

HEBREWS

You, God, and a KJV Bible

By Eric Neumann

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Quotations

The only material quoted in this book is the Word of God in the King James Version. No commentaries or scholars are quoted, because God's Word is important, not man's word. As such, I encourage all readers to be good Bereans by searching the scriptures to see if what I have said is true (Acts 17:11). It is okay if you do not agree with what I say, but it is not okay if your disagreement is not based upon the Word of God in its proper context, which involves "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

Goal

The goal of this Bible study is to cast "down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and [bring] into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Corinthians 10:5) so that members of the body of Christ may "come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4).

Contact the author

Therefore, the author encourages any disagreements be brought to his attention so that future versions of this Bible study can be changed if deemed necessary.

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Books by Eric Neumann

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Hebrews Introduction

I should not have to say this because it is blatantly obvious, but I must start this Bible study on Hebrews with the statement that: “the book of Hebrews is written to the Hebrews.” I must say this because over 99% of Christianity tries to apply this book to themselves today. Hebrews is probably relied upon for doctrine, with regard to the cross work of Christ, more than any other book in the New Testament, even though it is NOT written to us today.

Hebrews begins the section of the Bible that is for the ages to come for the Hebrews during the tribulation period. Hebrews tells the Hebrews what the cross of Christ means for Israel’s prophecy program. It was written before Acts 7, because Hebrews 3:13 tells the Hebrews to repent and follow the law covenant, “while it is called To day.” “To day” is not existence for Israel’s program after Acts 7. Since then, the day of salvation in Israel’s program has been delayed until after the rapture of the church. That is when “all Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:25), when they go through God’s “refiner’s fire” of the tribulation period (Malachi 3:2-3). Hebrews is written to the believing remnant of Israel to maintain their faith in God’s law covenant with them throughout the entire tribulation period.

Hebrews – Revelation are instructions for Israel to go through the tribulation period after the current, mystery dispensation of the body of Christ comes to a close. Therefore, the doctrine found in Hebrews is not applicable TO us, although it is certainly FOR our learning, as all scripture is (II Timothy 3:16-17). If you want doctrine about the cross for us today, go to Romans – not Hebrews.

Regarding the author of Hebrews, all epistles, from Romans through Philemon, mention in the first words, who the author of the book is. Since the first word of Hebrews is “God,” the author of Hebrews is God. Since all scripture is spoken by God (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21), the person, who held the pen in transcribing the book of Hebrews, is irrelevant, and so any discussion of the human author of Hebrews is both fruitless and pointless. Therefore, no time will be devoted to such a discussion.

Hebrews chapters 1-2 show how Jesus Christ was set apart by God the Father to be the sacrifice for the sins of Israel. Chapters 3-4 show Him as being greater than Moses and warns them that, like Israel in the wilderness, the offer to enter the Promised Land is only available “To day” (3:7). Once “To day” is gone, which to them is Jesus’ second coming, they cannot enter the Promised Land. Therefore, they had better have faith “To day” for God to redeem them through His law covenant (for Jesus is greater than Moses), just like the thief on the cross did (Luke 23:40-43). Chapters 5-6 show Jesus as being greater than the Levitical priests, which is why He can redeem believing Israel. He is a Melchisedecan priest, and chapter 7 shows why a Melchisedecan priest is better than a Levitical priest, which means He brings a better covenant than the Levites did (7:22), which chapter 8

expounds upon. Chapters 9-10 show Jesus bringing a better sacrifice than the Levites did (“the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (10:10)), and that He is perfect. Therefore, He can enter the holy of holies in heaven to bring that sacrifice to God, so as to bring in the new covenant. The down side of this is that this gives Israel a greater accountability, which explains the warning in 10:26-39. The focus then shifts from what Jesus did to what Israel must do to enter into that covenant. Encouragement is given to them in chapter 11, showing them the great people of faith before them. This culminates in the faith example of Jesus in 12:2-3. Chapters 12-13, then, have the Hebrews look unto Jesus as their example so that, even though they may have to endure trials during the tribulation period after they have believed God’s law covenant with them, they will go forth unto Him and bear His reproach (13:12-13).

Summary: Hebrews begins the last section of the Bible, which covers Israel in the tribulation period; it shows the HEBREWS (not us today) that they have a second chance to be in God’s earthly kingdom thanks to the cross work of Christ, but Israel must have faith in God in order to enter the kingdom.

Key passage: 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

1 God speaks to the Hebrews about Jesus Christ. He tells them that, in order to be Lord, the Messiah had to die and rise from the dead (vs. 3-5). He gives the Hebrews quotes from the Hebrew scriptures to show them that their view of the Messiah is not God’s view and is not what He told them in scripture. He also warns them that they are in trouble because God is about to make Jesus’ enemies His footstool (v. 13), and the Hebrews are his enemies, having crucified Him by wicked hands (Acts 2:22-23). Therefore, they need to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

1:1-2 Israel rebelled against God for their entire history (Acts 7:51-53). God spoke to them in different ways and at different times in the prophecy program, and they still did not believe God. Thus, Hebrews starts with a warning. Israel is guilty of all of the righteous blood shed (Matthew 24:35), and they are now in the “last days” of the prophecy program. Therefore, this is their last chance.

God has “spoken unto us by His Son” (Hebrews 1:2). The parable of the vineyard says that, after sending the prophets, God would send the Son to speak to them. They have now killed him, seeing that he is the “heir of all things” (1:2 and Matthew 21:34-39). Their last chance is the Holy Ghost speaking through the little flock in Acts 1-7 (Matthew 12:31-32). The book of Hebrews, then, is God’s written witness to apostate Israel both before Acts 7 and during the tribulation period, where “the Holy Ghost saith To day if ye

will hear His voice, harden not your hearts” (Hebrews 3:7-8). This is their last chance.

The prophets said, “Thus saith the Lord” (1:1). Now, the Lord Himself, Jesus Christ, is speaking to Israel. God made the worlds by the Son and made Him heir of the worlds (1:2). This shows that the power is present for God to judge Israel (Isaiah 3:13). Therefore, Israel had better listen to what the Son tells them in this epistle to the Hebrews. “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God” (10:29).

I believe that the reason that the human author of Hebrews is not given is because Israel was concentrating on what man was telling them, rather than what God was telling them (Mark 7:7-9). And so God says, “you’ve got a choice. Believe what man says and go to hell, or believe what I say here and have eternal life. Listen up! I am speaking to you now.” In fact, it is possible that, when Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Father, waiting for his enemies to be made His footstool (Acts 2:34-35), He penned the book of Hebrews Himself and dropped it into the hands of the 12 apostles to give as a “tract” for apostate Israel to read so that they would have faith in God’s program (Romans 10:17), rather than in the Jews’ religion.

1:3 Since Hebrews is written to the Hebrews, phrases and words are used that are found in Israel’s program in the Old Testament. The first two phrases: “brightness of His glory” and “the express image of His person” show that Jesus is the second Adam (I Corinthians 15:45-47).

Adam was created in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-27). Then, Adam fell, and his descendents were created in Adam’s fallen image (Genesis 5:3). Jesus, by being born of a virgin, was the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). As such, the sin nature was not passed on to Him, and so He was created in “the express image” (1:3) of God.

God is clothed in light (Psalm 104:1-2). Therefore, Jesus would have had this clothing as well. However, He did not look like anything other than an ordinary man because, even though He was “the brightness of His glory,” He “made himself of no reputation” (Philippians 2:7), “being found IN FASHION as a man” (Philippians 2:8), taking on “the likeness of sinful flesh” (Romans 8:3). It was only after His resurrection that man could see His clothing of light, which is why people had trouble recognizing Him after the resurrection.

The Son “made the worlds” (1:2), meaning both heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1), but then Satan came along and gained dominion over the heaven by his rebellion and over the earth by Adam’s rebellion. This put God in a position of needing to reconcile the heaven and the earth back to Himself, which He will do through Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection (Ephesians 1:10). Therefore, Christ now upholds “all things by the word of His power,”

as a result of “by Himself purg[ing] our sins” (1:3). With the work of salvation being done, Christ “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (1:3), waiting for the Father to make His enemies His footstool, as Psalm 110:1 says. The fact that God’s Son did all of this shows that 69 of the 70 weeks of Daniel have been completed (Daniel 9:24-27), which is why the writer of Hebrews refers to the time period that Israel was then in as the “last days” (1:2).

All three members of the Godhead are seen in Jesus. “The brightness of His glory” refers to God the Father (Exodus 33:18-22; John 1:14). “The express image of His person” refers to God the Son (II Corinthians 4:4). “The Word of His power” refers to God the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8). Thus, all three members of the Godhead were at work in Jesus Christ in order for Him to conquer death, hell, and the devil.

Also, note that 1:3 says that “He had BY HIMSELF purged our sins.” This shows that, even in Israel’s program, you cannot do any work whatsoever to earn eternal life. Your part is to believe what God has told you to believe, and then the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is applied to purge all your sins and give you eternal life.

1:4-5 The most popular interpretation of these verses in Christian-dumb is to say that the writer of Hebrews wrote these verses to combat the Gnostics. Gnostics believe that the spiritual realm is what is real, not the material realm. Therefore, God, becoming man, would make Him God no longer. Therefore, the writer is trying to show that is not the case with Jesus. He is saying that Jesus is above the angels, in spite of being made a man.

While it is true that Jesus is above the angels, what the writer of Hebrews is really showing is the significance of the cross. As a man, Jesus was made “a little lower than the angels” (2:7), but, as God, Jesus was never lower than the angels. As such, Jesus was both fully God and fully man. As a man, though, He was “made so much better than the angels” (1:4), when He “obtained a more excellent name than they” (1:4). This happened when He was begotten as God’s Son, which, according to Acts 13:33, happened at His resurrection, because His resurrection made possible His becoming “Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36).

Therefore, although Jesus was made “a little lower than the angels” (2:7), he was “made so much better than the angels” when He rose from the dead. Therefore, rather than these verses being a defense against gnosticism, they are a defense of the power of God to purge Israel of their sins (1:3) thanks to His death, burial, and resurrection.

By the way, “the inheritance” is His receiving God’s kingdom on earth, being over the entire earth for all eternity (Psalm 2:8), which is the next verse in Psalm 2 after the one quoted in Hebrews 1:5. The second Old Testament quote, in Hebrews 1:5, comes from II Samuel 7:14, which shows that, as the

begotten Son, Jesus is “the Son of David,” meaning again, that He receives the promise of “the throne of His kingdom,” being stablished “for ever” (II Samuel 7:13).

After the Davidic covenant says, “I will be His Father, and He shall be My Son,” it says, “if He commit iniquity, I will chasten Him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men” (II Samuel 7:14). John 19:1 says that Pilate scourged or whipped Jesus. So, did Jesus sin? Of course not. However, God “made Him to be sin for us” (II Corinthians 5:21). He was “Contrary to popular belief, this is the only time that scripture records that He was beaten. He only needed to be struck once for the sins of man, because He had not sinned Himself. It is interesting that Luke does not record a beating. It records Pilate twice saying that he would chastise him and let him go (Luke 23:16,22), but it never shows Jesus being beaten. Perhaps this is God’s way of saying that chastening was not necessary, since Jesus was sinless.

1:6 “When He bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world,” again, refers to Jesus’ resurrection, not His physical birth. Romans 8:29 says that, at His resurrection, Jesus became “the firstborn among many brethren.” I Corinthians 15:23 says, “every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.” Thus, when Jesus rose from the dead, He was “made so much better than the angels” (1:4), as all those saved in all dispensations will be made when they receive their new bodies. But, the point being made by the writer of Hebrews is that it is Jesus’ resurrection that takes man and exalts him above the angels, such that the angels worship the Son.

Regarding the angels worshipping Him, all Bible study notes say this is a quote of Deuteronomy 32:43, but the quote is really of Psalm 97:7. This is important because, if it is a quote of Psalm 97:7, it is referring to bad angels or devils worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 97:7 says, “worship Him, all ye gods,” and Psalm 97:9 says, “Thou art exalted far above all gods.” Ephesians 1:21 says that the Lord Jesus Christ is “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion.” Therefore, by quoting Psalm 97:7, the author of Hebrews is saying that the Lord Jesus Christ is Lord of all, including all in Satan’s realm. Deuteronomy 32:43 says, “Rejoice, O ye nations.” It does not mention angels. Therefore, Satan has gotten all Bible study notes to get the focus off of the Lord Jesus Christ’s rulership over all spirit forces and put it on the nations.

1:7-8 Note the contrast between the angels and the Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 104:4 says that the angels are God’s ministers, while Psalm 45:6-7 says that God’s throne is forever. Hebrews 1:5 establishes that God’s throne belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ as part of the Davidic covenant. Therefore, the “God” of 1:8 is the Son, as 1:8 says. These two quotes from Psalms go together nicely. The angels are ministers of “a flaming fire” (Psalm 104:4),

meaning that they bring God's judgment that comes from His throne, specifically from His righteous sceptre.

Of course, the point of all of this is that Jesus never would have ascended to God's throne without His death, burial, and resurrection. This is important for the Hebrews to understand, because they rejected Jesus because they expected their Messiah to come as the conquering king, not as the suffering servant. They did not understand that the Christ had to suffer first, and then the glory would follow (I Peter 1:10-11), even though the Old Testament prophets clearly showed this. Therefore, Hebrews is now taking Israel through the Old Testament scriptures that show the Messiah as the suffering servant before He becomes the ruler of God's kingdom on earth so that the Hebrews might: 1) Believe that Jesus is the Messiah, 2) Repent or change their mind about following their religion, 3) Take up God's law covenant again, and 4) Be water baptized to identify themselves with the little flock.

Note also from Hebrews 1:8 that the Messiah's suffering was only temporary, while His ruling over God's kingdom "is for ever and ever." This may also indicate that the angels' ministry is temporary. I Corinthians 6:3 says that we will judge angels. We do know that the body of Christ will replace the bad angels in heavenly places for all eternity. We also know that good angels are ministers "for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (1:14). Therefore, the angels' ministry will, at the very least, change in the dispensation of the fulness of times, and so the angels' temporary ministry may be put in contrast with the eternal rule of the Son here.

1:9 Israel was full of religious leaders, who taught "for doctrines the commandments of men..., laying aside the commandment of God" (Mark 7:7-8). They were "pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture" (Jeremiah 23:1). God promised to "gather the remnant of My flock...and set up shepherds over them which shall feed them" (Jeremiah 23:3-4). This starts with Jesus' first coming, when He preached "good tidings unto the meek," healed the broken hearted, and proclaimed "liberty to the captives" (Isaiah 61:1). We know, from Luke 4:17-21, that Jesus did this at His first coming. This refers to His bringing relief to the little flock of Israel, that had faith in God's law covenant with them, from their oppressors, which were apostate Israel and, specifically, the religious leaders.

Therefore, at His second coming, Jesus will receive "the oil of gladness above [His] fellows," as quoted, here, from Psalm 45:7. Psalm 45:8 says that the Gentiles will bring Him "myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces." Therefore, "the oil of gladness" would be His receiving "the riches of the Gentiles" (Isaiah 61:6), as He rules over them (Psalm 2:8).

1:10 Since the writer of Hebrews has already shown how Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection exalted him "above Thy fellows" (1:9) to the very throne of God, he now refers to Him as "Lord." He now reveals that Jesus, as

God the Son, has really been Lord all along, since He created the heaven and the earth Himself. Thus, the Hebrews, absent from Paul's writings, now understand that the God, Who of old created the heaven and the earth (Psalm 102:24-25), is really the Lord Jesus Christ, the very one Who just died to reconcile the heaven and the earth back to Himself. Thus, the Hebrews can now see God's plan come full circle. The Lord created the earth (Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-3), gave dominion of the earth to man (Psalm 8:6-8), man gave dominion of the earth over to Satan (Genesis 3), and the Lord gets the dominion of the earth back from Satan through His own death, burial, and resurrection.

1:11-12 Of course, God is holy, and the earth and heaven are now corrupted by Satan. Therefore, God will have to destroy the earth and heaven in judgment, bringing a new heaven and a new earth for God's eternal kingdom to be in (Revelation 21:1).

These two verses are a quote of Psalm 102:26-27, showing again that, if the Hebrews had the "ears to hear" (Matthew 13:14-16), they would have seen God's plan for the earth in the Old Testament centered around the redemption that is in the crosswork of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I love how 1:12 says that God will fold up the heaven and the earth and change them like a vesture is changed. In modern terms, Satan and man's fall have taken the beautiful heaven and earth that God created and turned them into a dirty, stinky diaper. So, God will fold up the diaper, throw it away, and slap a new one on there that will never get dirty again, because God will keep both realms from being corrupted. The new heaven and the new earth will be holy forever. Although the heaven and the earth will be changed, God never changes, meaning that we can rely upon the new heaven and the new earth never being corrupted.

This verse also puts God on the same level as His Word, because Matthew 24:35 says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." In fact, God has even exalted His holy word above His holy name, as Psalm 138:2 says.

These verses also teach that man is absolutely powerless either to destroy the earth or keep it from being destroyed, because it is God, Who will get rid of this earth and usher in a new one. Therefore, we need not be concerned that nuclear weapons will destroy this earth, nor should we focus our energies on "saving the planet."

Note also that 1:12 says that the Lord is the same. This means that He is the same in terms of His character. It does not mean that He is the same in how He deals with man, because that changes, as evidenced by His creation of man, His choosing of Israel to be His bride, His death on the cross, His resurrection, His choosing of the body of Christ to reside in heavenly places, etc. Therefore, it is unreasonable to say that there are no such things as

dispensations or different gospels, based on this statement that the Lord is the same.

1:13 Not only does this quote of Psalm 110:1 show that, by dying, the Lord Jesus Christ gained authority over all the earth and is sitting in the position of power in God's coming kingdom on earth, but it also serves as a warning to the Hebrews. Peter preached in Acts 2:22-23 that Israel took Jesus "by wicked hands" and crucified and slain Him. God raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:24) and set Him at His right hand (Acts 2:34), showing that He is now "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). The Hebrews are now Jesus' enemies, having crucified Him, and God Almighty says He is going to make Jesus' enemies His footstool. This means that the Hebrews are in a heap of trouble. Their proper response is to "repent, and be baptized...for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

1:14 Jesus is far above the angels. As Lord now, His work is done. He is sitting down. The angels are now the "ministering spirits" during the tribulation period. During that time, the Antichrist will set up Satan's kingdom on earth, and Satan's deception will be so great that, as Matthew 24:22 says, "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." So, the angels are sent, during that time, to minister to those "who shall be heirs of salvation" (1:14). We see them sealing the 144,000 (Revelation 7:1-4), preaching the everlasting gospel (Revelation 14:6), and warning people not to take the mark of the beast, or they will end up in the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11). Therefore, Jesus' work is done, but the angels are starting to work overtime.

Also, note that Hebrews 1:14 says that the angels minister to those "who SHALL be heirs of salvation." This shows that Hebrews is written to the Hebrews for the tribulation period. They are justified by faith plus works (James 2:24). Therefore, they do not receive salvation until Jesus' second coming (Acts 3:19-20). Contrast that with us today in the mystery dispensation. Since we are justified by faith alone (Romans 3:28), "we have NOW received the atonement" (Romans 5:11). Therefore, we are NOW sons of God (Galatians 4:6), and "heir[s] of God through Christ" (Galatians 4:7). Therefore, Hebrews 1:14 CANNOT apply to us today.

2 Given the position of authority as Lord that Jesus now has, the Hebrews need to repent and be baptized so that they will receive eternal life in God's kingdom on earth (vs. 1-5). Jesus made eternal life possible by becoming a man (v. 7) and taking the power over death away from the devil (v. 14) by living a perfect life (v. 18) and dying on the cross. Therefore, God becoming man is absolutely essential for man to be delivered from death and receive eternal life (vs. 11-18). Jesus also had to be a Jewish man, in order to redeem the Jews of their sins (v. 16-17).

2:1 "Therefore" brings us back to the previous chapter. We just learned that Jesus is not some dead guy, but He is Israel's living Messiah, sitting at the

position of power at God the Father's right hand. We also learned that God will soon make His enemies His footstool, and His enemies are the apostate Hebrews to which this letter is written by God. Therefore, they need to heed "the things which [they] have heard" (2:1). These "things" are the words of the gospel that the Lord Himself spoke, the disciples confirmed, and God the Father verified were so (2:3-4).

2:2 And, because Jesus is the Lord Himself, these words should be heeded. The apostate nation of Israel professes, at least at the time of the writing of this book, to follow the law of Moses, even if they really only follow Jewish traditions. The law of Moses is "the Word spoken by angels" (2:2), as Acts 7:53 tells us. So, if they believe what angels tell them, they should certainly believe what God Himself has told them. God showed His faithfulness to His Word by being faithful to the law covenant, which was spoken to them by angels. Certainly, then, the Hebrews can count on the judgment, that God has directly spoken to them, to come to pass.

2:3-4 Therefore, the apostate Hebrews should recognize they will be thrown into the lake of fire, if they reject "so great salvation" (2:3). This salvation was spoken to them "by the Lord" Himself, which the writer established in chapter 1 is Jesus. This salvation, that He spoke, was to "repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). In other words, Israel needs to change its mind about following Jewish traditions, which make "the word of God of none effect" (Mark 7:13). They need to repent, "and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:14-15). That gospel is to follow God's law covenant with them and be water baptized to identify themselves with the little flock of believers of Israel (Matthew 23:1-3; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).

Then, they are to continue to have faith in God's law covenant through the tribulation period (Malachi 3:2-3) so that their sins will be blotted out at Jesus' second coming (Acts 3:19-20). This is the "great salvation" that the Lord Himself spoke and that the little flock of Israel confirmed to apostate Israel, beginning in Acts 2.

God also confirmed that the gospel the little flock was preaching to Israel was true by "signs...,wonders...,divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost" (2:4; Mark 16:15-20). Therefore, not only is the kingdom gospel spoken by God the Son, but the whole Godhead is involved, as God the Father and God the Holy Ghost have confirmed that the gospel of the kingdom is true. Therefore, if a message brought to Israel by the angels (i.e., the law of Moses) was true, a message brought to them by God the Son and confirmed by the other 2 members of the Godhead must certainly be true as well.

Again, we see that this all pertains to Israel and Israel's program, which has been put on hold for now. Therefore, we need not worry about losing our salvation today (2:1). Besides, God is not even talking about saved Israel losing their salvation anyway. He is saying to APOSTATE Israel, "Don't let

the opportunity to have eternal life slip away from you” (2:1). Be saved while you have the chance.

By the way, note that 2:4 says that there were “gifts of the Holy Ghost.” Therefore, there must be more than one gift. Some of these gifts are speaking with other tongues (Acts 2:4), speaking the truth (Acts 4:8, 7:55), speaking with boldness (Acts 4:31), and spiritual discernment (Acts 5:1-5).

2:5 The writer has just shown that Jesus, as God, has greater authority than the angels to control what will come to pass. Now, the writer will show that even Jesus, as man, has greater authority than the angels do, in that it is the man, Jesus Christ, Who God puts “the world to come” in subjection to. Of course, that world to come is the new heaven and the new earth.

2:6-8 This is a quote of Psalm 8:4-6, showing, again, that the Old Testament scriptures demonstrate that the Messiah would rule over the whole earth, even though man is made lower than the angels.

Adam is Hebrew for man. Jesus was the second Adam in that He was the only man, other than Adam, created without a sin nature and original sin. This is why, over and over again in Matthew – John, Jesus refers to Himself as “the son of man” (Matthew 8:20, 9:6, 10:23, 11:19, 12:8,32,40, etc.).

We see that Psalm 8:4 and Hebrews 2:6, then, are talking about Jesus, since both specifically reference “the son of man.” Psalm 8:4-6 contains a quandary. How could God make man “a little lower than the angels” (2:7), yet crown “him with glory and honour,” such that he “put all things in subjection under His feet” (2:7-8)? Psalm 8:7-8 cleverly disguises the “all things” as animals, but the part about “whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea” would include the spirit realm or “the heaven.”

Now that Jesus has paid the penalty for sin, God emphasizes in Hebrews the “all things,” by saying, “He left nothing that is not put under him” (2:8). Obviously, “we see not yet all things put under Him” (2:8), because man is still lower than the angels and cannot even command certain animals not to harm or kill him, much less command Satan and his forces to stay away from us! This makes it clear that God had to intervene to give a lower level of creation (man) dominion over the whole earth, including over the angels (including Satan’s forces), since man, in himself, could not rise above his oppressors (Satan’s forces) (Jeremiah 31:11). Thus, we see the necessity for God to become man, which will now be addressed by the writer.

2:9 God had to become man so that man could be “crowned with glory and honour” (2:9). This verse says that the way man wins the victory over all of God’s creation is by “the suffering of death.” We see this in Colossians 2:14-15, which says that the Lord Jesus Christ triumphed over “principalities and powers” in His death on the cross. Without His death, He could not “taste death for every man” (2:9), and then all would go to hell.

God made man (Adam) without sin. Continuing to eat of the tree of life meant having eternal life (Genesis 3:22). However, man sinned, and “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Therefore, man fell. He lost his dominion over the earth. The only way to regain that dominion would be to make the payment for sin. The problem is that, once the payment is made, man is dead; therefore, he cannot have dominion over the earth. Therefore, man is in a catch-22. Therefore, a man (Jesus) had to come along and suffer death, even though He never earned death. Romans 5:12 says that sin and death passed to all men from Adam. Therefore, life can pass to all men from Jesus’ righteousness (Romans 5:18-19).

Therefore, Jesus suffered the penalty of sin (death), even though He “knew no sin” (II Corinthians 5:21). Having known no sin, Jesus was “crowned with glory and honour” (2:9), just like Adam was. And, now, for all those, who have faith in what God has told them, Jesus’ death, by God’s grace, counts as their sin payment, even though they themselves never die. That is why it is called God’s grace, because eternal life is a gift from God that is not earned (Ephesians 2:8-9), regardless of dispensation, as the dispensation of innocence goes back to Adam before his original sin. Therefore, the writer of Hebrews has already shown that Jesus Christ is God’s Son, who had to be made a man, lower than the angels, so that He could die for man so that man might have dominion over all things, including the spirit realm, restored to Him. Therefore, Jesus’ death is proof that He IS their Messiah; it is not proof that He was not their Messiah, as Israel thought.

Note also that Jesus was “crowned with glory and honour” by dying. To man, death is defeat, because it means that the flesh ceases to exist. But, in death, Jesus caused death to die (I Corinthians 15:54), such that there is glory and honour through believers receiving glorified bodies for all eternity (Philippians 3:21).

Isaiah 53:11 says that Jesus would “justify many.” Matthew 20:28 says that Jesus gave “His life a ransom for many.” It is not until the mystery, revealed to Paul, that it is testified in due time that Jesus really died for all (I Timothy 2:6). Since the mystery was kept secret until revealed to Paul (Ephesians 3:3-5) and Hebrews was written while the mystery was still a mystery, we must conclude that Jesus’ tasting death for every man (2:9) has to be viewed in the context of Israel’s program. Therefore, this would be a reference to Gentile salvation through saved Israel preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the Gentiles.

God winked at the Gentiles’ ignorance in Israel’s program (Acts 17:30), meaning that God did plan to save Gentiles in Israel’s program, but it did not appear that way to the Gentiles, since God focused on Israel. However, Isaiah 42:6-7 and 49:6 prophesies that God’s servant would be a light to the Gentiles and Luke 2:32 tells Israel that that Servant is the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, Gentile salvation is a part of Israel’s program, which is

why Jesus tasted death for every man, including the Gentiles, even in Israel's program.

2:10 "For whom" refers to Jesus' perfect humanity. "By whom" refers to Jesus' deity. But, Jesus did not suffer death just for Himself, because God desires for "all men to be saved" (II Timothy 2:4). Therefore, He also died on the cross to bring "many sons to glory" (2:10). The "sons" would be the sons of Adam.

We are all sons of man because we all descended from Adam. That is why Ezekiel and Daniel are called "son of man" (Ezekiel 2:1 and Daniel 8:17). So, in order to bring sons of man unto glory, Jesus had to become the captain of our salvation (2:10). In other words, Jesus had to bring about our salvation Himself. The only way He could do this was by suffering. The required suffering was not just "the suffering of death" (2:9), but also the suffering of taking on flesh, being tempted to sin in all points (Hebrews 4:15), and suffering persecution for His godly living (II Timothy 3:12), all of which culminated in His "suffering of death" (2:9).

2:11 Since the writer is writing to the Hebrews, we will address the Hebrews here, although Christ's sanctification of man applies to all men, who have faith in what God has told them. The only way that God and man could be "all of one" (2:11) was for God to also become man. So, the Lord Jesus Christ had to lower Himself beneath the angels (2:9) and become a man. By the Lord Jesus Christ being the God-man, both saved Israel and Jesus can have glorified bodies, such that they are one and Israel and Jesus are brothers. In other words, Jesus came down to Israel's level in order to bring them up to His level. That is why Luke 1:35 refers to Jesus as that "holy THING." His birth created a new thing, which is Israel becoming a sanctified people with Jesus, thanks to His attaining perfection as a MAN (2:10). Thus, Jesus reversed the curse for Israel.

Also note that, due to the body of Christ's atonement being the moment we believe (Romans 5:11) and Israel's atonement being the second coming (Acts 3:19-21), saved Israel WILL BE in Christ (John 17:21-23), while the body of Christ is ALREADY in Christ (Romans 12:5).

2:12-13 These verses give 3 Old Testament quotes. They are Psalm 22:22, Psalm 18:2, and Isaiah 8:18, respectively. Psalm 22:22 is a reference to how God delivered Jesus' soul from death. By reading the rest of Psalm 22, we can surmise that Jesus' declaration is made from the cross, which shows His faith, since God has not delivered Jesus' soul from death yet. The "name" that Messiah will declare to Israel is of God, the deliverer from death. God delivers saved Israel from being Satan's lawful captive (Isaiah 49:24-25) by their trusting in God's law covenant with them. Isaiah 8:14 says that Jesus' death is a "stone of stumbling and...a rock of offence" to Israel. However, Jesus says, "My God, My strength, in Whom I will trust" (Psalm 18:2), as will believing Israel (Isaiah 8:18 and Hebrews 2:13).

Therefore, these 3 quotes say that Jesus trusted God the Father to deliver Him from death so that Israel might have eternal life in God. Jesus then declared the faithfulness of the Father to Israel so that they might trust in God's law covenant with them, even as they suffer and even die during the tribulation period. Therefore, we see that Jesus had to become a man, not only to give eternal life to and sanctify Israel, but He also suffered as an example to Israel so that they may endure unto the end of the tribulation period, trusting in the Father the whole time, so that they stay saved (Matthew 10:22). By the way, Israel's sanctification process is the tribulation period when God purifies and purges saved Israel (Malachi 3:3).

We should note that most Bibles say that the second quote is from Isaiah 8:17, but that verse says, "I will wait upon the Lord." It is Psalm 18:2 that says that He will trust in God, which is in line with the text of Hebrews 2:13 that reads: "I will put My trust in Him."

Also note that 2:12 mentions "the church." The term "church" simply means a group of believers. Therefore, it can apply to believers in the prophecy dispensation, as well as to believers in the mystery dispensation. As such, the term's use, here, does not mean it applies to the church, the body of Christ, today.

2:14 Since "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23) and the devil got Adam to sin, this gave the power of death over to the devil. Then, when Jesus died, the wages of sin was paid and nothing more can be extracted by the devil from men, who are in Christ, because Christ, being perfect, died for all of mankind, and not for Himself. Therefore, "through death" Christ destroyed "the power of death" (2:14). As I Corinthians 15:55-57 says, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The only way Christ's death could count for us is if Jesus became man just like us. Therefore, "He also Himself likewise" became a partaker "of flesh and blood" (2:14). That is the lesson of Christ's analogy in John 12:24, where he says "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." A corn of wheat can only bring forth wheat. Since God's goal is to bring forth new men, Christ had to have a fleshly body to die and produce the fruit of new bodies for believers.

2:15 When the law was given to Israel, their sin nature revived, and their sin nature used the law to kill them (Romans 7:10-11). God gave Israel the law so that their sin nature "might appear sin" (Romans 7:13) so that they would realize the necessity of having faith in what God told them. Therefore, Israel was "all their lifetime subject to bondage" (2:15) to sin as a result of the "fear of death" (2:15) brought about by the law, so that they would have faith in God to deliver them "from the body of this death...through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:24-25).

2:16 In Genesis 22:18, God tells Abraham that “in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Galatians 3:16 specifically says that “seed” is singular, not plural, and that “seed” is Christ. This refers to all people, who have faith in what God has told them, both Jew and Gentile, regardless of dispensation. Therefore, Christ had to become man to save mankind.

2:17 Jesus also had to become a man so that He could “be a merciful and faithful high priest” (2:17). God the Father is a Spirit (John 4:24). Due to the fall of man, man’s spirit is dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1,5). Therefore, even if a sacrifice for our sins is provided, there is no way for God to communicate that sacrifice to us in a propitiatory manner without there being a mediator. In other words, God the Father has an alive Spirit but no flesh. Humans are born with a dead spirit and a live flesh. Therefore, Jesus had to become man so that God would have a live flesh so that He could communicate Jesus’ propitiatory sacrifice to us. In other words, there has to be a mediator between the “no flesh” God and the “dead spirit” man, and that mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ, because both His spirit and His flesh are alive.

We will learn more about this in Hebrews 7-9. For now, take note that, on the God side of the God-man Jesus Christ, He is merciful to man, not giving him hell if he believes what God has told him. On the man side, Jesus Christ was faithful to obey the law perfectly, satisfying the justice of God. Therefore, He is “a merciful and faithful high priest” (2:17), resulting in His making “reconciliation [to God] for the sins of the people,” who, in this context, are believing Israel.

Not only did Jesus have to become a man, but He had to become a Jewish man. God made a law covenant with Israel (Exodus 19:5-6), and Israel disobeyed that covenant, such that they were all worthy of death (Deuteronomy 27:26). Therefore, in order to save Jews from death, Jesus had to become a Jew, so that His death could count for theirs. Because He obeyed the law perfectly (Hebrews 4:15), He had life in the law (Leviticus 18:5). As such, He could hang on a tree and become a curse for them, under the Mosaic law (Galatians 3:13; Deuteronomy 21:23), so that they might have life in His name.

2:18 God the Father is a Spirit and does not have flesh. Therefore, He had never been tempted to sin. Jesus Christ, because He is a man, was tempted to sin “in all points..., yet without sin” (4:15). Therefore, while we earned death as our wage for sinning (Romans 6:23), Jesus earned eternal life, as His wage for not sinning (Romans 2:7). Therefore, “He is able to succour” (2:18) or help us by giving us the gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23). Therefore, His being the God-man makes Him a priest or mediator between God and man; His perfect life makes Him faithful (2:17); and His being a man and being tempted like we are enables Him to be merciful, such that He is “a merciful and faithful high priest” (2:17).

3 Verses 1-6a show that Christ Jesus was faithful to bring in the new covenant. Therefore, verses 6b-19 encourage Israel to believe God so that they may be part of God's new covenant with Israel.

The writer asks the Hebrews to consider the faithfulness of Christ Jesus to believe what God the Father told Him (vs. 1-2) so that the Hebrews may follow His good example by believing God the Father's promise to give them His kingdom on earth, as Luke 12:32 says, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." They are also to consider the bad example of Israel under Moses in the wilderness, who, because of unbelief, did not enter the Promised Land (vs. 7-11; 16-19). Therefore, the call is for Israel to believe God while they have the chance ("while it is called To day" (v. 13)) to receive God's eternal kingdom on earth.

3:1 The fact that the writer calls his audience "holy brethren" shows that he is talking to the Israel that will endure unto the end of the tribulation period and be saved. The writer recognizes that the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile is still up (Ephesians 2:14) at this time, which makes Israel "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (I Peter 2:9).

Note that the writer's audience is only believing Israel and all of the lost sheep of Israel, which means that His audience is not the "generation of vipers" (Matthew 23:33) that make up apostate Israel. The lost sheep are being called to "come out of her [apostate Israel], My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4).

Saved Israel's calling is to be a kingdom of priests to reconcile the earth back to God (Exodus 19:5-6). God gave them this call from heaven. As believers, then, they are "partakers of the heavenly calling" (3:1), even though their calling is to help establish God's kingdom on the earth. The reason for this is because God's earthly kingdom is in heaven right now, because Satan is "the god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4). Believing Israel is to pray for God's kingdom to come to earth (Matthew 6:10), which will happen at Jesus' second coming, once the devil is thrown into the bottomless pit (Revelation 20:2-4). Then, after death and hell are cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:13-15), New Jerusalem comes down to the earth from heaven (Revelation 21:1-2), which consists of eternal dwelling places for saved Israel (John 14:2-3).

Saved Israel are partakers of this heavenly calling only because of the work that the man, Christ Jesus, did to bring about eternal life for saved Israel. Christ Jesus is called "the Apostle," because apostle means "sent one." Christ Jesus was sent by God to save the world (John 3:16). Christ Jesus is also the "High Priest of our profession," because He offered His blood in heaven itself to put away sin forever (9:24-26), being the mediator between God and man (12:24), by which Israel may now "come boldly unto the

throne of grace” (4:16). In fact, the focus of chapters 3-10 is of Christ Jesus being Israel’s high priest with regard to the new covenant.

3:2 Christ was called to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24), and He did not lose a single sheep (John 17:12). This shows the faithfulness of Christ. Christ Jesus is compared with Moses, because Moses ushered in the old covenant (9:19-20), and Christ Jesus brings about the new covenant, which is better (9:14-15; John 1:17).

3:3 Note that Jesus is referred to here as “this man” (3:3). You may read verses 1-2 and say, “of course Jesus was faithful. He is God.” That’s true, but the writer is not talking about Christ’s deity here. He is talking about His humanity. “This MAN was COUNTED WORTHY” (3:3). As a man, the Lord Jesus Christ lived the perfect life and died for Israel. Because He fulfilled what He was supposed to do, He was counted worthy of glory. As Jesus said in John 17:4-5, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me.” Jesus was not given more glory than Moses received because He is God. Rather, He was given more glory because His life and death alone make it possible for God to fulfill His promises to Israel under the new covenant, while Moses gave promises that were not fulfilled to Israel at that time, because they were conditioned upon Israel’s obedience of the law, which they failed to obey. Israel was Satan’s lawful captive (Isaiah 49:24-25). Jesus contended with Satan, who was stronger than Israel (Jeremiah 31:11). From the cross, He contended with Satan (Isaiah 50:8) and built the house of Israel by dying for “the sins of the people” (2:17). Moses, on the other hand, kept the house of Israel through the wilderness. He did not build it. Therefore, Jesus the MAN is worthy of more glory than Moses, because of His greater faithfulness to God’s calling. (Note also Matthew 16:18, which says that God built His church upon the rock, which is Christ.)

3:4 Again, we see the importance of the Messiah being both fully God and fully man. As a man, Jesus built the house of Israel in God’s kingdom by living a perfect life and dying for their sins. However, at the same time “he that built all things is God” (3:4). Jesus, as God, built God’s kingdom, even though it took Jesus, the man, to build the house of Israel within God’s kingdom on earth.

3:5-6 In 3:3, we saw that Jesus, as a man, was as faithful to God as Moses was. Now, in 3:5-6, we see that Christ’s position, as God, is greater in God’s house. Numbers 12:7 says that “My SERVANT Moses...is faithful in all mine house.” Hebrews 3:6 says that Christ is “a SON over HIS OWN house.” Jesus Christ came as the heir of God’s house and was under the law (Galatians 3:24), just like a servant (Galatians 4:1). Then, at His resurrection, He became the only begotten Son of God (Acts 13:33), as Jesus the man was then adopted by the Father (Galatians 4:7).

Therefore, Moses was a faithful servant to testify of the things that Israel would receive as full-blown sons of God in the kingdom (3:5). Christ, as a son, shows to Israel the rewards they will have in God's earthly kingdom, if they are faithful, too. Therefore, Moses told of the promised land, and Christ made those promises a reality, bringing Israel INTO the promised land. Now, if Israel is faithful, they will also be part of Christ's house, like Moses was. But, they must "endure unto the end" of the tribulation period in order to receive an inheritance as sons of God in God's kingdom on earth (Matthew 10:22). That is the warning here. In order to be "partakers of the heavenly calling" (3:1), they need to believe the gospel AND endure unto the end of the tribulation period, just like Jesus endured unto His end, which was the cross. Therefore, we see the conditional salvation in Israel's program. If they stop having faith in what God has told them, they will not be part of God's kingdom on earth. (The focus of 3:6b-19 is on Israel believing the gospel of the kingdom, so that they may enter the kingdom.)

3:7-11 These verse are a parenthetical insertion and are a quote of Psalm 95:7-11. The fact that we are told "the Holy Ghost saith" (3:7) tells us that God's Word is the very words of God without man changing them. The fact that the writer tells Israel that the Holy Ghost says this also reminds them that the Holy Ghost is giving them the offer of the kingdom right then, since Hebrews was written during the one-year ministry of the Holy Ghost to Israel in Acts 1-7, in which He was calling the nation to "repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

Note the use of the words "to day." In this context, "To day" specifically refers to the opportunity that the Holy Ghost is giving Israel during their one year period of grace (see Luke 13:6-9) ("To day" is used 5 times here (3:7,13,15, and 4:7(2)), which is the number of grace.) after Jesus' ascension before God sets aside Israel's prophecy program, due to their unbelief, and begins the dispensation of grace with the apostle Paul in Acts 9. That is why there are warnings in Hebrews. "While it is said To day" (3:15) and "while it is called To day" (3:13), Israel needs to believe the gospel. Otherwise, the offer of the kingdom to Israel will go away. The kingdom was "at hand" (Matthew 3:2 and 4:17). Israel had rejected God the Father by beheading John the Baptist (Matthew 14:10); they had rejected God the Son by crucifying Jesus (Acts 2:22-23); and Jesus warned them that, if they reject God the Holy Ghost, they would not be forgiven (Matthew 12:31-32). They would become guilty of all blood shed in history (Matthew 23:35-36). Therefore, this "To day" period is their last chance to inherit God's kingdom on earth.

God gave them 1 more year (Luke 13:6-9), which is covered in Acts 1-7, and they are somewhere in that time period when Hebrews is written. Therefore, they are given the warning to believe "To day," because it will not be called "To day" for much longer. Note that 3:7 says, "if ye will hear His voice." Jesus says in John 10:3-4 that "the sheep hear His voice...and...follow Him:

for they know His voice.” Therefore, we know that the true Israel of God (Galatians 6:16) will hear His voice here.

3:8-9 Spiritually speaking, Israel is in the same position at this time as they were in the wilderness. Physically, they are in Israel, but Israel is like Gentile land because of the unbelief there (Matthew 4:15-16). The physical wilderness is like the Promised Land, because God has called them out to the wilderness (Matthew 3:1 and 4:1), apart from the apostate nation (Hebrews 13:13-14).

In Numbers 13:1-20, God sent 12 spies from Israel to go to Canaan (the Promised Land). This took place 11 days (number of disorder) after their rebellion against God in Horeb (Numbers 32:8-9; Deuteronomy 1:2). Because of their unbelief, they said, “We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we” (Numbers 13:31). As a result, God said, “Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it.... Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness” (Numbers 14:23,33). Therefore, because of Israel’s unbelief, they did not enter the Promised Land. However, because God remained faithful, He promised to give the land to the next generation. Similarly now in Hebrews, Israel is on the verge of entering the eternal Promised Land. This generation of apostates will not enter the kingdom (This is the “generation of vipers” (see Matthew 23:33,36).), but, if they save themselves “from this untoward generation” (Acts 2:40), they will be part of the nation (Matthew 21:43) entering God’s kingdom. This is “the generation of Jesus Christ” (Matthew 1:1).

3:10-11 If apostate Israel does not repent about following Jewish religious traditions and have faith in God’s law covenant with them instead, they will be damned to hell (Matthew 23:33), not entering the Promised Land, just like God swore in His wrath to Israel back in Numbers 14 that “they shall not enter into My rest” (3:11). As such, apostate Israel, in the book of Numbers, is an example to apostate Israel in the book of Hebrews of what NOT to do.

Note that unbelievers “do alway err in their heart.” By contrast, Isaiah 35:8-10 says that “wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.” What this shows is that, as long as the believing remnant trusts in God’s imputed righteousness through the law covenant, they will make it into the kingdom, even though they sin in their flesh. It is the belief of the heart that brings them into the kingdom. If sins in their flesh kept them from entering God’s kingdom, no one would make it in because, “in my flesh dwelleth no good thing” (Romans 7:18).

3:12 So far in this chapter, God has shown Israel the positive examples of Jesus Christ and Moses. Both were faithful to bring Israel to the edge of the Promised Land. Since Jesus Christ has more glory than Moses (3:3), you

can bet that the eternal Promised Land He brings is much better than the temporary dwelling in the Promised Land that Moses brought. Now, the question is, “What will Israel do with this better offer?” Because they have been given a better offer, they are given the warning, here, not to have “an evil heart of unbelief” (3:12). If they do not believe the offer of the kingdom that God is giving them, they will depart “from the living God” (3:12), Who is Jesus, by believing Satan’s lie program, as seen in the Jewish religion and traditions.

3:13 To avoid departing from God’s law covenant with them, Israel should “exhort one another daily” (3:13). The fact that they should “exhort one another daily, while it is called To day” (3:13), shows that “To day” does not refer to one, twenty-four hour time period, but it refers to a much longer time period.

From Luke 13:6-9, we know that the time period, in which Israel has to believe God’s law covenant with them, is 1 year, recorded in Acts 2-7. If they do not believe, “To day” will pass, and God will cut them down (Luke 13:9). For those, who do believe, it is easy to give up and not endure unto the end (Matthew 10:22) to be saved, because of the persecution they will face from the Jewish religious leaders. That is why, even the believing remnant in Israel, needs to “exhort one another daily.” Otherwise, they will be deceived by sin into thinking they should abandon faith in God and believe religion, because they will see religion prosper, while the believing remnant is persecuted. Therefore, the way sin will deceive them is by thinking that the material prosperity of religion is the way into God’s kingdom. This is how the Antichrist will “deceive many” (Matthew 24:11) in Israel into thinking they should follow the Antichrist, because they will attribute his prosperity to the material blessings God promised Israel under the law covenant for their obedience. This deception will be so strong that “except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved” (Matthew 24:22). That is why Jesus told the believing remnant: “Blessed are they that mourn; Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake; and Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:4, 10-11).

“The love of money is the root of all evil” (I Timothy 6:10), and it is the material prosperity of religion and the Antichrist that will deceive many into being hardened against the truth of God found in His law covenant with Israel and the instructions He has given the believing remnant for the tribulation period.

Since they are to “exhort one another daily,” this shows that Hebrews was written during the communal living period of early Acts, because it was during that period that they were “continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house” (Acts 2:46).

3:14 People get tripped up by the conditional salvation presented in this passage, because they think it applies to them, when God has told them in

Paul's epistles that they have already now been justified by Christ's blood and they have already now received the atonement (Romans 5:9,11). The truth is that Hebrews 3:14 is written to the Hebrews for the last days of the Hebrews' prophecy program. They do not receive the atonement until Jesus' second coming (Acts 3:19-21). They must endure unto the end to be saved (Matthew 10:22). That is because, if they receive the mark of the beast, they will be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11). God would be a liar if He gave them the atonement upon belief, but then took it away from them later, when they did not have the works to accompany their faith (James 2:24). Therefore, for Israel's prophecy program, they need to hold their confidence in God's law covenant with them "stedfast until the end" of the 70th week of Daniel, i.e., the end of the tribulation period (3:14). Thus, we see no contradiction here with Romans 5:9,11, but we recognize that Hebrews contains instructions for the Hebrews, in the Hebrews' prophecy program, while we recognize that Romans contains instructions for us today in the mystery dispensation.

3:15 Since Hebrews was written during the "To day" phase of their chance to believe before God set them aside, the writer repeats the exhortation of 3:7-8 for apostate Israel to come out of their apostasy by hearing the voice of Jesus, their Good Shepherd (John 10:11). His sheep hear His voice and follow Him (John 10:4), but they need to hear now "while it is called To day" (3:13). In the wilderness after they left Egypt, rather than believing God, they hardened their hearts and provoked God into not giving them the Promised Land. So, too, Israel, in the day of the writing of the book of Hebrews, has a chance to enter the Promised Land, but they will not enter with "an evil heart of unbelief" (3:12).

3:16 Now we see that, while the kingdom is offered to all Jews, not all Jews need to believe in order for the believing Jews to receive God's eternal kingdom on earth. In Numbers 14:6-9, we see Joshua and Caleb having faith in God's promise to Israel, and so God says they will enter the Promised Land, while the rest of Israel will not enter (Numbers 14:30). (Note that, out of a 2 million plus congregation, only Joshua and Caleb believed (Numbers 26:63-65; 32:11-12)!) So, too, believing Jews, in the day of the writer of Hebrews ("To day") will enter into God's eternal kingdom on earth, even if the nation of Israel, as a whole, remains apostate. We should also note that apostate Israel would have stoned Joshua and Caleb to death for believing God (Numbers 14:10), if God did not intervene. Similarly, in ending the "To day" phase of Israel's chance to be part of God's kingdom on earth in early Acts, apostate Israel stoned Stephen to death (Acts 7:58-60).

3:17-19 A lack of faith in what God has told Israel is what makes God grieved at Israel and causes Him not to give Israel rest in the Promised Land. God had absolutely no problem with Joshua and Caleb because they had faith in God's promise to give them the land, and so they did enter the Promised Land. Similarly, God will look at Israel in the day of the writer of Hebrews, and, when "To day" is over and it is time for judgment, those in

Israel with faith in God's plan will enter the Promised Land—God's eternal kingdom on earth—while the unbelievers in Israel will be cast into the lake of fire. Therefore, the Jews cannot say, "We be Abraham's seed" (John 8:33), and "Abraham is our father" (John 8:39), and think that, just because they were born Jewish, they will be in God's kingdom on earth. The issue is not only physical descent from Abraham. The issue is also spiritual descent from Abraham. If they believe God, they will "do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39) and enter into God's eternal kingdom on earth.

Both the old (Exodus 19:5-6) and new covenants (Jeremiah 31:31) are with Israel, but they are only with believing Israel (Galatians 6:16). We do a great disservice to God and His people when we try to say that the covenants are with us today. God says in Romans 9:4: "Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." Furthermore, even for Israel, the new covenant is still future, as 8:13 says, "A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old IS READY to vanish away."

4 The writer tells Israel that God prepared a rest for them 4,000 years ago, and that they will only enter into it by believing God (v. 3). Being Jewish does not automatically qualify you. You must believe to be considered part of "the people of God" (v. 9). Looking good in the eyes of man with religion will not do it either, as God discerns "the thoughts and intents of the heart" (v. 12). The good news is that God provides eternal life through Jesus Christ, Who will also help believing Israel overcome the Antichrist during the tribulation period (vs. 14-16).

4:1 At the time of this writing, the promise for Israel to enter into God's rest in His eternal kingdom on earth will continue to be offered to Israel for less than 1 year. Given that there is not much time left, apostate Israel needs to get its act together and believe God's promise to them. Otherwise, like Israel in the wilderness, they will "not enter into His rest...because of unbelief" (3:18-19). Missing out on this is something that they should fear so that they repent, put themselves back under God's law covenant with them, and are water baptized. Fearing the Lord's destruction of them is what should motive them to believe the gospel of the kingdom (10:26-31).

4:2 "The gospel" or good news to Israel is eternal life in God's kingdom on earth if they believe God's promise and demonstrate that belief by subjecting themselves to the law covenant God made with them. Israel, in the physical wilderness under Moses, believed God initially (Exodus 14:31), but they stopped believing after 1 ½ months in the wilderness (Exodus 16:1-3). Similarly, believers in the tribulation period will have a strong motivation not to continue to believe the gospel of the kingdom unto the end of the tribulation period. They must survive trials, in order to enter the kingdom (I Peter 1:5-7).

4:3-4 “The gospel” or good news, however, still does apply to believers in Israel. The writer, here, quotes Psalm 95:11 to show that believing Israel will enter into God’s eternal kingdom on earth, which is the same passage that he quoted in 3:7-11 to show that unbelieving Israel will not enter the kingdom.

The reference, here, that “the works were finished from the foundation of the world” (4:3), means that God included man’s redemption by Jesus Christ in the very foundation of the earth! Job 38:4-6 says that, when God created the earth, He laid the corner stone of the earth in the foundation. Psalm 104:5 says that “the foundations of the earth” are laid there forever. Proverbs 8:29-30 says that God “appointed the foundations of the earth” with wisdom. Isaiah 28:16 says that the Lord Jesus Christ is “a precious corner stone, a sure foundation.” Revelation 13:8 says that “the Lamb [was] slain from the foundation of the world.” Hebrews 9:26 implies that Christ’s suffering was done before the foundation of the world took place. Matthew 7:24 says that a wise man builds his house upon a rock. I Corinthians 10:4 says that Christ is the Rock. By putting all of these verses together, we can conclude that Jesus Christ’s death on the cross is the chief cornerstone of the foundation of the earth. Therefore, “the works were finished from the foundation of the world,” which includes Israel’s kingdom (Matthew 25:34). You may say that Jesus was not slain until 4,000 years after the earth was created. Yes, that is true, but God “calletth those things which be not as though they were” (Romans 4:17). Therefore, God says that the foundation of the earth is built upon the slain Lamb, which makes the foundation sure, lasting for all eternity.

Note, from 4:4, that this rest is a rest in God, as God, having done all the works, rested on the seventh day, as an example of the rest that believers could have in Him. This is the spiritual rest of Matthew 11:28-30. Therefore, this does not negate the fact that the believing remnant should be “working” by preaching the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel during the tribulation period (Matthew 10:6).

4:5 Again, the writer of Hebrews reminds Israel that God has promised (Psalm 95:11) that his rest can be their rest as well. All they have to do is believe.

4:6 Because God has promised that Israel will enter into His kingdom, “some must enter therein” (4:6). Since Israel did not enter in before, the time is now (at the time Hebrews was written) for Israel to accept God’s offer.

4:7 “He limiteth a certain day,” and it is now “To day, after so long a time” (4:7). Granted, anyone in Israel’s history could believe God, and God would give them eternal life in God’s kingdom on earth. However, they would wait for paradise to be brought back on earth, which takes place after the millennial reign (Revelation 21:1-2). But, the point of the writer of Hebrews is that, if Israel accepts the offer of the kingdom “To day,” there will be 7

years of tribulation and then Jesus will come back and set up the kingdom. So, entering God's eternal kingdom on earth is possible for them without dying. That is the "certain day" of "To day" when "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2 & 4:17). Also, "after so long a time" takes on a whole, new meaning, once the dispensation of grace interrupts the prophetic program.

4:8 Of the 54 most popular English translations of this verse, 10 versions say "Jesus" and 44 versions say "Joshua." Because the King James Version is without error, the correct translation is "Jesus." The reason that Jesus did not give them rest is because of their unbelief (3:19). Therefore, He had to speak of another day when they could enter into His rest, and that other day is the tribulation period. It is also true that Israel did not enter God's rest during Joshua's day, and it is Jesus, Who gives rest (Matthew 11:28-30), not Joshua.

4:9 God's rest, that He prepared in just 6 days of creation, 4,000 years prior to this book, still remains for Israel to enter into. Note that it is not for all Jews, but is for "the people of God" (4:9). "All Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26), but "all Israel" is "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16). That is not to say that we, today, in the dispensation of grace, are spiritual Israel. Rather, Israel is comprised of believing Jews to whom the promises of God's covenant with Israel were made. These are "the people of God" (4:9) that the writer of Hebrews is saying will enter into God's rest in paradise, which is in heaven right now, but will eventually come down to the earth, where Jesus will rule and reign forever (Revelation 21:1-2).

4:10 Although Israel was to put themselves under the law covenant they had made with God, they were not expected to keep it. Putting themselves under the law was an act of faith, trusting the system God set up, even if they failed to keep it themselves. By putting themselves under the law, it reminds them of their failure so that they will trust in the work God did for them by having Jesus live a perfect life and then die for their sins. Their faith in God's law covenant with them, then, is faith in God's provision of salvation through the law. For we see that Jesus was made a curse under the law's provisions (Galatians 3:13 and Deuteronomy 21:23).

The gospel for Israel was not to trust in Jesus' death as atonement for their sins. Their gospel was to trust in the promise of eternal life for keeping the law, which God did for them, as Galatians 2:16 says, "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith OF Jesus Christ." Christ had the faith to do what ordinary man could not do, and Israel, in the prophecy program, is called to rest in God's promise of eternal life found in Jesus' fulfillment of the law, and they rest in this by abandoning their own religion of works and trusting in the promise God had given them in the law by putting themselves under God's law covenant. Thus, they cease from their own works and rest in God (4:10). That is the point of James 2, where religion says "I have works" (James 2:18), and the believing remnant of

Israel says “I will shew thee my faith by my works” (of putting myself under the authority of God) (James 2:18).

4:11 Note that, while Israel was to rest in God’s rest, they had to “labour... to enter into that rest” (4:11). The “labour” is to keep reading and believing God’s Word to them. If they do not “labour” to maintain faith in God, they will “fall after the same example of unbelief” (4:11). Therefore, it is God’s work that they rest in, but they rest in that work by labouring to remain under God’s law covenant, which will not be easy to do, given the level of deception in the Antichrist’s program in the tribulation period (Matthew 24:4-5). That is why James 2:24 says, “by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” So, they labour to continue to believe in God’s program for them, during a time of great unbelief.

4:12 By itself, this is a great verse to show that God’s Word is alive and has the power to change the inner man. If you do not allow it to change your inner man, God’s Word will show you that your heart is evil. In its context, this verse is a warning to the Hebrews that their religion will not get them into God’s rest (God’s kingdom). Apostate Israel is busy working for their own righteousness, and they may look righteous to others. This is especially true in the tribulation period when those following the Antichrist will look holy to others, yet, at the Great White Throne Judgment, God will say to them “I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:23). That is when the Word of God will discern “the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12) and determine that their righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). In fact, we see Jesus wielding that twoedged sword at His second coming at the end of the tribulation period (Revelation 19:15). Therefore, religious Israel had better heed this warning by abandoning their own religious system and embracing God’s law covenant to them, and the promises God has given them in it, of entering into His rest.

Note how God’s Word is a sword that divides your soul and spirit from your flesh. Before you are saved, your spirit is dead (Ephesians 2:1), and your flesh is alive, controlling your soul. After you are saved, God makes your spirit alive (Ephesians 2:5), and He wants to use your spirit to control your soul (Romans 8), but the flesh often gets in the way (Romans 7). However, if you read and believe God’s Word, it will cut the connection between your flesh and your soul, such that your flesh is dead (Romans 6), so that you use your spirit to control your soul, walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16), and allowing Christ to live in you (Galatians 2:20).

4:13 The Jews thought they could do whatever they wanted and still enter God’s kingdom because, physically speaking, they were “Abraham’s seed” (John 8:33). However, God just told them in Hebrews 4:12 that the Word of God is so sharp that it can pierce right through the flesh and divide asunder from the soul and spirit. Therefore, “all things are naked and opened” unto God’s eyes (4:13), such that He will destroy their cloke of religion and judge them for what they really are inside. Since these religious folks in Israel “are

within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Matthew 23:27), they are in trouble.

4:14 However, there is good news for apostate Israel, and that is that they "have a great high priest..., Jesus the Son of God" (4:14). "Jesus" shows His humanity, and "the Son of God" shows His deity. This man, Jesus, has already "passed into the heavens" (4:14). Therefore, He can act as the mediator between God and Israel, and, even though they are full of dead men's bones, He can clean them up. In fact, God promised just that in Ezekiel 37:4-6 when He said, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Therefore, Israel needs to continue to believe God's plan of redemption for them.

4:15 The word of God is powerful enough to judge apostate Israel straight into the lake of fire (4:12). However, the humanity of the God-man, Jesus the Son of God, is "touched with the feeling of [Israel's] infirmities" (4:15), because, as a man, He "was in all points tempted like as we are" (4:15). (God cannot be tempted to sin, according to James 1:13.) Now, that does not mean that He was tempted to do every single sin. For example, Jesus was never tempted to commit adultery, because He was never married. Rather, there are three categories of temptations: 1) The lust of the flesh, 2) The lust of the eyes, and 3) The pride of life. These are "all that is in the world" (1 John 2:16).

We see Jesus tempted by the devil in all three of these categories in Matthew 4:1-10. Therefore, as a man, Jesus has compassion on Israel, seeing their predicament and feeling sorry for them, knowing firsthand how hard it is not to sin. At the same time, Jesus was "yet without sin" (4:15), as He overcame those temptations. This means He has the power to deliver Israel from their predicament, having died in their place so that they might have the gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23). Since He is the Word of God (John 1:1,14), the powerful word of God can now be used, not to judge Israel, but to give eternal life to Israel.

4:16 Therefore, Israel can "come boldly unto the throne of grace" (4:16). What a contrast for Israel before and after Jesus' resurrection! Before, the only way to approach God's throne was once per year by the high priest, only after he went through various cleansing ceremonies, and then he would do so in fear, because, if he had any impurities when he approached God's throne, he would be struck dead (Exodus 28:33-35,43).

In fact, the Old Testament saints could not even go to heaven, where God was, because the atonement for their sins had not been made by the blood of Jesus Christ yet. Therefore, they went to Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22). After Jesus' death, the veil in the temple that separated God from man was

torn in two from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51), showing that God tore that veil with Jesus' death on the cross. With the atonement for sin being made, not only can all of Israel now approach God's throne, but they can also do so with boldness and without fear. Instead of God's throne bringing them death, it now brings life to Israel. Instead of a throne of judgment, it is a throne of grace. Therefore, when they are going through the tribulation period and they are having trouble maintaining faith in God's Word to them, they can pray, and God will give them grace in their time of need to make it through the tribulation. Those prayers are precious to God, as He holds them in golden vials (Revelation 5:8), and God keeps their tears in His bottle (Psalm 56:8). Thus, the cross work of Christ brings Israel from death to life and gives them the strength to overcome (Revelation 2:11) the tribulations of the Great Tribulation period.

5 In verses 1-4, the writer goes over the qualifications of a high priest to show that, although Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi, He is still qualified to be a high priest. Christ became a Melchisedecian high priest, which is higher than a Levitical high priest, because He was called of God to that higher order, due to His suffering in the flesh that enabled Him to be the author of eternal salvation (vs. 6-10). This higher priesthood also brings about more advanced doctrine for Israel. Unfortunately, apostate Israel is unable to grasp this "strong meat," because they are still grappling with basic doctrine, related to salvation and the kingdom. Therefore, they are not yet able to go on to more advanced doctrine about the Melchisedecian priesthood (vs. 11-14).

5:1 In chapter 3, Jesus was greater than Moses (3:3). In chapter 4, Jesus offers a greater rest than what was offered under Moses (4:8-9). Now, in chapter 5, Jesus is a greater high priest than the Levitical priests (5:5-6). In 5:1, we are told that man's high priests must be "taken from among men" to be mediators for man "in things pertaining to God" (5:1). Thus, we see, from this verse, the qualifications of a high priest and his rights and responsibilities.

5:2 A judge is to judge justly, according to the law. A high priest, however, is to have compassion because he works for God and man. So, he tries to satisfy the justice of God, while having compassion on those worthy of God's judgment. Because the high priest is taken from man, he has compassion for man, being "compassed with infirmity" himself (5:2). Because God is not ignorant and has never sinned, He would not have this same compassion.

5:3 Because the high priests of the Levitical priesthood are men, they have sinned, just like other men have. Therefore, they offer sacrifices to cover sins, not just for the people, but for themselves, also. We see this commanded by God in Leviticus 4:3. Thus, the Hebrews can see, built into God's law, what the writer of Hebrews has said already in Hebrews 5:1-3.

5:4 Furthermore, since the high priest represents both God and man, he must be “called of God” to do this service. Contrast this with a bishop in the body of Christ. A bishop is not called of God. Rather, he **desires** the office of a bishop (I Timothy 3:1).

5:5-6 The Hebrews were quite familiar with the Levitical priesthood. Jesus Christ was not of the tribe of Levi. Therefore, when Hebrews 4:14 says that Jesus is Israel’s “great high priest,” Israel may object to this. That is why the writer of Hebrews gives the qualification of a high priest in Hebrews 5:1-4, so that they will judge Jesus by these qualifications and not by the qualifications God set forth in His law for the Levitical priesthood.

First, we see, from Psalm 2:7, that the Messiah is called of God by being God’s Son. Second, we see, from Psalm 110:4, that the Lord is called of God to be a Melchisedecian priest. Note that this takes place AFTER His resurrection. It is at Jesus’ resurrection that Jesus is begotten as God’s Son (Acts 13:33). It is also after Jesus’ resurrection that God makes Him “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). It is only then that “The Lord” (God the Father) can make a declaration to the Lord (God the Son) (Psalm 110:1). It is not until He is made Lord that Jesus can be the mediator between God and man, having conquered death and hell and defeated Satan to make Jesus Lord. Thus, a few verses later, in Psalm 110:4, is the declaration regarding the Lord Jesus Christ that He is made “a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Therefore, “Christ glorified not Himself to be made an high priest” (Hebrews 5:5), but “Jesus was glorified” (John 12:16) by the Father (John 17:5). As such, Jesus was “called of God” (5:4) to be a high priest. The difference is that He is of a higher order of priests, as He is a Melchisedecian priest, rather than being a Levitical priest. In chapter 7, the writer of Hebrews will show how the Melchisedecian priesthood is better.

5:7 Because Jesus was fully man, He suffered temptation in the flesh (4:15). His “prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears” (5:7) no doubt happened throughout His life, but it culminated in His prayers before the cross when He was “in an agony..., and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood” (Luke 22:44).

As a man, He asked the Father to remove the cross from Him (Luke 22:42), as He knew that the Father “was able to save Him from death” (5:7). 5:7 also tells us that the Father did hear that prayer, because “He feared.” In other words, because Jesus feared the Father’s plan for mankind, the Father did save Him from death. This salvation was not from the death of the cross, but it was salvation from dying before He even got to the cross. This is seen in Matthew 26:38, where Jesus says that His “soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” The Father sent an angel to strengthen Him (Luke 22:43) so that He was saved from death in the garden so that He could go to the cross, as was the Father’s will for Him. In other words, because Christ had the right heart attitude with regard to the cross, Christ’s death would be the sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Therefore, the Father saved Him from

dying in the garden so that He could be that sacrifice and fulfill the Father's will.

This resulted in Christ's glorification as high priest (5:5-6). As such, this is an example to the Hebrews that their faith obedience in the tribulation period will also result in God glorifying them in God's eternal kingdom on earth. In fact, it was that faith response that caused Jesus to say that the 12 apostles, in the kingdom, will "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28).

5:8 However, before the glorification came, Jesus had to suffer. He had to LEARN "obedience by the things which He suffered" (5:8). He would not be a man if He did not suffer, since Satan had Israel as his lawful captive (Isaiah 49:24-25). Therefore, Jesus suffered under Satan's authority and obeyed the Father to rise above the devil's authority. His obedience came from His faith in the Father's plan. Faith is a positive response to what God tells you. God told Jesus to obey Him in order to be glorified and give all people the opportunity for eternal life, as well. He obeyed the Father out of faith, but He had to learn this obedience by suffering temptations. Learning obedience is what qualified Jesus to be a Melchisedecian priest. Nothing is learned without a choice. Therefore, when Israel goes through tribulation, they can learn obedience, too, by the things they suffer, which will make them pure as gold and silver to be "an offering in righteousness" unto the Lord (Malachi 3:3).

5:9 As a man, Jesus was made "a little lower than the angels" (Hebrews 2:9). He came "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3). Then, when He had lived the perfect life, He received His glorified, new body, being raised from the dead. This was when He was "made perfect" (5:9). Being an overcomer, He was made perfect, being both Lord and man. As such, "He became the author of eternal salvation" (5:9).

Jesus wrote the "how to" book on eternal life by His perfect life, death, and resurrection. The "how to" is to "obey Him" (5:9). This does not mean perfect obedience of the law, because then Israel would not be ceasing from their own work (4:10). Rather, it means obeying the Lord like Jesus obeyed the Father. The way Jesus obeyed the Father was that He had faith in God's plan for Him. Thus, eternal salvation comes to Israel by having faith in the promise of eternal life in the law covenant, and we, today, in the dispensation of grace, have eternal salvation by having faith in the promise of eternal life by trusting in Jesus' death as atonement for our sins. Thus, we all obey by having faith in what God has told us, regardless of dispensation. Israel must believe what God has told them in order to enter into His rest (4:3). Also see 4:10-11, Romans 6:17, Romans 10:16, and II Thessalonians 1:8, where obeying means believing the gospel.

5:10 The way Jesus gives Israel the gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23) is by Him being placed in the position of authority to do this by being "an high

priest after the order of Melchisedec” (5:10). This is a higher priesthood than the Levitical priesthood. God did not give the law of circumcision to Abraham until Genesis 17:10. Therefore, he was not under the law until then. It is in Genesis 14:18-20 that we see Abraham giving tithes to Melchizedek. Thus, we see that the Melchisedecian priesthood precedes the Levitical priesthood. It is also a higher priesthood, because “he was the priest of the most high God..., possessor of heaven and earth” (Genesis 14:18-19). Thus, he is priest for heaven and earth, while Israel’s program relates only to the earth, making the Levitical priesthood only over Israel in the earth.

Therefore, Christ is of a higher priestly order, which is why Hebrews 5:9 says that He is the “author of eternal salvation unto ALL them that obey Him,” which means not just those in Israel’s program, although the original audience of Hebrews would not have known this, since the mystery was revealed to Paul after the book of Hebrews was written. Thus, Christ had to be a priest after Melchisedec in order to form the church, the body of Christ, in this present dispensation. Therefore, Israel should not balk at Jesus’ not being a priest of the tribe of Levi. God intentionally had Jesus come from the tribe of Judah, and made Him a higher priest than He would have been as a Levitical priest.

5:11 Because of the unbelief and apostasy of Israel (John 12:37), they have physical ears, but they are deaf spiritually, as God said in Isaiah 6:9-10 that they would be. Therefore, although the writer of Hebrews could tell them more advanced doctrine about Jesus for their edification, it would not do any good at this point. He must first cover the information in chapter 6, before he can go on to more detailed information about the Melchisedecian priesthood.

5:12-14 God called Israel to be “a kingdom of priests” to the Gentiles to reconcile the earth back to God (Exodus 19:5-6). In the kingdom, Gentiles will take hold of Jews (Zechariah 8:23) to learn God’s law (Isaiah 2:3), and the Jews will be called “Ministers of our God” (Isaiah 61:6). Because of this privileged position, “unto them were committed the oracles of God” (Romans 3:2). At the time of the writing of Hebrews, it had been over 1,000 years since those oracles were committed unto them; therefore, they “ought to be teachers” by now (5:12). They should already be in the kingdom, teaching the Gentiles. But, because of their unbelief, they “have need that one teach[es them] again which be the first principles of the oracles of God” (5:12), which are the basics of “the doctrine of Christ,” mentioned in 6:1-2.

Not only is the little flock not qualified to teach the law to the Gentiles (Matthew 28:20; 23:2-3), but they also do not even know the basics enough to learn anything beyond the basics yet! Therefore, instead of being priests, like Jesus Christ, they are babies, spiritually speaking, needing to understand “the principles of the doctrine of Christ” (6:1), and then they can grow from there. This “strong meat” (5:14) will be saved until chapter 7.

Note also that you have to use the strong meat of God's Word before you have your "senses exercised [enough] to discern both good and evil" (5:14). Therefore, being saved is not enough. You must also know sound doctrine for your dispensation. That is why the Antichrist will "deceive many" (Matthew 24:5) in the tribulation period such that "no flesh [would] be saved" if the Great Tribulation period was longer than 3 ½ years (Matthew 24:22). That is also why, today, in the dispensation of grace, 99.9% of Christians do not know how to rightly divide the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15) or even that Paul is their apostle (Romans 11:13). They may hear the Bible in church every Sunday, but they are being given evil doctrine. Because they have not believed in Paul's epistles in order to understand all things (II Timothy 2:7), they do not "have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (5:14). Therefore, they will lose their reward (I Corinthians 3:15), and, quite frankly, most people, who read the Bible, have probably not believed the gospel to them and will be thrown into the lake of fire, as a result. That is also the case for most of the writer's audience. They claim to know God, but they are far from God, due to their unbelief in God's law to them, such that they do not even know "the first principles of the oracles of God" (5:12). If you do not know the gospel, you are not saved. Even if you know the gospel but do not know anything beyond that, you will not be rewarded in eternity. This shows just how important it is to know advanced, sound doctrine!

6 Apostate Israel does not even know "the first principles of the oracles of God" (5:12); therefore, the writer must now cover those things in chapter 6, so that he can go on to more advanced doctrine in chapter 7. If they do not have a firm grasp of basic doctrine, they will not endure unto the end of the tribulation period, because there is a danger that they will "fall away" by taking the mark of the beast or worshipping his image (vs. 4-6). Once they understand this, the writer can then go on about the faithfulness of God to keep His promises to Israel because of His sure word (vs. 10-18), and His sure provision (vs. 19-20) of Christ's death as the once-for-all sacrifice for the atonement of Israel's sins.

6:1-3 The writer of Hebrews has spent 5 chapters going over basic, fundamental doctrine, just for Israel to be saved, just like Romans 1-5 gives us today, in the dispensation of grace, the fundamental doctrine for us to be saved.

The writer of Hebrews now seeks to move on to doctrine that will help Israel discern both good and evil so that they will endure the tribulation period and still be saved (Matthew 10:22). However, he cannot move "unto perfection" (6:1), until they have faith in foundational doctrine. Thus, he will only move on "if God permit" (6:3), meaning if God saves them through their faith in God's law covenant with them. As will be seen, the writer is able to move on, beginning with chapter 7. If he was not able, due to the unbelief of Israel, this epistle would have been cut short after the sixth chapter.

The first, foundational doctrine that apostate Israel needs faith in is “repentance from dead works.” Apostate Israel is following “the tradition of men,” “laying aside the commandment of God” (Mark 7:8), “making the Word of God of none effect” (Mark 7:13). They need to “repent” (Matthew 3:2 & 4:17) or change their mind about this and have faith in God. Apostate Israel says, “I have works” (James 2:18), and they will claim these “many wonderful works” (Matthew 7:22) as the reason that they should enter God’s kingdom. However, because works are dead (Hebrews 6:1) without faith, Jesus will say to them: “I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:23). Therefore, the first step to salvation for apostate Israel is “repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God” (6:1). Then, in order to be identified with the believing remnant of Israel, they need to be water baptized (6:2). In fact, repentance, faith, and water baptism (6:1-2) are what the little flock told Israel they needed to do to be saved (“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16), and “Repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38).).

Note that “baptisms” is plural, which means that this doctrine refers to both water baptism and the baptism with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38). There is actually a third baptism here, which is fire baptism, meaning that Israel would soon be baptized with fire to purge out unbelievers (Matthew 3:11). Therefore, both Hebrews 6:2 and Matthew 3:11 are good verses to show people that there is more than one baptism in the Bible, which also means that baptism in the Bible is not always water baptism, as most Christians believe that it is.

The “laying on of hands” (Hebrews 6:2) refers to the early Acts period when the Holy Ghost was received by believing Israel when the 12 apostles laid hands on them (e.g. Acts 8:17). This was necessary because Jesus gave them “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” to loose people from their sins (Matthew 16:19). They did so through the power of the Holy Ghost, as John 20:22-23 says. Therefore, the Holy Ghost, working through the 12 apostles, determined that a person had faith, and their laying on of hands was how the Holy Ghost was given to new believers.

Finally, they needed to know the doctrines “of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment” (6:2) to recognize that the promise of the kingdom may not be given to them until after they die, which is what happened to their forefathers as well: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises.... They were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13). If the believing remnant does not believe in resurrection, there is no way they will endure the Great Tribulation until the end and be saved (Matthew 10:22). They have to be willing to die for their faith (Revelation 6:9-11) in order to receive the promise of eternal life in the kingdom.

They also need to know that apostate Israel will be eternally judged into the lake of fire. Otherwise, why endure suffering? Therefore, the fundamental

doctrine for Israel during the “at hand” phase of the kingdom is to repent about religion, have faith in God’s law covenant, be water baptized and receive the Holy Ghost, and endure the baptism of fire of the tribulation period, knowing they will be resurrected to life in God’s eternal kingdom on earth, if they have to die for their faith.

6:4-6 Now, we have the proper context to understand this strong warning, here, that is actually stronger than the wording of Matthew 12:31-32 (the so-called “unpardonable sin”). So many people have worried themselves to death over Hebrews 6:4-6, not even realizing that it is talking to the believing remnant of Israel in the tribulation period.

“Those...once enlightened” means they received the light of God by having faith in God’s law covenant with Israel. They sat in darkness, because of their unbelief, but, then, Jesus, “the true light” (John 1:9), came unto them (Matthew 4:16), and they were enlightened by believing the gospel of the kingdom of God (Mark 1:14-15).

“The heavenly gift” would be the gift of the Holy Ghost (see Acts 2:38; 8:20). They have “tasted” of this gift through the speaking in tongues and miracles that have been done through them through the power of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4, 3:6-8, etc.). This is emphasized again by saying that they “were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.” However, because they are not sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30), they have only “tasted” of this heavenly gift, and they may lose this gift, as the Holy Spirit departed from Saul in I Samuel 16:14.

Tasting “the good word of God” (6:5) refers to the joy they are experiencing on the inside from keeping God’s commandments (John 15:10-11). They have also experienced “the powers of the world to come” (6:5). The “world to come” is the new earth God will make and rule from (Revelation 21:2). In that new world, God takes away all pain, sorrow, and death (Revelation 21:4), and He heals the Gentiles (Revelation 22:2). The miracles in early Acts are a foreshadowing of this. Thus, they tasted these powers, for example, when the lame man rose up and walked in Acts 3:6-7. Again, they are just tasting of the joy and the power, because Satan is still in this world. Therefore, in 6:4-5, the writer is talking about a saved Israelite, who has already laid the doctrinal foundation of 6:1-2. They have believed the gospel (“once enlightened”), experienced life in Christ (“the heavenly gift”), received the Holy Ghost, had joy from obeying God (“the good word of God”), and have experienced a taste of what the kingdom will be like (“the powers of the world to come”).

Now, along comes verse 6 with the big question: “What does ‘if they shall fall away’ mean?” It must mean that they fall away from all of the things in 6:4-5. The term “fall away” is only found in one other place in scripture, and that is in Luke 8:13. It is used there to refer to people who hear the word of

God, “receive the word with joy,” and “for a while believe,” but they fall away in time of temptation.

In the tribulation period, this refers to denying Christ (Matthew 10:33) by taking the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9-11). We know this because Revelation 14:9-11 says that those, who take the mark of the beast or worship his image, will burn in the lake of fire forever. This is precisely why they do not receive forgiveness of sins until Jesus’ second coming (see Acts 3:19-21), because they can later lose their salvation by aligning themselves with apostate Israel and the Antichrist.

The rest of Hebrews 6:6 tells us why taking the mark of the beast is the true, unpardonable sin. In taking that mark, they make a public allegiance to the Antichrist. Also, everyone, with whom they come in contact, knows whose side they are on because they took the mark. So, if they change their mind again, i.e., repent, and want to be part of God’s kingdom, it would mean “they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame” (6:6). The Antichrist will already “deceive many” (Matthew 24:5), but, if there were people with the mark preaching false doctrine and others with the mark preaching true doctrine, all would be deceived. Christ would be put “to an open shame” because Christ would be aligned with Satan, and Christ has no concord with Belial (II Corinthians 6:15). Furthermore, Christ would have had to have been crucified twice for their sins—once to save them at first from being Satan’s lawful captive, and again to save them from being Satan’s captive via the mark. Since Christ only died once, there is no salvation for believers in Israel, who take the mark after they are saved.

For that matter, unbelievers also have no salvation if they take the mark, because Christ was made a curse under the law (Galatians 3:13) to free those under the law. He did not make a provision of salvation for those who become Satan’s by taking the mark of the beast. He was crucified “ONCE for all” (10:10). Since we cannot take the mark of the beast in the current, mystery dispensation, it is impossible for those saved in this dispensation to lose their salvation, just like it is impossible for those taking the mark of the beast in the Great Tribulation period to be saved (Revelation 14:9-11). This shows that Satan, the great imitator of God, comes up with his own form of eternal security in his kingdom by bringing the mark of the beast upon man in the Great Tribulation period.

The point of 6:4-6 is that, once they take the mark, Israel’s doom is set. Therefore, they had better lay the foundation of the doctrine of 6:1-2 and move on to more sound doctrine so that they do not end up taking the mark and losing their souls (Matthew 10:32-33).

6:7-8 God’s vineyard is Israel, and Judah is His pleasant plant (Isaiah 5:7). It is upon Israel, in the prophecy program, that the Lord watered and blessed (Psalm 65:9-10). If a Jew becomes apostate, he is not part of Israel.

Therefore, he does not abide in God's vineyard and is cast into the fire to be burned (John 15:6 and Isaiah 5:6). Therefore, the analogy of 6:7-8 is really an analogy of believing Israel and apostate Israel that is found in the Old Testament.

Basically, God is saying that He has blessed believing Israel with favored nation status, while unbelieving Israel will be cast out. This is seen in the physical realm on the earth, and it will happen, spiritually speaking, with Israel. In other words, God is saying, "This is My earth—not the Antichrist's earth. So, if you align yourself with him, you will be cast out with him. If you align yourself with Me, you will receive blessings from Me in the earth in My kingdom."

6:9-10 Now, we see a clearer picture of the writer's audience. He is writing to unsaved Israel, but not the crowd that is persecuting the little flock, because they are children of the devil (John 8:44) and will not be saved. He is writing to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, because they will hear the Good Shepherd's voice (John 10:3-4). They were brought up to be religious, which is why they have trouble with doctrinal basics (5:12), yet they recognize the Jewish religious leaders are not of God, since they killed the Messiah and are persecuting the little flock. Therefore, they are helping out the persecuted saints (6:10). This is why the writer is "persuaded better things of" them (6:9). He expects they will endure unto the end and be saved, because he has already seen their works of faith (James 2:20-25). They just need to have a firm grasp on "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" (6:1), so that they are not deceived by the Antichrist and apostate Israel.

6:11 The writer wants to see the lost sheep of Israel saved, and then "shew the same diligence" (6:11) in faith in God's program for Israel, rather than just having works. They are used to working, having been in the religious system. Now, they are coming out of that religious system, but they are still working, because it has been so engrained in them. So, the writer encourages them to repent "from dead works" (6:1) and show the same diligence in faith in God's program, as they have shown in the works in helping the saints. Having faith in God's instructions to them is the "full assurance of hope" (6:11) that they need to endure in the faith until the end of the tribulation period in order to be saved (Matthew 10:22).

6:12 The slothfulness or laziness, that the writer is talking about, refers, not to being lazy in ministering to the saints, because they are already ministering to them (6:10). Rather, it refers to them not being slothful in learning "the first principles of the oracles of God" (5:12), which are "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" (6:1). They need to have faith in God's promises to them. Then, rather than being followers of the no-faith-all-work Jewish religious crowd, they will be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (6:13). They must have faith in order to enter into God's rest. It is unbelief that has kept Israel from entering into

God's rest (3:19). Then, once they have that faith established, they need to keep that faith, enduring unto the end of the tribulation period in order to be saved (Matthew 24:13). That is where the patience comes in. Therefore, it is not by works alone that they are saved. They need to repent from trusting in those dead works (6:1), trust in God's promise of eternal life found in the law covenant with them, and then have the patience to, by faith, endure unto the end of the tribulation period so that they may "inherit the promises" of the kingdom that God has given them (6:12).

6:13-14 The greater the thing you swear by, the greater the credibility of the oath. Since there is none greater than God, God had to swear by Himself. Therefore, God's promise cannot be any surer than it is. God WILL uphold His Word, since his Word is magnified above His Own Name (Psalm 138:2), and His name is "Holy, holy, holy" (Isaiah 6:3). Therefore, His oath is the highest thing in the world.

These verses are a quote of Genesis 22:16-17. The context is the work of Abraham offering Isaac on the altar to be sacrificed. According to James 2:21, this blessing is Abraham being justified by works, where "faith wrought with his works" made faith perfect (James 2:22). God's Word is sure, but it is up to the believing remnant to have the works with their faith to endure unto the end of the tribulation period and obtain God's promises to them. They can be patient with confidence, knowing that God's Word is sure.

6:15 In 6:13-14, the surety of God's promise to Abraham, and, by extension, to the believing remnant of Israel, is established. Now, in 6:15, the works of the believing remnant are established. Once they have faith in God's promises to them, they need to endure patiently the Great Tribulation period, just like Abraham patiently endured, being a stranger on the earth (11:13), in order to obtain the sure promises of God.

6:16-18 Again, the writer goes back to how sure the promises of God to Israel are. In the Great Tribulation period, many will have to flee to the mountains for their lives (Matthew 24:16-19). Many will be caught and will have to either make Satan their god, or be killed for confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord (Revelation 6:9-11). In order to be willing to give up their lives for promises from God, the little flock needs to be 100% certain that those promises will come to pass for them. Therefore, God swore by Himself that He would give believing Israel eternal life and blessings in the kingdom.

The oath gave the promises to Israel "by two immutable things" (6:18). The first, immutable thing is that God swore that He would give them the promises. God's Word is immutable because God cannot lie (6:18 and Titus 1:2). The second, immutable thing is His name, since He swore by His name. His name is "Holy, Holy, Holy" (Revelation 4:8). Therefore, His name is immutable, as well. Therefore, when Israel flees for refuge from the Antichrist, they "have a strong consolation" (6:18), knowing that, although

they may be killed, they will be blessed forever in God's eternal kingdom on earth.

When 6:18 says they "have fled for refuge," they are fleeing for physical refuge. However, more importantly, they flee for spiritual refuge. They take refuge in God's promises to them. Therefore, they are under His wings (Psalm 91:4; Matthew 23:37). There, they have refuge and are spiritually nourished by God for the 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation period (Revelation 12:6,14). Physically speaking, they may starve and even die from hunger, but, spiritually speaking, they are nourished by the immutable promises of God of life and blessings in God's kingdom on earth for all eternity. Therefore, they "lay hold upon the hope set before" them (6:18).

6:19 The "hope" of this verse is not, "I just hope I can make it into the kingdom." The hope is a confident expectation that, since entering into God's rest is contingent upon the Hebrews' belief in God's promises to them (4:3) and since God's promises to them are sure "by two immutable things" (6:18), when apostate Israel and the Antichrist deceive Israel into following Satan's lie program, believers will not follow. Their soul will be anchored in God's promises to them, such that they will not fear the one, who can destroy their body, i.e., the Antichrist, but they will fear the one who can throw both body and soul into the lake of fire, i.e., the true Christ (Matthew 10:28).

Thus, when the lies of the Antichrist come to steal away their souls, the believing remnant will have their souls anchored in the confident expectation of God giving them eternal life in the kingdom, such that they will not take the mark of the beast or worship his image. God's promise is "sure," because He gave His Word. It is "stedfast" because He backed it up with Christ's sacrifice for their sins "which entereth into that within the veil" (6:19). From the law, Israel knew that God dwells on the throne between the two cherubim. His throne was "within the veil" because unholy men would be struck dead if they entered the holy of holies and came in contact with a holy God. God provided for a high priest to cleanse himself once per year, go to God's throne behind the veil, and give an animal sacrifice for the people that would be a covering for their sins. All of this was a type of the real sacrifice in heaven. In heaven are God's throne and the cherubim guarding the throne. We see this in Ezekiel 1:24-28. Since Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the perfect sacrifice (7:27) "once for all" (10:10), His sacrifice enters into the veil of the throne room in heaven.

6:20 Now, the perfect sacrifice, to atone for sin, also requires the perfect mediator, or high priest, between God and man. That perfect high priest is Jesus, since He is after a higher order of priests. He is not a Levitical priest, but He is a Melchisedecian priest. Thus, Jesus Christ entered into the veil of the throne room in heaven and offered the perfect sacrifice for sins—Himself. His blood now covers God's throne. Since He is perfect and His

sacrifice is perfect, it makes holy all those with faith in God's promises to them.

Therefore, because Jesus is the forerunner, saved Israel can now "come boldly unto God's throne" (4:16), and that throne is not one of judgment, as it was in the Old Testament, but it is one of grace under the New Testament, sealed by the blood of Christ. Therefore, saved Israel can now "boldly" approach "the throne of grace" and receive "mercy, and find grace" (4:16), instead of finding God's wrath and judgment of sin, for their sins have already been judged by the blood of Christ. That is why, when Jesus died, the veil in the temple was torn in two, and it was torn from top to bottom, showing that God is the One Who did it (Matthew 27:51). Therefore, Israel, in the tribulation period, should not fear God's wrath, as they know for sure that God will give them eternal life, made sure by His Word and made steadfast by Jesus' sacrifice to atone for their sins. And, both the sacrifice and the priest had to be pure, which was only accomplished by the perfect man, Jesus, dying on the cross, and, Jesus, the perfect high priest "after the order of Melchisedec" (6:20), offering that sacrifice on God's throne as the atonement for the sins of Israel.

7 With chapter 7, the author begins to leave "the first principles of the oracles of God" (5:12) and moves into deeper doctrine, so that they may endure unto the end of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:13) without falling away (6:6). First, he goes into detail about the Melchisedecian priesthood, showing how it is better than the Levitical priesthood. Then, he shows that Jesus is Israel's eternal high priest after the order of Melchisedec (v. 17). Since it is a better priesthood, Jesus also brings about a better covenant (v. 22), whereby He gives eternal life to all those for whom He intercedes (v. 25). Since His sacrifice gives eternal life, He only had to offer it once (v. 27), negating the necessity of animal sacrifices as coverings for sin (vs. 27-28).

7:1 The first detail we are given about Melchisedec is that he is "priest of the most high God" (7:1). Genesis 14:19,22 tells us that the most high God is "possessor of heaven and earth." By contrast, the Levitical priests were the priestly tribe of Israel and then Israel is to be a kingdom of priests to the whole earth in God's kingdom on earth (Exodus 19:5-6). Therefore, we already see that the Melchisedecian priesthood is higher than the Levitical priesthood, since the Levites were only priests of God for the nation of Israel, while the Melchisedecian priests are priests of God for the entire, human race, both those saved today with an eternal promise of heaven and those saved in Israel's program with an eternal promise of earth.

7:2 Since Abraham gave tithes to Melchisedec and Melchisedec blessed Abraham, Melchisedec must be higher than Abraham. He is "King of righteousness," (7:2), when no man is righteous on his own (Romans 3:10 and Psalm 53:1-3). Therefore, Melchisedec is higher than men. He is also "King of peace" (7:2). Since "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus

Christ” (Romans 5:1) and we are given “the gift of righteousness...by one, Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:17), we know that the King of righteousness and peace HAS to be the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is even called “The Prince of Peace” in Isaiah 9:6. Therefore, Melchisedec must be the pre-incarnate Son of God. He also must have present in the covenant God made with Abraham in Genesis 15.

7:3 In case you did not get that, the author specifically tells you that here. Only God is “without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life” (7:3). The only thing “made” on Him was His image or body, and that was “made like unto the Son of God” (7:3).

When God created man, the Son of God already had a body, as Genesis 1:26 says, “Let Us make man in Our image.” When man fell, man needed a priest between God and man that had to be both God and man so that He could mediate between them. Therefore, a body was made, the Son of God entered that body, and He became Melchisedec, God’s priest forever. He is “made like unto the Son of God” (7:3), because His body portrays God’s likeness. It is my opinion that Melchisedec was made before God created man, and it is that image that is God’s image, and it was not until He was born of Mary that He took on the seed of the woman so that He could save mankind.

7:4 Thus, we have seen “how great this man was” (7:4), being the pre-incarnate Son of God. Abraham must have had knowledge of this, since he recognized Melchisedec as the priest of the Most High God by giving him “the tenth of the spoils” (7:4).

7:5-6 Israel was supposed to be “a kingdom of priests” to the Gentiles (Exodus 19:5-6). Why, then, would God establish a Levitical priesthood on top of that? The reason is because of Israel’s sin. While Moses was on Mount Sinai, receiving the law from the Lord, Israel was making golden calves and worshipping them. This incurred God’s wrath, such that God told Moses, “Let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation” (Exodus 32:10). Instead of doing this, Moses said, “Who is on the Lord’s side?” The people, who responded to Moses’ call, were the Levites (Exodus 32:26). They stepped between God and Israel, such that only 3,000 were killed (Exodus 32:28). Thus, God established the Levitical priesthood as a mediator between God and Israel so that, when Israel sinned, they could intervene for Israel so that God did not completely destroy the nation of Israel.

Therefore, the Levitical priesthood was meant to keep Israel from being destroyed, while the Melchisedecian priesthood gives Israel life. Thus, we now start to see the inferiority of the Levitical priesthood to the Melchisedecian priesthood. This is represented here in the fact that the Levites take tithes from the other 11 tribes of Israel, and they were descendents of Abraham.

Thus, the Levites are below Abraham. Melchisedec, by contrast, is higher than Abraham, because Abraham paid him tithes.

7:7 Melchisedec is also higher than Abraham, because he blessed Abraham, and the blesser has to be higher than the blessee. Abraham was the highest ranking man on the earth at the time, because he “had the promises” (7:6) of eternal life, the land, and ruling in the kingdom. Therefore, for Melchisedec to be higher than Abraham, he had to be from heaven.

7:8 Here, we see that the Levites are men, and Melchisedec is the Son of God. As men, the Levites die. As God, Melchisedec lives forever. This is another reason why Melchisedec is higher than Levi.

7:9-10 We, again, see that the Melchisedecian priesthood is higher than the Levitical priesthood, because the Levitical priests paid tithes to Melchisedec through Abraham’s paying tithes to him, since Levi came from Abraham.

7:11 Therefore, we see, in these first, 10 verses, how the Melchisedecian priesthood is greater than the Levitical priesthood. This is a hard truth for Israel to believe. Israel thinks they will be ruling in God’s kingdom just because they are Jews and follow their religion (John 8:33,39; Galatians 1:14). They think they are great because of their own works (Luke 18:11-12). However, God says that their righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). God says that no one does good (Psalm 53:1-3); there is no one righteous (Romans 3:10-11). “The law is holy,... but I am carnal, sold under sin” (Romans 7:12,14). Even if they are blameless under the law, as Paul was (Philippians 3:6), God’s righteousness does not come “by the Levitical priesthood” because that priesthood is not perfect (7:11). Therefore, “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins” (10:4).

Paul was blameless under the law. Therefore, he had that righteousness (Philippians 3:6), but that righteousness was as filthy rags, because no one kept the law perfectly. Therefore, he gave up that righteousness for “the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Philippians 3:9). That is what the writer of Hebrews is trying to get apostate Israel to do. They have the Old Testament scripture, which shows they need God’s imputed righteousness, and they do not believe it. He now shows them that the whole law system, even if you follow it, will not get you into the kingdom in itself, because no one follows it perfectly.

Therefore, God set up a higher priesthood, the Melchisedecian priesthood, so that Israel may get into the kingdom. The Levitical priests could slay animal left and right, but they would not atone for sins (10:4). Therefore, perfection does not come by the Levitical priesthood. Therefore, God had to set up a higher priesthood, the Melchisedecian priesthood, that would bring perfection for those under that system, which are those who have faith in God’s Word to them, which means just being born a Jew does not mean you

are saved, because Jews are born under Levi, not under Melchisedec. They must be “born again” (John 3:3) by having faith in God’s Word to them, which includes being water baptized. Thus, they must “be born of water and of the Spirit” in order to “enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). Then, they are saved under the Melchisedecian priesthood system, which is a priesthood of faith.

7:12-13 The Levitical priesthood represents “the law of sin and death.” The Melchisedecian priesthood represents “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:2; II Corinthians 3:7-8). Therefore, since the Melchisedecian priesthood is a different system, there is a different law of who qualifies. This means that Jesus needed to be a heavenly priest and did not have to come from the tribe of Levi.

7:14 Jesus came from the tribe of Judah (Matthew 1:2,16). Micah 5:2 tells the Hebrews that He would come from Judah, and that His “goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.” Therefore, even prophecy says the Messiah would be God. Genesis 49:10 also shows that the Messiah will come from Judah. Thus, “it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah” (7:14), and the law of Moses spoke nothing of priests coming from Judah. Therefore, the Melchisedecian priesthood is above the law of Moses.

7:15-17 The reason the writer says “it is yet far more evident” (7:15) that another Melchisedecian priest would arise than it is evident that the Lord sprang out of Judah is that the Levitical priesthood could not take away sin. Therefore, to fulfill the promises that God made to Israel, He would have to bring a higher priest, Who would take away their sin. If the Hebrews had faith in the Old Testament, it would have been clear that they needed to be looking for a higher priest to come than just a Levitical priest.

7:16 tells us of the Melchisedecian priesthood’s higher authority, because the Levitical was made out of the law and is carnal in the sense that it pertains to laws that govern the flesh (9:10). The Melchisedecian priesthood, however, came from God, because He is without “beginning of days [or] end of life” (7:3). Therefore, the Melchisedecian priesthood is “after the power of an endless life” (7:16). The Levitical priesthood is also a carnal priesthood in that it purified the sins of the flesh (9:13), while the Melchisedecian priesthood is a spiritual priesthood in that it purges the soul of sin (9:14).

Since Melchisedec was the pre-incarnate Son of God and Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, you may wonder what is the difference between the two. The difference is that Melchisedec was “made like unto the Son of God” (7:3), while Jesus “was made in the likeness of man” (Philippians 2:7), which is “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Romans 8:3). Therefore, the difference is the flesh. Melchisedec’s flesh was not in a fallen state. It was clothed with light (Psalm 104:1-2). Jesus’ flesh looked like man’s fallen flesh. Of course, after the resurrection, Jesus got His glorified body, which was clothed with light, which is why believers had trouble recognizing Him as Jesus (John

21:4). But, He still has the nail prints in His feet and hands from the cross (John 20:27). Thus, this shows that Jesus is the eternal priest after the order of Melchisedec, as He is both the priest and the sacrifice that He offered for sins, as the writer will tell us in 7:27.

7:18 The commandment of the Levitical priesthood comes from the old covenant. The Melchisedecian priesthood is from the new covenant (7:22). Now, many of the old-covenant laws do go forward into the new covenant. However, the Levitical priesthood is weak and unprofitable in the sense that it cannot take away sins (10:4). Therefore, it is “weak and beggarly” (Galatians 4:9) and is disannulled with Jesus taking His place as the final Melchisedecian priest.

7:19 The law is holy, just, and good (Romans 7:12), but it is powerless to make anyone holy, just, and good. Rather, it does the opposite, causing us to sin more (Romans 7:9-10). By setting up the perfect standard, it shows how imperfect we are and magnifies our imperfection.

The “better hope” is eternal life in God’s kingdom on earth. This is made possible by Jesus’ being made a curse under the law for Israel (Galatians 3:13 & Deuteronomy 21:23), so that they may “draw nigh unto God” through the blood of Christ (7:19). Now that that better hope is come, there is no need to offer animal sacrifices as atonement for sin (10:11-14).

7:20-21 Another way that the Melchisedecian priesthood is better than the Levitical priesthood is that God swore an oath when He made Jesus the high priest, as Psalm 110:4 says, “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent.” When God established the Levitical priesthood, He did not make an oath (Leviticus 8). Remember from 6:17-18 that, God cannot lie, and His name is Holy, Holy, Holy. Therefore, when God swears an oath, it is sure by those “two immutable things.” This means that it is impossible for the Lord Jesus Christ not to be an eternal priest to intercede for the sins of His people (7:25).

7:22 The writer of Hebrews has now shown that “by so much was Jesus made a surety” (7:22), meaning that Jesus’ higher order of priesthood, and all that surrounds it, makes it even more of a guarantee that God will fulfill His promises to the nation of Israel. Furthermore, He is “a surety of a better testament” (7:22), meaning that the new covenant is better than the old covenant. Now, that is not to say that the old covenant was replaced with Jesus’ death on the cross.

The new covenant is not realized by Israel until God puts His law in their hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-34) and causes them to walk in His commandments (Ezekiel 36:27) That does not take place until God forgives Israel of their sins (Jeremiah 31:34), which does not happen until Jesus’ second coming (Acts 3:19-20). Therefore, the old covenant continues, and Israel should be “zealous of the law” (Acts 21:20) under the old covenant until then, because

they do not have forgiveness of sins yet. However, Jesus' death, resurrection, and Melchisedecian priesthood are all surety or guarantees that God will bring about "a better testament" (7:22) or a new covenant to Israel at His second coming, which is after the tribulation period is over. Thus, the new covenant is still future and has not been realized today. In the dispensation of grace, we have our own surety or seal that God will give us eternal life in heavenly places with Him. That seal is the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30).

7:23-24 Again, we see Jesus' priesthood is better, because He never dies, but continues as the high priest forever. The Levitical priests, by contrast, since they are all men, all die and have to be replaced by more men, who will also die.

7:25 The Levitical priests could not give eternal life, because they died themselves (7:23). Jesus Christ, as the Melchisedecian priest, lives forever. Therefore, His intercession for them to God the Father is also forever.

Now, when it comes to saving "to the uttermost" (7:25), most people think that means He saves them to the end of time. While that is true, the term "uttermost," in regards to Israel's program, refers to God saving all of Israel, even if they are geographically located far from Jerusalem. Nehemiah 1:8-9 says, "if ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: But if ye turn unto Me, and keep My commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set My name there." Then, Mark 13:27 says that, when the Son of man comes, He will gather His elect from the uttermost part of earth and heaven. Therefore, saved "to the uttermost" means that all Hebrews, even those living in far-away countries, such as the United States, can rest assured that, if they believe the gospel of the kingdom, God will bring them into the kingdom.

7:26 Jesus is the Son of God. As such, He is everything mentioned in this verse, and He wants Israel to have these characteristics, too. Therefore, he "became us" (7:26), meaning that He became a Jewish man, so that Israel could be holy, harmless, undefiled, etc. (7:26). The Son of God had to become the Son of man so that He could be the mediator between God and man, giving to man, who comes to Him by faith, the things of God. This role, as mediator, explains why the doctrine of universal salvation is heresy. God stands ready to give eternal life to all who believe (Romans 3:22), but, if they do not believe, they never come to the mediation. Therefore, there is no reconciliation between God and man, when man does not come to be reconciled to God. If man stays away, then man is not reconciled to God. Therefore, the offer of eternal life is "unto all," but it is only "upon all them that believe" (Romans 3:22).

There are three people/groups of which the term “harmless” is used: 1) The Melchisedecian priest, 2) The believing remnant of Israel (Matthew 10:16), and 3) The Body of Christ (Philippians 2:15). Both Israel and the Body of Christ are said to be harmless in contrast to the wickedness surrounding them. Thus, faithfulness is a good synonym here for harmless.

7:27-28 The Levitical high priests sinned every day, just like all other men. Therefore, when they went to offer up sacrifices for Israel, they could not offer themselves as the sacrifice, as God would not accept it since it was not pure. So, they had to offer up an animal sacrifice for their own sins first (Leviticus 4:3). This sacrifice was only a covering of sin, pertaining to the ordinances under the law covenant (9:9-10); it did not take away sins (10:4). Therefore, the sacrifice, that the Levitical priest made for himself, only cleansed him ceremonially so that he could offer the same ceremonial sacrifice for the sins of the people. Since it did not take away sins, the high priest could not offer atonement for sins, and he had to offer sacrifices daily, both for himself and for Israel, just so Israel could have that covering and remain in communication with God.

For example, when Achan sinned (Joshua 7:1), Israel lost the battle (Joshua 7:4-5), but God could not communicate with Israel because they did not have a covering for sin yet. Therefore, the people had to be sanctified with an animal sacrifice first (Joshua 7:13). THEN, God showed up and revealed the sin to them (Joshua 7:16-18). This is the limitation of the Levitical priesthood. “the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity” (7:28).

By contrast, since Jesus is a sinless man, when He died on the cross, He was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens” (7:26). Therefore, when He went to the cross, He WAS the sacrifice. He was “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). His blood was pure, and it takes away sin because only pure, human blood can atone for humans. Since His blood takes away sin “once for all” (10:10), He only had to offer His sacrifice once, and His own, shed blood atones for the sins of all who have faith in Him. So, the Son of God is pure, which means He can enter the holy of holies in heaven as high priest, and His sacrifice for sins is also pure, which means it will be accepted by God as an atonement for sins. Therefore, with both being pure, God’s wrath is appeased, and there is no more need for sacrifices for sins.

8 In verses 1-6, the writer tells the Hebrews that the old law, priesthood, and covenant were just an “example and shadow” (v. 5) “of a better covenant” (v. 6) to come. He quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 to show that even the Hebrew scriptures prophesy of a new covenant to come for ISRAEL (vs. 7-12). God is ready to give them that new covenant, as the old is ready to vanish away (v. 13). The only thing stopping Israel from entering into that new covenant is their lack of faith in God’s Word to them (3:19).

8:1-2 The summary of chapter 7 is that the Levitical priesthood is an inferior type of the true priesthood—the Melchisedecian priesthood—that God set up in heaven so that He Himself could mediate between God and man with the man, Christ Jesus, and give man eternal life with Him forever. The Levitical priesthood was just set up to: 1) Show man the need for a Saviour and a higher priesthood, and 2) Give Israel a type so that it would be easier for them to understand the true, Melchisedecian priesthood in heaven. Therefore, the Jewish tabernacle on earth is not the true tabernacle either, but it is a type of “the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (8:2). Therefore, the true priesthood and tabernacle are in heaven.

The fact that Jesus is sitting down at the right hand of God the Father in 8:1 tells us that the book of Hebrews had to have been written before Acts 7, because Jesus stood up at that time (Acts 7:55-56), putting Israel’s prophecy program on hold and beginning today’s dispensation of grace. The author wrote chapter 7 to get Israel away from putting their trust in the Levitical system to save them and having faith in God’s promise to them to save them instead.

We should also note that anthropomorphism is a lie of the devil! Anthropomorphism is a theological term. The theory goes that, since “God is a Spirit” (John 4:24), He does not have arms, legs, eyes, and everything else that a body has. However, the Bible acts as if God does have those things. For example, Exodus 6:6 says that God will redeem Israel “with a stretched out arm.” So, theologians come along and say that such language is a figure of speech, whereby God appears to have bodily characteristics, even though He does not have a body, so that you can understand, from man’s perspective, what He is doing. This figure of speech is called anthropomorphism.

However, Genesis 1:26 says that God has an image. According to Colossians 1:13-15, the Lord Jesus Christ “is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” Therefore, we must conclude that God does, in fact, have a body. Therefore, when He refers to things that a body can do, it means that the Lord Jesus Christ is doing those things. By saying that anthropomorphism is true, man is saying that God is not really God, because He cannot do some of the things that man can do, because He does not have a body!

Thus, anthropomorphism is a lie of the devil that was created to limit God. How is it, then, that those, believing in right division, are accused of limiting God, when all we are doing is believing God’s Word, yet those same people, who accuse us of limiting God, are the true limiters of God, because they do not even think God could pitch a tabernacle, as claimed here in 8:2? If the Lord could not pitch a tabernacle because He does not have a body, then He could not function as a high priest. Therefore, even though Jesus had a physical body while on earth, He could never present His shed blood as a sacrifice in the heavenly temple, because He could not build a heavenly

temple since He does not have a body. Therefore, all of mankind's sins are left unatoned! This shows how crazy the theory of anthropomorphism is. It also does great damage by getting people not to take God's Word literally.

8:3 People sometimes have the idea that the things in heaven are not real. They think of them as just abstract things and concepts, floating in outer space. Therefore, Jesus' being high priest in heaven may not seem real, compared to the Levitical priesthood, but nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the author has shown that the opposite is true. What is real is in heaven, and God made inferior types on the earth, e.g., the Levitical priesthood and the tabernacle, in order to give us an idea of what reality (in heaven) really is (see 11:1-3; Colossians 2:16-17; Matthew 24:35). Therefore, when you are told in Revelation that someone is "like" something, the real thing is what is in heaven, while the thing on earth is a type of what is in heaven so that your mind can comprehend what the real thing is like. The reason, then, that God did not put any pictures in the Bible is because He put the pictures all around you in his creation on earth.

With that in mind, since we know that "every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices" (8:3), we know that the things Jesus offers, as high priest in heaven, are way better than the things offered by the Levitical priests on earth. In fact, the reason, that Jesus is not a Levitical priesthood, is because He is overqualified for the position. You would not make a janitor out of the CEO of a company. Similarly, God did not make the Melchisedecian priest into a Levitical priest.

8:4 The Hebrews naturally revered Levitical priests higher than they did people of the other tribes. The author of Hebrews has demonstrated that, even though Christ is of the tribe of Judah, He is to be revered above all Levitical priests because He is the Melchisedecian high priest. In fact, God purposely made Him come out of a different tribe just so the Hebrews would not lower His priesthood to that of the earth—the Levitical priesthood.

8:5 As we mentioned in 8:3, the tabernacle and the priesthood under the law only "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (8:5), as the writer also says in 10:1. Since they are a type, it was important for Moses to make the tabernacle exactly like the one in heaven. That is what God told Moses in Exodus 25:40. That is also why God goes into great detail as to how the tabernacle is to be built, covering 5 chapters (Exodus 25-28, 30), fills someone with the Holy Spirit to make sure it is done perfectly (Exodus 31:2-3), and spends 4 more chapters, giving the detail of the tabernacle actually being built (Exodus 36-39).

8:6 Apostate Israel is trusting in their own works of righteousness to make it into the kingdom (Romans 9:32-33), because they think that the law covenant is something great. While it is something great, because it is the oracles of God (5:12), the new covenant that Jesus brings to Israel is so much better. Jesus has "a more excellent ministry" because "He is the

mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises” (8:6).

With regard to Jesus’ “more excellent ministry,” the old covenant’s ministration was of death and condemnation, while the new covenant’s ministration is of the spirit and righteousness (II Corinthians 3:6-9). With regard to the new being a “better covenant,” it is better because the old was conditional upon man’s performance (Exodus 19:5-6), while the new is conditional upon God’s performance (Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:24-28). With regard to the new containing “better promises,” the old covenant contains many curses (Deuteronomy 27:14-29:1), while the new covenant contains many blessings (Ezekiel 36:24-38).

In other words, the new covenant brings eternal life to all those in Israel with faith in what God has told them. The law covenant only showed Israel of their sins, leaving them feeling guilty (10:3), which they were, to point them to the promises of a new covenant. Therefore, God’s old covenant with Israel was only put in place so that Israel might, by faith, put themselves under God’s new covenant with them.

8:7 God’s promise of a new covenant with Israel (Jeremiah 31:31-34) shows to them that the old covenant could not give them eternal life in the kingdom, dwelling in the Promised Land.

8:8-12 Note that the reason that the old covenant could not bring Israel into the kingdom is because God found “fault with THEM” (8:8; See 3:8-11,17-19). It is because of Israel’s failure to keep the old, law covenant that God promised to bring about His promises to them with a new, LAW covenant. This promise is found in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and is quoted here, as well.

Christians, who think that the new covenant is between God and them today, need look no further than these verses right here. The covenant is “with the house of ISRAEL and with the house of JUDAH” (8:8). It could not be any more clear than that! In fact, just after talking of the new covenant in Ezekiel 36, chapter 37 goes on to say that God will take the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah and make them one, united kingdom (Ezekiel 37:19-22) with David as their king forever (Ezekiel 37:24). (Sorry, Mormons, but this is not being fulfilled today in your church.)

Verse 9 tells you why God made the law covenant with Israel. Originally, God told Abram that He would give him the Promised Land (Genesis 15:7). Abram asked “whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” (Genesis 15:8). So, “the Lord made a covenant with Abram,” regarding the land (Genesis 15:18-21), and it was an unconditional covenant, because only God passed through the sacrifice, not Abram (Genesis 15:9-16). So, when “the iniquity of the Amorites [became] full” (Genesis 15:16), God brought Israel out of Egypt

to bring them into the Promised Land. However, unlike Abram (Genesis 15:6), Israel did not believe God.

Before they left Egypt, God said He would give them the land (Exodus 13:5,11). At the Red Sea, Israel said God brought them out to kill them (Exodus 14:10-11). In the wilderness, Israel said God brought them into the wilderness to kill them (Exodus 16:2-3). Again, in Exodus 17:3, we see them saying the same thing. Galatians 3:23-25 says that the law is our schoolmaster until faith comes. Since Israel had no faith in God's unconditional covenant to Abram to give Israel the land of the Canaanites, God had to give them a schoolmaster. Thus, He gave them the law. Therefore, "because they continued not in My covenant" (8:9), i.e., the covenant God made with Abram, God made the law covenant with the generation He brought out of Egypt (Exodus 19:5-6; Exodus 20-23).

Therefore, Hebrews 8:9 is saying that God "regarded them not" worthy to enter into the land because of their unbelief (3:19). Therefore, He gave them the law covenant (8:9), but that one will be replaced with a new covenant, because God found "fault with them" (8:8) under the old covenant, since they could not obey the law. Because the law is our schoolmaster until faith comes (Galatians 3:23-25), the new covenant will not start until faith has come in Israel. That takes place at the end of the tribulation period, after God has purged Israel through the fiery trials of the tribulation period (Malachi 3:2-3). "THEN shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord" (Malachi 3:4), because it will be an offering of faith.

Note how verse 9 says that God made the law covenant with them when He "took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt." So steeped was Israel in their unbelief that God had to drag them out of Egypt, kicking and screaming. This is not unlike Lot and his family, when God had to take their hands and set them outside Sodom and Gomorrah so that they would be spared death (Genesis 19:16). Therefore, Israel was acting like a bunch of children. That is why the King James Version uses the term "children of Israel" 604 times! That term is only found once in the Living Bible and the New American Standard Bible, and it is found zero times in the New International Version and the New Living Translation, which shows that it can be difficult to learn sound doctrine in a modern version.

"After those days" of 8:10, then, are the days of purification when "all Israel shall be saved" when God turns away their ungodliness through the tribulation period (Romans 11:26). Thus, at Jesus' second coming, He will "gather the lambs [Israel] with his arm, and carry them in His bosom" (Isaiah 40:11) to Zion to give them the new covenant. (He cannot do this if anthropomorphism is true!) Thus, the new covenant is a combination of the Genesis 15 and the Exodus 20 covenants. Because Israel will finally have the faith of the first covenant (Genesis 15), God will give them the ability to perform the provisions of the second covenant (the law covenant) by writing His law in their hearts (8:10). Then, they will be a people to their God.

Under the law covenant, Israel was the one to write the law for people to see (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; 11:18-20). Now, under the new covenant, God is the One Who writes the law IN them so that they will obey it. Therefore, they will not need to “teach every man his neighbour...[to] know the Lord” (8:11). All of Israel will instinctively know the Lord under the new covenant. God gives them righteousness, not because they fulfilled the provisions of the law covenant, but because He is “merciful to their unrighteousness” to remember their sins “no more” (8:12). The way He is merciful is by purging out their impurities by the Great Tribulation period (Malachi 3:2-3). Therefore, God’s spiritual mercy to Israel is His physical wrath against them in tribulation!

Note also from 8:12 that the only way man can know God is by having God forgive his sins, making him righteous. That is why the world, right now, does not know God. When God makes man righteous on the earth in His eternal kingdom, then they will know God. In fact, we are told that the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14). Now, THAT is full knowledge!

We should also note that it takes the knowledge of the Lord in order to eliminate violence, as Isaiah 11:6-9 says that the reason, there is no destruction in the kingdom, is because everyone has the knowledge of the Lord. Contrast this with the Pharisees of Jesus’ day. In referring to them, Jesus said, “the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force” (Matthew 11:12). We see this in them trying to kill the Son of God, because He is the heir of the kingdom (Matthew 21:38-39). Such people appear to have knowledge, but they are “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (II Timothy 3:7). Thus, they are violent.

8:13 “Testament” means covenant (see 7:22). Therefore, the reason Bibles have an Old and a New Testament is because they are looking at the old and new covenants mentioned in this verse. However, that is NOT how God divides scripture. The way to rightly divide “the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15) is to divide it between God’s reconciliation plan for the earth (Genesis – Acts and Hebrews – Revelation) and God’s reconciliation plan for the heaven (Romans – Philemon). Really, a division between old and new covenants cannot be done, as both the books of Hebrews and Jeremiah talk about both covenants. Also, there are no books of the Bible that are specifically devoted to the New Testament or covenant. Hebrews, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other books contain passages that mention the new covenant, but the details are not written down on the pages of scripture for God will write them on the hearts of believers (8:10).

Note from 8:13 that the old covenant is still in effect for Israel. The writer says that, “NOW [the old covenant] is ready to vanish away” (8:13), but it has not vanished away yet. People will say that the new covenant began at

the cross, because 10:16-17 says that “where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead.” Those verses show that Christ’s death was NECESSARY to bring in the new testament, but they do NOT say that the new testament began with His death.

Now, some will bring up II Corinthians 3:6, which says that, today, in the dispensation of grace, God “also hath made us able ministers of the new testament.” However, the context of that passage is giving “the ministration of the spirit” (II Corinthians 3:8), rather than “the ministration of death” (II Corinthians 3:7), which is the law. That is not what is in view in Hebrews.

In Hebrews, we are looking at a new testament God made with Israel, which is to write the law “in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts” (Jeremiah 31:33). This new testament with Israel will not start until God takes away Israel’s sins (8:12), and that does not happen until His second coming (Acts 3:19-20). Also, the new covenant involves God giving Israel His spirit to make sure they obey His law perfectly (Ezekiel 36:27), such that they “cannot sin” (I John 3:9). You do not have to look at a Christian’s life for long to see that he does, in fact, sin. Therefore, we are not under the new covenant today. God’s old and new covenants are with Israel, and they **both** contain the law. Today, after you are saved, “ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Romans 6:14). (We should also note that Israel in early Acts was not under the new covenant, because they still sinned after the Holy Ghost came (Acts 5:1-10 and 6:1). They were in “the last days” of the at-hand phase of the kingdom (Acts 2:16-17).)

Therefore, the “right” division in our Bible is between: 1) Acts and Romans, and 2) Philemon and Hebrews, recognizing that Romans – Philemon are the ONLY books of the Bible written TO us today in the dispensation of grace. Although all of the Bible is FOR us today, only a small portion of it is actually written TO us today (II Timothy 3:16).

8:13 recognizes the “at hand” phase of God’s kingdom on earth for the nation of Israel (Matthew 3:2, 4:17). That offer was for “To day” (Hebrews 3:7), but they did not enter into the kingdom because of their unbelief (3:8-12,19). Therefore, although the old covenant was “ready to vanish away” (8:13), its vanishing away was put on hold until Jesus’ second coming.

9 The writer ended chapter 8, saying that the old covenant is ready to vanish away, being replaced by the new covenant (8:13). The Jewish religion elevated the old covenant to the position of the new covenant. That is, the Jewish religion did not look for a new covenant, thinking that the old covenant would bring them into the kingdom. Therefore, the writer spends chapter 9, showing the inferiority of the old covenant and the superiority of the new covenant. The old covenant was holy (vs. 1-15), but it was only a figure of the new (v. 9). They had no way of coming to God for forgiveness of sins (v. 8). The old covenant only purified the flesh, not the soul (vs. 9-10).

By contrast, the new covenant has Christ as the perfect high priest (v. 11), coming to the perfect, heavenly tabernacle (v. 11), with the perfect sacrifice of His Own blood to atone for their sins (vs. 12-14). His death was necessary to bring about the new covenant (vs. 18-22). Since Christ's sacrifice is a pure, human sacrifice, it only needs to be offered once to atone for the sins of the many in Israel with faith in what God has told them (vs. 23-28).

9:1 Now, since “the first covenant” is “the example and shadow of heavenly things” (8:5), it is a good idea to examine that first covenant to learn about the new covenant. One of the reasons why the old covenant is not as good as the new is because the “ordinances of divine service” were to be performed in “a worldly sanctuary” (9:1).

9:2-3 There were two parts to the worldly tabernacle. The first part was called the holy place, and there were some sacrifices done there. However, the real “holy of holies” was the second part, “which is called the Holiest of all” (9:3).

9:4-5 The holy of holies had the ark of the covenant, which contained 3 items that all show Israel's lack of faith in God: 1) Manna, showing that Israel lived by physical bread, rather than the spiritual bread of faith in God (Matthew 4:4), 2) Aaron's rod that budded, showing that, because Israel did not trust in God, God had to create the Levitical priesthood as a mediator between Israel and God, just to keep God from destroying Israel (Numbers 16:49 and 17:10), and 3) “The tables of the covenant,” showing that God had to give Israel the law because of their lack of faith in God's unconditional promise to them to give them the land.

These three things were to keep Israel from succumbing to the three categories of temptation: 1) Lust of the flesh goes with the manna, as they lusted after meat in the wilderness (Exodus 16:2-3), 2) Lust of the eyes goes with Aaron's rod, as they lusted after a position of authority, and 3) Pride of life goes with the law, as they thought they were righteous on their own, when their own righteousness was as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Therefore, God had to show them their wretchedness by giving them the law (I John 2:16). Thus, the inside of the ark of the covenant showed Israel's lack of faith in God in all 3 areas of temptation, and it showed God's provision to keep from killing them when they sinned in these areas.

The mercy seat covered the ark. That is where the blood of the animal sacrifice was poured. Because it was a holy place, where God would meet man, there were “cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat” (9:5), as a type of the cherubims covering God's throne, keeping sin from entering into God's presence (Ezekiel 1:26-28). The significance and holiness of this is so great that the writer of Hebrews “cannot now speak particularly” about it (9:5). (The Bible says 7 times that the Lord dwells between the cherubims (I Samuel 4:4; II Samuel 6:2; II Kings 19:15; I Chronicles 13:6; Psalm 80:1; Psalm 99:1; Isaiah 37:16).)

But, what the Hebrews need to understand is that the ark contains symbols of Israel's failing in all three areas of temptation. Israel succumbed to the lusts of the flesh, as symbolized by the manna; they succumbed to the lusts of the eyes, as symbolized by Aaron's rod that budded; and they succumbed to the pride of life, as symbolized by the tables of the covenant (9:4). These are what God saw when He looked on Israel. However, when the high priest went into the holy of holies and put the blood of the animal sacrifice upon the mercy seat, the blood covered Israel's sins, such that God did not see their sin, and His wrath was temporarily appeased. However, this was just a temporary solution to a permanent problem, which is why God would bring about a better sacrifice (Jesus Christ) so that He could bring in a better covenant (the new covenant with forgiveness of sins, not just a covering for sin (8:12)).

9:6-7 The veil between the holy place and the holy of holies served as a barrier between God and man. So holy is God that, even coming close to Him, brings upon the danger of being killed if you are unholy. For example, in Exodus 19:10-13, God told Israel to be sanctified and wash their clothes, yet they still could not come close to God. God would appear on the top of the mountain, and, if they so much as touched the border of the mountain, they would die (Exodus 19:12)!

Therefore, in the tabernacle, only the priests would go into the holy place to accomplish "the service of God," i.e., to keep God's wrath from daily coming upon Israel by God seeing the blood of the animal sacrifice, such that He does not go outside the tabernacle to kill them. (The only way unholy man can approach a holy God is through holy blood in between the two (Leviticus 16:29-34).) If Israel went into the holy of holies, that would be like approaching the throne of God directly. Therefore, only the high priest went in there, and he only did it once per year. He would put the blood of the animal sacrifice on the mercy seat to keep God's wrath at bay, and you know he must have gotten out of there as quickly as possible, lest God see an impurity in him, and he be killed on the spot! To prevent this from happening, he not only offered a sacrifice for the people, but he also offered a sacrifice for himself so that his sin would be covered long enough for him to offer a sacrifice for the people. Therefore, the idea of boldly approaching unto God's throne (4:16) under the law covenant was, not only laughable, but also deadly!

9:8 By setting up the Levitical priesthood system and the sacrifices associated with it, the Holy Ghost was "signifying that the way to the holiest of all was not yet made manifest" (9:8). Not only could Israel not approach God directly, but they also did not even see a way for this to be possible in the future. The way was not made manifest until Jesus' first coming, when Jesus said, "I am the way....No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). Therefore, we see that, when people say that the gospel has always been to believe in Jesus' death as atonement for sins, they are

ignoring scripture, for scripture clearly says that those living in the Old Testament did not even know the way to the Father (I Peter 1:9-12). In fact, the 12 disciples admit as much in John 14:5, when Thomas said, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?" They just had to have faith in the law system that God provided for them at the time, figuring that God would work it out somehow. Granted, they could tell from Old Testament scriptures that the Messiah would be their sacrifice for sins, although very few understood that, but they did not know how that sacrifice would be presented to the Father. By saying, "I am the way" (John 14:6), Jesus revealed that He, as the Son of God, is the eternal Melchisedecian priest. Therefore, Jesus Christ was literally God's secret weapon.

9:9-10 Therefore, the first tabernacle and the Levitical sacrificial system under the law were only "a figure for the time then present" (9:9). They did the job of appeasing God's wrath when He saw the blood of the appropriate animal sacrifice, but they did nothing to change the fallen condition of man. The animal sacrifices stood to cover Israel's sins, as pertaining to the law God gave Israel, which the writer calls, here, "carnal ordinances" (9:10).

However, the sin nature remained intact, and God gave the conscience, i.e., the knowledge of good and evil, to show man his sin nature and the sins committed as a result of that. Since that is outside the law system, the animal sacrifices under the law did nothing to make Israel "perfect, as pertaining to the conscience" (9:9). That is why, even if Israel obeyed the Mosaic law and brought the sacrifices God told them to bring, they still could not see the way to the Father, because they were still sinners, who had fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), and they still deserved death as their wages of sin (Romans 6:23). Therefore, this old-covenant system was only in place "until the time of reformation" (9:10), which was when Jesus died on the cross.

9:11 That time of reformation came with the coming of Israel's Messiah, the Christ. Christ is the way to the Father. Therefore, he came as "an high priest" (9:11) of the good things to come in the new covenant, which would be everything associated with God's eternal kingdom on earth (11:1-3; Colossians 2:16-17). Since the earthly tabernacle was only a "shadow of heavenly things" (8:5), with the new covenant would come "a greater and more perfect tabernacle," one from heaven, made by God, "not made with hands" (9:11).

9:12 Not only is Christ a better high priest of a better tabernacle (9:11), but He also brought a better sacrifice. The law required that "life shall go for life" (Deuteronomy 19:21). God breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). He did not do this with animals, which means that humans are a higher class of creation than animals are. In fact, God gave man dominion over the animals (Genesis 1:28). Since "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), man must die for man's sins. Therefore, Jesus did not bring "the blood of goats and calves," but He brought "His

Own blood” (9:12). He only had to die once, because His blood met all of the requirements under the law of a kinsmen redeemer. Therefore, He only had to enter “in once into the holy place” in order to obtain “eternal redemption for us” (9:12). The perfect sacrifice means perfect redemption. Therefore, He “needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice” (7:27).

9:13-14 The fundamental difference between the old and new covenants is seen here. “The blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer” (9:13) did purify the flesh. But that is all they did; they did not “take away sins” (10:4). Since “in my flesh dwelleth no good thing” (Romans 7:18), the Levitical priests had to offer sacrifices every, single day for both their own sins and the sins of the people (7:27). However, since Christ is the perfect sacrifice for man—“the Lamb of God”—His sacrifice “taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Therefore, His sacrifice purges “your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (9:14). Therefore, Christ’s sacrifice purges both the flesh and the soul, when the Levitical sacrifices purged only the flesh (9:9).

We should note that, for the Hebrews, as part of God’s prophecy dispensation, this purging of their conscience to serve the living God does not happen until His second coming. Note that the verse says that the blood of Christ SHALL purge their conscience (9:14). This is a future event. This happens when they receive forgiveness of sins when the blood of Christ is applied to their souls at His second coming (Acts 3:19-20).

By contrast, in today’s grace dispensation, we have NOW been justified by His blood (Romans 5:9), so that we have NOW received the atonement (Romans 5:11). Therefore, He has already purified us and made our souls “zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). But, the point of Hebrews 9:13-14 is that Christ’s blood does what the blood of animals could not do, and that is give them forgiveness of sins, which happens for Israel when the new covenant goes in force, of which covenant the writer will now speak.

Also, note that Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross involves all three members of the Trinity. “The eternal Spirit” is the Holy Spirit, “God” is God the Father, and “the living God” is God the Son. John 7:38-39 says that the Holy Spirit is the rivers of living water that flows from a believer’s belly. John 19:34 says that, when a soldier pierced Jesus’ side, “forthwith came there out blood and water.” The water, then is the Holy Spirit, and He is with the blood in Christ’s sacrifice so that the blood is offered “without spot to God.” (So that Israel would know this happened, Jesus cried from the cross: “Into Thy hands I commend My spirit” (Luke 23:46).) Christ’s blood then purges the conscience to allow the believer to serve Christ, the living God.

Finally, note that believing Israel’s conscience is purged “from DEAD works.” These would be the “works of the law” (Galatians 2:16), which is why no flesh is justified by those works. However, Israel IS justified by the works of faith, as stated in James 2:21-25.

9:15 Because the perfect sacrifice has come along (9:14), Jesus Christ was ordained by the Father as the eternal Melchisedecian priest (5:6; 7:17; 7:21; and Psalm 110:4) so that He could be the mediator of the new covenant between God and Israel, which will ultimately be extended to the Gentiles on earth, after Jesus' millennial reign. Thus, "by means of [His] death," Christ, as the Melchisedecian priest, redeems Israel from the transgressions they committed under the law covenant, giving them "the promise of eternal inheritance" (9:15). Note that it is a promise. Israel does not receive eternal life until Jesus' second coming. By contrast, in the dispensation of grace, we are already heirs of God through Christ (Galatians 4:7), having already been blessed "with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

We should comment on the term, "called," that is used here. "Called" does not mean that God predestinates who gets into the kingdom and who does not. It cannot mean that because II Peter 3:9 says that God is "not willing that any should perish." So, if God does not want anyone to perish yet He predestinates some people to perish, that would make the law of predestination "God" over God, because God, in spite of His will for all men to be saved (I Timothy 2:4), could not overcome the law of predestination, and He would be forced, by the law, to send people to hell. If that is the case, God is not God. Therefore, the "called" simply refers to those, who choose, by their own free will, to be saved. They are then "called" as the true "Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16), and that is how "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26), even though most physical Jews will perish. In other words, God has called the Israel of God to be saved, and it is up to each, individual Jew to decide whether he will join that called group or not.

Finally, we should note that, although 9:15 says that God redeems Israel's transgressions under the law, the overriding issue is them having faith in what God has told them, because "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). Therefore, those entering into God's rest are only those who have faith in God (3:19; 4:3).

9:16-17 From these verses, we can see that a testament is not an ordinary contract. Rather, it is a will. If I make a will, no one receives the promises in that will until after I have died. Similarly, God made the new testament with Israel, which means that the Christ had to die in order for Israel to receive their eternal inheritance. Yet, they still have not received that inheritance yet. The reason is because Israel are still children (Luke 1:16). It is only at Jesus' second coming that they are considered adults and "inherit all things" (Revelation 21:7). By contrast, in the dispensation of grace, we have already been adopted by God as adult sons, which means that we have now received our inheritance (Galatians 4:5-7).

9:18-20 The author references Exodus 24:7-8, where, upon agreeing to obey the law covenant, both Israel and the law were sprinkled with blood.

9:20 is a quote of Exodus 24:8. This shows that blood is necessary to seal a testament. Since the Old Testament had to do with the flesh, the death of the flesh of animals sufficed to meet the death-of-the-testator requirement (9:16). Since the New Testament involves taking away sins, the death of mere flesh will not suffice. The death of the soul was required as well, which is why a better sacrifice is required for a better covenant. Therefore, the Christ had to die to bring in the new covenant. This also explains why “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (10:4). Christ’s flesh and soul had to die, as we see him saying in Psalm 16:10: “Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell.” “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6).

We should also note that, what Moses said about the Old Covenant in 9:20, is just what Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 26:28 about the new covenant, as well, showing that blood has to be shed for a testament to take effect. And, not just any blood, but the blood must be adequate to bring about the promises of the testament. Animal blood was able to purify the flesh under the old covenant, and Christ’s blood is able to purify the soul under the new covenant.

By the way, that is why saints of the Old Testament did not go to heaven, but had to be in Abraham’s bosom (Luke 16:22-23), waiting for the shed blood of Christ to redeem them from being Satan’s lawful captive (Isaiah 49:24-25). That is why Ephesians 4:8 says that Jesus “led captivity captive.”

Three things were used by Moses to ratify the old covenant. Water was used, because it cleanses the flesh. Scarlet wool was used to show sins being washed away (Isaiah 1:18). Hyssop was used to apply the blood (Exodus 12:22).

9:21 Note that God also sprinkled with blood the tabernacle, the vessels, and the book of the law. Because unholy man touched those things, they were impure and had to be covered with the blood. Sin is like a contagious disease; it spreads to all those touched by it.

9:22-23 Because there is no remission without the shedding of blood, the things, pertaining to the old covenant, were sprinkled with the blood of the testament. Remember that the things of the old covenant are just “patterns of things in the heavens” (9:23). Well, if the patterns are purified with animal sacrifices, the real things in heaven must be purified with a human sacrifice. Since the animal sacrifice had to be “without spot, wherein is no blemish” (Numbers 19:2), the human sacrifice in heaven had to be without spot or blemish, too. This means that only Christ’s sacrifice would do.

Under the old covenant, the blood was sprinkled upon the people so that the covenant would be between them and God (9:19-20). So, where is the blood sprinkled for the new covenant? Not only is it sprinkled on the “things in the heavens” (9:23), but it is also sprinkled on the hearts of believers (10:22).

Saved Israel's robes are also washed in the Lamb's blood (Revelation 7:14 and 19:8).

9:24 Again, the emphasis is that Christ is the Melchisedecian priest, not a Levitical priest. Therefore, He did not go into the Levitical tabernacle on earth, but He went into the true tabernacle in heaven. The higher level of purity is required because, instead of just entering into the presence of God's glory, as the Levites did, Jesus entered into the very "presence of God" for Israel (9:24).

An Old Testament example of this is found in the story of Esther. All Jews were sentenced to death (Esther 3:13), just like "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Esther had been away from the king for 30 days, like Jesus had been on earth for 30 years (Esther 4:11). Esther came into the king's presence on the third day (Esther 5:1-2), just like Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. Esther saved Israel from being destroyed because she went into the king's presence (Esther 8:4-8), just like Jesus saved believing Israel from being destroyed because He brought His blood into God's presence.

9:25 He also only had to enter into the holy of holies in the heavenly tabernacle once, because He brought the perfect sacrifice—His pure blood—to atone for all sins—past, present, and future.

9:26 Since Jesus' blood is without spot or blemish, because He lived a life without sin (4:15), he only had to die once to put away sin. This verse says that He did so "in the end of the world," even though the world has continued for another 2,000 years afterward. The reason is because the writer's perspective is Israel's prophecy program. In that program, God said that, when Messiah is killed, there would be 1 week of 7 years left in that program (Daniel 9:24-27), which is the tribulation period. Then, the "god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4), i.e., Satan, will be thrown into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:2-3), after which God will destroy Satan (Revelation 20:10) and bring a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1).

Therefore, when Jesus was killed, there were only 7 years left before the god of this world would be thrown out, and God would take over. Therefore, Christ did come "once in the end of the world" (9:26). This is also why Peter tells Israel that they were in the last days (Acts 2:16-17). However, Israel did not enter into the kingdom because of their unbelief. Therefore, God put Israel's program on hold, and God revealed the mystery program to Paul, which has been going on for the last 2,000 years.

9:27-28 People quote 9:27 to say that all of us must die, and that is true. However, the verse is really here to tell the Hebrews that the Messiah had to die just once to atone for the sins of all of those with faith in what God has told them. In other words, Christ died once, and after that is the judgment.

Therefore, if Israel has faith in what God has told them, God will judge Christ's death as counting as their death, which means that they will enter into eternal life, having never died, because Christ died in their place.

Therefore, this death rule is talking about the soul, not the flesh. All souls must die once because all have sinned (Romans 3:23), and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). But, Christ dies in their place, so that is counted as their death, and they are judged into life. The fact that 9:27 is referring to every man's soul dying explains how people, like Lazarus, could rise from the dead to die again, and how Enoch, Elijah, and members of the body of Christ at the rapture never die physically. If 9:27 was referring to physical death, these cases would make God a liar, since He says, "it is appointed unto men once to die."

In fact, it was Christ's faith in the judgment coming after His death that caused Him to lay down His life willingly. God says that He will give eternal life "to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality" (Romans 2:7). Christ, as a man, is the only One ever to live a life without sin (4:15). So, He laid down His soul (John 10:18), giving up the ghost (Mark 15:37), and He relied upon God's just judgment that God would not leave His soul in hell (Psalm 16:10), but God's justice would give Him eternal life for His life without sin. Since man's soul only dies once, Christ's death can be the propitiation (Romans 3:25), or the death in our place, so that we may have life in His name.

Since Hebrews was written before the mystery was revealed to Paul, the Hebrews are told that the Christ bore "the sins of many" (9:28). "Many" is also used in Isaiah 53:11, where the "many" are defined as "My people" (Isaiah 53:8), which, as we have previously seen, are the Jews with faith in what God told them in the old covenant. We also see, in Matthew 20:28, that He gave "His life a ransom for many." Thus, in Israel's program, He died "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament" (9:15). It is not until the mystery is revealed to Paul that we learn that Christ "gave Himself a ransom for ALL," both Jew AND Gentile, "to be testified in due time" (I Timothy 2:6).

The idea of looking for Him to "appear the second time" (9:28) refers to watching spiritually by obeying God's law covenant and not aligning themselves with the Antichrist. Note the command in Matthew 26:41 for believing Israel to "watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Note also the parable of Matthew 25:1-13. There, we see Israel slumbering (Matthew 25:5), and it is only when a cry goes out that the bridegroom (Jesus) is coming that Israel wakes up to meet Him (Matthew 25:6). If everyone is sleeping, then who gives the cry? The cry is given by the believing remnant, who have been watching for Jesus' second coming (25:13). Thus, if they do not have the spiritual eyes to see what is going on in the tribulation period, they will be deceived into thinking that the Antichrist is the Christ. They will have faith in Satan, not in God. Therefore,

Jesus will say to them, “I know you not” (Matthew 25:12), and they will not enter into God’s kingdom. Therefore, it is only “unto them that look for Him” that He will “appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (9:28). Now, we see why He had to come twice. At His first coming, He had to be “made...sin” (II Corinthians 5:21). Then, with sin put away, He could come a second time and give salvation to the Jews with faith in Him.

10 The law was just “a shadow” of the new covenant to come (vs. 1-4). Therefore, when Jesus came, He came to put away sins with His sacrifice to bring about the new covenant (vs. 5-20). Knowing that Jesus did this, Israel should have faith in God to bring them into the kingdom. They need to keep the faith throughout the tribulation period (vs. 21-25). If they lose faith and take the mark of the beast, they will spend eternity in the lake of fire (vs. 26-31). If they “live by faith” (v. 38) for “a little while” (v. 37), their souls will be saved (v. 39).

10:1 Again, the writer goes back to the old, law covenant to show that it had to be replaced because it cannot take away sins. The law is “a shadow of [the] good things” (10:1) that God will give Israel in the new covenant, because the law could not make Israel perfect.

10:2-3 If the law could have made Israel perfect, they would not have continued to make sin offerings to God. Those sacrifices only cleansed the flesh (9:13), while the soul remained evil. In fact, the sacrifices enhanced the conscience, as, each year, they reminded Israel of their sins. That was the purpose of the law anyway. God gave all men the conscience so that they know they are worthy of death (Romans 1:32) and they sin more (Romans 7:9-11), so that the law would teach them that they need to have faith in God (Galatians 3:24). Because of Israel’s unbelief (3:19), God treated them like children, giving them the Levitical law to enhance their conscience so that they would be more likely to have faith in what God had promised them, as they saw animals sacrificed every year and realized, “I can’t earn eternal life myself. God will have to do it for me.”

10:4 This is the key verse that Israel needs to understand. (Similarly, “the blood of bulls and of goats” could be replaced with “religion,” and it would be a key point for the Christian religion to understand today.) The animal sacrifices could only cleanse Israel’s flesh (9:9-10). “It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (10:4). Therefore, they need to trust, not in the Levitical, sacrificial system, but in God’s promise to give them eternal life in the land. Knowing that this is not accomplished by animal sacrifices, they need to understand that their Messiah had to die as the human sacrifice to take away their sins. They need to trust what God told them that “Messiah [would] be cut off” (Daniel 9:26) “out of the land of the living for the transgression of My people [Israel]” (Isaiah 53:8). Then, they will believe Jesus is the Messiah and will not let the Antichrist fool them into thinking during the tribulation period that he is their Messiah. However, because of Israel’s unbelief, if the tribulation period started

without the interruption of the mystery dispensation, Israel would have been fooled by the Antichrist. Therefore, God set aside the prophecy program to be picked back up after the rapture of the body of Christ, which is the end of the current, mystery dispensation we are living in now.

10:5-7 These verses come from Psalm 40:6-8. In 10:5-7, they are applied to the Messiah. In 10:8-9, they are applied to the nation of Israel. “Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not” (10:6) means that God did not want Jesus to continue the same, Levitical system. Instead, God prepared a body for Him to offer the once-for-all sacrifice of Himself as atonement for sins as a Melchisedecian priest under the new covenant.

Note how “mine ears hast Thou opened” in Psalm 40:6 is replaced with “a body hast Thou prepared Me” in 10:5. God gave Him a body that was born of a virgin so that He would be born without the sin nature. No Levitical priest ever had such a body. Their bodies were prepared for “sacrifice and offering” (10:5), but Jesus’ body was prepared to take away sin as the complete Passover Lamb sacrifice Himself (John 1:29). So, Jesus had a body prepared by God, and God opened His ears to understand what the Old Testament said about the Messiah so that He would fulfill the scripture. Jesus was learning the Old Testament through His daily Bible studies with God the Father (Isaiah 50:4-6), all the way up to the beginning of His ministry at age 30, so that He could fulfill all of the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah at His first coming. People wonder what Christ did before age 30. Now, you know. He was studying and believing God’s Word.

In 10:6, we are told that God “hast had no pleasure” “in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin.” Granted, God did say that those sacrifices should be done out of a heart of faith (Deuteronomy 10:16), and God did say they were a sweet savour to Him (Exodus 29:18,25,41), if they were brought in faith. But, that is only because they were works that went with faith to justify Israel (James 2:24). God did not take pleasure in the sacrifices themselves, because they did not take away sins (10:4). Therefore, God wrote about a time when the Messiah would come, live a perfect life in His sinless body, and do God’s will of giving people eternal life by taking away their sins through the Messiah’s sacrificial death.

10:8-9 10:5-7 has just applied Psalm 40:6-8 to Jesus Christ. Now, most of the quote is repeated in verses 8-9, but the quote is prefaced by “above when He said.” This means that, Psalm 40:6-8 does not just apply to Jesus Christ, but it also applies to the nation of Israel. The Old Testament shows that the Levitical sacrifices, “which are offered by the law” (10:8), had to be taken away, because they would not take away sins (10:4), which means they could not bring about God’s promises to Israel. Therefore, the Messiah came to bring about God’s promises to Israel, which meant taking away the old, Levitical system to establish the new system of forgiveness of sins under the Melchisedecian priesthood. This does not mean that Jesus did away

with the law. It just means that His sacrifice enables God to bring about the new covenant, which still has the law, but it gives Israel the ability to keep the law perfectly by putting the Holy Spirit within them to cause them to walk in the law (Ezekiel 36:26-28).

In summary, God gave the law to all of Israel and said, “Obey it yourself.” They failed in obeying. Jesus Christ obeyed it. Then, God will give the law again to saved Israel, which are the Jews within Israel who recognize their failure to obey by trusting in the gospel of the kingdom to save them. This time, God will obey the law through them. God is able to dwell within them to obey His law, because Jesus Christ’s sacrifice atones for their sins.

In 10:5-7, it is the faith of Christ that does God’s will perfectly. In 10:8-9, it is the faith of Israel, that God will bring them into the kingdom, that puts them under the new covenant so that they do God’s will perfectly in the kingdom.

10:10 It took the holy blood of the man, Jesus Christ, to give forgiveness of sins to Israel. This forgiveness of sins makes them sanctified or holy or set apart for God so that they can be a kingdom of priests to the Gentiles in God’s millennial kingdom on earth (Exodus 19:5-6). And, because Jesus’ blood is holy, His sacrifice is “once for all” (10:10) for those in Israel’s program—both past and future.

10:11-12 Note the inferiority of the Levitical sacrifices. Those sacrifices were offered over and over and over and over again, and, no matter how many animals were slaughtered, those sacrifices “can never take away sins” (10:11). Contrast this with Christ’s sacrifice. He offered one sacrifice—Himself—“for sins for ever” (10:12), and, because His sacrifice takes away the sins of all who believe, past, present, and future, He sat down at the Father’s right hand, showing that His work of atonement was completed. Note also that 10:12 refers to Christ as “this man,” which shows that God had to become man to save man (I Timothy 2:5-6).

10:13 Jesus sat down and waited. He waited for apostate Israel (the tares) and believing Israel (the wheat) “to grow together until the harvest,” i.e., until the tribulation period is over (Matthew 13:30). That is when His enemies are made His footstool, and He burns the tares (apostate Israel) and gathers the wheat into His barn (believing Israel going into God’s kingdom) (Matthew 13:30).

Note that He stays seated at the Father’s right hand until that time (10:13 and Psalm 110:1). Therefore, when Jesus stood up at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:55-56), He was not standing to welcome Stephen into heaven, as Christianity would have you believe. Rather, Israel’s program says that He would stand to judge His enemies (Isaiah 3:13). What happened was that the religious leaders were keeping the little flock from reaching the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ put Israel’s

program on hold, and, instead of pouring God's wrath out upon His enemies, He stood and offered grace and peace to all the world with the mystery dispensation beginning with the apostle Paul in Acts 9.

10:14-17 Israel's perfection and sanctification are two, different things (10:14), but they are both accomplished by Christ's sacrifice. WHEN HE BRINGS IN THE NEW COVENANT, which is at Jesus' second coming, they are perfected. They are perfected by the Lord putting His "laws into their hearts" (10:16) so that they will always do God's law (Ezekiel 36:27). That is why I John 3:9 says that they CANNOT sin. It is an impossibility for Israel to sin under the new covenant. God sanctifies them by remembering their sins no more. Jeremiah 31:33-34 in the Old Testament already told Israel that God would do this for them. Now, the writer of Hebrews says that the way God did this was by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross (10:14). Thus, Hebrews explains what the cross means to Israel. By the way, Jesus' death on the cross does the same for us today, except that we receive the atonement now (Romans 5:11), and we are sanctified now. The other side to this is that we still live in this vile flesh (Philippians 3:21) with its sin nature; therefore, we still sin, even though Jesus has already forgiven us of that future sin. With Israel's program, they do not receive the atonement until Jesus' second coming, and God gives them glorified flesh at that time.

10:18 Again, the fact is established that, since God takes away the sins of Israel by the offering of Jesus' body, "there is no more offering for sin" (10:18).

10:19 What a statement for the Jew! Under the old covenant, only the high priest entered the holiest, and he did so with great fear. The reason is because he would be struck dead by God if he did not do everything he was supposed to do before he went into the holiest. Under the old covenant, in order to avoid dying, the high priest had, among other things, to: 1) Be consecrated and not leave the temple for 7 days (Leviticus 8:31-35), 2) Wear bells (Exodus 28:35), 3) Wash his hands and feet (Exodus 30:20-21), 4) Come in only once per year (Leviticus 16:2 and Hebrews 9:7), and 5) Bring fire, incense, and the blood of the sacrifice (Leviticus 16:12-14). Therefore, he very carefully checked off each item before entering in, so that he would not die.

Now, though, all of Israel may enter the holiest with boldness without doing a thing except believing the gospel of the kingdom, which included water baptism and confession of sins (Matthew 3:6). This boldness comes "by the blood of Jesus" (10:19), because His blood takes away God's wrath, making the throne of God "the throne of grace" (4:16), rather than the throne of wrath.

10:20 Christ's blood is a new way into the holy of holies, because the old way was by the blood of animals. It is also a "living way," because His blood brings eternal life, while the blood of animals brought no remission of sins.

Jesus consecrated this way for Israel through His flesh, that is, by the sacrifice of His body (10:5) to take away sin. The way is “through the veil” (10:20). The barrier between Israel and God was destroyed by Jesus when He offered His blood as atonement for their sins. That is why, when Jesus died, the veil in the temple was torn in two by God (Matthew 27:51). So, Jesus went through the veil with His flesh as the perfect offering to God that consecrated a new and living way for Israel to enter boldly into the very presence of God by the blood of Jesus to receive God’s grace and the promises He had made to Israel.

There are two, common misconceptions about the significance of the veil in the temple being torn in two. First, some Christians think that the tearing of the veil in two in the temple means the distinction between Jew and Gentile is eliminated. That is not true, because they are sent only “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 10:6), and they will “not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come” (Matthew 10:23). Therefore, the believing remnant was not to go to the Gentiles until Jesus’ second coming, meaning that the distinction between Jew and Gentile still exists in Israel’s program. Second, some Christians think the tearing of the veil means that God got rid of the law. Again, this is not true, because we see Jewish believers zealous of the law as late as Acts 21:20, and we see Gentiles going to Jerusalem to learn the law in Jesus’ millennial reign (Isaiah 2:2-3).

What the tearing of the veil in two in the temple really means is that the blood of Christ makes it possible for believing Israel to approach God’s throne, on the basis of that blood, without being struck dead. Now, I have already mentioned that the old covenant remains in effect until Jesus’ second coming. Therefore, believing Israel should continue to obey the Mosaic law, which includes all of the steps of entering the holiest place as before. However, God removes the veil because He is no longer in the temple, due to Israel’s unbelief. In Ezekiel 10:18-19, God’s glory left the temple. In Ezekiel 11:22-23, God’s glory left Jerusalem. In Matthew 23, the Lord is in the temple in the person of Jesus Christ. When He leaves, He says, “YOUR house is left unto you desolate Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, ‘Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord’” (Matthew 23:38-39). This passage tells us that it is not God’s house, but it is religion’s house. This passage also tells us that God will not come back into the temple until His second coming. Therefore, although the old covenant is still in force, God is not in the holiest place on earth, due to Israel’s unbelief. Therefore, there is no danger of Israel being struck dead in the temple, even though they are still under the old covenant.

10:21-22 When Israel has faith in the promises of God, their “hearts [are] sprinkled from an evil conscience” (10:22). Thus, their souls are cleansed by the blood of Jesus. Under the old covenant, Moses sprinkled the blood on the people (9:19). Under the new covenant, God does this by spiritually sprinkling Christ’s blood on the hearts of believers.

When they have faith, they are to be water baptized in order to identify themselves as God's kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:5-6 and 29:4). This is why Israel was required to be water baptized, in addition to having faith, in order to receive the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). Thus, the writer of Hebrews mentions the faith part ("hearts sprinkled"), and the water baptism part ("our bodies washed with pure water") (10:22). Both are required for salvation in Israel's program.

10:23 Having "faith without wavering" (10:23) or a "full assurance of faith" (10:22) is important for Israel at this point in their program because the tribulation period was about to start. They need to know that God "is faithful that promised" (10:23). Otherwise, they will lose their faith when all circumstances indicate that they should bow down to the image of the beast. This bowing down and taking the mark of the beast is probably what is meant by wavering, based upon a reading of James 1:4-10.

10:24-25 Because of the strong deception of the Antichrist, the believing remnant of Israel, especially in the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period, will need to follow these two verses in order to keep faith in what God has promised them. The provoking of fellow believers to have love and good works (10:24) is so that uncommitted Israel, still undecided about the Antichrist, will know that the Antichrist is a liar by seeing the fruits of believing Israel (Matthew 7:16), since only a good tree can bring forth good fruit (Matthew 7:17-18).

The assembling of themselves together (10:25) will help fellow believers by giving them an opportunity to get a break from the world and encourage each other with sound doctrine to endure, much like fellowship with fellow right dividers helps us continue to believe Paul's epistles and deny ungodliness today. It should be noted that the believing remnant were already assembling themselves together in Malachi's day (Malachi 3:16), and they were doing so on a daily basis when the book of Hebrews was written (Acts 2:46).

This assembling of themselves together will help the believing remnant to endure unto the end of the tribulation period in order to be saved (Matthew 24:13), which is why the writer says, "as ye see the day approaching" (10:25), meaning the day of God's wrath at the end of the tribulation period. Jesus gave them signs to look for in Matthew 24, which means that they could "watch" for the day of the Lord (Matthew 16:3 and 24:42). Today, however, in the mystery dispensation, we do not have signs to look for to know when the rapture is coming.

10:26-27 These verses are taken completely out of context by Christians today. They apply the verses directly to themselves, and then they live in fear that they have committed the unpardonable sin. The last phrase of 10:25 tells us that these verses are not written to us today, since there is no way, today, to see the rapture approaching. If you have read the first 10

chapters of Hebrews as a saved person with an objective mind, it is absolutely impossible for you to believe, at this point, that these verses apply to you today in the dispensation of grace. The context is Israel in the tribulation period. Therefore, “the day,” of 10:25, refers to the day of the Lord, which starts at His second coming.

The “sin” of 10:26 must refer to a specific sin, since even saved Israel continues to sin in the tribulation period, because they do not have the new covenant yet (8:10-13). The willful sin, here, must refer to taking the mark of the beast or worshipping his image, since that is the only sin that God specifically says will result in them burning in the lake of fire forever (Revelation 14:9-11).

The Hebrews “have received the knowledge of the truth” (10:26) through the ministry of the believing remnant in Acts 1-7, the writings for the tribulation period (such as the book of Hebrews), and through the ministry of the 2 witnesses in the first half of the tribulation period (Revelation 11:3-12). Therefore, if Israel takes the mark of the beast, they have committed the willful sin that will damn them to hell for all eternity, because they knew the truth, but refused to believe it. They have made a public declaration that they have sided with Satan, proving that they do not have faith in God.

Christ’s sacrifice on the cross only covers sins that are under the law (both of the conscience and of the old covenant), which is everything, except the mark of the beast and worshipping the image. Therefore, if they commit this willful sin, “there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins” (10:26). The Son of God would have to be crucified again for that sin (6:6), and that is not going to happen. Therefore, Jesus will deny them to the Father (Matthew 10:33), and they will go to the lake of fire forever (Revelation 14:9-11). Therefore, they are dead men walking, waiting for the day of the Lord (10:25), when He will give them “judgment and fiery indignation” (10:27). That is why Jesus tells Israel to get out of Jerusalem, when the image of the beast is set up (Matthew 24:15-18), because bowing down to it means eternal damnation. They are not to fear the Antichrist destroying their bodies, but they are to fear God throwing them into the lake of fire (Matthew 10:28). That is the extent of the application of these two verses.

There is no sin today that we can commit to lose our salvation. If there was, God would be a liar, because He says we are “NOW justified by His blood” (Romans 5:9), and “we have NOW received the atonement” (Romans 5:11). God cannot unjustify us or unatone us. It is a done deal, and we are sealed by “the Holy Spirit of God...unto the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:30). Israel’s circumstances, however, are different, because they do not receive the atonement until Jesus’ second coming (Acts 3:19-21).

Since Christ’s sacrifice on the cross covers all sins under the law, even murder and adultery are forgiven, as demonstrated by David (II Samuel 11:3-4, 14-17; Romans 4:6-8). Our deceitful and desperately wicked hearts

(Jeremiah 17:9) say that taking the mark of the beast in order to give food to our families is an honorable thing, while murderers should rot in hell. But, God is pleased with faith (11:6), and so, when someone is in complete unbelief, such that he takes the mark of the beast, he will not be forgiven, while a murderer is forgiven, because that is just the sin nature working out through his flesh (Romans 7:17).

By worshipping the image, people become “adversaries” of God. They are slain by the Word of God at Jesus’ second coming (Revelation 19:13,19-21), and they are thrown into the lake of fire at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:14-15).

10:28-29 The old covenant says that it takes 2 or 3 witnesses to put someone to death for transgressing something in the law covenant for which God says someone should be killed (Deuteronomy 17:6). That was under the old covenant. The new covenant has a better sacrifice, a better high priest, a better temple, and better promises. The result is that it also has a higher level of sin. If a Jew has faith in God’s promises to him, agrees to put himself under the law covenant, and IDENTIFIES HIMSELF PUBLICLY AS A BELIEVER by being water baptized, then he feels the heat from the Antichrist and decides to DENY PUBLICLY THE SON OF GOD by taking the mark of the beast and worshipping his image, he has “trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the [new] covenant...an unholy thing” (10:29). He has also despised “the Spirit of grace,” Who was willing to give him eternal life in God’s kingdom (10:29). And, there are 3 witnesses to this: “the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost” (I John 5:7). Therefore, He has despised the entire Trinity, which is much worse than breaking the Mosaic law. Since breaking certain points of the Mosaic law required physical death, despising the entire Trinity requires soul death.

The point is that, if serving another god was worthy of death under the old covenant (Deuteronomy 13:6-10), how much more is serving another god, stomping over the Son of God, and despising the Holy Spirit worthy of death under the new covenant? Therefore, those, who take the mark of the beast and worship the image of the beast, will suffer in the lake of fire forever. Just like God gives eternal security in heavenly places in today’s dispensation of grace, Satan has eternal security during the Great Tribulation for those who take the mark of the beast and worship his image. If they do not bow down, they will be like Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Daniel 1:7), going through the fiery furnace of the great tribulation period without being touched by Satan spiritually (Daniel 3:27; Matthew 10:30). But, if they do bow down, they will be in the fires of the lake of fire forever, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:44).

10:30-31 The writer quotes Deuteronomy 32:35-36 to show that God judges fairly, and He does “judge His people” (10:30). So, Israel cannot say, “We are okay. God will not throw us into hell because we are Jews.” No, God will judge His people. If they do not remain faithful to God throughout the

tribulation period, they will not be saved (Matthew 10:22). They need to fear God, and not man, because “God is a consuming fire” (12:29 and Psalm 21:9).

The question is, “Which rock do they trust in?” If they trust in other gods, then they are trusting in the rock with a little “r” (Deuteronomy 32:37). However, if they trust in Christ (I Corinthians 10:4), they are trusting in the Rock with a big “R” (Deuteronomy 32:15). Only the big “R” can give them eternal life.

Christians think that the God of the Old Testament was a vengeful, mean God, Who smote people at the drop of a hat, while the God of the New Testament is the loving Jesus, Who died for them. However, a proper understanding of Hebrews will tell you that God is even more vengeful in the New Testament than He is in the Old, because God finally judges all unbelievers into a lake of fire in the New Testament. Sure, God did strike some people dead in the Old Testament, but that is nothing compared with the lake of fire. That is why 10:31 says that “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

10:32-33 From now until the end of the book, the writer will encourage Israel to have the faith to believe God’s promises to them all the way until the end of the tribulation period when Jesus comes back and consumes His enemies. As we saw in 6:10-12, it appears that the writer’s audience was part of apostate Israel. Then, they “were illuminated” (10:32) to the fact that the devil is behind Israel’s religious system (John 8:44; Matthew 23:25-28), and so they broke off from the religious system and began helping those, who showed them the truth, i.e., the believing remnant. As a result, they “endured a great fight of afflictions” (10:32). Some afflictions were for abandoning their religion, and some were for helping out the believing remnant (10:33). When these afflictions got bad, they backed off of their position by not helping the saints any more and maybe even going back to Israel’s religious system.

These conclusions are deduced from the writer calling them “the former days” (10:32), and that they “HAD compassion” (past tense) on the author’s persecution that he was suffering (10:34). This is the perfect group for the author to write to, because this is exactly the group that needs to hear this message in the tribulation period.

The first 3 ½ years of the tribulation period are called “the beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24:8). It is this beginning that will likely cause these fence-sitters to back away from their position. They will be tempted to go back to apostate Israel. Then, for the last 3 ½ years, there “shall be great tribulation” (Matthew 24:21). If they do not read, believe, and follow the book of Hebrews then, they will take the mark of the beast and be lost. Therefore, they need an increase in their faith in order to endure unto the

end, and that faith comes by hearing the Word of God to them for that time (Romans 10:17).

Because we know from chapters 3-4 that the kingdom is still being offered to Israel at this time, the book of Hebrews must have been written before the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7. Therefore, the persecutions, that these people suffered, also must have been before Acts 7

10:34-36 Israel's hope of eternal life is in God's kingdom on earth—not in heaven. However, Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-20 that they are to lay up treasures in heaven, because that is where New Jerusalem is today. Because of sin on the earth, the treasures would be corrupted if they were stored on earth. Therefore, they are laid up in heaven for them. Then, after all sin is cast into the lake of fire, God makes "a new heaven and a new earth" (Revelation 21:1), and "new Jerusalem [comes] down from God out of heaven" (Revelation 21:2). Israel, then, lives in God's eternal kingdom on earth forever. That is why the writer of Hebrews says that they "have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (10:34), even though God's eternal kingdom for Israel will be on the earth. The problem is that the tribulation period will have the greatest trials ever on earth. Therefore, they will need patience to endure unto the end of the tribulation period (10:36).

21:19 says about that time: "In your patience possess ye your souls," and that will literally be the case then. Even if Israel does the will of God, which is for them to come into the knowledge of the truth by faith (I Timothy 2:4), they will not "receive the promise" (10:36) of eternal life in the kingdom on earth, unless they have the patience to endure unto the end of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:13). Patience goes hand in hand with these trials, as James 1:3 says that "the trying of your faith worketh patience."

10:37 It will seem like a long time before the tribulation period ends. John 16:16-22 likens this suffering for "a little while" to the suffering of a travailing woman. A travailing woman thinks her pain lasts a long time, because it so intense. However, once she gives birth, she forgets the pain for the joy of having a child of her own. Similarly, the little flock will suffer greatly during the tribulation period, which is why those martyred ask "How long" until it is over (Revelation 6:10), but they will forget about that suffering once they enter God's eternal kingdom on earth. A comparison from the dispensation of grace is seen in Paul, when he says that the suffering of this life "is but for a moment" (II Corinthians 4:17). Therefore, from the eternal perspective, the tribulation period only lasts for "a little while" (10:37). Once it is over, God's wrath will be poured out upon His enemies quickly. He "will not tarry" in bringing judgment upon them (10:37), because "a thief in the night" does not tarry (II Peter 3:10).

10:38-39 "The just shall live by faith" is a quote from Habakkuk 2:4, showing that faith is ALWAYS required to please God (as the writer, also, will soon say in Hebrews 11:6), REGARDLESS OF DISPENSATION. It will

take living by faith in God's promises for the little flock to continue to resist the Antichrist and apostate Israel, even at the penalty of death. They will then have the works to back up that faith, as we see in these two verses how faith plus works will be required for Israel to be justified, since the work of drawing back would mean going into perdition, rather than having their souls saved. That is why James says "that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). That is true of Israel's dispensation. Today, in the mystery dispensation, we are justified by faith alone, without works (Romans 3:28). Because of the works requirement for Israel, the "saving of the soul" does not take place until Jesus' second coming (Acts 3:19-21).

Note that Hebrews 10:38, Romans 1:17, and Galatians 3:11 all say that "the just shall live by faith." However, the original quote, from Habakkuk 2:4, says that "the just shall live by HIS faith." "HIS faith" turns out to be the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. Because all saved people are taken out of Adam and placed into Christ (I Corinthians 15:22), once we are saved, His faith becomes our faith, which is why, after the cross, "His" is omitted, while it is still in the passage before the cross.

11 With the day of the Lord's coming approaching (10:25), Israel needs to keep their faith in God and not take the mark of the beast (10:26-39). The key for Israel to endure unto the end of the tribulation period and be saved (10:39 and Matthew 24:13) is for them to live by faith (10:38). Really, that has been the key all along, but it is even more important in the tribulation period, when the temptation to believe Satan's lie program is at its peak. Therefore, the writer gives Israel a whole chapter of examples of people, in the past, who have lived by faith. The point is that, if they did it, the believing remnant in the tribulation period can do it, too. The believing remnant may have more trials to endure, but they will receive the promise of eternal life in the kingdom quicker than the Old Testament saints will (vs. 39-40). They also have the Holy Ghost to help them through it (Acts 2:16-18).

Moreover, the faith examples in chapter 11 are given in such a way as to show the progression of faith that Israel needs to take. First, Israel is told that obedience of the law (as we sadly see today in Judaism and in Christianity) will not cut it. They need to have faith in order to please God (v. 6). In verses 7-16, they are given examples of faith in God. In verses 17-27, they are given examples of works during tribulation that come out of faith, thereby justifying them by faith plus works (James 2:24). Then, in verses 28-31, they see the examples of how justification by faith plus works will cause God to bring them into God's eternal kingdom on earth, including seeing Gentiles being saved in the millennial kingdom (v. 31). Then, Israel enters eternity (v. 32), and they are rewarded in the kingdom because of their faith in God (vs. 33-35). In order for this to happen, Israel needs to have the proper perspective to be willing to be tortured and give up their physical lives, if doing so is necessary, in order to enter the kingdom (vs. 35-40).

11:1 When the believing remnant looks around them on earth during the tribulation period, they definitely will not see God's kingdom on earth! The only way they will "see" it and endure unto the end of the tribulation period is by faith. Faith provides the substance and the evidence of the things they will have in God's kingdom on earth. So, they may use the eyes of man to look all around and see Satan's kingdom, but, through the eyes of faith, they will see God's kingdom coming soon. They are to become blind to the things of Satan's kingdom, so that they may see the things of God's kingdom by faith (John 9:39-41).

11:2 Throughout Israel's history, the majority of the people did not have faith in God. Ever since Adam, Satan has been "the god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4), and all the kingdoms of the earth belonged to Satan (Luke 4:5-6). Therefore, if you believe God and look at this world, things look pretty bad. However, through the eyes of faith, "the elders obtained a good report" (11:2). So, they lived lives of faith in God, even though they "received not the promise" on earth (11:39). Note how the chapter begins (v. 2) and ends (v. 39) with this good report through faith. It is the same with us today. If we set our "affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2), we will obtain a good report through faith and put to death the flesh (Colossians 3:5).

11:3 This "good report" (11:2) that Israel received by faith was that God made the worlds (11:3). So, God made the worlds, and everything He made was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). Yet, Israel looks around in the tribulation period and sees nothing but evil. That tells them that the "things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" [by faith] (11:3). In other words, because God did not make the evil of the tribulation period, it will pass away, because they were not made by the Word of God (Matthew 24:35). (Note how everything is made in Genesis 1 by God speaking it into existence. Thus, everything God makes is by the Word (John 1:1-3).)

The things that "do appear" are the things that God made. These things are spiritual and eternal, while "the things which are seen are temporal" (II Corinthians 4:18). Therefore, what this verse is saying is that, by using the eyes of faith, believing Israel will see that God's kingdom will come down to earth and replace the current kingdom of the Antichrist. Therefore, although evil reigns during the tribulation period, Israel can still have a good report by faith, knowing that these things will pass away, and the good things that God's Word made will stand forever.

An example of this "good report" is Joshua and Caleb's report, when they went into the Promised Land. The report of unbelief was an "evil report" (Numbers 13:32), saying that "we be not able to go up against the people" (Numbers 13:31). The report of belief was a good report, saying, "If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it to us" (Numbers 14:8). Similarly, for Israel, in the tribulation period, believing

Israel will have faith in God to give them the land, even though the Antichrist and his people will be currently ruling in it.

11:4 Now, for the rest of the chapter, the author will give Israel examples of people, in the Old Testament, who, because they understand that the things they saw on earth were not the real things of God, obeyed God by faith, rather than going along with what everyone else was doing. This is to encourage the little flock of Israel to do the same during the tribulation period.

In 11:4, Cain and Abel are mentioned. This is a great example of faith versus religion. Abel brought the sacrifice that God required. Cain brought the sacrifice that he wanted to bring (religion) (Genesis 4:3-5). Therefore, God counted Abel as righteous, accepting him and his sacrifice, while Cain was not accepted.

Note that 11:4 says that, by Abel's faith, he still speaks. This shows that Abel is still alive today, 6,000 years after this event took place, and he is an example to others to have faith in God. That is why God tells Cain that "the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Genesis 4:10). That "voice" is the voice of faith. People, today, talk about doing things by which people will remember them. Well, if you want to be remembered for all eternity, have faith in God's Word for today. Also, note from the verse that Abel was righteous by faith. His work of the proper sacrifice was a "witness that he was righteous" (11:4). Therefore, Abel was justified by faith, and His work stemmed from that faith.

The voice of Abel's blood is one of God's vengeance upon religion (See Luke 11:50-51 and Revelation 6:9-10). By contrast, Christ's blood speaks of going from spiritual death to eternal life in God's kingdom. That is why 12:24 says that Jesus' "blood ... speaketh better things than that of Abel."

11:5 Enoch's faith tells Israel of the resurrection life they have in Jesus Christ (2:9). Enoch is also a type of the body of Christ, as he was raptured up before the judgment came (Noah's flood), just like the body of Christ will be raptured up before the tribulation period comes. 3 times, this verse describes this event as Enoch being "translated." That just means that his soul and spirit went to paradise. He will not get a new body until Jesus' second coming, because Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection (I Corinthians 15:20)—not Enoch.

11:6 The reason Enoch "pleased God" (11:5) was because he had faith in God. Rote obedience of God's laws by Israel would not please God. In fact, He tells Israel in Amos 5:22: "Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them." REGARDLESS OF DISPENSATION, what God requires is faith. For "without faith it is impossible to please Him" (11:6). This is important for Israel to understand in the tribulation period, because there will be people doing "many wonderful works" in Jesus' name,

yet Jesus will say, “I never knew you: depart from Me” (Matthew 7:22-23). That is why James tells the believing remnant that apostate Israel will say, “Thou hast faith, and I have works” (James 2:18), showing apostate Israel’s belief that God cares about works more than He cares about faith. Therefore, the Hebrews need to keep in mind 11:6 that they must have faith in order to please God.

11:6 goes on to say that faith requires you to believe that: 1) God is God (“He is” is a reference to God as the “I AM” (Exodus 3:14).), and 2) “That He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” God has allowed Satan to so confuse this world that people must hear God’s Word (Romans 10:17) and shut out all the noise created by Satan in order to have faith in what God has said to them in their dispensation. Today, people argue that, if right division is true, why doesn’t mainstream Christianity accept it? If it is so important to believe in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection alone as atonement for sins, why isn’t the gospel clear in mainstream Christianity? The simple answer to both of these questions is that the reason mainstream Christianity does not believe right division and preach a clear gospel is because mainstream Christianity does not diligently seek God. Therefore, they are not rewarded with the truth of God’s Word, and they do not have faith in what God has told them for this dispensation. If man diligently seeks God, he will find Him and receive eternal life from Him, because He is “not far from every one of us” (Acts 17:27). The same holds true for Israel during the tribulation period. With the Antichrist ruling, God may be hid from them, but He is not far away. Believing Israel will find Him in His Word, if they diligently seek after Him, such that the gospel of the kingdom will be clear to them, and they will believe it.

11:7 Noah was “warned of God of things not seen as yet” (11:7). In other words, he was warned of God’s impending judgment of the world, just like God warns Israel during the tribulation period by His Word, by the little flock, and by the two witnesses. Noah believed and was “moved with fear” (11:7). So, too, Israel, in the tribulation period, needs to be moved with fear of God’s impending judgment and believe God’s Word. By the ark, Noah saved his house and condemned the world. By God’s Word, the little flock is saved and condemns those not part of the spiritual house of Israel. Thus, Noah’s ark and God’s Word are both two-edged swords, killing those against them and saving those believing them. That is why Isaiah 54:7-10 compares the tribulation period with “the waters of Noah.”

11:8 Israel, in the tribulation period, is called by God, just like Abraham was. Abraham lived in Babylon (Genesis 11:9) and was called to leave Babylon to go to a land that God would show him (Genesis 12:1). Similarly, Israel lives in Babylon in the tribulation period (Revelation 17:5) and is called to leave Babylon (Matthew 24:16) to wait for Jesus’ second coming to lead them into the Promised Land (Isaiah 40:11).

Not many people know this, but God actually called Abram's father to go to Canaan first (Genesis 11:31). He disobeyed, because he served other gods (Joshua 24:2). God then called Abram, and Abram obeyed (Genesis 12:1,4-5). This is like the little flock in the tribulation period. Their fathers were called to go to the Promised Land, but they disobeyed, because they served other gods. The little flock, however, has faith in God's promises to them. Therefore, they get to enter in.

11:9-10 Abraham was actually "in the land of promise," but "he sojourned" there, "as in a strange country" (11:9). Similarly, Israel will be living in tents, running away from the Antichrist, even though they will be in the land that will soon be God's kingdom.

In today's dispensation, we live among humans, but, spiritually speaking, we sojourn, as in a strange country, because "our conversation is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20), and Satan is "the god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4). The reason Abraham sojourned was that he, by faith, understood that the cities of Canaan would be destroyed. Therefore, he looked for God's city—New Jerusalem. God's city has foundations, which, not only means that it is a literal, physical city, but it is also a permanent, eternal city. In other words, since the "builder and maker is God" (11:10), He laid a permanent foundation, so that the city will never be taken away. This permanent foundation is the Lord Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:5-7), and the saved people of Israel are the city (Revelation 21:9-10). Similarly, Israel, in the tribulation period, recognizes that "heaven and earth shall pass away" (Matthew 24:35), meaning that the city of Babylon, built by the Antichrist, will fall (Revelation 18:2). Therefore, they choose to put their faith in God's city—the New Jerusalem—that will come down from heaven (Revelation 21:1), in which believing Israel will reign forever (Revelation 22:5).

11:11 Sara may have laughed in unbelief at first (Genesis 18:12) over having a child passed her childbearing years. However, she must have had faith later, because it was through her faith that God gave her "strength to conceive seed" (11:11). Similarly, in Matthew – Acts 7, Israel initially did not believe God would give them the kingdom through Jesus. However, before Jesus' second coming (parallel to Isaac's birth), they will believe (parallel to Sarah's belief), such that "all [believing] Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26).

11:12 The weird wording of this verse is due to the fact that the seed that was conceived by faith is Christ, here, and not Isaac. Galatians 3:16 says that the promised seed was not Isaac, but it was Christ. The flesh was "as good as dead" (11:12), and so the seed, in view here, is the spiritual seed of faith, which is Christ. That is why Christ is identified as "the son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1). Therefore, the child of 11:11 is Isaac, who came from dead parents (Romans 4:16), but the "one" of 11:12 is Christ.

“The stars of the sky” (11:12) represent the body of Christ in the mystery dispensation, since we will occupy the heavenly places (Genesis 15:5). “The sand...by the sea shore” represents those saved in Israel’s program, since they will occupy God’s kingdom on earth (Genesis 22:17). Christ was also the physical seed of Abraham, but the emphasis is on the spiritual, since the emphasis is on faith. We see Christ make this distinction in John 8:39 when He says, “If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham.”

11:13 Faith is all about recognizing that God’s world is future, and His promises to Israel will be realized in the future. Therefore, the people mentioned, here, completely disregarded the things they saw on the earth and trusted God would give them what He had promised them, even if it meant they would die, “not having received the promises” (11:13). John 8:56 tells us that Abraham saw God’s kingdom by faith.

Similarly, the little flock, in the tribulation period, will be “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (11:13), embracing God’s promises by faith so that they will endure the persecutions of the Antichrist and apostate Israel, even if it means they are killed before God brings in the kingdom. They are “strangers” because having faith in God is foolish to unbelievers (I Corinthians 1:18-19). Therefore, believing Jews will appear strange to unbelieving Jews. They are “pilgrims” because they suffer and continue in their faith pilgrimage to God’s eternal kingdom on earth. In fact, we see the prayer of the tribulation saints in Psalm 39:12, where they acknowledge they are strangers and sojourners WITH the Lord, which means that even the Lord is a stranger on this earth today!

11:14 By praying the prayer of Psalm 39:12, the little flock acknowledges that their faith is in God’s kingdom that He will give to them at His second coming, rather than believing Satan through the Antichrist and settling for a temporary kingdom that will soon fall.

11:15-16 “That country from whence they came out” refers to Egypt. Going back down to Egypt represents going back into sin. We see rebellious Israel in the wilderness, telling Moses many times that they want to go back to Egypt, e.g., Exodus 16:3, 17:3, Numbers 11:4-6, 14:2-4, 20:3-5, and 21:5. This is the cry of unbelief. Those, with faith in God, “desire a better country” (11:16). For believing Israel in the tribulation period, this means they should be mindful of the heavenly country—New Jerusalem—and not go back to apostate Israel and the Babylonian system of the Antichrist. Because the little flock has faith in God, looks for the heavenly country, and does not bow down to the Antichrist, God has no shame in being called their God. Therefore, “He hath prepared for them a city” (11:16), which is New Jerusalem, and the Lord Jesus Christ prepares a place in that city for each saved Jew (John 14:2-3).

Contrast believing Israel with apostate Israel, who prophesies, casts out devils, and does many, wonderful works, all in the Lord's name (Matthew 7:22). God does not have a city for these Jews. Rather, He says, "I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:23). The point to the Hebrews is that the tribulation period is no different from any other period in Israel's history in the sense that, if they have faith in God's promises to them, God will give them eternal life in the Promised Land.

11:17 The emphasis in 11:4-16 has been on faith in God in order to receive the promises. Now, in 11:17-28, we see the works that accompany faith. In Israel's program, they have to have faith plus works to be justified (James 2:20-24). James 2:21 specifically says that Abraham "our father [was] justified by works." FOR ISRAEL'S PROGRAM "faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). Therefore, the writer now shows faith by works (James 2:18) in Israel's forefathers. Abraham was justified by faith as a Gentile (Hebrews 11:8-10; Genesis 15:6), but he was also justified by works when he offered Isaac on the altar (James 2:21; Genesis 22:16-18). He had already "received the promises" of eternal life, but, to be justified by works so that he could be the father of all believing Jews as well, he had to offer up his son (Romans 4:16). Note that he offered up "his only begotten son" (11:17), showing that Abraham and Isaac are a type of God the Father and God the Son. God had Abraham do this so that Israel in the Old Testament would have a picture of what their Messiah would do when He finally came.

11:18-19 Abraham's work of offering Isaac upon the altar showed his faith in the resurrection. After all, if God said that Abraham's seed would be called in Isaac (11:18 & Genesis 21:12), Isaac has no children at the time, and Abraham counted Isaac as good as dead, then Abraham also had to account "that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead" (11:19). Otherwise, Abraham never would have been willing to kill Isaac. Faith in the resurrection is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL because all of the Old Testament saints "died in faith, not having received the promises" (11:13).

Similarly, many of the believing remnant in the tribulation period will die before receiving the promises, because they will be killed for their faith (Revelation 13:15 and 6:9). Therefore, they will need to believe like Abraham and account that God is faithful to His promises to them. So, if they die for their faith, then God will later raise them up from the dead to give them His promises to them (11:19). As such, they are justified by the work of offering themselves to be killed, with that "work" being rooted in their faith. That is how they are justified by works, like Abraham was (James 2:24). Although Isaac did not die, Abraham received him back from the dead "in a figure" (11:19), because of Abraham's faith. This is important to understand, because it shows that Abraham believed he would kill Isaac and he was willing to do so. He did not know that God was just testing him.

Since Jesus was not raised from the dead until the New Testament, this “resurrection” of Isaac from the dead is an important example for believing Israel in the Old Testament to look to, especially since they died, “not having received the promises” (11:13). Also, Israel was supposed to offer their Messiah on the altar in the temple, as the complete Passover Lamb to die for their sins (Psalm 118:27), and so this sacrifice would also be a visual example of what God wanted them to do with the Messiah. It is probably for these two reasons, then, that God had Abraham sacrifice Isaac.

11:20 Faith plus works is seen in Isaac, as well, since he did the work of giving Jacob the firstborn’s blessing. This shows that Isaac knew he was giving the firstborn’s blessing to Jacob, although you probably would not come to that conclusion by reading the account in Genesis 27:18-40. Isaac knew God’s promise that Esau would serve Jacob (Genesis 25:23). Therefore, by faith, he gave the firstborn’s blessing to the younger.

When Isaac gave the blessing to Jacob, he must have known that he was blessing Jacob, even though he acts like he thinks he is blessing Esau. Isaac probably did this because he was afraid that Esau would kill him, if Esau knew that he blessed Jacob intentionally. This makes sense in light of Genesis 27:41, where Esau says he will kill Jacob. Also, note that Isaac was blind (Genesis 27:1), which is a physical sign of his faith, since faith is the opposite of sight (II Corinthians 5:7).

11:21 By blessing “both the sons of Joseph” (11:21), Jacob gave the firstborn’s blessing to Joseph, who was not the firstborn. Therefore, Jacob also operated in faith, as Isaac did, by not giving the firstborn’s blessing to the firstborn. Jacob also had the physical sign of faith, since his eyes were dim, too (Genesis 48:10). Also, Jacob quotes God’s promise to give Israel the land of Canaan and includes Joseph’s 2 sons, as if they were each his own sons (Genesis 48:3-6). This shows, again, that he went against man’s way of a double blessing to the firstborn and went, by faith, with God’s choice for the double blessing.

Note that this verse also says that Jacob “worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff” (11:21). When Jacob gave the firstborn blessing to Ephraim and Manasseh, he was sitting upon his bed (Genesis 48:2). He then placed his hands upon the heads of the boys and gave the blessing (Genesis 48:14), which means that he was not leaning on the top of his staff at that time. Then, in Genesis 49:1, he gathers together his other sons and tells them what shall befall them in the last days (Genesis 49:3-27). He then gathers his feet back in bed and dies (Genesis 49:33). There is no mention of him doing anything else, which makes sense, given the lack of strength he has just before dying. Therefore, the time, when he “worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff” (11:21) was probably when he blessed his other sons in Genesis 49:3-27. This shows that worship is not singing the same 7 words 11 times, closing your eyes, and raising your hands. Worship is giving glory to God, grounded in the truth of God’s Word to him (John 4:23). And, so,

Jacob worshipped God, not by singing, but by declaring the truth of how God would use the tribes of Israel in the last days. Therefore, a preacher in a church, giving sound doctrine, is worshipping God, while a “worship” leader, singing about his feelings about God, is NOT worshipping God.

11:22 Note how the works, mentioned in 11:17-28, all relate specifically to having faith in God’s promise to Israel to give them the land. That is why the work of Joseph’s faith, mentioned here, is not related to his telling the meaning of dreams (Genesis 40:5-19, 41:15-32) or being in charge of food storage and distribution (Genesis 41:55-57). The work mentioned is telling Israel to bring his bones to the land of Canaan.

The 400 years of being in Egypt had just started (Genesis 15:13), and Joseph had faith that God would bring Israel into the Promised Land. Therefore, just before he died, he told Israel to bring his bones into the land with them. Note from Genesis 50:24-25 that Joseph specifically mentioned that God would bring them into the Promised Land. Again, God’s promise to bring Israel into the Promised Land after death is vitally important for the little flock in the tribulation period to have faith in, given they may have to give their lives for their faith. Without faith in God’s promise to bring them into God’s eternal kingdom on earth AFTER THEY ARE KILLED, they will end up denying their Father, taking the mark of the beast, and burning forever in the lake of fire.

Also note from Genesis 50:24-25, that Joseph says twice, “God will surely visit you.” Therefore, Joseph is speaking prophetically of the burning bush (Exodus 3:2).

11:23 Moses’ parents intentionally disobeyed the king’s commandment, which shows their faith. In other words, God said He would bring Israel into the Promised Land, and Moses’ parents knew that the next generation would be the one to go into the Promised Land, based on the time given by God to Abraham in Genesis 15:13. So, they were looking for a redeemer.

Note that, the reason Moses’ parents hid Moses, was “because they saw he was a proper child” (11:23). This tells us that they did not hide Moses because they did not want their son to be killed. They hid him because there was something special about him that led them to believe that God would use Moses to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage and bring them into the Promised Land. If that was not the case, then they would not be an example of faith here. Thus, again, we see the believing remnant of Israel with faith in God in spite of the circumstances around them, and that faith is acted out in their works, as demonstrated, here, by Moses’ parents.

We should also note that, many examples of faith given in chapter 11, show the faithful ones disobeying their human authorities. Faith says, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). This will be important for the believing remnant during the tribulation period, because they will not

receive eternal life if they obey man's order to bow down to the image of the beast or take his mark (Revelation 13:14-17).

11:24-26 Most Christians say that the faith of Moses, here, relates to the ten plagues that God sent upon Egypt, and then Moses wandering in the wilderness with Israel for 40 years. However, the verses say that the time of his faith was when he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter" (11:24). This would be 40 years prior to the ten plagues, when he left Pharaoh, recognizing that God had made him Israel's deliverer, as demonstrated by him killing an oppressing Egyptian (Exodus 2:11-12).

Israel's response to Moses being their deliverer was, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?" (Exodus 2:14). Pharaoh then tried to kill Moses, and Moses fled Egypt and was content to live with the priest of Midian for 40 years (Exodus 2:15,21). Therefore, when 11:25 says that Moses suffered "affliction with the people of God" rather than enjoying "the pleasures of sin for a season" (11:25), it is referring to the 40 years he spent in Midian with the priest's family. In other words, Israel was apostate at the time, and so the true Israel was in Midian. ("The people of God" were not the Jews delivered from Egypt, because that generation ended up dying in the wilderness due to their lack of faith (Numbers 26:63-65).)

Similarly, the faith of Moses for the 40 years prior to the deliverance from Egypt is a type of Israel in the tribulation period. God made Jesus to be a ruler over Israel (Matthew 2:6), but Israel refused their deliverer by crucifying Him. Instead, the nation of Israel will make a 7-year covenant with the Antichrist (Daniel 9:27). Since the Antichrist will rule over all, Israel will be "Pharaoh's daughter" (11:24), so to speak, rather than being "the daughter of Zion" (Isaiah 37:22; 52:2). The believing remnant will refuse "to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter" (11:24), because they have faith in God's promises to them. Therefore, they will choose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God" (11:25) (outside Jerusalem) than to have the riches and power of the Antichrist and "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (11:25), because they esteem "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in [Babylon]" (11:26). Thus, Moses' example, of forsaking Egypt and apostate Israel, is the perfect example for Israel to forsake the riches of the Antichrist in favor of the riches of God in God's coming eternal kingdom on earth.

Now, the term "the reproach of Christ" (11:26) does not mean that Moses trusted in Jesus' death as atonement for his sins. "The reproach of Christ" is that Moses was rejected by Israel for having faith in God, just like Christ was rejected (see Psalm 69:7-10). Hebrews 13:13 says, "Let us go forth therefore unto [Christ] without the camp, bearing His reproach." Since Israel was apostate at the time he tried to deliver them, Moses bore the reproach of Christ by living with God's people in Midian for 40 years, which was "without the camp" of where apostate Israel was. Thus, "the reproach of Christ" simply means being reproached by the prevalent religious system.

Rather than respecting religion, the little flock will have “respect unto the recompense of the reward” (11:26). Therefore, they will reject the Antichrist and apostate Israel, coming outside of the religious camp of the Antichrist (13:13) to bear Christ’s reproach, knowing they will receive God’s promise of eternal life, as a result (10:35-36).

11:27 The same, here, can be said of the believing remnant in the tribulation period. They will forsake Babylon, not fearing the wrath of the Antichrist. They will endure the reproach of Christ in the tribulation period, because they see the invisible king—the Lord Jesus Christ—Who will come and destroy the Antichrist and set up God’s kingdom on earth. That is the kingdom the believing remnant will be a part of—not the Antichrist’s kingdom, which is but “for a season” (11:25).

11:28-29 In 11:4-16, we saw faith in God’s promise of eternal life on earth. In 11:17-27, we saw the works wrought by that faith, which justify the believers in ISRAEL’S PROGRAM. Now, in 11:28-30, we see God delivering the believing remnant of Israel, who were justified by faith plus works (James 2:24). Here, in 11:28, we see that Moses’ work of faith of keeping the Passover, in Exodus 12:21-28, kept Israel safe from the judgment of God when God killed “all the firstborn in the land of Egypt” (11:29-30).

Similarly, in the tribulation period, the little flock will believe and obey God’s command to watch (Matthew 26:41), such that they warn Israel that Jesus is coming (Matthew 25:6). Believing Israel, who obey God’s commands (Exodus 12:28) in the tribulation period, will then enter God’s eternal kingdom on earth because they will have the blood of the new covenant sprinkled on them, such that, when Jesus comes back to earth to tread “the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:15), He will “Passover” His firstborn son, Israel (Exodus 4:22). Saved Israel will then pass through the Red Sea of blood (Revelation 14:20) “as by dry land” (11:29) and go into the kingdom, just like Moses brought Israel through the Red Sea after the Passover, and they should have gone right into the Promised Land, if not for their unbelief.

11:30 Note that, because of Israel’s faith plus works in the tribulation period, God does the work to bring them into the kingdom. Similarly, once Israel entered Canaan after being in the wilderness for 40 years (Note that this period of unbelief is not mentioned here.), God did the work of getting rid of the enemy in the Promised Land. Therefore, Israel, in the wilderness in the Old Testament, is a type of the tribulation period, God’s redemption, and Israel entering into the Promised Land, such that they need only look to the type to have faith that the Lord Jesus Christ, at His second coming, will give them the full fulfillment of His promises to the nation of Israel. “And so all Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:26).

11:31 Then, in the millennial kingdom, Israel will finally be “the Priests of the Lord” (Isaiah 61:6) that God called them to be to the Gentiles (Exodus

19:5-6), such that the Gentiles will take hold of the Jews (Zechariah 8:23) and go to Jerusalem with them to learn God's LAW (Isaiah 2:3). This is pictured by "the harlot Rahab" (11:31). She was a Gentile, but, because she had faith in what the Jews told her (Joshua 2:8-21), she was saved (Joshua 6:25).

Similarly, Gentiles, in the millennial kingdom, will be saved at the end of that period, if they have faith in the law that the Jews tell them in Jerusalem. (The Gentiles in Israel's program before then will be saved if they help out the little flock of Israel. See Matthew 25:31-46 for the judgment of these Gentiles in Israel's program.)

11:32-34 By going from Abraham through Rahab (11:17-31), the author has shown how faith plus works in Israel's program takes them from the beginning of Israel's program to the end. These are all the examples Israel needs to endure unto the end of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:13). Therefore, the writer does not need to say any more, even though there are many more examples in the Old Testament of God's working through faithful men so that Israel may continue toward entering God's eternal kingdom on earth.

It is interesting that the writer says that "the time would fail me" (11:32), because that is exactly what happens once the Gentiles enter God's kingdom on earth, after the millennial kingdom and God's final battle with Satan are over. As Revelation 10:6 says "that there should be time no longer." However, for the author's audience, "the time would fail me" probably means two things: 1) The kingdom of heaven is still at hand at the time of the writing of Hebrews, and 2) There is no time to listen for believing Israel on the run in the tribulation period.

Note, in 11:33-34, the things that God did through others in the Old Testament. He "subdued kingdoms." Not only does this include Israel defeating enemy nations, but it also refers to subduing Satan's kingdom within Israel. For example, David subdued Saul's kingdom. "Stopped the mouth of lions" is seen in Samson (Judges 14:5-6), David (I Samuel 17:34-36), and Daniel (Daniel 6:22). Satan is like a roaring lion, trying to devour Israel (I Peter 5:8). Thus, Israel, in the tribulation period, can stop the mouth of Satan from devouring them, by having faith in God's Word to them.

"Quenched the violence of fire" should remind the Hebrews of Daniel 3, when Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were thrown into the fiery furnace. The Son of God was with them (Daniel 3:25), and they came out without even a hair singed (Daniel 3:27). Similarly, believing Israel will go through the refiner's fire of the tribulation period (Malachi 3:2-3) with God helping them through His Word, and they will not lose even one hair (Matthew 10:30). They might be killed, but God will restore their bodies whole, giving them new bodies, in His kingdom. Therefore, John the Baptist could also be

seen as quenching the violence of fire, since he preached the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 3:2) to keep Israel from receiving the baptism with fire (Matthew 3:11).

“Escaped the edge of the sword” (11:34), like “subdued kingdoms,” should remind us, both of not being killed by other nations’ armies and not being killed by apostate Israel, like when David ran from Saul. “Out of weakness were made strong” should remind us of Gideon’s army of 300 (Judges 7:7), defeating the multitude of the Midianites and Amalekites (Judges 7:12); David’s defeat of Goliath with a slingshot and one stone (That stone was Christ (I Corinthians 10:4).) (I Samuel 17:49-50); and Jonathan defeating the Philistines by himself (I Samuel 14:13-15).

Spiritually speaking, we also see “out of weakness were made strong” is true for Paul (II Corinthians 12:7-10), since his thorn in the flesh kept him from being puffed up in the flesh. This is also true for the widow, who gave two mites (Mark 12:38-44), because she gave everything she had, which is an important example for the little flock in the tribulation period, since they will sell all that they have (Luke 12:33).

11:32-34 pictures the ultimate deliverance that God will give faithful Israel from the Antichrist and from apostate Israel at the end of the tribulation period.

11:35-37 However, we also know that many of the little flock will be killed (Revelation 6:9-10), have limbs cut off (Matthew 5:30), and be victims of unjust trials (Matthew 10:16-22). God gives Israel examples of these, too, in the Old Testament and, ultimately, with Jesus, in His first coming.

Women, receiving “their dead raised to life again” (11:35), are seen in I Kings 17:22 and II Kings 4:35, as pictures of those killed in the tribulation period being raised to eternal life in God’s kingdom on earth. Spiritually speaking, this is also seen in Nicodemus (John 3:1-3; 7:50-53; 19:38-40), who is raised to spiritual life to his mother, the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16), by being “born again” (John 3:3).

Others being “tortured, not accepting deliverance” (11:35) is a picture of believers being maimed and beaten, not willing to bow down to the image of the beast, because they want to “obtain a better resurrection” (11:35). The “better resurrection” for Israel is the first resurrection, which is to life in the kingdom (Revelation 20:5-6). The second resurrection is after the millennial reign, when all unbelievers from all dispensations are judged by their works and thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15). Thus, the first resurrection is the better resurrection.

11:36-37 talks about believers being falsely mocked, beaten, imprisoned, and killed. Although these things happened in the Old Testament, most of these examples for the tribulation saints are found in Jesus and the little

flock in early Acts. Jesus was mocked, scourged, put in bonds, imprisoned (v. 36), sentenced to death, and then crucified by the Romans. Jesus told His disciples that, if that is how He is treated, they can count on being treated even worse themselves (Matthew 10:24-25). Therefore, with the example of Israel's Lord in scripture, it was not necessary to record others from the Old Testament.

However, we should mention the stoning of 11:37. God told Israel, as a government, to stone someone to death when they were worthy of capital punishment under God's laws (e.g., Leviticus 24:16). This was to be a picture of their unbelief, resulting in them being broken by the Stone (the Lord Jesus Christ) (Matthew 21:44). In other words, physical death by stoning symbolized their spiritual death by stoning by the Rock (I Corinthians 10:4), the Lord Jesus Christ, due to their lack of faith in God. However, Satan likes to mimic what God does. Therefore, he got apostate Israel to stone righteous people to death. Also, we see examples of Jews trying to do this with the Lord Jesus Christ (John 8:59 and 10:31).

Scripture does not record anyone being "sawn asunder" (11:37). However, it is said that apostate Israel did this with the prophet Isaiah. This should also remind us of I Kings 3:23-25, where Solomon said he would divide the living child in half. There, the woman, who was the true mother, is a picture of believing Israel, while the false mother is a picture of apostate Israel. Therefore, when we are told of people being "sawn asunder" and being "slain with the sword" (v. 37) for their faith, this should remind the Hebrews in the tribulation period that apostate Israel's solution to getting rid of the believing remnant is to force them into obeying the Antichrist. Contrast this with the true Christ, Who looks for people with faith in what He has told Israel He will do for them. We can also see a spiritual meaning behind "sawn asunder" in that the Word of God divides asunder the soul and spirit from the joints and marrow so that believers operate through the spirit, rather than through the energies of their flesh (4:12). We also see that believing the gospel of the kingdom will divide believing family members from unbelieving family members (Matthew 10:32-38).

"Were tempted" is mentioned in the middle of physical death, because the little flock may be killed for their faith (Matthew 10:24-25; Revelation 13:15; 6:9).

Wandering about "in sheepskins and goatskins" (11:37) should remind us of Elijah (II Kings 1:8) and of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:4). The reason they did this is because sheep and goats were sacrificed to God under the law of Moses (Leviticus 22:19). Therefore, by wearing sheepskin and goatskin, they were a sign to apostate Israel for them to repent. That is, Israel should stop following the Jewish religious system and start following the law covenant that God made with them.

The sum of 11:35-37 is that the believing remnant of Israel has always been “destitute, afflicted, tormented” (11:37) by apostate Israel for having faith in what God has told them. Therefore, when the little flock is afflicted like this in the tribulation period, they can look to their faith examples, and, by faith, see the promises of God afar off and embrace them (11:13), rather than following the Antichrist and embracing his promises that will soon pass away via God’s judgment.

11:38 I love the parenthetical phrase here. Since Satan is “the god of this world” (II Corinthians 4:4) and the world sees faith in God as foolishness (I Corinthians 1:18), the world is not worthy of faithful Israel. (Today, they are not worthy of the body of Christ, either.) That is why God will take believing Israel out of the world and bring them into a new world, where He will set up His eternal kingdom. Israel was looking for their Messiah to come, overthrow the Romans, and set up his kingdom on earth. Well, the world was not worthy of this, due to their unbelief. Therefore, God will start all over with a new earth (Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:1).

The verse goes on to say that believing Israel wandered on this earth. Because the world is corrupt and not worthy of faithful man, God did not give believing Israel a possession on this earth, even though He promised them a land. He will give them “a better country, that is, an heavenly” (11:16). If God gave them the earth now, they may be satisfied with that and not look, by faith, for that better, heavenly country that He will give them in the kingdom. Therefore, their wandering on the earth is a good thing “for when I am weak, then am I strong” (II Corinthians 12:10).

11:39 The chapter ends where it begins. Because they had faith in God’s promises to them, they “obtained a good report” (11:2), realizing that the things of this world “which are seen” are not the true things of God “which do appear” (11:3) by faith. Therefore, when the little flock looks at Israel during the tribulation period, they do not put their trust in the Antichrist, but they put their trust in God, “having obtained a good report through faith” (11:39). The faithful of Hebrews 11 did not receive God’s promise of the land yet, but, that was not a concern, because they believed God would raise them from the dead and place them in God’s land in His time.

11:40 God’s time is after the tribulation saints are saved. “All Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:26), but God has to get the impurities out of Israel first, which He does through the tribulation period (Malachi 3:2-3). “THEN shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord” (Malachi 3:4). So, what we see is that the believing remnant, throughout the years, still has not received the promise, and the reason is because God is waiting for all believers of Israel to come in and be saved, so that He makes Israel perfect (complete) in the kingdom at His second coming after the tribulation period is over. It is the same thing for today’s dispensation of grace. The rapture of the church, the body of Christ, will not take place “until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (Romans 11:25). Therefore, if

you are tired of living in this sinful world and you want Jesus to come and take us home, rather than praying for Jesus to hurry up and come, you can actually do something about it by presenting the gospel to unbelievers and, more importantly when it comes to the rapture taking place, presenting right division to believers, whenever given the opportunity, so that the fulness of the Gentiles will come in more quickly, and God will take us home.

The “better thing,” of this verse, is knowledge of the kingdom. I Peter 1:10-12 says that the Old-Testament prophets searched the scriptures diligently to figure out the details of Jesus’ first and second comings, and God told them that those things were written for future believers to understand, not for them. Jesus says, in Matthew 13:16-17, that He was now revealing those kingdom mysteries to believers. We can also contrast Daniel 12:4 with Revelation 1:19, because Daniel was told to “shut up the words, and seal the book,” while John was told to “write the things which thou hast seen.” Therefore, the “better thing” of the knowledge of the kingdom was reserved for believers during the at-hand phase of the kingdom.

12 Chapter 11 is a “great...cloud of witnesses” (12:1) to help Israel keep faith in God during the Great Tribulation period. The ultimate example of faith, though, is Jesus Christ’s going to the cross (vs. 2-3). When Israel goes through the tribulation period, they need to understand that God brings it upon them so that they will have faith in God like their faith predecessors did (vs. 4-11). If they do not have faith and end up worshipping the image or taking the mark, there will be no chance for God to forgive their sins and give them eternal life (vs. 16-17). The reason is because the ultimate sin of apostasy, i.e., taking the mark of the beast, is not covered by Christ’s sacrifices under the law (vs. 17-18), as they have to deal directly with God’s judgment, rather than His mercy, with regard to that sin (vs. 22-23). Therefore, Israel needs to make sure they have faith in God’s promises to them. Otherwise, God will consume them at the end of the tribulation period, rather than give them eternal life (vs. 25-29).

12:1 It is no coincidence that the word “cloud” is used here, in reference to the faithful witnesses of chapter 11. Under Moses, God guided Israel through the wilderness by a cloud (Exodus 13:21-22). Thus, God guides believing Israel through the tribulation period by a cloud, as well. This cloud is one of the witnesses to confirm that God’s Word is true.

The first 3 ½ years of the tribulation period is when at least 144,000 Jews will be saved (Revelation 7). The rest of Israel, then, has the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period to make up their minds. That period begins with the Antichrist, setting up the image and the mark of the beast. If they take either of those, they seal their eternal doom in the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11). Therefore, Israel needs to have faith in God’s law covenant with them before the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period beings.

Since the law says that two witnesses establish a matter (Deuteronomy 17:6), God sends two of these witnesses for the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation period (Revelation 11:3-13). Then, “the patience of the saints” is tested (Revelation 14:12) during the Great Tribulation. During those last 3 ½ years, it is essential that Israel looks to the “so great a cloud of witnesses” (12:1) to God’s faithfulness that God provides in the pages of His Word, in order to endure unto the end of the tribulation period and be saved (Matthew 24:13).

In spite of all that is around the little flock in the Great Tribulation period in this world, if they look to God in faith, instead of seeing the things of this world (11:3), they will see the things of that city (New Jerusalem) that God has prepared for them (11:16). If they see that city, they will see the inhabitants of that city, which is believing Israel in time past. Therefore, instead of feeling like they are trapped by the Antichrist and apostate Israel, they will, by faith, see that they “are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses” (12:1).

This will cause them to “lay aside every weight” (12:1), which would be the heavy burden laid upon them by religious (apostate) Israel, which is human good. They will also lay aside “the sin,” which is human evil, which is what “so easily [will] beset” them from being saved. Then, with full faith in God’s promises to them, believing Israel will “run with patience the race that is set before [them]” (12:1). That race is a race to “the end” of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:13). Just like any man-made race, the race, that believing Israel will run, has a set course. Therefore, they can run the race of faith, knowing what to expect, instead of running without hope.

12:2 This race of faith has already been run before by Jesus. In fact, He authored or designed the race of faith that they will run. Not only that, but Jesus also ran and finished that race of faith already. So, how did Jesus do it? He looked unto “the joy that was set before Him” (12:2). Remember that Jesus was both fully man and fully God. As a man, He certainly had difficult times following God’s will, as evidenced by His sweat coming down “as it were great drops of blood” (Luke 22:44). But, He “endured the cross, despising the shame” (12:2) by having faith in God’s promise to have Him rule over God’s kingdom on earth.

Similarly, believing Israel, in the tribulation period, can have faith in the joy that is set before them of ruling in the kingdom under Jesus. Jesus, at the time of this writing, “is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (12:2), showing that God was faithful to give Him what He had promised Him. This should give believing Israel the confidence to trust in God’s promise to them, as well, to the point of enduring trials throughout the Great Tribulation period. They will need to daily take up their cross and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). Christ had to suffer first and then receive glory later (I Peter 1:11). So, too, the little flock will suffer through the tribulation period first before they receive eternal glory in God’s kingdom on earth.

However, the little flock can take comfort in the fact that Jesus is the “finisher of our faith,” which means that He completed it all, as shown by His sitting down at the right hand of God. Therefore, all the tribulation saints have to do is to rest in what He has already done for them.

12:3 The great cloud of witnesses prove that God’s promises are true. Jesus’ suffering proves that the little flock will have to suffer in order to receive God’s promises. As Jesus told them, “the disciple is not above His master” (Matthew 10:24). “If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household?” (Matthew 10:25).

Note that 12:3 says that Jesus “endured such contradiction of sinners.” Romans 14:23 says that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” Since Jesus lived with perfect faith in the Father and religious Israel lived with faith in their religious system, He had to endure “such contradiction of sinners” (12:3) from the religious crowd. (This contradiction is seen in Psalm 22:12-21.) So, too, believing Israel will have to endure the contradiction of sinners that will be apostate Israel, as they trust in the Antichrist’s religious system (Babylon) over having faith in God’s law covenant with them. Without looking to Jesus as their example, they will be wearied in trying to rationalize in their minds going against the apostate religious system, when it seems like they should be going with it. They will then faint and not endure unto the end.

We can see this happening today in the dispensation of grace. So many people will not believe right division, because they rationalize that the majority of Christianity must be right, instead of looking to Paul’s example of having “all they which [be] in Asia” turn away from him (II Timothy 1:15). Note that the battle is in the mind. If Israel sees that Jesus had the same opposition as they will have in the tribulation period, then they will not faint in their minds and will continue to go against the grain by faith.

12:4 Resisting unto blood comes primarily in the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period, which is known as the Great Tribulation period. At that point, “that man of sin”—the Antichrist—will control the whole world. If believing Israel is wearied and faints in their minds with the religion of apostate Israel telling them to follow the Antichrist, there is no hope for them when “that man of sin be revealed” (II Thessalonians 2:3), and he requires all to worship the image of the beast or be killed (Revelation 13:15). The little flock’s resistance in the tribulation period is against religion. In the Great Tribulation (the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period), their resistance causes their own blood to be shed. They will not just have a battle of their minds, but they will be “striving against sin” (12:4) itself. If they have already fainted in their minds in the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation period (12:3), they WILL worship the image of the beast and lose their own souls. Therefore, the author gives them the warning here.

By the way, in Christianity today, there is a great emphasis placed on not taking the mark of the beast. Almost nothing is said about not worshipping the image of the beast, yet Revelation 13:15 says that capital punishment is instituted by the Antichrist for not worshipping the image. Revelation 14:9-11 says that worshipping the image is enough to cast you into the lake of fire forever. What will probably happen, then, is that people will rationalize worshipping the image to avoid physical death by saying that God will not kill them for just bowing down. Then, because “sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily” (Ecclesiastes 8:11), they will think they can go ahead and take the mark to buy and sell, and they will still be okay with God. Therefore, many will worship the image, see that God did not strike them down, and then take the mark so that they can have food.

A similar thing happened with Eve. God said that she would die when she ate the fruit (Genesis 2:17). Eve added a commandment, saying that God told her not to touch it (Genesis 3:3). When she touched it and nothing happened to her, she rationalized that eating it would be okay, as well (Genesis 3:6). Satan has already set up the deception through Christianity today regarding the image of the beast, making people think they will be okay if they just worship the image, but that is not the case.

12:5-6 These two verses are a quote of Proverbs 3:11-12. Note the context in Proverbs. In Proverbs 3:1, Israel is exhorted to “forget not My law: but let THINE HEART keep My commandments.” Instead, Israel followed religion; therefore, God gives the warning to “trust in the Lord with all THINE HEART; and lean not unto thine own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5). But, Israel, again, did not listen to God. So, Proverbs 3:11-12 warns of God’s chastening of Israel.

The writer of Hebrews quotes Proverbs 3:11-12 now to show that God’s chastening of Israel is fulfilled in the tribulation period. Because Israel would not believe the gospel of the kingdom, preached by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:2), Jesus (Matthew 4:17), and the 12 disciples (Luke 9:2,6), God has to chasten Israel with the tribulation period. Thus, the tribulation period for Israel can be equated to a little child being spanked by his father. When God does chasten Israel, they are not to faint (12:5) in their minds (12:3), but they are to learn from the rebuking to trust in God’s law covenant with them, rather than leaning on their own understanding (Proverbs 3:5), i.e., religion (Deuteronomy 8:5 also mentions that God will chasten Israel.).

12:7-8 If they “endure chastening” (12:7), it means that they have endured unto the end of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:13). “But if ye be without chastisement” (12:8), that means that they have decided not to be God’s sons and want to be children of the devil (John 8:44) instead. “Then are ye bastards, and not sons” (12:8). In other words, apostate Israel are bastards, meaning that their father is the devil, even though their mother is Israel.

Therefore, they are not part of God's seed line, and they do not receive eternal life.

12:8 says that "all are partakers" of God's chastening. The "all" would be all of God's sons, i.e., believing Israel. I Peter 5:9 says "that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren." Apostate Israel are not brothers with believing Israel, because they are bastards. Therefore, what 12:7-8 is saying is that God's chastisement of Israel, as sons in the tribulation period, shows who are real sons (believing Israel) and who are bastards (apostate Israel). If they do not endure chastisement, because they have aligned themselves with the Antichrist, then they are not saved.

The parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 makes this clear, as well. Until the Great Tribulation comes, both wheat (believing Israel) and tares (apostate Israel) look the same (Matthew 13:28-30). It is only after the tribulation period is over, i.e., the chastisement period, that both become clear and apostate Israel is thrown into the lake of fire (Matthew 13:40-42), and believing Israel shall be in God's kingdom (Matthew 13:43).

12:9-10 God ordained fathers with the responsibility to chasten their children. Not only does this help us function as a lawful society, but it also serves as an example to Israel of how the great tribulation period is necessary for them to learn the lesson of faith in God's promises to them being essential to live in God's lawful society of the kingdom. People today need only look at these verses to see that spanking your children is for their own good. It is not child abuse.

Note also from 12:9 that the term "the Father of spirits" is used. This shows: 1) That the tribulation period is meant to heal Israel spiritually, and 2) That not all physical Jews are spiritual Jews. The tribulation period will show which Jews are bastards and which Jews are sons.

12:10 says that physical fathers punish their kids "after their own pleasure." This does not mean that fathers get pleasure out of spanking their children. Rather, it means that they have a long-term pleasure from punishing their kids, because they recognize that discipline will help keep their children out of trouble when they become adults. However, the rules, that the fathers set, only help in the flesh. Therefore, they are like the law given to Moses, i.e., they are not really profitable in the sense that they cannot give their children eternal life. They can only help in this life, and there is no profit to be had in this world (Mark 8:36), because it will pass away (Matthew 24:35). By contrast, God's chastisement of Israel is for Israel's profit, because it purifies them so that they "might be partakers of His holiness" (12:10) in the kingdom.

12:11 Just like being spanked by your physical father is no fun, Israel's being chastised by God with the tribulation period will not be fun either. The

result, though, will be that their faith in God's promises to them will be "exercised thereby" (12:11), which means that the little flock's faith muscle will grow stronger to the point that, when Jesus comes to bring them into the kingdom, they will have complete faith in God and become His sons (Revelation 21:7). So, the tribulation period is nothing to look forward to in the flesh, but, when it is over, Israel will come forth as gold (Job 23:10).

Note that 12:11 says that the tribulation period "yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness." Israel will rule and reign over the Gentiles in God's kingdom on earth (Deuteronomy 32:8). They will, then, be in charge of keeping peace on the earth, which means swift execution of judgment (Psalm 147:14-15). Once before, Israel was supposed to bring peace in the Promised Land, and they failed to do so, because they did not utterly destroy the sinful inhabitants, like God told them to do (Cp. Deuteronomy 12:2 with I Samuel 15:9). The result was a history of war in the land that will continue until Jesus' second coming.

The tribulation period will show saved Israel that sin must be judged swiftly, or else evil will continue (Ecclesiastes 8:11). That is why Jesus will rule the Gentiles with a rod of iron (Psalm 2:9). Having learned this in the tribulation period, Israel will rule with a rod of iron with Jesus, executing swift judgment of the Gentiles in the millennial kingdom. Therefore, not only does the tribulation period bring Israel into God's kingdom, but it also equips them to rule over the Gentiles in that kingdom and keep the peace while maintaining God's righteousness on the earth. This is "the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (12:11).

As a side note, Christians often think that God chastens us today by bringing something bad upon us due to some secret sin in our lives. However, the scripture rightly divided does not support this idea. Even in Israel's dispensation, the disciples asked Jesus, "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2). Jesus said, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents" (John 9:3). Today, in the dispensation of grace, I Corinthians 11:32 is the only mention of us being "chastened of the Lord." This is an indirect chastening, whereby others do not have faith in the gospel or the sound doctrine we give them due to our un-Christlike behavior. Therefore, chastening today comes only in not seeing souls saved or come into the knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:4), because others do not see us walking in the Spirit.

Incidentally, this may be how II Samuel 7:14 is fulfilled. This verse is God's promise to His Son that He would "chasten Him with the rod of men" if He commit iniquity (II Samuel 7:14). Why would God say this, since Jesus Christ never sinned (Hebrews 4:15)? Perhaps it is because, today, we are the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:27), and so Christ is chastened with the rod of men by us committing the iniquity of the lack of faith in God's Word to work through our lives, such that others do not believe the gospel we proclaim.

12:12-13 These verses use physical body parts as references to the spiritual condition of Israel, when the tribulation period begins. Because they need to learn the importance of righteous ruling, they had better get their spiritual hands, knees, and feet in order right now before the great tribulation period starts.

The little flock's hands are hanging down, rather than pointing apostate Israel to faith in God's law by turning the pages of God's Word. Thus, their spiritual hands are motionless, which is why God has to send them two witnesses for the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation period to get Israel moving (Revelation 11:3-7). Israel's knees are feeble, because they have not exercised them in so long (12:11) that, spiritually speaking, they do not even know how to walk (By the way, 12:12 is a reference to Isaiah 35:3, and Isaiah 35:4 says, "Behold, your God will come with vengeance," which shows that the original context in Isaiah also refers to the tribulation period.).

The path is symbolic of the way into the kingdom (Matthew 7:13-14). The believing remnant's leaders' job was to make the path straight (Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:3), lighted with God's Word (Psalm 119:105), so that the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 10:6-8) may find their way (Proverbs 4:13-19) into the kingdom. The more faith that believing Israel has in God's Word to them, the light "shineth more and more unto the perfect day," which is the day of atonement in the kingdom (Proverbs 4:18).

Therefore, the elders of the little flock are to "make straight paths for [their] feet" (12:13; Proverbs 4:26) by having faith in God's law. God's law will direct their paths (Proverbs 3:6) so that they can find "lame" members of the little flock and point them in the right direction of the path into God's kingdom. Thus, this call is for the believing remnant to help the lost sheep of the house of Israel make it into the kingdom.

12:14 If the little flock's leaders' feet are on the path of the kingdom (Proverbs 4:25-27), they are proclaiming the gospel of peace to Israel (Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15). This makes them peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). This is the idea of "follow peace with all men" (12:14). The little flock is to preach the gospel of the kingdom in the tribulation period so that people may believe and have peace with God. The idea is not for them to make peace with everyone. Jesus said He did not come to bring peace, but a sword (Matthew 10:34). The little flock will not be at peace at all with unbelievers. In fact, the religious folks will drag them in front of judges and rulers (Mark 13:9-13). The peace, then, of 12:14, refers to spiritual peace. Jesus left His peace with the little flock (John 20:19), and they are sent to give God's peace to others (John 20:21), which makes them "peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9).

If men accept God's peace, offered to them by the little flock, that means they believe the gospel. Then, they are water baptized to be identified with the little flock (Acts 2:38). This is also a sign of God cleansing them at His

second coming. Thus, it is said that they wash away their sins by being water baptized (Acts 22:16). Therefore, by being water baptized, they are also following after holiness. The reminder is given that, without holiness, “no man shall see the Lord” (12:14).

12:15 They are to continue in holiness with works that are a demonstration of their faith (James 2:17). Thus, they are to “watch and pray, that [they] enter not into temptation” (Matthew 26:41). The little flock, when they see apostate Israel joining the Antichrist and the Antichrist controlling the world, may feel alone. That is why they are not to forsake the assembling of themselves together to exhort one another to keep the faith as they see the day of the Lord approaching (10:25). The problem is that some, in their midst, will get bitter with God, becoming impatient with the injustices that they are receiving at the hands of the Antichrist and apostate Israel. Therefore, the little flock needs to watch diligently for “any root of bitterness” (12:15) springing up, because “many [may] be defiled” (12:15) by it and lose their own souls.

There is also great danger in the root of bitterness occurring within the little flock. They will be casting out devils, speaking in new tongues, taking up serpents, drinking poison, and healing the sick, as signs that confirm the gospel they preach (Mark 16:17-20). One sign may appear to be “greater” than another, and there could be internal strife over the importance of members of the little flock, based upon who does what sign. That is what happened in the Corinthian church (I Corinthians 12:25, 14:26). Then, the sign becomes magnified, sound doctrine is compromised, the church bites and devours one another (Galatians 5:15), and many are defiled (12:15). Therefore, sound doctrine must be maintained.

12:16-17 The example of Esau is given to show how bitterness, among the little flock, can turn a friend into an enemy. Rather than having faith in God’s promise to him (via the birthright), Esau was willing to give up eternal life in the land so that he would not go hungry for a few hours. Similarly, the little flock has the promise of eternal life in the Promised Land, but they will go without food and water, because they will not take the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:17). In fact, hunger will be so great that some will become sick to the point of death and need the prayer of faith to save them (James 5:14-15). Therefore, the danger is that they will grow bitter with God and give up their “birthright” by taking the mark so that they do not continue hungry.

Note that these people are called fornicators and profane (12:16), meaning that they have rejected God and aligned themselves with the Antichrist for the things of this world. Times will get so bad that, if the days of the great tribulation were any longer, “there should no flesh be saved” (Matthew 24:21-22). Therefore, the little flock needs to watch diligently (12:15) to keep a root of bitterness against God from uprising up that would defile many

(12:15). In fact, it is this defilement that causes most of Israel to have to trim their lamps before Jesus comes (Matthew 25:7).

When Esau rejected the firstborn's blessing, he could not get it back, even though he cried (Genesis 27:34). The same holds true for Israel in the tribulation period. Once they take the mark of the beast, they give up the blessing of the land, regardless of how much they cry about it (Zechariah 12:10-11). That is why the writer tells them: "exhort one another daily, while it is called To day" (3:13), because, if someone worships the image of the beast, "To day" is over for them.

By the way, the term "place of repentance" does not refer to Esau's repentance, but to Isaac's repentance. Repentance means to change your mind, not to turn from your sins. Therefore, although Esau sought Isaac to change his mind and give him the blessing, Esau did not get the blessing. The same holds true for Israel in the tribulation period. If they worship the beast and take the mark, they will not receive the blessing of eternal life in the kingdom, even though they seek it carefully with tears (12:17).

12:18 Most Christians believe that the God of the Old Testament was a vengeful God, Who killed people on a whim, while Jesus is the loving God of the New Testament, Who does not judge, but loves. However, this view is the opposite of what the author of Hebrews presents in 12:18-29. Here, the law covenant, in the Old Testament, was given in God's mercy, while the God of the New Testament is a consuming fire (12:29).

What we need to realize is that "the mount that might be touched" (12:18) of the Mosaic law is a mountain of God's mercy, while "mount Sion" of "the heavenly Jerusalem" (12:22) is a mountain of God's judgment. To understand this, we need to know the background behind both mountains.

With regard to "the mount that might be touched," God delivered Israel from Egypt by leading them through the Red Sea on dry land (Exodus 14:21-22). Israel had ample evidence to have faith in God's provision for them. Yet, once they were in the wilderness, they began to complain. In Exodus 15:23-24, they murmured against Moses, and God gave them water to prove them (Exodus 15:25). Then, in Exodus 16:2-3, Israel complained to God, and God gave them the law of the Sabbath to prove them (Exodus 16:22-26). Israel disobeyed (Exodus 16:27-28). The penalty for disobeying the Sabbath is death (Exodus 31:14-15). Therefore, if God gave Israel what they deserved at this point, they would have been destroyed.

Instead, God, in His mercy, gave Israel the law (Even then, God almost destroyed them when He gave the law (Exodus 32:10-14).). Because the law is holy (Romans 7:12) and Israel was unholy, the giving of the Mosaic law was a scary sight (Exodus 19:16-19; 20:18-19), but it was God's mercy, at that time, that He spared them. Then, under the law covenant, if the wicked turned from their sins, God would forgive them, and they would live in the

land (Ezekiel 18:21) forever. Therefore, the law represents a renewed opportunity for apostate Israel to believe God and have eternal life with Him.

This opportunity is presented to Israel in the at-hand phase of the kingdom with the gospel of the kingdom. Their belief in the gospel means that they trust God to give them eternal life through the law covenant He gave them. However, if a Jew worships the image of the beast or takes the mark of the beast, he has abandoned God's law covenant and has aligned himself with the Antichrist instead. This represents a permanent stand of unbelief of God, which means they have rejected His mercy under the law covenant.

Since they have rejected the mountain of mercy, the only mountain left for them is the mountain of judgment. They will see Jesus "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64). He will sit upon "a great white throne" (Revelation 20:11), judge all unbelievers according to their works, and cast them into an eternal lake of fire (Revelation 20:12-15).

Therefore, God gives mercy with the law, but that mercy appears to be vengeful, due to the holiness of the law. Then, God sends Jesus to bring eternal life to believers. Since Jesus is the only way into life (John 14:6), rejecting Him means they receive eternal damnation in the lake of fire. As the writer says in 10:26-27, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Therefore, God's wrath is much greater at the end, because, then, His wrath is "poured out without mixture" (Revelation 14:10), while any wrath of the Old Testament was mixed with mercy because forgiveness was still possible for the living.

It is funny how people will quote 13:8, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" to say that right division is a lie because God never changes, yet 12:18 says that God changed His dealings with Israel, even within their own dispensation! Under the law, the wicked, who turn from their sins, are forgiven. Under the tribulation, coming from heavenly Jerusalem, there is no forgiveness for those, who take the mark or worship his image due to the finality of rejecting Jesus' sacrifice for their sins.

12:20-21 The Mosaic law gave them fear of death so that they "may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (12:28). The law is holy (Romans 7:12), such that, not only they could not follow it, but also "they could not [even] endure that which was commanded" (12:20). They could not even endure it vicariously through an animal! If an animal just touched the mount on which the law was given, they were to kill the animal right away. Otherwise, they would have been killed themselves by coming into contact with the animal. When Moses came down from the mountain, he had to veil his face, because they could not even behold the glory of the law that was still on his face (II Corinthians 3:7 and Exodus 34:33-34). Moses even "said, I exceedingly fear and quake" (12:21) over the prospect of having to meet

God on the mountain and receive the law. Therefore, we see what a fearful thing the holy law is, and yet the law is seen, here, as a picture of mercy, while the REAL fearful thing is coming into contact with “God the Judge of all” (12:23).

12:22-23 Jesus’ death on the cross is the atoning sacrifice for Israel’s sins. If they refuse His sacrifice, “there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins” (10:26). Therefore, rather than receiving more mercy for their unbelief, as Israel in the wilderness received, at the end of the tribulation period, apostate Israel will be judged by God. Therefore, this “mount Sion” is a place of righteous judgment (Revelation 20:11-15), not mercy (Exodus 25:17-22). It is the sentencing phase (Luke 22:69), not the plea bargaining phase (Luke 23:39-43).

If the mount, on which Moses received the law, was such a fearful sight, how much more fearful is the sight of the heavenly Mount Sion. In the tribulation period, when the Antichrist tries to get them to worship the image of the beast, Israel is standing before God on mount Sion in the heavenly Jerusalem before “an innumerable company of angels, ... the ... church of the firstborn [i.e., saved Israel], ... God the Judge of all, and ... the spirits of just men made perfect” (all saved people outside of Israel) (12:22-23). If the law would cause Israel to die for their unholiness, just by touching a cat that touched the mount on which the law was given, you can rest assured, one million times over, that those worshipping the image of the beast and taking his mark will be thrown into the lake of fire forever (Revelation 14:9-11). It could not be any clearer than that! (This same visual is also given in Revelation 14:1.) This is the visual image that all people need to have when they are told to worship the image of the beast or be killed. The three Hebrew boys (Daniel 3) survived such a threat with Nebuchadnezzar, and the believing remnant in the tribulation period can survive, too.

Now, “the church of the firstborn” is saved Israel, because God specifically says that Israel is His firstborn (Exodus 4:22). Their names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20) to show that they are inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem. A lot is made out of the phrase “the spirits of just men made perfect.” This phrase is a reference to all saved people in heaven, who are not part of Israel’s program. Thus, this is mostly the body of Christ. Since the mystery had not yet been revealed at the time of the writing of Hebrews, the body of Christ is not mentioned. Therefore, a more generic term is used. And, this is not to say that Israel has eternal life in heaven. It is just saying that the body of Christ stands as a witness against those taking the mark of the beast or worshipping his image.

12:24 The good news, though, is that Israel, in the tribulation period, can still receive eternal life, because Jesus mediated a new covenant for them. By having faith in God, then, they can boldly approach God’s throne (Hebrews 4:16). Therefore, by coming “unto the city of the living God”

(12:22), they will either be judged into the lake of fire, because of their unbelief, or they will be welcomed into God's city, because they had faith in God's law covenant with them, thereby, receiving "the blood of sprinkling" for "the new covenant" (12:24) that is between saved Israel and God for all eternity. Therefore, coming unto the true, Mount Zion is not necessarily a bad thing.

In Genesis 4:10, God said that the voice of Abel's blood cried unto God from the ground. That cry is for vengeance, as Matthew 23:35-36 says that "the blood of righteous Abel" will come upon the generation of vipers in unbelief. So, when Hebrews 12:24 says that Jesus' blood "speaketh better things than that of Abel," it means that Abel's blood talks about the righteous being avenged for unjust death, while Jesus' blood speaks of eternal life to all those with faith in God. In other words, Abel's blood speaks of eternal death in the lake of fire for unbelievers, and Jesus' blood speaks of eternal life with God for believers (10:19-22; John 3:16).

12:25 So, the line in the sand is drawn. Jesus' blood speaks eternal life in the kingdom under the new covenant for believers, while Abel's blood speaks eternal damnation in the lake of fire for violating the old covenant for the unbelievers in Israel. With eternal consequences at stake, Israel should see to it that they refuse not Jesus' offer to them. Since Israel did not escape death if they came close to the mountain from which the law was given (3:17-19), Israel certainly will not escape eternal death when God speaks to them from the true Mount Zion in the heavenly Jerusalem (10:26-31)!

12:26 The promise, referenced here, is found in Haggai 2:6. This shaking occurs at Jesus' second coming, in which God makes Christ's enemies His footstool (Psalm 110:1) so that Jesus can come with the Word of God and tread "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:15). If Jews are in unbelief, they will be part of the generation of vipers that God judges at that time. Therefore, since they were afraid when God shook the earth in giving the law to Moses, you know unbelievers are in eternal trouble when He comes and shakes both the earth and the heaven surrounding the earth! People will think that God does not exist or that He cannot touch them, or else He would have done so already. However, all they are doing is making it worse for themselves come judgment day.

12:27 According to 12:26-27, God first shook the earth when He gave the law. That was a warning of the judgment to come with the second shaking. The author emphasizes that "yet once more" means that this second shaking will cause all movable things to be destroyed. These movable things would be Satan and his forces in heaven (Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:25; Luke 21:26) and the wicked on earth (Job 38:13).

Hebrews 11:3 says "that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Everything

that God made was “very good” (Genesis 1:31). The problem is that the “things which are seen” are the evil of Satan’s creation. Thus, God will shake out those things, leaving only the things that God created. Psalm 104:2 says that God “stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.” Satan has come along and dirtied up the heaven and the earth. So, God will come along and shake the curtain, getting all of the dust out of it. The point is that, at Jesus’ second coming, God will destroy Satan’s creation. If Israel aligns herself with the Antichrist, she is part of Satan’s creation and will be shaken out with it. Thus, it behooves Israel to believe the gospel of the kingdom so that they will not be shaken out when God shakes the earth and the heaven.

By the way, the shaking out of heaven will take place midway through the tribulation period. That is when Satan and his forces will be shaken out of heaven (Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:25; Luke 21:26). This means that, for the Great Tribulation (the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period), the “devil is come down unto [the earth], having great wrath” (Revelation 12:12). Israel needs to continue to have faith in God during Satan’s great wrath in order to survive God’s great wrath when He shakes the earth at the end of the tribulation period, since the wicked are the ones, who will be shaken out of the earth (Job 38:13). What will remain is God’s kingdom (12:28), and the righteous, who cannot be moved (Psalm 1).

12:28-29 With the wicked removed, the curse of sin is lifted (Revelation 22:3), and Israel receives God’s eternal kingdom on earth. In order to be part of that kingdom, Israel needs to be righteous by believing the gospel of the kingdom. If Israel takes God at His Word and seed with the eyes of faith that they have “come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God” (12:22), then they will serve God “acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (12:28). God accepts such humble service.

Contrast this with apostate Israel, who will do work in God’s name, but will be thrown into the lake of fire, because they serve God out of their own flesh (Matthew 7:22-23), rather than doing so out of a heart of faith, as the little flock will. Therefore, God will consume apostate Israel in fire. The illustration is given in Daniel 3. The little flock, as represented by the 3 Hebrew boys, are thrown into the fiery furnace of the tribulation period. Because they have faith in God, they shall come forth as gold (Job 23:10). Apostate Israel (the ones who threw them in) is thrown into the fire, like Nebuchadnezzar’s guards were, and they are consumed by the fire, because of their lack of faith.

Thus, all people are thrown into the spiritual fire, but only those with faith in God are not consumed by the fire. And, that faith in God, in the tribulation period, is demonstrated by serving God “with reverence and godly fear” (12:28). By the way, the warning of God, being a consuming fire, also shows up in Deuteronomy 4:24, where Moses warns Israel not to serve idols! Then, Psalm 21:9 tells of how God will devour His enemies in a fire.

Therefore, Israel has evidence from the Old Testament, as well, that they should serve God under the old covenant, lest God consume them.

13 This final chapter of Hebrews progresses doctrinally past initial faith in God's promises to Israel unto an exhortation to continue and grow in that faith during the tribulation period, in order to do God's will, which is for all Israel to be saved (Romans 11:26). Thus, we see the warning not to get involved with the Antichrist's religious system again (v. 4). They are told not to covet the material possessions of apostate Israel (v. 5); otherwise, they will exchange their souls for material possessions that will soon pass away (Matthew 16:26). They are to obey those over them in the little flock (vs. 7 and 17) so that they keep their faith in God. This will increase their faith in God over time so that they will do God's will (v. 21). Thus, Hebrews concludes with the little flock serving God in the tribulation period so that the rest of Israel may be saved.

13:1 Israel will have everyone against them in the tribulation period. In order to endure unto the end of the tribulation period to be saved (Matthew 24:13), the little flock will need to take care of each other, both physically and spiritually. This "brotherly love" (13:1), then, includes "exhorting one another" (10:25) to continue in faith in God and help one another with physical food. Note how the verse starts with "let," which shows that Christ's love for the brethren will naturally flow from those having faith in God's Word to them.

13:2 Entertaining angels unawares should remind us of Lot's taking care of two angels of God, who came to Sodom and Gomorrah to spy out the land (Genesis 19:2-3). Lot tried to keep these men safe from the men of the city, who wanted to have sex with them (Genesis 19:4-9). Similarly, the believing remnant will be living in spiritual Sodom and Gomorrah in the tribulation period. In fact, God warns that He will overthrow Babylon, like He overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah 13:19-22), and Revelation 18:2 shows that this happens at the end of the tribulation period. Israel had better get out of their apostasy, because God likens apostate Israel to Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah 1:9-10; Jeremiah 23:14), which means they will be destroyed with Babylon.

Daniel 11:37 says that the Antichrist will not regard "the desire of women." Therefore, homosexual perversions will probably be part of the Antichrist's religion, just like they were in Sodom's religion. Given the parallels and the degree of angelic activity mentioned in the book of the Revelation, it is not far fetched to conclude that God will send angels to spy out Babylon before God destroys it. Therefore, if the little flock sees "strangers" on their side, they should show them brotherly love, for they may be helping out God's angelic spies. As such, the context of this verse is Israel in the Great Tribulation. There are no angels taking human form and dwelling among us today in the dispensation of grace, as most people have twisted this scripture to say.

13:3 When members of the little flock are persecuted for their faith in God during the tribulation period, other members of the little flock should look after them so that more believers are alive to witness to the unbelievers. This helping of the little flock is so important to God that it is how Gentiles, in the tribulation period, get into God's kingdom (Matthew 25:31-46).

13:4 Given the context, the writer can only be talking about the little flock's spiritual marriage to God (Revelation 19:7-8), and not about physical marriage. In fact, the Babylonian religious and economic system of the Antichrist is called "the mother of harlots" (Revelation 17:5). All nations are said to have committed fornication with her (Revelation 17:2 & 18:3). Therefore, this warning of 13:4 tells the little flock to be completely separate from the Antichrist, his religious system, and apostate Israel.

In fact, the writer later says in this chapter for Israel to "go forth" unto Jesus "without the camp, bearing His reproach" (13:13). This is the same as telling them, here, to have an honourable marriage and undefiled bed with Christ. Otherwise, if they worship the image of the beast or take his mark, "God will judge" them as "whoremongers and adulterers" (13:4), which means they will be consumed with his fire (12:29). Therefore, they are to stay separate from the Antichrist and apostate Israel. They are to "touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her" (Isaiah 52:11).

13:5 Staying separate from the Antichrist and apostate Israel will be hard for the little flock to do, given the material wealth and power that they would receive if they align themselves with the Antichrist. Therefore, the little flock needs to stay away from coveting apostate Israel's possessions. If they start coveting apostate Israel and talking about their possessions with envy when they assemble themselves together, instead of "exhorting one another" (10:25) to have faith in God, they will be convincing each other to take the mark of the beast. Instead, they are to trust God's promise to them that, in spite of what is going on around them, He will not leave or forsake them (13:5).

The part about not leaving them or forsaking them goes back to God's promise to Joshua, and Israel under Joshua, in Deuteronomy 31:7-8 and Joshua 1:5, when Israel was about to enter the Promised Land. Joshua is a type of Jesus, even to the point of sharing the same name (the Greek translation of "Joshua" is "Jesus"). Since the kingdom is at hand at the time that Hebrews is written, Israel is in a similar situation in the tribulation period as Israel was under Moses.

Note that Joshua 1:5 is quoted and not Matthew 28:20. In the Matthew passage, Jesus says that He is with the little flock "unto the end of the world." But, the end of the world does not come until after the millennial reign is over. What is in view in Hebrews is Jesus' second coming and the millennial kingdom, not the end of the world. Therefore, Joshua is quoted

instead. This is a proof, then, that the so-called Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 is not for today and is not in force until the millennial reign begins.

13:6 This is a quote of Psalm 118:6. Note that the believing remnant “BOLDLY” says that they do not fear what man will do unto them. Considering that man wants to kill them for not worshipping the image of the beast (Revelation 13:15), this is a bold statement indeed! Just because the Lord is their helper does not mean that He will save them from physical death. Rather, it means that the Lord helps them in death in that He raises them from the dead to resurrection life in the kingdom. Since man cannot keep this from happening, there is no need to fear man. Man can only destroy the body, not the soul (Matthew 10:28, 16:26).

13:7 Those, having rule over them, would be their spiritual leaders in the little flock (I Peter 5:1-6) and NOT apostate Israel or the kings under the Antichrist. This is evident from the fact that these rulers speak the Word of God unto the little flock. There is also some indication from scripture that the 12 apostles will be resurrected to guide the little flock during the tribulation period. Therefore, the 12 apostles may be in view here. At any rate, the charge to the little flock is for them to listen to the spiritual leaders among them, because they are exhorting them to have faith in God’s Word to them. The little flock should heed that exhortation, since “the end of their conversation” (13:7) is eternal life in the kingdom.

13:8 Christians use this verse to say that God never changes, which is true. However, they then go on to say that God’s dealings with man never change, and that is FALSE. That is not what the verse says. Just because God never changes, it does not mean that He does not change His dealings with man. We see Him changing all of the time. In fact, He just told Israel in the Great Tribulation period that God does not judge them according to the law of Moses, but they are judged based on their faith in God or their lack of faith in God, resulting in them taking the mark of the beast (12:18,22).

God dealt with Adam differently than He dealt with Noah. He dealt with Abraham differently than He dealt with Paul. He dealt with Israel in Jesus’ day differently than He dealt with Israel under the law. Therefore, Hebrews 13:8 has nothing to do with God’s DEALINGS with man.

Also, 13:8 has nothing to do with God. It says that “Jesus Christ” is the same, not the “Lord Jesus Christ.” What the verse is saying is that Jesus Christ, the man, had faith in the Father, regardless of the circumstances that He faced. He stayed true to the Father during the miracles, His death, and His resurrection. Similarly, the little flock should have faith in the Father during the miracles He performs through them and all the way up to their physical deaths. This interpretation makes sense in light of 13:9, which talks about not being carried away with false doctrine.

13:8 also means that Jesus Christ's blood gives eternal life "yesterday, and to day, and for ever." If man has faith in whatever God tells him to have faith in, then God gives him eternal life through the blood of Jesus Christ. That is how God judges all men by Paul's gospel, even though all men have not heard Paul's gospel (Romans 2:16), because Jesus Christ's blood is the same, atoning blood for "yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (13:8).

13:9 The foundation of salvation is Jesus Christ. If Israel has faith in God's promise of eternal life to them, they will put themselves back under the law covenant that they agreed to do (Exodus 19:8), and they will not take the mark of the beast. The doctrines of the Antichrist will be "divers and strange" (13:9) in the sense that they will not be according to the law covenant and God's Word to them.

Jesus went over this in Matthew 5, showing that, although similar, the Jewish religion did not teach Israel to keep the law. Jesus kept making the comparison between God's law and the Jews' religion. He said, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time," "but I say unto you" (Matthew 5:21-22). We see this also in Matthew 5:27-28, 31-32, 33-34, 38-39, and 43-44. Just like the Jewish religious system mimicked God's law, the Antichrist's Babylonian religious system will mimic God's law covenant with Israel. In addition, the Antichrist will offer great, material rewards to Israel for joining him. That is why Jesus said, "take no thought for your life" (Matthew 6:25), "but seek ye first the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33). They need to believe God's law covenant with them, and not the Antichrist's covenant with them (Daniel 9:27), which contains "divers and strange doctrines" (13:9). Then, the heart is "established with grace" (13:9), meaning that they have listened to the words of life (John 6:63) found in God's Word, rather than feeding the flesh, which is what "not with meats" (13:9) means here.

Apostate Israel can sacrifice all of the animals that they want, but they will not be accepted by God because they do not have faith in what God has told them. 10:8 says, "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offering and offering for sin Thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law." In fact, Hosea 6:6 says, "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Jesus quotes this to the Pharisees, in Matthew 9:13, and adds the phrase: "for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." In other words, if Israel trusts in meats in and of themselves, they are self-righteous and will not be saved. Therefore, the meats "have not profited them that have been occupied therein" (13:9). But, if they recognize that they need something greater than the animal sacrifices, i.e., Jesus' sacrifice, then they will repent about their religious beliefs and trust in God to bring them into His eternal kingdom on earth.

13:10 If Israel, by faith, put themselves under the law covenant (Exodus 19:8), they will be God's "kingdom of priests and an holy nation" (Exodus

19:6) to the Gentiles. Since they are priests, they “have an altar” to eat from because they “serve the tabernacle” (13:10). Obviously, the writer is talking about the new covenant. Under the old covenant, only the tribe of Levi were priests. The writer has already shown that Jesus brought the better, Melchisedecian priesthood. Therefore, under the new covenant, saved Israel are Melchisedecian priests to the Gentiles.

The point is that, under the Antichrist, apostate Israel will be the Antichrist’s priests, getting the power and money that go along with it. Although that may look good for a while, they will be thrown into the lake of fire forever. Therefore, apostate Israel has not profited by serving the Antichrist. The true profit for Israel comes after the tribulation period in God’s kingdom on earth. Saved Israel will be rewarded by God as a kingdom of priests to the Gentiles. This reward is eternal, since God’s kingdom is eternal. Therefore, the writer is telling Israel: “Don’t worry about the temporary prosperity of apostate Israel. We, as saved Israel, “have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat” (13:10).

13:10-11 When a burnt offering was brought to God in the Old Testament, the person bringing it would bring it to the door of the temple (Leviticus 1:3) and “put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering...to make atonement for him” (Leviticus 1:4). The priest would then take the blood of the animal and sprinkle it before the Lord (Leviticus 4:5-7). Thus, the altar, that the person brought it to, was outside the temple, but the blood was also brought inside the temple to a different altar so that the Lord would recognize it.

Similarly, Jesus was sacrificed outside of the city (13:12), and He brought His blood into the holy of holies in heavenly places (9:24-26), so that the Lord would recognize His sacrifice as atonement for Israel’s sins. Therefore, when 13:10 says, “we have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle,” it means that believers come to the cross, where His blood was spilled (John 19:34), so that His sacrifice atones for their sins, and partake of the heavenly altar for their eternal life. Those, who serve the tabernacle, would be apostate Israel, and they have no right to eternal life, because of their unbelief.

The Antichrist will rebuild Israel’s temple (Daniel 9:27) and sit in it, declaring himself to be God (II Thessalonians 2:4), which will make it look like he is the true Christ. That is why the writer, here, reminds Israel that, God had the animal sacrifices for sin burned outside of Israel (Exodus 29:14; Leviticus 4:11-12; Numbers 19:3). So, Israel does not meet God by going to the Antichrist’s temple and participating in his sacrifices. The true sacrifices for sin are burned outside of that religious system (13:11).

13:12 Jesus, Himself, proved this by suffering “without the gate” or outside of Israel’s religious system and outside of the apostate temple (13:12; Matthew 21:39). He could not make Israel holy, or sanctified, within Israel’s polluted religious system. Therefore, He was killed by the Romans. Why,

then, would Israel, in the tribulation period, want to align themselves with the very system that is corrupt, such that they kicked their own Messiah out of it?

Jesus was crucified at a place called “Golgotha” in the Greek (Matthew 27:33, Mark 15:22, and John 19:17), which is translated into the English “Calvary” in Luke 23:33. It was just outside the city of Jerusalem. We know this, because 13:12 says so. However, we also have a clue that this is the case by Matthew 21:39, which says that Jesus would be cast out of the vineyard and slain.

13:13 Since Israel’s sacrifice for sins is outside of apostate Jerusalem and Israel’s religious system and the Antichrist’s rule, Israel needs to abandon their covenant with the Antichrist (Daniel 9:27), and align themselves with God and His law covenant with them. To do so, means that they will bear Christ’s reproach, as Israel’s religious system will make them outcasts. As a type of this, we see, from 11:26, that Moses bore “the reproach of Christ” instead of accepting “the treasures in Egypt,” when he was rejected as Israel’s redeemer by the Jews in slavery in Egypt. Similarly, the little flock will take on the reproach of Christ, esteeming it better than the Antichrist’s riches, by fleeing to the mountains when the abomination of desolation stands in the holy place (Matthew 24:15-16).

We see God commanding the little flock to come out of apostate Israel in Isaiah 52:11, and this commandment is fulfilled in Revelation 18:4-6. We also have John the Baptist as a type of this, since believing Israel fled to him, outside of the city, confessing the sins of the nation and being water baptized to be saved (Matthew 3:5-6).

This verse is the conclusion of the whole book of Hebrews. The information, contained in the book, is to give Israel God’s perspective so that they will abandon their covenant with the Antichrist and have faith in God’s promises to them in the law covenant before they worship the image of the beast and take its mark. Then, it will be too late for them.

It is no coincidence, then, that this instruction is found in 13:13, since 13 is the number of rebellion in the Bible, and believing Israel will have to rebel against the Antichrist at this time.

13:14 Israel may be able to rule over the world with the Antichrist in the tribulation period, but the Antichrist’s city will fall at Jesus’ second coming (Revelation 18:2; Isaiah 21:9). Therefore, “HERE” Israel has “no CONTINUING city” (13:14). The eyes of faith recognize this, and know that “they shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 22:5) in God’s city (11:10), the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:1-3). Therefore, they do not put their trust in the Antichrist’s city, but they “seek one to come” (13:14), “the city of the living God” (12:22).

13:15 Therefore, believing Israel is not offering sacrifices in apostate Israel's system. But, the law requires they bring sacrifices. So, how do they obey the law without going to the temple and being killed by the Antichrist? The answer is that they offer "the sacrifice of praise" from their lips (13:15). Psalm 141:2 specifically says, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Since they cannot offer a holy sacrifice in the temple, God allows their "sacrifice of praise" to substitute for the animal sacrifices required under the Levitical law. That sacrifice of praise is acceptable to God, because it is "by Him," i.e., Christ (13:15). In other words, because they have already gone to the heavenly altar (13:10), they are now in Christ, and so they can serve God spiritually by offering a sacrifice of praise, rather than one of animals. In fact, Hosea 14:2 calls this "sacrifice of praise," "the calves of [their] lips."

13:16 In addition to "the sacrifice of praise," mentioned in 13:15, God looks for two more sacrifices from the tribulation saints. The first of these is "to do good." This means having the works that go along with their faith. This would include having all things in common (Acts 2:44-45), giving to fellow believers to help them along. Since they cannot participate in the Antichrist's economic system without taking the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:17), any food, that they can get their hands on, is to be shared with fellow believers.

The second of these sacrifices is "to communicate" (13:16). While this includes warning fellow believers of where the Antichrist's forces are in trying to catch the little flock to kill them, the more important communication is to give each other exhortations and encouragements from God's Word. Most of the promises that the body of Christ claim for themselves today really belong to Israel. In the tribulation period, then, Israel can encourage each other with those promises, and they will actually apply to them. Then, they will "trust in the Lord with all [their] heart; and lean not unto [their] own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). By giving these two sacrifices, the little flock helps each other physically and spiritually, which will enable them to endure unto the end of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:13). That is why God "is well pleased" (13:16) with these sacrifices.

13:17 13:7 may refer to the 12 apostles, and 13:17 may refer to lower elders within the little flock. When the number of disciples multiplied in Acts 6:1, the 12 apostles appointed 7 elders to take care of a matter (Acts 6:3). Therefore, as the little flock grows during the tribulation period, elders, grounded in the Word of God, will be appointed to instruct them in God's Word to them so that they will not be caught up in the apostasy program of Israel. These leaders watch for their souls, which means that they can lose their salvation by taking the mark of the beast or worshipping his image (Revelation 14:9-11). Therefore, the little flock should obey them.

Since this will be the last days of Israel's program, God will, once again, pour out His Spirit (Acts 2:17). Therefore, these leaders will be Spirit-filled,

which means that the little flock can trust them to give them the Word of God to them. That is why the author of Hebrews tells them to obey and submit to them. In other words, they will not be corrupted leaders.

13:18 The change that Christ's sacrifice makes in the hearts of believing Israel is evident here. "The blood of bulls and of goats" cannot take away sins (10:4). It leaves past sins in man's conscience (10:2-3). Jesus Christ's sacrifice, however, sprinkles with blood "an evil conscience" (10:22), such that believing Israel can now say: "we have a good conscience" (13:18). At the same time, although they are "willing to live honestly" (13:18), "how to perform that which is good [they] find not" (Romans 7:18), because the sin nature is still with them. Therefore, the writer asks the Hebrews to pray for them.

13:19 However, the more important prayer for the Hebrews to pray is that the writer be restored to them soon. That way, he can be there to teach them the things of God for their program in person, rather than having to do so by letter. The implication is that the writer is a leader of the little flock in the early Acts period, and he wrote this epistle while he was in prison for having faith in God. He was, no doubt, put there by apostate Israel. (The Hebrews must have known who wrote this letter, even though we do not know today.) This is the perfect scenario for writing this book, since the purpose of the book is to get Israel to have faith in God over the religion of the Antichrist and apostate Israel in the tribulation period, and then to keep that faith until the end of the tribulation period so that they may inherit God's kingdom on earth.

13:20 Jesus Christ lived a perfect life and did not know sin until He was "made ... sin" (II Corinthians 5:21). In other words, God put everyone's sins on Jesus so that His death may atone for the sins of all of those with faith in God. So, Jesus paid the penalty of sin, which is death and separation from God, which is why He cried from the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me" (Matthew 27:46). This, then, put Jesus in the same position as all men, i.e., He was dead in sin. But, because of His faith in God (Psalm 16:10-11), Jesus was raised from the dead. In other words, the first person to receive atonement by the blood of Jesus was Jesus. That is what this verse is saying when it says that "God ... brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus ... through the blood of the everlasting covenant."

This also means that Jesus was the first man with whom God made the new covenant. Therefore, the Holy Spirit was given to Jesus in his new body so that He would walk in God's laws by the Spirit. Note that the first thing Jesus would tell His disciples, after His resurrection, was "peace be unto you" (John 20:19, 21, 26). This shows that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross made peace between God and man. That is why the writer calls the Father, "the God of peace" (13:20), here. In other words, since God brought peace to a man with sin on Him (Jesus), because He had faith in what God told Him, God can give eternal peace between God and Israel, also, if they believe what

God has told them, which is the law covenant He made with them. As a man, then, Jesus was saved by His Own blood. As Lord, he is “that great shepherd of the sheep” (13:20). He will gather the lambs, i.e., believing Israel, out of the Antichrist’s kingdom and carry them in His bosom into God’s eternal kingdom on earth (Isaiah 40:11). Believing Israel does not have peace with apostate Israel in the tribulation period, but they do have peace with God, and the Lord Jesus will see that they live in peace for all eternity. All they have to do is endure the tribulation period, keeping faith in God’s promises to them.

Jesus is the good shepherd, because He gave His life for the sheep (John 10:11). He is the great shepherd because He makes them perfect through the tribulation period (13:21). He is the Chief Shepherd, because He rewards the little flock in the kingdom (I Peter 5:4).

13:21 During the tribulation period, believing Israel is called to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). That is, they are to go to apostate Israel and preach the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 10:5-7). In fact, they will not “have gone over the cities of Israel” before Jesus’ second coming (Matthew 10:23). Therefore, when 13:21 says they are “to do His will,” it means they are to preach the gospel of the kingdom to the cities of Israel. They also need to do the signs of the kingdom, which are healing the sick and casting out devils (Matthew 10:8).

In Matthew 17:15-16, we are told that the disciples could not cast out a devil. Jesus said, in Matthew 17:20, that they could not cast out the devil because of their unbelief. Jesus then said that they would be able to cast out the devil “by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:21), which they do when they are forced to do so, in the great tribulation, when they have to fast because they do not have any food because they will not take the mark of the beast. The point is that believing Israel needs increased faith to do the signs of the kingdom, so that the gospel of the kingdom that they preach to the rest of Israel might be believed. Therefore, when 13:21 asks that God make believing Israel “perfect in every good work to do His will,” it is a prayer for the little flock’s faith to increase through the tribulations they go through so that they can perform all the signs of the kingdom so that more people believe the gospel of the kingdom so that more Jews may be in God’s eternal kingdom on earth. Of course, this “is well pleasing in His sight” (13:21), and the salvation of more Jews is “through Jesus Christ,” meaning that it is made possible through the saving blood that Jesus shed on the cross.

13:22 By the time the Jews have read most of this epistle, we see that they have placed their faith in God’s promises to them under the law covenant, when we did not yet see this earlier on in this epistle. This shows the work of God’s Word in Israel during the tribulation period, such that “all Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:26) at the end. Therefore, they can be exhorted to continue to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord” (II Peter

3:18) so that they will allow God to make them “perfect in every good work to do His will” (13:21) throughout the entire, tribulation period. If they do so, they “suffer the word of exhortation” (13:22) of this Hebrew epistle to increase their faith in God during the tribulation period.

13:23 It is this verse that makes people think that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews, since Paul and Timothy traveled together. However, Timothy was not circumcised until Acts 16:3, meaning that Timothy was considered a Gentile before then. Hebrews had to have been written before Acts 7, because the day of salvation for the Jews under Israel’s program was put on hold with the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7, and the writer of Hebrews tells his audience to “exhort one another daily, while it is called To day” (3:13), showing that Israel’s program had not been put on hold yet at the time of the writing of Hebrews. Therefore, “our brother Timothy” cannot be the Timotheus of Acts 16, and the writer cannot be Paul, because he was persecuting and killing Christians before Acts 9. It is safe to say, then, that “our brother Timothy” is a Jew, saved under Israel’s program, who is mentioned nowhere else in scripture.

The indication, from this verse, is that the writer of Hebrews was in prison at the time, and he had just received his release from prison. But, he was still in prison, waiting for Timothy to pick him up so that they could both return home and visit with the believing Jews. God probably had “Timothy” mentioned on purpose to give Satan the angle to generate unbelief in people, making them think that Hebrews was written to the church today. God likes to conceal the truth (Proverbs 25:2) so that only those diligently seeking the truth find it (11:6).

13:24 The writer sends greeting to all of the little flock. First, the greeting goes to the leaders. Second, the greeting goes to all saved Jews. We also learn, here, that the writer was in prison in Italy, not to be confused with Paul’s imprisonment in Rome at the end of Acts.

13:25 Grace is God granting unmerited favor, which would mean God blessing believing Israel in spite of their sins. Tied in with 13:21, it means that they need God’s grace to do the signs of the kingdom to make the gospel of the kingdom more effective as they go to the cities of Israel during the tribulation period. So, when they fail, in not performing the signs and in not preaching the gospel, they do not have to become depressed and give up. Rather, they can boldly come to the throne of grace in their time of need (4:16).