content of Jesus' prayer, then God hears his prayer by accepting the sacrificial offering.[61]

This first option is weakened by two observations. First, this reading of "offering prayers and supplications" as sacrificial does not account for the "loud cries and tears" (κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς καὶ δακρύων) with which Jesus prayed. "Loud cries and tears" is nowhere associated with a priest's sacrifice, but is used of prayers for deliverance in times of crisis (as in Exod 3:7, 9; 2 Sam 22:7; 2 Kgs 20:5; Neh 9:9; Ps 18:6; Isa 30:19; 38:5; Jonah 2:2; 2 Macc 11:6; 3 Macc 1:16; 5:7; 5:25).[62] Second, this reading cannot offer a strong explanation for why Jesus prays to "the one who is able to save him out of death" (τὸν δυνάμενον σῴζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου). Lane suggests that τὸν δυνάμενον σῴζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου is "simply a traditional circumlocution for God (cf. Hos 13:14; Ps 32[MT 33]:19 LXX; Jas 4:12)," so that it "defines not the content of Jesus' prayers but the character of God as the Lord of life who acts for the accomplishment of salvation."[63] This, however, introduces a false dichotomy. Even if τὸν δυνάμενον σῴζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου is a traditional circumlocution for God,

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[59] See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 150 for a discussion of other possibilities: prayer for others, the strength to persevere, victory over Satan, deliverance from premature death in Gethsemane, the Father's will to be done, or for death. Attridge notes that none of these suggestions finds support in the text.

[60] Lane advocates this first interpretive option (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 119-20).

[61] So Lane: "The assurance that 'he was heard' is equivalent to stating that Jesus' offering was accepted by God" (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 119).

[62] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 151 n 172 and 173; Koester, *Hebrews*, 288. Lane also notes this point, but does not suggest how this aligns with the sacrificial reading he advances (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 120). More on Hebrews' depiction of Jesus' attitude in prayer in chapter 7, section IV.

[63] Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 120.

this does not preclude it from describing the content of Jesus' prayers. If Jesus is praying for the acceptability of his sacrifice, then what is it about this prayer that causes Jesus to supplicate "the one able to save him out of death"? No satisfactory answer can be given to this question.

V.1.2. Prayer for Deliverance Out of Death

The second interpretive option – that Jesus prayed for deliverance out of death and was heard by being resurrected – is to be preferred in view of four points.

First, this reading takes seriously the description of God as "the one able to save him out of death" (5:7). If we read this as more than just a circumlocution for God, but a description of the God who was able to do what Jesus needed at the present time, then Jesus' prayer as one for deliverance is more clearly in view.[64] That God in Heb 13:20 is described as the one who brings Jesus back from the dead may further support the view that Jesus is praying for his resurrection in Heb 5:7.[65]

Second, the author of Hebrews emphasizes Jesus' endurance of suffering (5:8) and his subsequent perfection (5:9).[66] Jesus suffers in order to sanctify people (9:26; 13:12), and he suffered when being tempted (2:18), but nowhere does Jesus suffer because of desire for his sacrifice to be acceptable to God. More than that, Jesus' suffering is elsewhere associated with eschatological reward (glory and honor in 2:9; perfection in 2:10; session at the right hand of God in 12:2).[67] Jesus' suffering in 5:7-9 is likely a precursor to his enjoyment of life beyond death.

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[64] See also Peterson: "The words πρὸς τὸν δυνάμενον σῴζειν ἐκ θανάτου are more than a periphrasis for God: they indicate the way in which Jesus approached God in prayer and the particular help sought" (Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 87). So too Moffitt: "the identification of God as having the 'power to save out of the realm of death' suggests that a key element of Jesus' faith was the belief that God was able to resurrect him out of the realm of death" (Moffitt, "If Another Priest Arises," 70). See also Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 134, 230, 232 n. 792; and Spicq, *Hébreux II*, 113-14.

[65] Gray, *Godly Fear*, 193.

[66] That Jesus' perfection comes subsequent to his learning obedience through suffering is made clear by the coordinating conjunction καί: ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν, καὶ τελειωθεὶς (Heb 5:8b-9a), as I noted in chapter 5, section II.3.3.2.

[67] I speak more to the connection between suffering and eschatological reward in the next chapter, where I will argue that the author of Hebrews conceives of the faithfulness of Christ in terms of his endurance of sufferings in the face of death.

Third, the author says that Jesus was made perfect (τελειωθείς) in 5:9. As I noted in the previous chapter,[68] Jesus' perfection in Hebrews is closely associated with his reception of the eschatological hope.

Finally, Heb 5:7-9 is surrounded by references to Jesus being a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (5:6, 10). I argued in the previous chapter that Jesus' eternal priesthood after the order of Melchizedek is possible only if he is resurrected.[69] If this is the case, then Heb 5:7-9 fits perfectly within the cultic context of 4:14-5:10. If Christ's appointment to the high priesthood is only possible by means of his resurrected life, then the author logically introduces Jesus' resurrection into this discussion of Jesus' priesthood.

The reasons for my translation of ἐκ θανάτου as "out of death" are now clearer. Ἐκ θανάτου could be translated "from death" as in being saved from the experience of death, but this reading falters for three reasons. First, Jesus praying for deliverance from the experience of death makes little sense given that the author and hearers of Hebrews knew that Jesus had in fact died. If Jesus were praying for salvation from the experience of death, then he was in fact *not* heard. Second, as Ellingworth rightly notes, "The author of Hebrews insists so strongly on the positive results of Christ's suffering and death (2:9, 14; 9:15) that it is antecedently improbable that he would speak here of Christ's attempting to avoid them."[70] Furthermore, the author depicts Jesus in 12:2 as intentionally enduring the cross "for the joy that was set before him."[71] Jesus, therefore, knew of the rewards following death, and so it is less likely that he is praying for deliverance from the experience of death in 5:7. Finally, the author of Hebrews consistently upholds Jesus' suffering as a salvific act that Jesus undertakes willfully (see 2:13; 9:26; 10:7, 9; 12:2), and so it is unlikely that the author of Hebrews would depict Jesus as praying to avoid such suffering.[72] Instead, as I have argued, Jesus prayed for deliverance *despite his death*. God heard Jesus' prayers, and answered him in resurrection, granting Jesus a better fate than mere deliverance from the experience of death: "Par là d'ailleurs, le Christ

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[68] Chapter 5, section II.3.3.
[69] Chapter 5, section II.3.3.3.
[70] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 288.
[71] More on this verse and on ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ below in section VII.1 and in chapter 7, section II.1.2.2.
[72] Richardson, "Passion," 61.

obtient d'être délivré de la mort sous une forme bien supérieure, la résurrection (*Act.* II, 27, 32), triomphe sur la mort."[73]

V.2. Humanity's Shared Destiny

Hebrews 5:7-9 closes with mention of humanity's eschatological hope. Jesus suffered and was raised, "and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him" (5:9). Heb 5:7-9 makes no direct mention of the cross or of atoning sacrifice, but only of Jesus' suffering and deliverance out of death. As a result, humanity's eternal salvation in 5:9 is secured with Jesus' suffering, deliverance out of death, and perfection. Humanity's eternal *salvation* (σωτηρίας αἰωνίου) in 5:9 is likely a salvation out of death in view of Jesus' *salvation* out of death (σῴζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου) in 5:7. Humanity can be saved out of death because Jesus was.

VI. HEBREWS 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1-28: A PRIEST FOREVER

VI.1. Jesus' Reception of the Eschatological Hope

As noted in the previous chapter, Jesus' reception of the eschatological hope is intimately related to his eternal high priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.[74] Jesus is associated with Melchizedek in 5:6, 10, 6:20; 7:15, and 17. In each case, Jesus' fittingness to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek is related to his enduring life. In the first three cases, mention of Jesus' postmortem life (5:7-9) or passage into heaven (4:14; 6:19-20)[75] appears in the context. When Jesus is appointed high priest on account of being "a Son who has been made perfect forever" (7:28), this is likely a reference to the enduring life that he received by means of resurrection after death. Like Melchizedek, Jesus is a high priest not on the basis of his genealogical lineage, but on the basis of his enduring life (7:16-17).

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[73] Spicq, *Hébreux II*, 117.
[74] Chapter 5, section II.3.3.3.
[75] On entering behind the curtain in 6:19 as entrance into the heavenly realm, see Cortez, "Anchor of the Soul," 300-306.

VI.2. Humanity's Shared Destiny

Jesus as a priest forever is clearly associated with humanity's eschatological hope. The Levitical priesthood could not secure humanity's perfection (which is enduring life in Heb 7, as I argued in the previous chapter).[76] The author makes clear on a number of occasions that Jesus' atonement for sins purifies the conscience and allows humans to approach God (e.g., 9:14-15, 25-26; 10:14, 19-22), but we see that humanity's hope of salvation goes beyond Jesus' sacrifice in death but is also contingent on his ongoing life after death. This is clearest in 7:25, where the author says Jesus "is able to save forever the ones who are drawing near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them." Jesus, the Son who has been made perfect, is uniquely qualified to secure perfection for humanity. As elsewhere throughout Hebrews, we see here an example of Jesus' destiny (here, the perfection of enduring life that qualifies him for the high priesthood) securing the hope of the same for humanity (albeit a perfection of enduring life without the priestly implications).

VII. HEBREWS 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2: JESUS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND

VII.1. Jesus' Reception of the Eschatological Hope

The final image of Jesus' postmortem experience of life comes with the image of his session near the throne of God. Taking his cue from Ps 110:1, the author of Hebrews five times depicts Jesus sitting at the right hand of God.[77] In all but perhaps one case (1:13), the author of Hebrews connects Jesus' session with his enduring life after death. In 1:13-14, the author quotes Ps 110:1 to contrast Jesus' dominion (1:13) with the angels' servanthood (1:14). Heb 1:13 gives no clear indication of Jesus' enduring life. However, it is worth noting that the verses prior speak to Jesus' enduring life beyond the perishing of the created order (1:10-12). Nevertheless, the clearest connections between Jesus' session and his enduring life appear in the other four cases.

In Heb 1:3 and 10:12, Jesus' session follows his sacrifice for sins. Jesus sits down after making purification for sins (1:3) and after offering a once-for-all sacrifice

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[76] Chapter 5, section II.3.3.4.

[77] For quotations or allusions to Ps 110 in the NT, see Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 45-47.

(10:12). Jesus' offering is clearly an offering of his body in death (10:10), and so his session is located temporally after his sacrificial death. So also Hay rightly notices, "His glory is ontological and in a sense eternal (1.2-3*a*); yet the author also seems to maintain that only after his earthly career and death did he enter on perfect glory, a state portrayed first by the heavenly enthronement, then by the acquisition of a name above every other (1.3*b*-4)."[78] Therefore, in 1:3 and 10:12 the author situates Jesus' session after Jesus' endurance of death.

Jesus' session in Hebrews 8:1 is not at first clearly associated with Jesus' enduring life, but a closer study of the passage demonstrates that his enduring life is instrumental. Jesus' high priesthood is intimately connected to his enduring life. This theme is most evident in Heb 7, where Jesus owes his priesthood to his "power of an indestructible life" (7:16). The author connects Jesus' session in 8:1 directly to his discussion in Heb 7 by reminding his hearers, "now the point of what we are saying (κεφάλαιον δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις)." If, as I have argued, Jesus' enduring priesthood secures humanity's enduring life, then the author's mention of Jesus' session here in 8:1 may also connect to his and our enduring lives.

The final reference to Jesus' session at the right hand requires more discussion. In 12:2, the author of Hebrews describes Jesus as one who "for the joy that was set before him (ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ) endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (ἐν δεξιᾷ τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ κεκάθικεν)." In saying Jesus endured the cross "ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς," ἀντί can mean either "instead of" or "for the sake of"[79] the joy set before him. The options are clearer in French:

> Jésus endure la croix *au lieu de* la joie qui lui était proposée
>
> *or*
>
> Jésus endure la croix *en vue de* la joie qui lui était proposée.[80]

Our decision on how to read ἀντί relates directly to what Jesus' "joy" was.

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[78] Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 86.
[79] For a treatment of the etymological possibilities of ἀντί, see Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 178-80.
[80] See the discussion in P.-E. Bonnard, "La traduction de Hébreux 12,2: 'C'est en vue de la joie que Jésus endura la croix'," *NRTh* 97 (1975), 415.

Croy's excellent work on this phrase's history of interpretation demonstrates that ἀντί as "instead of" was the consensus reading in the patristic and early medieval periods.[81] Among modern commentators, Lane is the strongest advocate for this reading.[82] The best argument in favor of "instead of" is the language of Jesus' joy being *set before* (προκειμένης) him. The author of Hebrews uses the same word for the race set before us in 12:1: "… let us run with endurance the race set before us (τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα)." Lane notes that in both cases (be it the race as in 12:1 or joy as in 12:2), that which is set before is something within grasp.[83] In the case of Jesus, Lane suggests that what was within his grasp was the joy "of being delivered from impending and degrading death."[84] Lane also notes a parallel in 4 Macc 15:2-3, where the mother of the seven sons had the choice set before her (προκειμέων) between religion (εὐσεβείας) or preserving her sons for a short time (τῆς ἑπτὰ υἱῶν σωτηρίας προσκαίρου). She forwent the possible joy that would come with saving her sons. Likewise, Jesus, instead of the joyous possibility of deliverance from impending death, "deliberately chose to renounce the joy proposed to him in order to share in the contest proposed for us. This necessarily meant a commitment to tread the path of obedience and suffering."[85] This account of "instead of," as Lane so construes it, does not associate the joy set before Jesus with a preexistent glory (as in the Christ-hymn in Phil 2), but with the joy of deliverance from impending death.[86]

Alternatively, ἀντί can mean "for the sake of," to say that Jesus endured the cross "for the sake of the joy set before him."[87] This reading aligns with the athletic metaphors in play in 12:1-2 (metaphors which can be adapted into martyrological

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[81] For a history of interpretation (both modern and pre-modern) of 12:1-13, see Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 4-35 (on ἀντὶ τῆς … χαρᾶς see especially 11, 15-19, 24-27 and summarized again at 177-78).

[82] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 397; 399 note l; 413; see also P. C. B. Andriessen and A. Lenglet, "Quelques passages difficiles de l'Épître aux Hébreux (5,7.11; 10,20; 12,2)," *Bib* 51, no. 2 (1970), 215-20.

[83] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 413.

[84] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 413.

[85] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 413.

[86] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 413. See also Attridge, who notes that the kenotic interpretation "ignores the paraenetic analogy that the pericope establishes" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 357).

[87] This is by far the most popular translation. Every major English Bible translation translates ἀντί as "for" (see, for example: NRSV; ESV; NASB; NET; NIV; RSV; KJV; NJB). For ἀντί as "for," see among others: Attridge, *Hebrews*, 357; Bonnard, "La traduction," 415-23; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 339 n 45; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 436-38; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 318; and Koester, *Hebrews*, 521.

contexts as well), so that the joy is the prize at the end of the athletic competition.[88]
By this reading, the joy set before Jesus is the joy of exaltation that he knows awaits
him after crucifixion.[89] The joy, therefore, is Jesus' session at the right hand of God's
throne (12:2).

This latter interpretation is to be preferred for three reasons.[90] First, the author
of Hebrews gives no hint in the context that Jesus' joy was the joy of being saved
from death. Jesus' session at the right hand of God's throne is the only joyous
occasion hinted at in the verse. While Lane is likely correct that the joy set before
Jesus was within his grasp, this does not preclude the possibility that, like the leading
runner in a race, he could nearly grasp the victor's reward. Further, Croy lists a
number of examples in Greek literature in which the thing that is "set before"
(πρόκειμαι) is the reward at the end of a race, battle, or other competition.[91] Jesus'
joy being "set before" him, therefore, can in fact be the reward following his
victorious race, as the latter interpretation suggests. Second, the author of Hebrews
never describes escape from death as a joyous alternative to obedience. Indeed, the
author warns that timidity leads to destruction (10:39),[92] as the disobedient wilderness
generation learned (3:17-19). Third, Jesus' joy as exaltation following death is
commensurate with the rest of the book. For example, Lane alludes to Heb 5:7-9, and
reads those verses to say that Jesus was perfected "not by being removed
provisionally from death but by removal from the power of death definitively through
vindication and enthronement at the Father's right hand."[93] As I addressed above,[94]
the author of Hebrews insists that Jesus' cries to be saved out of (ἐκ) death were in
fact heard (5:7). Jesus in Heb 5:7-9 was not granted escape from the experience of

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[88] More on the athletic and martyrological imagery in 12:1-2 in chapter 7, section II.1.

[89] So Attridge: "The joy is not in the crucifixion itself – our author is not quite that fond of paradox – but in its eschatological result" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 357).

[90] Aντί appears elsewhere in Hebrews only in 12:16. Andriessen and Lenglet suggest that ἀντί in 12:16 is "instead of," so that Esau gives up his birthright instead of a meal (Andriessen and Lenglet, "Quelques passages," 219-20). However, ἀντί in 12:16 more likely means "for the sake of": Esau sold his birthright for [the joy of] a meal. Esau exchanged temporary joy (the satisfaction of hunger) for his inheritance, whereas Jesus endured suffering for a time in order that he might receive his eternal exaltation. See also Bonnard, "La traduction," 420; Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 180; and deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 436.

[91] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 66-67.

[92] I speak to Heb 10:37-39 in more detail in chapter 8, where I argue that the author associates timidity with shrinking back in the face of death.

[93] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 413-14.

[94] Section V.

death, but rather deliverance out of death by means of resurrection. Were ἀντί in 12:2 to be read as "instead of the joy," then this would create a contradiction with 5:7-9, where Jesus' perfection comes after his suffering of death. Similarly, Jesus' exaltation is a reward for (or, at least, a consequence of) his death in 1:3-4 and 2:9-10.

Therefore, as with the other references to Jesus' session (1:3; 8:1; 10:12), Jesus' session in 12:2 is associated with his enduring life after death. In particular, this life after death is "the joy set before him" (ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς), the reward of life following the suffering of death (the cross).

VII.2. Humanity's Shared Destiny

The author of Hebrews gives no explicit indication that human beings will share in Jesus' session.[95] Nevertheless, such an expectation is conceivable in view of humanity's shared dominion in Heb 2:5-8 and our expectation of "receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken" (12:28). Furthermore, as noted above, Jesus' session follows his earthly task (1:3; 10:12; 12:2). This pattern may echo God's Sabbath resting that followed his works of creation (4:4). In urging believers to strive to enter this rest (4:11), resting from works as God did (4:10), we may have an implicit expectation of session in the heavenly realm.[96] Although the author of Hebrews does not directly connect humanity's dominion with Jesus' session *per se*, the author does envision an eschatological hope that could conceivably parallel Jesus' session.

The closest connection between Jesus' session and humanity's shared destiny appears in Heb 12:1-3. In Heb 12:1-2, the author of Hebrews urges us to run with endurance while looking to Jesus, the ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις. Jesus, I argue in the next chapter,[97] is here depicted as the faithful martyr who completes the race of suffering and so brings perfection (τελειωτής) to the story of faith. Jesus' faithful endurance culminates in his session at the right hand of God's throne. I flesh out the argument of Heb 12:1-2 in the next chapter. For our purposes here, I am concerned with the exhortation that follows this depiction of Jesus: "consider the one who

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[95] On the question of believers sharing in Jesus' session, see Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 94-101. He finds, "No text from the NT age expressly says that men have the present or future possibility of sitting with Christ at God's right hand. Yet several passage come extremely close to doing so" (94). Hay lists Eph 2:6; Col 3:1; Heb 12:1-2; and Rev 3:21 as examples.

[96] Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 95-96.

[97] Chapter 7, section II.

endured such hostility from sinners against themselves,[98] so that (ἵνα) you might not grow weary or lose heart" (12:3). The author expects the hearers' consideration of Christ to be the motivation to stave off weariness and loss of heart. The key question here centers on what it is about considering Christ that will provide such motivation.

The commentaries rarely address explicitly how our consideration of Jesus should motivate us. For many interpreters, the answer is found in a form of emulation. For example, Koester writes, "the drama of Jesus confronting sinners invites listeners' [*sic*.] to identify with him in the battle against sin."[99] However, Koester offers no further comment on *how* observing the drama or *what* it is about this drama that motivates the listeners. Likewise, Lane comments: "Christians are to find in Jesus, whose death on the cross displayed both faithfulness and endurance (12:2-3), the supreme example of persevering faith. His endurance of hostility from those who were blind to God's redemptive design and their own welfare provides a paradigm for the community of faith whenever it encounters hostility from society."[100] The hearers, therefore, look to the endurance of Christ to motivate them to display similar pertinacity.[101] However, true as this may be – and the author here is clearly putting forth Jesus as an exemplar[102] – the call to motivation as rooted in the imitation of Christ may not adequately answer *why* considering Christ will be sufficient to keep the hearers from losing heart.

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[98] Or, "against himself." The manuscript evidence favors the plural reading, attested as early as P[13] and P[46], in the first hand of D, and in the first and second hands of ℵ. Further, the plural is also the more difficult reading. Probably for this reason translations typically opt for the singular (ESV, NRSV, NASB, NET, RSV, KJV) or leave it out altogether (NIV, NJB). For commentators preferring the singular translation, see: Attridge, *Hebrews*, 353-54 n 10; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 340-41; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 426 n 111; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 313; and Koester, *Hebrews*, 525. See also Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 604-605, who notes that the majority of the UBS committee preferred the singular reading, despite the external evidence strongly favoring the plural. He attributes this decision to "the difficulty of making sense of the plural" (605). For commentators preferring the plural, see: Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 643-44; and Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 397, 400 note u; 416. Given the stronger manuscript evidence for the plural reading and the difficulty of "against themselves" (and thus the reading more likely to be altered), I prefer the plural reading. As such, with "biting irony" the author of Hebrews depicts those showing hostility to Jesus as in fact harming themselves (Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 416).

[99] Koester, *Hebrews*, 537.

[100] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 407.

[101] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 415. So also Ellingworth: "the readers are to consider the perseverance of Jesus when under pressure, and base their conduct on his" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 643).

[102] I am not, therefore, positing a mutually-exclusive interpretation where imitation must be ignored completely.

DeSilva offers one possible answer to this question. He suggests that social mores of reciprocity may motivate the hearers to imitate Jesus and so endure: "There is a strong potential for considerations of reciprocity to enter the hearers' minds at this point. Growing weary would mean, in effect, breaking faith with the one who endured infinitely more to bring them benefit in the first place. They have not yet begun to pour themselves out for Christ as Christ did for them."[103] By deSilva's reading, the motivation does not stop with looking to the example of Christ, but is in fact located in the hearers' fear of being shamed by not reciprocating. Christ remains an exemplar,[104] but the author of Hebrews expects that the hearers, by looking at this exemplar, will be motivated to reciprocate with similar endurance.

Loader offers another suggestion. Loader reads Jesus in Heb 12:2 as "both the first to complete the road to salvation and the one who makes our following him possible."[105] In describing Jesus as ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής, the author of Hebrews wishes to highlight both the past and present (namely, intercessory) activity of Christ. The reason the author encourages his hearers to look to Christ, therefore, is "because he helps them by intercession."[106] However, this reading does not adequately account for why the author in 12:3 describes Jesus as "the one who endured such hostility from sinners against themselves." The author here is not appealing to Jesus' ongoing intercessory activity (although he does do so elsewhere, as in 7:23-25), but to Jesus' experience of hostility. Therefore, Loader's suggestion is not to be preferred.

Instead, our motivation is found in the consideration of the positive outcome of Jesus' story. Jesus' resurrection after enduring suffering offers hope of resurrection for us, as Müller writes:

> Der glaubensgemäße Beweis dafür, daß die Verheißung Gottes zutreffen wird, liegt im exemplarischen Schicksal Jesu, der in seinem Leiden durchgehalten hat bis zum Tod, ohne das Ziel zu sehen. Erst durch die Nacht des Todes hindurch gelangte Jesu in das Licht der Auferstehung und Verherrlichung. Erst nach der Prüfung des Kreuzes gelangte er zur Schau des Zieles. ... Daher sollen sie ihren Blick auf Jesus richten, um dasselbe zu tun wie er, nämlich im Glauben durchzuhalten, ohne das Ziel gleich sehen zu können. Die

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[103] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 438.

[104] deSilva still maintains that "the hearer is to imitate the posture of this exemplar" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 438).

[105] William R. G. Loader, "Christ at the Right Hand - Ps. CX. 1 in the New Testament," *NTS* 24, no. 2 (1978), 207.

[106] Loader, "Christ at the Right Hand," 207.

Verherrlichung Jesu gibt den auf ihn Schauenden die Gewißheit, auf die eigene Auferstehung als Ziel des gegenwärtigen Leidensweges hoffen zu können.[107]

The author of Hebrews writes to a community who has undergone suffering (10:32-34) and who will undergo more suffering (12:4), and they were perhaps losing confidence in the Christian confession as a result.[108] He hopes that by looking to the conclusion of Jesus' story, those suffering will find motivation to endure like Jesus. This does not discredit Jesus as exemplar, but it places the emphasis on the assurance-giving quality of the ending to his life. The ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις in 12:2 endured death but was exalted, and so those who share in this faith can expect the same. Like Jesus, who endured the cross amid the hostility of sinners, so too the community should expect to endure perhaps even to the point of bloodshed in their struggle against sin (12:4). Since the community shares with Jesus in the deathly struggle, the outcome of Jesus' life is particularly applicable to their present striving against sin. Jesus experienced a blessed future beyond physical death, and so too will those who demonstrate similar endurance.

Although the author of Hebrews does not explicitly say that Christians can expect to share Jesus' session, if my reading of Heb 12:3 is correct, then this is an example of Jesus' session after his death justifying the hope of eschatological reward for those who are running the same race he ran. Therefore, Origen may not be too far off the mark: "Jesus having once *endured the cross, despising the shame*, sits on that account *on the right hand* of God. So, too, those who imitate Him, *despising the shame, will* sit and *reign* in heaven *with Him*."[109]

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[107] Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ*, 303. See also Hay: "His exaltation to the right hand is conceived here chiefly as a reward, and the logic of the whole passage points to an assumption that loyal Christians may expect like reward" (Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 96). See also Jipp, "Entrance," 574.

[108] So Fiorenza: "Der Grund für die Glaubensschwäche ist also der Widerspruch zwischen dem im Glauben angeeigneten Bekenntnis zu Jesus als dem Herrn der Welt und der Erfahrung bleibender Weltlichkeit. Aus der trotz der Erlösung scheinbar heillos gebliebenen Gegenwart erwächst die Anfechtung. Wie kann man Jesus als Herrn der Welt bekennen, wenn seine Gemeinde weiterhin verfolgt wird und zu leiden hat?" (Fiorenza, "Anführer und Vollender," 272).

[109] Origen, "Exhortation to Martyrdom," in *Prayer; Exhortation to Martyrdom*, ed. John J. O'Meara ACW 19 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1954), 181 (italics original); also quoted in Rowan A. Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation: A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews*, BGBE 15 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1973), 53.

VIII. CONCLUSION

We found in chapter 5 that the eschatological hope in Hebrews is for an enduring, God-built homeland. This homeland had been uninhabited, even by the heroes of faith from Israel's tradition, because human beings were constrained by their finite mortality. The enduring homeland can only be inhabited by enduring beings. Jesus, as we have seen in this chapter, is the answer to this problem. As one who shares in humanity and thus humanity's destiny, Jesus experienced the resurrection that allowed him to endure through eternity. By being raised as a human and in enjoying enduring life, he opened up the possibility of the same for humanity. In the next chapter, I will investigate the reason for Jesus' resurrection and argue that Jesus is raised because he perfectly exemplified faith in the face of death. In chapter 8, we will see how this story of faith concluding in life plays out in Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38. Then, in chapter 9 I will turn to how human beings can participate in this new story and so share in the blessed assured conclusion of faith.

Chapter 7
The Faithfulness of Christ

I. INTRODUCTION

In part 3 of the thesis, we are discussing the way Jesus has rewritten the default human narrative. Through his participation in the human story, his faithfulness in the face of death, and his resurrection, Jesus has written a new story with a new assured conclusion of life rather than death. In this chapter we turn to the faithfulness of Christ, and I will argue that in Hebrews we see a story emerging wherein Jesus' faithfulness is understood to be his obedience to the point of self-sacrifice in death. The faithfulness of Christ accomplishes two broad points. Taking our cues from Heb 12:2, the faithful Christ (1) pioneers and (2) perfects faith. What "pioneers" and "perfects" mean will become clearer as we go, but in short, the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus as the faithful one *par excellence* who successfully finishes the race of faith in the face of death and so secures the assured conclusion of eschatological life for those participating in the same story of faith.

In the introduction to the thesis I offered the four dimensions of faith as (1) christological, (2) ethical, (3) eschatological, and (4) ecclesiological. In this chapter we will discover the first three dimensions in full force. We will see that faith, as modeled perfectly in Jesus (christological dimension), is one of endurance to the point of death (ethical dimension) that realizes postmortem life as its assured conclusion (eschatological dimension).

Before engaging the topic at hand, two points of clarification are in order. First, I explained in the introduction that we should not limit the motif of Jesus' faithfulness only to places where the author of Hebrews uses a πιστ- word. The author could well be operating with a concept of Jesus' faith apart from the appearance of πιστ-. We must tread carefully here, avoiding two extremes. On the minimalist side, it would be inappropriate to limit our investigation only to those passages where πιστ- is used. On the maximalist side, it would be inappropriate to begin with a concept of what faith is, find passages in Hebrews that seem to align

with this concept, and then label these accounts as instances of Jesus' "faithfulness." To avoid these two extremes, we will start by looking at the passage in Hebrews that uses πίστις of Jesus (12:1-3) and then cast the net wider to other plausibly-related passages.

Second, the primary concern in this chapter is with how Jesus exercises faith and what this says about faith in Hebrews. Jesus is also "faithful" (πιστός) in Hebrews. Both times Jesus is described as "faithful" (πιστός), he is faithful as high priest (2:17; 3:2). Jesus' faithfulness as high priest entails his becoming human and making sacrifice for sins (2:17). I will address this idea in chapter 9, where I will make the case that Jesus' faithfulness as high priest enables human faith.[1]

II. HEBREWS 12:1-3: THE PIONEER AND PERFECTER OF FAITH IN THE FACE OF DEATH

The clearest connection in Hebrews between Jesus and faith appears in 12:1-3. Following the encomium on faith in chapter 11, the author places his hearers in a grand arena, where they are surrounded by these heroes of faith from the previous chapter. He encourages his hearers to cast off their encumbrances and sin,[2] and so run with endurance the race before them (12:1). The author turns our attention to Jesus, τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν, on whom we should fix our eyes. The author describes Jesus as one who endured the cross and is now seated at the right hand of God's throne (12:2). By looking at Jesus and the conclusion to his story, the author expects us not to lose heart (12:3). A close reading of Heb 12:1-3 will demonstrate two things in particular: (1) that faith is an ethic of endurance unto death, and (2) that Jesus is the faithful one *par excellence* who, in perfectly living out this story of faith, has assured the conclusion of the story of faith. That is, Jesus is the faithful martyr who successfully completed the race, and so has received the reward of exaltation.[3] In so doing, Jesus proves that faith leads to life despite death.

In this section, we will cover first the athletic and martyrological imagery in 12:1-3, and so see how the author of Hebrews situates Jesus' faithfulness in an

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[1] Chapter 9, section II.1.

[2] The author probably does not have a specific sin in mind, but general disobedience (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 336; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 409; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 169).

[3] See also Still, who alludes to Jesus as the "martyr and mediator par excellence (see 8:6; 9:15; 12:1, 24)" (Still, "Christos as Pistos," 752).

athletic-martyrological context. Then, we will see how the language of Jesus as ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις associates faith – for Jesus as well as for us – with endurance unto death.

II.1. Images in Play

II.1.1. Athletic Imagery

Hebrews 12:1-3 features both athletic and martyrological imagery, and for reasons we will develop, these metaphors need not be mutually exclusive.

The athletic flavor of these verses is readily apparent. The author starts out by situating us in a footrace[4] surrounded by a νέφος μαρτύρων, a cloud of witnesses. As μαρτύρων, they are more than passive observers, but witnesses who have themselves been witnessed to (as μαρτυρέω is so used of the heroes of faith in 11:2, 4, 5, 39). Keeping with the athletic metaphor, we may imagine this cloud of witnesses as spectators populated by former athletes. Reading into μαρτύρων later Christian adaptations of "martyr" (in the sense of someone who has witnessed with one's own blood) is tempting, but should be avoided. Μάρτυς was likely not used with such a meaning until the second century,[5] and is clearly not used as such within Hebrews. Further, νέφος μαρτύρων most likely refers to those named in Heb 11; some of them may be considered martyrs in the sense that they gave up their lives (11:35-38), but this cannot be said of everyone.[6]

Croy lists a number of other terms in 12:1-3 that come from the racecourse or arena, and demonstrates the agonistic background to these terms in comparative Greco-Roman texts: (most clearly) "let us run the race which lies before us (τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα);" and (because of their place in the context) "putting off every weight (ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα);" "with endurance (δι' ὑπομονῆς);" "looking to Jesus (ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν ... Ἰησοῦν);" "for the joy which had been set

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[4] Although ἀγών can refer to any athletic contest, the author's exhortation to "run" (τρέχω) makes it clear that the ἀγών is a footrace.

[5] Hermann Strathmann, "ΜΑΡΤΥΣ, ΚΤΛ," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament; Vol. IV: Λ–Ν*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 504-508. See also Jan Willem van Henten and Friedrich Avemarie, *Martyrdom and Noble Death: Selected Texts from Graeco-Roman, Jewish and Christian Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 2002), 2.

[6] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 39.

before him (ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς);" and "lest you become fatigued …
growing weary (μὴ κάμητε ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν ἐκλυόμενοι)."[7] The author of Hebrews
clearly wishes his hearers to see themselves as runners in a race who must cast off all
else in hopes of attaining the athlete's prize.

The athletic imagery in 12:1-3 is thus clear. Jesus is the athlete who ran the
race before us, and we who are surrounded by a cloud of spectators are runners in this
race and so must endure to the finish line. This does not, however, eliminate the
possibility of martyrological imagery as well.

II.1.2. Martyrological Imagery

In view of the athletic imagery in the passage, Croy argues for a reading of
Heb 12:1-3 that emphasizes athletic over martyrological metaphors. He makes this
clear in his introduction: "Moreover, the particular way in which the athletic imagery
is used in verses 1-3 favors a non-martyrological emphasis, even while it appropriates
some language from martyrological texts."[8] However, distinguishing so sharply
between martyrological and athletic imagery is a false dichotomy. It is in fact quite
likely that the author of Hebrews is employing both athletic and martyrological
metaphors. Croy makes three unnecessary assumptions: (1) that both athletic imagery
and martyrological imagery cannot be emphasized in the same text; (2) that ἀντὶ τῆς
προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς, if understood as "for the sake of the joy set before him,"
aligns only with an athletic metaphor; and (3) that the author of Hebrews expects
endurance but not endurance unto death.

II.1.2.1. Athletic-Martyrological Imagery

First, Croy separates athletic and martyrological traditions, and in so doing
favors the athletic imagery over the martyrological. He admits to "a faint
martyrological air," but he does not fully inhale this air: "I do not deny that Hebrews
12.1-3 has a faint martyrological air, but I am convinced that another, and I would
say, more influential, tradition has shaped the passage, that of the agonistic

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[7] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 40-41; 58-70. Croy does not give an account of how Jesus
"despising shame (αἰσχύνης καταφρονήσας)" (12:2) and "enduring hostility from sinners
(ὑπομεμενηκότα ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀντιλογίαν)" (12:3) aligns with athletic imagery.
[8] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 3.

exemplar."[9] However, he never entertains the possibility that martyr and agonistic exemplar images may be two sides of the same coin. Indeed, the author of Hebrews combines the two images in 10:32, where he describes the hearers' past as "a great contest of sufferings" (πολλὴν ἄθλησιν … παθημάτων).

The martyrs of 4 Maccabees are also set in an agonistic context.[10] Like those in Hebrews who are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, the martyrs in 4 Macc compete in front of the spectating world: "The tyrant was the antagonist; the world and human society looked on" (17:14).[11] Just as the hearers of Hebrews are surrounded by witnesses from Israel's history, so also the seven brothers in 4 Macc 13:17 remind each other: "For if we so die, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will welcome us and all the fathers will praise us." Tortures are part of a grand contest (ἀγών): "While he [the sixth brother] was being tortured, he said, 'O contest befitting sanctity (ὦ ἱεροπρεποῦς ἀγῶνος) in which, for the sake of piety, so many of my brothers have been summoned to a school in sufferings, a contest in which we have not been defeated' " (11:20; see also 13:15; 16:16; 17:11). The martyrs are contestants against antagonists: "Like a noble athlete (καθάπερ γενναῖος ἀθλητὴς), the old man, while being beaten, conquered his torturers" (6:10; see also 12:14; 17:13, 14, 16). The Maccabean martyrs receive a victor's prize of postmortem incorruptibility: "for then virtue, testing them for their perseverance, offered rewards. Victory meant incorruptibility in long-lasting life (ἀφθαρσία ἐν ζωῇ πολυχρονίῳ)" (17:12). Similar to Jesus' session at the right hand of God's throne, the martyrs' prize in 4 Macc is a place near the throne of God: "The tyrant himself and all his council marveled at their endurance, for which they now stand before the divine throne and live the life of the blessed age" (17:17-18). The athletic imagery is so strong in the martyrological

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[9] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 40.

[10] Many of these parallels are noted by others. See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 355-56; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 335 n 18; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 363; Koester, *Hebrews*, 523-24; and Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 169. On Maccabean martyrdom and athletic imagery, see David deSilva, "The Noble Contest: Honor, Shame, and the Rhetorical Strategy of 4 Maccabees," *JSP* 7 (1995), 55; Victor C. Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agon Motif: Traditional Athletic Imagery in the Pauline Literature*, NovTSup 16 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), 57-65; Peter J. Scaer, *The Lukan Passion and the Praiseworthy Death*, New Testament Monographs 10 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005), 82-84; van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 119-22; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 632; and Williams, *Jesus' Death*, 239-41. I treat 4 Macc, including its date, in more detail below.

[11] This and all translations from 4 Macc come from NETS. See also 2 Macc 7:12, 20; 14:43; 4 Macc 1:11; 6:11; 8:5; 9:26; and 18:3.

context of 4 Macc 17:11-16 that van Henten suggests: "the image of the martyrs as athletes is presented so extensively and realistically, that one wonders whether the author may have been a visitor to athletic contests during games in Antioch or one of the cities in Asia Minor."[12] Similarly, Pfitzner comments, "Already in IV Macc there is a decided tendency for the word Agon to become a designation for suffering itself."[13] Croy notes that 4 Macc "contains a number of verses that depict the sufferings of the Maccabean martyrs in agonistic terms,"[14] but he does not offer any further reflection on how martyrological and agonistic metaphors may not be mutually exclusive.

That martyrs are depicted in contests elsewhere suggests that athletic and martyrological metaphors are commensurate. As such, a both/and (athletic-martyrological) reading of Heb 12:1-3 is both possible and preferable. Jesus is the martyr-athlete.

II.1.2.2. Ἀντί τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς

Second, Croy tries to monopolize the interpretation of ἀντί τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς (Heb 12:2) for only the agonistic exemplar interpretation: "the prospective interpretation ["for the sake of the joy" rather than "instead of the joy"] of ἀντί is far more likely and, if correct, lends itself much better to the portrayal of Jesus as an agonistic exemplar."[15] In the previous chapter I argued, agreeing with Croy, that the prospective interpretation is correct: Jesus endures suffering "for the sake of the joy before him," namely, session at the right hand of God.[16] However, Croy wishes to reserve this interpretation only for an athletic metaphor, as it "contributes to a picture of an athlete's exertion toward a goal, rather than the martyr's sacrifice."[17] He supposes that if we were to understand Jesus as a martyr, then we must read ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς as Jesus laying aside the joy of escape from death in order that he might accept suffering.[18] However, as we saw with the examples above

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[12] van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 235.
[13] Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agon Motif*, 64.
[14] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 56-57, 62 (here 56).
[15] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 40.
[16] Chapter 6, section VII.1.
[17] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 3.
[18] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 215.

from 4 Macc, a martyr may be an athlete in a competition who through victorious endurance receives a prize (9:8; 15:29; 17:12, 18). Jesus' prize of session at the right hand of God's throne is particularly similar to the martyr's prize of standing near the divine throne (τῷ θείῳ νῦν παρεστήκασιν θρόνῳ, 4 Macc 17:18). Our treatment of the Maccabean martyrological literature below will further demonstrate that the expectation of reward following suffering is a key theme in martyrological narratives. We need not, therefore, contrast "an athlete's exertion toward a goal" with "the martyr's sacrifice." Both images can be – and I think are – in play. Jesus, the athletic martyr *par excellence*, endured the cross and so received the joyous reward of life.

II.1.2.3. Endurance unto Death

Croy's third assumption is that the author of Hebrews expects endurance, but not endurance unto death. For example, Croy writes, "The call is to faithful endurance, not death. Even the example of Jesus, which could certainly be portrayed as martyr-like, is used to highlight his endurance of shame and hostility."[19] Again, he says elsewhere, "the author's immediate call was not to die, but to run with endurance as Jesus did."[20] He roots this claim in two points. First, he argues that the author of Hebrews does not wish to highlight the "lethal nature or the physical torments" of crucifixion, but its shame.[21] Secondly and related, Croy supposes that if the author of Hebrews had chosen to emphasize the lethality or torturous nature of the cross, "the paraenetic thrust would have been lost since the readers' experience had not reached that extreme (vs. 4)."[22] "The readers' ordeal," on the other hand he suggests, "had not involved crucifixion (12.4); it had involved public displays, reproaches, and afflictions (10.32)."[23]

However, contrasting "endurance" with "endurance unto death" is likely an unnecessary dichotomy. Jesus' death is clearly insinuated with the mention of the cross he endured (12:2). Although Hebrews does not feature the violent or gruesome

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[19] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 3.
[20] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 216.
[21] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 186-87.
[22] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 186.
[23] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 187.

language of some martyrological texts,[24] the cross that Jesus endured is clearly a tool of violent execution. Furthermore, if Heb 12:1-3 features martyrological metaphors (as I am arguing), endurance and death are clearly associated.

Endurance (ὑπομένω; ὑπομονή) is a key martyrological virtue. "Endurance" appears three times in Heb 12:1-3. The author of Hebrews exhorts us to run "with endurance (δι᾽ ὑπομονῆς)" (12:1), looking to the one who "endured the cross (ὑπέμεινεν σταυρόν)" (12:2) and "endured hostility (ὑπομεμενηκότα … ἀντιλογίαν)" (12:3). Endurance is a key virtue in 4 Macc. The martyrs of 4 Macc endure suffering (5:23; 7:22; 9:8; 16:19),[25] pains (6:9; 16:17),[26] torture (9:6, 22; 16:21; 17:10, 23),[27] and the torture of loved ones (16:1).[28] By endurance the martyrs are victorious over the tyrant (1:11; 9:30; 17:12, 17).[29] Endurance can lead directly to death (13:12; 17:7).[30]

Croy's contention that the author of Hebrews expects endurance but not endurance unto death is a key point for further discussion. Namely, does the author of Hebrews wish to highlight the death of Jesus and does he invite or expect his hearers to experience the same? I will argue in the rest of our treatment of Heb 12:1-3 that the author of Hebrews situates his hearers in 12:1-3 at the brink of death,[31] where we must endure even unto death. The author calls upon us to be faithful in the face of

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[24] 4 Macc 9:19-20 is particularly gory: "When he said these things, they spread fire under him, and, while fanning the flames, tightened the wheel further. The wheel was stained on all sides with blood, the heap of coals was being quenched by the drippings of body fluids, and pieces of flesh whirled around the axles of the machine."

[25] ὥστε πάντα πόνον ἑκουσίως *ὑπομένειν* (5:23); πάντα πόνον *ὑπομένειν* μακάριόν (7:22); τῆς κακοπαθείας καὶ *ὑπομονῆς* … δι᾽ ὃν καὶ πάσχομεν (9:8); ὀφείλετε πάντα πόνον *ὑπομένειν* διὰ τὸν θεόν (16:19).

[26] ὁ δὲ *ὑπέμενε* τοὺς πόνους καὶ περιεφρόνει τῆς ἀνάγκης καὶ διεκαρτέρει τοὺς αἰκισμούς (6:9); γέροντα τοῦτον *ὑπομένειν* τὰς διὰ τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἀλγηδόνας (16:17).

[27] βασανισμοὺς *ὑπομείναντες* (9:6); *ὑπέμεινεν* εὐγενῶς τὰς στρέβλας (9:22); Δανιηλ ὁ δίκαιος εἰς λέοντας ἐβλήθη καὶ Ανανιας καὶ Αζαριας καὶ Μισαηλ εἰς κάμινον πυρὸς ἀπεσφενδονήθησαν καὶ *ὑπέμειναν* διὰ τὸν θεόν (16:21); τὰς βασάνους *ὑπομείναντες* (17:10); ταῖς βασάνοις αὐτῶν *ὑπομονήν* (17:23).

[28] ἑπτὰ παίδων μήτηρ *ὑπέμεινεν* τὰς μέχρι θανάτου βασάνους τῶν τέκνων ὁρῶσα (16:1).

[29] νικήσαντες τὸν τύραννον τῇ *ὑπομονῇ* (1:11); νικώμενον τὸν τῆς τυραννίδος ὑπερήφανον λογισμὸν ὑπὸ τῆς διὰ τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἡμῶν *ὑπομονῆς* (9:30); ἠθλοθέτει γὰρ τότε ἀρετὴ δι᾽ *ὑπομονῆς* δοκιμάζουσα τὸ νῖκος ἀφθαρσία ἐν ζωῇ πολυχρόνιῳ (17:12); αὐτός γέ τοι ὁ τύραννος καὶ ὅλον τὸ συμβούλιον ἐθαύμασαν αὐτῶν τὴν *ὑπομονήν* (17:17).

[30] μνήσθητε πόθεν ἐστέ η‡ τίνος πατρὸς χειρὶ σφαγιασθῆναι διὰ τὴν εὐσέβειαν *ὑπέμεινεν* Ισαακ (13:12); δι᾽ εὐσέβειαν ποικίλας βασάνους μέχρι θανάτου ὑπομείνασαν (17:7).

[31] I made the case at greater length in chapter 4, section II.2 that the hearers of Hebrews were either in or perceived themselves to be in life-threatening situations.

such possible death, just as Jesus was. Being faithful in this way – enduring even to the point of death – is what faith entails. Like martyrs engaged in a contest, those who endure will share in the athlete's reward. This truth is assured by Jesus, the ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις, a description that we will discuss in due course. Before turning to how Jesus functions as ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις, I first treat the key Jewish martyrological texts and themes to demonstrate the themes and implications of martyrological narratives like Heb 12:1-3. After establishing the martyrological context (alongside its related athletic images) in Heb 12:1-3, we will see more clearly that the author's depiction of Jesus as the ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις is a picture of one who pioneered faith via his endurance in the face of death and one who perfected faith via his experience of life after death.

II.2. Maccabean Martyrs and Hebrews

The purpose of this subsection is to establish the key themes in martyrological literature prior to or generally contemporary with Hebrews. Doing so will help give context to the way in which the author of Hebrews depicts the faithfulness of Jesus.

Identifying examples and the qualities of martyrological[32] literature is by unfortunate necessity a circular task. One must establish what constitutes a martyrological narrative, find examples of this in literature, and then use this literature to explain martyrological concepts. For our purposes, we can start with van Henten and Avemarie's definition of a martyr: "a martyr is a person who in an extremely hostile situation prefers a violent death to compliance with a demand of the (usually pagan) authorities."[33] Van Henten identifies the following as the clearest examples of Jewish martyrological texts: Daniel 3 and 6; 2 Maccabees 6-7; and 4 Maccabees.[34]

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[32] "Martyr," "martyrdom," and "martyrological" are all anachronistic misnomers for the Jewish texts, given that it was later Christians who adopted "martyr" (μάρτυς) to describe someone who had bore witness to peril of his/her life. For more on the terminological difficulty and the rationale for continuing to use "martyr" for these contexts, see van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 6-7. While "martyr" is an anachronistic term for this discussion, I maintain the tradition of others (such as van Henten) who use this terminology for the sake of brevity.

[33] van Henten and Avemarie, *Martyrdom and Noble Death*, 3. deSilva's definition is also appropriate: "The term 'martyr' usually designates a person who chooses to accept death rather than violate his or her allegiance to a higher cause" (David deSilva, "Jewish Martyrology and the Death of Jesus," in *The Pseudepigrapha and Christian Origins: Essays from the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*, ed. Gerbern S. Oegema and James H. Charlesworth (New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 52).

[34] Jan Willem van Henten, "Jewish Martyrs and the Lukan Passion Narrative Revisited," in *Luke and His Readers: Festschrift A. Denaux*, ed. Reimund Bieringer, Gilbert van Belle, and Jozef

Here we are concerned predominately with the Maccabean[35] martyrologies, as these narratives exhibit more parallels with Hebrews than Daniel does.[36]

II.2.1. Date

II.2.1.1. 2 Maccabees

2 Macc was authored some time in the first or second century B.C.E. Nickelsburg dates 2 Macc to 180-161,[37] while Goldstein dates 2 Macc later to 78/7-63

Verheyden. BETL 182 (Leuven: University Press, 2005), 333. For other examples of the larger concept of "noble death" in Jewish literature, see: Pr Azar (= Dan 3:24-45 LXX); 1 Macc 6:43-46; 2 Macc 14:37-46 [Razis]; Philo, *Prob.* 88-91; *As. Mos.* 9:1-10:10; and Josephus, *J.W.* 1.648-55; 7.389-406; *Ant.* 1.223-236; Philo, *Legat.* 209-210; *Flacc.* 84-85, 96; and *Prob.* 22-25, 76, 88-91, 111-113, and 146 (van Henten and Avemarie, *Martyrdom and Noble Death*, 42-87).

[35] I discuss 2 and 4 Macc together due to their similar content matter. As we will see, they date to different historical contexts, but they both narrate the stories of Eleazar and the mother with her seven sons. We cannot be sure, but it is possible that 4 Macc is dependent in some way on 2 Macc. On 4 Macc's dependency on 2 Macc, see van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 70-73 and deSilva, *4 Maccabees*, xxx. See also the discussion in Williams, *Jesus' Death*, 166 n 1.

[36] Dan 3 and 6 differ from 2 and 4 Macc in two significant ways:

(1) First, for Daniel, it may not be necessary for the martyr to die, but to be *willing* to die. In Dan 3, King Nebuchadnezzar offers Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego the opportunity to follow the new law of the land and worship the statue he commissioned. They understood that their refusal would lead either to a miraculous intervention by the God of Israel or end in their deaths (Dan 3:17-18). They clearly demonstrated their willingness to die, as evidenced by their blatant disobedience. They were cast into the flaming furnace, only to escape unscathed. Like the three in chapter 3, Daniel consciously chooses to disobey the law by continuing to pray to the God of Israel (6:10), and he was delivered despite facing a tortuous end (in being left with hungry lions overnight). The story of Daniel differs from that of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in that Daniel's king (Darius) is not the antagonist. Darius was distressed to find that Daniel had broken the ordinance, and was determined to save Daniel (6:14). He endured a sleepless night and hurried to the lion's den at daybreak to check on Daniel (6:18-19). This is rather different from Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 3, who vengefully stoked the furnace fire so hot as to kill the guards who tossed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the flames (3:19-22). Nevertheless, in both cases the king had issued a decree that established a set of circumstances that, if transgressed, would lead to death. Darius regretted this decree and Nebuchadnezzar reveled in it, but in both cases the Jewish heroes deliberately transgressed the decree and in so doing chose death over disobedience.

(2) Secondly, the ones facing death in Dan 3 and 6 expect God to deliver them *from the experience of* death rather than *despite* death. Both Dan 3 and 6 evoke the motif of God's power to deliver from death (3:17; 6:16), so that the God of Israel may be worshiped (3:29; 6:26-27) and the heroes may experience blessings after their brush with death (3:30; 6:28). The expectation of God's deliverance is made more explicit in the LXX (Dan 3:24-45) in the Prayer of Azariah, prayed as he is in the midst of the furnace's flames. Whereas, as we will see, 2 and 4 Macc expect deliverance *despite* death followed by postmortem reward, Daniel expects deliverance *from* death followed by blessings in life.

Despite these differences, Dan 3 and 6 share the general themes with 2 and 4 Macc that martyrs (1) face death and (2) expect God to deliver them. For parallels between Dan 3 and 6 and 2 Macc 7, see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 120. For van Henten's treatment of Dan 3 and 6 see van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 10-13.

[37] George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 106.

B.C.E.[38] It seems 2 Macc was likely written some time around 124 B.C.E. The first festal letter in 2 Macc dates the festival of booths in the month of Chislev, in the one hundred eighty-eighth year (2 Macc 1:9). As van Henten explains, "This date probably refers to the Seleucid era, which began in the spring of 311 B.C.E., thus indicating that December 124 B.C.E. is the likely date of the festival."[39] This date serves as the *terminus a quo*. The *terminus ante quem* is not clear, but van Henten makes a strong case for dating 2 Maccabees no later than 63 B.C.E., when Pompeius intervened in the struggle between the sons of Alexander Jannaeus. He narrows the date further to the reign of John Hyrcanus (135/34-104 B.C.E.), since 2 Macc ends with Jewish autonomy (15:37).[40] Van Henten concludes: "These considerations imply that 2 Maccabees was most likely composed not long before or shortly after the date of 2 Macc. 1:9, December 124 B.C.E."[41]

II.2.1.2. 4 Maccabees

4 Macc is more difficult to date.[42] DeSilva makes a strong case for a date between 19-72 C.E.,[43] against dates as late as the 2nd century, as suggested by van Henten.[44] Even if written after Hebrews (which is possible),[45] that 4 Macc shares similar language and metaphors in a martyrological context is striking. DeSilva's conclusion is instructive: "It is highly probably [*sic*.] that 4 Maccabees was written later than many of the New Testament documents. Nevertheless, the conceptual and linguistic parallelism between early Christian reflection on Jesus' death and early Jewish reflection on the deaths of martyrs suggests strongly that the developments in

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[38] Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 71-83.

[39] van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 50-51.

[40] van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 52.

[41] van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 53.

[42] Anderson gives the broad limits of 63 B.C.E.-70 C.E. (H. Anderson, "4 Maccabees," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Volume 2*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 533-34). Williams suggests 4 Macc was composed "at a time antedating the period of Paul's literary activity by at least a decade" (Williams, *Jesus' Death*, 197-202, here 202). He later narrows the date to 35-40 C.E., composed in Antioch (248-253). Klauck argues for a later date of 90-100 C.E. (Hans-Josef Klauck, "Hellenistische Rhetorik im Diasporajudentum: Das Exordium des Vierten Makkabäerbuchs (4 Makk 1.1-12)," *NTS* 35 (1989), 452).

[43] deSilva, *4 Maccabees*, xiv-xvii. See also deSilva, "Jewish Martyrology and the Death of Jesus," 54 for "sometime in the mid to late first century C.E.".

[44] Van Henten posits a date in "the last decades of the first century C.E. or further in the second century" (van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 73-78, here 78).

[45] As noted in the introduction, Hebrews was likely written some time between 60 and 100 CE (see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 9).

the Jewish martyrological tradition reflected in the former deeply informed the latter."[46]

II.2.1.3. 2 Maccabees 6-7

2 Macc 6-7 are the martyrological chapters in 2 Macc, and Shepkaru suggests that these chapters are a first-century C.E. interpolation from the Roman-Christian world. This suggestion serves the interests of his thesis, which claims that Jewish martyrology was written under the influence of Roman virtues of noble death.[47] In particular, he argues that Josephus and Philo are responsible for appropriating the Roman noble death tradition into the Jewish context, and so "championed a Jewish 'tradition' of voluntary death."[48] For our purposes, Shepkaru's contention that 2 Macc 6-7 is a later interpolation must be addressed.[49] Although he does not numerate his argument clearly, we can identify six reasons Shepkaru offers for why 2 Macc 6-7 are later interpolations.

First, Shepkaru suggests that "the ending of Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 as a whole interrupt the fluidity of the book's narrative. They artificially interrupt the description of Philip's activities (2 Macc. 6.11), which is resumed in 8.1 with 'But Judas Maccabee and his followers.' "[50] For Shepkaru, the flow is also broken thematically, in that 2 Macc 6-7 divert from the main characters of the rest of the book and do not look forward to the happy ending of the book, where the Temple is purified and Nicanor is defeated.[51] However, 2 Macc 6-7 do not break up the flow of

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[46] deSilva, "Jewish Martyrology and the Death of Jesus," 67.

[47] Shmuel Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs in the Pagan and Christian Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 6.

[48] He helpfully states his thesis clearly: "This chapter will continue to show why martyrdom is not likely to be an early Hellenistic Jewish product. Instead, I am arguing here that the Roman noble death ideal, which Roman imperialism introduced to the region, was internalized and adorned in biblical grabs [*sic.*] by Philo and Josephus. In this manner the two authors championed a Jewish 'tradition' of voluntary death. My goal in this chapter is to show that the evolution of Jewish martyrdom and martyrology started as a process of inward acculturation during the Roman occupation of the Jewish kingdom. Philo and Josephus made use of the Roman noble death concept not to acknowledge external influence but to present voluntary death as an original Jewish ideal. Through voluntary death, Philo and Josephus described mostly nonviolent Jews as altruists superior to the belligerent Romans" (Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 35). For Josephus as a source for 4 Maccabees, see Shepkaru, 57. For reasons I will develop, Shepkaru dates 2 Macc 6-7 to the Christian era, and the strength of his thesis relies heavily on this suspect re-dating.

[49] As noted above, few deny that 4 Macc is a product of the first (or second) century C.E., but most scholars date 2 Macc well before the Christian era.

[50] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 25.

[51] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 26.

the book as Shepkaru posits, but may be seen instead to fit the book's pattern. For example, 2 Macc 6-7 fits neatly in Nickelsburg's outline of 2 Macc. Nickelsburg labels 3:1-15:36 "The history," under which falls "blessing" (3:1-40), "sin" (4:1-5:10), "punishment" (5:11-6:17), "turning point" (6:18-8:4), and "judgment and salvation" (8:5-15:36).[52] In Nickelsburg's outline, therefore, the martyrological literature serves a key purpose in the book's pattern: "The account of the martyrs' deaths in 6:18-7:42 is both the climax of the account of Antiochus's cruelty … and the turning point in the historical drama."[53] Also, as Horbury notes, the martyrological section has thematic and vocabulary links with other sections of the book.[54] Nevertheless, even if tenable, Shepkaru's argument alone proves nothing about the date of the chapters. Indeed, interpolations may represent earlier traditions worked into a larger book by the author, just as they can represent later traditions. Even if the interpolation arises out of a later tradition, the case still needs to be made that the later tradition dates to the Christian era.

Second, Shepkaru notes the absence of the Temple in the martyrological narratives, despite the book's clear interest in the purity of the Temple elsewhere.[55] Rather than die for the Temple, the martyrs die for the protection of the Law (6:23, 28; 7:1, 9, 10, 30, 37).[56] Shepkaru suggests, "the sudden and pointed shift from the Temple to the Law with *Tannaitic* and *Amoraic* characteristics raises the possibility that these stories of voluntary death were added in the first century, or even after the destruction of the Temple, by Diaspora Jews whose form of Judaism assigned more significance to the Law (6.18; 7.6, 30) than to Temple worship."[57] However, strands of Jewish tradition prior to the Rabbinic period also show a marked love of the Law. The Psalms clearly demonstrate the Law's significance well before the 1st or 2nd centuries C.E. (see Ps 1:2; 19:7; 37:31; 40:8; and esp. 119). Israel in the Babylonian exile became a "people of the Book," a period in which the Law's significance would have hardly been neglected. Barclay has shown that loyalty to the Law and the Jewish Scriptures was a marker of Jewish identity in the Diaspora, clearly evident in

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[52] Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 107.
[53] Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 107-108. See also van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 25-27.
[54] William Horbury, "The Cult of Christ and the Cult of the Saints," *NTS* 44 (1998), 451.
[55] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 29-31.
[56] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 30.
[57] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 31.

Josephus and Philo.[58] Therefore, the Maccabean martyrs' willingness to die for the law is not itself evidence of a late date.

Third, Shepkaru suggests that 2 Macc 6-7 betrays echoes of early rabbinic views. Shepkaru offers only one clear example, in that Eleazar distinguishes between public and private transgressions, as is also found in *P. Sanh.* 3:5, 21b and *B. Sanh.* 74a.[59] However, this argument falls flat because Shepkaru cannot demonstrate which text is echoing which. At best, we have a textual parallel in which two texts make a similar distinction between transgressions. This parallel does not illuminate any details about dating, since either one could be echoing the other (or not be echoing at all). Indeed, under this parallel that Shepkaru has identified, it is just as possible that *P. Sanh.* and *B. Sanh.* are aware of an earlier Eleazar narrative and echoes of this appear in these later Rabbinic texts.

Fourth, Shepkaru suggests that the prohibition to confess that one was a Jew "has a parallel only in the Roman-Christian confrontation of the first centuries but not regarding Jews. The prohibition against confessing one's religion is reminiscent of the Roman decree against Christianity alone."[60] However, this argument proves insufficient on two points. On the one hand, Shepkaru understands the prohibition against confessing oneself as a Jew to be a religious prohibition only. However, van Henten has forcefully demonstrated that the Maccabean martyr narratives are political-patriotic as well as religious.[61] In trying to force the Judeans to eat swine's flesh, the foreign authorities are asking for more than a denouncement of religion, but for assimilation into Hellenistic culture.[62] On the other hand, Shepkaru suggests that the prohibition against confessing one's religion is a Roman-era decree against Christianity alone, but this claim is only valid if one has already dated 2 Macc 6-7 to the Roman era. Indeed, if 2 Macc 6-7 is dated to the 2nd century B.C.E. along with the rest of the book, and if the martyrological narratives demonstrate a decree against confessing Judaism, then we do in fact have a text that depicts a prohibition against

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[58] John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora from Alexander to Trajan (325 BCE - 117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 424-26.

[59] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 30.

[60] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 31.

[61] On the political dimensions to the Maccabean martyr narratives, see van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 187-269.

[62] For efforts to force assimilation on Jewish people, see also Dan 1:1-21.

confessing one's religion (as well as political-patriotic allegiance) prior to the Roman-Christian era.

Fifth, Shepkaru suggests that 2 Macc 6-7 contains traces of Christianity. He offers the example of the mother, who claims not to know how her sons came to be in her womb: "I do not know how you came into being in my womb. It was not I who gave you life and breath, nor I who set in order the elements within each of you" (7:22).[63] Shepkaru suggests that the mother's words coupled with the absence of a father figure connect with the Christian virgin birth: "It would have been premature for a Jewish writer in the Hellenistic period to insinuate a miraculous creation *ex nihilo* of embryos."[64] However, this argument falters in view of three observations. First, Shepkaru has failed to note other stories of miraculous impregnation in the Hellenistic world (such as the story of Danaë, who Zeus impregnated in a shower of gold).[65] Given similar parallels in Hellenistic literature, it is possible that a Jewish Hellenistic author could have a concept of miraculous conception prior to the Roman-Christian era. Second, even if we ignore other Hellenistic accounts of miraculous impregnation, the presence of miraculous impregnation in 2 Macc does not forbid an early date. Indeed, it is possible that 2 Macc could be the first example of such an account in Jewish literature, and the author need not have garnered his account from the Christian Virgin Mary. Finally, Shepkaru does not adequately prove that the mother's words in 2 Macc 7:22 is a confession of a miraculous impregnation. In fact, in view of the context that expects the creator to resurrect the martyred sons (as I addressed in more detail in chapter 5),[66] the mother's language of not knowing how her sons came to be in her womb is likely not a confession of miraculous impregnation in the vein of virgin birth, but a confession of God's miraculous power to create life. As a result, Shepkaru has once again failed to demonstrate a necessary reason to date 2 Macc 6-7 later than the rest of the book.

Finally, and most important for our purposes, Shepkaru argues that the presence of resurrection hope in the martyrological narratives in 2 Macc shows that

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[63] This and all translations of 2 and 4 Macc comes from NETS.

[64] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 32.

[65] On Danaë, see Ioanna Karamanou, *Euripides Danae and Dictys: Introduction, Text and Commentary*, Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 228 (Leipzig: K G Saur München, 2006), 1-117 (esp. 3-4 n 9).

[66] Section III.1.2.

chapters 6-7 are later interpolations.[67] He suggests that Judas Maccabees' reaction to the death of the soldiers in 2 Macc 12 betrays the unfamiliarity with resurrection in the earlier period.[68] Here, Judas takes up a collection for his fallen soldiers as a sin offering, "taking account of the resurrection" (12:43). The author of 2 Macc explains the purpose of this offering at length: "For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Therefore, he made atonement for the dead so that they might be delivered from their sin" (12:44-45). Shepkaru suggests, "Had the notion of resurrection been common during the crisis or during the writing of the episode, any believer would have found such a statement superfluous."[69] However, while the author of 2 Macc may have included this extended comment on the resurrection for didactic purposes, this does not necessarily mean that the original hearers were ignorant of resurrection. The author could be putting forward a specific aspect of resurrection (namely, that the living should make atonement for the dead), or the author could have simply been adding emphasis through repetition. Shepkaru appears to be operating with an overly simplistic account of Judaism that does not take into account the variegated strands of belief in a given time period.

　　　　None of Shepkaru's arguments give sufficient reason to consider 2 Macc 6-7 a later Christian-era interpolation. We can continue to consider these chapters as part of the whole of 2 Macc, both in literary structure and in date. Having established the date of the martyrological narratives in 2 Macc 6-7 and 4 Macc (approx. 124 B.C.E. and 19-72 C.E., respectively), we can discuss the martyrological themes and parallels to Heb 12:1-3.

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[67] I addressed resurrection in 2 Macc in chapter 4, section III.2.2 and chapter 5, section III.1.2, and I speak to postmortem life in 4 Macc below. Here we speak only to Shepkaru's claim that the presence of resurrection indicates a later date.

[68] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 28.

[69] Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs*, 28.

II.2.2. Themes in Maccabean Martyrdom and Parallels to Hebrews

The martyrological narratives in 2 and 4 Maccabees feature four themes that are particularly interesting for our study of Hebrews in general and Heb 12:1-3 in particular: (1) martyrdom as a path worthy of imitation; (2) righteous suffering as divine discipline; (3) martyrdom as representative death; and (4) the hope of reward (resurrection in 2 Macc; immortality in 4 Macc) following the martyr's death. Our subsequent study of Jesus' faithfulness in Heb 12:1-3 will demonstrate similarities with each of these themes.

II.2.2.1. Imitation

The story of the elderly scribe Eleazar appears in 2 Macc 6:18-31. The foreign powers tried to make him eat swine's flesh, but he adamantly refused, and so chose death over life. The story of Eleazar emphasizes his concern to leave a positive example in his death. Eleazar had a long acquaintance with the ones in charge of executing the command to sacrifice swine's flesh, and they offered him a compromise: he could bring his own meat, eat it in front of the king (pretending to eat swine flesh), and so preserve his life (6:21-22). Eleazar refuses this compromise because it would tarnish his enduring example: "for many of the young might suppose that Eleazaros in his ninetieth year had gone over to allophylism, and through my pretence, for the sake of living a brief moment longer, they would be led astray because of me, while I defile and disgrace my old age" (6:24-25). He hopes that by giving up his life now, he will "leave to the young a noble example of how to die a good death willingly and nobly for the revered and holy laws" (6:28). The narrator of 2 Macc concludes: "So in this way he died, leaving in his death an example of nobility and a memorial of courage, not only to the young but also to the great body of his nation" (6:31).

Like Eleazar in 2 Macc, the martyrs in 4 Macc are examples to others. Eleazar desires to be a good example by refusing to eat pork, because it would be irrational to fail in this point (6:18-19). In the midst of torture, Eleazar instructs, "O children of Abraam, die nobly for the sake of piety [ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐσεβείας]" (6:22). Eleazar remains an example to the mother and her seven sons (9:6; 16:15-17). The eldest brother wishes to be an example to his younger siblings: " 'Imitate me, brothers,' he said. 'Do

not desert your post in my struggle nor renounce the brotherhood of good courage you share with me' " (9:23). As he was dying, the youngest brother exclaims, "I will not abandon the valor of my brothers" (12:16). In 13:9, the seven brothers remembered the example of the "three youths in Assyria" (likely Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego [LXX: Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah] of Dan 3; see also 4 Macc 16:21 and 18:11-13). Antiochus admired the seven brothers' endurance, and offered their example to his soldiers (17:23-24). Reflecting back on the martyrs, the author of 4 Macc writes, "Wherefore those who, for the sake of piety, gave over their bodies to sufferings were not only admired by human beings but also deemed worthy of a divine inheritance" (18:3).

I argued in chapter 6 that the author of Hebrews points to Jesus as an exemplar when he encourages us to "consider Jesus" (12:3).[70] More specifically, I suggested that the motivation comes not in mere imitation, but in seeing the positive outcome to his story. Nevertheless, the theme of imitating Jesus is clear: we find motivation to imitate Jesus on the basis his story's conclusion. Jesus' death as exemplary in Heb 12:1-3 aligns with Maccabean martyrological imagery.

II.2.2.2. Righteous Suffering as Divine Discipline

In 2 Macc, the connection between righteous suffering and divine discipline appears first in 6:12-17, and is picked up again in the story of the mother and her seven sons.[71] In 2 Macc 6:1-11, the author mentions a number of struggles Jewish people underwent at the hands of Greek rulers. The Jewish temple was filled with debauchery (6:4), the altar was profaned by unholy offerings (6:5), and people were unable to keep the Sabbath (6:6). Those who refused to convert to Greek customs were killed. For example, two women circumcised their babies, and so the women and their babies were murdered (6:10). With this bloody backdrop, the author of 2 Macc urges his readers not to be distressed by these calamities, but to see them as punishments meant to discipline (6:12). These punishments are not meant for destruction (ὄλεθρος), but for discipline (παιδεία). The experience of such punishment is a sign of divine kindness. The Lord kindly punishes his people quickly so as to

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[70] Chapter 6, section VII.2.
[71] The theme of disciplinary suffering is absent in 4 Macc. Noted also in van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 135-40.

address sin before it reaches its peak (6:15), but he waits patiently and allows the other nations to reach the full measure of their sins before punishing them (6:13-14). 2 Macc 6:16 concludes: "Therefore he never withdraws his mercy from us. While he disciplines us with calamities, he does not forsake his own people." The stories that follow (that of Eleazar and the mother and her seven sons) are illustrations to show that God does not forsake his own people.

The theme of righteous suffering as divine discipline does not appear in the story of Eleazar, but it reappears in 2 Macc 7. The sixth son advises his torturers: "Do not deceive yourself in vain. For we are suffering these things on our own account, because of our sins against our own God" (7:18). While the torturers may appear to be the ones acting, they are merely tools in the hands of the God who disciplines his people, and will punish those who strive against him (7:19). Likewise, the seventh son understood his present suffering as temporal discipline for his sin: "For we are suffering because of our own sins. And if our living Lord is angry for a little while, to rebuke and discipline us, he will again be reconciled with his own slaves" (7:32-33). The son is clear here that he understands his discipline not as divine abandonment, but as punishment for a time, to be followed by reconciliation. Ultimately, the son hopes that his and his brothers' deaths will evoke God's mercy and he will bring an end to his wrath against their nation (7:37-38).

Heb 12:1-3 is also set in a context of suffering as divine discipline. In 12:5-11, the author of Hebrews exhorts his hearers to endure trials as God's parental discipline. God disciplines those whom he loves, and so we should not let trials discourage us, because discipline is a marker of one's identity as a child of God.[72] Jesus is not specifically in view in Heb 12:5-11 (it is the hearers who are enduring discipline), but Jesus in Heb 5:8 is the Son who "learned obedience through what he suffered (ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν)." That the Maccabean martyrological narratives are likewise framed in such a disciplinary context suggests that martyrological metaphors in Heb 12:1-3 are commensurate with the language of discipline that follows.

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[72] More on Heb 12:5-11 in chapter 9, section II.2.1.

II.2.2.3. Representative Death[73]

The martyrs of 4 Macc hope that their suffering will bring benefit to others. By their endurance, they defeat tyranny, purify the land, and vindicate the nation (1:11; 11:23-25; 17:10, 21-22; 18:4). They hope that their suffering will provoke God to be merciful to the nation (9:24; 12:17). In this there is a sense that their suffering is an experience of punishment, and that their suffering substitutes[74] for the suffering of others. Eleazar prays, "Be merciful to your people, and be satisfied with our punishment on their behalf. Make my blood their purification [καθάρσιος], and take my life in exchange for theirs" (6:28-29).[75] Like the high priest Jesus in Hebrews, the priest Eleazar is in 4 Macc the offering as well as the priest. Later, the author of 4 Macc calls the death of these martyrs a "ransom for the sin of the nation" (ἀντίψυχος, 17:21) and a "propitiatory offering" (ἱλαστήριον, 17:22).[76] DeSilva notes two results of the martyrs' deaths in 4 Macc: "God now acts favorably toward God's people to deliver them; covenant obedience among God's people is revived (17:22; 18:4)."[77]

Understanding Jesus' death in martyrological terms in Heb 12:1-3, therefore, does not conflict with reference to his atoning death elsewhere in Hebrews. As we see in the Maccabean martyrological narratives, martyrs' deaths can extend beyond themselves, affecting others. So, while the author of Hebrews elsewhere consistently describes Jesus' death using sacrificial metaphors (1:3; 2:17; 5:5; 6:19-20; 9:12, 14-15, 28; 10:10, 12, 14, 19-22, 29; 12:24; 13:12, 20), his death in Heb 12:1-3 can still be read in light of the martyrological imagery in the immediate context.

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[73] For the atoning death of the martyrs, see van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 140-63.

[74] Evans reads 4 Macc 1:11; 6:27-29; 17:21; and 18:14 as substitutionary atonement (Evans, *Ancient Texts*, 55).

[75] Therefore, Williams is incorrect when he writes, "II Maccabees does not suggest a direct cause-effect relationship between the death of the martyrs and the deliverance and purification of Israel. That work God effects through the righteous warriors, the Maccabees" (Williams, *Jesus' Death*, 82-90 here 89). 2 Macc 6:28-29 is clearly such a relationship between the martyrs' suffering and Israel's purification that Williams finds absent.

[76] On ἱλαστήριον here as "propitiatory offering," see deSilva, *4 Maccabees*, 250-52.

[77] deSilva, "Jewish Martyrology and the Death of Jesus," 55.

II.2.2.4. Hope of Postmortem Reward

Both 2 and 4 Macc hope for life after death. Resurrection (in 2 Macc) or immortality (in 4 Macc) is the expected reward for those who endure suffering.[78]

I discussed the martyrs' resurrection hope in 2 Macc in chapters 4 and 5.[79] There we found that the martyrs hope for the resurrection of their bodies, and not immortality. The resurrection for which they hope is likely a resuscitation to mortal life on earth, unlike the "better resurrection" of Heb 11:35c, which I argued is a bodily resurrection to enduring life.

4 Macc expresses a hope of postmortem deliverance, but this is not conceived in terms of bodily resurrection. 4 Macc 18:17, with the reference to Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, may allude to a hope of national resurrection, but this point is not clear. This one allusion does not give interpreters sufficient reason to see bodily resurrection as the hope in 4 Macc. The stronger expectation is one of immortality.

The author of 4 Macc, more in line with Greco-Roman understandings of the human constitution, separates body from soul, whereas 2 Macc combines σῶμα and ψυχή (as in 7:37; 14:38; and 15:30).[80] The most common hope is one of immortality for those who endure through suffering (7:3; 14:5; 15:3; 16:13, 25; 18:23). This immortality is not an embodied experience. Van Henten comments, "It is significant that those passages in 4 Maccabees which refer to the resurrection refer usually only to the resurrection of the soul (4 Macc. 18:23; cf. 10:4 and 14:5-6)."[81] Those who endured suffering stand before the divine throne and live the life of eternal blessedness (17:18) as ones sharing in a divine inheritance (18:3). This blessing awaits the martyrs, while eternal torment awaits the tyrant (9:9, 32; 10:11, 21; 11:3, 23; 12:12, 18; 18:5).[82]

As I developed in the previous chapter, Jesus' session at the right hand of God's throne (1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2) is a realization of the eschatological hope,

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[78] van Henten also sees the possibility of a corporate resurrection in 2 Macc 12:42-45: "In 2 Macc. 12:42-45, a wider group of persons seems to await resurrection, but there is no hint of a vindication directly after death in these verses. Therefore, the resurrection at the end of time may well be meant in this passage" (van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 181-82).

[79] Chapter 4, section III.2.2; chapter 5, section III.1.2.

[80] van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 129.

[81] van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 129.

[82] See also van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 172. For postmortem retribution in 2 Macc, see 2 Macc 6:26.

"the joy that was set before him" (12:2).[83] For Hebrews, Jesus realized humanity's eschatological hope when, having been raised, he sat at the right hand of God's throne. The vision of the eschatological hope in Heb 12:1-3 aligns with the Maccabean hope of life after death. Similar and yet different to 2 Macc's hope for resuscitation and 4 Macc's hope for immortality, Hebrews hopes for a resurrection into an enduring life. The martyrological imagery in all three shows a hope of life following death.

II.2.3. Conclusion

Heb 12:1-3 features both athletic and martyrological metaphors. As noted earlier in this chapter, the athletic flavor of 12:1-3 is readily apparent, as we must "run with endurance the race that is set before us (δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα)" (12:1). At the same time, the martyrological imagery must not be overlooked. Jesus is the faithful martyr who has endured sufferings and so has received the postmortem reward of exaltation. We, who are presently enduring trials as parental discipline, are to look to Jesus as the martyr-exemplar who has successfully completed the race. In the sections that follow, I discuss in more detail what it means to look to Jesus, what race he endured, and how this race is constitutive of what faith entails.

II.3. Jesus, the Ἀρχηγός and Τελειωτής of Πίστις

The author describes Jesus as the ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις, on whom we should fix our eyes. In so doing, I will argue that the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus as an athlete-martyr who has not only pioneered, but has ably completed the story of faith, and has thus assured the conclusion to this story.

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[83] Chapter 6, section VII.

II.3.1. Ἀρχηγός and Τελειωτής

Ἀρχηγός can mean "founder," "leader," or "source."[84] Ἀρχηγός appears only four times in the NT – in Acts 3:15, Acts 5:31, Heb 2:10, and Heb 12:2 – and in each case Jesus is said to be the ἀρχηγός.[85] The second descriptor, τελειωτής, recalls the language of perfection elsewhere in Hebrews. As noted in the chapter 5,[86] both Jesus (2:10; 5:9; 7:28) and humanity (7:11; 9:9; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:23) are subjects of perfection, and the law made nothing perfect (7:19).[87] Here in 12:2, Jesus is the one who perfects, and πίστις is what is perfected.

In both Heb 12:2 and 2:10, the author juxtaposes ἀρχ- and τελ- stems,[88] and this juxtaposition proves instructive. Τελειωτής appears in Heb 12:2 for only the second time in the extant Greek literature, and subsequently appears only in Christian sources. In the other place where the word appears (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Din.* 1),[89] τελειωτής is contrasted with εὑρετής (inventor), which is a near synonym to ἀρχηγός.[90] Here, Dionysius defends his failure to mention the orator Dinarchus on the ground that Dinarchus "was neither the inventor [εὑρετήν] of an individual style, as were Lysias, Isocrates and Isaeus, nor the perfecter [τελειωτήν] of styles which others

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[84] LSJ, 252; BDAG, 138-39; see also J. Julius Scott, "Archēgos in the Salvation History of the Epistle to the Hebrews," *JETS* 29, no. 1 (1986), 47-54. Johnston reads ἀρχηγός as "prince" (George Johnston, "Christ as Archegos," *NTS* 27 (1981), 381-85). For the fullest treatment of the various uses of ἀρχηγός, see Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ*, 68-113. Ἀρχηγός as "leader" is the most common meaning of the term in the LXX. For ἀρχηγός as a leader of groups of people, see: Exod 6:14; Num 10:4; 13:2, 3; 14:4; 16:2; 24:17; 25:4; 33:21; Judg 5:15; 9:44; 11:6, 11; 1 Chr 5:24; 12:21; 26:26; 2 Chr 23:14; 1 Esd 5:1; Neh 2:9; 7:71; Jdt 14:2; Isa 3:6, 7; and 30:4. For ἀρχηγός as a leader of evil or sin, see: 1 Macc 9:61 (leaders of evil [ἀρχηγῶν τῆς κακίας]) and Mic 1:13 (leader of sin [ἀρχηγὸς ἁμαρτίας]). For ἀρχηγός as "originator" or "beginner" see: 1 Macc 10:47 and Jer 3:4. Ἀρχηγός is used of mischief in Josephus, *Ant.* 7:207 and 20:136, of leaders in *Ag. Ap.* 1:71, and of Noah as the ἀρχηγός of our race in *Ag. Ap.* 1:130. Ἀρχηγός appears twice in Philo, and in both cases he is quoting the LXX. Ps.-Phoc. 1:44 speaks of gold as ἀρχηγός of evil. For ἀρχηγός with evils, see also *Sib. Or.* 2:115; 5:180, 231, 242.

[85] Jesus is the ἀρχηγὸν τῆς ζωῆς in Acts 3:15 and ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα in Acts 5:31.

[86] Section II.3.

[87] Forms of the τελ- stem appear in each case.

[88] In 2:10, Jesus is the ἀρχηγός of humanity's salvation who was perfected (τελειῶσαι) through suffering. I discussed this passage in more detail in chapter 5 (section II.3.3.1), where I argued that Jesus' perfection in this case is a realization of the eschatological hope.

[89] This parallel was first noted by N. Clayton Croy, "A Note on Hebrews 12:2," *JBL* 114, no. 1 (1995), 117-19 (see also Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 175-76) and subsequently acknowledged by deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 432 n 124 and Koester, *Hebrews*, 523.

[90] Croy notes that a contemporary of Dionysius speaks of Zeus and Hera as "the originators (ἀρχηγοί) and inventors (εὑρεταί) of all things," which helps support Croy's suggestion that "Hebrews' antithesis of ἀρχηγός/τελειωτής differs only slightly from Dionysius's antithesis of εὑρετής/τελειωτής" (Croy, "Note," 118).

had invented, as [he judges] Demosthenes, Aeschines and Hyperides to have been."[91]
Where Hebrews is unique, as Croy rightly notes, is in attributing to Jesus the roles of
both ἀρχηγός *and* τελειωτής, whereas Dionysius allows a person only one such role.[92]
In Hebrews, the two words must be read together and interpreted in such a way as to
account for their juxtaposition.

Based on the juxtaposition of ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής, Croy concludes that
Jesus in Heb 12:2 "is both the originator *and* consummator of faith. He is the
'prototype,' but not one to be transcended by subsequent improvements, for he is also
faith's paragon."[93] Similarly, Attridge also makes much of the juxtaposition of ἀρχ-
and τελ- stems, and sees in ἀρχηγός a connotation of "founder" or "initiator."[94] The
largest challenge to reading ἀρχηγός as "founder" is the question of how Jesus can be
the originator of faith, given the heroes of faith in Heb 11. As evidenced by the list of
heroes of faith in the previous chapter, the author of Hebrews clearly thinks faith is
possible before Jesus' coming in 4 BCE. How, then, can Jesus be the "founder" of
faith? Attridge finds two senses in which Jesus is the initiator of faith: as the "specific
source of the faith of the addressees" and as "the first person to have obtained faith's
ultimate goal, the inheritance of divine promise, which the ancients only saw from
afar."[95] The author of Hebrews, however, never attributes faith to us with the use of a
possessive pronoun (i.e. τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν) such that is "the faith of the addressees,"
as Attridge so describes it. Instead, τῆς πίστεως remains unmodified by a possessive
pronoun, and so need not be "our faith" (more on this below).[96] Furthermore,
describing Jesus as "the first person to have obtained faith's ultimate goal" fits more
properly with an idea of Jesus as "perfecter" (as in τελειωτής) of faith rather than with
"initiator."'Αρχηγός as "founder" or "initiator," while a valid construal especially in
light of its juxtaposition with τελειωτής, does not adequately account for the clear
presence of faith prior to the incarnation of Christ.

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[91] Usher, LCL.
[92] Croy, "Note," 119.
[93] Croy, "Note," 119 (italics his).
[94] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 356; see also ESV ("founder") and NASB and NIV ("author"). Koester reads
12:2 in one place as "the founder and finisher of faith," and later as "pioneer and perfecter" (Koester,
Hebrews, 229, 521).
[95] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 256.
[96] Noted also in Hamm, "Faith," 280.

Another possible interpretation of ἀρχηγός is that advocated by Lane: "the champion in the exercise of faith."[97] The athletic imagery in the passage supports this reading. Lane also finds similar athletic imagery with the other occurrence of ἀρχηγός in 2:10-16 (as a cosmic struggle with the devil).[98] However, this translation does little to account for the juxtaposition of ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής.[99] If we should understand these two words alongside one another, as Croy aptly demonstrated, then ἀρχηγός as "champion" finds no clear association with τελειωτής. Lane, too, notes this juxtaposition, and so also wants to allow for a nuance of Jesus as initiator and completer: "Jesus is the initiator and head of the rank and file in the order of faith, just as he is the one who brought faith to its ultimate expression."[100] Lane here also introduces the possibility of Jesus as ἀρχηγός as "head of the rank and file," which would fall under the connotation of "leader," as ἀρχηγός is commonly used in the LXX. Lane, therefore, wishes to see at least three connotations in ἀρχηγός: champion, initiator, and leader.

The strongest option worth considering is that of ἀρχηγός as "pioneer."[101] This reading of ἀρχηγός has much in its favor, and is to be preferred for four reasons. First, this translation does well to honor the shades of meaning in ἀρχηγός as "beginner" and "leader."[102] Jesus is not just a leader, but the leader who has blazed a new trail. Second, this translation also honors the juxtaposition of ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής. "Pioneer" along with "perfecter" allows Jesus to be the first leader who has successfully carried "faith to its goal, going where others have not yet gone."[103] Third, "pioneer" is commensurate with depictions of Jesus elsewhere in Hebrews. Jesus is "a forerunner (πρόδρομος) on our behalf" (6:20) who has opened for us "a

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[97] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 397.

[98] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 411.

[99] Lane translates τῆς πίστεως ... τελειωτὴν in this context as "the one who brought faith to complete expression" (Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 397).

[100] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 411.

[101] As translated by Bruce, *Hebrews*, 337-38; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 425, 431-32; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 639; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 312-13; Koester, *Hebrews*, 521; Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ, passim.*, esp. 309; NRSV; NET; RSV; see also NJB ("who leads us in our faith").

[102] As noted by Koester, *Hebrews*, 228.

[103] Koester, *Hebrews*, 523.

new and living way" (10:20).[104] He is not the first high priest, but the high priest who has successfully secured the means by which human consciences can be cleansed.

Finally, ἀρχηγός as "pioneer" aligns nicely with the use of the word in the Kadesh-barnea account in Numbers.[105] In chapter 3 we covered Heb 3-4, and I demonstrated how the narrative of the Israelites camped at Kadesh-barnea plays large in the author of Hebrews' exhortation to "enter the rest."[106] In the account in Numbers, the Lord tells Moses to choose a leader from every tribe to spy out Canaan. Each Israelite spy going out from Kadesh-barnea into Canaan was an "ἀρχηγὸν ἐξ αὐτῶν" (Num 13:2), numbered among the "ἀρχηγοὶ υἱῶν Ισραηλ" (13:3). Based on the report of ten of the ἀρχηγοί who were fearful, the wilderness generation opted to disobey God's command and so refused to enter the land (as lamented in Heb 3:19). These ten ἀρχηγοί, therefore, are not pioneers of faith, but ἀρχηγοί characterized by disobedient unbelief (3:18-19). At the same time, the Kadesh account also includes an example of fidelity.[107] In Numbers, Ἰησοῦς (here, Joshua) is also (along with Caleb) an ἀρχηγός, but one who wished to enter the Promised Land as God had commanded. Joshua in Numbers, we may say, is an ἀρχηγός of faith. He trusted God to bring them into the land, if God so willed (Num 14:8). This ἀρχηγός, however, proved unsuccessful, as he was outvoted. Ἰησοῦς, Joshua, failed to give the Israelites rest at this point in time; and when he finally did bring them into the Promised Land, they still did not experience God's rest (Heb 4:8). The Ἰησοῦς in Numbers, therefore, is an ἀρχηγός, but not a τελειωτής. Jesus, however, is the ἀρχηγός of faith who, as the τελειωτής as well as the ἀρχηγός, successfully pioneered the journey into God's rest. This ἀρχηγός *and* τελειωτής "has passed through the heavens" (4:14) and "has sat

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[104] See also Grässer: "Πρόδρομος ist sandlich identisch mit ἀρχηγός 2, 10 und τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸς καὶ τελειωτής 12,2" (Grässer, *Glaube*, 34). So too Söding: "Sie liegt auf einer Linie mit anderen christologischen Würdenamen und soteriologischen Funktionsbezeichnungen. Hebr 12,2 erinnert vor allem an 2.10. Nach diesem Vers ist Jesus für die Menschen der von Gott durch das Leiden vollendete ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν: derjenige, der sie auf dem Weg in die Herrlichkeit Gottes anführt. Wichtig sind aber auch 5.9 und 6,20. Beide Verse kennzeichnen das Hohepriestertum Jesu, nach dem ersten ist er *Urheber* (αἴτιος) des ewigen Heiles (5.9 f.), nach 6,20 *Vorläufer* (πρόδρομος) auf dem Weg hinter den Vorhang (des Tempels), d. h. vor das Angesicht Gottes. Ähnlich ist 12.2 zu interpretieren" (Söding, "Zuversicht," 231).

[105] See also Thiessen, "Exodus," 366-67 and Matthew Thiessen, "Hebrews 12.5-13, the Wilderness Period, and Israel's Discipline," *NTS* 55 (2009), 378 n 46.

[106] Section III.3.1.

[107] Whitfield, "Pioneer and Perfecter," 82-83.

down at the right hand of the throne of God" (12:2), and so is therefore the one on whom we should fix our eyes (12:2).

This account of ἀρχηγός aligns with our suggestion above that ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής must not be read separately from one another. The author's point is not that Jesus is ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής only, but that he is ἀρχηγός *and* τελειωτής at the same time. He is the pioneer who successfully completed the journey for the first time.

Having established this understanding of ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής, we turn now to how Jesus can be the pioneer and perfecter of *faith*.

II.3.2. Τῆς Πίστεως

Τῆς πίστεως in Heb 12:2 can be read in three ways, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. First, τῆς πίστεως can be translated possessively as "our faith."[108] The author of Hebrews does not include a possessive pronoun, and a possessive pronoun does not appear at this place in the manuscript tradition. Nevertheless, since in some cases possession can be inferred from the presence of the article[109] alone, "our faith" is not a grammatically impossible translation.[110] Πίστις is usually anarthrous in Hebrews, appearing with the article only in 4:2, 11:39, 12:2, and 13:7. Ellingworth, although he emphasizes that "no stress can be laid on the use of the article as such," takes the presence of the article in 4:2, 12:2, and 13:7 (he makes no mention of 11:39) as referring to "the faith of specified groups."[111] In 12:2, this would include the faith of the hearers, the author, and "a less direct reference to the faith of the OT believers discussed in chap. 11."[112]

As a second option, τῆς πίστεως may be understood as "the faith," in the sense of a creedal confession, where "the faith" refers to a set of beliefs common to the

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[108] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 640; NRSV; ESV; NET; NIV; NJB; RSV; KJV.

[109] I use "article" rather than "definite article" at the direction of grammarians. For example, Porter suggests: "The Greek article is best not called the 'definite article', since this implies a non-existent indefinite article. Once a Greek speaker or writer chose to use the article, there was not a choice whether an indefinite or definite one would be used. Therefore, the presence or absence of an article does not make a substantive definite or indefinite" (Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: JSOT, 1994), 103). See also Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 209.

[110] On the article functioning as a possessive pronoun, see Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 215-16.

[111] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 640.

[112] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 640.

author and hearers.[113] The strongest evidence for this possibility comes with the
introductory relative pronoun ὅς, which leads into a succinct recollection of Jesus'
obedience to the point of death on the cross.[114] The parallels to the Christ-hymn of
Phil 2:6-11 (which is also introduced with ὅς) are striking.[115]

   Finally, τῆς πίστεως may be read simply as "faith," in the sense that Jesus is
the pioneer and perfecter of "faith" itself.[116] This translation is valid, since in Greek
"No vital difference was felt between articular and anarthrous abstract nouns."[117]
This third possible reading also takes on the best aspects of the first two options. The
first option does well to highlight the quality of faith as something that the author
invites us to participate in. The author is clear in 12:3-4 that he wants his hearers to
live differently in light of what they see in Jesus, and this is most clearly expressed in
living by faith. For those who are faithful, πίστις is "our faith." Where reading τῆς
πίστεως as "our faith" proves inadequate, though, is that it limits the work of Christ as
the ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις to only the faith of the author and his hearers.
Ellingworth sees this issue and so wishes to include the faith of those in Heb 11 with
"our faith," but the translation of simply "faith" removes any ambiguity in this regard.
Further, reading τῆς πίστεως as "our faith" must take the Greek article as possessive,
which is not necessary. Wallace notes that the article is used possessively "in
contexts in which the idea of possession is obvious, especially when human anatomy
is involved."[118] Possession in Heb 12:2, while a possibility, is not so necessary as to
call the possibility obvious. Another viable reading of the article with the noun exists,
namely that of Jesus pioneering and perfecting "faith" itself.[119]

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[113] Rhee sees in 12:2b "a creedal statement in the form of a hymn" (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 231).
Horning lists without further defense ten criteria suggesting a creedal form to 12:2, none of which are
particularly convincing (Estella B. Horning, "Chiasmus, Creedal Structure, and Christology in Hebrews
12:1-2," *BR* 23 (1978), 40). For a response to Horning, see Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 191-92.

[114] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 641; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 412-13. This is also the only place in Hebrews
where the author mentions the "cross" explicitly as the means of Jesus' death, although this point is
clearly assumed elsewhere in the book (see especially 6:6, where apostates are said to be crucifying
again the Son of God).

[115] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 641; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 412-13; Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 261.

[116] For τῆς πίστεως as simply "faith," see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 353; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 337; deSilva,
Perseverance in Gratitude, 425; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 313; Koester, *Hebrews*, 521; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*,
399 note k; and Westcott, *Hebrews*, 395.

[117] Robertson, *Grammar*, 794.

[118] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 215.

[119] So also Grässer: "Auch Hb 12,2 heißt es gerade nicht Anführer und Vollender eures bzw. unseres
Glaubens, sondern einfach nur des Glaubens" (Grässer, *Glaube*, 78; see also 58).

Reading τῆς πίστεως as "faith" also takes on the best of the second interpretive option. The second option, which sees in τῆς πίστεως an early creedal confession, does well to locate the story of Jesus in the notion of his being τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν. It is quite likely that the author of Hebrews shared with other early Christians the basic story of Jesus,[120] and Heb 12:2b may be a summary of such a story. However, to extract from this likelihood that πίστις in this case refers to a creedal confession of Jesus may unduly limit the possible meaning in the term. Indeed, of all of the occurrences of πίστις in Hebrews (even when it appears with the article), this is the only place where πίστις may possibly refer to a creedal confession of Jesus. Nevertheless, that πίστις involves the story of Jesus (as narrated in 12:2b) remains a solid suggestion. Translating τῆς πίστεως simply as "faith" takes this into account without precluding the possibility that πίστις may point to a concept beyond a summary of this story of Jesus.

Translating τῆς πίστεως as "faith," therefore, adopts the best parts of the first two interpretive options while avoiding their shortfalls. The nature of what it means for Jesus to be the pioneer and perfecter of faith is evident in the latter half of Heb 12:2. Here the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus as one who obediently endured death. As the pioneer and perfecter of faith, Jesus' story becomes the paradigmatic expectation of what faith entails: endurance in the face of death.

II.4. Faith and Endurance to Death

As noted earlier in our treatment of Heb 12:1-3 (II.1.2.3.), the third assumption we noticed in Croy's thesis is that the author of Hebrews wishes to highlight Jesus' endurance of the suffering of shame rather than his endurance of death. Croy is clear on this point:

> As the agonistic exemplar who culminates (and makes possible) all previous exemplars, Jesus serves as the supreme model of endurance, scorning a shameful cross and finally assuming the victor's position at the right hand of God. The paradigm displayed to the readers of the epistle is, then, not one who has forgone joy and suffered a martyr's death, but a contestant who has

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[120] So Miller: "One of the remarkable similarities between [Paul and the author of Hebrews] concerns the story of Jesus" (Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 261).

faithfully endured an agon similar to that of the readers and has completed the race.[121]

Croy lists Jesus' endurance of shame and hostility among what he finds to be differentiating marks between Heb 12:1-3 and martyrological traditions: "His endurance of shame and hostility, not so much the agony of his physical torments and death, is the author's concern."[122] However, contrary to Croy, we will see that endurance is precisely endurance to death.

"Endurance" (ὑπομονή) appears three times in 12:1-3. In 12:1, the author encourages us to run with endurance (δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν) the race set before us. Since "running the race" resides in the realm of metaphor and since it is not clear in itself as to what it references, we look elsewhere for meaning. The meaning of the other two uses of endurance is clearer: Jesus "endures the cross" (ὑπέμεινεν σταυρὸν) in 12:2 and "endures hostility" (ὑπομεμενηκότα … ἀντιλογίαν) in 12:3. In both cases, contrary to Croy, the endurance is one of enduring persecution at best or death at worst.

The author of Hebrews uses the unique language of Jesus "enduring the cross" (ὑπέμεινεν σταυρὸν, 12:2). This phrase appears only here as a description of Jesus' crucifixion, and Jesus' death is clearly in view. In so describing the death of Jesus, the author gives Jesus the active role of endurance rather than the passive role of being crucified.[123] As Koester explains, "To say that Jesus 'endured' the cross suggests not only that he experienced it, but that he bore it faithfully rather than

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[121] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 192.

[122] Croy lists the differences: "Jesus is not adduced as an example of courageous defiance, righteous opposition in the face of pagan oppression, nor (as I will argue) self-renunciation. He is the champion of enduring faith. His endurance of shame and hostility, not so much the agony of his physical torments and death, is the author's concern. There is none of the exquisite detail of torture and dramatic defiance of pagan authority found in the martyrologies" (Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 39-40). However, as noted above, Heb 12:1-3 includes many martyrological images, many of which overlap with agonistic images, and many of which parallel the Maccabean martyrologies. As such, there appears to be a martyrological influence in 12:1-3, even if such an influence does not include everything common to other martyrological traditions.

[123] For example, the language of Jesus "enduring the cross" would be tantamount to someone today saying, "The death row inmate *endured* the lethal injection needle." We typically speak passively with respect to execution, "The death row inmate *was excuted by means of* the lethal injection needle." Similarly, Jesus elsewhere in the NT is "crucified" and does not "endure crucifixion."

allowing the ordeal to turn him away from obedience."[124] Jesus' endurance is tied explicitly with his obedience to death. That the author subsequently describes Jesus' endurance of the cross as "disregarding the shame" does not lessen the fact that Jesus' primary object of endurance was that of crucifixion. Therefore, to differentiate between Jesus' endurance of shame and hostility and his agony of death, as we saw in Croy above,[125] is to introduce an unnecessary dichotomy. The author of Hebrews appears to be perfectly comfortable with thinking of Jesus enduring the cross while disregarding the shame associated with such an ignominious death.

In 12:3, the author describes Jesus as "enduring such hostility from sinners against themselves." Here also the author has in mind Jesus' endurance of a death amid persecution. This is evidenced by two points. First, the author modifies "hostility" (ἀντιλογίαν) with "such a kind" (τοιαύτην), which I have translated as "such hostility." The adjective τοιοῦτος "pert[ains] to being like some pers[on] or thing mentioned in a context,"[126] and so looks for contextual clues to clarify what "such" means. This likely refers back to Jesus' endurance of the cross while disregarding the shame in 12:2, which is the nearest expression of hostility in the context. Jesus' endurance of death is clearly in view in 12:2, and so Jesus' endurance of such hostility in 12:3 recollects Jesus' endurance of his death amid persecution. Secondly, this point is evidenced by similar language in Heb 6:6. In 6:6, the author describes apostates as "crucifying to themselves (ἑαυτοῖς) once again the Son of God and putting him to shame," and in 12:3 sinners mistreating Jesus experience hostility against themselves.[127] Furthermore, Jesus' death is associated with crucifixion in Hebrews only in 6:6 and 12:2. In both 6:6 and 12:2-3, those crucifying Jesus do so to their own harm. "Such hostility" in 12:3, therefore, should be read as Jesus' endurance of the persecution leading to death.

Having established the meaning of the last two occurrences of "endurance" in 12:1-3, we are prepared to address "endurance" in 12:1. Here the author uses the

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[124] Koester, *Hebrews*, 536. See also Lane, who notes that the author of Hebrews uses the language of ὑπέμεινεν σταυρόν "to emphasize that Jesus demonstrated the endurance of faith to which Christians are called" (Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 414).

[125] As noted, Croy suggests: "His endurance of shame and hostility, not so much the agony of his physical torments and death, is the author's concern" (Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 40).

[126] BDAG, 1009.

[127] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 416.

same language of endurance to describe our running of the race (ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν). By using the same language for our endurance and Jesus' endurance, we see a verbal parallel that works in two directions. First, since Jesus is described as having "endured" (12:2-3), and the race is something to be endured (12:1), the author depicts Jesus as having run the race. This connection is strengthened by the author's exhortation that the runners look to Jesus. In looking to Jesus, we see the one who has already completed the race, has received his reward, and is now waiting at the finish line for those who would join him. Secondly, the recurrence of the endurance theme suggests that the race we are presently running is a race in the face of death. Like Jesus, the race we are to endure is a race of persecution that may in fact involve death.[128] The author of Hebrews is clear, though, that the death of Jesus is not the end of the story: he still had "the joy set before him" (12:2), a conclusion which should motivate we who stand at the brink of death (12:3-4).[129]

II.5. Conclusion

What, then, does Heb 12:1-3 say about the faithfulness of Jesus? In short: faith as we see it in Jesus is one of enduring suffering even to the point of death.

We found that Heb 12:1-3 operates with both athletic and martyrological metaphors, so that we are depicted as athletes competing in a race that may well entail endurance unto death. This is a race that has already been run by Jesus. As the "pioneer and perfecter of faith," Jesus pioneered the path of faith in the face of death, and was the first one to complete successfully the journey by realizing eschatological life beyond death. Jesus' faithfulness involved enduring in the face of death and concluded in eschatological life (being "seated at the right hand of the throne of God").

Prior to the coming of Christ, the faithful ones died without receiving the promise (11:39), but the faithful Jesus has perfected faith and thus made it possible

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[128] Marohl rightly notes, "the author's use of race imagery places the witnesses, the addressees, and Jesus into the *same* story," but he fails to discuss the nature of this story (Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 145, italics his).

[129] I developed this point in more detail in chapter 6, section VII.2.

for us to enjoy postmortem perfection (11:40).[130] Jesus is not the object of faith in Heb 12:1-3.[131] Instead, Jesus is the one who has pioneered and assured the conclusion to faith itself, and in so doing invites others to share in the same faith and the same blessed conclusion. Humans find their motivation to endure faithfully in the realization that faith ends in life despite death, as the story of Jesus so illustrated.

III. HEBREWS 2:13: THE BROTHER WHO TRUSTS GOD THROUGH SUFFERING

In the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that instances of Jesus' faithfulness need not be limited to places where the author of Hebrews uses a πιστ-word with respect to Jesus. Methodologically, we started with the place where the author clearly uses πίστις of Jesus to get a grasp of how the author conceives of the faithfulness of Christ. With that conceptual framework now in place, we can identify two other places in Hebrews where the author depicts the faithfulness of Christ: 2:13 and 5:7-9.[132] In both cases, we see Jesus exercise faith in the face of death, just as he did in Heb 12:1-3.

This section addresses Heb 2:13, and the next investigates Heb 5:7-9. After discussing these two passages we will be prepared to offer a summary of the faithfulness of Christ in Hebrews and the implications of Jesus' faithfulness for the understanding of faith.

III.1. God as Object of Trust[133]

In Heb 2:13, the author puts Isa 8:17 on the lips of Jesus directed to God: "I will put my trust in him" (ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποιθὼς ἐπ' αὐτῷ).[134] DeSilva suggests that

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[130] See also Heliso: "Jesus' πίστις is superior to that of the biblical characters outlined in chapter 11, because it results in resurrection life" (Desta Heliso, *Pistis and the Righteous One*, WUNT 2/238 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 67).

[131] More on this in chapter 9, section II.3.

[132] Another possible instance of Jesus' faithfulness in Hebrews may appear in 10:5-7 (quoting Ps 39:7-8 LXX): "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in whole burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come, as it has been written of me in the scroll of the book, to do your will, O God.' " As I noted in chapter 6, section I.1, these verses emphasize Jesus' offering of a human body for humanity's sanctification. Jesus clearly demonstrates willful obedience when he says, "Behold, I have come to do your will (10:7), but we cannot speak to Jesus' faithfulness with as much certainty as we can in 2:13 and 5:7-9.

[133] I use "trust" rather than my typical translation of "faith" in this section to signal that the key word in 2:13 is πείθω and not a πιστ- word.

Jesus in 2:13 confesses trust not in God, but in human beings, his brothers and sisters: "this verse is now being offered as proof that Christ is not ashamed to associate himself closely with those whom he receives into his protection (2:11). I would suggest, therefore, that the author would have the believer see himself or herself as the object of Jesus' declared trust."[135] This suggestion, however, is unlikely. In 2:13, Jesus confesses trust in the singular αὐτῷ. Throughout the context in Heb 2:10-18, the author of Hebrews speaks of human beings in the plural (πολλοὺς υἱοὺς in 2:10; οἱ ἁγιαζόμενοι and ἀδελφοὺς in 2:11; ἀδελφοῖς in 2:12; παιδία in 2:14; τούτους in 2:15; ἀδελφοῖς in 2:17; and τοῖς πειραζομένοις in 2:18). God is the only singular figure in the context (αὐτῷ in 2:10; ὅ … ἁγιάζων in 2:11; and σε in 2:12). The author uses the singular with reference to humans only in 2:16, where they are described as σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ. Nevertheless, this likely carries a plural sense, as the NRSV translates it: "descendants of Abraham." Therefore, when Jesus confesses trust ἐπ' αὐτῷ in 2:13, this likely refers to the singular figure in the context: God.

Jesus' confession of trust in God comes within the discussion of his camaraderie with humanity (as I addressed in chapter 6).[136] Jesus, who is later called the pioneer and perfecter of faith in 12:2, is here put forward as the child of God who directs his trust toward God. As such, Jesus' confession of trust is "an allusion to that which above all is or ought to be the characteristic of all God's children, their faithful reliance upon God."[137] Jesus, who shared in blood and flesh with his human siblings (2:14), exhibits the trust that all humans should embody.

III.2. Trust in the Face of Death

Jesus' confession of trust in Heb 2:13 is one of trust amidst suffering. I argued above that Jesus is depicted in martyrological terms in Heb 12:1-3. Similarly, Jesus' "trust in God (πεποιθὼς ἐπ' αὐτῷ)" in Heb 2:13 may echo the Maccabean martyrs who "trust in the Lord (ἐπὶ τῷ κυρίῳ πεποιθώς)" (2 Macc 7:40).

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[134] This phrase appears in 2 Sam 22:3, Isa 8:17, and Isa 12:2. Given that the latter half of Heb 2:13 ("behold, I and the children God has given me") is from Isa 8:18, the author is most likely quoting Isa 8:17 with ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποιθὼς ἐπ' αὐτῷ. See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 90.

[135] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 116.

[136] Section II.

[137] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 91. See also Johnson, *Hebrews*, 99; Koester, *Hebrews*, 239; and Still, "Christos as Pistos," 748.

The context in Heb 2 is inundated with references to suffering. Jesus, who for a short time was made lower than the angels, received the crown of glory and honor on account of his *suffering of death* (τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου), whereby he tasted death (γεύσηται θανάτου) for everyone (2:9). God made Jesus perfect through sufferings (διὰ παθημάτων) (2:10). Jesus became like his human siblings in every way so that "through death (διὰ τοῦ θανάτου) he might destroy the one who has the power of death" (2:14), thereby freeing humanity from their slavery to the fear of death (φόβῳ θανάτου) (2:15). Jesus made atonement for the sins of the people (2:17) (which clearly implies his death, as in 9:12-15; 10:10, 19; 13:12), and on account of his testing in suffering (πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθείς), he can offer help to those being tested (2:18). Jesus' trust in 2:13, therefore, is a trust in the midst of suffering.

There is hope associated with Jesus' confession of trust while suffering. In Heb 2:12, the author puts the words of Ps 21:23 LXX on the lips of Jesus: "I will announce your name among my brothers and sisters; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you." Psalm 21 LXX is plea for help in a time of suffering.[138] Jesus' cry of dereliction in Matt 27:46 and Mark 15:34 alludes to Ps 21:2: "ὁ θεός μου ὁ θεός μου, εἰς τί ἐγκατέλιπές με" (Mark 15:34); "ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεός μου πρόσχες μοι ἵνα τί ἐγκατέλιπές με" (Ps 21:2). The psalmist laments his feelings of abandonment (2-3) and his ill treatment from others (7-19). In images repeated in the passion traditions in the Gospels, the psalmist is poured out like water (Ps 21:15; John 19:34), experiences extreme thirst (Ps 21:16; John 19:28), and others cast lots for his clothing (Ps 21:19; Matt 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:24). In Ps 21:21-22 (the verses immediately prior to the verse quoted in Hebrews), the psalmist begs: "Rescue my soul from the sword, and from a dog's claw my only life! Save me from a lion's mouth, and my lowliness from the horns of unicorns" (NETS). Verse 23, with the promise to "tell of your name to my kindred" is a shift in the psalm, as the psalmist moves from lament and pleas for help to jubilant confidence. The psalmist exhorts everyone to praise the Lord because he has heard the petition of the poor (24-27). As Lane notes, this latter half of the psalm "is appropriate to an experience of vindication

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[138] So Goldingay on Ps 22 MT: "The Psalter presents it as a model for the prayer of ordinary Israelites or Christians when they experience affliction" (Goldingay, *Psalms; Volume 1: Psalms 1-41*, 340).

and exaltation after suffering and affliction."[139] Having endured suffering (as noted in the contexts of both Heb 2:12 and Ps 21, quoted in Heb 2:12), Jesus now rejoices in vindication.[140] Craigie's messianic reading of the ending of Ps 21 would apply here:

> The psalm concludes with praise because the sufferer escaped death; Jesus died. Yet the latter half of the psalm (vv 22-32) may also be read from a messianic perspective. The transition at v 22 is now understood not in deliverance *from* death, as was the case for the psalmist, but in deliverance *through* death, achieved in the resurrection. And it is that deliverance which is the ground for praise.[141]

III.3. Conclusion

Jesus' confession of trust in Heb 2:13, therefore, is a faith in the face of suffering that realizes reward following the suffering. Given the discussion of Jesus' camaraderie with humanity in Heb 2, Lane is correct: "The fact that Jesus' confidence was fully vindicated after he had experienced suffering and affliction assured them that they could also trust God in difficult circumstances."[142] This vision of faith in the face of death aligns with the depiction of Jesus in 12:1-3, where he pioneers faith in the face of death, and perfects faith by realizing life despite this death.

IV. HEBREWS 5:7-9: THE FAITHFUL RIGHTEOUS SUFFERER

The faithfulness of Jesus is also in view in Heb 5:7-9. In the previous chapter I discussed Heb 5:7-9 as a key text in which the resurrection of Jesus is likely in view.[143] Jesus, who offered prayers and supplications to the one able to save him out of death (τὸν δυνάμενον σῴζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου), was heard: he was saved out of death by being resurrected. In this section, we are concerned with the depiction of Jesus in 5:7-9. In the other passages we have covered so far in this chapter (Heb 12:1-3 and 2:13), we have found that Jesus exercises faith in the face of death, and his subsequent resurrection is interlaced so tightly with his faith as to say that resurrection is the assured conclusion to the story of faith. Heb 5:7-9 shows the same pattern. Here, I will argue, the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus in the vein of a suffering righteous person who in a time of distress directs his fervent prayers to the God who

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[139] Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 59.
[140] See also Guthrie, "Hebrews, OT in NT," 949.
[141] Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, WBC 19 (Waco: Word Books, 1983), 203 (italics his).
[142] Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 60. See also Lane, "Living a Life of Faith," 263.
[143] Chapter 6, section V.

can deliver him. Although the author of Hebrews does not use a πιστ- word to describe Jesus in 5:7-9, we will see that he depicts Jesus as one exercising faith in the face of death.

The author of Hebrews insists that Jesus was heard ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας (5:7). This phrase presents two related exegetical questions: what is the meaning of εὐλάβεια, and what is the function of ἀπό? Εὐλάβεια can mean (a) "fear" or "caution," or can connote (b) "piety," "reverence," or "godly fear."[144] Ἀπό can signal (1) separation ("away from") or (2) causation ("because of"). The most logical pairings are "Jesus was heard [and so saved] away from his fear" (a, 1) or "Jesus was heard because of his reverence" (b, 2).[145] Our decision on these two issues impacts our view of Jesus in Heb 5:7-9: does he exemplify being saved from fear or does he exemplify faith in the face of suffering?

IV.1. Εὐλάβεια as Fear (of Death)

At first glance, it appears that Jesus may not be exemplifying *faith* in the face of death, but rather *fear* in the face of death. Cullmann, for example, writes:

> I do not understand why some translators choose to translate the phrase εἰσακουσθεὶς ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας 'He was heard for his godly fear (reverence),' when it can just as accurately be translated, 'He was heard in his fear (anxiety).' The whole context forces upon one the sense of ordinary human fear as the meaning of εὐλάβεια. This is just what the *temptation* is. The ἀσθένεια of Jesus shows itself precisely in the fact that he was afraid, that he had the ordinary human fear of death! And he was heard because he conquered his fear when he prayed, 'not my will …'.[146]

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[144] LSJ, 720.

[145] The other two possibilities ("Jesus was heard [and so saved] away from his reverence" [b, 1], and "Jesus was heard because of his fear" [a, 2]) can both be disregarded based on the improbability that the author of Hebrews would diminish the import of reverence or praise fear. The author of Hebrews nowhere portrays fear positively, but as something to be avoided (2:15; 4:1; 11:23, 27; 13:6). Indeed, the absence of fear is to be desired: Moses and his parents are praised for not being afraid of the king's edict (11:23, 27); and based on the promise of divine presence, we can say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear" (13:5-6). Only in Heb 4:1 does the author commend fear, but here he does so as a warning: "let us fear lest any of you might be deemed to have fallen short." The author of Hebrews expects timidity to lead only to destruction (10:37-39), and he depicts God as one from whom there is no escape (10:26-31; 12:25). It is highly unlikely that the author would say in Heb 5:7 that God delivered Jesus because of his fear.

[146] Cullmann, *Christology*, 96 (italics his).

Similarly, Montefiore suggests, "The nature of Jesus' prayer underlines his natural human fear of death: 'Take this cup from me' (Mark xiv. 36)."[147] Montefiore understands Jesus' prayer as one not to be "brought by safe conduct through death into a new life," but for "escape from imminent death."[148] God heard Jesus' prayer by delivering him from the fear of death, so that Jesus could undergo the suffering of the cross.[149] Montefiore connects this reading of Heb 5:7 to Heb 2:15: "If Jesus was to release those who through fear of death had been in lifelong servitude (ii. 15), he himself had to be triumphant over his own fear of death."[150]

Andriessen and Lenglet offer a reading similar to this first option, but in a nuanced form. Andriessen and Lenglet read ἀπό temporally, so that Jesus was heard after (ἀπό) his fear: " 'Il fut exaucé depuis la crainte', c.à.d. après avoir traverse la crainte."[151] This fear is not ordinary human fear, but fear of the particular sacrificial death Jesus must experience:

> Chez lui, il ne s'agit pas tant de l'anxiété commune face à la mort, comme c'est le cas en 2,15 (φόβος θανάτου), don't 5,7 constitue comme le pendant. Le Christ est effrayé par la sentence de mort que son Père a pronouncée au suject de lui et qu'il doit subir pour toute une humanité pécheresse.[152]

Andriessen and Lenglet's reading is similar to the first option in that they read εὐλάβεια as fear, and it is different from the second option ("heard because of reverence") in that they do not read ἀπό as a causative.

The first reading ("Jesus was heard [and saved] away from his fear"), as well as Andriessen and Lenglet's variation of this reading, is unlikely for two reasons. First, Jesus is nowhere else in Hebrews depicted as one exhibiting fear. As we have seen particularly in Heb 12:1-3 and 2:13 in this chapter, Jesus exemplifies faith in the face of death, not fear. Although Montefiore recalls examples from the Gospel accounts, he can offer no such example of Jesus demonstrating fear of death within

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[147] Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 98.

[148] Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 98.

[149] So also Jean Héring, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, trans. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock (London: Epworth, 1970), 40.

[150] Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 99. See also Ebrard: "He prayed to be preserved from the death which threatened him, and he was *heard* and saved from the fear of death" (Ebrard, *Hebrews*, 186, italics his).

[151] Andriessen and Lenglet, "Quelques passages," 210. They give the example of Heb 11:34, where the heroes are made strong through weakness (ἐδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας).

[152] Andriessen and Lenglet, "Quelques passages," 211. Calvin offers a similar reading, wherein Jesus feared the "curse of God" associated with his sacrificial death (Calvin, *Hebrews*, 65).

Hebrews. Instead, Jesus in Hebrews is one who experienced the same temptations as humanity (2:18; 4:15), not succumbing to these temptations (4:15), but freeing human beings from fear (2:15).

Second, it is unlikely that the author of Hebrews means simply "fear" with εὐλάβεια. The words the author of Hebrews uses for fear elsewhere are φόβος or φοβέομαι (2:15; 4:1; 11:23, 27; 13:6), and the author never recommends this type of fear to his hearers except as warning (4:1). Εὐλάβεια, on the other hand, is the attitude with which we should worship God (12:28). Noah is commended as one who "in εὐλάβεια prepared an ark (εὐλαβηθεὶς κατεσκεύασεν κιβωτὸν)" (11:7), and like Jesus, Noah's εὐλάβεια resulted in the salvation of his household (εἰς σωτηρίαν τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ; compare αἴτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου in Heb 5:9).[153] While εὐλάβεια appears in the NT only in Hebrews, the adjective εὐλαβής in the NT is used only in a positive light (Luke 2:25; Acts 2:5; 8:2; 22:12).

IV.2. Εὐλάβεια as Reverence

Rather than simply "fear," εὐλάβεια should be read along the lines of "piety," "reverence," or "godly fear," and so translated: "Jesus was heard because of his reverence." Gray has argued at length for reading εὐλάβεια as "godly fear,"[154] and a similar reading appears in most English translations.[155]

Attridge argues that Philo's discussion of the prayers of Abraham and Moses in *Her.* 1-29 helps illuminate our understanding of εὐλάβεια in Heb 5:7.[156] Philo describes frank prayer as one prayed loudly: "The meaning is that those should keep silent who have nothing worth hearing to say, and those should speak who have put their faith in the God-sent love of wisdom, and not only speak with ordinary gentleness, but shout with a louder cry" (*Her.* 14). This description of prayer parallels Jesus' prayer with loud cries (Heb 5:7). Philo says that Abraham's prayers were not only bold, but were accompanied by εὐλάβεια (*Her.* 22). Philo describes God, to

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[153] Gray, *Godly Fear*, 203.

[154] With respect to Heb 5:7-9 in particular, see esp. Gray, *Godly Fear*, 188-205. See also Christian Maurer, "'Erhört wegen der Gottesfurcht', Hebr 5,7," in *Neues Testament und Geschichte Historisches Geschehen und Deutung im Neuen Testament. Oscar Cullmann zum 70. Geburtstag.*, ed. Bo Reicke and Heinrich Baltensweiler (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1972), 275-84.

[155] For example: "godly fear" (RSV); "reverent piety" (NRSV); "reverence" (ESV; NJB); "piety" (NASB); "devotion" (NET); "reverent submission" (NIV).

[156] Harold W. Attridge, "'Heard Because of His Reverence' (Heb 5:7)," *JBL* 98, no. 1 (1979), 91-93.

whom Abraham is praying, as a δεσπότης, which he later associates with "a terrible lord" (φοβερὸν κύριον, 23) who has authority over everything and who ought to be feared. Attridge notes, "By using this title Abraham recognizes the power and absolute sovereignty of God and humbly submits himself to the divine will," as Jesus does in Heb 5:8.[157] Attridge suggests that this parallel from Philo highlights Jesus' prayer as one of boldness that the hearers of Hebrews ought to adopt. This is, however, a boldness tempered by εὐλάβεια: "a humble recognition of divine sovereignty, a 'religious awe' or 'reverence' that guaranteed that the prayers would be heard."[158]

IV.3. Εὐσέβεια in 4 Maccabees and Πίστις

Similar to how Jesus in Heb 5:7 is heard because of εὐλάβεια ("reverence," "piety"), the virtue most commonly lauded in 4 Macc is that of εὐσέβεια ("piety" or "godliness").[159] In 4 Macc, the noun εὐσέβεια appears 46 times,[160] the adjective εὐσεβής appears 10 times,[161] and the verb εὐσεβέω appears 4 times.[162] The martyrs suffer torments for the sake of piety (διὰ τὴν εὐσέβειαν – 5:31; 9:6, 7, 24, 29, 30; 11:20; 13:12, 27;14:3, 6; 15:12, 14; 16:13, 17; 17:7; 18:3). Eleazar refuses to ruin his reputation for εὐσέβεια (5:18; 6:2; 7:1, 3), and he encourages others to die nobly for εὐσέβεια (6:22). Εὐσέβεια is the means by which the martyrs overcome obstacles (7:4, 16; 8:1; 16:4).

The meaning of πίστις and εὐσέβεια in 4 Macc is likely similar. The πιστ-word group is not strongly represented in the Maccabean martyr narratives. Πιστός or πιστεύω appears only three times in 2 Macc (1:2, 3:12, 22), and nowhere in the martyrological narratives (although see πείθω in 7:40). In 4 Macc, πίστις appears in 15:24; 16:22; 17:2; πιστεύω in 4:7; 5:25; 7:19, 21; 8:7; and πιστός in 7:15. Of these,

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[157] Attridge, "Heard," 93.

[158] Attridge, "Heard," 93.

[159] LSJ, 731. While εὐλάβεια and εὐσέβεια are clearly different words, they share similar meanings and sound similar. Braun also notes the similarity, but without reference to 4 Macc (Braun, *Hebräer*, 144).

[160] Εὐσέβεια appears twice in 2 Macc (3:1; 12:45), neither of which appear in the martyrological accounts. Within the NT, εὐσέβεια appears 15 times: Acts 3:12; 1 Tim 2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 6:3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim 3:5; Titus 1:1; 2 Pet 1:3, 6, 7; 3:11.

[161] Εὐσεβής appears twice in 2 Macc (1:19; 12:45), neither of which appear in the martyrological accounts. Within the NT, εὐσεβής appears 3 times: Acts 10:2, 7; 2 Pet 2:9.

[162] Εὐσεβέω does not appear in 2 Macc, and appears 2 times in the NT: Acts 17:23 and 1 Tim 5:4.

three occurrences appear in martyrological contexts as virtues of the martyrs. In 2 Macc 7, the king employs torture and whips to try to force a mother and her seven sons to eat swine's flesh. Proceeding from the eldest son to the youngest, each son valiantly refuses to obey the king's edict and embraces death instead of disobedience to God's laws. The sons mock their torturers and warn them that God will punish them for their actions (7:9, 16-17, 24, 27, 34). The mother, who watched her sons choose death, disregarded the destruction of her seven sons "because of faith in God" (διὰ τὴν πρὸς θεὸν πίστιν; 15:24). In 16:22, the mother encourages her sons to have the same faith in God (πίστιν τρὸς τὸν θεὸν) as the heroes in the book of Daniel. Finally, in 17:2, the author of 4 Macc praises the mother and her seven sons for nullifying the violence of the tyrant and showing the courage of faith (τὴν τῆς πίστεως γενναιότηατ). Van Henten suggests that "εὐσέβεια in 4 Maccabees is an alternative word for πίστις, chosen, most likely because of the philosophical character of the work."[163]

I suggest that the author of 4 Macc uses εὐσέβεια where other authors would have used πίστις. For example, the author of 4 Macc often compares the martyrs with Daniel and his companions, Isaac, or Abraham (as in 7:14; 9:21; 13:9-10, 12; 14:20; 15:28; 16:3, 20-21). When the seven brothers recall the stories of the heroes in Daniel, they describe them as exhibits of εὐσέβεια (13:9-10). The seven brothers consider Isaac's sacrifice as a submission to death for the sake of εὐσέβεια (13:12). However, when the mother of the seven brothers recounts the same stories from Israel's past, she describes them as demonstrations of πίστις (16:20-22). As van Henten rightly notes, this parallel "demonstrates that πίστις functions sometimes as a synonym of the more often used word εὐσέβεια."[164] Therefore, this possible parallel to the Maccabean virtue of piety (εὐσέβεια) as the noble character of a martyr may strengthen our reading of εὐλάβεια in Heb 5:7 as a posture of faithful reverence rather than fear.

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[163] van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 131.
[164] van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 132.

IV.4. Jesus as Faithful Righteous Sufferer

I have argued in this section that Heb 5:7-9 should not be read to say that Jesus feared death. Instead, the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus as a faithful righteous sufferer who cries out in prayer in a time of desperation, and who is heard because of his reverence. Cries or tears in the LXX are often used of prayers for deliverance in times of crisis (as in Exod 3:7, 9; 2 Sam 22:7; 2 Kgs 20:5; Neh 9:9; Ps 18:6; Isa 30:19; 38:5; Jonah 2:2; 2 Macc 11:6; 3 Macc 1:16; 5:7; 5:25).[165] More particularly, the author may intend to place Jesus in the context of Ps 21 LXX.[166]

That the author of Hebrews has Ps 21 in mind is substantiated by three observations.[167] First, as I noted in the section above, the author quotes part of Ps 21 in Heb 2:12. In addition, Heb 4:16, which encourages us to approach the throne of grace so that we might receive help (βοήθεια), may parallel Ps 21:12, where the Psalmist asks God to stay near to him because there is no one to help (βοηθέω). Later, the Psalmist repeats his request and this time speaks of God as his help (βοήθεια, 21:20).[168] As a result, we know that the author is familiar with the psalm and can use it with reference to Jesus. Second, Heb 5:8 notes that Jesus learned obedience, "although he was a son (καίπερ ὢν υἱός)." Given that the author also adopts familial language from Ps 21 in Heb 2:12 ("I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters"), the mention of Jesus' sonship in Heb 5:8 may echo this earlier quotation from Ps 21.[169] Third, Heb 5:7-9 and Ps 21 feature a number of similar words. In Ps

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[165] See also Philo, *Leg.* 3.213; *Her.* 19; and esp. *Det.* 92-93. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 151 n 172 and 173; Koester, *Hebrews*, 288.

[166] Brandenburger argues for Ps 114-115 LXX (116 MT) as the background to Heb 5:7-9 (Egon Brandenburger, "Text und Vorlagen von Hebr. V 7-10: Ein Beitrag zur Christologie des Hebräerbriefs," *NovT* 11 (1969), 190-224, esp. 211-18). Hebrews shows little engagement with other traditions of the righteous sufferer in the LXX (esp. Isa 53 and Wis 2:12-20). Heb 9:28 (εἰς τὸ πολλῶν ἀνενεγκεῖν ἁμαρτίας) likely takes up Isa 53:12 (αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκεν), but beyond this reference, the author of Hebrews does not explicitly depict Jesus as the Isaian servant (see Otfried Hofius, "The Fourth Servant Song in the New Testament Letters," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, ed. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 184-85). While we need not eliminate the possibility that the author of Hebrews is informed by Isa 53 and/or Wis 2:12-20, Ps 21 is more clearly in view for the reasons I adduce.

[167] A possible fourth piece of evidence is that Jesus in Matt and Mark alludes to Ps 21:2 in Jesus' cry of dereliction. If Heb 5:7-9 reflects a Golgotha tradition (as Richardson argues, "Passion," 51-67), and if Jesus' cry of dereliction from Ps 21:2 was part of a Jesus tradition with which the author of Hebrews was familiar, then it is even more likely that Ps 21 lies in the background of Heb 5:7-9.

[168] Richardson, "Passion," 66 n 58.

[169] Swetnam connects the sonship language in Heb 5:8 to the centurion's claim of Jesus as "son of God" in Matt 27:54 and Mark 15:39 (James Swetnam, "The Crux at Hebrews 5,7-8," *Bib* 81 (2000),

21:25, the Psalmist rejoices that God "did not despise nor abhor the prayer [τῇ δεήσει] of the poor, nor did he turn away his face from me, but when I cried [κεκραγέναι] to him he heard [εἰσήκουσέν] me."[170] Jesus in Heb 5:7 offers prayers (δεήσεις) with cries (κραυγῆς) and he too is heard (εἰσακουσθείς).[171]

With Ps 21 in view in Heb 5:7-9, we see Jesus as one who in faith turns to the one who can deliver him. We can already hear the ending of the psalm, when Jesus, having been faithful, can proclaim God's name to his brothers and sisters (Ps 21:23, see also Heb 2:12) and rejoice in God's deliverance (Ps 21:24-32).

IV.5. Conclusion

Therefore, Heb 5:7-9 offers another clear connection in Hebrews between Jesus' faithfulness amid suffering and his resurrection. Even though a πιστ- word is not present, the depiction of Jesus in 5:7-9 as a faithful righteous sufferer who is resurrected by "the one able to save him out of death" affirms what the author of Hebrews insists later: that faith leads to the preservation of the soul (10:39).

V. CONCLUSION

Having investigated the faithfulness of Christ in Hebrews in Heb 12:1-3, where πίστις appears explicitly, in Heb 2:13 and 5:7-9, where the concept of faith appears, we are prepared to offer some conclusions.

This chapter of the thesis has placed Jesus' faithfulness in the wider framework of Jesus rewriting the default human narrative. We found in chapters 3-4 that the author of Hebrews operates with a pessimistic anthropology, and he expects only postmortem death as the conclusion to the default human story. We found in chapter 6 that Jesus participated fully in the human condition and realized humanity's divine intention by experiencing life after death. We have seen in this chapter that Jesus received this eschatological hope by means of faith, which the author of Hebrews consistently depicts as endurance through suffering. The story of Jesus' faith offers a guaranteed conclusion of life beyond death for those who participate in

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355-56). However, the closer contextual parallel in Heb 2:12 is more likely in view than the Synoptic account.

[170] Bruce also notices this parallel (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 128).

[171] Furthermore, κράζω and εἰσακούω appear in Ps 21:3, and κράζω and σῴζω in Ps 21:6 (Swetnam, "Crux," 354).

the same story of faith. We have thus seen three dimensions of faith at work: christological (Christ as pioneer and perfecter of faith), ethical (faith as suffering in the face of death), and eschatological (faith as assurance of postmortem life). We will speak to this in more detail in the chapter 9,[172] but it is worth noting in preliminary form at this stage that our study has not found Jesus to be the *object* of faith, but the faithful one who also trusts. Jesus, as the faithful one *par excellence*, pioneers faith by exercising faith the face of death, and he perfects faith by being raised from the dead. Jesus is not, therefore, the object of our trust, but the one who has assured the blessed conclusion of the story of faith.

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[172] Section II.3.

Chapter 8

The Stories Meet: Faith in Hebrews 10:37-39

I. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter we found that Jesus writes a new story with a new assured conclusion. Faith, as we see it in Jesus, is one of enduring even to the point of death if necessary. In this chapter, we conclude our investigation into the rewritten narrative by examining the meaning of faith in Heb 10:37-39. I will argue that the author of Hebrews quotes Hab 2:3-4 (10:37-38) and applies it (10:39) in such a way as to bring two narratives into stark contrast: timidity leads to death (the default human story) while faith leads to life (the rewritten story). The author introduces Hab 2:3-4 into a specific context in order to emphasize the need to exercise faith in the face of death, as such faith leads assuredly to eschatological life. "My righteous one (ὁ δίκαιός μου)" in 10:38 refers in the first instance to any human being who lives by faith (ἐκ πίστεως). At the same time, however, I will propose that the author of Hebrews also wishes to allude to the faithfulness of Christ in Hab 2:3-4, and in so doing not only highlight the rewritten narrative, but point to Jesus as the assurance of this story. The truth of the rewritten story is assured because the story of faith has already been told in the faithful δίκαιος *par excellence*, Jesus.

II. HEBREWS 10:39: TWO SINGULAR NARRATIVES

In Heb 10:39, the author follows up his OT citation with a succinct application, as he does elsewhere.[1] The author expects his hearers to endure. In 10:39, the author picks up on two words from Hab 2:4 (ὑποστείληται and πίστεως) and suggests that his hearers are not ὑποστολῆς, but πίστεως.[2] With great pastoral

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[1] Attridge finds "pithy summary" statements following quotations in 1:14; 8:13; and 10:18 (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 304 n 94). See also 2:8; 10:10; and 12:7.

[2] Further, περιποίησιν τῆς ψυχῆς is probably a paraphrase of ζήσεται in the quotation from Habakkuk (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 304).

sensitivity, the author expresses confidence in his hearers.[3] He allows them no room

for doubt: they endure to the preservation of the soul.

Heb 10:39 presents challenging translational issues. Despite featuring two

singular nouns (ὑποστολῆς and πίστεως), many English translations render them as

plurals. For example, the NRSV reads: "But we are not *among those who* shrink back

and so are lost, but *among those who have* faith and so are saved" (italics mine).[4]

Furthermore, as we see in the NRSV, some translations supply "have" with πίστεως

("have faith"), which is absent from the text.[5]

Similarly, a survey of various commentaries shows a struggle with how to

read 10:39. Lane renders the nouns as plurals, but avoids adding "have": "But we are

not *of those* who draw back, leading to destruction, but *of those* who are faithful,

culminating in the acquisition of life."[6] Likewise, Bruce translates the verse: "we are

not in the ranks *of those* who draw back and perish; we belong *to those* who believe

and thus gain our lives."[7] Other commentators supply "have" before faith. For

example, Moffatt translates the verse: "We are not the men to shrink back and be lost,

but to *have faith* and so to win our souls."[8] Johnson converts the first noun to a verb

in his English translation and supplies "have" with faith: "But we *do not draw back* –

to our destruction. Rather, we *have faith* – to the securing of our life."[9]

Campbell reads verse 39 in another manner. Campbell points to Hebrews'

description of Jesus as the founder (as Campbell translates ἀρχηγός) and perfecter of

faith in 12:2, and suggests that the genitives in 10:39 (ὑποστολῆς and πίστεως) could

be either possessive or partitive: "Jesus could be the one who founds the auditors'

fidelity, and the perfector [*sic.*] who ultimately also redeems their souls […] and they

are consequently exhorted as people who 'belong to' or 'are part of' the fidelity of the

righteous one."[10] By this reading, the hearers of Hebrews are called to be faithful, and

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[3] The author expresses similar confidence in 6:9-10 and 11:40.

[4] See the NASB, NET, NIV, ESV, KJV, and RSV.

[5] See the NASB, NET, ESV, and RSV. The NIV and KJV have "believe" instead of "have faith."

[6] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 274 (italics mine).

[7] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 275 (italics mine).

[8] Moffatt, *Hebrews*, 153 (italics mine). See also Schreiner, who reads 10:39: "Those who 'shrink back … are destroyed' … but those who trust God 'are saved' (lit., 'possession of soul')" (Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 589). Heb 10:39, however, does not make any mention of trusting God.

[9] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 267 (italics mine).

[10] Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 614.

their faithfulness is understood rightly only in light of Jesus' faithfulness. Campbell's reading does not adequately address the singular ὑποστολῆς, which the author of Hebrews does hold out as a viable possibility for some.

A translation of 10:39 that both keeps the singular nouns and avoids supplying "have" is that followed by Attridge, deSilva, and Koester. With slight variations, all three translate verse 39 in a similar way to: "But we are not characterized by shrinking back unto destruction but rather by faith unto the preservation of the soul."[11] This is a valid way to translate the genitive,[12] but none of the three commentators explain in detail how a person or a group of persons ("we") can be "characterized" by shrinking back or by faith. Ellingworth and Weiss helpfully suggest that membership with a group of people is implied.[13] Similarly, deSilva reads 10:39 as assigning "different roles or qualities to different groups."[14] By this reading, "shrinking back" and "faith" remain singular, as they are the individual qualities marking singular groups.

I propose a translation of 10:39 that is largely similar to that of Attridge, deSilva, and Koester, and which seeks to emphasize Ellingworth's and Weiss' suggestion that membership in a group is implied. I contend the clearest translation of 10:39 is: "But we are not of timidity unto destruction, but of faith[15] unto the preservation of the soul." By this reading, the author presents two singular groups of which "we (ἡμεῖς … ἐσμέν)" can be a part: "of timidity (ὑποστολῆς)" or "of faith (πίστεως)."

Keeping an eye toward the narratival reading of Hebrews that I am advancing, ὑποστολῆς and πίστεως represent two singular stories of which we can find ourselves a

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[11] Attridge: "But we are not characterized by shrinking back unto destruction, but by faith which leads to the preservation of the soul" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 297). deSilva: "But *we* are not characterized by shrinking back unto destruction but rather by trust unto the preservation of life" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 367, italics his). Koester: "Now, we are not characterized by shrinking back to destruction, but by faith for the preservation of the soul" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 458).

[12] For other uses of the genitive in this manner, see Luke 9:55; Acts 9:2; 1 Cor 14:33; and 1 Thess 5:5 (all cited in Attridge, *Hebrews*, 304 n 97). See also Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 79-81.

[13] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 557; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 552 n 35.

[14] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 369.

[15] I explained the logic behind translating πίστις as "faith" in chapter 1, section II.3. Part of the attractiveness of "faith," I suggested, is that "faith" can include notions of "belief," "trust," and "faithfulness."

part:[16] the story of timidity and the story of faith. The author of Hebrews names the end to each story: "destruction"[17] and "the preservation of the soul." We found in part 2 of the thesis that the default human story in Hebrews is a pessimistic account. Humans living within this default story have reason to fear death. They are shackled by sin and a guilty conscience, and they must ever be on the forward move in obedience, lest they fall back into their previous existence. Failing to enter God's rest leads inevitably to death in the wilderness (3:17-19). So also here in 10:39, the author insists that ὑποστολή (timidity) ends assuredly in destruction. Therefore, as with the wilderness generation who fearfully refused to move forward into the rest (3:7-4:11) and the apostate who is characterized by sluggishness (νωθρός, 5:11; 6:12), timidity (ὑποστολή) in 10:39 represents the default human story. Those who are in this story have no hope of deliverance, but the author is assured that "we are not of timidity." Instead, the author suggests that he and his listeners are of the story of faith (πίστεως), which leads to the preservation of the soul: life despite death.[18] We turn now to the LXX quotation in Heb 10:37-38, after which I will return to the depiction of faith in these verses.

III. THE LXX QUOTATION (HEBREWS 10:37-38)

III.1. The Various Forms of Habakkuk 2:3-4

The text of Hab 2:3-4 in Hebrews is unique,[19] as the following table illustrates:

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[16] I address the idea of finding oneself in a story in chapter 2, sections III and IV, and I will develop *how* the author expects the hearers of Hebrews to find themselves in the story of faith in chapter 9 (on the question of "getting in" specifically, see esp. section V.3).

[17] For "destruction" as eternal judgment, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 304 n 100; and Koester, *Hebrews*, 463. I addressed eschatological death as the assured conclusion to the default human story in chapter 4, section IV.2, and I gave particular attention to 10:39 in section IV.2.4.

[18] On "preservation of the soul (περιποίησιν ψυχῆς)" as life despite death, see Koester: "Preserving one's soul often meant saving one's life from death (Isocrates, *To Philip* 7; Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 4.4.10; Ezek 13:19), but it ultimately means life beyond death (Luke 17:33; TLNT 3.100-102)" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 463).

[19] For a full discussion of Hab 2:3-4 and the possible *Vorlage* of Heb 10:37-38, see Steyn, "Quest," 310-17.

MT Hab 2:3-4 (from BHS[4])	LXX Hab 2:3-4 (from Göttingen)	Heb 10:37-38 (from NA[27])	Rom 1:17/ Gal 3:11 (from NA[27])
³ כִּי חָזוֹן לַמּוֹעֵד לַקֵּץ וְלֹא עוֹד וְיָפֵחַ אִם־יִתְמַהְמָהּ חַכֵּה־לוֹ כִּי־בֹא יָבֹא לֹא יְאַחֵר ⁴הִנֵּה עֻפְּלָה לֹא־יָשְׁרָה נַפְשׁוֹ בּוֹ וְצַדִּיק בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ יִחְיֶה	³ διότι ἔτι ὅρασις εἰς καιρὸν καὶ ἀνατελεῖ εἰς πέρας καὶ οὐκ εἰς κενόν ἐὰν ὑστερήσῃ ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν ὅτι ἐρχόμενος ἥξει καὶ οὐ μὴ χρονίσῃ ⁴ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται	³⁷ ἔτι γὰρ μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον, ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἥξει καὶ οὐ χρονίσει· ³⁸ ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται, καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ.	¹⁷ δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν, καθὼς γέγραπται· ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται. ¹¹ ὅτι δὲ ἐν νόμῳ οὐδεὶς δικαιοῦται παρὰ τῷ θεῷ δῆλον, ὅτι ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται·
³ For there is still a vision for the appointed time and it speaks with regard to the end and it does not lie. If it delays, wait for it because it will come and coming it will not tarry. ⁴ Whoa! His soul is proud and is not right in him, but the righteous will live by his faith.	³ For the vision is yet for a time, and it shall shoot forth at the end and not in vain; though he might tarry, wait for him, because coming will come and he will not delay. ⁴ If he might draw back, my soul has no pleasure in him, but/and the righteous one by my faith will live.	³⁷ Yet for in a very little while, the coming one will come and he will not delay. ³⁸ But/and my righteous one will live by faith, and if he²⁰ draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him.	¹⁷ For in it, the righteousness of God is being revealed by faithfulness to faith, as it has been written, "The righteous one will live by faith." ¹¹ Now it is clear that through law no one is righteoused before God, because "The righteous one will live by faith."

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²⁰ The danger of "shrinking back" is ascribed not to just "anyone," but to ὁ δίκαιός μου. Therefore, the singular personal pronoun is to be preferred over the NRSV translation: "but my righteous one will live by faith. My soul takes no pleasure in anyone who shrinks back."

The MT suggests that the righteous by *his* (the righteous person's)[21] or *its* (the vision's)[22] faith will live (וְצַדִּיק בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ יִחְיֶה). Hab 2:4 in the LXX has the righteous one living by "my" faith instead of "his" (or "its") faith (ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται). Hab 2:4 is also quoted differently in Paul and Hebrews. Paul does not include Hab 2:3, nor does he include a personal pronoun modifying faith in Hab 2:4. The text in Hebrews features a number of particularities, the significance of which will be addressed below in sections IV and V. In summary, the particularities of the text in Hebrews with respect to the LXX are: the inclusion of the article before ἐρχόμενος; the future indicative χρονίσει rather than the subjunctive χρονίσῃ; μου modifying δίκαιος rather than πίστις; and the flipped word order of ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται and ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ. Before addressing the meaning of Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38 and the possible import of the quotation's particularities, some reflections on the role of authorial intention with regard to quotations from the Septuagint are in order.

III.2. The LXX, Authorial Intention, and Hebrews

That the author of Hebrews was functioning with a Greek translation of the OT is largely accepted, and so we need not belabor this point.[23] For our purposes we are interested in the extent to which we can attribute authorial intention to variations between the LXX and the text as quoted in Hebrews.

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[21] For the *righteous person's* faith, see: Kenneth L. Barker and Waylon Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, The New American Commentary 20 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 325-26; F. F. Bruce, "Habakkuk," in *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary; Volume 2*, ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 860-61; Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets; Volume Two: Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, Berit Olam Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2000), 472.

[22] For the *vision's* faith, see: Robert D. Haak, *Habakkuk*, VTSup 44 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 59; and J. J. M. Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 107. Roberts qualifies his reading: "Nonetheless, the appropriate human response to the trustworthiness of the vision is to believe it and live in a way that reflects that faith" (111).

[23] For an extended study of the impact of the LXX on Hebrews, see Gheorghita, *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*.

III.2.1. *Examples of Interpreters Finding Import in Quotation Variations*

Based on the fact that the author of Hebrews is using a Greek version of the OT, scholars sometimes make interpretive assertions on the basis of minute differences between the quotation in Hebrews and the LXX (either the Göttingen edition or their reconstruction of Hebrews' *Vorlage*). I offer three examples.

First, Enns argues that the author of Hebrews altered the text of Ps 95 in Heb 3 in such a way as to make it speak directly to those who read it.[24] The most intriguing variation is the insertion of διό in verse 10. The LXX reads τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη προσώχθισα, whereas the version in Hebrews reads τεσσεράκοντα ἔτη **διό** προσώχθισα. The added διό proves significant for Enns. The LXX is translated "where your fathers tested, they tried, and saw my works. I was angry with that generation for forty years;" but Hebrews reads, "Your fathers tested with scrutiny and saw my works for forty years. Therefore [διό] I was angry with this generation."[25] The LXX account suggests that God was angry with the people for forty years, while the account in Hebrews delays God's anger until after forty years of witnessing his works. This changed detail in Hebrews casts a positive light on the wilderness experience: the wilderness is a good time of God's blessing, and punishment followed their unfaithfulness only after this blessed period.[26] Enns suggests the author of Hebrews depicts the wilderness in this positive manner because he is using Ps 95 to warn the church, which is the new wilderness community.[27] The church's time in the wilderness is a time of blessing, and they have not yet committed the sin of the unfaithful of the wilderness generation: "Anger is what follows upon disbelief in

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[24] Enns offers three ways that the author of Hebrews applies the Exodus warning in Ps 95 to his hearers: "(1) by presenting Israel and the church as being in an analogous situation: both are Exodus communities in their period of wilderness wandering; (2) by making certain changes in the citation of Ps 95:7b-11 so as to make it most relevant for his readers; (3) by equating the goal of the Christian's wandering with God's creation rest" (Enns, "Creation and Re-Creation," 256-57). As the first and third points are larger exegetical findings, we focus here only on a change in the citation that Enns notices.

[25] Peter Enns, "Interpretation of Psalm 95 in Hebrews 3:1-4:13," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. C. Evans and J. A. Sanders. JSNTSup 148 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 353 (brackets his).

[26] The wilderness is remembered similarly in some strands of Jewish interpretation (see Neh 9:21; Acts 7:36).

[27] Enns, "Interpretation," 354.

God's activity, not what characterizes the period of God's activity."[28] The added διό,

therefore, allows the author of Hebrews to reserve God's anger for unfaithfulness.

Second, van der Bergh argues that the author of Hebrews deliberately altered

the text of LXX Ps 39:7-9 (van der Bergh uses Rahlfs) in Heb 10:5b-7. Hebrews

differs from the LXX text in Rahlfs in the following ways:

LXX Ps 39:7-9 (Rahlfs)	Heb 10:5b-7 (NA[27])
ὠτία (v 7)	σῶμα (v 5)
ὁλοκαύτωμα (v 7)	ὁλοκαυτώματα (v 6)
ᾔτησας (v 7)	εὐδόκησας (v 6)
τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθην (v 9)	ὁ θεὸς τὸ θέλημά σου (v 7)

Van der Bergh begins his study by seeking to establish the text of the *Vorlage*, since

"Only if certainty exists about both the text of the NT and the *Vorlage* of the author of

Hebrews can such a comparison be made in a trustworthy manner."[29] After working

through the textual problems for LXX Ps 39:7-9, van der Bergh reconstructs

Hebrews' *Vorlage* as such:

LXX Ps 39:7-9 (Rahlfs)	Reconstructed *Vorlage*
ὠτία (v 7)	σῶμα (v 7)
ὁλοκαύτωμα (v 7)	ὁλοκαυτώματα (v 7)
ᾔτησας (v 7)	ἐζήτησας (v 7)
τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθην (v 9)	τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθην (v 9) [same as Rahlfs][30]

As a result, the differences between the text in Hebrews and van der Bergh's

reconstructed *Vorlage* are:

Reconstructed *Vorlage*	Heb 10:5b-7 (NA[27])
ἐζήτησας (v 7)	εὐδόκησας (v 6)
τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθην (v 9)	ὁ θεὸς τὸ θέλημά σου (v 7)

Van der Bergh summarizes the differences between Hebrews and his reconstructed

Vorlage (quoting van der Bergh):

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[28] Enns, "Interpretation," 355.

[29] Ronald H. van der Bergh, "A Textual Comparison of Hebrews 10:5b-7 and LXX Psalm 39:7-9," *Neot* 42, no. 2 (2008), 354.

[30] van der Bergh, "Textual Comparison," 361. His text-critical work on the LXX text appears on pages 355-61.

1. εὐδόκησας has been inserted in the place of ἐζήτησας.
2. μου has been omitted from the last line in the quotation.
3. ὁ θεός has been transposed to stand before τὸ θέλημά in the Hebrew text.
4. The author of Hebrews has ended the quotation just before ἐβουλήθεν. Therefore, ἐβουλήθεν can be seen as omitted from the text of Hebrews.[31]

Van der Bergh is convinced that these changes are attributable to deliberate changes. He writes: "it is quite clear that the author of Hebrews made use of a written *Vorlage*. Changes to the text can, therefore, indeed point to *intentional* changes to the wording of the *Vorlage* used by the author of Hebrews."[32]

Finally, in his extended treatment of the role of the LXX in Hebrews, Gheorghita ascribes authorial intention to variations between Hab 2:3-4 and Heb 10:37-38 (I have already noted these variations above). Gheorghita addresses the LXX text-tradition of Hab 2:3-4 and ultimately agrees that the text in the Göttingen edition is accurate.[33] He attributes the variations between Hab 2:3-4 and Heb 10:37-38 to the author's theological purposes: "Whatever the literary nature of these modifications might be, it should be underlined that behind them lies a theological intention which led to the alteration of the quotation text."[34]

These three examples demonstrate that some interpreters understand the author of Hebrews to be making theological points when we observe differences between the LXX and quoted texts in Hebrews.

III.2.2. Cautionary Notes

However, a discussion of the author's intentionality with regard to his use of the LXX is problematic for three main reasons, each of which I will discuss below. First, *the* LXX is a misnomer. Second, given the oral culture and the high illiteracy at the time, there is a real possibility that the author of Hebrews could not have read (or at least read easily) the passage in question. Third, even if we have a LXX manuscript that is essentially the exact text in circulation during the time of Hebrews (or if we can confidently reconstruct his *Vorlage*), and if the author of Hebrews were

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[31] van der Bergh, "Textual Comparison," 367-68.
[32] van der Bergh, "Textual Comparison," 369 (italics his).
[33] Gheorghita, *Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, 170-75.
[34] Gheorghita, *Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, 220.

able to read, the question remains whether he would have had the resources or patience to access the passage in a scroll.

I am not suggesting that the author could not or would not have deliberately quoted the passage differently. Indeed, as Whittaker and Hill have shown, it was standard practice in the ancient world to alter quotations deliberately in the form of switched word order, additions, or substituted terms.[35] Furthermore, deliberate alterations are not evidence of a low view of the text being quoted, as respected philosophical works, religious works, and other works of high regard are quoted with deliberate alterations. Therefore, it is quite possible that the author of Hebrews intentionally altered the LXX for his purposes, but the extent to which we can say this with certainty is greatly handicapped by these three factors. I will now consider these factors in turn.

III.2.2.1. *The LXX?*

The first major challenge to what we can say about the LXX in Hebrews involves the myth of an unadulterated text collection. A single widely-circulated version of the LXX never existed. As with the NT text, the LXX has various manuscripts that do not always have word-for-word agreement. Docherty has demonstrated the dangers of presuming a uniform text tradition of the LXX.[36] Greek translations were modified to improve style or conform to other texts, and a number of manuscripts were in circulation at any given time. Therefore, I use "the LXX" as a non-technical shorthand way of referring to a Greek text of the OT that the author used or had in mind. That his text of the Greek scriptures resembles the eclectic text we have in the Göttingen edition is highly likely, but certainly not to be taken for

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[35] John Whittaker, "The Value of Indirect Tradition in the Establishment of Greek Philosophical Texts or the Art of Misquotation," in *Editing Greek and Latin Texts: Papers Given at the Twenty-Third Annual Conference on Editorial Problems, University of Toronto 6-7 November 1987*, ed. John N. Grant (New York: AMS Press, 1989), 63-95; Charles E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 67-71. See also van den Hoek, who finds similar practice by Clement of Alexandria (Annewies van den Hoek, "Techniques of Quotation in Clement of Alexandria: A View of Ancient Literary Working Methods," *VC* 50, no. 3 (1996), 223-43, esp. 235-36).

[36] Susan E. Docherty, *The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews: A Case Study in Early Jewish Bible Interpretation*, WUNT 2/260 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 124-30.

granted. This first point should cause considerable pause to those ascribing authorial intention to quotation variations in Hebrews.[37]

III.2.2.2. Orality and Literacy

The author of Hebrews lived in an oral culture with low literacy rates. As a result, we have good reason to believe that he was operating from memory rather than from a manuscript.

The author of Hebrews offers clues to the orality of the Scripture he knows. Many other NT authors refer to Scripture as the "writing" or "writings" (γραφή or γραφαὶ),[38] speak of *written* texts (often with γέγραπται),[39] or speak of Jesus fulfilling things that were written about him in Scripture.[40] Hebrews, however, almost never uses the expression "it is written." Instead of using γέγραπται, the author of Hebrews usually uses verbs of speaking (as in 3:7: "as the Holy Spirit says [καθὼς λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον]"; see also 1:5, 6, 7, 13; 2:12; 3:15; 4:3, 4, 7; 5:6; 6:14; 7:21; 8:8; 9:20; 10:5, 8, 9, 16, 30; 13:5). As Eisenbaum suggests, using these verbs of speaking for the OT is not unusual, but nowhere else do we see such use to the exclusion of verbs of writing.[41] Eisenbaum claims that the author of Hebrews never uses a verb of writing with respect to Scripture,[42] but Esler finds one example in Hebrews 10:7 (from the lips of Jesus in a quotation from Psalm 39:7 LXX: "as it is written of me in the scroll of the book [ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμου]").[43] However, it is worth noting in Heb 10:7 that the author does not use γράφω of Scripture, but quotes the LXX which uses the word. Likewise, the author of Hebrews never refers to Scripture as γραφή and never names a book of the Bible.[44] Therefore, if the author's

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[37] Both van der Bergh and Gheorghita go to great lengths to acknowledge the text-critical issues in play, and so they adequately address this first point.

[38] Esler points to Rom 1:2, where Paul refers to " 'the sacred writings' (γραφαῖς ἁγίαις) of Israelite Scripture, thus indicating that by the mid first century C.E. there was already a sense of a collection of Israelite writings that were especially revered" (Esler, "Collective Memory," 164).

[39] See, for example, Matthew 2:5; 4:4, 6, 7, 10; 11:10; 21:13; 26:24, 31; Mark 1:2; 7:6; 11:17; 14:27; Luke 2:23; 3:4; 4:4, 8, 10: 7:27; 10:26; 19:46.

[40] See, for example, Luke 22:37; 24:44; John 5:45; 12:16; 15:25.

[41] Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*, 97.

[42] Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*, 97.

[43] Esler, "Collective Memory," 165.

[44] Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*, 98.

introductory formulae are any indication, he may have an oral LXX in mind rather than a written text before him.

This point is further substantiated in view of the poor literacy rates in the ancient world. Literacy rates were low in Greco-Roman, Jewish, and early Christian groups. Among upper-class Greco-Romans between 100 BCE to 250 CE, "an illiterate male would have been regarded as bizarre,"[45] but literacy rates dropped off significantly in the lower classes. By Harris' estimation, the literacy rate among soldiers was close to 34%.[46] A "very small proportion" of slaves could read and write.[47] There was more incentive for slaves to learn to read and write than for freepersons, and so the majority of the non-slave population remained illiterate. Harris summarizes:

> Limited though the amount of slave literacy was, it strongly influenced the shape of the entire educational system. The essential point is obvious enough: since it was easy for well-to-do Romans and for officials to acquire or train slaves with clerical skills, they had no practical need to take thought for the elementary education of the free-born. A large population of Roman clerical work was carried out by slaves and freedmen, and this very fact came near to precluding the literacy of the majority of the free-born population.[48]

Harris estimates the overall literacy in Rome and Italy to have been below 15%,[49] dropping below 5-10% in the western provinces.[50]

Jewish literacy rates were likely the same or below that of Greco-Roman rates. Meier suggests that the presence of sacred texts in Jewish tradition was one of the "counterinfluences that would have favored literacy."[51] The five books of Moses spawned other literature, such as *Genesis Apocryphon* and *Jubilees*, and Jewish people found their identity in the sacred texts. Meier writes, "For all the differences among various groups of Jews, the narratives, laws, and prophecies of their sacred texts gave them a corporate memory and a common ethos. The very identity and continued existence of the people Israel were tied to a corpus of written and regularly

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[45] William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 248.
[46] Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 254.
[47] Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 257.
[48] Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 258-59.
[49] Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 267.
[50] Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 272.
[51] John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus; Vol 1: The Roots of the Problem and the Person* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 274.

read works."[52] 1 Macc 1:56-57 speaks of people possessing books of the law, and Josephus says that the Law orders children to read and learn the laws and deeds of their predecessors (*Ag. Ap.* 2.204). Nevertheless, none of this proves that the average person was literate, but only that "there were special factors in Jewish life that fostered respect for and pursuit of literacy."[53] Meier concludes, "we are not to imagine that every Jewish male in Palestine learned to read – and women were rarely given the opportunity. Literacy, while greatly desirable, was not an absolute necessity for the ordinary life of the ordinary Jew."[54] Bar-Ilan is less optimistic about Jewish literacy rates, suggesting a rate below 3% in the land of Israel in the first century CE.[55] Hezser's extended study on Jewish literacy rates in Roman Palestine finds Bar-Ilan's figure "very plausible," but notes that our estimates are contingent upon how rigidly we define literacy.[56]

The same low literacy rates likely extended into the early Christian era. Gamble agrees with Harris' estimations, and concludes with regard to early Christians:

> Only a small minority of Christians were able to read, surely no more than an average of 10-15 percent of the larger society and probably fewer. Thus only a small segment of the church was able to read Christian texts for themselves or to write them. Still, every Christian had the opportunity to become acquainted with Christian literature, especially the scriptures, through catechetical instruction and the reading and homiletical exposition of texts in the context of worship.[57]

Given that illiteracy rates at the time of Hebrews' writing likely ranged between 85% and 97%, there is a fair chance that the author of Hebrews could not

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[52] Meier, *Marginal Jew Vol 1*, 274.

[53] Meier, *Marginal Jew Vol 1*, 275.

[54] Meier, *Marginal Jew Vol 1*, 275-76.

[55] Meir Bar-Ilan, "Illiteracy in the Land of Israel in the First Centuries CE," in *Essays in the Social Scientific Study of Judaism and Jewish Society, Vol 2*, ed. Simcha Fishbane, Stuart Schoenfeld, and Alain Goldschläger (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 1992), 55-56.

[56] She explains, "If 'literacy' is determined as the ability to read documents, letters, and 'simple' literary texts in at least one language and to write more than one's signature oneself, it is quite reasonable to assume that the Jewish literacy rate was well below the 10-15 percent (of the entire population, including women) which Harris has estimated for Roman society in imperial times. If by 'literacy' we mean the ability to read a few words and sentences and to write one's own signature only, Jews probably came closer to the Roman average rate" (Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine*, TSAJ 81 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 496).

[57] Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), 2-10, here 10.

read and write well. Although Hebrews has the highest Greek in the NT,[58] this does
not require that the author himself be highly literate. The author of Hebrews could
have employed an amanuensis.[59] As a result, we have reason to question whether the
author of Hebrews would have been reading a manuscript of the LXX. Variations
between the LXX and Hebrews, therefore, could be attributable to a variety of
influences (such as lapse of memory or an accidental misreading of the text), with
authorial intention being only one possible explanation.

        It is worth noting, however, that we can take the implications of orality and
illiteracy too far. For example, Esler laments Eisenbaum's coming ever so close to
recognizing the full implications of orality for Hebrews. He suggests that the
"inevitable conclusion" for his and Eisenbaum's arguments for orality in Hebrews is
that "*the lengths taken by the author to detextualize*[60] *the primary source of Israelite
tradition that he is employing necessitate jettisoning textual interpretation, let alone
intertextuality, as an explanatory framework for his aims or achievement.*"[61] He
further suggests estimates of illiteracy in the ancient world "make [Richard B.] Hays's
description of Israel … as 'a reading community,' in relation to an intertextual
approach to Paul's letters, appear wide of the mark."[62] Esler's critique is unfair,
however, given that intertextuality does not necessarily deal only with *texts*.[63] In fact,
just a few lines before Hays' reference to Israel as a "reading community," Hays
writes in auditory terms: "I am urging that we should learn from Hollander and other
literary critics the discipline of *tuning our ears to the internal resonances* of the

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[58] So Westcott: "The language of the Epistle is both in vocabulary and style purer and more vigorous than that of any other book of the N.T." (Westcott, *Hebrews*, xliv). See also Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek; Vol IV: Style* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1976), 107.

[59] For more on ancient text production and the use of secretaries, see E. Randolph Richards, *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing: Secretaries, Composition and Collection* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004), esp. 59-80.

[60] By "detextualize," Esler refers to an argument of his essay, which finds, "with the exception of Heb 10:7, he [the author of Hebrews] obliterates all reference to the textual form in which these Israelite traditions were embodied. Someone in the original audience of Hebrews hearing it read who was not already familiar with Israelite Scripture would have had virtually no idea that the author, in numerous places throughout his composition, was drawing on its resources!" (Esler, "Collective Memory," 166).

[61] Esler, "Collective Memory," 165 (italics his).

[62] Esler, "Collective Memory," 154.

[63] Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, The New Critical Idiom (London: Routledge, 2000), 174-208.

biblical text."[64] Intertextuality does not need "texts" being read, as it is about hearing resonances between various works – textual (written or oral), artistic, musical, and so on. Illiteracy, therefore, is not an insurmountable barrier to intertextuality. It is possible that the author of Hebrews is operating with an oral LXX and at the same time wishing to make connections to the context of the passages he quotes.

III.2.2.3. Scroll Availability and Technology

Finally, if we assume the author of Hebrews were literate, the question remains of whether or not he could access a text to read. This point includes two dimensions: (1) the issue of accessing a scroll and (2) the issue of locating a passage within the scroll.[65]

Scrolls were expensive. Blank scrolls were typically sold in rolls of 20 parchment or papyrus sheets glued together (about 12 feet long), but were often published in longer rolls (which could be as long as 30 feet).[66] A blank 12-foot scroll cost about 8 days' wages for an unskilled worker in the ancient world, and so a 24-foot scroll filled with writing such as the Isaiah Scroll would have been a significant

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[64] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 21 (italics mine).

[65] Scrolls were the standard presentation form for written literature from "the beginnings of Greek written literature until deep into the Roman era," when the codex replaced the scroll (William A. Johnson, "The Ancient Book," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 256). However, Stanton argues that Christians may have been using codices or precursory notebooks as early as the middle of the first century CE, even though widespread non-Christian use did not develop until after 300 CE (Graham N. Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 165-91. Even so, given that, as Stanton notes, "we do not have explicit evidence for use of notebooks by first- or even early second-century Christians" (182), we cannot be certain that the author of Hebrews had access to copies of the LXX in codex or notebook form. Furthermore, if the author of Hebrews did not have access to his own copy or to a copy from other Christians, then he would have had to read the LXX from a scroll, given that no one argues that non-Christian Jews used codices in the first- or early second-centuries CE. For these reasons, in this section I address only scrolls. If Stanton is correct, and the author of Hebrews did have access to copies of the LXX in codex form, then the economic and technological barriers to using the LXX would have been substantially mitigated, but not eliminated. For example, the codex would still require an economic outlay, and the LXX text in the codex would still not be broken into paragraphs or marked by other indicators (more on these points below).

[66] Thompson says scrolls normally ranged between 20 and 30 feet (Edward Maunde Thompson, *An Introduction to Greek and Latin Palaeography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), 46). Richards notes that the copy of the Isaiah Scroll discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls, which dates roughly to the time of the NT, measured 10 inches by 24 feet (Richards, *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing*, 51). Metzger and Ehrman say the normal length rarely exceeded 35 feet (Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration, Fourth Edition*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 12). Johnson names a normative range of 3-15 meters (approx. 10-49 feet) (Johnson, "Ancient Book," 264).

expense.[67] The cost of scrolls would suggest with near certainty that the author of Hebrews did not own his own scrolls of each of the LXX books from which he quotes. Instead, if he were to use a scroll, he would have to access a public copy, such as by studying at a local synagogue.[68]

We know that villages had scrolls of the Torah. For example, Jesus reads from a scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-21), and Josephus records the execution of a Roman soldier for destroying a Torah scroll (*Ant.* 20.115-116; *J.W.* 2.229-31). Josephus assures his Gentile readers that Jews do not conceal their scriptures, but invites others to examine the scriptures (*Ant.* 16:43-44). It is not immediately clear, however, that these scrolls were written in Greek. The scrolls of Deuteronomy and Ezekiel that were discovered in the synagogue at Masada[69] were all in Hebrew, as were five other biblical scrolls found elsewhere at Masada.[70] Although the passage from Isaiah in Luke 4 follows the LXX, it is likely that the synagogue in Nazareth, a village where Aramaic was commonly spoken, would have read scripture in Hebrew.[71]

Although "there is no direct archeological data for the use of specific copies of *Greek* Scripture in synagogues in Israel or in the Diaspora,"[72] literary evidence suggests the presence of Greek scriptures in Greek-speaking communities from the first century BCE onwards.[73] For example, the Theodotos inscription (*CIJ* ii 1404) discovered in Jerusalem, dated to the first century CE,[74] states, "Thodotus, son of

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[67] Richards, *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing*, 52.

[68] On synagogues as places for public study and instruction, see Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 134-59.

[69] Whether there was actually a synagogue at Masada is a debated point. Runesson, Binder, and Olsson suggest, "While the original function of the building is uncertain, renovations made during the First Jewish Revolt clearly adapted it for use as a synagogue" (Anders Runesson, Donald D. Binder, and Birger Olsson, *The Ancient Synagogue from its Origins to 200 C.E.: A Source Book*, AJEC 72 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 55).

[70] Emanuel Tov, "The Text of the Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek Bible Used in the Ancient Synagogues," in *The Ancient Synagogue from its Origins until 200 C.E.: Papers Presented at an International Conference at Lund University, October 14-17, 2001*, ed. Birger Olsson and Magnus Zetterholm (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2003), 238-42.

[71] Donald D. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts: The Place of Synagogues in the Second Temple Period*, SBLDS 169 (Atlanta: SBL, 1999), 401.

[72] Tov, "Text," 251 (italics his).

[73] Tov, "Text," 251-55.

[74] This point is debated, but Kloppenborg has argued convincingly for a pre-70 C.E. date for the Theodotos inscription, which "attests a synagogue building in Jerusalem, probably constructed in the early first century C.E. or perhaps the latter part of the first century B.C.E. (John S. Kloppenborg, "The

Vettenos a priest and *archisynagogos*, son of an *archisynagogos* and grandson of an *archisynagogos*, built this synagogue *for the reading of the Law* (εἰς ἀν[άγν]ωσ[ιν] νόμου) and the study of the commandments."[75] Given that the inscription is in Greek, the synagogue was likely used by Greek-speaking Jews who presumably used Greek scriptures. A number of Greek scrolls were discovered at Qumran, such as a scroll of the Greek Minor Prophets found at Naḥal Ḥever, dating to the end of the first century BCE.[76] Nevertheless, Tov admits, "When turning to the question of which specific text(s) of Greek Scripture was/were used in Greek-speaking communities, we are groping in the dark."[77]

Karrer suggests that the author of Hebrews worked from manuscripts. In particular, Karrer argues that the author of Hebrews used scrolls of the Psalms and Jeremiah. According to Karrer, the quotations of Jer 38 (MT 31) and Ps 94 (MT 95) are so extensive that "the conclusion is almost certain that the author possessed and used scrolls of the Psalms and Jeremiah."[78] However, he does not think that the author had a manuscript of Habakkuk, and so was working from memory at this point.[79] Karrer concludes on the use of LXX manuscripts in Hebrews:

> All in all, Hebrews gives indirect, but informative insight into the distribution of LXX manuscripts: even an author who is orientated strictly to the Scriptures of Israel – as is the case with the author of Hebrews – possessed, at the end of the first century, at most Psalms scrolls and one or two great prophets and in addition, had access to manuscripts of the Torah (the most widespread text of Israel and available in the synagogues).[80]

For our treatment of Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38, it is worth noting that Karrer suggests that the author of Hebrews would *not* have been working with a text of

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Theodotos Synagogue Inscription and the Problem of First-Century Synagogue Buildings," in *Jesus and Archaeology*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 251-79, here 278).

[75] Translation from Tov, "Text," 252 (italics his).

[76] Tov, "Text," 253; Emanuel Tov, R. A. Kraft, and P. J. Parsons, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8HevXIIgr)*, Discoveries in the Judaean Desert VIII (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1990).

[77] Tov, "Text," 253.

[78] Martin Karrer, "The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Septuagint," in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures*, ed. Wolfgang Kraus and R. Glenn Wooden. SBLSCS 53 (Atlanta: SBL, 2006), 342. See also McCullough, who suggests that the extensive quotations from Jer 31 and Ps 8 indicate that the author of Hebrews was not operating from memory (J. Cecil McCullough, "The Old Testament Quotations in Hebrews," *NTS* 26, no. 3 (1980), 368).

[79] Karrer, "Hebrews and LXX," 343.

[80] Karrer, "Hebrews and LXX," 344.

Habakkuk. Karrer's conclusion that the author of Hebrews had access to LXX manuscripts of the Psalms, one or two great prophets, and the Torah may be correct. Still, given the paucity of clear archaeological evidence establishing whether and which LXX scrolls would have been accessible to the author of Hebrews, we cannot say with certainty that he was operating with a manuscript. This is a possibility, but not a certainty.

Nevertheless, assuming the author of Hebrews had access to scrolls of the LXX, locating a desired text to quote from was exceedingly difficult. An author must unroll a scroll (which, as noted above, could be as long as 30 feet), locate a desired passage without the aid of clear indications of where various parts of passages begin and end, and then roll the scroll back to the beginning.[81] The reader must use two hands to wind the scroll so that the narrow columns of writing can be read.[82] In addition, there are no verse references, paragraph markers, or page numbers to help locate a desired passage or make reference to it for others.[83] Johnson notes that indentation and reverse indentation were common in documents but rare in scrolls. He writes, "In general, then, lectional aids were few, and little by way of help or intervention interrupted the flow of the letters. Thorough training was necessary for one to be able to read this *scriptio continua* readily and comfortably."[84] As a result, as Achtemeier notes, "authors did not 'check references.' "[85] So, Achtemeier concludes: "In light of the pervasive orality of the environment, and the physical nature of written documents, references were therefore much more likely to be quoted from memory than to be copied from a source."[86]

Hence, we should pause before assuming that the author of Hebrews has before him a manuscript of the LXX and deliberately alters his quotations to match

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[81] Thompson explains: "By the time the reader had read the entire roll, it had become reversed, the beginning being now in the centre and the end being outside; therefore, before putting it away, it must be rolled back into its proper form, a process which the idle man would shirk and the methodical reader would accomplish by holding the revolving material steady under his chin, while his two hands were employed in winding up the roll" (Thompson, *Introduction*, 49-50).

[82] Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the NT*, 12. See also Johnson, "Ancient Book," 258-60.

[83] Paul J. Achtemeier, "Omne Verbum Sonat: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity," *JBL* 109, no. 1 (1990), 26-27.

[84] Johnson, "Ancient Book," 262.

[85] Achtemeier, "Omne Verbum Sonat," 27.

[86] Achtemeier, "Omne Verbum Sonat," 27.

his theological purposes.[87] The author may or may not have had access to a scroll, and if he did, he may or may not have labored through the process of locating the precise passage. These observations make it exceedingly unlikely that the author was working from a manuscript of the LXX with every quotation from the OT.

III.3. Conclusion

Therefore, we are left with three main reasons for caution with regard to our assertions of authorial intention in relation to differences from the LXX. (1) *The LXX is a misnomer.* The author of Hebrews may have been working directly from a text, but we do not know what that text actually said. Even if the Göttingen edition is essentially correct, we cannot know that the author of Hebrews was working with a manuscript exactly as we have it in the Göttingen edition. Extensive text-critical care must be taken, as van der Bergh and Gheorghita do, to determine Hebrews' likely *Vorlage* should an interpreter wish to ascribe authorial intention to changes. (2) The author of Hebrews may not have been able to read. (3) Even if the author could read, we cannot know whether he had access to a copy of the passage he is quoting.

With no text before him, the author would have been working from memory (albeit a brilliant one). Working from memory, the author could have misremembered the passage. Van der Bergh responds, "It is highly unlikely that such a close relationship to the text of the LXX could have been established if the quotations were made by way of memory. In general, the text of Hebrews resembles the text of the LXX in detail."[88] He does not, however, defend why it is unlikely that the author of Hebrews could have recalled from memory a text that closely resembles the LXX. Given the oral culture, it is rather conceivable that the author could have reproduced a text of sacred Scripture with a high degree of accuracy. Nevertheless, this does not preclude the possibility that the author still intentionally alters the quotations. It is possible that the author remembers the passage perfectly and still deliberately alters the quotation to suit his theological purposes. Any divergences could be attributed to a number of factors, with authorial intention being only one possible conclusion.

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[87] Similarly Achtemeier of Paul: "the assumption that Paul is laboriously quoting a source he has in front of him is overwhelmingly likely to be false" (Achtemeier, "Omne Verbum Sonat," 27).

[88] van der Bergh, "Textual Comparison," 369.

Moving forward, then, we are limited to what we can say about authorial intention and the LXX. We simply cannot know for sure if the author of Hebrews changed a text intentionally. However, we can still make observations at the literary level without insisting on authorial intention. Such observations can discuss how the LXX text as we have it in Hebrews reads differently on its own merit than it does when it appears in another form in other sources. Without ascribing certain authorial intention, these claims are appropriate. And so, when I make such observations in the following treatment of Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38, I do so with this disclaimer in view.

IV. FAITH IN THE FACE OF DEATH

We return now to Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38 and the depiction of faith therein. I will argue that faith in these verses follows the same pattern as we saw with respect to Jesus: faith involves endurance in the face of death in hope of eschatological life to follow.

IV.1. The Parousia in 10:37?

There is little doubt that ὁ ἐρχόμενος in 10:37 is a reference to the Messiah.[89] The author of Hebrews uses forms of ἔρχομαι five times (6:7; 8:8; 10:37; 11:8; 13:23), with the participle appearing only twice (6:7; 10:37), and only here with the article. The author of Hebrews may have been influenced by Jewish[90] or early Christian[91] use of ὁ ἐρχόμενος as a messianic title. The text of Hab 2:3 in Hebrews also includes the article with ἐρχόμενος (which is absent in most LXX versions), suggesting that a specific person is in view.[92] Jesus, therefore, is ὁ ἐρχόμενος.

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[89] See also Heliso, who suggests that ὁ ἐρχόμενος as Christ is "beyond dispute" (Heliso, *Pistis*, 63).

[90] For ὁ ἐρχόμενος as the Messiah in the LXX, see Ps 118:26 (applied to Jesus in Matt 23:29 and Luke 19:38).

[91] Within the NT, see Matt 3:11, 11:3, 21:9; Luke 7:19, 19:38; John 1:15, 1:27, 11:27; and Rev 1:4.

[92] Interpreters widely agree on this point. See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 302; Braun, *Hebräer*, 332; Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 614; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 554; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *To Advance the Gospel: New Testament Studies* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 243; Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (London: SPCK, 1974), 45; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 304; Steyn, "Quest," 320; Thomas, "Old Testament Citations," 316; and Westcott, *Hebrews*, 348. Further, Attridge argues that the translators of the LXX probably took ἐρχόμενος as personal, "since the masculine participle cannot modify what should be the subject of ἥξει, namely, the noun 'vision' (ὅρασις), which is feminine in Greek" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 302). Furthermore, the LXX translates the Hebrew חכה לו ("wait for it") with ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν ("wait for him"). The masculine pronoun in Hebrew (ו) refers to

The author of Hebrews suggests "the coming one" (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) will be "coming" again: "For yet a little while, the coming one will come and will not delay (ἔτι γὰρ μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον, ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἥξει καὶ οὐ χρονίσει)" (10:37). That the author knows Christ has already "come" is clear (10:5), and so the coming one's coming without delay is taken by most interpreters as a reference to the Parousia. For example, Koester writes, "The author does not cite Hab 2:3 to prove that Christ will return, but to articulate a belief in the second coming that his listeners already consider to be true on the basis of common Christian teaching."[93] Similarly, Hofius suspects the hearers of Hebrews were struggling with the delay of the Parousia: "Man hat mit Recht vermutet, daß die Gemeinde, an die der auctor ad Hebraeos seinen λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως richtet, durch die Verzögerung der Parusie Jesu Christi angefochten war."[94]

A possible support for seeing the Parousia in Heb 10:37 concerns the difference between Hebrews and the LXX with regard to the tense and mood of χρονίζω in Hab 2:3. Hebrews features a future indicative with one negative adverb (οὐ), while the LXX has an aorist subjunctive with the double negative οὐ μή.[95] Of this change Heliso writes, "It is to be noted here that our author strengthens the idea of the coming of the Messiah by using the future οὐ χρονίσει instead of the LXX's subjunctive οὐ μὴ χρονίσῃ."[96] However, the aorist subjunctive and future indicative are related forms, and grammarians are still debating the different shades of meaning when comparing the aorist subjunctive to the future indicative. Future indicatives are

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חזון, which the LXX renders as the feminine noun, ὅρασις, which cannot be the antecedent for αὐτόν (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 302 n 70).

[93] Koester, *Hebrews*, 467. See also Gheorghita: "the article appended to ἐρχόμενος transforms the messianic potential of the Habakkuk text into a clear messianic reference to the climactic eschatological event of Christ's *Parousia*" (Gheorghita, *Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, 220, italics his). So too Mackie: 10:37-39 "clearly recalls the mention of Jesus' 'second' coming in 9:28" (Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 132).

[94] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 150. See also Lindars, who posits the delay of the Parousia as the "obvious" main reason for the hearers' laxity: "Since the joyful days of the beginning of their conversion the readers have lost confidence in the truth of the gospel, and this is why they are in such a quandary about their consciousness of sin. It is obvious that the main reason for this is the delay of the parousia, for which they were not prepared" (Barnabas Lindars, *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 107). See also Grässer, *Hebräer 1*, 114.

[95] The drop of the μή in Hebrews is probably of little significance, as μή does not usually modify indicative verbs. The exceptions to the rule are when μή occurs in a question expecting a negative answer and in second class contra-factual clauses. See Porter, *Idioms*, 281.

[96] Heliso, *Pistis*, 65 n 100. See also Thomas, "Old Testament Citations," 316.

sometimes used in situations normally reserved for aorist subjunctives, and the subjunctive sometimes functions like a future indicative.[97] For example, the author of Hebrews quotes Jer 31:34 in Heb 8:12 and 10:17. He changes from the aorist subjunctive in 8:12 (οὐ μὴ μνησθῶ) to the future indicative in 10:17 (οὐ μὴ μνησθήσομαι). The context in these two passages in Hebrews gives no clues to suggest an intended variation of meaning, and so in these cases the future indicative and the aorist subjunctive can be read as near synonyms. If, as we see with regard to 8:12 and 10:17, the author of Hebrews takes the freedom to alter the tense and mood of a verb from his LXX text (or his memory thereof) without any intended shift in meaning, then the change to the future indicative in Hab 2:3 does not offer additional evidence of the Parousia in Heb 10:37.

Hebrews is not brimming with expectations of a Parousia. Heb 10:25, with the mention of "the Day drawing near" may be a Parousia expectation, but this cannot be certain. "The Day" of 10:25 is likely in the vein of Day of the Lord judgment expectations in the OT, which does not necessitate a messianic Parousia in Hebrews.[98] Heb 9:28 is the only clear expectation of a second appearance of Christ. This second appearance does not necessarily refer to Jesus' Parousia, however. Nowhere else in the NT does an author refer to Jesus' Parousia as a second (δεύτερος) coming with the passive of ὁράω (ὀφθήσεται).[99] This would also be the only occasion where the Parousia is linked solely with salvation.[100]

Given that the Parousia is not a strong theme in Hebrews, we have justification to look to other possible explanations for the language of "the coming one coming (ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἥξει)" in "a very little while (μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον)" in Heb 10:37.

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[97] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 426, 571. For a summary of the major options when analyzing the future form, see Porter, *Idioms*, 43.

[98] On "the Day" in Heb 10:25 and the eschatological Day of the Lord in the LXX, see Allen, *Deuteronomy and Eschatology in Hebrews*, 99-100; and Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 125-27.

[99] Braun, *Hebräer*, 286; Erich Grässer, *An die Hebräer. 2. Teilband (Hebr 7,1-10,18)*, EKKNT XVII/2 (Zürich: Benziger, 1993), 199; Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 98 n 213; Motyer, "Not Apart from Us," 242 n 18.

[100] Motyer, "Not Apart from Us," 242 n 18.

IV.2. A Coming at Death

Instead of Jesus' coming as a Parousia in 10:37, I suggest that his coming refers instead to a coming to individuals after death. Aquinas suggests that in addition to the Parousia, Heb 10:37 also anticipates the Lord's coming to individuals at death:

> There is a twofold advent of the Lord according to the twofold judgment. One is general, namely the universal judgment at the end; the other is particular, at the death of each man. Regarding each, then, he says, **For yet a little,** for the brevity of time. … **And He that is to come, will come,** swiftly, **and will not delay,** whether in death or in judgment. Jas. 5:9: *Behold the judge standeth before the door*.[101]

Menno Simons offers a similar reading in a letter consoling a sick woman: "Be comforted in Christ Jesus, for after the winter comes the summer, and after death comes life. O sister, rejoice that you are a true daughter of your beloved Father. Soon the inheritance of His glorious promise will be due. But a little while, says the Word of the Lord, and He who is coming shall come and His reward will be with Him."[102] Similarly, Motyer connects Jesus' second coming in 9:28 to the image of postmortem judgment in 9:27: "there is a strong implication in this passage that Christ's second appearance 'to save those who are eagerly waiting for him' (9:28) is not just the end-of-the-age 'Day' (10:25), but an individual post-mortem appearance to save us in the context of the judgment we face in and at the very moment of our death."[103] That the coming one's "coming" in Heb 10:37 is a coming to individuals in death is substantiated by two observations.

IV.2.1. A Context of Death in Hebrews 10

First, the impending death of the hearers is in view in the immediate context in Heb 10:32-36.

Scholars have noticed for some time a shift in Heb 10:19, where the author of Hebrews turns from his discussion of Christ's high priesthood to a direct application to the community.[104] In light of Jesus' sonship, his priesthood after the order of

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[101] Aquinas, *Hebrews*, 224 (bold and italics original).

[102] Menno Simons, "Letter of Consolation to a Sick Saint, c. 1557," in *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, ed. John Christian Wenger (Scottdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1956), 1052.

[103] Motyer, "Not Apart from Us," 241-42.

[104] Heb 10:19-22 hearkens back to 4:16 and the exhortation to approach the throne of grace with boldness. For the parallels between 4:14-16 and 10:19-23, see Guthrie, *Structure*, 79-82 and Wolfgang

Melchizedek, and his once-for-all sacrifice for our forgiveness, we have confidence to draw near to God (10:19-22). The author calls on his hearers to encourage others and to continue meeting together and even more so "as you see the Day approaching" (10:24-25). He follows up his exhortation with one of the most severe warnings in the sermon in 10:26-31. He warns that if we continue sinning willfully there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, and we have to face the fear of falling into the hands of the living God.[105]

The author follows the strong warning in 10:26-31 with a word of encouragement in 10:32-39. He recalls the hearers' previous faithfulness as a basis for present encouragement: they suffered persecution after they had been enlightened, they were compassionate to those in prison, and they cheerfully accepted the plundering of their possessions because they knew that they possessed something better and more lasting (32-34).[106] The author uses the hearers' own past stories of enduring trials as an example,[107] pressing them in 10:36: "for you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive the promise." Reception of the promise does not come at the Parousia, but after doing the will of God. Presumably this will of God is endurance through trials, perhaps endurance to the point of death in suffering, exercising obedience in this regard as Jesus did (Heb 5:8). Similarly, the author's application of Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:39 deals with either death (ἀπώλειαν) or life (περιποίησιν ψυχῆς). Therefore, the threat of death is clearly in view in context.

IV.2.2. Isaiah 26:20 and μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον

Second, the author of Hebrews prefaces his quotation from Hab 2:3-4 with three words from Isa 26:20: μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον.[108] In the entirety of the canon, μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον occurs only here and in Isa 26:20, so it is clear that Hebrews is taking this

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Nauck, "Zum Aufbau des Hebräerbriefes," in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias*, ed. Walther Eltester (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1960), 200-203.

[105] I treated these verses in more detail in chapter 4, section IV.2.3.

[106] I discussed persecution and Hebrews in more detail in chapter 4, section II.2.

[107] Heb 10:37-39 thus connects the hearers' stories (10:32-36) with the stories of Israel's heroes in chapter 11.

[108] Here the author of Hebrews seamlessly incorporates Isa 26:20 and Hab 2:3-4 into his exhortation. The author customarily introduces OT citations with an introductory phrase (1:5, 6, 7, 8, 13; 2:6, 12; 3:7; 4:4, 7; 5:5, 6; 7:17, 21; 8:8; 10:5, 15; and 12:5).

phrase from Isaiah.[109] Furthermore, Ellingworth has shown a number of parallels between Isa 26 and this section of Hebrews,[110] the clearest being the echo of Isa 26:11 in Heb 10:27, where both speak of fire that will consume adversaries. Isa 26 in the LXX deals with death and resurrection life,[111] and by including μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον the author of Hebrews likely alludes to this theme.

In Isa 26, the prophet notes that Israel acknowledged only the Lord's name, and for those who do not do likewise, the prophet expects only death: "But the dead will not see life, nor will physicians raise them up; because of this you have brought them and destroyed (ἀπώλεσας) them and taken away all their males" (26:14).[112] "Destruction" appears here as in Heb 10:39 (ἀπώλειαν). Isa 26:19 expects something better for God's people, because they look forward to God's resurrecting power: "The dead shall rise, and those who are in the tombs shall be raised, and those who are on the earth shall rejoice; for the dew from you is healing to them, but the land of the impious shall fall." Here the prophet pictures a "little passionate community of faith, surrounded by adversaries, having cast its lot with the only alternative power it knows or trusts."[113] The people may not receive their deliverance in this life, but as Brueggemann suggests, that is not "a deterrent to Yahweh's resolve and therefore no ground for Israel to forsake its deep trust in Yahweh."[114]

It is in this context of faith, death, and life that we find μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον in Isa 26:20: "Go, my people, enter your chambers; shut your door; hide yourselves for a little while (μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον) until the wrath of the Lord has passed." Admittedly, this language of entering the chambers and shutting the doors does not at first glance resonate with the author of Hebrews' exhortation. After all, it may sound like

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[109] For an argument for Hebrews' awareness of Isaiah in general, see J. Cecil McCullough, "Isaiah in Hebrews," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 159-73.

[110] Ellingworth writes, "Compare Is. 26:11, πῦρ τοὺς ὑπεναντίους ἔδεται, with Heb. 10:27; Is. 26:16, on the affliction (θλῖψις) by which God disciplines his people, with Heb. 10:33 (cf. 12:4-11); Isaiah's contrast between the city of the godless, doomed to destruction (25:2), and the 'strong city' (26:1) of God's people, with Heb. 11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14. These chapters are strongly eschatological … with references to hope (Is. 26:4, 8; cf. Heb. 10:23; 11:1) and use of the expression 'in that day' (25:9; 26:1; cf. Heb. 10:25)" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 555).

[111] See also Anderson, *"But God Raised Him"*, 56-58 and Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 118.

[112] This and all translations from Isa 26 are taken from the NETS.

[113] Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1-39*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 208.

[114] Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1-39*, 208.

"shrinking back" to hide in a chamber.[115] However, a number of earlier interpreters do not find withdrawal here, but rather continue with the narrative of death. For example, Augustine, Jerome, Tertullian, and Clement of Rome all understand "enter your chambers" as a reference to the grave.[116] This is not the typical use of the word in the LXX,[117] but given the prevailing narrative of death in Isa 26, this interpretation may carry some validity.[118]

Isa 26 clearly deals with themes of death and resurrection life, and by prefacing his quotation of Hab 2:3-4 with the unique three-word phrase μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον from Isa 26:20, the author of Hebrews signals how he wishes his hearers to understand "the coming" in Heb 10:37. This "coming" is the coming of the Messiah to individuals after their deaths, an imminent possibility for the persecuted community.

IV.3. Conclusion

Therefore, faith in Heb 10:37-38 is depicted in terms of death and life. Faith is not a matter of enduring until the Parousia, but a matter of enduring in the face of suffering in hope of finding life. Hab 2:4 puts this into clear terms for us: "my righteous one will live by faith (ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται)." With Ellingworth, I read ἐκ πίστεως with ζήσεται (" my righteous one will live by faith") rather than with ὁ δίκαιος μου ("my righteous one [is righteous] by faith [and not works], and so lives).[119] This reading coordinates with the other two uses of δίκαιος elsewhere in Hebrews (11:4; 12:23), where in neither case is there a clear sense that

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[115] Lewis suggests that the author of Hebrews quotes Isa 26:20 for this very point. For Lewis, the original hearers of Hebrews were tempted with a mode of endurance characterized by shrinking back and hiding in their chambers (as seemingly encouraged in Isaiah), but the author of Hebrews uses the quotation from Hab 2:3-4 to refute such an ethic. The author of Hebrews thus reads Hab 2:3-4 against Isa 26:20. See Thomas W. Lewis, "'...And If He Shrinks Back' (Heb. X.38b)," *NTS* 22 (1975), 88-94. To the contrary, "entering the chambers" in Isa 26:20 is not withdrawaling in disobedience, but heeding the prophet's warning in a period of God's wrath.

[116] Steven A. McKinion, ed., *Isaiah 1-39*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Old Testament X (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 182-83.

[117] Prov 7:27 is the only verse that clearly associates "chambers" (ταμιεῖον) with death.

[118] Calvin's comment on Isa 26:19 is fitting: "The general meaning here is that God guards believers, although they are like dead people, yet they will live amidst death itself or will rise again after their death" (John Calvin, *Isaiah*, ed. Alister McGrath and J. I. Packer, The Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2000), 176).

[119] As Ellingworth rightly notes, Hebrews is not concerned with the contrast between faith and works (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 555).

faith makes one righteous.[120] "Will live (ζήσεται)," in view of the context of death in which this quotation appears in Hebrews, refers to life beyond death. This depiction of faith aligns with Jesus' faith as we found in the previous chapter: faith in the face of death concludes assuredly in postmortem life. As a result, ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται is a succinct expression of the rewritten narrative. The default human story is also in view, as Hab 2:4 also warns, "if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him (ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ)." As such, the author of Hebrews quotes Hab 2:3-4 (with Isa 26:20) in Heb 10:37-38 to show succinctly two stories (timidity and faith) and their assured conclusions (death and life). The author depicts his hearers as people undergoing persecution, in danger of facing their own deaths. If they are faithful through suffering, they will realize the assured conclusion to the story of faith, and so find life despite death.

V. THE FAITHFULNESS OF CHRIST AS ASSURANCE

In addition to expressing the rewritten narrative, I would further suggest that the faith of Christ is in view in Heb 10:37-38 as well, albeit in allusive terms.[121] I am not suggesting that Heb 10:37-38 is about Christ only, but that we hear an allusion to Christ's faith as assurance of the truism, "God's righteous one will live by faith."

Some interpreters have understood Hab 2:4 christologically, especially when it appears in Paul (Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11).[122] By this reading, ὁ δίκαιος refers to Jesus and, since Hays, the passage points to the narrative of Christ's faithfulness to the point

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[120] In 11:4, Abel is "commended as righteous (ἐμαρτυρήθη εἶναι δίκαιος)." This commendation comes in response (δι᾽ ἧς) to his "more acceptable offering to God (πλείονα θυσίαν … προσήνεγκεν τῷ θεῷ)." Abel makes this offering "by faith (πίστει)," but the commendation as righteous is likely a response to the obedience issued out of faith (the offering). Heb 12:23 has no language of faith, and the spirits are simply named as δίκαιος without any indication of why they are righteous.

[121] Although he does not argue explicitly for the christological reading, Hamm notes the christological reading of Hab 2:3-4 as a valid possibility: "R. B. Hays … writing about Galatians 3, makes a good case that Hab 2:3-4 in the LXX carried a messianic sense, reading *ho dikaios* in parallel with *ho erchomenos*. Such a secondary meaning here would surely be in harmony with Hebrews' christology" (Hamm, "Faith," 275 n 15).

[122] Douglas A. Campbell, "Romans 1:17 - A *Crux Interpretum* for the Πίστις Χριστοῦ Debate," *JBL* 113 (1994), 281-84; Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 613-16; Douglas A. Campbell, "The Faithfulness of Jesus Christ in Romans 3:22," in *The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical, and Theological Studies*, ed. Michael F. Bird and Preston M. Sprinkle (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009), 64-66; Hanson, *Studies*, 40-45; Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 132-41; Richard B. Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 136-142; Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 78-82, 110-11; and (more cautiously) Heliso, *Pistis and the Righteous One*. For a summary of this debate in Paul, see my treatment elsewhere (Easter, "Pistis Christou Debate," 40-41).

of death and his subsequent resurrection. That the author of Hebrews alludes to the faithfulness of Christ in Heb 10:37-38 is suggested by two points.

First, the word order of Hab 2:4 is different in Heb 10:37-38. The sentence clauses "if he draws back… (ἐὰν ὑποστείληται…)" and "my righteous one by faith… (ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται…)" are flipped in Hebrews so that "if he draws back" does not follow "the coming one (ὁ ἐρχόμενος)" (which, as noted above, is clearly a reference to Christ), but "my righteous one": "And my righteous one will live by faith, and if he draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

Some commentators see the author of Hebrews intentionally rearranging the text in order to build a chiasm in 10:38-39: πίστεως … ὑποστείληται … ὑποστολῆς … πίστεως.[123] By this reading, the author of Hebrews wished to conclude his application of the Hab 2:3-4 quotation on a high note ("but we are of faith [πίστεως] unto the preservation of the soul") rather than a sour note ("we are not of timidity [ὑποστολῆς] unto destruction") (10:39). In order to maintain this concluding word order and form a chiasm, the author flipped the phrases in Hab 2:3-4, so that "my righteous one will live by faith (πίστεως)" precedes "and if he shrinks back (ὑποστείληται)" (10:38). This explanation may be correct, but it does not on its own support either an anthropological or christological reading.

On the one hand, the switched word order could be evidence for an anthropological reading. By placing ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται (rather than ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτω) immediately after ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἥξει καὶ οὐ χρονίσει, the author of Hebrews has eliminated the ambiguity that the coming one could be the one in danger of shrinking back.[124] The danger of shrinking back is reserved for human beings who are not ὁ ἐρχόμενος. So, Mackie comments, "These two clauses represent two options and identities laid before the recipients: they may be either 'my righteous ones' who 'live by faith,' or 'those who

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[123] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 304; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 369 n 78; Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 307. Gheorghita notes the lack of textual evidence in Hebrew and Greek manuscripts for this rearrangement, and so posits that the alterations are original to the author of Hebrews (Gheorghita, *Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, 220). As I have noted above, I am less convinced than Gheorghita that the author of Hebrews intentionally alters LXX quotations.

[124] Gheorghita, *Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, 221; Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 132-33.

shrink back' and find the Lord's displeasure."[125] However, Mackie makes the singular ὁ δίκαιός μου a plural ("my righteous *ones*").

On the other hand, the flipped word order could instead support the christological reading. The word order in Hebrews places ὁ ἐρχόμενος in "an overt parallelism"[126] to ὁ δίκαιός μου:

ἔτι γὰρ μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον,

ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἥξει καὶ οὐ χρονίσει·

ὁ δὲ **δίκαιός μου** ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται,

καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ.

Read thusly, the text in Hebrews makes "the coming one" and "my righteous one" point to the same person. If ὁ ἐρχόμενος is Christ, and if ὁ δίκαιός μου is the same person as ὁ ἐρχόμενος, then ὁ δίκαιός μου is also Christ.[127]

Second, in addition to being parallel to the christological ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ δίκαιός μου may carry its own christological significance. The author of Hebrews uses the adjective δίκαιος only three times (10:38; 11:4; 12:23), and only here does it appear as a substantive. As with ὁ ἐρχόμενος with the article, so also ὁ δίκαιός μου with the article appears to be a single person. Heliso suggests that "ὁ δίκαιός μου has a similar sense to the messianic υἱός μου in Heb 1:5 (cf. Ps 2:7; 89:3, 20; Isa 53:11)."[128] Similarly, Hanson suggests the added μου might "well have been in order to underline the messianic significance of ὁ δίκαιος."[129] Furthermore, like ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ δίκαιος is used in reference to the Messiah[130] in Jewish (both within[131] and outside[132] the LXX) and early Christian[133] literature.

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[125] Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 133. See also Gray: "This slight modification has the effect of making his audience the subject of the oracle: 'those who remain faithful in spite of the suffering involved are 'my righteous one[s],' while those who do not are 'those who shrink back' (10:39)" (Gray, *Godly Fear*, 159, brackets his).

[126] Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 614. See also Campbell, "Crux," 283 and 283 n 55; Heliso, *Pistis*, 65-66.

[127] Similarly, Campbell suggests that Hebrews' "early Christian auditors would have interpreted 'the righteous' and 'the coming one' here as Christ" (Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 614).

[128] Heliso, *Pistis*, 65.

[129] Hanson, *Studies*, 45.

[130] For extended treatments of the Messiah and ὁ δίκαιος, see Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 613-15; Peter Doble, "Luke 23.47 - The Problem of Dikaios," *BT* 44, no. 3 (1993), 320-31; Peter Doble, *The Paradox of Salvation*, SNTSMS 87 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 127-60; Hays, *Conversion of the Imagination*, 119-42; Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 189-90.

For these two reasons, the author may also be alluding to the faithfulness of Christ with Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38. Jesus, the coming one and God's righteous one, lived by faith, having realized life after death, thereby proving that "God's righteous one lives by faith."

If the Parousia is not in view in Heb 10:37, then the possibility of the Messiah "shrinking back" in 10:38 is not a problem. To be sure, it would be odd for the author of Hebrews to fear that Christ, who has been made perfect (2:10; 5:9; 7:28) and who obediently endured death (5:7-9; 10:5-7; 12:1-2), might shrink back upon his second coming and so find ill favor in the sight of God. However, that Jesus might "shrink back" prior to being made perfect coordinates with the Christology of Hebrews. The author of Hebrews operates with a robust understanding of the humanity of Jesus, and part of Jesus being truly human was his openness to temptation. Jesus suffered when being tempted (2:18), and was himself tempted in every way like us, yet without sin (4:15). Jesus was faced with the real temptation of shrinking back in the face of death, and yet "despite the immensity of the suffering Jesus faced, he showed loyalty to God marked by his steadfast refusal to shrink back from his task."[134] Instead, God's righteous one *lived* by faith.

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[131] For possible associations between ὁ δίκαιος and a messianic figure in the LXX, see Wis 2:12-20 and Isa 53:11.

[132] Outside of the LXX, *1 Enoch* offers the strongest connection between the Messiah and the righteous one. On the righteous one and *1 Enoch*, see Hays, *Conversion of the Imagination*, 122-23. *1 Enoch* pictures a messianic righteous one who appears in the context of final judgment (38:1-6), and who is called "the Elect One of righteousness and of faith" (39:6), "the Son of Man, to whom belongs the righteousness and with whom righteousness dwells" (46:3), and "the Righteous and Elect One" (53:6). This figure is a minister of God's judging and saving power who is glorified by God (*1 En.* 61) and someone who is concealed by God until the appointed time (*1 En.* 62:7). All of these citations come from the *Similitudes of Enoch*, the date of which has been questioned, but likely dates to the turn of the era (see James H. Charlesworth, "Can We Discern the Composition Date of the Parables of Enoch?," in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 450-68; Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, *1 Enoch* 6; Leslie W. Walck, "The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch and the Gospels," in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 300). Nevertheless, as Hays has suggested, these dating questions do little to affect the force of the argument. Whether the *Similitudes* in *1 Enoch* appear before or after the writing of the NT, they stand as an example of a text that associates the righteous one with a messianic figure (Hays, *Conversion of the Imagination*, 123).

[133] For possible christological uses of ὁ δίκαιος in the NT see Matt 27:19; Luke 23:47; Acts 3:13-15; 7:52; 22:14; Jas 5:6; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 John 2:1, 29; and 3:7. See also Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 613-14; Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 81 n 78. If Hab 2:4 in Paul is christological, then we can also add Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11 to the list.

[134] Heliso, *Pistis*, 65. Likewise, Hanson: the author of Hebrews "might perhaps have seen the line about 'shrinking back' as a prophecy of Gethsemane: the Messiah was tempted to shrink back, but

While we cannot say with certainty that the faithfulness of Christ is in view in Heb 10:37-38 – and it is clearly not the only point in view – the author of Hebrews may be alluding to the story of Jesus' faithful endurance unto death and subsequent resurrection as an assurance for those who "have need of endurance" (10:36).

VI. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have argued that the author of Hebrews quotes Hab 2:3-4 in Heb 10:37-38 to bring two stories together in stark contrast: timidity leads to destruction (the default human story and its assured conclusion), while faith leads to life (the rewritten story and its assured conclusion). The author is convinced that we are "of faith ($\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\omega\varsigma$)" and so will experience life ($\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\pi\omicron\iota\eta\sigma\iota\nu\ \psi\upsilon\chi\hat{\eta}\varsigma$) (10:39). "My righteous one who lives by faith," I have suggested, refers generally to any human being who is participating in the rewritten story, but also alludes to Jesus, the Messianic $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$, whose faithfulness ending in life assures the truth of the rewritten narrative.

This concludes part 3 of the thesis, which investigated the rewritten story. In the next chapter, I address how human beings can participate in this new story.

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resisted the temptation and went boldly on to accept the experience of death and vindication" (Hanson, *Studies*, 45).

Part 4:

Participating in the New Story

Chapter 9

Human Faith in Hebrews

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the culmination of everything we have covered thus far, and so will benefit from a quick review. In chapter 2 I laid the theoretical groundwork for a narrative approach to reading Scripture and understanding human identity. I argued that human identity is narratively oriented, such that we can understand ourselves as part of a story. In part 2 of the thesis (chapters 3-5), I investigated the "default human story" according to Hebrews. We found that God intended human beings to receive glory and honor, but these good purposes for humanity have not been realized. Instead, the default human story is a pessimistic one, characterized by unfaithfulness and leading to the assured conclusion of eschatological death. We found that this story held true even for the heroes of faith in Israel's tradition: they all died without receiving what was promised (11:39). Part 3 (chapters 6-8) then addressed the story rewritten in Christ. There we found that Jesus, who participated fully in the human story, wrote a new story by faithfully enduring to the point of death and by enjoying the eschatological hope that was previously unrealized by humanity. As illustrated most clearly in 12:1-2, Jesus pioneered faith by faithfully enduring the cross and he perfected faith by realizing life beyond death. The story rewritten in Christ is characterized by faithfulness and concludes assuredly in eschatological life. This new conclusion is not assured for all people, but only those who are participating in the rewritten story. What "participating in the re-written story" looks like is our concern in this chapter.

In this chapter, I investigate what faith looks like for human beings participating in the story rewritten in Christ. Given that the new story is one characterized by faith, the question of what human faith looks like is the key consideration. I will argue that faith in Hebrews is christological, ethical, eschatological, and ecclesiological.

The christological, ethical, eschatological, and ecclesiological dimensions of faith are all intimately related, and so it is admittedly misleading to discuss them separately. Nevertheless for the sake of clarity I will discuss the elements individually, but I do so with constant awareness of the other related dimensions in play. In particular, as we will see, the christological element of faith also gives expression to the ethical and eschatological dimensions. That is, given that Jesus is the faithful one *par excellence* (the christological dimension), his faithfulness to the point of death (the ethical dimension) in hope of a life beyond death (the eschatological dimension) demonstrates what faith entails. I will argue that human beings participate in this faith most clearly by persevering with the travelling people of God (the ecclesiological dimension). In short, I am arguing that faith in Hebrews involves individuals joining together and moving forward as a community in radical costly discipleship, suffering with and like Christ in expectation of the eschatological hope Christ enjoys.

Before moving forward, a word of clarification is in order. The book of Hebrews is an "in-house" sermon addressed to people the author knows (more on this later), who have already endured persecution after "being enlightened" (10:32-34). Hebrews has no clear language of how to join the Christian movement for the first time, but is written to people who are already associated with Jesus.[1] The author of Hebrews likely had an understanding of how to join the Christian movement, and perhaps had relayed this information to the hearers of Hebrews at a prior time. The book of Hebrews, however, gives no clear instruction on how to "get in."[2] As a result, the question of how to "get in" can be addressed only by extracting a possible answer out of how the author expects his hearers to demonstrate faith now that they are *already* "in." Given that the author's primary concern is not with how to "get in" (but instead the danger of dropping out), this chapter is not devoted to answering this

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[1] So also Lehne: "the paraenetic appeals are never about 'getting in', but always about 'staying in' the NC [New Covenant], while the warnings are about the danger of 'dropping out' " (Susanne Lehne, *The New Covenant in Hebrews*, JSNTSup 44 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 107).

[2] To be sure, as van der Watt notes, Hebrews' failure to offer a comprehensive soteriology is not unusual in the NT: "[I]n the writings of the New Testament (or at least in most of them) there is no effort to formulate a comprehensive soteriology. Rather, soteriological images, emphasizing different aspects relevant to that particular situation, are presented" (Jan G. van der Watt, "Soteriology of the New Testament: Some Tentative Remarks," in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt. NovTSup 121 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 21).

question, but rather to how the author envisions human faith. In my treatment of the ecclesiological dimension of faith near the end of this chapter, I will offer a possible answer to how the author of Hebrews may have understood the way people can "get in;" but, given the absence of any clear evidence within the text, any possible answer must remain tentative.

II. CHRISTOLOGICAL FAITH

As we found in chapter 7, the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus as the faithful one *par excellence*. This is expressed most clearly in the image of Jesus as the pioneer and perfecter of faith who has already completed the race we are now running (12:1-2). For the author of Hebrews, Jesus is both the (1) enabler and (2) model of human faith.

II.1. Jesus as Enabler of Human Faith

In chapter 3, I argued that the default human story is characterized by unfaithfulness and that human beings need divine enablement to be faithful. Whitlark, reviewed in the introduction, makes the most extended case for divine enablement in Hebrews, but he does not address the function of Jesus' faithfulness in this regard. We can identify two ways in which the faithful Jesus enables human faith: (1) his faithfulness in sacrifice, and (2) his perfecting of faith.

First, the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus as a faithful high priest, obedient in sacrifice. This point is clearest in 2:17 and 10:5-10. In 2:17, Jesus is the "merciful and faithful high priest (ἐλεήμων γένηται καὶ πιστὸς ἀρχιερεὺς)" who makes "atonement for the sins of the people (εἰς τὸ ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ)."[3] The word πιστός does not appear in 10:5-10, but the description of Jesus alludes to his faithful obedience. The author of Hebrews places the words of Ps 39:7-9 LXX on the lips of Jesus and he expresses his desire to do God's will: "Behold, I have come to do your will, O God" (10:7).[4] The author deduces, "And by that will we have been

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[3] Jesus is also described as the high priest who is "faithful" (πιστός) in 3:1-2, but the author of Hebrews gives no clear indication of what this faithfulness entails.

[4] Hamm finds a number of parallels between Ps 39 LXX and Heb 5:7-8, and concludes: "This echo of the language of LXX Psalm 39 at Heb 5:7 confirms what can already be surmised from the development of the Letter, namely that the prayer of Jesus 'in the days of his flesh' coupled with the

sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:10). The author of Hebrews makes it clear elsewhere that the sacrifice of Jesus cleanses the human conscience so humans can serve God (9:14), ushers in the new covenant when God will inscribe his laws on human hearts (8:10), and allows us to enter the holy places (10:19-20).[5] In none of these cases does the author of Hebrews say explicitly that this sacrifice enables *faith*, but it is clear that the sacrifice of Jesus "facilitates the heart-obedience of believers."[6] I will show in more detail later in this chapter that obedience and faith are closely related. Jesus' faithfulness as high priest enables human faith by removing obstacles to obedience through his sacrifice.

Second, the author of Hebrews describes Jesus as ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of πίστις. I addressed these terms in detail in chapter 7, where I argued that as τελειωτής of πίστις, Jesus brought to completion the story of faith that had previously been unrealized even by the heroes of faith in Israel's tradition.[7] In this way, Jesus has enabled us to realize the eschatological hope as the assured conclusion to faithfulness.[8]

Therefore, Jesus is the enabler of faith in two ways. First, his faithfulness in sacrifice cleanses the human conscience so that human beings can be faithful to God. Second, by realizing faith's hopeful conclusion, Jesus enabled the possibility of the same for those who participate in the same story.

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obedience learned through suffering (in 5:7-8) is an alternative way of expressing the doing of God's will celebrated by the *pesher* of LXX Psalm 39 in chap. 10" (Hamm, "Faith," 285).

[5] Hamm notes further that Ps 39:8 LXX also features the image of God's law on the heart (Hamm, "Faith," 285).

[6] Hamm, "Faith," 284.

[7] Section II.3.1.

[8] On Jesus' realization of the eschatological hope as enabling human beings, see also Wallis: "Jesus is, thus, the first to reach faith's heavenly goal and, as a result of the way in which this was accomplished, has enabled others to follow in his footsteps" (Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 157). See also Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ*, 310.

II.2. Jesus as Model of Human Faith

Jesus is also the model of human faith.[9] This theme is recognized by a number of interpreters,[10] and I have already addressed the faith Jesus models throughout the thesis. With Jesus as the model of human faith, we see that human beings are called to endure like Jesus and can expect the same eschatological reward as Jesus.

II.2.1. Suffering as Παιδεία and Shared Progeny

Jesus as the model of human faith is clearest in Heb 12:1-3, where the author of Hebrews exhorts us to fix our eyes on Jesus. Jesus, who ran the race we are running and received the prize, exemplifies the type of runner we are to be. The paradigm of faithfulness in suffering extends into the next section, 12:4-11. The author notes that while his hearers are suffering in their struggle against sin,[11] they have not yet resisted to the point of bloodshed (12:4). He then encourages them to view their sufferings positively as a marker of their true identity as children of God. God is treating them as children by allowing them to endure the discipline (παιδεία) of suffering (12:7).

Croy has argued convincingly that the discipline (παιδεία) in view in Hebrews 12:5-11 is non-punitive and educative.[12] That is, the discipline of suffering that the hearers are undergoing is a formative experience that is not punishment for a sin or sins committed. Croy emphasizes that the distinction he is making is not between punitive and educative suffering, since punitive discipline can be educative. He instead distinguishes between punitive and non-punitive. He explains, "The distinguishing factor then is not whether learning results, but whether wrongdoing is presupposed. When learning does result, its precise nature may also help distinguish between punitive and non-punitive discipline. The former produces a chastened spirit, an eagerness to avoid further error; the latter produces a mature, hardy spirit, a toughness and endurance."[13] Within Jewish and Greco-Roman literature, Croy has

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[9] The author also encourages his hearers to imitate the faith of their local leaders (13:7) and of others who "through faith and patience inherit the promises" (6:12).

[10] In addition to those reviewed in the introduction, see also Hughes, *Hebrews and Hermeneutics*, 80; Miller, "Paul and Hebrews," 254; and Motyer, "Atonement in Hebrews," 145.

[11] As I noted in chapter 4, section II.2, the "sin" against which the hearers are struggling is likely a periphrasis for "sinners" who are persecuting them (as with Jesus in 12:3).

[12] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 192-214.

[13] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 77.

demonstrated that both punitive and non-punitive discipline of suffering is represented, and suffering is often framed as an educative experience.[14]

With respect to Heb 12:5-11, Croy offers four observations that suggest the discipline of suffering in view is non-punitive and educative. First, the athletic imagery in the passage (12:1-3, 4, 11, 12, and 13) aligns with a non-punitive view of suffering, as suffering within an athletic contest "contains no hint of culpability for the hardships endured."[15] Discipline (παιδεία), then, is not punitive, but akin to "rigorous training." Second, Croy acknowledges that the social situation of the hearers of Hebrews "was primarily one of persecution rather than moral failure," and "Nowhere does the author suggest that the readers are guilty of sins for which they are being punished through persecution."[16] Third, the heroes of faith in Heb 11 are not illustrations of people who endured suffering as punishment for wrongdoing, but who persevered in faith amidst difficult circumstances. If the author intends the experiences of these heroes to reflect or instruct the present hearers' circumstances, then the παιδεία in view is likely not punitive, but educative and non-punitive.[17] Fourth, the image of Jesus in 12:1-2 is not one of suffering as retribution for his sins, but as enduring suffering through persecution.[18]

The discipline in view in Heb 12:5-11, therefore, is a non-punitive, educative experience of suffering. As educative discipline, the suffering of discipline we undergo reflects Jesus' experience of learning obedience through suffering, although he was a Son (καίπερ ὢν υἱός) (5:8).[19] The author of Hebrews shows that suffering is the marker of being a child of God. As such, "it was fitting that God … in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (2:10).[20] Therefore, the image of Jesus faithfully enduring suffering in

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[14] His focus is not παιδεία in general, but παιδεία with divinely-directed suffering. For his study of discipline in suffering in Jewish and Greco-Roman sources, see Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 83-161.

[15] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 213.

[16] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 213.

[17] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 214.

[18] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 214.

[19] See also Bruce, *Hebrews*, 343; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 648; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 321; Koester, *Hebrews*, 527; and Schenck, "Keeping," 97. Huxhold suggests that the heroes of faith who endured suffering (esp. Heb 11:33-38) are in view as well (Harry N. Huxhold, "Faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *CTM* 38, no. 10 (1967), 659-60).

[20] See also Fiorenza: "Wenn Gott die Gemeinde durch Leiden züchtigt, dann handelt er an ihr wie an Söhnen: Sie sollen an seiner Heiligkeit Anteil erhalten. So hat er ja auch den Sohn durch Leiden

12:1-2 is the model of what faith looks like, and we should embrace similar suffering as the indication of our shared progeny with the Son.[21]

II.2.2. Other Examples of Jesus as Model of Faith

Hebrews 12:1-11 is the clearest example of Jesus as model of faith, but five other passages offer hints of the same theme. First, in Heb 2:12-13, the author of Hebrews uses three quotations from the LXX to depict Jesus as a brother among God's children (παιδία), who places his trust in God: " 'I will tell your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.' And again, 'I will put my trust in him.' And again, 'Behold, I and the children God has given me.' " Jesus in Heb 2:12-13 models faith in two ways. First, as I developed in chapter 7, Jesus here is depicted as one who exercises faith in the midst of suffering.[22] Jesus' suffering as a brother among the children (παιδία) in 2:13 prepares an interesting parallel to the children's discipline (παιδεία) of suffering in 12:3-11.[23] Second, Jesus' trust in God exemplifies the trust human beings are expected to show. In this way, we get the sense that insofar as faith in Hebrews is faith "in" someone, it is never faith in Christ (more on this below), but in God (see also 6:1 [πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν] and 11:6),[24] the one to whom Jesus prayed "with loud cries and tears" (5:7).

Second, Jesus is depicted as a model of faith in Heb 5:9, where he is said to be the source of eternal salvation for "all who obey him (πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν

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vollendet, damit er viele Söhne zur Herrlichkeit führe [2,10]" (Fiorenza, "Anführer und Vollender," 274, brackets hers).

[21] So rightly Rusche: "Die Pilger, die in Jesus bereits vor Gott stehen, zugleich selber aber noch den Weg gehen und herzutreten müssen, sollen sich nicht wundern, daß *dieser* Weg beschattet ist von Kreuz und Trübsal (12,1—11). Ein solcher Schatten auf ihrem Weg muß als Zeichen dafür verstanden werden, daß sie in Verbindung mit dem Sohn sind und auf *seinem* Wege" (Helga Rusche, "Glauben und Leben nach dem Hebräerbrief: Einführende Bemerkungen," *BibLeb* 12 (1971), 103, italics hers). See also Johnson: "The suffering experienced by Jesus was integral to his obedient and faithful response to God. In just the same manner, the author here insists, the sufferings experienced by these discouraged and dispirited Christians are the very means by which they are now to be educated into the status of 'sons' like the Son of God, Jesus" (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 321).

[22] Section III.

[23] Hamm, "Faith," 281.

[24] So Backhaus: "Der Glaube selbst ist ausschließlich auf Gott gerichtet" (Backhaus, *Der sprechende Gott*, 72). So too Hughes: " 'faith' for this early Christian theologian has a theocentric, rather than a Christocentric, orientation" (Hughes, *Hebrews and Hermeneutics*, 97). See also Grässer, *Glaube*, 66; I. Howard Marshall, *Kept by the Power of God: A Study of Perseverance and Falling Away* (London: Epworth, 1969), 146; Söding, "Zuversicht," 224; and Weiss, *Hebräer*, 568.

αὐτῷ)."[25] In the previous verse (5:8), the author describes Jesus as one who "learned

obedience through what he suffered (ἔμαθεν ἀφ᾽ ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν)." As I

developed in chapter 7, Jesus' obedience through suffering in 5:7-9 is an image of

Jesus' faithfulness amid suffering that ends in resurrection, even though the word

πίστις does not appear.[26] Since this faithfulness is characterized by obedience

through suffering, and we too are called to obey, the implication is that his faith-

obedience is a model for ours.[27]

 Third, I suggested in the previous chapter that the Hab 2:3-4 quotation in Heb

10:37-38 may allude to the faithfulness of Jesus. Jesus, God's δίκαιος, did not shrink

back (ὑποστείληται), but was faithful and so lived (ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται). The author

of Hebrews is convinced that we are not of timidity unto destruction (ὑποστολῆς εἰς

ἀπώλειαν), but of faith unto the preservation of the soul (πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιν

ψυχῆς) (10:39). If I am correct that Hab 2:3-4 alludes to the story of Jesus'

faithfulness to death, then the exhortation to endurance (10:36) and the expectation of

faith (10:39) are modeled after the faithfulness of Jesus in 10:37-38.

 The fourth and fifth passages are related. In Heb 11:26, the author curiously

claims that Moses "considered the reproach of Christ (τὸν ὀνειδισμὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ)

to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking for the reward (εἰς

τὴν μισθαποδοσίαν)" (11:26).[28] The author could be alluding to Ps 68 or 88 LXX,

both of which feature the language of bearing reproach (ὀνειδισμός),[29] but it is not

clear which (if either) of these psalms informs Hebrews' meaning in Heb 11:26.[30] A

more fruitful comparison appears within Hebrews, when the author exhorts us to "go

to him [Jesus] outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured (τὸν ὀνειδισμὸν

αὐτοῦ φέροντες)" (13:13).[31] Jesus' suffering was a sacrifice that sanctified people

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[25] So too Müller: "Die jetzige Leidenserfahrung der Gemeinde in der Welt ist vorweggenommen in der Leidenserfahrung Jesu, der durch sein unvergleichliches Durchhalten (5,7-8) unter dem Willen des Vaters (10,7) die Versuchungen und Leiden überwand und so zum Vorbild und Anführer der in ihrer Anfechtung nach einem Führer Ausschau haltenden Gemeinde wurde" (Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ*, 292).

[26] Section IV.

[27] See also Hamm, who sees Jesus' εὐλάβεια in 5:7 as "an obedience that models the obedience to which Christians are called" (Hamm, "Faith," 284).

[28] On Moses as a martyr in Heb 11:23-27, see D'Angelo, *Moses*, 17-64.

[29] For a discussion of parallels in these two psalms, see D'Angelo, *Moses*, 48-53.

[30] See the discussion in deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 410.

[31] I speak to this passage in more detail later in this chapter.

(13:12), and these sanctified people are now called to suffer with him with the expectation of enjoying eschatological life in the enduring city (13:14). Both of these passages (11:26 and 13:13-14) speak of bearing Christ's reproach (ὀνειδισμός)[32] and of an expected reward (the reward [τὴν μισθαποδοσίαν] in 11:26 and the enduring city in 13:14). Although reproach (ὀνειδισμός) does not appear in 12:2, the shame (αἰσχύνης) of the cross is a parallel concept.[33] Therefore, the reproach of Christ which Moses endured and which the author of Hebrews wishes for us to endure is the faithful endurance in suffering[34] modeled perfectly by Jesus.[35]

Therefore, the model of faith we see in Jesus is one of endurance through suffering, bearing reproach. This is evident in the clearest example of Jesus as model of faith (12:1-3) and in the other five likely passages (2:12-13; 5:7-9; 10:36-39; 11:26; and 13:13).

II.3. Christological Faith without Christ as Object of Faith

A number of interpreters have posited that Jesus is not only enabler and model of human faith, but *object* of human faith as well. Hurtado, for instance, writes, "One of the most notable expressions of *belief in Jesus* in earliest Christianity is the writing known as the Epistle to the Hebrews."[36] However, I suggest that christological faith is not faith *in* Jesus, nor is it is faith *in* the redemption Jesus secures.

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[32] See also 10:33, where the author praises his hearers for previously being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction (ὀνειδισμοῖς τε καὶ θλίψεσιν θεατριζόμενοι).

[33] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 411.

[34] See also Chrysostom: "This is 'the reproach of Christ,' to be ill-treated to the end, and to the last breath: as He Himself was reproached and heard, 'If thou be the Son of God' (Matt. xxvii. 40), from those for whom He was crucified, from those who were of the same race. This is 'the reproach of Christ' when a man is reproached by those of his own family, or by those whom he is benefiting. For [Moses] also suffered these things from the man who had been benefited [by him]" (Chrysotom, *Homilies on Hebrews* 26 [*NPNF¹* 14:484, brackets original to editor]; also quoted in Nathan MacDonald, "By Faith Moses," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 376-77).

[35] Therefore, deSilva is partially correct to say, "The example of Moses is being adapted to the pastoral needs of the audience in order to serve as a model for their own enactment of faith" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 410). While deSilva is correct that Moses is a model of faith, Moses is a model of faith only insofar as he models the faith of his model, Jesus.

[36] Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 497 (italics mine).

II.3.1. Westcott and Thomas

The concept of Jesus as object of faith becomes particularly confused when interpreters try to find Jesus as object of faith in Heb 12:2. For example, Westcott writes, "in Jesus Christ Himself we have *the perfect example* – perfect in realisation and in effect – *of that faith* which we are to imitate, *trusting in Him*."[37] Thomas follows suit: "As 'pioneer and perfecter of faith,' Jesus becomes the perfect exemplar of the life of faith. In Jesus, therefore, the portrayal of the life of faith comes to a climax, and for this reason all eyes must be fixed on him. In this way, Jesus curiously becomes the supreme model and ultimate object of faith."[38] Both Westcott and Thomas recognize Jesus as exemplar of faith, but they at the same time maintain that faith entails faith in him. If, however, the faith that Jesus exemplifies is one of "trusting in him," and Jesus is also the object of faith, then Westcott and Thomas have introduced a second meaning of faith. That is, if the faith that Jesus exemplifies is one of "trusting in him," and if this is the same faith which finds Jesus as object, then we have a picture of Jesus having faith in himself. Neither Westcott nor Thomas explores the exegetical merit of seeing two meanings of faith in 12:2, nor do they demonstrate why Jesus is the object of faith.[39]

II.3.2. Hamm

Hamm begins his study by positing, "Jesus is presented as a model and enabler of Christian faith and, in some ways, even as object of faith."[40] He offers three rationales for Jesus as object of faith.[41] First, he suggests, "After the death and exaltation of Jesus, faith in God is implicitly faith in Jesus." Second, he points to the language of Jesus being "the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him" (Heb 5:9). Third, since faith in 3:7-4:11 is obedience to divine initiative, "in the Christian era … faith is obedient response to what God has finally spoken 'to us through a Son' (1:2)."[42]

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[37] Westcott, *Hebrews*, 395 (italics mine).
[38] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 259-60.
[39] Against Jesus as object of faith in 12:2, see also Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ*, 309.
[40] Hamm, "Faith," 272.
[41] All three rationales appear in Hamm, "Faith," 291.
[42] See also Schoonhoven: "If we were to inquire of this literature as to how one really obtains rest, the answer would be given in simple monosyllabic syntax: by faith in Christ" (Calvin R. Schoonhoven, "The 'Analogy of Faith' and the Intent of Hebrews," in *Scripture, Tradition, and Interpretation: Essays*

None of Hamm's explanations demonstrate clearly Jesus as object of faith. With regard to the first and third explanations, Hamm demonstrates a *theo*centric rather than a *christo*centric faith. That is, human beings have faith in *God*, and not necessarily in Christ. With regard to Hamm's second point, he rightly notes that faith and obedience in Hebrews are closely connected (more on this connection below). However, it is a mistake to assume that every time the author speaks of "obedience" toward someone he at the same time considers us to have faith in that person. This is clearest in view of Heb 13:17, where the author tells his hearers to "obey your leaders and submit to them." It is inconceivable that the author would encourage his hearers to *have faith in* their local leaders. As a result, all three of Hamm's explanations fail to demonstrate Jesus as object of faith.

II.3.3. Hurst

Hurst, exploring points of comparison between Paul and Hebrews, lists "faith in Christ" as one such similarity.[43] With regard to "faith in Christ" in Hebrews, Hurst makes two observations.

First, the author of Hebrews lists "the elementary teaching about Christ (ὁ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ λογός)" among the elementary doctrines (6:1), and Hurst sees in this an allusion to our faith in Christ.[44] However, when the author mentions πίστις in 6:1, it is explicitly faith *in God* (πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν), and not Christ. The elementary teaching about Christ could include a number of elements, such as Christ's role as high priest after the order of Melchizedek, a discussion which surrounds the paraenesis in 5:11-6:20. "Faith in Christ" is only one possible explanation for ὁ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ λογός in 6:1, and a less likely explanation in view of its context among other christological teaching and language of "faith in God."

Hurst's second observation has been followed by a number of commentators, and offers the best possible case for Jesus as object of faith. Hurst points to Heb 13:8 where the author of Hebrews says that Jesus is "the same yesterday and today and

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Presented to Everett F. Harrison by His Students and Colleagues in Honor of his Seventy-fifth Birthday, ed. W. Ward Gasque and William S. LaSor (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 106). This "simple monosyllabic syntax" never appears in Hebrews, however.

[43] Hurst, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought*, 119-20.

[44] Hurst, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought*, 119.

forever."[45] In 13:7, the author urges his hearers to imitate the faith of their leaders.
Hurst explains, "The more probable link between the two verses is that the latter is an
amplification of the nature of the leader's faith, a faith which was in Christ and his
work; since he is the same 'today' as he was then, they may with confidence imitate
such faith."[46]

Three observations weaken Hurst's interpretation of Heb 13:7-8. First, the
leaders' faith which the hearers are to imitate is likely connected not to belief (as in
faith in Christ), but to "the outcome of their way of life (ἣν ἔκβασιν τῆς ἀναστροφῆς)"
(13:7). This "outcome" is likely their deaths, and so speaks of a faith that endures to
death.[47] This reading would coordinate with the author's vision of faith as endurance,
which we have seen with respect to Jesus and as I will develop more fully later in this
chapter.

Second, the connection between the leaders' faith in 13:7 and Jesus in 13:8 is
not necessarily located in Jesus as the *object* of faith, but could recall Jesus as the
basis of faith. That is, given that Jesus is consistent as the one who "is the same
yesterday and today and forever," we have reason for faith. Along these lines,
Attridge writes, "While previous leaders have departed, the ultimate source of their
faith remains forever; while many strange teachings may be afoot, Christ is ever the
same."[48] Similarly, Grässer says of these verses, "Insofern ist Jesus Christus wohl der
feste Glaubensgrund, das Fundament, um dessentwillen allein der Glaube als
Bewährung angesichts des Todes standhalten kann; aber er ist nicht als
Glaubensinhalt verstanden."[49]

Third, Hurst misses other connections in the immediate context that illustrate
that the issue in play is not faith in Christ, but the consistency of Jesus. An equally
probable link to 13:8 is not the leaders' faith (13:7), but the exhortation not to be led
away by divergent teachings (13:9). That is, rather than follow diverse and strange
teachings, we should remember that Jesus Christ is consistent as one who is "the same

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[45] See also Heb 1:12.

[46] Hurst, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought*, 120. See also deSilva,
Perseverance in Gratitude, 494; Koester, *Hebrews*, 567; and Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 528.

[47] On ἔκβασις as their death, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 392; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 494;
Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 703; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 345-46; and Koester, *Hebrews*, 567.

[48] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 392. See also Johnson: "although their leaders may pass away, the basis of
their faith and hope remains the same" (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 346). See also Weiss, *Hebräer*, 714-15.

[49] Grässer, *Glaube*, 29-30.

yesterday and today and forever." As Lane writes, "A contrast is intended by the writer, but it is not between v 7 and v 8. It occurs rather between v 8 and v 9. In contrast to the fluid and changing configurations of 'strange teachings' (v 9), the truth concerning Jesus Christ never changes (v 8)."[50] Furthermore, the leaders' faith in 13:7 could point back to 13:6, where the author reminds us that "we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can a person do to me?' " Their faith[51] to the end demonstrates the truth of this Scripture quotation.

Therefore, while Hurst's reading of 13:7-8 offers the best possibility of faith in Christ in Hebrews, his reading ultimately fails to convince.

II.3.4. Rhee

Rhee makes the most extended effort at demonstrating Jesus as the object of faith. In the introduction, I surveyed Rhee's monograph and suggested a number of methodological and argumentative weaknesses in his study. Here I respond particularly to his five clearest arguments in favor of Christ as object of faith in Hebrews.[52]

First, Rhee's most common argument is based on the structure of Hebrews. As noted in the introduction, Rhee highlights the interchange between doctrinal and paraenetic sections in Hebrews (doctrinal/paraenetic: 1:1-14/2:1-4; 2:5-18/3:1-4:16; 5:1-10/5:11-6:20; 7:1-10:18/10:19-39; and 11:1-40/12:1-29; he does not address chapter 13). He demonstrates how the doctrinal sections are concerned with Christology, and so suggests that the concept of faith in the paraenetic sections must

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[50] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 528-29. See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 706; Hamm, "Faith," 275.

[51] The author of Hebrews does not discuss in detail the nature of these leaders' faith, but their faith likely parallels the same story as that which we see in Jesus: faith in the face of death, hoping for eschatological life. This aligns with the author's exhortation to "consider the outcome of their conduct (ἀναθεωροῦντες τὴν ἔκβασιν τῆς ἀναστροφῆς)," where "the outcome (ἔκβασις)" is their deaths.

[52] My summary of Rhee's arguments for Christ as object of faith differs slightly from his own summary: "The argument for Christ being the object of faith can be summarized as follows: (1) the alternating structure of Hebrews between doctrine and exhortation is a clear indication that the author's exhortation to hold on to faith is based on the redemptive work of Christ; (2) Hebrews' reference to 'holding fast the confidence' (3:6; 4:16; 10:19; 10:35) is based on the work of Christ's high priesthood; (3) the author's use of the word 'cross' (12:2b) suggests that it is based on the work of Christ's high priesthood in 7:1-10:18; (4) the author's use of the word ὁμολογία (3:1; 4:14; 10:23) is not merely an act of confession, but has to do with the objectivity of faith, namely, the content of Christian faith. The above evidence clearly indicates that Christ is not only the model of faith, but also the object of believers' faith" (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 63). My summary differs by including another of his arguments ("faith in God" equates to "faith in Christ") and by highlighting his emphasis on Jesus as ἀρχηγός (rather than the cross with high priesthood) in 12:2.

relate to christological teaching in the immediate context.[53] However, even if we

grant Rhee that the exhortations in paraenetic sections are related to the christological

teaching in the nearby doctrinal sections, he begs the question by assuming that this

relation shows that "Christ is implicitly depicted as the object of faith."[54] His reading

of Heb 7:1-10:18 with 10:19-39 illustrates this point.[55] Rhee suggests that the long

doctrinal section on Jesus as high priest (7:1-10:18) addresses Jewish Christians who

were "in danger of being apostatized into Judaism."[56] "With this background in

mind," he explains,

> it is easy to see why the author employed the theme of the levitical high
> priesthood from the Old Testament to explain the doctrine of the high
> priesthood of Christ in the new covenant. Since it was a familiar concept for
> them, they were able to realize the significance of the high priest of the new
> covenant and the terrible consequence of rejecting Jesus. This explains why
> faith in Hebrews has Jesus as its object even if the author does not use phrases,
> such as 'faith in Jesus' or 'believe in Jesus.' In 10:19-39 the author uses the
> doctrinal exposition of 7:1-10:18 as a basis to exhort the readers not to forsake
> their faith in Jesus.[57]

Without defense or argument, Rhee assumes that the high priestly Christology of Heb

7:1-10:18 means that the depiction of faith in 10:19-39 is one of "faith in Jesus."

However, interpreters might instead highlight the image of Jesus as *enabler* of faith,

given that as "a great priest over the house of God" (10:21), Jesus' blood and flesh

gives us "confidence to enter the holy places" (10:19) and has "opened for us" "the

new and living way" (10:20) so that we can "draw near with a true heart in full

assurance of faith" (10:22).[58] Indeed, as we have found throughout the thesis thus far,

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[53] Rhee explains: "The overall structure of Hebrews and the context imply that Jesus Christ is not only the exemplar of faith, but also the object of faith. This can be seen from the fact that the doctrinal sections (1:1-14; 2:5-18; 5:1-10; 7:1-10:18; 11:1-40) are followed by the hortatory sections (2:1-4; 3:1-4:16; 5:11-6:20; 10:19-39; 12:1-13:21). All the doctrinal sections (except for 11:1-40) focus on either the sonship or the high priesthood of Christ. Based on these teachings the author admonishes the readers to remain in faith with words, such as 'hold fast our confession' (cf. 3:1; 4:14; 10:23), 'hold firm the confidence' (3:6, 14; 10:35), and 'realize the full assurance of hope' (6:11). Thus it may be said that Christ is implicitly depicted as the object of faith throughout the book" (Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 56).

[54] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 56.

[55] I listed three other examples in chapter 1, section III.9.

[56] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 155.

[57] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 155.

[58] See also Matera, who writes of the relation between doctrine and exhortation in Heb 10:19-25: "The relationship of this exhortation to the material which precedes it again underlines the connection between doctrine and exhortation in Hebrews. Christians must act because Christ has acted on their behalf" (Matera, "Moral Exhortation," 175).

the christological teaching of Hebrews may serve purposes other than depicting Jesus as an object of faith. Rhee does not adequately demonstrate *why* this structure indicates Jesus as *object* of faith in distinction from other possible explanations. Therefore, his argument from structure is not a valid proof for Jesus as object of faith in Hebrews.

Second, similar to Hamm (noted above), Rhee argues that faith in God is implicitly faith in Christ. As Rhee rightly notes, Hebrews seems to think of Jesus as God, given that the Son receives angelic worship (Heb 1:6) and is called God in Heb 1:8 (quoting Ps 44:7 LXX): "But of the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.' " On this basis, Rhee suggests, "This is another indication that Jesus is to be viewed as the object of faith for his followers."[59] Later, Rhee equates "faith toward God" in 6:1 with "faith in Christ": "the six elements described in 6:2-4 are a further elaboration of the elementary doctrine of Christ in 6:1a. In this sense, the author's description of 'faith toward God' in 6:1 is to be regarded as 'faith in Christ.'"[60] Rhee does not demonstrate why this is the case, nor does he explain in what way Christ relates to other foundational doctrinal elements, such as "instruction about washings" or "the laying on of hands" (6:2). In fact, he contradicts his earlier claim, when he writes, "In 6:1 the author of Hebrews clearly makes a distinction between Christ and God. For this reason the phrase 'faith toward God' (πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν) suggests that the object of faith is not Jesus, but God the Father."[61] However, even if we grant Rhee that Jesus being God makes him an object of faith, this point still does not itself demonstrate *Christ* as object of faith, but *God* as object. Jesus is object of faith only by virtue of his being God. Faith in Hebrews, therefore, is more *theo*centric than *christo*centric.

Third, Rhee suggests "the idea of 'confidence' [παρρησία] shows that Jesus is the object of faith."[62] In particular, it is confidence in Jesus' high priesthood that indicates he is object of faith. I quote Rhee at length:

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[59] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 56.
[60] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 125.
[61] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 58.
[62] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 60.

> The author indicates that Christ's work of high priesthood is related to the Christian confidence (3:6, 4:16, 10:19, 10:35). In 3:1-6 the author exhorts the readers to consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession. This passage compares the faithfulness of Moses with that of Christ. In this context 'holding fast the confidence' naturally refers to holding fast the faithfulness of Christ as the high priest. Moreover, the phrase 'whose house we are' … implies Christ's Lordship over the believing community. In the same way, the Christian confidence is also related to the high priesthood of Christ in 4:14-16. The expression, 'let us, therefore, with confidence, draw near to the throne of the grace of God (v. 16),' is not the language of imitating Christ, but of worshipping God through the high priesthood of Christ. Hebrews 10:19 and 10:35 also uses the word 'confidence' (παρρησία) without direct reference to the high priesthood of Christ. However, one must realize that these exhortations are based on the work of the high priesthood, which the author expounded in Hebrews 7:1-10:18. As Lane correctly points out, 'the unique character of His personal sacrifice and achievement is not forgotten.' In this sense, the high priesthood of Christ is the content of the Christians' confidence. Thus it can be said that Jesus is the object of faith for believers.[63]

Rhee's argument falters in two ways. First, Rhee does not adequately demonstrate why confidence in Jesus as high priest equates to faith in Jesus. As noted above, Jesus as high priest may not entail an image of Jesus as *object* of faith, but perhaps instead as *enabler*. To be sure, Christ as enabler and Christ as object of faith are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but Rhee needs to put forth a cogent argument demonstrating Christ as object. Second, Rhee does not adequately investigate the meaning of παρρησία in Hebrews and why his reading of παρρησία relates to a human's faith in Jesus. He admits that the term is ambiguous, but he maintains that it still relates to Jesus as object of faith: "In 3:6 the meaning of the term [παρρησία] is ambiguous, perhaps denoting both one's devotion to Christ and the outward demonstration of faith in Christ. In this sense, the author's exhortation to hold fast the confidence may be understood as his way of exhorting the readers not to forsake their faith in Jesus whom they believed. Thus for the author of Hebrews Jesus is considered the object of faith."[64] To the contrary, I will argue below for reading παρρησία as an active "boldness," which would align with the martyrological depiction of faith exemplified in Christ.

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[63] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 60-61; see also 174.
[64] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 92.

Fourth, Rhee posits, "The reference to Jesus being the object of faith can also be detected from the author's use of the word ὁμολογία (confession), which is found three times in Hebrews (3:1; 4:14; 10:23)."[65] He notes that ὁμολογία can refer either to a creedal confession formula or to the act of making public profession, and he settles for a both/and reading:

> I feel that the meaning of ὁμολογία should not be either/or, but both/and. The term appears to be ambiguous enough to imply that the two interpretations belong together; Jesus whom we confess creedally is also the one whom we confess publicly. This means that, no matter which view one holds, the author uses ὁμολογία to emphasize that Jesus is the content (or the object) of faith for believers. That is, the reason why the author employs this word in his exhortation to remain in faith is to emphasize that Jesus is the object of believers' faith.[66]

Here again Rhee fails to explore adequately the reasons why Jesus is object of faith with respect to ὁμολογία. Instead, he notes that the "confession" can be a creedal formula or an act of public confession, and then leaps to the conclusion that Jesus is object of faith under either reading.[67]

Finally, Rhee argues that Jesus as ἀρχηγός indicates that he is object of faith. Rhee suggests that ἀρχηγός as "pioneer" leads to the conclusion of Jesus as object of faith: "The word ἀρχηγός in the LXX and non-biblical literature has basically two different meanings: (1) leader or ruler; (2) originator, founder, or pioneer (i.e., one who begins something as first in a series to give the impetus). Understanding ἀρχηγός as the former sense leads to the conclusion that Jesus is the model of faith; but taking it in the latter sense, to the conclusion that Jesus is the object of faith."[68] To the contrary, as we found in chapter 7,[69] ἀρχηγός can refer to Jesus as "pioneer," but the notion of Jesus as object of faith need not be present as a result. Instead, I suggested that the faithful ἀρχηγός Jesus pioneers the story of faith and perfects (τελειωτής) faith

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[65] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 61.

[66] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 88-89.

[67] With Attridge, *Hebrews*, 107-108, Koester, *Hebrews*, 243, and Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 75, I understand ὁμολογία as "that which we confess" rather than our act of making confession. This reading is supported by the article with ὁμολογία in each case in Hebrews, and the author's exhortation to "hold fast (κρατέω; κατέχω)" this confession (4:14; 10:23), "which suggests that it could be identified and grasped" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 243). This confession need not be "faith in Christ," as Rhee supposes. It is more likely associated with the hope of entering the holy places, a hope secured by Christ's sacrifice as high priest (as in 10:19-23).

[68] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 227.

[69] Section II.3.1.

by realizing the eschatological hope, unlike the ἀρχηγός Joshua who did not bring his people into God's rest (4:8). Even if my reading is incorrect, I have demonstrated contrary to Rhee that reading ἀρχηγός as "pioneer" does not lead inevitably to the conclusion that Jesus is object of faith.

Rhee similarly suggests that Jesus as ἀρχηγός of salvation (Heb 2:10) indicates that he is object of faith. He roots this interpretation in the meaning of σωτηρία elsewhere in Hebrews, which, for Rhee, "denotes the spiritual salvation."[70] As ἀρχηγός of σωτηρία, Jesus is also "ἀρχηγός of the new age" through whom the new age becomes a reality.[71] Rhee concludes, "In this sense, it is reasonable to understand that the phrase 'ἀρχηγός of salvation' is the author's way of expressing Jesus as the object of faith for believers, not simply the model of faith."[72] Rhee does not adequately demonstrate, however, why "salvation" necessarily relates to human faith in Jesus. Instead, Jesus as ἀρχηγός of salvation in 2:10 more clearly parallels his role as ἀρχηγός of πίστις in 12:2. In both cases, Jesus is not the object of faith, but the one who pioneers life beyond death ("glory" in 2:10 and session at the right hand of God in 12:2). The author of Hebrews makes it clear that Jesus' pioneering role into postmortem life is in view by describing Jesus as one who was "made perfect through suffering (διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι)" (2:10), an image of eschatological life.[73] As such, Jesus is not the one in whom we place faith, but the one to whom we look (12:2) and consider (12:3) in order to find encouragement; although at present we do not see the world subjected to humanity (2:8), we do see Jesus, who has been crowned with glory and honor (2:9). Jesus, as ἀρχηγός of salvation, offers hope of the same eschatological life he enjoys for those who participate in the same story. In this way, contrary to Rhee, Jesus is model of faith and not object.

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[70] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 228.

[71] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 228. Rhee quotes Scott: Jesus is the one "through whose sufferings (the 'birth pangs of the Messiah') the new age becomes a reality and whose personal honor and glory, which is shared with 'his sons,' is a major characteristic of it" (from Scott, "Archēgos," 50). Rhee does not demonstrate how Scott helps his case, and Scott's article says nothing of Jesus as object of faith. The closest Scott comes to such a suggestion appears on the following page: "He [Jesus] opened the race, the new faith, within which his followers struggle, and he remains the focus of their attention" (51). Scott gives no indication that he intends Jesus as object of faith when he speaks of Jesus as the focus of the hearers' attention.

[72] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 228.

[73] See chapter 5, section II.3.3.1.

Therefore, none of Rhee's arguments in favor of Jesus as object of faith are convincing.

II.3.5. *Faith in What Christ has Done*

Other scholars understand faith as faith in what Christ has done. For example, Peterson writes, "Men can be released from the 'fear of death' (2:15) and therefore, in a sense, from bondage to the Devil's power, *by coming to believe in* the effectiveness of the redemption achieved by Christ."[74] Here Peterson has shifted the mode of deliverance from Jesus' death as a human (see 2:14) to *our belief in* Jesus' redemption.

Similarly, Koester introduces the concept of faith in Christ's work with regard to our sanctification: "Those who are sanctified by *faith in* what Christ has done have the hope of heavenly glory, for without holiness no one can see the Lord (2:10-11; 12:14)."[75] However, the author of Hebrews never speaks of people being sanctified by *faith in* what Christ has done. Instead, human beings are sanctified "through the offering of the body of Jesus" (10:10) and by Jesus' suffering (13:12). The author never introduces a concept of *faith in* Jesus' work of sanctification as a means by which human beings are sanctified.

Likewise, McKnight speaks of the age to come as inaugurated through faith in Christ: "the author describes his readers, at the phenomenological level, as those who have participated in the age to come as it has been inaugurated through *faith in* Jesus Christ."[76] Again, the author of Hebrews, however, never speaks of the age to come as being inaugurated by human faith in Christ.

In these three examples, interpreters have shifted the emphasis onto human faith, even though the author of Hebrews does not make this move. Readers of Hebrews do well to exercise more caution.

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[74] Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 62 (italics mine).
[75] Craig R. Koester, "God's Purposes and Christ's Saving Work According to Hebrews," in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt. NovTSup 121 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 372 (italics mine).
[76] McKnight, "Warning Passages," 48 (italics mine).

II.4. Conclusion

Christological faith in Hebrews, therefore, is not faith *in* Jesus and it is not faith in what Christ has done. Rather, faith is christological in the sense that Jesus is the faithful one *par excellence*. As such, he enables and models faith. In Christ we see precisely what faith looks like: endurance even to the point of death that ends in eschatological life. The nature of human faith, therefore, is consistently christological even when the faithful one *par excellence* (Jesus) is not present in a given passage. Faith remains christological by virtue of its story being pioneered and perfected by Jesus.

III. ESCHATOLOGICAL FAITH

Another facet of faith in Hebrews is its eschatological quality. As with the christological dimension of faith, we have already covered much of the eschatological quality of faith in the thesis. That is, we have already seen that Jesus' faithfulness (christological dimension) is one of obedient endurance to the point of death (ethical dimension – more below) that looks forward to the eschatological hope (eschatological dimension). As a result, in this section we do not need to demonstrate at length the eschatological dimension of faith, as doing so would largely repeat the arguments from the preceding chapters. Instead, in this section I wish to make clear how the author of Hebrews wishes for his hearers to exemplify a faith that is eschatological.

III.1. Faith and Hope

The eschatological dimension of faith is most evident in the intimate relationship between faith and hope.[77] I argued in chapter 5 that in Heb 11:1, faith is "the *reality* of things hoped for."[78] Faith by its very nature is directed toward the eschatological hope and offers in some sense the guarantee of realizing this hope.

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[77] A number of interpreters have recognized this. See, among others, Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 163-64; Grässer, *Glaube*, 39, 115-17; Hamm, "Faith," 274; Mariam J. Kamell, "Reexamining Faith: A Study of Hebrews 10:19-12:14 and James 1-2," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 423; Käsemann, *Wandering*, 39; George W. MacRae, "Heavenly Temple and Eschatology in the Letter to the Hebrews," *Semeia* 12 (1978), 191-95; Marshall, *Kept*, 146-47; Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 588; Thomas Söding, "Gemeinde auf dem Weg: Christsein nach dem Hebräerbrief," *BK* 48 (1991), 184; and Wallis, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 154.

[78] Section III.1.1.1.

The heroes of faith, however, did not realize the eschatological hope that faith assures, and so awaited the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who exemplified hopeful faith by enduring the cross "for the joy that was set before him" (12:2). As the perfecter of faith, Jesus secured the assured conclusion of faith: eschatological life.

The connection between faith and hope is so close that Dautzenberg suggests the author of Hebrews uses the concepts almost interchangeably: "Im Hebr rücken Glaube und Hoffnung wenn möglich noch enger zueinander, so daß die beiden Begriffe an manchen Stellen fast austauschbar und nur aus stilistischen Gründen abwechselnd gebraucht erscheinen."[79] The interchangeability of faith and hope is clear when comparing Heb 10:22 with 6:11. In 10:22, the author of Hebrews exhorts his hearers, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith (ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πίστεως)." Πληροφορία (full assurance) appears elsewhere in Hebrews only in 6:11,[80] where the author desires his hearers "to show the same earnestness[81] to realize the full assurance of hope (τὴν πληροφορίαν τῆς ἐλπίδος) until the end." Therefore, " 'full assurance [*plērophoria*] of faith' seems to be an epexegetical genitive with a meaning similar to the 'full assurance of hope' at 6:11."[82] That the hope in 6:11 is closely related to faith is further corroborated by 6:12, where the hearers' "full assurance of hope" issues in their being "imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."[83] Faith elsewhere is also intimately linked to the hope of receiving the promises (11:9, 10, 13, 24-26, 39).[84]

That faith and hope are related, therefore, is hardly disputable. What is disputable, however, is what this faith-hope entails. A person who hopes can hope to arrive at a better future or can hope for this better future to break into the present. With respect to Hebrews, the question deals predominately with whether the community of faith in Hebrews is "travelling" in hope or "waiting" in hope.

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[79] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 164.

[80] The word does not appear in the LXX, and appears in the NT only twice outside of Heb (Col 2:2; 1 Thess 1:5).

[81] That is, their "work and love that they showed for God's sake in serving the saints" (6:10).

[82] Hamm, "Faith," 274; see also Grässer: "Die Variation des Ausdruckes πληροφορία τῆς ἐλπίδος 6,11 in πληροφορία τῆς πίστεως 10,22 signalisiert einen für das Glaubensverständnis des Hb bedeutsamen Tatbestand: Pistis und Elpis sind identisch" (Grässer, *Glaube*, 115).

[83] See also Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 164.

[84] Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 164.

III.2. Travelling

As I summarized in the introduction to the thesis, Käsemann's famous monograph *The Wandering People of God* ably demonstrates a corporate wandering motif underlying the message of Hebrews. The author of Hebrews envisions the hearers of Hebrews as a community travelling[85] to the heavenly homeland. As a result, faith is "*a confident wandering*,"[86] and "the obedience of faith is fulfilled when, in trusting the divine promise, one is willing to be led patiently through the present time of suffering into the heavenly future."[87] The hopeful faith, then, is one that exhibits itself in travelling with the people of God toward the heavenly homeland.

III.3. Waiting

Hofius has argued that the image is not one of travelling, but rather of "waiting." Instead of travelling toward a heavenly homeland, we are waiting in hope for the future city that God is building:

> Der Vers [Heb 13:14] ist deshalb falsch verstanden, wenn man interpretiert: Wir haben hier (d.h. auf der Erde) keine bleibende Stadt, sondern wir sind unterwegs nach der zukünftigen (sc. die droben im Himmel ist). Der Sinn des Satzes ist vielmehr: Wir haben hier (d.h. auf der zum alten Äon gehörenden und mit ihm vergehenden Erde) keine Stadt, die Bestand hätte, sondern wir sehnen uns nach der zukünftigen (d.h. kommenden) Stadt (sc. die feste, von Gott selbst gelegte Fundamente hat).[88]

For Hofius, the hearers of Hebrews are struggling with the delay of the Parousia,[89] and so the people of God are waiting in apocalyptic expectation: "Der Hebräerbrief kennt den Gedanken einer Wanderschaft zum Himmel bzw. zu den im Himmel bereiteten Stätten nicht, sondern er teilt die apokalyptische Erwartung, daß die präexistenten Heilsorte am Tag der Endvollendung aus der Verborgenheit heraustreten werden."[90] Hofius' image of a waiting people of God envisions faith not

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[85] The language of "travelling" avoids the English connotations of "aimless" often associated with "wandering." I follow Laansma in opting for "travelling" (Laansma, *Rest*, 310).

[86] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 44 (italics his).

[87] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 39. See also Barrett, "Eschatology," 373-83; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 74; Johnsson, "Pilgrimage," 239-51; and Ceslas Spicq, *L'Épitre aux Hébreux I - Introduction*, EBib (Paris: Gabalda, 1952), 269-80.

[88] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 149.

[89] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 150.

[90] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 150.

as moving forward in endurance, but as waiting and holding on to hope despite what appears to be a hopeless situation:

> Angesichts dieser Lage mahnt der Verfasser zur Geduld (6,12; 10,36; 12,1), zum Festhalten an der Hoffnung (3,6; 6,11; 10,23) und zur Bewährung der πίστις (6,12; 10,22.38f; 13,7). Glauben – das heißt ja gerade: sich an die Verheißung halten auch gegen allen Augenschein, weil der „treu" ist, der sie gegeben hat (10,23; 11,11); dem unsichtbaren Gott so vertrauen, als sähe man ihn (11,27); die παρρησία nicht wegwerfen (10,35), sondern auf die Erfüllung der Zusagen Gottes unbeirrbar warten „bis ans Ende" (3,6.14; 6,11).[91]

In the present, the community of faith must wait for Christ's return: "Darum gilt es zu warten! Denn der wiederkommende Christus erscheint denen, die auf ihn warten, - aber auch nur ihnen! – zum ewigen Heil (9,28)."[92]

III.4. Eschatological Faith as Travelling *and* Waiting

"Travelling" and "waiting" are not necessarily mutually exclusive, despite Hofius' response to Käsemann. Laansma helpfully suggests, "*Auctor* [i.e. the author of Hebrews] *is not concerned to make* either *travelling* or *waiting the structuring factor in the passage* [Heb 3:7-4:11]. Or, rather, *both* travelling *and* waiting are adequate descriptions of the believer's existence."[93] As noted in chapter 5, God's rest (κατάπαυσις) is both present and future: we can enter it proleptically now but not fully until the future.[94] This aligns nicely with both the travelling and waiting motifs, as Laansma explains: "On the one hand, they are not yet entering (*travelling*). On the other hand, the entrance is about to 'occur' (*waiting*)."[95] In other words, the author urges us to "strive to enter the rest" (4:11), "encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (10:25).[96]

As a result, the hopeful faith of Hebrews is one in which the community is travelling toward the heavenly homeland, while at the same time waiting for God to

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[91] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 150.
[92] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 151. See also Lane: "The community is called to expectant waiting" (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 88).
[93] Laansma, *Rest*, 312-13 (italics his).
[94] Section II.1.5.
[95] Laansma, *Rest*, 314 (italics his).
[96] As Laansma rightly notes, the image of the Day drawing near is not so much about our moving toward a goal, but the goal moving toward us (Laansma, *Rest*, 314 n 289).

break into the present struggles and usher in the abiding kingdom.[97] The images of travelling and waiting are not mutually exclusive, but indicate the eschatological tension characteristic of Hebrews and the NT in general. Nevertheless, for the sake of brevity and in view of my argument in chapter 3 that posits that forward movement is required lest one slip back into the default human story, I refer predominately to the "travelling people of God," but do so without denying a "waiting" element as well.

Faith is eschatological in that it is directed toward the heavenly homeland. As God's people, we travel toward the heavenly homeland in hope of entering the rest, all the while waiting for the approaching Day (10:25). The fact that the pioneer and perfecter of faith realized the eschatological hope gives reason to expect the same for those who are being faithful.

IV. ETHICAL FAITH

The ethical dimension of faith is most clearly evident in the coordination of faith with obedience and the coordination of faith with endurance. Both of these relate to the eschatological dimension of faith we found above. That is, faith entails obedience and endurance until we reach the heavenly homeland that God is ushering in.

IV.1. Faith and Obedience

A number of interpreters have noted a close connection between faith and obedience in Hebrews.[98] In Spicq's words, "les croyants – οἱ πιστεύσαντες (IV, 3) – se définissent par leur obéissance, τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν (V, 9)."[99] The relationship of faith and obedience is most clearly evident in Heb 3:7-4:11 and Heb 11.

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[97] As Wedderburn notes, "a spatial dichotomy is also very much part of the apocalyptic world-view. The heavenly world is already there for the apocalyptic seer to see, existing alongside the present material world, and often his expectation takes the form of a vision of that already existing heavenly world impinging upon, and replacing, the present world" (A. J. M. Wedderburn, "Sawing off the Branches: Theologizing Dangerously *Ad Hebraeos*," *JTS* 56 (2005), 394).

[98] See, among others: Hamm, "Faith," 273, 289; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 150-51; Kamell, "Reexamining," 426; Käsemann, *Wandering*, 38; Klauck, "Moving in and Moving Out," 427; Marshall, *Kept*, 146-47; McKnight, "Warning Passages," 32; Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 96-99; Schoonhoven, "'Analogy of Faith'," 106-108; Söding, "Zuversicht," 222; Spicq, *Hébreux II*, 374; Übelacker, "Anthropologie und Vollendung," 222-23; and John Howard Yoder, *For the Nations: Essays Public and Evangelical* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 149. See also Weiss, who gives Heb 3:1-4:13 the heading, "Mahnung zum Glaubensgehorsam" (Weiss, *Hebräer*, 8).

[99] Spicq, *Hébreux II*, 374.

In Heb 3:7-4:11, the author of Hebrews connnects faith and obedience by way of negative example. As I already addressed in detail in chapter 3, the author of Hebrews depicts the wilderness generation as a paradigmatic expression of the default human story.[100] The author three times attributes their failure to enter God's rest to their disobedience (ἀπειθέω: 3:18; ἀπείθεια: 4:6, 11). In the context of the Kadesh narrative from Num 14, this disobedience is clearly their refusal to enter the Promised Land in response to God's command. At the same time, the author attributes this disobedient refusal to unbelief.[101] It is an "evil unbelieving heart (καρδία πονηρὰ ἀπιστίας)" that leads people to fall away from God (3:12), and the wilderness generation failed to be united in faith with those who heard God's message (μὴ συγκεκερασμένους τῇ πίστει τοῖς ἀκούσασιν) (4:2). The clearest connection between disobedience and unbelief appears in 3:18-19: "And to whom did God swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient (ἀπειθέω)? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief (ἀπιστία)." In 3:18, the author attributes their failure to enter God's rest to their disobedience, and in 3:19, he attributes it to their unbelief.[102] With the Kadesh narrative framing our understanding, it is clear that disobedience stems from unbelief: the wilderness generation did not believe that God could bring them safely into the land (see also Num 14:8), and so disobeyed God by refusing to enter the land. In the context of the travelling people of God, disobedient unbelief manifests itself as refusing to move forward with God's people toward the rest. Put positively, then, faith manifests itself as travelling with God's people in obedience to God's command.

The coordination of faith and obedience is also seen throughout Heb 11.[103] Many of the heroes acted in obedience "by faith (πίστει)":

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[100] Section III.3.1.

[101] See also Num 14:11: "How long is this people going to provoke me, and how long are they not going to believe me (ἕως τίνος οὐ πιστεύουσίν μοι) amidst all the signs that I have performed among them?" (NETS).

[102] Noted also in Schoonhoven, "'Analogy of Faith'," 108. Similarly, Spicq writes, "De même que δι' ἀπιστίαν (III, 16-19) est synonyme de δι' ἀπείθειαν (IV, 6)" (Spicq, *Hébreux II*, 374).

[103] See also Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 590-91.

Hero (verse)	By Faith	Act of obedience
Abel (4)	By faith	Offered God a more acceptable sacrifice
Noah (7)	By faith	Constructed an ark
Abraham (8-9, 17)	By faith	Left his homeland; offered up Isaac
Moses (24-28)	By faith	Identified with God's people; left Egypt; kept the Passover
Israelites (29-30)	By faith	Crossed the Red Sea; encircled the walls of Jericho
Rahab (31)	By faith	Gave friendly welcome to the spies

The connection between faith and obedience is clearest in the case of Abraham: "by faith Abraham obeyed (πίστει … Ἀβραὰμ ὑπήκουσεν)" (11:8). "Der Glaube erscheint hier als Gehorsam gegenüber dem Ruf, und zwar als tätiger Gehorsam."[104] Unlike the wilderness generation, Abraham acted by faith and entered the land that God had promised.

The coordination of faith with obedience will also entail suffering. Joining the travelling people of God in obedience involves leaving a prior existence, an action which is a form of suffering. Johnson explains:

> Such obedient faith, therefore, is itself a form of suffering. It is impossible to answer the call of *any* 'other' and enter into the other's project – even the call of spouse, student, child – without experiencing the stress of letting go of the absoluteness of what, until then, had been our own quite legitimate project. But if the call that summons us is God's call, if the space into which we are asked to step is infinitely larger than the one we presently inhabit, then the pain of responding is commensurate with the stretching involved.[105]

Just as the paradigmatic faithful one, Jesus, "learned obedience through what he suffered" (5:8), so also the hearers' faithful obedience is likely to entail suffering.

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[104] Niederwimmer, "Vom Glauben der Pilger," 127.

[105] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 151. See also Schoonhoven: "Faith is depicted not so much in the theoretical sphere, as in the practical sphere. It is not so much an abstract belief of the heart as enduring a hard struggle and suffering abuse and affliction. Here moves to the fore a pragmatic understanding of faith. It is more doing that being, or better, it is a being that issues quite surely in doing" (Schoonhoven, "'Analogy of Faith'," 107).

IV.2. Faith and Endurance

The ethical dimension of faith also involves endurance.[106] We have already seen the dimension of endurance in the face of suffering clearly in our treatment of the faithfulness of Jesus in chapter 7, faith in the face of death in chapter 8, and the christological dimension of faith earlier in this chapter. As I have already argued, it is clear that the race the author wishes us to "run with endurance (δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν)" (12:1) is precisely the race of suffering that Jesus endured (ὑπέμεινεν) (12:2). By considering the one who endured (ὑπομεμενηκότα) such hostility, we can stave off weariness and faintheartedness (12:3) as we endure discipline (εἰς παιδείαν ὑπομένετε) (12:7). Outside of these verses, "endurance" appears in 10:32 (ὑπομένω); 10:36 (ὑπομονή); and 11:27 (καρτερέω). In each case "endurance" is exercised in the face of suffering or adversity. One aspect of endurance, therefore, is that of suffering, as particularly modeled in Christ.

I argued in chapter 4 that the hearers of Hebrews were either actually facing or perceived themselves to be facing persecution.[107] They have "not yet resisted sin to the point of bloodshed" (12:4), but the implication is that they may in fact need to resist to such a bloody end. The author of Hebrews never uses ὑπομονή ("endurance" or "perseverance") explicitly with the exhortation to persevere until the end, but contextual clues suggest that the author conceives of endurance as "until the end." That is, one cannot endure for a short time only, because this is no longer endurance – endurance by its very nature demands endurance until death. The author likely intends such a meaning in 10:36, where he tells his hearers, "For you have need of endurance (ὑπομονῆς), so that having done the will of God, you may receive the promise."[108] Given the context of sufferings in the preceding verses (10:32-34) and the theme of faith leading to life after death in the following verses (10:37-39), the

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[106] A number of interpreters have noted the coordination of faith with endurance. See, for example: Dautzenberg, "Glaube," 167-68, 171; Hamm, "Faith," 276, 275, 289-90; Grässer, *Glaube*, 42, 102-105; Kamell, "Reexamining," 431; Käsemann, *Wandering*, 25; Marshall, *Kept*, 133; McKnight, "Warning Passages," 24-25 n 12, 57; and Söding, "Zuversicht," 214-41.

[107] Section II.2.

[108] Kamell rightly notes that the eschatological and ethical dimensions of faith appear in Heb 10:36: "Here three components of 'faith' come together: endurance, obedience to God, and the promise (or hope). Faith believes God has promised Christ's victory and that the promise will come to fulfillment, and therefore faith dictates endurance in obedience" (Kamell, "Reexamining," 426).

author likely refers to a lifelong endurance when he says, "having done the will of God (τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιήσαντες)."

The exhortation to display παρρησία (3:6; 4:16; 10:19, 35) is also associated with endurance. Παρρησία is often translated as "confidence" in English Bible translations,[109] but it should not be confused with an intellectual assurance. Παρρησία is a public demonstration, typically evidenced by "outspokenness," "freedom of speech," or "freedom of action."[110] Interestingly, παρρησία appears in a number of contexts where the person or persons exercising παρρησία do so amidst suffering.[111] In light of the parallels to the Maccabean martyrologies discovered in chapters 5 and 7,[112] the third martyred brother's παρρησία in 4 Macc 10:5 is particularly illuminating: "But they, taking the man's boldness (τὴν παρρησίαν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς) bitterly, dislocated his hands and feet with their instruments of torture and dismembered him by prying his limbs from their sockets" (NETS). The παρρησία which the author of Hebrews expects his hearers to exercise in Heb 10:35 is certainly one of endurance through suffering, given its placement in the context of their past persecutions (10:32-36).[113] It is also conceivable that the παρρησία to which the hearers must continually hold firm (3:6) and by which the hearers are to approach God's presence (4:16; 10:19) is precisely such a public display that may entail endurance through suffering.

Hebrews offers other hints that faith involves endurance until the end. The story of Jesus makes this point clear, as he consistently exhibits endurance to the point of death (esp. 5:7-9 and 12:1-2). Many of the heroes of faith in Heb 11 also endure even to their deaths, as noted in chapter 5.[114] Likewise, the author of Hebrews urges his hearers not to stop in the wilderness, but to strive to enter the rest (4:11), and "to

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[109] The NRSV (with the exception of 4:16), translates παρρησία as "confidence" in each case. See also the ESV and NASB, which opt for "confidence" in every case.

[110] LSJ, 1344. For a history of interpretation of παρρησία with respect to its use in Hebrews, see Alan C. Mitchell, "Holding on to Confidence: ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ in Hebrews," in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World*, ed. J. T. Fitzgerald (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 205-17.

[111] See esp. Wis 5:1; 4 Macc 10:5; Mark 8:32; Phil 1:20; Philo *Somn.* 2:83; *Ios.* 1:222.

[112] Chapter 5, section III.1.2; chapter 7, section II.2.2.

[113] So rightly Lewis: "The exhortation of x. 35: 'Therefore, do not throw away your boldness, which has a great reward', interprets the community's bearing of public hostility as a manifestation of παρρησία" (Lewis, "And If He Shrinks Back," 89).

[114] Section III.1.

have full assurance of hope until the end" (6:11). The hearers must not neglect meeting together, even though the end is approaching (10:25).

IV.3. Hebrews 3:6 and 3:14

The most explicit connection between endurance until the end and identification with Christ appears in 3:14: "For we have become sharers in Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of the reality[115] firm until the end (μέτοχοι γὰρ τοῦ Χριστοῦ γεγόναμεν, ἐάνπερ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ὑποστάσεως μέχρι[116] τέλους βεβαίαν κατάσχωμεν)." This verse parallels the similar theme in 3:6, where the author writes, "we are his house, if indeed we hold firm the boldness and boasting in hope (οὗ οἶκός ἐσμεν ἡμεῖς, ἐάν[περ][117] τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ τὸ καύχημα τῆς ἐλπίδος κατάσχωμεν)."[118] In both cases, holding firm (κατέχω) to the reality (ὑπόστασις) (3:14) or boldness (παρρησία) (3:6) is related to our identification with Christ.[119]

These verses are common battleground texts. The key issue for many is whether this endurance until the end is the *means* by which one shares in the eschatological hope realized by Jesus or the *evidence* that one is already sharing in this hope. Put in terms of the Calvinist-Arminian debates: does endurance until the end secure our salvation or does endurance until the end show that we are already

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[115] For this translation of ὑπόστασις, see my discussion in chapter 5, section III.1.1.1. See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 113.

[116] See also Heb 12:4, where we have not yet resisted to bloodshed (οὔπω μέχρις αἵματος ἀντικατέστητε) (Braun, *Hebräer*, 408).

[117] The editors of NA[27] explain the use of brackets: "Square brackets in the text ([ ]) indicate that textual critics today are not completely convinced of the authenticity of the enclosed words. … The reading given in the text shows the preference of the editors. … Square brackets always reflect a great degree of difficulty in determining the text" (NA[27], 49*-50*). The text-critical evidence is split between ἐάνπερ (notably P[46], ℵ[2], D[2]) and ἐάν (notably P[13], ℵ[1], B, and D*), but a decision on the best reading in this case provides little exegetical payoff, given that Liddell-Scott finds no marked difference between ἐάνπερ and ἐάν (LSJ, 465; 480-81 – εἰ B. II.).

[118] In a number of uncial (most notably Sinaiticus) and minuscule manuscripts, Heb 3:6 also includes μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν ("firm until the end"), but this phrase is absent in P[13], P[46], and Vaticanus. The shorter reading, which is also represented in the earlier papyri, is probably the best reading of 3:6, and μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν is likely an interpolation from 3:14. As Metzger explains, "the phrase is an interpolation from ver. 14, especially since not βεβαίαν but βέβαιον is the gender that one would have expected the author to use [in 3:6], qualifying the nearer substantive τὸ καύχημα" (Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 595).

[119] See also 4 Macc 17:4, where the author describes the mother as one who "held firm the enduring hope in God (τὴν ἐλπίδα τῆς ὑπομονῆς βεβαίαν ἔχουσα πρὸς τὸν θεόν)." Noted also in Braun, *Hebräer*, 97; and deSilva, *4 Maccabees*, xxxiv.

saved? Given the heavily debated nature of these texts,[120] and the fact that I have not yet treated them in detail,[121] some extra reflection at this stage is in order.

Although πίστις is absent in these verses, three observations show that these verses apply to an understanding of faith. First, κατέχω (hold fast) in 3:6 and 3:14 is clearly antonymous with the ἀπιστία (unbelief) and ἀπείθεια (disobedience) which characterized the wilderness generation in the immediate context. Second, the "house" of which we can be a part is the same house over which Christ is faithful (πιστός) (3:6a) and in which Moses was faithful (πιστός) (3:2, 5). God's house, therefore, is associated with faithfulness (πιστός). Finally, the object which we are to hold firm in 3:14 is ὑπόστασις, and πίστις in 11:1 is described as ὑπόστασις ("now faith is the reality of things hoped for (ἔστιν δὲ πίστις ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις)"). Therefore, "holding firm the beginning of the reality until the end" speaks to the ethical dimension of faith we are investigating in this section.[122]

Three questions arise in these verses that must be addressed: (1) the meaning of οἶκος in 3:6; (2) the meaning of μέτοχος in 3:14; and (most importantly) (3) the function of ἐάνπερ in joining the two clauses in both verses.

IV.3.1. Οἶκος

The house (οἶκος) in Heb 3:1-6 is "his" (αὐτοῦ) house, but the author is not clear as to the antecedent of αὐτοῦ. Moses is said to be faithful in his house (ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ) in verses 2 and 5, while Jesus is said to be faithful over his house (ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ) in verse 6. In all three cases, the nearest possible antecedents could be Moses or Jesus, so that Moses would be faithful in Moses' house and Jesus would be faithful over Jesus' house. However, 3:2 opens with language of Jesus being

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[120] The Scripture index in Bateman, *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews* (2007) offers a handy illustration of the importance of Heb 3:6 and 3:14 in this debate, as these two particular verses are cited substantially more than any other in Hebrews.

[121] For the other so-called warning passages in Hebrews, see chapter 3, section III.2 (Heb 2:1-4); chapter 3, section III.3.1 (Heb 3:7-4:11); chapter 3, section III.3.2 (Heb 6:4-6); and chapter 4, section IV.2.3 (Heb 10:26-39).

[122] So also Attridge: "It is clear then, as patristic interpreters also recognized, that this pregnant expression serves as a paraphrase for faith" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 119). See also Chrysostom: "What is the beginning of confidence? It means faith, through which we subsisted and have come to be and have been made to share in being" (Chrysostom in Heen and Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, 57). So too Grässer, *Glaube*, 16-19, 35.

faithful to the one who appointed him (τῷ ποιήσαντι),[123] who is clearly God. Αὐτοῦ, therefore, could well be pointing to this person who appointed Jesus: God. Read in this way, Jesus is faithful over God's house. Perhaps the strongest indication that "his" is a reference to God is the echo of Num 12:6-8:

> Num 12:6b-8a (LXX): ἐὰν γένηται προφήτης ὑμῶν κυρίῳ ἐν ὁράματι αὐτῷ γνωσθήσομαι καὶ ἐν ὕπνῳ λαλήσω αὐτῷ ⁷ οὐχ οὕτως ὁ **θεράπων** μου Μωυσῆς **ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ μου πιστός** ἐστιν ⁸ στόμα κατὰ στόμα λαλήσω αὐτῷ ἐν εἴδει καὶ οὐ δι᾽ αἰνιγμάτων καὶ τὴν δόξαν κυρίου εἶδεν
> "If there is a prophet among you for the Lord in a vision I will be known to him; and in sleep I will speak to him. Not so [with] my **servant** Moses – he is **faithful in my whole house**. I will speak to him mouth to mouth, in visible form and not through riddles. And he has seen the glory of the Lord." (NETS)

> Heb 3:5: καὶ Μωϋσῆς μὲν **πιστὸς ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ** ὡς **θεράπων** εἰς μαρτύριον τῶν λαληθησομένων
> "and Moses was **faithful in his whole house** as a **servant**, as a testimony to the things that were to be spoken later"[124]

In view of this parallel, at least the first two instances of αὐτοῦ (3:2 and 3:5) are God.[125] Furthermore, if both the house in which Moses is a servant and the house over which Christ is a Son point to the same house, then the antecedent of the third αὐτοῦ can reasonably be assumed to be God. Therefore, "his house" is God's house.[126]

The identity of God's house is also not immediately clear.[127] Οἶκος appears 7 times in verses 2-6.[128] The use of οἶκος in verses 2, 5, and 6 are the main occasions of interest, since the use in verses 3-4 deals generally with houses in an argument from analogy. Attridge sees οἶκος as the wider cosmic creation (in the first few cases)

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[123] For ποιεῖν as "to appoint," see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 108 n 50; and Koester, *Hebrews*, 244. For an alternative view, see Johnson, *Hebrews*, 107.

[124] Another possible parallel is 1 Sam 2:35: "And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do all that is in my heart and that is in my soul, and I will build him a sure house, and he shall go about before my anointed one all the days" (Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 76).

[125] Contra Hanson, who understands κύριος in Num 12:6-8 as the preincarnate Christ (Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, *Jesus Christ in the Old Testament* (London: SPCK, 1965), 49-57).

[126] This reading is followed by most interpreters. See, for example, Attridge, *Hebrews*, 108; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 195-96; Koester, *Hebrews*, 242-47; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 70-71; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 72-73; and NRSV. For opposing views, see Bruce, *Hebrews*, 90; and Hanson, *Jesus Christ*, 50-52.

[127] For more on οἶκος and various possibilities, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 108-109 and accompanying footnotes.

[128] The author also refers to the house of God (τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ) in 10:21. Given the sanctuary imagery in that context, οἶκος in 10:21 is the heavenly tabernacle. In 11:7, the house of Noah (τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ) is clearly a group of people.

and as the people of God over which Christ presides (in verse 6).[129] Others limit

οἶκος to the people of God in each case.[130] Ephrem the Syrian understood the house

as people: Christ "was faithful, and not over the shrine of the temple but over the

souls of people."[131] Likewise, for Bruce, "house" in Num 12:7 is a reference to "the

people of Israel, the family of God,"[132] and, under Christ, the "household comprises

all believers."[133]

 Similar to Bruce, I read God's house in verses 2, 5, and 6 as a reference to the

people of God. However, we need not draw a strong contrast between the house

under Christ (which Bruce says is comprised of all believers) and the house in which

Moses served (which Bruce associates with the people of Israel). Indeed, the author

does not suggest a difference between the houses – each house is God's house. The

difference lies in the person and role of the servant: Moses is servant in the house

while Jesus is servant over the house. The house remains the same: this is God's

people,[134] the travelling people of God. As Roloff writes, "Der Hebräerbrief kennt

nur ein *einziges Gottesvolk*, zu dem gleichermaßen Juden und Christen gehören."[135]

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[129] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 110-111.

[130] A house of God as believers also appears in Eph 2:19-21 and 1 Pet 2:4-5.

[131] Ephrem the Syrian in Heen and Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, 54.

[132] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 92. Bruce points to the Targum of Onqelos at Num 12:7, which paraphrases *bêṯî* ("my house") as *'ammî* ("my people") (92 n 12).

[133] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 94. See also Aquinas, *Hebrews*, 80; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 210; Hagner, *Hebrews*, 39; and Scott C. Layton, "Christ Over His House (Hebrews 3.6) and Hebrew אשר על־הבית," *NTS* 37 (1991), 477.

[134] This also has implications for the question of the hearers' association with Israel. If the house is God's people, then the author of Hebrews is suggesting that those who hold fast the boldness and boasting of hope have a place in the story of God's people Israel. Johnson agrees: "This is a dramatic claim to continuity with historic Israel. If the author and readers are 'God's house' ruled by God's Son, and if the Son has taken 'hold of the descendants of Abraham,' as we learned in 2:16, then author and readers participate in the story of that people" (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 110; see also Koester, *Hebrews*, 252-53). In the immediate context, this association with historic Israel makes the following words from Ps 95 (Heb 3:7-11) applicable to the hearers of Hebrews.

[135] Jürgen Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, GNT 10 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 283 (italics his). So too Laub: "Die Heilstat Jesu erst, die 'den neuen und lebendigen Weg erschlossen' hat (10,20), verbindet die Glaubenden Israels und die Jesus-Gemeinde zur einem Gemeinschaft von Glaubenden" (Franz Laub, "Glaubenskrise und neu auszulegendes Bekenntnis: Zur Intention der Hohepriesterchristologie des Hebräerbriefs," in *Theologie im Werden: Studien zu den theologischen Konzeptionen im Neuen Testament*, ed. Josef Hainz (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1992), 394).

IV.3.2. Μέτοχος

The author of Hebrews speaks of becoming μέτοχοι … τοῦ Χριστοῦ.[136] The meaning of this phrase hinges on how we translate μέτοχος and how we understand the genitive τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Μέτοχος appears six times in the NT, with five of those times in Hebrews (1:9; 3:1, 14; 6:4; 12:8). The verb μετέχω appears in Heb 2:14, 5:13, and 7:13.[137] The word can mean either a "sharing or participation in" (such as "sharer," "partaker," or "participator") or it can carry a business connotation, meaning something like "partner" or "companion."[138]

The genitive could be rendered "in Christ," "of Christ," or "with Christ." Most of the possible combinations are represented in translations: "share in Christ" (RSV; NIV; ESV); "share with Christ" (NJB); "partners of Christ" (NRSV); "partners with Christ" (NET); and "partakers of Christ" (KJV; NASB). These translations indicate two groups of interpretation: (1) one which reflects a Pauline sense of being "in Christ"[139] or perhaps a later theosis soteriology[140] (= "sharer/partaker in/of Christ");[141] and (2) one which assumes a companionship with Christ (= "sharer/partner with Christ").[142] Both of these possibilities are represented elsewhere in Hebrews. The companionship reading aligns with μέτοχος in 1:9, where it refers to companions of the Son of God: "God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions (τοὺς μετόχους σου)." The full participation reading aligns with 12:8, where the author speaks of the hearers as participating in discipline: "but if you are without discipline, in which you all have become partakers (ἧς μέτοχοι γεγόνασιν πάντες), then you are illegitimate children and not God's

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[136] In full: μέτοχοι γὰρ τοῦ Χριστοῦ γεγόναμεν.
[137] Within the NT, see also 1 Cor 9:10, 12; 10:17, 21, 30.
[138] BDAG, 643. For this second connotation, see Luke 5:7, which uses the word to describe James', John's, and Peter's fishing partnership.
[139] So Mackie: " 'partaking in Christ' quite possibly reflects something comparable to Paul's participatory soteriology. Μέτοχοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ may then be loosely equated with Paul's ἐν Χριστῷ" (Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 53).
[140] So Theodore of Mopsuestia: "those who believe and who have received the Spirit 'share' in the substance of Christ, since they have received some physical fellowship with him" (Heen and Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, 56).
[141] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 117-18; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 118.
[142] Bateman IV, "Introducing," 48-49; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 150-51; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 225-27; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 87.

children." The author also speaks of κλήσεως ἐπουρανίου μέτοχοι (3:1) and μετόχους γενηθέντας πνεύματος ἁγίου (6:4), but these phrases are unclear.[143]

The language within the phrase itself and parallel uses elsewhere in Hebrews, therefore, give no clear indication of how to understand μέτοχοι … τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Furthermore, the difference between "sharing in Christ" as participation and "sharing with Christ" as partnership is minimal, as both could point to the same general idea.[144] As a result, our understanding of the phrase will be determined by a wider reading of the theology of Hebrews. I argued in chapter 6 that human beings share a destiny with Jesus, the one who "shared (μετέσχεν)" in blood and flesh (2:14). Heb 3:14 and the language of "sharing in Christ" likely alludes to this theme of shared destinies that I developed earlier.[145]

Therefore, I translate μέτοχοι γὰρ τοῦ Χριστοῦ γεγόναμεν in 3:14 as "for we have become sharers in Christ," and I understand this to refer to our sharing in the destiny of the one who shared in our blood and flesh. This reading of μέτοχοι … τοῦ Χριστοῦ is commensurate with an understanding of οἶκος as God's travelling people. As I will argue in fuller detail in the next section on the ecclesiological dimension, faith is an inherently corporate experience, and so sharing in Christ cannot be divorced from the travelling people of God.

IV.3.3. Ἐάνπερ

The final question with regard to Heb 3:6 and 3:14 is the most difficult: what is the relationship between the two clauses? Both verses are third class conditional clauses[146] joined by ἐάνπερ:

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[143] The phrase in 3:1 is translated: "share in the/a heavenly calling (RSV; NIV; ESV); "partners in a heavenly calling" (NRSV; NET); "partakers of a heavenly calling" (KJV; NASB). The phrase in 6:4 is typically translated "shared in the Holy Spirit" (NRSV, ESV, NIV, NASB); or "partakers of the Holy Spirit" (KJV ["Ghost"]; RSV; NET).

[144] Koester, *Hebrews*, 259-60; 266; Enrique Nardoni, "Partakers in Christ (Hebrews 3.14)," *NTS* 37 (1991), 456-72.

[145] So also Weiss: "Seiner 'Teilhabe' an ihnen (2,14) korrespondiert ihre 'Teilhabe' an ihm." (Weiss, *Hebräer*, 264).

[146] Third class conditions feature ἐάν with a subjunctive verb in the protasis (Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 389).

Heb 3:6

Χριστὸς δὲ ὡς υἱὸς ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ· οὗ οἶκός ἐσμεν ἡμεῖς, [apodosis]
  ἐάν[περ] τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ τὸ καύχημα τῆς ἐλπίδος κατάσχωμεν. [protasis]
But Christ [is faithful] over God's house as a son – whose house we are,
  if indeed we hold firm the boldness and boasting of hope.

Heb 3:14

μέτοχοι γὰρ τοῦ Χριστοῦ γεγόναμεν, [apodosis]
  ἐάνπερ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ὑποστάσεως μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν κατάσχωμεν [protasis]
For we have become sharers in Christ,
  if indeed we hold firm the beginning of the reality firm until the end.

According to Wallace, a third class condition "often presents the condition as *uncertain of fulfillment, but still likely*," but "There are, however, many exceptions to this."[147] The interpretation, therefore, cannot be rooted solely in the semantic relationship, as Wallace also notes: "Because of the broad range of the third class condition … many conditional clauses are open to interpretation."[148]

With respect to the interpretation of conditional clauses, the relationship between the apodosis and protasis can either be (1) cause-effect or (2) evidence-inference.[149] The cause-effect condition is familiar: "If you touch the hot stovetop, you will burn your hand;" or "If you run in the rain, you will get wet."[150] The evidence-inference condition is one in which "the speaker infers something (the apodosis) from some evidence. That is, he makes an induction about the *implications* that a piece of evidence suggests to him."[151] Wallace gives the example: "If she has a ring on her left hand, then she's married." Based on the evidence in the protasis (the ring on her left hand), observers infer that the woman is married. The ring on her left hand does not cause the woman to be married, but demonstrates that she is married. Within the NT, Wallace gives an example from 1 Cor 15:44: "εἰ ἔστιν σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἔστιν καὶ πνευματικόν; If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual [body]."

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[147] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 696. See also Blass, Debrunner, and Funk, *Greek Grammar*, 188; and James Allen Hewett, *New Testament Greek: A Beginning and Intermediate Grammar* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1986), 169-70.

[148] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 697.

[149] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 682-84. Wallace also lists "equivalence" as a way the clauses can relate, but says equivalence "often looks very similar to evidence-inference" (683). For our purposes, then, I restrict the possibilities to evidence-inference and cause-effect.

[150] Wallace offers the following as an example from the NT: "ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι; I will give you all these things, if you fall down and worship me" (Matt 4:9). (Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 683).

[151] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 683 (italics his).

Wallace explains, "Obviously the physical body does not *cause* the spiritual one; rather, Paul simply infers that there must be a spiritual body from the evidence of a physical one."[152] Therefore, the key difference between the evidence-inference conditional clause and the cause-effect clause is the question of causation.

With respect to our interpretation of Heb 3:6, then, the debate is whether "holding firm the boldness" *causes* us to be "God's house," or whether "holding firm the boldness" *gives evidence to infer* our being "God's house." Similarly, in Heb 3:14, the question is whether "holding firm the reality" *causes* us to be "sharers in Christ," or whether "holding firm the reality" *gives evidence to infer* that we are "sharers in Christ." Put another way, does enduring make us sharers in Christ (cause-effect), or does enduring show that we are already sharers in Christ (evidence-inference)?

Similar conditional clauses elsewhere in Hebrews add little to our understanding of the relationship in 3:6 and 3:14. Outside of Heb 3:6 and 3:14, ἐάν or ἐάνπερ appears with the subjunctive six times. The clearest example of causation appears in Heb 10:38 (quoting from the LXX): "if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him (ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ)." God's displeasure is clearly the result of an individual shrinking back. Causation is not as clearly in view in the other five cases. In Heb 6:3, the author writes, "And this we will do, if indeed God permits (καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσομεν, ἐάνπερ ἐπιτρέπῃ ὁ θεός)." The ability to move beyond basic instruction (6:1) is contingent on God's permission, but it is not clear that God's permission *causes* the author to move beyond basic instruction. In 13:23, the author writes, "with whom [Timothy] I will see you, if he comes soon (μεθ᾽ οὗ ἐὰν τάχιον ἔρχηται ὄψομαι ὑμᾶς)." As with 6:3, a contingency is clear, but causation is not necessarily in view. The final three occurrences are from the quotation of Ps 95:7-8: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts (σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε, μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν)" (Heb 3:7-8, 15; 4:7). Hearing God's voice could conceivably cause a person to harden the heart, but the implication seems to be more akin to "when you hear his voice, be sure not to harden your heart."

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[152] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 683 (italics his).

Thomas is a representative supporter of the evidence-inference reading of Heb 3:6 and 3:14.[153] By Thomas' reading, "the author indicates that holding firmly to one's initial confidence and hope is the evidence that one belongs to God's family or has become a partaker of Christ. In other words, this is not a threat to one's spiritual status that may be at stake for failure to persevere, but rather the confirmation of that status based upon the evidence that one is already persevering."[154] Thomas' strongest piece of evidence in support of the evidence-inference reading is the present tense ἐσμεν (3:6) and the perfect tense γεγόναμεν (3:14).[155] As we will see, the cause-effect relationship locates sharing in Christ ultimately in the future, such that our present endurance is the necessary cause of the sharing. To the contrary, Thomas' evidence-inference view emphasizes "*the present state* that has resulted from an action began in the past. This means that our present state of being partakers of Christ is the result of an action initiated at a past time, and all of this is encompassed in the use of the perfect tense."[156] For Thomas, then, true faith is *evidenced* by endurance. "Holding firm the beginning of the reality" (3:14) is not the criteria by which we become sharers in Christ, but is evidence that we are presently sharing in Christ.[157] This reading is in service to Thomas' larger thesis, which, as I surveyed in the introduction, posits that false faith is one which falls away while genuine faith is one which perseveres.

Most interpreters favor the cause-effect reading.[158] For example, concerning 3:6 and 3:14, McKnight suggests, "there is a present reality, the continuance of which is dependent upon perseverance. If that person does not persevere, there will be a cessation of that former reality."[159] Contrary to Thomas, the perfect tense γεγόναμεν

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[153] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 183-89. See also Buist M. Fanning, "A Classical Reformed View," in *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews*, ed. Herbert W. Bateman IV (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007), 206-15.

[154] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 185-86.

[155] So also Fanning, "Classical Reformed View," 215.

[156] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 187 (italics his).

[157] Thomas, *Mixed-Audience*, 188-89.

[158] See, among others: Harold W. Attridge, "The Psalms in Hebrews," in *The Psalms in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken. The New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 209; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 101; Colijn, "'Let Us Approach'," 584; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 118; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 88; and Thomas R. Schreiner and Ardel B. Caneday, *The Race Set Before Us: A Biblical Theology of Perseverance & Assurance* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2001), 200-202.

[159] McKnight, "Warning Passages," 57.

(3:14) does not necessarily exclude the possibility of a contingent future. There are two possible responses to Thomas. On the one hand, if Porter is correct that the perfect tense does not grammaticalize time, but rather "the author's stative conception of a process,"[160] then the perfect tense γεγόναμεν would be read duratively: "we are become sharers of Christ."[161] As such, the process of becoming a sharer may not be completed until a future point. On the other hand, even if the perfect tense in 3:14 does grammaticalize time ("we have become"),[162] the verse still aligns nicely with the eschatological tension characteristic of Hebrews. McKnight presents the scheme thusly:

Past	Present	Future
INAUGURATED SALVATION		FINAL
Conversion	Perseverance	Salvation[163]

Human beings experience the foretastes of inaugurated salvation in the present, but the fullness of this salvation is realized only in the eschaton. Along these lines, Nardoni writes, "While the believers already partake in Christ in the present time, their definitive participation lies in the future and is contingent on their final faithfulness."[164] The perfect tense in 3:14, therefore, foreshadows the perfect tense προσεληλύθατε ("you have come" or, if a process, "you are come") in Heb 12:22: "You have come (προσεληλύθατε) to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."[165] Despite already drawing near to the heavenly Jerusalem, the hearers must still strive to enter the rest (4:11) and "not refuse the one who is speaking" (12:25).

A firm decision between the evidence-inference and the cause-effect reading of Heb 3:6 and 3:14 has little impact on the force of Hebrews' exhortation and our understanding of faith in Hebrews. With the majority of scholarship, I find the cause-effect reading more plausible for the reasons adduced above, but the evidence-

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[160] Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood*, Studies in Biblical Greek 1 (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), 245-90 (here 270).

[161] Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 269.

[162] For a response to Porter, see Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 504-12.

[163] McKnight, "Warning Passages," 57 (capital letters his).

[164] Nardoni, "Partakers," 468. See also Osborne: "while there is security of our salvation (6:9, 10; 10:39) there is no guarantee. It is ours by virtue of repentance but can only be secured finally by means of perseverance" (Grant R. Osborne, "Soteriology in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Grace Unlimited*, ed. Clark H. Pinnock (Orig. Pub. 1975; Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 1998), 155).

[165] Nardoni, "Partakers," 469.

inference reading is not wholly improbable. Nevertheless, in both cases the author of Hebrews is clear that *endurance to the end is precisely what faith looks like*. If one hopes to share in the destiny of Christ, this member of God's house must faithfully endure to the point of death, like Christ. Whether this endurance *causes* one to share in Christ fully in the future or whether this endurance *gives evidence of* our sharing in Christ already is not the primary question in view. Instead, the author of Hebrews issues a clear warning that if a person is not enduring, then that person is in danger of falling away from the living God (3:12).[166] Those who are not persevering are slipping back into the default human story, and cannot expect anything other than that story's assured conclusion.

IV.4. Conclusion

Faith in Hebrews involves enduring to the end in obedience to God. This endurance is closely related to the eschatological dimension of faith, as we endure while travelling toward the eschatological hope. This is perhaps illustrated most clearly in Heb 3:6, where the author of Hebrews urges his hearers to "hold fast the boldness and boasting of hope (τὸ καύχημα τῆς ἐλπίδος)."[167] In keeping with with the christological dimension of faith, the ethic of obedience and endurance is modeled perfectly in Jesus and so is defined by his story: the ethical dimension of faith requires faithfulness to the point of death in obedience to God. If a person fails to endure, then this person is no longer moving with the travelling people of God and cannot expect to arrive at the hoped-for heavenly homeland. This leads into the ecclesiological dimension of faith, to which we now turn.

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[166] On the so-called warning passages as pastoral tools intended to encourage perseverance, see Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 589, 595-96; Schreiner and Caneday, *Race*, esp. 142-213. Allen's pithy statement is particularly apropos: "Hebrews' answer to the question of 'can one apostatize?' is neither 'yes' nor 'no' but rather '*don't*!' " (Allen, "Irrevocable," 22, italics his).

[167] The substantive τὸ καύχημα likely refers to "that about which one boasts," and τῆς ἐλπίδος to "that for which one hopes"; τὸ καύχημα τῆς ἐλπίδος is likely a genitive of content, meaning, "an object of pride consisting in that for which one hopes" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 212; see also Johnson, *Hebrews*, 111; and Koester, *Hebrews*, 248).

V. ECCLESIOLOGICAL FAITH

The final dimension is that of the corporate nature of faith. To be sure, drawing too sharp of a distinction between individual and corporate faith can lead to false dichotomies. Groups are composed of individuals, Greco-Roman and Jewish society understood the category of "individual,"[168] and, as we will see, the author of Hebrews shows a definite concern for the wellbeing of individuals within the group. One can recognize the unique identity of an "individual" without being "individualistic," a term which often connotes a system whereby the "individual person is above the group and is free to do what he or she feels right and necessary, normally using other persons, objects in the environment, and groups of people in the society to facilitate individually oriented personal goals and objectives."[169] I am not, therefore, arguing that faith in Hebrews lacks any individual component. Rather, I am arguing that an individual's faith is demonstrated most clearly by being faithful with the corporate travelling people of God. In other words, the author of Hebrews insists that faith is impossible apart from the community, and faith is demonstrated most clearly by remaining with the community. To fall away from the community is to fall away from faith.[170]

This corporate construal of faith aligns with the group-oriented mindset in the ancient world, where people generally operated with a strong perception of the group. Malina explains:

> In strong group societies individuals always feel themselves as embedded in a group, as representatives of the group, as needing others to know who they are and what they are doing. What this means is that the individual does not

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[168] Gary W. Burnett, *Paul and the Salvation of the Individual*, Biblical Interpretation Series 57 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 23-87. Within the NT, the Gospel of John is probably the best representative of individual faith. Moule explains: "This is the Gospel, par excellence, of the approach of the single soul to God: this is the part of Scripture to which one turns first when trying to direct an enquirer to his own, personal appropriation of salvation" (C. F. D. Moule, "The Individualism of the Fourth Gospel," *NovT* 5, no. 2-3 (1962), 185). So too O'Grady: "This gospel is basically christological and is truly individualistic in that it emphasizes the need for the individual believer to respond in faith to the final revealer, mediator and envoy to God. This is the central thought and always most necessary for the understanding of the gospel. … As far as the Church is concerned, there are signs of the Church in this gospel because the Church as community of believers is the result of this personal faith response" (John F. O'Grady, "Individualism and Johannine Ecclesiology," *BTB* 5 (1975), 260-61).

[169] Bruce J. Malina, *Christian Origins and Cultural Anthropology: Practical Models for Biblical Interpretation* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1986), 19.

[170] As noted in the introduction, Marohl in *Faithfulness and the Purpose of Hebrews* finds that "faithfulness" is a marker of social identity for Hebrews, but he spends little time explaining what "faithfulness" in Hebrews entails.

primarily perceive himself or herself as unique but as a group member. Group belonging and group location is primary and essential to self-definition. Furthermore, the individual would feel responsible, for the most part, to the group (not to the self) for his or her own actions, destiny, career, development, and life in general. The good of the whole, of the group, has primacy in the individual's life. The individual person is embedded in the group and is free to do what he or she feels is right and necessary only if the group shares the same judgment that the individual holds.[171]

To demonstrate the ecclesiological dimension of faith in Hebrews, I will first establish the corporate nature of Hebrews, then show how the individual fits within this corporate exhortation, and finally show how corporate faith is associated with the suffering of Christ. In doing so, we will see that faith for Hebrews cannot be divorced from the community: an individual demonstrates faith most clearly by enduring Christ's suffering with the people of God.

V.1. The "Church" in Hebrews

Hebrews is written to a specific group of people. The author offers little terminology for this group beyond God's house of people (οἶκος)[172] and familial language (brothers and sisters of each other[173] and Christ[174]; sons and daughters of God[175]). If the hearers of Hebrews were experiencing persecution accompanied by social dislocation, the familial ties forged via the Son would have been particularly significant.[176] Another image of the group is that of the travelling people of God.

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[171] Malina, *Christian Origins*, 19. Malina suggests that the world of the NT, as well as much of the modern world, operates with this mindset (19-20). See also Bruce J. Malina, "The Individual and the Community-Personality in the Social World of Early Christianity," *BTB* 9 (1979), 126-38; Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 81-97; Jerome H. Neyrey, "Dyadism," in *Biblical Social Values and their Meanings: A Handbook*, ed. John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), 51; Jerome H. Neyrey, "Group Orientation," in *Biblical Social Values and their Meaning: A Handbook*, ed. John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), 88.

[172] Heb 3:6. See also Bockmuehl: "The homily's most characteristic term for 'church', if it has one at all, is οἶκος, 'house' " (Markus Bockmuehl, "The Church in Hebrews," in *A Vision for the Church: Studies in Early Christian Ecclesiology in Honour of J. P. M. Sweet*, ed. Markus Bockmuehl and Michael B. Thompson (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 137).

[173] Heb 3:1, 12; 10:19, 13:22, 23.

[174] Heb 2:11, 12, 17.

[175] Heb 2:10; 12:5-8.

[176] As Neyrey and Stewart explain, "Because no welfare or social-security system was in place, individuals looked to their families to comfort, feed, nurture, and, finally, bury them. It was a tragedy to be taken from one's family or to be forced to leave. Ties of affection, identity, and support would be broken by this rupture" (Jerome H. Neyrey and Eric C. Stewart, "Kinship," in *The Social World of the New Testament: Insights and Models*, ed. Jerome H. Neyrey and Eric C. Stewart (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2008), 25).

Like the wilderness generation, they are situated at the brink of the Promised Land, and must strive to enter God's rest (4:11).[177]

Ἐκκλησία appears twice in Hebrews. In Heb 2:12, the author of Hebrews puts the words of Ps 21:23 (LXX) on the lips of Jesus: "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the ἐκκλησίας I will praise you." Roloff suggests that ἐκκλησία in this context refers to "die himmlische Versammlung der Engel,"[178] but the ἐκκλησία is more likely composed of Jesus' "brothers and sisters" (clearly humans, as in 2:14) to whom he is proclaiming God's name. In 12:23, the author envisions the city of the living God with "the ἐκκλησία of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven." Although the author does not explicitly say so, ἐκκλησία is likely another image of the church. Ἐκκλησία was used of Christian gatherings by the time of Hebrews' writing,[179] and the ἐκκλησία in Heb 2:12 is associated with Jesus' brothers and sisters, which is another image for the group. The heavenly ἐκκλησία in 12:23 may refer to a heavenly gathering of all Christians, or perhaps only to Christians from Hebrews' specific community who have died (note 13:7).

Despite the lack of clear terminology for the group, it is evident that the author of Hebrews has in mind a specific group of people who meet together (10:25).[180] The author knows his audience,[181] and he often writes with first-person plural pronouns.[182]

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[177] For Käsemann, the story of Israel in the wilderness is the key image by which the hearers of Hebrews understand themselves to be "the wandering people of God" (see esp. Käsemann, *Wandering*, 17-22). For more on "story" and the nature of the church, see Lindbeck: "The first and, in a narrative approach, tautological rule for reading is that the Church is fundamentally identified and characterized by its story. Images such as 'body of Christ,' or the traditional marks of 'unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity,' cannot be first defined and then used to specify what is and what is not the Church. The story is logically prior. It determines the meaning of images, concepts, doctrines, and theories of the Church rather than being determined by them" (George Lindbeck, "The Story-Shaped Church: Critical Exegesis and Theological Interpretation," in *The Theological Interpretation of Scripture*, ed. Stephen Fowl (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997), 42).

[178] Roloff, *Der Kirche*, 279.

[179] Although we cannot be certain of the date of Hebrews (see Attridge's range of 60-100 CE [Attridge, *Hebrews*, 9]), ἐκκλησία commonly appears in all of Paul's letters, which were most likely written prior to Hebrews. Among Paul's undisputed letters, see: Rom 16:1, 4, 5, 16, 23; 1 Cor 1:2; 4:17; 6:4; 7:17; 10:32; 11:16, 18, 22, 28; 14:4, 5, 12, 19, 23, 28, 33, 34, 35; 15:9; 16:1, 19; 2 Cor 1:1; 8:1, 18, 19, 23, 24; 11:8, 28; 12:13; Gal 1:2, 13, 22; Phil 3:6; 4:15; 1 Thess 1:1; 2:14; 2 Thess 1:1, 4; Phlm 1:2.

[180] On the hearers of Hebrews as a distinct social group, see Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 101-105.

[181] As Petersen highlights, every letter presupposes a relationship between the sender and the receiver (Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul*, 63-64). While Hebrews reads like a sermon, it appears to have been sent from a distance as a letter (13:22-25).

[182] Heb 1:2; 2:1, 3; 3:1, 6; 4:13, 15; 5:11; 6:20; 7:14, 26; 9:14, 24; 10:15, 20, 26, 39; 11:40; 12:1, 9, 25, 29; 13:6, 20, 21, 23. Noted also by Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 101, 105.

Jesus is consistently depicted as the community's representative. As Bockmuehl writes, "Christians now speak and live as one people: Christ is *our* High Priest, *our* Lord, the apostle and High Priest of *our* confession (3.1; 7.14, 26; 8.1). They are thus united as a people around their representative High Priest."[183] Although the author does not name individual members, he is aware of leaders within their community (13:7, 17, 24). He hopes to be reunited with them (13:19), and he hopes to visit them with their common acquaintance Timothy (13:23). He knows of their previous experiences, of how they endured persecution and were compassionate toward those in prison (10:32-34). Given that not all Christ-followers experienced the plundering of property, the fact that the hearers of Hebrews did experience such persecution indicates their membership in a distinct group.[184]

Therefore, while admittedly "Hebrews does not have a developed theology of the church,"[185] the author is clearly addressing a group of people who identify themselves with each other. As Söding writes, "Der Hebräerbrief entwickelt keine eigentliche Lehre von der Kirche. Aber er ist ekklesiologisch äußerst relevant."[186] This is further evidenced by the nature of his exhortations.

V.1.1. Corporate Exhortation

The author describes Hebrews as "a word of exhortation (τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως)" (13:22), and his exhortations are consistently directed to a group. In fact, the author only exhorts *individuals* in 6:11-12: "And we desire *each of you* (ἕκαστον ὑμῶν) to show the same earnestness…" Nevertheless, it is worth noting that this exhortation to individuals is still corporate in effect, as the author expects *every* member of the community to heed his words and for the community not to be sluggish (μὴ νωθροὶ γένησθε) (6:12). Beyond this possible exception, the rest of the exhortations in Hebrews are directed specifically to the group with plural verbs

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[183] Bockmuehl, "Church in Hebrews," 138 (italics his). Bockmuehl later writes, "Given his representative role as 'our' High Priest, the appeal to Christ's example does carry clearly ecclesiological implications (4.14; 5.10; 12.2)" (144). Similarly, Roloff finds, "*Kirche ist die Solidargemeinschaft von Menschen, die Jesus durch seine Menschwerdung ermöglicht hat*" (Roloff, *Der Kirche*, 281, italics his).

[184] Marohl, *Faithfulness*, 105.

[185] Lindars, *Theology*, 127. See also Roloff: "Die Ekklesiologie bleibt demgegenüber jedoch auffallend unbetont, ja fragmentarisch. Nächst den johanneischen Schriften ist der Hebräerbrief das neutestamentliche Buch mit dem geringsten Interesse am Thema 'Kirche' " (Roloff, *Der Kirche*, 278).

[186] Söding, "Gemeinde," 187.

(usually first-person plural subjunctive or second-person plural imperative). The exhortations in Hebrews may be summarized thusly:

Exhortations in Hebrews	
Exhortation to Forward Movement[187]	
4:11	Let us strive (σπουδάσωμεν) to enter the rest
6:1	Let us press on (φερώμεθα) to maturity
12:12	Strengthen (ἀνορθώσατε) weakened hands and knees
12:13	Make (ποιεῖτε) straight paths for your feet
Exhortation to Endurance	
3:6	Hold fast (κατάσχωμεν) boldness and boasting of hope
3:14	Hold fast (κατάσχωμεν) the beginning of the reality
4:14	Let us hold fast (κρατῶμεν) the confession
10:23	Let us hold fast (κατέχωμεν) the confession of hope
10:35	Do not throw away (ἀποβάλητε) your boldness
12:1	Let us run (τρέχωμεν) with endurance
12:7	Endure (ὑπομένετε) [suffering] as discipline[188]
Exhortation to Corporate Attendance and Accountability	
3:12	Watch out (βλέπετε) lest there be in anyone among you an evil unbelieving heart
3:13	Exhort (παρακαλεῖτε) one another
4:1	Let us fear (φοβηθῶμεν) lest any of you fail to reach God's rest
10:24	Let us consider (κατανοῶμεν) how to provoke one another to love and good works
12:14-15	Pursue (διώκετε) peace with everyone and holiness … seeing to it (ἐπισκοποῦντες) that no one fails to obtain the grace of God
13:2	Do not neglect (ἐπιλανθάνεσθε) hospitality
13:16	Do not neglect (ἐπιλανθάνεσθε) doing good and sharing
Exhortation to Attend to a Theological Truth or God's Voice	
2:1	We must pay closer attention (προσέχειν) lest we drift away (παραρυῶμεν)
12:25	See that (βλέπετε) you do not refuse (παραιτήσησθε) the one who is speaking
13:9	Do not be carried away (παραφέρεσθε) by diverse and strange teachings
Exhortation to Look to Jesus or Follow Jesus	
3:1	Consider (κατανοήσατε) Jesus
12:1-2	Let us run (τρέχωμεν) … looking to (ἀφορῶντες) Jesus
12:3	Consider (ἀναλογίσασθε) the one who endured hostility
13:13	Let us go (ἐξερχώμεθα) to him outside the camp

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[187] None of these subcategories are mutually exclusive, but I divide them as such to highlight the key themes.

[188] Or, if ὑπομένετε is 2nd person plural indicative: "you endure (ὑπομένετε) [suffering] as discipline."

	Exhortation to Draw Near to God in Worship
4:16	Let us draw near (προσερχώμεθα) to the throne of grace with confidence so that we might receive (λάβωμεν) mercy and find (εὕρωμεν) grace
10:22	Let us draw near (προσερχώμεθα) with a true heart
12:28	Let us show gratitude (ἔχωμεν χάριν) and offer worship (λατρεύωμεν) to God
13:15	Let us offer (ἀναφέρωμεν) a sacrifice of praise continually
	Exhortation to Obey or Imitate Local Leaders
13:7	Remember (μνημονεύετε) your leaders … considering (ἀναθεωροῦντες) the outcome of their way of life, imitate (μιμεῖσθε) their faith
13:17	Obey (πείθεσθε) your leaders and submit (ὑπείκετε) to them[189]

As the table demonstrates, with the possible exception of 6:11-12 (as noted above), the author of Hebrews never exhorts an individual, but only the group.

V.1.2. Corporate Concern for the Individual

Nevertheless, while the author of Hebrews exhorts communities, he also shows a definite concern for the individual. For the author of Hebrews, the role of the individual is to stay in step with the travelling people of God. This aligns closely with the strong group mindset that typified the ancient world. The maintenance of this continued participation, however, is the group's responsibility. As a travelling community, the hearers of Hebrews are responsible for one another: "Dans cette lutte de toute l'Église pour l'intégrité de la foi et la fidélité à la sainteté, chaque chrétien se considèrera comme le gardien et le protecteur de ses frères."[190] The book of Hebrews may be directed to a specific group of Christians, urging them to watch out for others, as Koester notes, "The request to greet *all* your leaders and *all* the saints (13:24a)

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[189] Given the massive amount of exhortations, Eisenbaum is wrong to suggest, "The author is much more concerned about the subject of which he writes, namely a systematic understanding of Christology, than about the behavior or well-being of his audience. This theoretical focus distinguishes Hebrews not only from the authentic letters of Paul, but from the pseudonymous letters as well (with the possible exception of Ephesians). The cumulative effect of this evidence is that it is likely that the author was motivated by a theological issue rather than problems of practice in a particular community" (Eisenbaum, "Locating Hebrews," 222). Quite to the contrary, the author of Hebrews is deeply concerned about the practice of his community. So, McKnight is more accurate when he writes: "Our book is not simply a dispassionate treatise on the differences between Judaism and Christianity or an apologetic on the superiority of the Christian revelation. No, instead, the book is essentially a pastoral missive designed to appeal to the religious affections of these readers and to propel them onward toward a life of obedience, courage, and fidelity to God's revelation in Christ" (McKnight, "Warning Passages," 32). See also Guthrie: "In writing Hebrews his first concern is to present a dynamic, motivational, relational appeal, not a cold theological treatise" (George H. Guthrie, *Hebrews*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 37).

[190] Spicq, *Hébreux II*, 399.

implies that Hebrews addressed only some of the Christians in the recipients' locale … For them to honor the request, they would have to contact others in the community – a helpful exercise in a situation where some were drifting away (10:25)."[191] The author encourages his hearers to care for one another physically (13:2-3) and spiritually.

The author of Hebrews acknowledges the presence of leaders in the community (13:7, 17, 24), but the call in Hebrews is nevertheless directed to the entire community.[192] The author values their intercessory prayer (13:18).[193] Each member of the community is a kind of priest, as the author calls on everyone to "offer up continually a sacrifice of praise to God" by acknowledging God's name, doing good, and sharing possessions (13:15-16). As Fernández explains, the author of Hebrews depicts the Christian life in priestly terms: "la novedad de la vida cristiana está descrita como una capacidad sacerdotal: Podemos entrar en el santuario (10,19; 6,19; 9,8), tenemos un altar (13,10), salimos fuera del campamento (como el sumo sacerdote: 13,13 = Lv 16,27; 4,12), ofrecemos un culto agradable a Dios (12,28; 9,14), que es un verdadero *sacrificio* (13,15-16)."[194] Still, as Fernández notes, we owe our priesthood to Jesus' high priestly sacrifice: "nuestra acción sacerdotal es totalmente dependiente del Sacerdocio de Cristo."[195]

The author entrusts the task of overseeing (ἐπισκοποῦντες) to everyone: "See to it (ἐπισκοποῦντες) that no one comes short of the grace of God" (12:15a).[196] The wellbeing of individuals within the group has a definite impact on the community, as

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[191] Koester, *Hebrews*, 583. See also Christopher D. Marshall, "One for All and All for One: The High Priesthood of Christ, the Church, and the Priesthood of Believers in Hebrews," *Journal of the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship* 129 (1992) 9.

[192] See also Bockmuehl, "Church in Hebrews," 138.

[193] Marshall, "One for All," 10.

[194] Víctor M. Fernández, "La Vida Sacerdotal de los Cristianos según la Carta a los Hebreos," *RevistB* 52 (1990), 146 (italics his). On the priesthood of the hearers of Hebrews, see also Scholer, who understands the hearers as members of a "proleptic priesthood" who "are already enjoying access to God and offering sacrifices of praise, worship, and thanksgiving since the end-time days are here (e.g. 1.2; 9.26), and all the while they are anticipating the eschatological future when full and direct access will be enjoyed" (Scholer, *Proleptic Priests*, 205). See also Leithart, who argues that baptism in Heb 10:22 is a rite of priestly ordination (Peter J. Leithart, "Womb of the World: Baptism and the Priesthood of the New Coveannt in Hebrews 10.19-22," *JSNT* 78 (2000), 49-65). See also Marshall, "One for All," 7-13.

[195] Fernández, "La Vida Sacerdotal," 146-52 (here 146).

[196] Bockmuehl, "Church in Hebrews," 138.

"a root of bitterness" can "defile many" (12:15b).[197] As Guthrie suggests, "the issue of apostasy is not merely about the health, or lack of it, of individuals, but also concerns the health or lack of health of the church."[198] The health or lack of health of the church, however, is determined by the health or lack of health of individuals within the group.

The "church" in Hebrews, therefore, is a travelling group of people who must care for one another. The wellbeing of individuals within the group affects the group, and so the members of the group must nurture one another.[199] The corporate dimension of faith becomes clearer upon further investigation into how the author expects an individual to relate to the group.

V.2. Corporate Faith

The author of Hebrews insists that the whole community must be moving forward in faith, and this is most evident in his image of the church as a travelling people of God. As I discussed in greater detail in chapter 3, the author in Heb 3:7-4:11 recalls the story of the wilderness generation at Kadesh.[200] They were situated at the brink of the Promised Land, but did not trust that God would deliver the land to them, and so in fear they refused to enter "God's rest." The fact that two of the twelve ἀρχηγοί (Joshua and Caleb) wished to enter the land was not sufficient – the whole community disobeyed God by refusing to trust God and so enter.

The author of Hebrews recalls this story of corporate disobedience in Heb 4:1-2, where he urges the community to be united in faith instead of following the negative example of the wilderness generation: "Let us fear (φοβηθῶμεν), therefore, while the promise of entering God's rest still stands, lest any of you (τις ἐξ ὑμῶν) might be deemed (δοκῇ) to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us (ἐσμεν εὐηγγελισμένοι) just as to them, but the message they heard did not profit them, since

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[197] See esp. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 454.

[198] George H. Guthrie, "Conclusion," in *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews*, ed. Herbert W. Bateman IV (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007), 441.

[199] Therefore, Verbrugge overstates his case when he suggests, "the writer [of Hebrews] is not so much interested in each separate individual as he is in the congregation as a whole" (Verbrugge, "New Interpretation," 67). On the other side, see Roloff: "Demnach gilt die Sorge des Hebräerbriefs um die Kirche weder dem Gottesvolk in seiner Gesamtheit noch dessen Gestalt als örtlicher Versammlung, sondern der Erhaltung der einzelnen Glaubenden beim Gottesvolk" (Roloff, *Der Kirche*, 288).

[200] Section III.3.1.

they were not united in faith (μὴ συγκεκερασμένους τῇ πίστει) with those who listened." Here faith is clearly a corporate reality. God's message to enter God's rest did not profit the wilderness generation because they failed to *unite in faith* and enter the land. The author expects his hearers to be united in faith, as it is "*we* who have believed that enter God's rest (εἰσερχόμεθα γὰρ εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν οἱ πιστεύσαντες)" (4:3).

This image harkens back to 3:12-13, where the author urges the community to watch out for one another: "Watch out (βλέπετε), brothers and sisters, lest there be in anyone among you (ἔσται ἔν τινι ὑμῶν) an evil unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' so that no one among you (τις ἐξ ὑμῶν)[201] may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." The author speaks similarly in 4:11, where the community's striving helps keep the individual from failing to enter God's rest: "Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same kind of disobedience." The author shows a definite concern that individuals continually move forward with the group, because it is in remaining with the group that an individual remains faithful, and it is by being united in faith that the group can realize the eschatological hope.[202]

Faith, therefore, is ecclesiological. A person cannot be faithful without being part of the travelling people of God. As Käsemann notes, "In this sense we may deny to Hebrews any 'private Christianity,' and describe faith as well as obedience as the true attitude of the community."[203]

V.3. "Getting In" and "Getting Out"?

As I noted earlier in this chapter, the author of Hebrews gives no specific indication of how a person can "get in" to the Christian movement. The author of

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[201] For τις ἐξ ὑμῶν as "one among you," see Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 86.

[202] See also Osborne: "In Hebrews, in fact, there are two antidotes to apostasy: the vertical side, the confession of our hope before God; and the horizontal side, the involvement of the community in the life of the individual believer" (Grant R. Osborne, "A Classical Arminian View," in *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews*, ed. Herbert W. Bateman IV (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007), 99). See also Koester: "Deteriorating community life (10:25) increased the threat of apostasy, because it is through community members speaking the word to each other – as the author is doing in written form – that the community's faith is maintained" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 265).

[203] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 22. See also Schreiner: "Only those who continue to trust God in the future by remaining within the Christian church reveal that they have found in Jesus Christ final forgiveness of sins" (Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 597).

Hebrews may have explained his understanding of how one "gets in" at another time, but our present text does not address this question directly. The author of Hebrews refers to "the elementary teaching of Christ (τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ λόγον)," and names a number of foundational concepts: repentance from dead works, faith toward God, instructions about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment (6:1-2). The author never suggests, however, that assent to these teachings or participation in these practices is what secures a person's place in the Christian movement. After this, the author of Hebrews describes a number of marks of a Christian: having been enlightened, having tasted the heavenly gift, having shared in the Holy Spirit, and having tasted of the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come (6:4-5).[204] However, the author never suggests *how* a person is *first* enlightened, *first* shares in the Holy Spirit, or *first* tastes the powers of the age to come. The author of Hebrews is not presently concerned with how to "get in." Therefore, insofar as we can answer the question of how one "gets in," the answer must be derived from our understanding of how the author of Hebrews wishes for humans to exercise faith *after* "getting in."

On the basis of the account of human faith I have developed in this chapter, it appears that a person first "gets in" by joining with the community of faith (the ecclesiological dimension), and, with the community, enduring suffering like Christ (the christological and ethical dimensions) in hope of the eschatological life Christ realized (the eschatological dimension). This "getting in" is contingent upon a person's identification with the travelling people of God and subsequently moving forward with this community of faith. Put another way, I suspect that if a person asked the author of Hebrews, "what must I do to inherit eternal life" (Mt 19:16; Mk 10:17; Lk 18:18), he would likely respond, "do not neglect to meet together … let us go to Jesus outside the camp and bear his reproach, for here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come" (Heb 10:25; 13:13-14). A person "gets in" by joining the group of people who are "going out to Jesus."

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[204] I addressed these images in more detail in chapter 3, section III.3.2.

This group-oriented account of "getting in" aligns with sociologists' findings with respect to religious conversion.[205] Lofland and Stark observed converts to the "Moonie" religious group and noted that those people who did not identify with the group were the ones who did not convert. They explain: "thus, verbal conversion and even a resolution to reorganize one's life for the D.P. [Divine Precepts] is not automatically translated into total conversion. One must be intensively exposed to the group supporting these new standards of conduct. … Persons who accepted the truth of the doctrine, but lacked intensive interaction with the core group, remained partisan spectators, who played no active part in the battle to usher in God's kingdom."[206] This conclusion was reaffirmed later by other researchers with respect to adolescent conversion.[207] A person's association with the group is the determining factor in conversion, as Stark summarizes: "Although several other factors are also involved in the conversion process, the central sociological proposition about conversion is this: *Conversion to new, deviant religious groups occurs when, other things being equal, people have or develop stronger attachments to members of the group than they have to nonmembers.*"[208]

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[205] I am not suggesting that the sociological discoveries arising out of studies in 20th- and 21st-century Western contexts give meaning to how the author of Hebrews understood conversion. Instead, I am suggesting that these later sociological studies have demonstrated that such a group-oriented conversion is a conceivable possibility.

[206] John Lofland and Rodney Stark, "Becoming a World-Saver: A Theory of Conversion to a Deviant Perspective," in *Religion in Sociological Perspective: Essays in the Empirical Study of Religion*, ed. Charles Y. Glock (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1973), 47 (reprint of an article by the same name published in *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 6, December 1965). For an example of an interpreter within NT studies following Lofland and Stark's conclusions, see Campbell, *Deliverance of God*, 128-36. See also Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 74.

[207] Kox, Meeus, and 't Hart find: "Eighty percent of the converts establish affective bonds with other members of the group. This is very meaningful to people who experience little support from parent and peers. It seems justified to suppose that religious groups have a twofold appeal: ideological, by offering a new perspective on life, and social, by providing a satisfactory social network" (Willem Kox, Wim Meeus, and Harm 't Hart, "Religious Conversion of Adolescents: Testing the Lofland and Stark Model of Religious Conversion," *Sociological Analysis* 52 (1991), 238). See also Gallagher, who studies *Acts of John*, *Joseph and Aseneth*, and *Metamorphoses* (or *The Golden Ass*) and finds: "Each of the texts considered portrays conversion as a continuing process, which involves entering a new community, adopting specific forms of behavior, and participating in ongoing ritual life. The texts emphasize the continuity between 'personal' and 'institutional' religious experience. … Conversion narratives become community stories as much as individual stories because in their telling they reflect the continuing integration of the convert into the community" (Eugene V. Gallagher, "Conversion and Community in Late Antiquity," *JR* 73, no. 1 (1993), 14).

[208] Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 18 (italics his).

Given this account of conversion and the ecclesiological nature of faith in Hebrews, the problem of "falling away" (or "getting out") is redefined. Apostasy for Hebrews is not simply intellectual doubt or a failing to believe certain tenants of Christian doctrine, but an individual's abandoning of the community. When an individual abandons the community, this person abandons hope of realizing the promise, as Käsemann notes: "Only in union with Christ's companions is there life, faith, and progress on the individual's way of wandering. As soon as a person is no longer fully conscious of membership and begins to be isolated from the people of God, that person must also have left the promise behind and abandoned the goal."[209] Similarly, Grässer writes, "Der gottesdienstlichen Versammlung der Gemeinde kommt damit eine entscheidende Funktion zu. In ihr hat das irdisch noch wandernde, angefochtene Gottesvolk seinen unerschütterlichen Hort zur andauernden Bewahrung der stabilitas fidei. In ihr zu bleiben ist darum 'heilsnotwendig.' "[210] This is to be distinguished from Verbrugge's reading of Heb 6:4-8, where he finds that "the primary concept in the author's mind is that of a covenant community and not the individual child of God."[211] For Verbrugge, *God* rejects the community: "when we read of the falling away and of God's subsequent rejection, it is rejection of a community that is in focus."[212] To the contrary, in view of the author of Hebrews' clear concern for the wellbeing of individuals within the group, apostasy entails *an individual's* rejection of continued participation in the community. In Käsemann's words, "existence in the form of isolation is peculiar only to disobedience."[213] Failing to travel with the group is tantamount to unfaithfulness, and abandoning the group is abandoning faith.

V.4. Corporate and Christological Faith

The final dimension to note with respect to ecclesiological faith is the community's identity as Christ-sufferers. Throughout the thesis I have already developed in detail the christological element of faith as one of suffering to the point

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[209] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 21.
[210] Erich Grässer, *An die Hebräer. 3. Teilband (Hebr 10,19-13,25)*, EKKNT XVII/3 (Zürich: Benziger, 1997), 29; see also Grässer, *Glaube*, 41.
[211] Verbrugge, "New Interpretation," 62.
[212] Verbrugge, "New Interpretation," 62.
[213] Käsemann, *Wandering*, 22.

of death. I have suggested in various places that the author of Hebrews invites us to share in these sufferings. Here I wish to demonstrate further that the author expects this travelling people of God to suffer with Jesus.

Unlike Paul, Hebrews has no explicit language of being baptized into Christ's death or of being crucified with Christ. Instead, the sense in Hebrews is wholly ecclesiological, as Grässer notes: "Der Unterschied besteht nur darin, daß der Akzent der ganzen Hebr-Theologie im Gegensatz zu Pls nicht auf der Rechtfertigung des einzelnen, sondern auf der eschatologischen 'Heiligung' der Gemeinschaft liegt."[214] The author of Hebrews envisions his hearers as part of the journeying community running the race Christ ran, following the pioneer and perfecter of faith (12:1-3), and so invites us to "go to him outside the camp, bearing Christ's reproach" (Heb 13:13).[215]

The author's exhortation in 13:13 is wholly corporate: "let *us* go (ἐξερχώμεθα) to him outside the camp, bearing (φέροντες) his reproach." The invitation to bear Christ's reproach (ὀνειδισμός) recalls the author's images of persecution elsewhere.[216] On the one hand, Christ's suffering outside the camp points to Jesus' sacrificial death outside the city gates. Animals are burned outside the camp (13:11) and Jesus

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[214] Erich Grässer, "Rechtfertigung im Hebräerbrief," in *Rechtfertigung: Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Peter Stuhlmacher et al. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1976), 91.

[215] As Müller notes, the image of going to Jesus coordinates with the vision of Jesus as pioneer: "Die eindeutige Bindung des Anführertitels an den Namen Jesu hat ihre Entsprechung in dem exhorativen Konjunktiv: 'Laßt uns hinausgehen vor das Lager zu Jesus!' (13,13). Dem ἐξερχώμεθα der christlichen Gemeinde entspricht das Geführtwerden durch den auferstandenen und erhöhten Jesus. ... Hinausgehen zu Jesus heißt aber konkret für die Gemeinde der Glaubenden, an Jesu Schmach und Tod teilzunehmen, als 'Genossen des Christus' (3,14) auch seine Leidensexistenz zu tragen, in der Hoffnung, an sein Verherrlichungsziel zu gelangen. Das 'Hinausgehen zu Jesus' ist die proleptische Realisierung eschatologischer Hoffnung auf das Verheißungsziel, das Jesus bereits besitzt" (Müller, *ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ*, 311-12).

[216] This verse is often read as though the author of Hebrews is urging his community to leave Judaism or the synagogue. For example, Hanson writes, "despite the 'otherworldly' tone of verse 14, the phrase seems much more likely to signify 'outside Judaism' than 'away from the world'. The comparison is between something in Judaism and something in Christianity. The passage is written to encourage the readers to bear rejection by Judaism, not necessarily rejection by the world" (Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, "The Reproach of the Messiah in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *Studio Evangélica* 7 (1982), 239). See also Norman H. Young, "'Bearing His Reproach' (Heb 13.9-14)," *NTS* 48 (2002), 243-61. Against this reading, see Dieter Lührmann, "Der Hohepriester außerhalb des Lagers (Hebr 13 12)," *ZNW* 69 (1978), 180. Other interpreters read Heb 13:13 as the author's exhortation to leave the physical city of Jerusalem (see, for example, Carl Mosser, "Rahab Outside the Camp," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 383-404 and Peter Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City: New Testament Perspectives on Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 217-20). Even if these readings are correct, the call to endure suffering with Christ is still clear.

suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify people (13:12). However, at the same time, the author is also clearly speaking metaphorically of the community's shared persecution with Christ. The community has exemplified endurance through persecution in the past (they were "publicly exposed to reproach [ὀνειδισμοῖς]," 10:33), and in 13:13 the author invites his hearers to continue enduring.[217] The image of going to Jesus, then, is "a distinctive understanding of discipleship," whereby the "task of the community is to emulate Jesus, leaving behind the security, congeniality, and respectability of the sacred enclosure, risking the reproach that fell upon him."[218] Like Moses, we should "choose to be mistreated with the people of God" (11:25) and "consider the reproach of Christ greater wealth" (11:26), because those who "go to Jesus outside the camp" do so anticipating the enduring city to come (13:14), an expression of the eschatological hope that Jesus himself realized.

V.5. Conclusion

Faith is evidenced most clearly by remaining part of the travelling people of God who are enduring Christ's suffering. This entails continued participation in the meeting together (10:25) and a commitment to help others in the group remain part of the travelling community. This group is travelling toward God's rest, the eschatological hope Christ realized, and as a community identified by Christ, they must "go to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach" (13:13).

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[217] Although the author of Hebrews does not speak of "taking up the cross" as Jesus does in the Synoptic Gospels (Mt 10:38; 16:24; Mk 8:34-38; Lk 9:23-25; 14:27), the image of going to Jesus outside the camp is a parallel concept. So Attridge: "In this equivalent of the call to take up the cross, Hebrews suggests where it is that true participation in the Christian altar is to be found – in accepting the 'reproach of Christ' " (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 399).

[218] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 543. Similarly Thompson: " 'Outside the camp' means neither 'outside Judaism,' nor 'outside Jerusalem.' Christian existence is a matter of 'going out' in the direction of the pioneer (cf. 11:8, 15). To 'go out' is to give up earthly securities (11:8) and to accept the lifestyle of the pilgrim people" (James W. Thompson, "Outside the Camp: A Study of Heb 13:9-14," *CBQ* 40 (1978), 61). See also Köster, who understands "going outside the camp" as leaving sacred seclusion, protected from the secular, into "the worldliness of the world itself" (Helmut Köster, "'Outside the Camp': Hebrews 13.9-14," *HTR* 55 (1962), 302). For a modification of Köster's reading, see Isaacs, who reads 13:13 as "a relocation of the sacred, not its replacement. It is no longer to be identified with Israel's shrine but with heaven itself" (Marie E. Isaacs, "Hebrews 13.9-16 Revisited," *NTS* 43 (1997), 283). Along similar lines to Isaacs, see also Trudinger: "The 'holy of holies', the place of God's presence, is no longer within the sacred city; it is outside the gate, in the secular world, where and for which Christ died, and once thought of as the unholy place" (L. Paul Trudinger, "The Gospel Meaning of the Secular: Reflections on Hebrews 13:10-13," *EvQ* 54, no. 4 (1982), 237).

VI. CONCLUSION: THE UNIFIED VISION – A COMMUNITY SUFFERING WITH CHRIST, EXPECTING CHRIST'S FUTURE

Faith for Hebrews, therefore, is christological, ethical, eschatological, and ecclesiological. Faith entails endurance like Christ through suffering, even to the point of death if necessary. A person endures by remaining in the community and can look forward to sharing in the eschatological reward that Christ realized. This community has endured persecution in the past, and the author expects them to endure more persecution with Christ, but they do this while "seeking the city that is to come" (13:14). By the reading of faith in Hebrews I have proposed, perhaps the hearers of Hebrews could say with the 9th-century patriarch St. Photius, "Before we feared and tried to avoid death as the supreme and invincible evil, but now we perceive it as prelude transition into the superior life and accept it joyously from those who persecute us for the sake of Christ and his commandments."[219]

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[219] Photius, from Fragments on the Epistle to the Hebrews 2:14-15, in Heen and Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, 47.

Chapter 10
Conclusion

I. REVIEW

In this thesis I sought to offer a reading of Hebrews that situates faith and the faithfulness of Christ in the author's wider understanding of the human story. I suggested that a study of "faith" in Hebrews need not be constrained to occurrences of πιστ- words only, nor should we assume that the author of Hebrews means the same thing every time uses he a πιστ- word. For this reason, I did not organize the thesis as a study of πιστ- words in Hebrews.

In the introduction (chapter 1) we discovered that few scholars have devoted full studies to faith in Hebrews. Only two monographs treat the topic, and the shorter article-length studies do not offer holistic accounts of faith and faith's place in the wider context within Hebrews. I suggested we approach faith in Hebrews in narrative terms, an approach which until now has not been applied to faith in Hebrews.

Chapter 2 offered the exegetical and philosophical foundations for a study of faith as story. This chapter demonstrated two key points. First, the author of Hebrews operates with stories which match criteria of narrativity. As a result, I suggested, we have reason to explore story in Hebrews. Second, and more importantly, I showed how the works of various philosophers, theologians, psychologists, and sociologists have named "story" as a basic component of human identity. Humans have a "narrative identity" and can adopt new stories. The rest of the thesis, then, is an investigation into the two narrative identities the author of Hebrews offers: the default human story with its assured conclusion (part 2), the new story and its assured conclusion (part 3), and how human beings can adopt this new narrative identity (part 4).

Part 2 of the thesis comprised chapters 3, 4, and 5, and addressed "the default human story." Although these chapters do not address faith *per se* they are necessary pieces to fill out the whole vision of Hebrews' understanding of faith. In other words, to understand "faith" fully, we needed to understand "unfaith."

In chapter 3, I argued that the default human story in Hebrews is a pessimistic story. Although God had intended glory, honor, and dominion for human beings (Heb 2:6-8), we do not at present see this divine intention fulfilled. Instead, humans are shackled by a guilty conscience and are inherently unfaithful. Humans need divine enablement *not* to be unfaithful. The author exhorts us to move forward continually, thereby showing that the status quo is an unacceptable way of life. As we see later, timidity leads only to destruction (10:39), a concise depiction of the default human story.

Chapter 4 studied the assured conclusion to the default human story. I did this by first discussing death in general in Hebrews, where we found that the author expects all people – righteous and unrighteous – to die. Death, for Hebrews, is not the enemy, but rather the enemy is *the fear of* death (2:15). The hearers of Hebrews were facing persecution (either actually or perceptually), and so their own possible deaths were likely at the forefront of their minds. Next, I surveyed Greco-Roman and Jewish understandings of the human constitution, death, and the afterlife. I did this to help us situate Hebrews' understanding of the same. With respect to Hebrews, we found that the author of Hebrews understands human beings as embodied creatures with an inner animating spirit. This inner self is not inherently immortal, contrary to most Greco-Roman views. Instead, to be human is to be embodied, even in the afterlife. With respect to the afterlife in Hebrews, we found that the assured conclusion to all who are participating in the default human story is one of postmortem death. Hebrews does not give ample evidence to say whether this postmortem death is eternal hellish suffering, or whether it is complete annihilation. What is certain, though, is that those participating in the default human story have no hope of a blessed life after death, and so have good reason to fear death.

Chapter 5 addressed the eschatological hope for Hebrews. Although at first glance this chapter may have appeared to be placed in the wrong part of the thesis (in the "default human story" rather than in "the rewritten narrative"), my reasons for placing it where I did became clearer as we progressed. We found that the eschatological hope for Hebrews is one of an enduring heavenly homeland populated by enduring human beings who have been perfected after death. Resurrection, I suggested, is a prerequisite to enjoyment of the eschatological hope. This chapter

belongs in the default human story part of the thesis, however, because the author of Hebrews insists that no human being prior to Jesus had realized this eschatological hope. All of the heroes of faith from Israel's tradition (Heb 11) exemplified faith in the face of death, and yet none of them received the promise and none were made perfect (11:13, 39-40). Heb 11, then, laments the default human story: even the faithful ones do not realize "the reality of things hoped for" (11:1).

Part 3 of the thesis comprised chapters 6, 7, and 8, and here we investigated the rewritten narrative and its assured conclusion. I argued that the rewritten narrative is one characterized by faith that endures in the face of death and concludes assuredly in eschatological life.

In chapter 6, we found that the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus as one who participated fully in the human story, and yet realized a different conclusion after death: he experienced life *despite* death via resurrection. In each case where Jesus realizes such ongoing life after death, we found that the author of Hebrews implies hope of the same for humanity.

Chapter 7 studied the faithfulness of Jesus. There we found that the author of Hebrews depicts Jesus in athletic-martyrological terms, much like the martyrs of 2 Macc 6-7 and 4 Macc. In Heb 12:1-3, 2:13, and 5:7-9, we found a consistent story: Jesus exercised faith in the face of death, hoping for the eschatological reward, and he realized this reward by experiencing life after death. He is both the "pioneer" and "perfecter." He pioneered faith by exemplifying faith in the face of death. This, however, as noted in Heb 11, is not wholly unusual, as others have exercised faith in the face of death. However, Jesus is the first one to *perfect* faith. Unlike the pioneer Joshua who led the people into the Promised Land but not ultimately into God's rest (4:8), Jesus has led the way fully into the presence of God, as one sitting at the right hand of God's throne (12:2). Jesus opens up the possibility of human beings enjoying eschatological life because he wrote the rest of faith's story: faith now concludes assuredly in life after death.

Chapter 8 addressed a key passage in Hebrews (10:37-39) where the two stories and their assured conclusions appear. We found that the author of Hebrews depicts faith as one exercised in the face of death, and that those who are "of timidity (ὑποστολῆς)" will be destroyed (the default human story), while those who are "of

faith (πίστεως)" will live (the rewritten story). This claim is verified because the faithful one *par excellence*, as we found in chapters 6-7, enjoyed life after death.

Finally, part 4 of the thesis (chapter 9) investigated human faith in Hebrews. By this stage, we had already narrated the default human story and the rewritten story, and so chapter 9 focuses on how a human being can participate in this rewritten story. The question of *how* a person *first* participates in the story of faith is particularly difficult with respect to Hebrews, as the author never speaks to this question directly. The author, I suggested, is writing to people who he believes are *already* "in," and so never shows how to "get in." However, I proposed that we can get an idea of how humans can "get in" by looking at how the author expects humans to exercise faith *after* they are "in."

Faith, we found, is characterized by four dimensions: christological, eschatological, ethical, and ecclesiological. Faith is exemplified perfectly in Jesus (christological), who realized postmortem life (eschatological) after enduring in the face of death (ethical). Human beings follow the model of Jesus and are enabled by his faithfulness in sacrifice as high priest (christological dimension), and move forward in hope of postmortem life (eschatological). In the present, faith entails endurance to the end (ethical), and this endurance likely involved suffering, given that the hearers were undergoing persecution and the faithful one *par excellence* also suffered. The final dimension (ecclesiological) looks for human beings to join together with others being faithful. I argued that the author of Hebrews does not conceive of faith apart from community – a person cannot be faithful individually. Instead, if a person wishes to participate in the story of faith, this person must join with the community of faith, and endure suffering with this community, going to Jesus outside the camp, bearing his reproach (13:13).

II. IMPLICATIONS

A study of a topic like "faith" is sure to have many implications for our understanding of Hebrews and its contribution to the NT vision, given that "faith" touches nearly every aspect of theology. I offer only a few possible implications here.

II.1. Defining the Πιστ- Words, Revisited

In the introduction, we found that the πιστ- word group encompasses a number of meanings, but generally means: [πιστεύω] "to trust," "to put faith in," "to believe in/that;" [πίστις] "faith," "trust," "belief," "faithfulness;" [πιστός] "trustworthy," "faithful," "genuine."[1] I suggested we delay defining πιστ- at the outset of the study, lest we bias our reading of Hebrews. I proposed we use the word "faith," because it can include notions of "trust," "belief," and "faithfulness."[2] Having completed a study of faith in Hebrews, we are prepared now to comment on the best translations of the πιστ- words.

Faith in Hebrews, we discovered, is consistently active. The active notion is clear with respect to all four facets of faith (christological, ethical, eschatological, and ecclesiological). We found that faith is modeled perfectly in Jesus, and the faith he demonstrated was one of actively enduring suffering in the face of death (christological dimension). With respect to the ethical dimension, we found that faith entails active obedience as we endure suffering. The eschatological dimension of faith involves actively moving forward in hope of the eschatological reward. The ecclesiological dimension of faith calls for individuals to join with a community of faith who are the travelling people of God. In view of the active nature of faith, πιστ- can be understood as *faithfulness*.

At the same time, we also found that faith at times involves *trusting* God. This is clearest in Heb 2:13, where Jesus says, "I will put my trust (πεποιθώς) in him [God]." Heb 2:13 does not use a πιστ- word (using πείθω instead), but we see the theme of trusting God elsewhere. For instance, πιστ- words appear four times in Heb 3:7-4:11: 3:12 (ἀπιστία); 3:19 (ἀπιστία); 4:2 (πίστις); and 4:3 (πιστεύω). In each case, trusting God is in view, while the notion of active faithfulness is not eliminated. The need to trust God is evident in light of the Kadesh narrative undergirding these verses, where (as we noted in chapter 3)[3] the wilderness generation had to trust God to bring them into the Promised Land and so move forward (faithfulness) into "the rest." Against this backdrop, when the author warns against "καρδία πονηρὰ ἀπιστίας"

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[1] For my discussion of the various meanings of the πιστ- words, see chapter 1, section II.2.1.
[2] For my discussion of "faith" as a working translation, see chapter 1, section II.3.
[3] Section III.3.1.1.

(3:12), this is likely a heart that does not trust God, and so remains stagnant (unfaithfulness). Similarly, the wilderness generation failed to enter the rest "because they failed to trust (δι' ἀπιστίαν)" (3:19). They were not "united in trust (συγκεκερασμένους τῇ πίστει)" (4:2), but "the ones who have trusted (οἱ πιστεύσαντες) enter the rest" (4:3). In none of these cases is the sense of "faithfulness" eliminated, but the call to "trust" is also present. Trusting God is also likely in view in Heb 11:11, where Sarah "considered him faithful who promised (πιστὸν ἡγήσατο τὸν ἐπαγγειλάμενον)." While a πιστ- word is not present in this case, Sarah considering (ἡγέομαι) God faithful likely involves trusting God.

Faith as cognitive belief ("belief in [the existence of God/something]") is a possibility in 11:6, where the author writes, "for it is necessary for the one who comes to God πιστεῦσαι that he is and that he rewards the ones who seek him." God is the object of πιστεύω, and the author of Hebrews may be referring to belief in God's existence. It is conceivable, however, that the author wishes us to understand πιστεύω as "trust" as well as "believe." "Trust" and "belief" are related: if one were to "trust" someone, she surely must "believe" that the object of her trust exists. "Trust" and "belief," therefore, are not mutually exclusive. Πιστεύω in 11:6 likely means both "trust" and "belief," in view of the two qualities of God following the ὅτι clause:

πιστεῦσαι γὰρ δεῖ τὸν προσερχόμενον τῷ θεῷ **ὅτι**

(1) ἔστιν καὶ

(2) τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσιν αὐτὸν μισθαποδότης γίνεται

In 11:6, πιστεύω is better understood as "believe" with respect to point 1 (ἔστιν),[4] but as "trust" with respect to point 2 (τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσιν αὐτὸν μισθαποδότης γίνεται). Therefore, we could translate this part of Heb 11:6: "for it is necessary for the one who comes to God *to believe* (πιστεῦσαι) that he is and [*to trust*] he rewards the ones who seek him." Outside of Heb 11:6, faith as "belief in [the existence of God/something]" is not a significant theme in Hebrews.[5]

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[4] On πιστεῦσαι … ὅτι ἔστιν as "believe that God exists," see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 318; Koester, *Hebrews*, 476; and Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 338.

[5] In 6:1, πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν is named among the elementary doctrines. Πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν, a unique formulation in the NT, is likely more than belief in God's existence (given the absence of the abstract ἔστιν as in 11:6), but is "trust in and fidelity to God" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 164). See also Ellingworth:

In summary, we have found that πιστ- means "trust" and "faithfulness" in Hebrews, and these points are inseparable.[6] That is, a person who trusts God will be faithful. Put negatively, if we are not faithful, then we do not trust.

Πίστις, therefore, could justifiably be translated as "trust" or "faithfulness." Given the intimate relationship between "trust" and "faithfulness" in Hebrews, and the possibility that "faith" can also be understood as "trust,"[7] I propose that the best translation of πίστις in Hebrews is *"faith(fulness)."*[8] "Faith(fulness)" helps keep both "trust" and "faithfulness" in view.

English provides no good way of expressing both "trust" and "faithfulness" in verbal form, so it is more difficult to translate the verb πιστεύω adequately. Πιστεύω appears only twice in Hebrews, and in both cases "to trust" is a sufficient translation. In 4:3, the author writes, "εἰσερχόμεθα γὰρ εἰς [τὴν] κατάπαυσιν οἱ πιστεύσαντες." "For we who have trusted (οἱ πιστεύσαντες) enter that rest" is an adequate translation. As noted above, while it is likely that πιστεύω here also entails being faithful ("for we who have been faithful (οἱ πιστεύσαντες) enter that rest"), the underlying Kadesh narrative points to the need to "trust" that God can bring us into the rest. Similarly, as noted above, when the author in 11:6 insists, "δεῖ τὸν προσερχόμενον τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἔστιν καὶ τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσιν αὐτὸν μισθαποδότης γίνεται," πιστεύω can be "believe" or "trust." "To be faithful" makes little sense in this context. Therefore, with respect to πιστεύω in Hebrews, "to trust" is the best translation in 4:3 and an adequate choice in 11:6.

We spent less time on πιστός in Hebrews, but in view of the close association between "faithfulness" and "trust," πιστός is rightly translated as either "faithful" or

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"Neither here [6:1], nor even in 11:6, is faith in God conceived of as mere assent to his existence" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 315).

[6] See also Bassler: "Trust in God (or Christ) is necessarily rooted in the belief that what is said about God (or Christ) is true, whether it be promise or proclamation. And real trust necessarily manifests itself in the way one lives one's life, that is, in actions" (Jouette M. Bassler, *Navigating Paul: An Introduction to Key Theological Concepts* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 24).

[7] As I discussed in chapter 1, section II.3.

[8] For similar language with respect to Hebrews, see Todd Still, "Christos as Pistos: The Faith(fulness) of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *CBQ* 69 (2007). For examples of others using "faith(fulness)," see Richard B. Hays, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology" in *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 277, 296-97; David G. Horrell, "Whose Faith(fulness) is it in 1 Peter 1:5?," *JTS* 48 (1997); S. K. Stowers, "ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ and ΔΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ in Romans 3:30," *JBL* 108 (1989), 669 n 23.

"trustworthy." A person who is "trustworthy" is such only because he is "faithful," and a person who is "faithful" is "trustworthy" as a result. Either translation is suitable, given that both senses are in play with πιστός.

II.2. Conversion and Salvation

Our study of faith in Hebrews has two particular implications for Hebrews' understanding of conversion and salvation. First, I suggested that faith for Hebrews is ecclesiological. Communities are not "saved" (individuals are), but the author of Hebrews insists that a person cannot be "saved" *apart* from the community. A key part of conversion, therefore, involves joining the community of faith. It is worth noting, however, that the author of Hebrews does not think it sufficient to join *any* group, but to join a specific group of people who are *going to Jesus outside the camp, bearing his reproach*. Second, faith involves more than intellectual assent or a conviction of the truth of a certain concept. Rather, faith entails endurance until the end (likely involving suffering). As a result, salvation likely involves more than acceptance of key doctrines or precepts, but a life of perseverance until the end.

II.3. The Church and Suffering

This reading of faith in Hebrews also has significant implications for ecclesiology. If faith involves a community enduring like Jesus (likely involving suffering), then this community must understand itself as identified by the suffering of Jesus. The story of Jesus' suffering is the community's story, its "narrative identity."

One of the more difficult challenges to this reading of faith in Hebrews is how to say that faith is one of corporate suffering like Christ, while at the same time acknowledging that many communities who seem to be faithful do not suffer persecution. To be clear, the suffering I have proposed in this thesis is the specific dimension of suffering on account of being associated with Christ. Surely the answer cannot be to tell these communities to seek suffering for suffering's own sake? The Anabaptist vision of the church may have an answer for us.

The Anabaptists understood the church as, among other things, a gathering of believers who are suffering on account of their association with Christ. For example, Dirk Philips (1504-1568) names "suffering" as one of the seven ordinances of the

church.[9] Similarly, Menno Simons (1496-1561) names communal cross-bearing as a sign of the church: "This very cross is a sure indicater [*sic.*] of the church of Christ, and has been testified not only in olden times by the Scriptures, but also by the example of Jesus Christ, of the holy apostles and prophets, the first and unfalsified church, and also by the present pious, faithful children."[10] Menno Simons names Heb 12:2, among other texts, as proof of this sign of the church. He is convinced that godly obedience leads assuredly to persecution, and he sees this theme running throughout the Scriptures, seen in figures such as Abel, David, and Stephen.[11] Given that the church is a gathering of obedient disciples, and obedience leads to persecution, the church will consequently be marked by suffering. Menno's vision of the Christian life bears a certain resemblance to Hebrews' exhortation to "go outside the camp and bear Christ's reproach," when he writes: "[A]ll those who believe the Word of the Lord with true hearts, who have become partakers of the Holy Ghost, who are clothed with power from on high, and out of whose mouths pour grace and wisdom, who rebuke the world's shame and sin … must with Stephen be cast out of the city and get a taste of flying stones."[12] John Howard Yoder also names "the cross" as one of the four "nota" of the church. The church, for Yoder, does not view suffering as a random unexpected divergence from normalcy, but as precisely what it means to be church. He explains, "The suffering of the church is not a passing tight spot after which there can be hope of return to normalcy; it is according to both Scripture and experience the continuing destiny of any faithful Christian community."[13] Like Dirk Philips and Menno Simons before him, Yoder also emphasizes that the suffering in view "is not the resigned acceptance of limitations or

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[9] Dietrich Philips, "The Church of God, c. 1560," in *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, ed. George Huntston Williams and Angel M. Mergal. LCC 25 (London: SCM Press, 1957), 251-54. These seven ordinances are: (1) right doctrine of Scripture and ministerial leadership; (2) believers' baptism and the Supper; (3) foot washing; (4) the ban; (5) loving one another; (6) living a Godly life; and (7) suffering (Philips, "Church of God," 240-55). For Philips, the church is defined as a group of believers who are being persecuted for following Jesus, and insofar as they persecute others, they are no longer the church: "Hence they can nevermore stand nor be counted as a congregation of the Lord who persecute others on account of their faith" (252).

[10] Menno Simons, "Reply to Gellius Faber, 1554," in *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, ed. John Christian Wenger (Scottdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1956), 741-42 (here 742).

[11] Menno Simons, "The Cross of the Saints, c. 1554," in *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, ed. John Christian Wenger (Scottdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1956), 587-98.

[12] Simons, "The Cross of the Saints," 594.

[13] John Howard Yoder, *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical*, ed. Michael G. Cartwright (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 86.

injustice in an imperfect world but the meaningful assuming of the cost of nonconformed obedience. … [It] is to be understood much more narrowly as that kind of suffering that comes upon one because of loyalty to Jesus and nonconformity to the world."[14]

The Anabaptist vision of the church as a suffering community, as we see it in Philips, Menno, and Yoder, helps answer the question of how faith can be understood as "suffering" without at the same time urging people to seek out suffering for suffering's own sake. The Anabaptists never view suffering as an end in itself. Instead, suffering is an expected product of a life of discipleship. The Anabaptists never extol suffering for suffering's own sake; suffering is not something we seek. Indeed, many of Menno's works are addressed in whole or in part to magistrates or other outsiders, appealing for the cessation of persecution.[15] Instead, for the Anabaptists, suffering is a natural consequence of a life of obedience, and given that the church is comprised by followers of Jesus, suffering will naturally be a mark of the church.

If the church itself is defined as followers of Jesus who are suffering for this discipleship (expressed in Hebrews as "going out to Jesus, bearing his reproach"), then suffering is not something we seek. Instead, suffering is an expected consequence for following Jesus. Insofar as the church suffers, it receives this suffering as a natural corollary of its identity. Yoder explains, "[O]ne does not seek [suffering], but when it comes neither does one consider it simply as a matter of having been providentially chosen for a hard time."[16]

Faith as corporate suffering is about the community's *willingness* and *readiness* to suffer. (To be sure, indeed a community that is *not* suffering may need to check itself to see if it is truly following Jesus in such a manner that could see suffering as a viable consequence for its present discipleship.) Again, Yoder writes:

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[14] Yoder, *Royal Priesthood*, 86, 87. The "world" for Yoder "is neither all nature nor all humanity nor all 'culture'; it is *structured unbelief*, rebellion taking with it a fragment of what should have been the Order of the Kingdom" (62, italics his).

[15] See (page numbers from *Complete Writings of Menno Simons* volume in parentheses): "Foundation of Christian Doctrine" (105-226, esp. 190-221); "Christian Baptism" (229-87, esp. 284-87); "Why I Do Not Cease Teaching and Writing" (292-320); "Confession of the Distressed Christians" (501-22); "A Pathetic Supplication to All Magistrates" (525-31); "Reply to False Accusations" (543-77).

[16] Yoder, *Royal Priesthood*, 88.

"Thus willingness to bear the cross means simply the readiness to let the form of the church's obedience to Christ be dictated by Christ rather than by how much the population or the authorities are ready to accept. When stated in this way it is then clear that the readiness of the church to face suffering thus understood is precisely the only way in which it is possible to communicate to that society and to its authorities that it is Christ who is Lord and not they."[17] In short, if the church is not suffering physical persecution in the present, it need not actively seek such suffering for suffering's own sake. At the same time, the church needs to be ever ready to accept suffering and follow Jesus in such a way that would expect suffering, given that suffering is what defines it.

II.4. Hebrews, Paul, and Faith

Finally, the reading of faith in Hebrews I have advanced will have implications for our understanding of Hebrews' concept of faith compared to other NT accounts. Rhee says of his study: "this study has suggested that the difference in the concept of faith between Hebrews and the Pauline epistles has been overestimated."[18] My study affirms his conclusion, but in a different way. As noted in the introduction, Rhee presupposes an objective genitive understanding of πίστις Χριστοῦ ("faith in Christ") in Paul, and he suggests that Pauline faith is similar to the understanding of faith in Hebrews.[19] I agree with Rhee that the vision of faith in Hebrews parallels that in Paul, but I would suggest that faith in Hebrews coincides more closely a subjective genitive reading of πίστις Χριστοῦ in Paul, which highlights the narrative of the faithfulness of Christ.[20]

III. AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Time and space constraints limited the scope of this study. I did not treat Heb 9 in much detail, and more attention could be paid to the way in which the depiction of Jesus' self-sacrifice as high priest may or may not correspond to the narrative of faith. As we found in our treatment of the Maccabean martyrologies, martyrs (such as

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[17] Yoder, *Royal Priesthood*, 88-89.
[18] Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, 253.
[19] See Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews*, xv, 59, 62, 79, 125, 171, 203, 224, 229, 242, 252.
[20] I cannot go into the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate here, but I have written on this topic elsewhere (see Easter, "Pistis Christou Debate," 33-47).

the priest Eleazar) understood their deaths as somehow atoning for their people, and it would be worth investigating further if or how the author of Hebrews conceives of Jesus' entire sacrificial work in martyrological terms.

I have intentionally focused on the book of Hebrews only. The understanding of faith in Hebrews that I have advanced could be brought into conversation with studies of faith and the faithfulness of Jesus more generally in the NT, the early church, and subsequent Christian traditions. For example, I suggested above that my reading of faith as ecclesiological aligns with the Anabaptist vision of the church. More work could be done on how the vision of faith in Hebrews may be aligned with (or may have even informed) other traditions. Or, as another example, we have found that faith in Hebrews is largely participatory. More work could be done on the question of participation in Christ in Hebrews, especially in comparison with other NT texts.

IV. FINAL CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the usefulness of this study will be borne out in the way communities appropriate the vision of faith in this "word of exhortation" (Heb 13:22). Kant claims the motto of enlightenment is the courage to use one's own reason.[21] In a more recent expression, a quote I have seen plastered on various inspirational photos (usually in classrooms) tells us, "You are the author of your own life story." Quite to the contrary, the author of Hebrews would agree with Hays: "there is too much emphasis on individual faith-experience and not enough grounding of our theological discourse in the story of Jesus Christ."[22] The author of Hebrews has no time for those who wish to write their own life stories. Faith for Hebrews, we have found, is not something we "have," but is a participation in a story already told. The author of Hebrews offers hope only in the story of faith told perfectly in Jesus, and so invites us to join with one another and "go to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach" (Heb 13:13).

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[21] "'Have courage to use your own reason!' – that is the motto of enlightenment" (Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and What is Enlightenment?*, trans. Lewis White Beck (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 83). This is also on the shield of the University of Otago: *sapere aude* (my thanks to my colleague Mark Gingerich for this connection).

[22] Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, lii.

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