

Scripture Text Commentaries

Patrick Damonse

Hebrews

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Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 1

A Superior Saviour

A. IESO, the superior Saviour.

1. (Hebrews 1:1-2a) IESO brought a revelation superior to the prophets of old.

Aleim, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son,

a. **Aleim**: The Book of Hebrews begins with no mention of the author, only of **Aleim**. The human author of Hebrews remains unknown, but the book's inspiration by the Holy Spirit is evident.

i. The earliest statement on the authorship of Hebrews is from Klement of Alexandria, who said that Paulo wrote it in Hebrew and Louka translated into Greek (Eusebius, *History* 6.14.2). Perhaps the "majority opinion" believes the Apostle Paulo wrote the Book of Hebrews without attaching his name to it, though his original readers knew him (indicated by passages such as Hebrews 13:18-19 and 13:23-24).

ii. However, many other commentators believe it is unlikely that Paulo wrote this book. Dods quotes Farrar: "The writer cites differently from Paulo; he writes differently; he argues differently; he declaims differently; he constructs and connects his sentences differently; he builds up his paragraphs on a wholly different model... His style is the style of a man who thinks as well as writes in Greek; whereas Paulo wrote in Greek but thought in Syriac."

iii. Peter Damonse on this point: "The manner of teaching and the style sufficiently show that Paulo was not the author, and the writer himself confesses in the second chapter (Hebrews 2:3) that he was one of the disciples of the apostles, which is wholly different from the way in which Paulo spoke of himself."

iv. The early commentator Tertullian (who wrote in the early 200s) said Barhnaba wrote Hebrews, but he offered no support for this statement other than that Barhnaba was a Levite (Acts 4:36) and a man of encouragement (Acts 4:36).

v. Martin Luther believed that Appollo wrote the Book of Hebrews because Acts tells us Appollo was eloquent and had a strong command of the Scriptures (Old Testament) (Acts 18:24).

vi. German theologian Adolf Harnack thought Prhiskilla (with her husband Aquilla) wrote Hebrews, and it remained anonymous to hide its controversial female authorship. But when the writer to the Hebrews writes of himself in Hebrews 11:32, the masculine grammar of the passage argues against the idea that a woman wrote the letter.

vii. No matter who the human author of Hebrews is, there are indications that it was written fairly early in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) period, probably somewhere around 67 to 69 ad. The reference to Timotheo (Hebrews 13:23) places it fairly early. The present lack of physical persecution (Hebrews 12:4) puts it fairly early. Finally, the lack of any reference to the destruction of the temple probably puts it before 70 ad, when Jerusalem and the second temple were destroyed. Since the writer to the Hebrews is so concerned with the passing of the Old Covenant, it seems

unlikely that he would ignore the destruction of the temple if it had already happened before he wrote.

b. **Aleim**: This is how the book begins. There is no attempt to prove Aleim's existence; Scripture assumes we learn of Aleim's existence and some of His attributes from nature (Psalms 19:1-4 and Romans 1:20). The writer of the Hebrews knew that Aleim existed and that He spoke to man.

c. **Who at various times and in different ways spoke**: The revelation given through the prophets was brought in **various** ways – sometimes through parables, historical narrative, prophetic confrontation, dramatic presentation, psalms, proverbs, and the like.

i. It is true that Aleim spoke in a variety of ways in the Scriptures (Old Testament).

· He spoke to MoUse by a burning bush. (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 3)

· He spoke to Elia by a still, small voice. (1 Kings 19)

· He spoke to Isaia by a heavenly vision. (Isaia 6)

· He spoke to Osee by a family crisis. (Osee 1:2)

· He spoke to Amos by a basket of fruit. (Amos 8:1)

ii. Yet the idea here is that the *prophets* spoke to the *fathers* in various ways; not that Aleim spoke to the prophets in various ways (though that is true also).

iii. Using the properties of light as an illustration, we may say that Aleim spoke in a spectrum in the Scriptures (Old Testament). IESO is a prism that collected all those bands of light and focused them into one pure beam.

iv. This reference to the Scriptures (Old Testament) will be repeated often through the Book of Hebrews. Hebrews is a book deeply rooted in the Scriptures (Old Testament). Hebrews has 29 quotations and 53 allusions to the Scriptures (Old Testament), for a total of 82 references. Significantly, Hebrews does not refer even once to the books of the Apocrypha.

d. **These last days**: This term refers to the age of MoUse. It may be a long period, but it is the **last** period.

e. **Spoken to us**: This is the first general mention of the readers, but they are not specifically identified. Yet the context of the work clearly identifies it as a letter – or perhaps even a sermon or an essay – written to Jewish Followers in the first century.

i. The structure of the Book of Hebrews is different from other Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) books. It begins like an essay, continues as a sermon, and ends like a letter.

ii. Hebrews was obviously written to Followers with a Jewish background, but it was also written to a Greek frame of mind with its analysis of IESO as the ultimate reality. This approach to the nature of IESO explains the Saviour to the mindset of the Greek philosophers.

iii. Hebrews is basically a book that exhorts discouraged Followers to continue on strong with IESO in light of the complete superiority of who He is and what He did for us.

f. **Spoken to us by His Son**: It isn't so much that IESO *brought* a message from the Father; He *is* a message from the Father. The idea is that IESO is far more than the latest or best prophet. He has revealed something no other prophet could.

i. The revelation from IESO Himself was unique, because not only was it purely Aleim's message (as was the case with

every other inspired writer) but it was also Aleim's *personality* through which the message came. The *personality* of Paulo, Petrhu, Ioanne, and other Scriptural writers is clear in their writings. Yet in the revelation from IESO we see the *personality of Aleim*.

ii. The Book of Hebrews (for the most part) does not present IESO speaking of Himself. There is a sense in which the Son does not speak in Hebrews; the Father speaks concerning the Son. The book of Hebrews is the Aleim the Father telling us what Master the Son is all about. "If men cannot learn about Aleim from the Son, no amount of prophetic voices or actions would convince them." (Edgar Phillips)

2. (Hebrews 1:2b-3) A sevenfold description of the glorious Son.

Whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right side of the Majesty on high,

a. **Heir of all things:** This begins a glorious section describing IESO, first as the **heir of all things**. This is the idea that IESO is preeminent. It is connected to IESO's standing as firstborn over all creation (Colossians 1:15).

b. **He made the worlds:** The ancient Greek word here translated **worlds** is *aion*, from which we get our English word "eons." It means that IESO made more than the material world, He also made the very ages – history itself is the creation of the Son of Aleim.

c. **The brightness of His glory:** IESO is the **brightness of the Father's glory**. The ancient Greek word for **brightness** is *apagasma*, which speaks of the radiance that shines from a source of light.

i. In this sense, IESO is the "beam" of Aleim's glory. We have never seen the sun, only the rays of its light as they come to us. Even so, we have never seen Aleim the Father, but we see Him through the "rays" of the Son of Aleim.

ii. The ancient Greek philosopher Philo used the word *apagasma* to describe the Logos: the being or intelligent mind who ordered the universe. The writer of Hebrews explained IESO in terms that made sense to both first-century Jews and those familiar with Greek philosophy.

d. **The express image of His person:** The idea is of an exact likeness as made by a stamp. IESO *exactly* represents Aleim to us.

e. **Upholding all things by the word of His power:** The idea behind the word translated **upholding** is better thought of as "maintaining." The word does not have the idea of passively holding something up (as the mythical Atlas held up the earth), but of *actively* sustaining.

i. In His earthly ministry IESO constantly demonstrated the power of His word. He could heal, forgive, cast out demons, calm nature's fury all at the expression of one word. Here we see that His word is so powerful that it can **uphold all things**.

f. **Himself purged our sins:** From the previous description, we know that the Son of Aleim is a being of great power and wisdom. Now we know He is also a being of great love, who purged the guilt and shame of **our sins**. He did this **Himself**,

showing that no one else could do it for us, and we could not do it for ourselves.

g. **Sat down at the right side of the Majesty on high:** This is a position of majesty, of honour, of glory, and of finished work. This position of IESO sets Him far above all creation.

3. (Hebrews 1:4) Therefore, IESO is so much better than the angels.

Having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

a. **Having become so much better than the angels:** This description of IESO in previous verses shows us that He is far superior than any angelic being. Yet this tells us that IESO *became better than the angels*. We could say that He is *eternally* better than the angels, but He also *became* better than the angels.

i. IESO *became* better in the sense that He was made *perfect* (complete as our redeemer) *through sufferings* (Hebrews 2:10) – something no angel ever did.

b. **A more excellent name than they:** IESO's superior status is demonstrated by a superior **name**, which is not merely a title, but a description of His nature and character. There are many reasons why it is important to understand the surpassing excellence of IESO, setting Him far above every angelic being.

- We often best understand things when they are set in contrast to other things.

- Though the Old Covenant came by the hands of angels to MoUse, a better covenant came by a better being, IESO. First century Jews might think that the Glad Tidings came at the hands of mere men – the apostles. But in truth, the Glad Tidings came by IESO, who is superior to the angels.

- There was a dangerous tendency to worship angels developing in the early Ekklesia (Colossians 2:18, Galatians 1:8), and Hebrews shows that IESO is high above any angel.

- There was the heretical idea that IESO Himself was an angel, a concept that degrades His glory and majesty.

- Understanding how IESO is better than the angels helps us to understand how He is better than anyone or anything in our life.

i. In this sense, the purpose of Hebrews is like the purpose of the Transfiguration of IESO mentioned in the Glad Tidings. They each cry out and say, "*This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!*" (Marhko 9:7)

B. The Scriptures prove IESO is superior to the angels.

1. (Hebrews 1:5) IESO is superior to the angels because He is the Son of Aleim, as shown in Psalms 2:7 and 2 Samouel 7:14.

For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"?

a. **You are My Son:** Aleim the Father calls IESO, "**Son**" – the *more excellent name* of Hebrews 1:4. This shows that IESO is greater than the angels because no angel was ever given this great name. Though the angels may *collectively* be called "sons of Aleim" (such as in Iob 1:6), but no angel is ever given that title *individually*.

b. **Today I have begotten You:** The word **begotten** speaks of the equality of *substance* and *essential nature* between the Father and Son. It means that the Father and the Son share the

same *being*.

2. (Hebrews 1:6-7) IESO is superior to the angels because angels worship and serve IESO, who is their Aleim, as shown in 5th MoUse (Deuteronomy) 32:43 (in the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls) and Psalm 104:4.

But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: “Let all the angels of Aleim worship Him.” And of the angels He says: “Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.”

a. **The firstborn:** This word was used both as an *idea* and to designate the one born first. Since the firstborn son was “first in line” and received the position of favour and honour, the title “firstborn” could indicate that someone was of the highest position and honour.

i. Many of those *not* born first in the Scriptures are given the title “firstborn.” David is an example of this (Psalm 89:27) and so is Ephraim (Jeremiah 31:9).

ii. According to Rabbi Bechai (quoted in Lightfoot) the ancient Rabbis called IEUE Himself “Firstborn of the World.” It was a title, not a description of origin.

iii. Rabbis used **firstborn** as a specifically Messianic title. One ancient Rabbi wrote, “Aleim said, ‘As I made Iakob a first-born (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 4:22), so also will I make king MoUse a first-born (Psalm 89:28).’”

b. **Let all the angels of Aleim worship Him:** IESO is superior because He is the *object* of angelic worship, not an angelic worshipper. They worship Him; He does not worship among them. Revelation 5 gives a glimpse of the angelic worship of IESO.

c. **Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire:** IESO is Ruler over the angels. They are *His* angels and *His* ministers. The angels belong to IESO, and He is not among them.

3. (Hebrews 1:8-12) IESO is superior to the angels because the Father Himself calls Him (and not any angel) Aleim and Ruler (IEUE), as shown in Psalm 45:6-7 and 102:25-27 from the Septuagint.

But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O Aleim, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore Aleim, Your Aleim, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” And: “You, Ruler, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.”

a. **Your throne, O Aleim:** This makes it plain that the Father calls the Son Aleim. When the First Person of the Diety spoke to the Second Person of the Diety, He called Him Aleim. This is unique and powerful evidence of the deity of IESO.

i. Some argue that there are many beings called “aleims” in the Scriptures such as satan (2 Corinthians 4:4) and earthly judges (Psalm 82:1 and 6). But these others are *supposed* aleims, *pretenders* to their throne. If IESO is not the *true* Aleim, He is a *false* aleim – like satan and the wicked judges of Psalm 82.

ii. But IESO *is* the True and Living Aleim, called so here by Aleim the Father, and also by Ioanne in Ioanne 1:1, by Thomas in Ioanne 20:28, and by Paulo in Tito 2:13 and Tito 3:4.

b. **Therefore Aleim, Your Aleim, has anointed You:** This passage shows striking interaction between the Aleims. “Aleim, Your Aleim” speaks of the Father and His position of authority over the IESO as Aleim. “You” refers to the Son. “Anointed” has in mind the ministry and presence of the Holy Spirit.

c. **You, Ruler, in the beginning:** The Son is not only called Aleim, but also Ruler (IEUE). Then the Son is described with attributes and terms that belong only to Aleim.

i. **You, Ruler, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth:** This shows that IESO The Anointed One, the Second Aleim, is the Creator. IEUE is specifically said to be the Creator (Isaia 45:12, Isaia 45:18).

ii. **They will perish, but You will remain:** This shows that IESO The Anointed One is self-existent, even as Psalm 102:25-27 says this of IEUE.

iii. **Like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed:** This shows that IESO The Anointed One is sovereign, with authority over all creation and history, even as Psalm 102:25-27 says this of IEUE.

iv. **You are the same:** This shows that IESO The Anointed One is immutable, unchanging, and eternal (**Your years will not fail**). Psalm 102:25-27 says this of IEUE and the writer to the Hebrews says that it clearly applies to IESO as well.

4. (Hebrews 1:13-14) IESO is superior to the angels because He has sat down, having completed His work, while the angels work on continually, as shown in Psalm 110:1.

But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right side, till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

a. **Sit at My right side:** Anyone who *sits* in the divine presence shows they have the perfect right to be there. There are no seats for the angels around the throne of Aleim because they are constantly busy praising Aleim and serving Him. Yet IESO can – at the invitation of Aleim the Father – **sit** at the **right side** of Aleim the Father.

i. It isn’t good to be too comfortable in the presence of majesty. There is a story about a man named Lear who was hired to give Queen Victoria art lessons. Things went well, and Lear started to feel quite at home in the palace. He enjoyed standing in front of the fire, leaning on the hearth and warming himself in a relaxed manner, but every time he did one of the Queen’s attendants invited him to look at something on the other side of the room, making him move. No one explained it to him, but after a while he got the idea: good manners said it was wrong for a subject to have such a relaxed attitude in the presence of their Queen. IESO is not a subject – He is the Sovereign, so He sits in the presence of majesty.

b. **But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right side.”** The angels are not permitted to “relax” before Aleim. They “stand” before the Father, but the Son sits down – because He isn’t a subject, He is the Sovereign.

c. **Are they not all ministering spirits:** Angels are

ministering spirits, not *governing* spirits; *service*, not *dominion* is their calling. In this respect angels are like a toy that won't quit. They keep working while the Son takes a posture of rest because He is the Son.

i. IESO is also called a servant and a minister, but this is part of His voluntary humiliation, not his essential nature – as it is in the essential nature of angels to be servants.

d. **Sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation:** The angels are commanded to serve Aleim, but He shares His servants with redeemed men and women. This shows the great love of Aleim for us and how He wants to share all things with us

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 2

IESO, Our Elder Brother

A. Therefore: Because of the superiority of IESO to the angels, we must pay attention to IESO.

1. (Hebrews 2:1) The lesson of the first chapter is applied: listen and don't drift away.

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

a. **Therefore:** The use of **therefore** in Hebrews makes us pay attention to a point of application after the writer developed a principle. The Scriptural *fact* of IESO's superiority over the angels has life-changing application – and now we consider the application.

b. **We must give the more earnest heed:** This is what we must *do* in light of IESO's superiority over angels. We must give **more earnest heed** to the words of IESO. It's easy to think this exhortation is directed to unbelievers, but this letter was written to Followers.

i. **Give the more earnest heed:** This has not only the idea of *hearing* carefully, but also in *doing* what we hear – and we **must give the more earnest heed**.

c. **Lest we drift away:** If we do not **give the more earnest heed**, we will **drift away**. Drifting naturally happens without an anchor to something solid. If we are not securely set in the superiority of IESO, we will drift with the currents of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

i. The ancient Greek phrase for **drift away** comes from the idea “to slip” (Edgar Phillips). It was used for an arrow slipping from the quiver, for snow slipping off a landscape, or of food slipping down the windpipe to cause choking. It happens easily. One doesn't have to *do* anything to **drift away**. Our backsliding usually comes from slow drifting, not from a sudden departure.

ii. According to an old story, an wicked farmer died and it was discovered in his will that he left his farm to the devil. In the court, they didn't quite know what to do with his bequest – how do you give a farm to the devil? Finally, the judge decided: “The best way to carry out the wishes of the deceased is to allow the farm to grow weeds, the soil to erode, and the house and barn to rot. In our opinion, the best way to leave something to the devil is to do nothing.” We can leave our lives to the devil the same way – by doing nothing, by drifting wherever the current drive us.

2. (Hebrews 2:2-4) The lesson emphasized: how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Ruler, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, Aleim also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

a. **The word spoken through angels:** This is a way to describe the Mosaic Law, which was *received... by the direction of angels* (Acts 7:53). The idea is that the law was “delivered” to MoUse by the hands of angels.

i. The idea that angels had a role in bringing the Law to MoUse is found in 5th MoUse (Deuteronomy) 33:2, Acts 7:53, and in Galatians 3:19. Josephus also repeated this idea in his ancient history (*Antiquities*, 15.53).

b. **Proved steadfast:** The Mosaic Law was **steadfast** and strict (**every transgression and disobedience received a just reward**). It demanded to be taken seriously.

c. **How shall we escape:** If we must take the word which came by angels seriously, then we must take the word that came by the Son of Aleim even more seriously. The Son is proven to be greater than the angels, so His message should be regarded as greater.

i. A greater word brought by a greater Person having greater promises will bring a greater condemnation if it is neglected.

d. **If we neglect so great a salvation:** The word ancient Greek word translated **neglect** is *amelesantes*, also used in Matthio 22:5 (*they made light of it*). This refers to those who disregarded the invitation to the marriage supper. It means to have the opportunity but to ignore or disregard the opportunity.

i. This is a word to *believers*, not to the unsaved. The danger described isn't *rejecting* salvation (though the principle certainly applies there also), but the danger is *neglecting* salvation.

ii. Remember that Hebrews was written not primarily as an evangelistic tract, but as an encouragement and warning to discouraged Followers. It was written to those who neglected an abiding walk with IESO.

e. **So great a salvation:** When we consider something **great**, we will naturally pay attention to it and not **neglect** it. If we do not consider something great, we leave it to convenience rather than to commitment.

i. Therefore, if we neglect something, we probably do not consider it great. Yet our salvation *is* great, because:

· We are saved by a **great** Saviour.

· We are saved at a **great** cost.

· We are saved from a **great** penalty.

ii. A reason many neglect their salvation is because they never see it as salvation. They see it merely as *receiving* something, not as being *rescued* from something.

f. **Spoken by the Ruler, and was confirmed:** This word was spoken by IESO and confirmed by eyewitnesses (**those who heard Him**). Then it was **confirmed** with **signs, wonders, miracles** and **gifts of the Holy Spirit** given by Aleim.

i. In saying **and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him**, the writer shows that he was not a “first generation” Follower. He heard the message second-hand through the apostles and eyewitnesses of IESO's ministry.

ii. Hebrews 2:3 is one reason some believe the Apostle Paulo did not write Hebrews. In other passages, Paulo clearly set himself on an equal level with the apostles and other eyewitnesses of IESO (1 Corinthians 9:1 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-11).

g. **Aleim also bearing witness:** Aleim does confirm His word with **various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit**. But He does it all **according to His own will**, not on the command of man.

i. IESO said miraculous signs would follow those who believe (Marhko 16:17). If there is no element of the miraculous, one may question whether there is true belief in IESO or if the word of Aleim is truly being preached. The preacher must give Aleim something to confirm.

ii. On the other hand, the Spirit brings such miracles and gifts **according to His will**. Genuine miracles can't be "worked up" and brought about by human effort or emotion. Much damage is done by those who don't think *enough* miracles are happening, and want to "prime the pump" with the enthusiasm of the flesh.

iii. It's hard to say which is worse – the denial of miracles and the gifts of the Holy Spirit or the fleshly counterfeit of them. Either error is dangerous.

B. The glorious humanity of IESO The Anointed One.

1. (Hebrews 2:5-8a) We know IESO is human, because Aleim put the world in subjection to man, not angels (quoting from Psalms 8:4-6).

For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him.

a. **You have made him a little lower than the angels:** In chapter one, the writer to the Hebrews brilliantly demonstrated from the Scriptures the deity of IESO and His superiority over all angels. Now he demonstrates the *humanity* of IESO from the Scriptures and applies the implications of IESO's humanity.

i. It is Scripturally wrong to think of IESO as merely Aleim or merely man. It is wrong to think of Him as half Aleim and half man (or any other percentage split). It is wrong to think of Him as "man on the outside" and "Aleim on the inside." The Scriptures teaches IESO is *fully* Aleim and *fully* man, that a human nature was added to His divine nature, and both natures existed in one Person, IESO The Anointed One.

ii. Significantly, the first false teaching about IESO in the days of the early Ekklesia did not deny that He was Aleim, but it denied that He was really human and said He only *seemed* to be human. The heresy was called *Docetism*, coming from the ancient Greek word "*to seem*," and was taught by Cerinthus, who opposed the apostle Ioanne in the city of Ephesus and whose teaching is probably the focus of 1 Ioanne 4:2 and 1 Ioanne 5:6.

b. **He has not put the world to come... in subjection to angels:** Aleim never gave angels the kind of dominion man originally had over the earth (1st MoUse (Genesis) 1:26-30). Angels do not have dominion over this world or the world to come.

c. **What is man:** The quotation from Psalms 8:4-6 shows both the smallness of man in relation to the Aleim of creation and the dominion Aleim gives to man, even though he is **a little lower than the angels**.

d. **He left nothing that is not put under him:** The writer emphasizes the point that Aleim put *all* things (not *some*

things) under subjection to human beings. This shows that IESO must be human because Aleim gave this dominion to humans, and IESO exercises this authority.

2. (Hebrews 2:8b-9) A problem and its solution.

But now we do not yet see all things put under him. But we see IESO, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of Aleim, might taste death for everyone.

a. **But now we do not yet see all things put under him:** By all appearance the promise of Psalms 8:4-6 seems to be an unfulfilled promise. We do not see that all things are subjected to man.

b. **But we see IESO:** The promise is fulfilled in IESO, who is Ruler over all. Through IESO man can regain the dominion originally intended for Adam (Revelation 1:6, 5:10 and Matthio 25:21).

i. There are many things we will not understand until we see **IESO**. The answers to life's most perplexing questions are not found in asking "Why?" The greatest answer is a *Who* – IESO The Anointed One.

c. **Who was made a little lower than the angels:** This promise of dominion could only be fulfilled through the humility, suffering, and death of IESO. The Son of Aleim defeated the evil Adam brought into the world – which was death (Romans 5:12).

i. Aleim gave man dominion over the earth, but man forfeited his power (not his right or authority) to take that dominion through sin, and the principle of death took away the power to rule. But IESO came and through His humility and suffering He defeated the power of death and made possible the fulfillment of Aleim's promise that humans will have dominion over the earth – fulfilled both through IESO's own dominion and the rule of believers with Him (Revelation 20:4).

3. (Hebrews 2:10-13) We know IESO is human, because He calls us **brethren**.

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." And again: "I will put My trust in Him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom Aleim has given Me."

a. **For it was fitting:** It was more than necessary – it was **fitting** for the sovereign Aleim – **for whom are all things and by whom are all things** to be made **perfect through sufferings** in the task of **bringing many sons to glory**.

i. Conceivably, Aleim could have engineered a way to save us that did not require the suffering of the Son of Aleim. But it **was fitting** for IESO to save us at the cost of His own agony.

ii. This is the ultimate illustration of the fact that real love, real giving, involves *sacrifice*. As Dauid said: *nor will I offer... offerings to the Ruler my Aleim which costs me nothing* (2 Samouel 24:24). Aleim's love for us had to show itself in

sacrifice and Aleim could not sacrifice unless He added humanity to His deity and suffered on our behalf.

b. The captain of their salvation: IESO is the **captain** – the leader, the advance – of our salvation. This has wonderful implications:

- A captain makes all the arrangements for the march, and IESO makes the arrangements for our progress as Followers.
- A captain gives the commands to the troops – “Go” or “Stay” or “Do this.” IESO commands us as our captain.
- A captain leads the way and is an example to his men, and IESO does this for us.
- A captain encourages his men, and IESO encourages us.
- A captain rewards his troops, and IESO rewards His followers.

i. “Now, seeing that it is the will of the Ruler to lead us to glory by the Captain of our salvation, I want you to be worthy of your Leader. Do you not think that, sometimes, we act as if we had no Captain? We fancy that we have to fight our way to heaven by the might of our own right side, and by our own skill; but it is not so. If you start before your Captain gives you the order to march, you will have to come back again; and if you try to fight apart from your Captain, you will rue [regret] the day.” (Edgar Phillips)

c. Perfect through sufferings: There was nothing lacking in the deity of IESO. Yet until He became a man and suffered, Aleim never *experienced* suffering.

i. “*To make perfect* does not imply moral imperfection in IESO, but only the consummation of that human experience of sorrow and pain through which He must pass in order to become the leader of His people’s salvation.” (Edgar Phillips)

ii. “We know that had He only been Aleim yet still He would not have been fitted for a perfect Saviour, unless He had become *man*. Man had sinned; man must suffer. It was man in whom Aleim’s purposes had been for a while defeated; it must be in man that Aleim must triumph over His great enemy.” (Edgar Phillips)

iii. The point is that **it was fitting** for the Father to do this, in the sense that *it pleased the Ruler to bruise Him* ([Isaia 53:10](#)), to do it for the sake of **bringing many sons to glory**.

d. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one: Therefore we are **sanctified** by One who has been sanctified. We are all of the same human family, so **IESO is not ashamed to call them** (that is, us) **brethren**. He could not be our brother unless He was also human like us.

i. **Being sanctified:** “Well, then, dear friends, are you sanctified? I have heard some make a jest of that word, and jeer at certain persons as ‘saints.’ They might as well call them kings and princes, and then mock at them, for there is nothing mean or despicable in the name ‘saint.’ It is one of the most glorious titles that a man can ever wear.” (Edgar Phillips)

ii. It is not remarkable that I am unashamed to associate with IESO. But it is remarkable that He **is not ashamed to call us brethren**.

e. He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: The writer cites three proofs that IESO the MoUse calls His people His brethren from [Psalm 22:22](#), [Isaia 8:17](#), and [Isaia 8:18](#).

i. In each of these examples the MoUse is willing to associate Himself with His brethren, whether it be in a congregation of

worship, a community of trust in the Father, or in the declaration of a common family association.

f. In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You: This wonderful quote from [Psalm 22:22](#) (from the ancient Septuagint) reminds us that IESO sang, singing worship to His Father among His brethren.

i. “Behold, then, in your midst, O Ekklesia of Aleim, in the days of His flesh there stood this glorious One whom angels worship, who is the brightness of His Father’s glory in the very heaven of heavens; yet when He stood here, it was to join in the worship of His people, declaring the Father’s name unto His brethren, and with them singing praises unto the Most High. Does not this bring Him very near to you? Does it not seem as if He might come at any moment, and sit in that pew with you; I feel as if already He stood on this platform side by side with me; why should He not?” (Edgar Phillips)

g. Here am I and the children whom Aleim has given Me: The phrasing of this quote from [Isaia 8:18](#) shows how precious IESO’ people are to Him. “He likes to dwell on that fact. They are precious to him in themselves, but far more precious as the Father’s gift to Him. Some things are valued by you as keepsakes given by one you love; and so are we dear to The Anointed One because His Father gave us to Him.” (Edgar Phillips)

4. ([Hebrews 2:14-16](#)) What IESO did as our Brother.

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abrahm.

a. He Himself likewise shared in the same: For IESO to truly fulfill the role of “Elder Brother” for the family of the redeemed, He *had to* take on **flesh and blood**. He had to enter into the prison to free the captives.

b. Through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil: Some take this as meaning that IESO destroyed satan’s “right” to rule over man, which was presumably given to him in the garden of Eden through Adam’s rebellion. The idea is that IESO took away satan’s “right” to rule by allowing satan to “unlawfully” take IESO’ life on the tree, and satan’s “unlawful” action against IESO forfeited his right to rule over man. In this thinking, the end result is that the devil has no right over those who come to Aleim through IESO’ work on the tree.

i. Since death only has dominion over those who are born sinners or who have sinned ([Romans 5:12](#)), satan had no “right” to take the life of IESO, who had never sinned nor was born a sinner – and the devil then committed an “unlawful” murder, according to his nature ([Ioanne 8:44](#)). IESO allowed the devil to *bruise His heel* so that He could *bruise his head* ([1st MoUse \(Genesis\) 3:15](#)).

ii. The problem with this approach is that we know the devil did not *take* IESO’ life. IESO laid it down of His own accord, and no one took it from Him ([Ioanne 10:17-18](#)).

iii. However, one might say the devil is guilty of “*attempted* unlawful murder” over someone he had no rights over because

there was no stain of sin on IESO. satan certainly *wanted* to murder IESO and tried to, and satan is guilty of that.

iv. We know that the devil loves death and murder. “I think death is the devil’s masterpiece. With the solitary exception of hell, death is certainly the most Satanic mischief that sin hath accomplished. Nothing ever delighted the heart of the devil so much as when he found that the threatening would be fulfilled, ‘In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.’ ” (Edgar Phillips)

v. satan repeatedly tried to kill IESO. He tried through the murderous intent of Herod when IESO was a baby. He tried at a synagogue where they tried to kill IESO. He tried to starve IESO and tried to drown Him. None of these plans worked, until IESO stood before Pilato and received the sentence of execution – what joy there was in the counsels of Hell! They were convinced they finally had IESO where they wanted Him. Yet the death of IESO became defeat for the devil.

c. **Release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage:** The fear of death rules as a tyrant over humanity. Some try to make peace with death by calling it their friend. But Followers have no fear of death (though perhaps a fear of *dying*), not because death is their friend but because it is a defeated enemy that now serves Aleim’s purpose in the believer’s life.

d. **He does give aid to the seed of Ahrham:** The Father’s work in IESO was not primarily for the sake of angels (though it is for the angels in a secondary sense according to [Ephesians 3:10](#)). The work was for the people of faith (**the seed of Ahrham**).

i. **Seed of Ahrham** is used here in the sense of those who are Ahrham’s children inwardly, not ethnically ([Romans 2:28-29](#), [Galatians 3:7](#)).

4. ([Hebrews 2:17-18](#)) Therefore: IESO is our faithful Great Priest.

Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful Great Priest in things pertaining to Aleim, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

a. **Made like His brethren:** If IESO were not **like** us He could not be our Great Priest, representing us before the Father and making atonement (**propitiation**) for our sins.

i. Neither the Deity nor the Humanity of IESO is negotiable. If we diminish either, then He is unable to save us.

b. **That He might be a merciful and faithful Great Priest:** The Great Priest wore a breastplate with stones engraved with the names of the tribes of Israhel on both his chest and his shoulders. The Great Priest was therefore in constant sympathy with the people of Aleim, carrying them on his heart and on his shoulders.

i. IESO did not wear the Great Priest’s breastplate. But the wound in His chest and the tree on His shoulders are even more eloquent testimony to His heart for us and work on our behalf – **to make propitiation for the sins of the people.**

c. **He Himself has suffered, being tempted:** Some wonder if IESO was *really* tempted. After all, since He was Aleim (they reason), He could not sin – so His temptation could not be

real. The writer to the Hebrews insists that not only was IESO’ temptation *real*, but it was so real that He **suffered** under it.

i. We can even say that IESO’ temptation was *more* real and difficult than any we could face. When the pressure of temptation builds, some only find relief by giving into the temptation – *but IESO never did this*. The pressure of temptation only built and built upon Him.

ii. IESO knew the temptations of power and the temptations of pain. He knew the temptations of riches and the temptations of poverty. He knew the temptations of popularity and the temptations of rejection. He knew the temptations of the boy and the temptations of the man. He knew temptation from His friends and temptation from His enemies. He knew temptation from His family and temptation from strangers.

iii. “Many persons are tempted, but do not suffer in being tempted. When wicked men are tempted, the bait is to their taste, and they swallow it greedily. Temptation is a pleasure to them; indeed, they sometimes tempt the devil to tempt them... But good men suffer when they are tempted, and the better they are the more they suffer.” (Edgar Phillips)

d. **He is able to aid those who are being tempted:** Because IESO added humanity to His deity and experienced human suffering, He is able to help us in temptation. He knows what we are going through.

i. We have two advantages – knowing the *example* of IESO in temptation, but also having His *active assistance* from heaven, providing strength and a way of escape. With these we can find victory in the midst of temptation and come out *better* from being tempted. IESO did not lose anything from being tempted – He only *gained* in glory and sympathy and ability to help His people. In the same way, we do not *have* to lose anything when we are tempted.

ii. “This is the most powerful preservative against despair, and the firmest ground of hope and comfort, that ever believing, penitent sinners could desire or have.” (Edgar Phillips) “Were the rest of the Scripture silent on this subject, this verse might be an ample support for every tempted soul.” (Edgar Phillips)

iii. “Moreover, *do not make it any cause of complaint that you are tempted*. If your Ruler was tempted, shall the disciple be above his Master, or the servant above his Ruler? If the Perfect One must endure temptation, why not you? Accept it, therefore, at the Ruler’s hands, and do not think it to be a disgrace or a dishonour. It did not disgrace or dishonour your Ruler, and temptation will not disgrace or dishonour you. The Ruler, who sends it, sends also with it a way of escape, and it will be to your honour and profit to escape by that way.” (Edgar Phillips)

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 3

IESO, Superior to MoUse

A. Considering IESO.

1. (Hebrews 3:1a) Therefore: who we *are* because of our superior saviour..

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,

a. **Therefore:** From the previous chapter, we are left with the picture of IESO as our heavenly Great Priest. Since this is true, it teaches something about who we are. Understanding who *we are* in light of who IESO is and what He did is essential for a healthy Follower life. It keeps us from the same depths of discouragement the Hebrew Followers faced.

b. **Holy brethren:** This is who we are because IESO regards us as such, because our heavenly, holy Great Priest is *not ashamed to call them brethren* (Hebrews 2:11). It should bless and encourage us that IESO calls us His **holy brethren**.

c. **Partakers of the heavenly calling:** Because IESO is committed to *bringing many sons to glory* (Hebrews 2:10), we are partners in His heavenly calling. This should bless and encourage us to press on, even through times of difficulty and trial.

2. (Hebrews 3:1b) Therefore: what we are to *do* in light of the previous paragraphs.

Consider the Apostle and Great Priest of our confession, The Anointed One IESO,

a. **Consider the Apostle:** We don't often apply this word to IESO, but He is our **Apostle**. The ancient Greek word translated **apostle** really means something like *ambassador*. In this sense, IESO is the Father's ultimate ambassador (Hebrews 1:1-2). Aleim the Father had to send a message of love that was so important, He sent it through **The Anointed One IESO**.

i. The ancient Greek word translated **consider** is *katanoein*: "It does not mean simply to look at or to notice a thing. Anyone can look at a thing or even notice it without really seeing it. The word means to fix the attention on something in such a way that its inner meaning, the lesson it is designed to teach, may be learned." (Edgar Phillips) The same word is used in Louka 12:24 (*Consider the ravens*). It is an earnest appeal to look, to learn, and to understand.

ii. The message is plain: **consider** this. **Consider** that Aleim loves you so much He sent the ultimate Messenger, **The Anointed One IESO**. **Consider** also how important it is for you to pay attention to Aleim's ultimate **Apostle**, who is **The Anointed One IESO**.

iii. Aleim also chose His original, authoritative "ambassadors" for the Ekklesia. These are what we think of as the original twelve apostles. Aleim still chooses ambassadors in a less authoritative sense, and there is a sense in which we are *all* ambassadors for Aleim. Yet surely, IESO was and is the Father's *ultimate* ambassador.

b. **Consider the... Great Priest:** IESO is the One who supremely represents us before the Father, and who represents the Father to us. Aleim cares for us so much that He put the ultimate mediator, the ultimate **Great Priest**, between Himself and sinful man.

i. The message is plain: **consider** this. **Consider** that Aleim loves you so much to give you such a great Great Priest. Consider that if such a great **Great Priest** is given to us, we must honour and submit to this **Great Priest**, who is **The Anointed One IESO**.

c. **Of our confession:** IESO is the *ambassador* and the *mediator* of **our confession**. Our Faith is a **confession** made with both the mouth and with the life (Matthio 10:32, Romans 10:9).

i. The word "confession" means, "to say the same thing." When we confess our sin, we "say the same" about it that Aleim does. In regard to salvation, all Followers "say the same thing" about their need for salvation and Aleim's provision in IESO.

3. (Hebrews 3:2) Consider IESO as **faithful** in His duties before the Father.

Who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as MoUse also was faithful in all His house.

a. **Who was faithful:** When we *consider* the past faithfulness of IESO, it makes us understand that He will *continue* to be **faithful**. And as He was **faithful** to Aleim the Father (**Him who appointed Him**), so He will be **faithful** to us. This should bless and encourage us.

b. **As MoUse also was faithful in all His house:** MoUse showed an amazing faithfulness in his ministry; but IESO showed a *perfect* faithfulness – surpassing even that of MoUse.

B. IESO, superior to MoUse.

1. (Hebrews 3:3a) IESO has received more glory than MoUse did.

For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than MoUse,

a. **MoUse:** MoUse received much glory from Aleim. This is seen in his shining face after spending time with Aleim (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 34:29-35), in his justification before Mirhiam and Aarhon (4th MoUse (Numbers) 12:6-8), and before the sons of Korha (4th MoUse (Numbers) 16).

b. **For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than MoUse did:** But IESO received far more glory from the Father, at His baptism (Matthio 3:16-17), at His transfiguration (Marhko 9:7), and at His resurrection (Acts 2:26-27 and Acts 2:31-33).

2. (Hebrews 3:3b-6) MoUse the servant, IESO the Son.

Inasmuch as He who built the house has more honour than the house. For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is Aleim. And MoUse indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but The Anointed One as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

a. **Inasmuch as He who built the house has more honour than the house:** MoUse was a *member* of the household of Aleim but IESO is the creator of that **house**, worthy of greater glory.

i. The ancient Rabbis considered MoUse to be the greatest man ever, greater than the angels. The writer to the Hebrews

does nothing to criticize MoUse, but he looks at MoUse in his proper relation to IESO.

b. **MoUse indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant... but The Anointed One as a Son over His own house:** MoUse was a faithful **servant**, but he was never called a **Son** in the way IESO is. This shows that IESO is greater than MoUse.

c. **Whose house we are if we hold fast:** We are a part of IESO's household **if we hold fast**. The writer to the Hebrews is encouraging those who felt like turning back, helping them to **hold fast** by explaining the benefits of continuing on with IESO.

i. True commitment to IESO is demonstrated over the long term, not just in an initial burst. We trust that *He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of IESO The Anointed One* (Philippians 1:6).

ii. **Whose house we are:** 1 Petrho 2:4-5 says we are *being built up a spiritual house*. Aleim has a work to build through His people, even as one might build a **house**.

C. The application of the fact of IESO's superiority to MoUse.

1. (Hebrews 3:7-11) A quotation from Psalm 95:7-11 and its relevance.

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.' So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"

a. **Do not harden your hearts:** If those who followed MoUse were responsible to surrender, trust, and persevere in following Aleim's leader, we are much more responsible to do the same with a greater leader, IESO.

i. The point is clear. As the Holy Spirit speaks, we must hear His voice and *not* allow our hearts to become hardened. We hear the Spirit speak in the Scriptures, in the heart of His people, in those He draws to salvation, and by His works.

ii. Just as the Spirit speaks in many ways, there are also several ways we can harden our heart.

- Some harden their hearts by relapsing into their old indifference.
- Some harden their hearts by unbelief.
- Some harden their hearts by asking for more signs.
- Some harden their hearts by presuming upon the mercy of Aleim.

b. **Today:** There is *urgency* to the voice of the Holy Spirit. He never prompts us to get right with Aleim *tomorrow*, or to trust in *yesterday* – the Holy Spirit only moves us to act **today**.

i. The Holy Spirit tells us **today** because it is a *genuine* invitation. We know that the Holy Spirit really wants us to come to IESO because He says, "**today**." If someone asks me to come over their house for dinner but they give no day or time, I know it isn't a firm invitation yet. But when they say, "Come over on this day at this time," I know it is a *firm* invitation, that they *want* me to come, that they *are ready* for me to come, and that it will be *prepared* for my coming. The Holy Spirit gives you a time for His invitation – **today**.

ii. Edgar Phillips pointed out one reason why the Holy Spirit is so urgent: "Besides, he waits to execute His favourite office of a Comforter, and He cannot comfort an wicked soul, He cannot comfort those who harden their hearts. Comfort for unbelievers would be their destruction. As he delights to be the Comforter, and has been sent forth from the Father to act specially in that capacity, that he may comfort the people of Aleim, he watches with longing eyes for broken hearts and contrite spirits, that he may apply the balm of Gilead and heal their wounds."

iii. We must also have great urgency about **today**. "Select the strongest man you know, and suppose that everything in reference to your eternal welfare is to depend upon whether he lives to see the next year. With what anxiety would you hear of his illness, how concerned you would be about his health? Well, sinner, your salvation is risked by you upon your own life, is that any more secure?" (Edgar Phillips)

c. **As in the rebellion, in the day of trial:** The **day of trial** refers first to the trial at Meribah (4th MoUse (Numbers) 20:1-13). But more generally it speaks of Israhel's refusal to trust and enter the Promised Land during the 2nd MoUse (Exodus) (4th MoUse (Numbers) 13:30-14:10). Aleim did not accept their unbelief and condemned that generation of unbelief to die in the wilderness (4th MoUse (Numbers) 14:22-23 and 14:28-32).

d. **And saw My works forty years:** Because of their unbelief, the people of Israhel faced judgment which culminated after **forty years**. This warning in Hebrews was written about **forty years** after the Jews' initial rejection of IESO. Aleim's wrath was quickly coming upon the Jewish people who rejected IESO, and would culminate with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

e. **Therefore I was angry with that generation:** Aleim's anger was kindled against **that generation** on account of their unbelief. They refused to trust Aleim for the great things He promised, and they were unwilling to continue in trust.

2. (Hebrews 3:12-15) **Beware:** Don't be like the generation that perished in the wilderness.

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living Aleim; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of The Anointed One if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

a. **Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief:** This is strong language, but we often underestimate the terrible nature of our **unbelief**. Refusing to believe Aleim is a serious sin because it shows **an evil heart** and a **departing from the living Aleim**.

i. "Unbelief is not inability to understand, but *unwillingness* to *trust*... it is the will, not the intelligence, that is involved." (Edgar Phillips)

ii. One can truly believe Aleim, yet be occasionally troubled by doubts. There is a doubt that *wants* Aleim's promise but is weak in faith at the moment. **Unbelief** isn't *weakness* of faith; it sets itself in *opposition* to faith.

iii. “The great sin of not believing in the Ruler IESO The Anointed One is often spoken of very lightly and in a very trifling spirit, as though it were scarcely any sin at all; yet, according to my text, and, indeed, according to the whole tenor of the Scriptures, unbelief is the giving of Aleim the lie [calling Aleim a liar], and what can be worse?” (Edgar Phillips)

iv. “Hearken, O unbeliever, you have said, ‘I cannot believe,’ but it would be more honest if you had said, ‘I *will* not believe.’ The mischief lies there. Your unbelief is your fault, not your misfortune. It is a disease, but it is also a crime: it is a terrible source of misery to you, but it is justly so, for it is an atrocious offence against the Aleim of truth.” (Edgar Phillips)

v. “Did I not hear someone say, ‘Ah, sir, I have been *trying* to believe for years.’ Terrible words! They make the case still worse. Imagine that after I had made a statement, a man should declare that he did not believe me, in fact, he could not believe me though he would like to do so. I should feel aggrieved certainly; but it would make matters worse if he added, ‘In fact I have been for years trying to believe you, and I cannot do it.’ What does he mean by that? What can he mean but that I am so incorrigibly false, and such a confirmed liar, that though he would like to give me some credit, he really cannot do it? With all the effort he can make in my favour, he finds it quite beyond his power to believe me? Now, a man who says, ‘I have been trying to believe in Aleim,’ in reality says just that with regard to the Most High.” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Exhort one another daily:** If we will strengthen our faith and avoid the ruin of unbelief, we must be around other Followers who will **exhort** – that is, “seriously encourage” us. This shows our responsibility to both *give* exhortation and to *receive* exhortation, and to **exhort one another daily**. It is an easy thing to judge and criticize, but that is not exhortation.

i. If you are out of fellowship altogether, you can’t exhort or be exhorted. When we are out of fellowship, there is much less around us to keep us from becoming **hardened through the deceitfulness of sin**.

ii. Some think that IESO’s command to not bother with the speck in our brother’s eye while we have a log in our own (Matthio 7:5) indicates that we should not **exhort one another daily**. Yet IESO told us to *first* deal with our log in our own eye, but *then* to go and deal with the speck in our brother’s eye. He did not tell us to ignore their speck, only to deal with it in proper order.

iii. This emphasis on the importance of fellowship stands in the face of society’s thinking. A United States survey found that more than 78% of the general public and 70% of churchgoing people believed that “you can be a *good* Follower without attending Ekklesia.”

iv. “You are to watch over your brethren, to exhort one another daily, especially you who are officers of the Ekklesia, or who are elderly and experienced. Be upon the watch lest any of your brethren in the Ekklesia should gradually backslide, or lest any in the congregation should harden into a condition of settled unbelief, and perish in their sin. He who bids you take heed to yourself, would not have you settle down into a selfish care for yourself alone, lest you should

become like Kain, who even dared to say to the Ruler himself, ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’” (Edgar Phillips)

c. **Lest any of you become hardened:** Followers must be vigilant against hardness of heart. That hidden sin you indulge in – none suspect you of it because you hide it well. You deceive yourself, believing that it really does little harm. You can always ask forgiveness later. You can always die to self and surrender to IESO in coming months or years. What you cannot see or sense is that your hidden sin hardens your heart. As your heart becomes harder, you become *less and less sensitive* to your sin. You become more and more distant from IESO. And your spiritual danger grows every day.

d. **The deceitfulness of sin:** The sin of unbelief has its root in *deceit* and its flower is marked by *hardness* (**lest any of you be hardened**). Unbelief and sin are **deceitful** because when we don’t believe Aleim, we don’t stop believing – we start believing in a lie.

e. **Partakers of The Anointed One:** Believers – those who turn from sin and self and put their life’s trust in IESO – are gloriously called **partakers of The Anointed One**.

i. **Partakers of The Anointed One** – this is the whole picture. Partakers of His obedience, partakers of His suffering, partakers of His death, partakers of His resurrection, partakers of His victory, partakers of His plan, partakers of His power, partakers of His ministry of intercession, partakers of His work, partakers of His glory, partakers of His destiny. Saying “**Partakers of The Anointed One**” says it all.

ii. There are many ways that the believer’s union with IESO is described:

- Like a stone cemented to its foundation
- Like a vine connected to its branches
- Like a wife married to her husband

f. **Do not harden your hearts:** We often say our hearts become hard because of what *others* or *circumstances* do to us. But the fact is that we harden our own hearts in *response* to what happens to us.

3. (Hebrews 3:16-19) It isn’t enough to make a good beginning.

For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by MoUse? Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

a. **For who, having heard, rebelled?** As a nation, Israhel made a good beginning. After all, it took a lot of faith to tree the Red Sea. Yet *all* of that first generation perished in the wilderness, except for the two men of faith – Ieso and Kaleb.

i. Think of their great privilege:

- They saw the seven plagues come upon Egypt
- They had great revelation from Aleim
- They had received great patience from Aleim
- They received great mercy

b. **They would not enter His rest:** 11 times in Hebrews chapters 3 and 4, the Book of Hebrews speaks of *entering rest*. That rest will be deeply detailed in the next chapter. But here, the *key* to entering rest is revealed: *belief*.

c. **So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief:** One might be tempted to think the key to entering rest is *obedience*, especially from Hebrews 3:18: *to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?* But the disobedience mentioned in Hebrews 3:18 is an outgrowth of the **unbelief** mentioned in Hebrews 3:19. The **unbelief** came first, then the disobedience.

i. It was **unbelief** and not something else that kept them out of Canaan:

- Their sin did not keep them out of Canaan.
- Lack of evidence did not keep them out of Canaan.
- Lack of encouragement did not keep them out of Canaan.
- Difficult circumstances did not keep them out of Canaan.

ii. In a Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) context, our belief centers on the superiority of IESO The Anointed One, the truth of who He is (fully Aleim and fully man) and His atoning work for us as a faithful Great Priest (as in Hebrews 2:17). When we trust in these things, making them the food of our souls, we enter into Aleim's rest.

d. **They could not enter in:** Israhel's great failure was to persevere in faith. After crossing much of the wilderness trusting in Aleim, and after seeing so many reasons to trust in Him, they end up falling short – because they did not persevere in faith in Aleim and in His promise.

i. IESO reminded us in the parable of the soils with the seeds cast on stony ground and among thorns that it is not enough to make a good beginning, real belief perseveres to the end. It is wonderful to make a good start, but how we finish is even more important than how we start.

ii. C.S. Lewis wrote about the difficulty of persistence (from a tempting demon's fictional perspective): "The Enemy has guarded him from you through the first great wave of temptations. But, if only he can be kept alive, you have time itself for your ally. The long, dull monotonous years of middle-aged prosperity or middle-aged adversity are excellent campaigning weather. You see, it is so hard for these creatures to *persevere*. The routine of adversity, the gradual decay of youthful loves and youthful hopes, the quiet despair (hardly felt as pain) of ever overcoming the chronic temptations with which we have again and again defeated them, the drabness which we create in their lives and inarticulate resentment with which we teach them to respond to it — all this provides admirable opportunities of wearing out a soul by attrition. If, on the other hand, the middle years about prosperous, our position is even stronger. Prosperity knits a man to the World. He feels that he is 'finding his place in it' while really it is finding its place in him.... That is why we must often wish long life to our patients; seventy years is not a day too much for the difficult task of unraveling their souls from Heaven and building up a firm attachment to the earth." (*The Screwtape Letters*)

iii. If we enter in to Aleim's rest, then the coming years will only increase our trust and reliance on IESO. If by unbelief we fail to enter in, then the coming years will only gradually draw us away from a passionate, trusting relationship with IESO.

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 4

Entering Into His Rest

A. How to enter Aleim's rest.

1. (Hebrews 4:1-2) The warning is repeated: don't miss Aleim's rest.

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the Glad Tidings was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

a. **Therefore:** The idea is carried on without pause from Hebrews 3, that *unbelief* kept the generation that escaped Egypt from entering Canaan. The **promise remains of entering His rest**, and we can enter into that rest by faith. *Unbelief* will make us fall short of the rest Aleim has for us.

i. The old Puritan commentator John Owen described five features of this rest for the believer:

- **Rest** means *peace with Aleim*.
- **Rest** means *freedom from a servile, bondage-like spirit in the worship and service of Aleim*.
- **Rest** means *deliverance from the burden of Mosaic observance*.
- **Rest** means the *freedom of worship according to the Glad Tidings*.
- **Rest** means the *rest that Aleim Himself enjoys*.

b. **Let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it:** This place of rest is so glorious it should *concern* us when others or we seem to **come short of it**. It isn't enough to *almost* enter His rest; we don't want to **come short** of it.

i. Edgar Phillips on **come short**: "It is an allusion, of which there are many in this epistle, to the *racers* in the Grecian games: he that *came short* was he who was any distance, no matter how small, *behind* the winner."

c. **For indeed the Glad Tidings was preached to us as well as to them:** Hearing Aleim's word isn't enough. Ancient Israhel **heard** the word but it **did not profit them** because they did not receive it with **faith**. Hearing gave them the opportunity, but the opportunity only profited if it was **mixed with faith**.

d. **Mixed with faith:** You can hear the word and have spiritual experiences, but unless the work of Aleim is **mixed with faith**, it will do no good. This explains why two people can hear the same message and one benefits while the other does not. It also shows that when there is more faith – more of the *anticipation* of blessing and favour from Aleim – there is more blessing indeed.

i. Edgar Phillips on **mixed**: "It is a metaphor taken from the nutrition of the human body by mixing the aliment taken into the stomach with the saliva and gastric juice... so that on this process, properly performed, depend (under Aleim) strength, health, and life itself."

ii. Think of the joy Israhel had in coming out of Egypt and approaching the Promised Land – and then think of all the graves dug in the desert. A wonderful promise was available but unattained. They came short because though they heard Aleim's word, it was not **mixed with faith**.

2. (Hebrews 4:3-9) Proof that a "rest" remains for the people of Aleim.

For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,' " although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And Aleim rested on the seventh day from all His works"; and again in this place: "They shall not enter My rest." Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." For if Ieso had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest for the people of Aleim.

a. **So swore in My wrath:** This quote from Psalms 95:11 demonstrates that Aleim has a rest available to us. This rest is after the pattern of Aleim's own rest **on the seventh day from all His works**, as described in the quote from 1st MoUse (Genesis) 2:2.

b. **Therefore it remains that some must enter it:** Aleim did not create this place of rest in vain. If Israhel (**those to whom it was first preached**) failed to enter **because of disobedience**, then someone else would enter into that rest.

c. **Today, if you will hear His voice:** The appeal in Psalms 95:7-8 proves that there is a rest remaining for Aleim's people to enter, beyond the fulfillment under Ieso. If Ieso completely fulfilled the promise of rest, Aleim's appeal through **David**, saying "Today" makes no sense.

d. **There remains therefore a rest for the people of Aleim:** All this together proves the point that there is a rest for the people of Aleim. This is a rest that is spiritual, yet patterned after the rest provided through Ieso.

i. The mention of **Ieso** reminds us that the name "IESO" is the same as "**Ieso**." The second Ieso will finish what the first Ieso left unfinished. IESO is greater than both MoUse and the second Ieso.

ii. This rest is in a *person* – in IESO The Anointed One, not so much in doctrines and ideas. If you meet a troubled, crying child and try to comfort him and give him rest using ideas and logic, it won't do much good. But when mommy comes, the child is happy again.

iii. Those who *preach* this rest must *possess* it themselves. "Not long ago, one of our ministers was preaching upon salvation, and the work of the Spirit in the heart, when one of the congregation rose and asked him respectfully, 'Sir, do you know all this by the report of others, or has this taken place in your own experience?' The preacher was by no means put about by the question, but rather rejoiced in it; for he could honestly reply, 'I have trusted The Anointed One. I am saved, and I know and feel the peace which results there from.' If he could not have made that solemn statement, he would have had no influence over the person who had put the question." (Edgar Phillips)

3. (Hebrews 4:10) Rest means to not continue on in works.

For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as Aleim did from His.

a. **He who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works:** Entering this rest means no longer needing to *work*. The idea isn't that there is no longer any place for *doing* good **works**. The idea is that there is no longer any place for **works** as a basis for our own righteousness.

b. **Ceased from his works as Aleim did from His:** This cessation from works as a basis for righteousness fulfills our "Sabbath rest." Aleim rested from His works on the original Sabbath of 1st MoUse (Genesis) 2:2 because the work was finished. We cease from self-justifying works because IESO finished the work on the tree.

4. (Hebrews 4:11) Accepting the invitation to enter Aleim's rest through faith.

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

a. **Let us therefore:** This phrase, or this idea, appears repeatedly in the Book of Hebrews. A doctrinal truth is presented – in this case, the truth of a remaining rest available by faith – then the truth is applied.

b. **Be diligent to enter that rest:** The **rest** is there, but Aleim does not force it upon us. We must **enter that rest**. Clearly, the rest is entered by *faith*; but it takes **diligent** faith. This shows us that faith is not *passive*; it takes *diligence* to trust in, rely on, and cling to IESO and His work for us.

c. **Lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience:** If we are not **diligent to enter that rest**, the result can be a disaster. We may **fall according to the same example of disobedience**. We may **fall**, even as the children of Israhel did in the wilderness.

5. (Hebrews 4:12-13) Found out by Aleim's Word.

For the word of Aleim is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

a. **For the word of Aleim:** Aleim's Word diagnoses the condition of man with a surgeon's precision. It lays open our heart and discerns our spiritual health. In the case of those the writer to the Hebrews first addressed, they were too ready to follow in the failure of the children of Israhel and to give up strong, living faith.

b. **Living and powerful:** When the **word of Aleim** exposes our weakness and unbelief like this, it demonstrates its inherent power, sharpness, and accuracy. It bears constant reminding that as we submit ourselves to the **word of Aleim**, we do it for far, far more than intellectual knowledge or to learn Scriptures facts. We do it for the *ministry of the Word*, because Aleim *meets us* in His Word and the *Holy Spirit* works powerfully through the **word of Aleim**. This spiritual work of Aleim's Word goes far beyond the basic educational value of learning the Scriptures.

i. Aleim's Word brings true health, fruitfulness, prosperity and success to what we do (Psalm 1:3).

ii. The Word of Aleim has healing power and the power to deliver from oppression (Psalm 107:20, Matthio 8:8, Matthio 8:16).

iii. Aleim's Word cleans us. If we take heed according to Aleim's word, our way will be cleansed (Psalm 119:9, Ioanne 15:3, Ephesians 5:26).

iv. The Word of Aleim, hidden in our hearts, keeps us from sin (Psalm 119:11).

v. Aleim's Word is a counselor. When we delight in Aleim's word, it becomes a rich source of counsel and guidance for us (Psalm 119:24).

vi. Aleim's Word is a source of strength (Psalm 119:28).

vii. Aleim's Word imparts life. It is a continual source of life (Psalm 119:93 and Matthio 4:4).

viii. Aleim's Word is a source of illumination and guidance. When Aleim's word comes in, light comes in. It makes the simple wise and understanding (Psalm 119:105 and Psalm 119:130).

ix. Aleim's Word gives peace to those who love it. They are secure, standing in a safe place (Psalm 119:165).

x. When the Word of Aleim is heard and understood, it bears fruit (Matthio 13:23).

xi. The Word of Aleim has inherent power and authority against demonic powers (Louka 4:36).

xii. IESO Himself – His eternal person – is described as the *Word*. When we are into the word of Aleim, we are into IESO (Ioanne 1:1).

xiii. Hearing Aleim's Word is essential to eternal life. One cannot pass from death into life unless they hear the Word of Aleim (Ioanne 5:24, Iakobo 1:21, 1 Petrho 1:23).

xiv. Abiding – living in – Aleim's Word is evidence of true discipleship (Ioanne 8:31).

xv. Aleim's Word is the means to sanctification (Ioanne 17:17).

xvi. The Holy Spirit can work with great power as the Word of Aleim is preached (Acts 10:44).

xvii. Hearing Aleim's Word builds faith (Romans 10:17).

xviii. Holding fast to the Word of Aleim gives assurance of salvation (1 Corinthians 15:2).

xix. The faithful handling of the Word of Aleim gives the ministers of the word a clear conscience. They know that they did all they could before Aleim (2 Corinthians 4:2 and Philippians 2:16).

xx. The Word of Aleim is the sword of the Spirit. It is equipment for spiritual battle, especially in the idea of an offensive weapon (Ephesians 6:17).

xxi. The Word of Aleim comes with the power of the Holy Spirit, with "much assurance" (1 Thessalonians 1:5).

xxii. The Word of Aleim works effectively in those who believe (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

xxiii. The Word of Aleim sanctifies the very food we eat! (1 Timotheo 4:5).

xxiv. The Word of Aleim is not dead; it is living and active and sharper than any two edged sword. The Word of Aleim can probe us like a surgeon's expert scalpel, cutting away what needs to be cut and keeping what needs to be kept (Hebrews 4:12).

xxv. The Word of Aleim is the Follower's source of spiritual growth (1 Petrho 2:2 and 1 Corinthians 2:1-5).

c. **Is living and powerful:** No wonder the writer to the Hebrews can say this. The Scriptures isn't a collection of musty stories and myths. It has *inherent* life and power. The preacher doesn't make the Scriptures come alive. The Scriptures *is* alive, and gives life to the preacher and anyone else who will receive it with faith.

i. **Powerful** (translated *active* in the KJV) reminds us that something may be *alive*, yet *dormant*. But Aleim's Word is both **living** and **powerful**, in the sense of being *active*.

d. **Sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow:** Aleim's Word reaches us with surprising precision, and the Holy Spirit empowers the ministry of the Word to work deeply in our hearts.

i. Often people wonder how a preacher's message can be *so relevant* to their life. They sometimes honestly wonder if the preacher has inside information about their life. But it isn't necessarily the preacher at all. It is the sharpness of the Word of Aleim, delivering the message in just the right place.

ii. "A sword with two edges has no blunt side: it cuts both this way and that. The revelation of Aleim given us in Holy Scripture is edge all over. It is alive in every part, and in every part keen to cut the conscience, and wound the heart. Depend upon it, there is not a superfluous verse in the Scriptures, nor a chapter which is useless." (Edgar Phillips)

iii. "While it has an edge like a sword, it has also a point like a rapier, 'Piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.' The difficulty with some men's hearts is to get at them. In fact, there is no spiritually penetrating the heart of any natural man except by this piercing instrument, the Word of Aleim. But the rapier of revelation will go through anything." (Edgar Phillips)

e. **Even to the division of soul and spirit:** The writer to the Hebrews makes a distinction between **soul** and **spirit**, indicating that a **division** can be made between them.

i. Certainly, there is *some* distinction between **soul** and **spirit**. "The Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) use of *pneuma* for the human spirit focuses on the spiritual aspect of man, *i.e.* his life in relation to Aleim, whereas *psyche* refers to man's life irrespective of his spiritual experience, *i.e.* his life in relation to himself, his emotions and thought. There is a strong antithesis between the two in the theology of Paulo." (Edgar Phillips)

ii. But the stress of this passage isn't to spell out a theology of the difference between **soul** and **spirit**. "Attempts to explain [these terms] on any psychological basis are futile. The form of expression is poetical, and signifies that the word penetrates to the inmost recesses of our spiritual being as a sword cuts through the joints and marrow of the body." (Edgar Phillips)

iii. However, it is important to understand what the Scriptures means with the terms **soul** and **spirit**. The Scriptures tells us that people have an "inner" and an "outer" nature (1st MoUse (Genesis) 2:7, 2 Corinthians 4:16). The inner man is described by both the terms *spirit* (Acts 7:59, Matthio 26:41, Ioanne 4:23-24) and *soul* (1 Petrho 2:11, Hebrews 6:19, Hebrews 10:39). These two terms are often used the same way, as a

general reference to the inner man. But this is not always the case. Sometimes a distinction is made between **soul** and **spirit**. We can say that **soul** seems to focus more on *individuality* regarding the inner life (often defined as *the mind, the will, and the emotions*). The **spirit** seems to focus more on supernatural contact and power in the inner life.

iv. That there is *some* distinction between **soul** and **spirit** is obvious in passages like Hebrews 4:12 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Passages like Job 7:11 and Isaia 26:9 show that the terms are *sometimes* both used to generally refer to the inner man.

v. Because the soul and spirit both have reference to the "inner man," they are easily confused. Often an experience intended to build up the **spirit** only "blesses" the **soul**. There is nothing wrong with "soulish" excitement and blessing, but there is nothing in it that builds us up spiritually. This is why many Followers go from one exciting experience to another but never really grow **spiritually** – the ministry they receive is "**soulish**." This is why the Word of Aleim is so powerful and precise; it can pierce **even to the division of soul and spirit**, which isn't easy to do.

vi. "When the *soul* is thus distinguished from the *spirit*, by the former is meant that *inferior faculty* by which we *think of* and *desire* what concerns our *present being* and *welfare*. By *spirit* is meant a *superior power* by which we *prefer future things* to *present*." (Edgar Phillips)

vii. The terms *flesh* (Colossians 2:5, Matthio 26:41, Galatians 5:16-17) and *body* (Romans 6:6, Romans 8:13, 1 Corinthians 6:13 and 6:19-20) describe the *outer* man. The terms *flesh* and *body* also seem to include aspects of our person such as the senses and habits. When we allow our flesh to direct our thoughts and actions, it ends in spiritual ruin. Aleim wants us to be directed not by the **spirit**, not by the *flesh*, or even the **soul**.

f. **All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account:** There is no one hidden before Aleim. He sees our heart and knows how to touch it, and we must **give account** for how we respond to His touch.

i. **Naked** reminds us of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and how Aleim saw their nakedness. They could not hide from Aleim and neither can we.

ii. **Open** translates the ancient Greek word *trachelizo*, used only here in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament). It was used of wrestlers who had a hold that involved gripping the neck so powerfully that it brought victory. So the word can mean "to prostrate" or "to overthrow;" but many scholars do adopt the simply meaning of "open" – in the sense of laying an opponent open and overcome.

iii. Remember the context. The writer to the Hebrews trusts that he has pierced the hearts of his audience, who thought about giving up on IESO. In this passage, he makes it clear that they can't give up on IESO and keep it hidden from Aleim. The Word of Aleim discovers and exposes their condition.

B. IESO our Great Priest.

1. (Hebrews 4:14) Seeing IESO, our great Great Priest.

Seeing then that we have a great Great Priest who has passed through the heavens, IESO the Son of Aleim, let us hold fast our confession.

a. **Seeing then that we have a great Great Priest:** The idea that IESO is our **Great Priest** was mentioned before ([Hebrews 2:17](#) and [Hebrews 3:1](#)). But now the idea will be developed more extensively.

b. **Seeing then:** The writer to the Hebrews calls attention to the specific, unique character of IESO as our **Great Priest**.

- No other Great Priest was called **great**.
- No other **Great Priest... passed through the heavens**.
- No other **Great Priest** is the **Son of Aleim**.

c. **Let us hold fast our confession:** It is wonderful to know we have a **Great Priest**, and how unique and glorious He is. It is even greater to know He **passed through the heavens**, that He ascended into heaven, and now ministers there for our sake. Both these truths should encourage us to **hold fast our confession**.

2. ([Hebrews 4:15](#)) Our Great Priest can sympathize with us.

For we do not have a Great Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

a. **We do not have a Great Priest who cannot sympathize:** Thus far the writer to the Hebrews was careful to document both the deity of IESO ([Hebrews 1:4-14](#)), while careful to also remember His compassionate humanity ([Hebrews 2:5-18](#)). It means that IESO, Master the Son, enthroned in heaven, our **Great Priest**, can **sympathize with our weaknesses**.

i. To the ancient Greeks, the primary attribute of Aleim was *apatheia*, the essential *inability* to feel anything at all. IESO isn't like that. He knows and He feels what we go through. The ancient Greek word translated **sympathize** literally means "to suffer along with."

ii. What makes the difference is that IESO added humanity to His deity and lived among us. When you have been there, it makes all the difference. We might hear of some tragedy at a high school and feel a measure of sorrow. But it is nothing like the pain we would feel if it were the school we had attended.

b. **In all points tempted as we are, yet without sin:** IESO knows what it is like to be **tempted** and to battle against sin, though He was never stained by sin. "His sinlessness was, at least in part, an earned sinlessness as he gained victory after victory in the constant battle with temptation that life in this world entails." (Peter Damon)

i. Sometimes we think that because IESO is Aleim, He could never know temptation the way we do. In part, this is true: IESO faced temptation much more severely than we ever have or ever will. The Sinless One knows temptation in ways we don't, because only the one who never gives into temptation knows the full strength of temptation. It is true that IESO never faced temptation in an *inner* sense the way we do because there was never a sinful nature pulling Him to sin from the *inside*. But He knew the strength and fury of *external* temptation in a way and to a degree that we can never know. He knows what we go through and He has faced worse.

ii. "Yet He endured triumphantly every form of testing that man could endure, without any weakening of His faith in Aleim or any relaxation of His obedience to Him. Such endurance involves more, not less, than ordinary human suffering." (Edgar Phillips)

c. **Sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted:** IESO can sympathize with our *weakness* and our *temptation*, but He cannot sympathize with our *sin*. We should not think that this makes IESO less sympathetic to us, and that He could understand us better if He had sinned Himself.

i. "But listen to me; do not imagine that if the Ruler IESO had sinned he would have been any more tender toward you; for *sin is always of a hardening nature*. If The Anointed One of Aleim could have sinned, He would have lost the perfection of His sympathetic nature." (Edgar Phillips)

3. ([Hebrews 4:16](#)) An invitation: come to the throne of grace.

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

a. **Let us therefore come boldly:** Because we have a Great Priest who is both omnipotent and compassionate, we can **come boldly** to His throne. Discouraging us from this access is a central strategy of satan. The devil sometimes wants us to consider IESO as unapproachable – perhaps encouraging us to come by Marhia or by the saints instead of IESO. Sometimes the devil wants us to think of IESO as being powerless to help, not as one who sits on a throne in heaven.

i. Boldly does not mean proudly, arrogantly, or with presumption.

- Boldly means we may come *constantly*.
- Boldly means we may come *without reservation*.
- Boldly means we can come freely, *without fancy words*.
- Boldly means we can come with *confidence*.
- Boldly means we should come with *persistence*.

b. **The throne of grace:** The throne of Aleim is a **throne of grace**. When we come, we may **obtain mercy** (this is *not getting* what we deserve) and **find grace** (this is *getting* what we don't deserve) in our **time of need**.

i. Ancient Jewish Rabbis taught that Aleim had two thrones, one of mercy and one of judgment. They said this because they knew that Aleim was both merciful and just, but they could not reconcile these two attributes of Aleim. They thought that perhaps Aleim had two thrones to display the two aspects of His character. On one throne He showed judgment and on the other throne mercy. But here, in light of the finished work of IESO, we see mercy and judgment reconciled into one **throne of grace**.

ii. Remember that grace does not *ignore* Aleim's justice; it operates in *fulfillment* of Aleim's justice, in light of the tree.

c. **Find grace to help in time of need:** Thankfully, Aleim provides **help** in our time of need. No request is too small, because He wants us to *be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer... let your requests be made known to Aleim* ([Philippians 4:6](#)).

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 5

IESO, A Priest Forever

A. Our Compassionate Great Priest.

1. (Hebrews 5:1-4) Principles of priesthood under the Law of MoUse.

For every great priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to Aleim, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honour to himself, but he who is called by Aleim, just as Aarhon was.

a. **For every great priest taken from among men:** Aleim established both the priesthood and the office of great priest in the days of MoUse, as described in 2nd MoUse (Exodus) 28 and following. The writer to the Hebrews neatly summarizes the work of the **great priest**, in saying “**that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.**” The primary job of the **great priest** was to officiate, either directly or indirectly through lower-ranking priests, sacrifices unto the Ruler.

i. The phrase “**gifts and sacrifices for sins**” reminds us that not every sacrifice was a blood atonement for sin. Many of the ritual sacrifices were intended as simple gifts to Aleim, expressing thanks and desiring fellowship.

b. **He can have compassion:** Ideally, the **great priest** was more than a “butcher” offering animals for sacrifice. He also had **compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray** and ministered the atoning sacrifices with a loving heart for the people. In this ideal, the **great priest** had this **compassion** because he understood that **he himself is also subject to weakness.**

i. Aleim made specific commands to help the **great priest** to minister with compassion. In the breastplate of the **great priest** were set twelve stones engraved with the names of the tribes of Israhel, and on the shoulder straps were stones engraved with the names of the tribes. In this, the people of Israhel were always on the *heart* and on the *shoulders* of the **great priest** (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 28:4-30). The intention was to stir the compassion of the great priest.

c. **Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins:** Aleim also made specific commands to help the **great priest** serve knowing that he was **also subject to weakness.** On the Day of Atonement, the **great priest** had to sacrifice for himself first, to remind him and the nation that he had sin to atone for, just like the rest of the people of Israhel (3rd MoUse (Leviticus) 16:1-6).

d. **And no man takes this honour to himself, but he who is called by Aleim, just as Aarhon was:** The Great Priest was taken *from* the community of Aleim’s people but was not *chosen* by Aleim’s people. He was appointed by Aleim *for* His people. The principle is that **no man takes this honour to himself.** The office of great priest was nothing to aspire to or campaign for. It was given by right of birth and therefore chosen by Aleim. It was an honour no man could *take* to himself.

i. The true priesthood and **great priest** came from a specific line of descent. Every priest came from Iakob, Ahrham’s grandson, whose name was changed to Israhel. Every priest came from Leui, one of Israhel’s thirteen sons. Aleim set the tribe of Leui apart as a tribe to serve Him and represent Him to the whole nation of Israhel (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 13:2 and 4th MoUse (Numbers) 3:40-41). Leui had three sons: Gerhson, Koath and Marharhi. Each of these family lines had their own duties. The family of Gerhson had care of the tabernacle’s screen (veil), fence, and curtains (4th MoUse (Numbers) 3:25-26). The family of Koath had care of the tabernacle’s furnishings, such as the lampstand, altar of incense, and the ark of the covenant (4th MoUse (Numbers) 3:31-32). The family of Marharhi had care of the boards and pillars of the tabernacle and the fence (4th MoUse (Numbers) 3:36-37). These families were not properly *priests*, though they were *Levites*. The priesthood itself came through Aarhon, the brother of MoUse, of the family of Koath. Aarhon’s family and their descendants made up the priests and the great priest, those able to serve in the tabernacle itself and to offer sacrifice to Aleim. The great priest was generally the eldest son of Aarhon, except if they disqualified themselves by sin (as Nadab and Abihu in 3rd MoUse (Leviticus) 10:1-3) or according to the regulations of 3rd MoUse (Leviticus) 21. In this sense, the priesthood was not popularly elected but chosen by Aleim. Man did not appoint the great priest.

ii. There are dreadful cases where men who were not priests presumed to act as priests. These include:

· Korha, who was swallowed up in a divine earthquake (4th MoUse (Numbers) 16).

· King Saulo, who was rejected from his place as king over Israhel (1 Samouel 13:11-14).

· Uzzia, who was struck with leprosy in the temple itself (2 Chronicles 26:16).

iii. Today, we also are prohibited from being our own priest. It is great arrogance to think we can approach Aleim on our own, without a priest. But it is also great superstition to think we need any priest other than IESO The Anointed One Himself. Aleim provides IESO as a mediator and priest, and we *must* use the priest Aleim provides.

iv. “A sinner can undertake to manage nothing towards Aleim immediately, or by himself, but with a mediating priest, who must know Aleim’s mind and perform it... The common sense of mankind about it since the fall doth evidence it; no nation being without a religion, a temple, a place of worship, or a priest.” (Edgar Phillips)

2. (Hebrews 5:5-6) IESO is qualified to be our Great Priest.

So also The Anointed One did not glorify Himself to become Great Priest, but it was He who said to Him: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.” As He also says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek”;

a. **The Anointed did not glorify Himself to become Great Priest:** IESO did not make Himself Great Priest. Instead, just as much as IESO was declared to be the **Son** (in Psalms 2:7), He was also declared to be a **priest forever** (in Psalms 110:4).

i. It is easy to see why the priesthood of IESO was difficult for early Jewish Followers to grasp. IESO was not from the

lineage of Aarhon. IESO neither claimed nor practiced special ministry in the temple. He *confronted* the religious structure instead of *joining* it. In IESO's day, the priesthood became a corrupt institution. The office was gained through intrigue and politicking among corrupt leaders.

b. **Today I have begotten You:** This refers to IESO's resurrection from the dead. At that time He fully assumed His role as our great Great Priest, *having been perfected* (Hebrews 5:9).

i. IESO's resurrection demonstrated that He was not a priest like Aarhon, who had to atone for his own sin first. The resurrection vindicated IESO as the Father's *Holy One* (Acts 2:24 and Acts 2:27), who bore the wrath sinners deserved without becoming a sinner Himself.

c. **A priest forever:** This is an important contrast. IESO's priesthood (like Melchizedek's) is unending, but no Great Priest descended from Aarhon ever had a **forever** priesthood.

i. Hebrews 7 will more fully develop the theme of IESO as a Great Priest **according to the order of Melchizedek**.

3. (Hebrews 5:7-11a) The compassion of IESO, our Great Priest.

Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His divine fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by Aleim as Great Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," of whom we have much to say,

a. **When He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears:** The agony of IESO in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthio 26:36-39, Louka 22:44) proved He struggled with the difficulty of obedience, yet He obeyed perfectly.

i. This answers the question, "How can this glorious, enthroned IESO know what I am going through down here?" He knows; obedience did not always come easy for IESO.

b. **Prayers and supplications:** The ancient Greek word for **supplications** is *hiketeria*. This word means "an olive branch wrapped in wool" (Edgar Phillips) because that is what the ancient Greek worshipper held and waved to express their desperate prayer and desire. Significantly, this supplication of IESO took place in a garden of olives – and He supplied the "wool," being the Lamb of Aleim.

c. **And was heard because of His divine fear:** IESO asked that the cup be taken away from Him (Louka 22:42), yet the cup was not taken away. Nevertheless, His prayer **was heard** because His prayer was not to escape His Father's will, but to *accept* it – and that prayer was definitely heard.

d. **He learned obedience by the things which He suffered:** Though IESO was Aleim and is Aleim, yet He **learned obedience**. Aleim, enthroned in heaven's glory, can only *experience obedience* by casting off the glory of heaven and humbling Himself as IESO did.

i. IESO did not pass from disobedience to **obedience**. He learned **obedience** by actually obeying. IESO did not learn *how* to obey; He learned what is involved in obedience.

ii. "Obedience is a trade to which a man must be apprenticed until he has learned it, for it is not to be known in any other way. Even our blessed Ruler could not have fully learned obedience by the observation in others of such an obedience as he had personally to render, for there was no one from whom he could thus learn." (Edgar Phillips)

e. **He learned obedience by things which He suffered:** Suffering was used to teach IESO. If suffering was good enough to teach the Son of Aleim, we must never despise it as a tool of instruction in our life.

i. Some say that we *might* learn through suffering; but such lessons are only Aleim's second best and Aleim really intends for us to learn only by His word, and it is never His real plan to teach us through trials and suffering. But IESO was never in the Father's *second best*.

ii. The Scriptures never teaches that strong faith will keep a Follower from all suffering. Followers are appointed to affliction (1 Thessalonians 3:3). It is through many tribulations we enter the kingdom of Aleim (Acts 14:22). Our present suffering is the prelude to glorification (Romans 8:17).

f. **Having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation:** IESO's experience of suffering – and subsequent resurrection – made Him perfectly suited to be the **author** (the source, the cause) of our salvation.

i. Sometimes when a person dies and leaves an inheritance, it never gets to the intended heirs. IESO died leaving an inheritance, and He ever lives to make sure His people receive it. As Edgar Phillips said it, "He died, and so made the legacy good; he rose again and lives to see that none shall rob any one of his beloved of the portion he has left."

ii. Some don't want IESO to be the **author** of their salvation. They want to write their own book of salvation – but Aleim won't read it. Only IESO can **author** your eternal salvation.

g. **The author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him:** This salvation is extended to **all who obey Him**. In this sense, **all who obey Him** is used to describe those who believe on Him – which simply assumes that believers will obey.

h. **Called by Aleim as Great Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek":** The emphasis is repeated. IESO is a **Great Priest**, who was **called by Aleim** (not by personal ambition), according to the order of **Melchizedek**.

i. **Of whom we have much to say:** The **much to say** comes later in Hebrews 7. From here until the end of Hebrews 6 the writer to the Hebrews deals with problems he believed prevented his readers from receiving this truth.

B. An exhortation to maturity.

1. (Hebrews 5:11b) Their dullness of hearing is exposed.

And hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

a. **Since you have become dull of hearing:** This explains why the writer didn't go deeper into the topic of Melchizedek right away. He wanted to address some critical basics before going on to more intricate topics, but the spiritual state of his readers made it **hard to explain**.

i. He feared the discussion of Aarhon and Melchizedek and IESO sounded too academic and theoretical to his readers. At the same time, he recognized this said more about his **dull hearers** than it did about the *message*. It wasn't that the

message was too complicated; it was that the hearers were **dull of hearing**.

ii. Being **dull of hearing** is not a problem with the ears, but a problem with the heart. The hearer isn't really interested in what Aleim has to say. Not wanting to hear the Word of Aleim points to a genuine spiritual problem. It can even be a reason for unanswered prayer, according to Proverbs 28:9: *One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination*.

iii. These Followers who felt like giving up with IESO were also **dull of hearing**. The dullness usually comes first, then the desire to give up. When the Word of Aleim starts to seem dull, we should regard it as a serious warning sign.

b. **You have become dull of hearing**: The word "**become**" is important. It indicates that they didn't start out that **dull of hearing**, but *became* that way.

2. (Hebrews 5:12a) Their failure to mature is exposed.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of Aleim;

a. **By this time**: According to the time they had been followers of IESO, they should have been much more mature than they were.

b. **You ought to be teachers**: It wasn't that these were unique people who should hold a unique role of teaching. Instead, they **ought to be teachers** in the sense that every Follower should be a teacher.

i. There is an important sense in which every Follower must be a teacher, because we can all help disciple others. We really only master something after we have effectively taught it to someone else. Teaching is the final step of learning.

c. **You need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of Aleim**: This isn't to their credit. It isn't that **the first principles** are "beneath" the mature Follower. Rather, the sense is that one should be able to teach one's self, and remind one's self of these **first principles of the oracles of Aleim**.

3. (Hebrews 5:12b-14) A contrast between *milk* and *solid food*. **And you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

a. **And you have come to need milk**: **Milk** corresponds to the *first principles* of Hebrews 5:12. **Solid food** is the "meatier" material such as understanding the connection between IESO and Melchizedek. It isn't that **milk** is bad; but these Followers should have added **solid food** to their diet. Petrho reminds us all *as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby* (1 Petrho 2:2).

b. **For he is a babe**: In the ancient Greek, the sense of this phrase is *for he has become a babe*. There is nothing more delightful than a true babe in IESO. But there is nothing more irritating and depressing than someone who *should* be mature but who has *become a babe*.

i. Have you **become a babe**? Perhaps your Follower life is unstable. Babies are handed from one person to another, and

spiritual babes are *tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine* (Ephesians 4:14-16).

ii. Have you **become a babe**? Perhaps you are divisive in your Follower life. Babies each have their own crib that they stick to, and spiritual babes have their particular denomination or Ekklesia that they think of as "my Ekklesia."

iii. Have you **become a babe**? Perhaps you are star-struck by Follower celebrities of one kind or another. Babies are focused on one particular person (their mother), and spiritual babes glory in men (*I am of Paulo, I am of Appollo*, as in 1 Corinthians 1:12).

iv. Have you **become a babe**? Perhaps you are spiritually asleep. Babies need a lot of sleep, and spiritual babes spend much time spiritually asleep.

v. Have you **become a babe**? Perhaps you are fussy and cranky with others. Babies can be cranky, and spiritual babes will fuss over any little thing.

c. **Is unskilled in the word of righteousness**: Those who have *become* babes reveal themselves because they are **unskilled in the word of righteousness**. We don't expect brand new Followers to be **skilled in the word of righteousness**, but those who have been Followers for a time should be.

d. **Who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil**: Our **senses** are **exercised** (trained by practice and habit) **to discern both good and evil** (primarily doctrinally, more than morally). Our **senses** become **exercised** when we *use* them (**by reason of use**). When we decide to **use** discernment, we mature.

i. These Followers demonstrated immaturity by both their lack of discernment between **good and evil** and in their contemplation of giving up with IESO. The mature Follower is marked by their discernment and by their unshakable commitment to IESO The Anointed One.

ii. Edgar Phillips on **good and evil**: "Not moral good and evil, but wholesome and corrupt doctrine. The implication is that the readers' condition is such as to prevent them from making this distinction."

iii. The ability to **discern** is a critical measure of spiritual maturity. Babies will put *anything* in their mouth. Spiritual babes are weak in discernment, and will accept any kind of spiritual food.

e. **Have their senses exercised**: It can be said that all five human senses have their spiritual counterparts.

i. We have a spiritual sense of taste: *If indeed you have tasted that the Ruler is gracious* (1 Petrho 2:3). *Taste and see that the Ruler is good!* (Psalms 34:8).

ii. We have a spiritual sense of hearing: *Hear and your soul shall live* (Isaia 55:3). *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Ekklesias* (Revelation 2:7).

iii. We have a spiritual sense of sight: *Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law* (Psalms 119:18). *The eyes of your understanding (heart) being enlightened* (Ephesians 1:18).

iv. We have a spiritual sense of smell: *He shall be of quick scent in the fear of the Ruler* (Isaia 11:3, RV margin). *I am full, having received from... you, a sweet-smelling aroma* (Philippians 4:18).

v. We have a spiritual sense of touch or feeling: *Because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the Ruler (2 Kings 22:19). The hardening of their heart; who being past feeling, have given themselves over to licentiousness (Ephesians 4:18-19).*

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 6

A Warning to Discouraged Believers

A. The essential nature of maturity.

1. (Hebrews 6:1a) Going beyond the basics.

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of The Anointed One, let us go on to perfection,

a. **Therefore:** The writer rebuked his readers for their spiritual immaturity, but he knew that nothing was gained by treating them as immature. So he moved on to other ideas.

b. **Elementary principles:** This has the idea of “rudiments” or “ABCs.” They are basic building blocks that are necessary but must be built upon, or there is only a foundation and no structure.

c. **Perfection:** This is the ancient Greek word *teleiotes*, which is much better understood as “maturity.” The writer to the Hebrews is not trying to tell us that we can reach perfection on this side of eternity, but we can and should reach a place of maturity in IESO. So the call is plain: **let us go on to perfection.**

i. “*Teleiotes* does not imply complete knowledge but a certain maturity in the Follower’s faith.” (Edgar Phillips)

2. (Hebrews 6:1b-2) Some of the “basics” to go beyond.

Not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward Aleim, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

a. **Not laying again the foundation:** These “basics” are given in three pairs. **Repentance** and **faith** go together. **Baptisms** and **laying on of hands** go together. **Resurrection of the dead** and **eternal judgment** are paired together.

b. **Not laying again the foundation:** Many people regard this as a Scriptural list of important “foundations” for the Follower life. Scriptures study series have been taught developing each one of these topics, with the thought that this is a good list of basic doctrines. But that isn’t the writer’s point here at all.

i. To understand this list, you must ask basic questions:

- What is distinctively *Follower* about this list?
- Where is the specific mention of IESO or salvation by grace alone?

- Can you believe or practice these things and still not be a follower of IESO The Anointed One, and not believe Him to be the MoUse?

ii. “When we consider the ‘rudiments’ one by one, it is remarkable how little in the list is distinctive of Our Faith, for practically every item could have its place in a fairly orthodox Jewish community... Each of them, indeed, acquires a new significance in a Follower context; but the impression we get is that existing Jewish beliefs and practices were used as a foundation on which to build Follower truth.” (Edgar Phillips)

c. **Of the doctrine of baptisms:** Not even **baptisms**, as used in this passage, is necessarily Follower. The specific ancient Greek word translated **baptisms** (*baptismos*) is *not* the word regularly used in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) to describe baptism (*baptizo*). *Baptismos* is used on three other specific instances to refer to Jewish ceremonial washings (Hebrews 9:10, Marhko 7:4, and Marhko 7:8).

i. The New English Scriptures translation reflects this, translating “**doctrine of baptisms**” as “instruction about cleansing rites.”

ii. Edgar Phillips: “‘Doctrines of washings’—how unnatural are the attempts to explain this plural as referring to Baptism.”

d. **The foundation:** In this case, the *elementary principles* to move beyond are all items in the common ground between Our Faith and Judaism. This was a safe common ground for these discouraged Jewish Followers to retreat back to.

i. Because Our Faith did grow out of Judaism, it was a more subtle temptation for a Jewish Follower to slip back into Judaism than it was for a formerly pagan Follower to go back to his pagan ways. “Part of the problem facing the Hebrews was the superficial similarity between the elementary tenets of Our Faith and those of Judaism, which made it possible for Follower Jews to think they could hold on to both.”

ii. Of course, these Jewish Followers did not want to abandon *religion*, but they did want to make it less distinctively *Follower*. Therefore, they went back to this common ground to avoid persecution. Living in this comfortable common ground, one did not stick out so much. A Jew and a Follower together could say, “Let’s repent, let’s have faith, let’s perform ceremonial washings,” and so forth. But this was a subtle denial of IESO.

iii. This is entirely characteristic of those who feel discouraged and wish to give up. There is always the temptation to still be religious, but not so “fanatical” about IESO.

3. (Hebrews 6:3) A statement of hope and dependence on Aleim.

And this we will do if Aleim permits.

a. **If Aleim permits:** This should not be taken as implying that Aleim may not want them to go on to maturity, past those basics common to Our Faith and Judaism.

b. **If Aleim permits:** Instead, this expresses the believers’ complete dependence on Aleim. If we do press on to maturity, we realize that it only happens at Aleim’s pleasure.

B. The danger of falling away.

Preface: Understanding an approach to controversial passages like this.

a. There is a great temptation to shape a difficult passage in to what we *think it should* say, according to our theology system or bent. Yet we must first be concerned with understanding what the text says (exposition), before we are concerned with fitting what it says into a system of theology.

b. Systems of theology have some value, as they show how Scriptural ideas are connected and show that the Scriptures *does not* contradict itself. But the way to right systems *begins with a right understanding of the text, not one that bends the text to fit into a system.*

i. “We come to this passage ourselves with the intention to read it with the simplicity of a child, and whatever we find therein to state it; and if it may not seem to agree with something we have hitherto held, we are prepared to cast away every doctrine of our own, rather than one passage of Scripture.” (Edgar Phillips)

ii. “We had better far be inconsistent with ourselves than with the inspired Word. I have been called an Arminian Calvinist or

a Calvinistic Arminian, and I am quite content so long as I can keep close to my Scriptures.” (Edgar Phillips)

c. satan knows Scripture, and the following passage has rightly been called “one of the devil’s favourite passages” for the way it can (out of context) condemn the struggling believer. Many Followers feel like giving up after hearing satan “preach a sermon” on this text.

1. (Hebrews 6:4-6) The impossibility of repentance for those who fall away after receiving blessing from Aleim.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of Aleim and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they impale again for themselves the Son of Aleim, and put Him to an open shame.

a. **For it is impossible:** The word **impossible** is put in a position of emphasis. The writer to the Hebrews does not say this is merely difficult, but that it is without possibility.

i. Note the other uses of **impossible** in Hebrews:

- It is *impossible* for Aleim to lie (Hebrews 6:18).
- It is *impossible* that the blood of bulls and goats can take away sin (Hebrews 10:4).
- It is *impossible* to please Aleim without faith (Hebrews 11:6).

ii. “This word **impossible** stands immovable.” (Phillip Prins)

b. **Who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of Aleim and the powers of the age to come:** The writer to the Hebrews speaks of people with impressive spiritual experiences. The big debate is whether this is the experience of *salvation* or the experience of something *short of salvation*. Looking at each descriptive word helps see what kind of experience this describes.

i. **Enlightened:** This ancient Greek word has the same meaning as the English word. It described the experience of light shining on someone, of a “new light” shining on the mind and spirit.

ii. **Tasted:** The idea of “tasting” may mean to “test” something. But other uses of this word indicate a full, real experience as in how IESO *tasted death* in Hebrews 2:9. **The heavenly gift** is probably salvation (as in Romans 6:23 and Ephesians 2:8).

iii. **Partakers of the Holy Spirit:** This is an unique term in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament). Since it means “sharing” the Holy Spirit, it has to do with receiving and having fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

iv. **Tasted the good word of Aleim:** This means they experienced the goodness of Aleim’s Word, and saw its goodness at work in them.

v. **The powers of the age of come:** This is a way to describe Aleim’s supernatural power. The writer to the Hebrews describes those who experienced Aleim’s supernatural power.

c. **If they fall away, to renew them again to repentance:** One of the most heated debates over any Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) passage is focused on this text. The question is simple: Are these people with these impressive spiritual

experiences in fact Followers? Are they Aleim’s elect, chosen before the foundation of the world?

i. Commentators divide on this issue, usually deciding the issue with great certainty but with no agreement.

ii. One the one side we see clearly that someone can have great spiritual experiences and still not be saved (Matthio 7:21-23). One can even do many religious things and still not be saved. The Pharisees of Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) times are a good example of this principle. These men did many religious things but were not saved or submitted to Aleim. These ancient Pharisees:

- Energetically evangelized (Matthio 23:15)
- Impressively prayed (Matthio 23:14)
- Made rigorous religious commitments (Matthio 23:16)
- Strictly and carefully tithed (Matthio 23:23)
- Honoured religious traditions (Matthio 23:29-31)
- Practiced fasting regularly (Louka 18:12)
- Yet IESO called them *sons of Hell* (Matthio 23:15)

iii. Yet, from a *human perspective*, it is doubtful that anyone who seemed to have the credentials mentioned in Hebrews 6:4-5 a true Follower. Aleim knows their ultimate destiny and hopefully the individual does also – yet from all outward appearance, such experience might qualify a man to be an elder in many Ekklesias. Yet beyond the knowledge hidden in the mind of Aleim and the individual in question, from all *human observation*, we must say these are Followers spoken of in Hebrews 6:4-5. A good example of this is Dema.

- Paulo warmly greeted other Followers on his behalf (Colossians 4:14).
- Dema is called a *fellow worker* with Paulo (Philemon 24).
- Yet Paulo condemned Dema, at least hinting at apostasy (2 Timotheo 4:10).

iv. Taking all this together, we see that it is possible to display some fruit or spiritual growth – then to die spiritually, showing that the “soil of the heart” was never right (Marhko 4:16-19).

v. Therefore, eternal standing of those written of in Hebrews 6:4-6 is a question with two answers. We may safely say that from a human perspective, they had all appearance of salvation. Nevertheless, from the perspective of Aleim’s perfect wisdom it is impossible to say on this side of eternity.

d. **For it is impossible... if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance:** Despite their impressive spiritual experience – or at least the appearance of it – these are in grave danger. **If they fall away**, it is **impossible** for them to repent.

i. If these are genuine Followers who “lost their salvation,” the terrible fact is that they can *never* regain it. In the early Ekklesia some groups (such as the Montanists and the Novatianists) used this passage to teach there was *no possibility* of restoration if someone sinned significantly after their baptism.

ii. Others explain it by saying that this is all merely a hypothetical warning (in light of the statement in Hebrews 6:9). In this thinking, the writer to the Hebrews never intended to say that his readers were really in danger of damnation. He only used a *hypothetical* danger to motivate them. However, one must say that there is questionable value in warning someone against something that can’t happen.

iii. Still others think that this penalty deals only with reward, not with salvation itself. They stress the idea that it says **repentance** is **impossible**, not *salvation*. Therefore these are Followers of low commitment and experience who risk a loss of all heavenly reward, saved only “by the skin of their teeth.”

iv. This difficult passage is best understood in the *context* of Hebrews 6:1-2. The writer to the Hebrews means that if they retreat back to Judaism, all the religious “repentance” in the world will do them no good. Retreating from distinctive Our Faith into the “safe” ideas and customs of their former religious experience is to forsake IESO, and to essentially impale Him again. This is especially true for these ancient Followers from a Jewish background, since the religious customs they took up again likely included animal sacrifice for atonement, denying the total work of IESO for them on the tree.

e. **If they fall away:** There is a necessary distinction between *falling* and *falling away*. Falling away is more than falling into sin; it is actually departing from IESO Himself. *For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity* (Proverbs 24:16). The difference is between a Petrho and a Iouda. If you depart from IESO (**fall away**) there is no hope.

i. The message to these Followers who felt like giving up was clear: if you don’t continue on with IESO, don’t suppose you will find salvation by just going on with the ideas and experience that Our Faith and Judaism share. If you aren’t saved in IESO, you aren’t saved at all. There is no salvation in a safe “common ground” that is not distinctively *Follower*.

ii. If someone falls away we must understand *why* he or she can’t repent – it is because *they don’t want to*. It is not as if Aleim *prohibits* their repentance. Since repentance itself is a work of Aleim (Romans 2:4), the desire to repent is evidence that he or she has not truly fallen away.

iii. The idea is not that “if you fall away, you can’t ever come back to IESO.” Instead, the idea is “if you turn your back on IESO, don’t expect to find salvation anywhere else, especially in the practice of religion apart from the fullness of IESO.”

iv. “This passage has nothing to do with those who fear lest it condemns them. The presence of that anxiety, like the cry which betrayed the real mother in the days of Solomon, establishes beyond a doubt that you are not one that has fallen away beyond the possibility of renewal to repentance.” (Phillip Prins)

2. (Hebrews 6:7-8) An illustration of the serious consequences of falling away.

For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from Aleim; but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

a. **For the earth which drinks in the rain... and bears herbs useful... receives blessing from Aleim:** When the earth receives rain and bears useful plants, it fulfills its purpose and justifies the blessing of rain sent upon it. The writer to the Hebrews applies the point: “You’ve been blessed. But where is the fruit?” Aleim looks for what grows in us after He

blessees us, especially looking for what grows in terms of maturity.

b. **But if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected:** If ground is blessed by rain but refuses to bear fruit, no one blames the farmer for burning it. The idea shows that growth and bearing fruit are important to keep from falling away. When we really bear fruit, we abide in IESO (Ioanne 15:5) and are in no danger of falling away.

C. Don’t be discouraged.

1. (Hebrews 6:9) The writer admits he is a little more harsh than he needs to be.

But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner.

a. **We are confident of better things concerning you:** Though he spoke so severely, the writer to the Hebrews was confident His readers would continue on with IESO. He thinks of their continuation in the faith as one of the **things that accompany salvation**.

b. **Though we speak in this manner:** These encouraging words after the strong warning of Hebrews 6:4-8 should not be understood to mean that the warnings in the previous verses are not serious, or that the writer warned of impossible consequences. If anything, verse nine shows how badly these struggling Followers needed *encouragement*. Their spiritual danger was not so much out of a calculated rebellion, but more because of a depressing discouragement. They need warning, but also needed encouragement.

2. (Hebrews 6:10-12) Don’t be discouraged because Aleim hasn’t forgotten about you.

For Aleim is not unjust to forget your work and labour of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

a. **Aleim is not unjust to forget your work and labour of love:** When we are discouraged we often think Aleim forgot us and all we did for Him and His people. But Aleim would deny His own nature if He forgot such things (He would be **unjust**). Aleim sees and remembers.

i. Sometimes our fear that Aleim forgot our **work and labour of love** comes from relying on the attention and applause of people. It is true that some *people* may **forget your work and labour of love**, but Aleim never will.

b. **We desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end:** The writer to Hebrews encourages like a coach, pressing us to press on. We must keep up our good work; press on with that hope until the end; and imitate those who **inherit** (not earn) Aleim’s promises. When we fail to do this, discouragement often makes us **become sluggish**.

c. **But imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises:** Imitate those who found the key to gaining Aleim’s promises – **faith and patience**, as demonstrated by Ahrham.

i. We are grateful to remember Abrham's life and to see that he did not have a *perfect* faith or a *perfect* patience. If Abrham had some of our weakness then we can have some of his **faith and patience**.

d. **Do not become sluggish**: The idea is that we should not let discouragement make us **sluggish**, leading to the sense that we may as well give up. First we lose the desire to *press* on, then we lose the desire to *go* on.

i. David showed a great answer to discouragement: *David encouraged himself in the Ruler his Aleim (1 Samuel 30:6, KJV)*. It is a blessing when others encourage us, but we don't have to wait for it. We can encourage ourselves in the Ruler.

3. (*Hebrews 6:13-18*) Don't be discouraged because Aleim's promises are reliable.

For when Aleim made a promise to Abrham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus Aleim, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for Aleim to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

a. **After he had patiently endured**: A season of patient endurance is a time of spiritual attack. It seems that we may never obtain **the promise** of Aleim in our life. It is easy to wonder, "Will Aleim *really* come through in my situation?"

b. **After he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise**: Aleim came through for Abrham, even sealing His **promise** with an oath. In fact, **because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself**. This oath showed that Aleim's promises (like His character) are unchanging. Abrham's trust in this was the gateway to the fulfillment of the promise.

i. "This passage teaches us... that an oath may be lawfully used by Followers; and this ought to be particularly observed, on account of fanatical men who are disposed to abrogate the practices of solemn swearing which Aleim has prescribed in His Law." (Peter Damon)

c. **That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for Aleim to lie, we might have strong consolation**: The two **immutable** (unchanging) **things** are Aleim's *promise* and Aleim's *oath*. It is **impossible for Aleim to lie** in either of these two things.

i. The *absolute reliability* of Aleim's promise should impress us. "Now, brethren, who among us dare doubt this? Where is the hardy sinner who dares come forward and say, 'I impugn the oath of Aleim'? Oh! But let us blush the deepest scarlet, and scarlet is but white compared with the blush which ought to mantle the cheek of every child of Aleim to think that even Aleim's own children should, in effect, accuse their heavenly Father of perjury. Oh, shame upon us!" (Edgar Phillips)

d. **Strong consolation**: Aleim isn't content to give us mere **consolation**. He wants to give us **strong consolation**. Edgar Phillips described some characteristics of strong consolation:

- **Strong consolation** does not depend upon bodily health.
- **Strong consolation** does not depend upon the excitement of public services and Follower fellowship.
- **Strong consolation** can't be shaken by human reasoning.
- **Strong consolation** is stronger than our guilty conscience.

i. "It is a strong consolation that can deal with outward trials when a man has poverty staring him in the face, and hears his little children crying for bread; when bankruptcy is likely to come upon him through unavoidable losses; when the poor man has just lost his wife, and his dear children have been put into the same grave; when one after another all earthly props and comforts have given way, it needs a strong consolation then; not in your pictured trials, but your real trials, not in your imaginary whimsical afflictions, but in the real afflictions, and the blustering storms of life. To rejoice then, and say, 'Though these things be not with me as I would have them, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure;' this is strong consolation." (Edgar Phillips)

e. **Who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us**: This is another reason for encouragement, knowing that Aleim has a **refuge of hope set before us**. We can think of this **refuge of hope** like the cities of refuge commanded by the Law of MoUse, as described in *4th MoUse (Numbers) 35*.

· Both IESO and the cities of refuge are *within easy reach* of the person in need. The place of refuge is of no use if it can't be reached.

· Both IESO and the cities of refuge are *open to all*, not just the Israelite. No one who comes to the place of refuge is turned away in time of need.

· Both IESO and the cities of refuge were *places to live*. In time of need, one never came to a city of refuge just to look around.

· Both IESO and the cities of refuge are the *only alternative* for the one in need. Without this refuge destruction is certain.

· Both IESO and the cities of refuge provide protection *only within their boundaries*. To go outside the provided refuge means death.

· Both IESO and the cities of refuge provided full freedom with the *death of the Great Priest*.

· However, there is a *crucial distinction* between IESO and the cities of refuge. The cities of refuge only helped the *innocent*; the *guilty* can come to IESO and find refuge.

4. (*Hebrews 6:19-20*) Don't be discouraged, because IESO will lead us into Aleim's glory.

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even IESO, having become Great Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

a. **This hope we have as an anchor**: The **anchor** was a common figure for **hope** in the ancient world. Here the idea is that we are anchored to something firm but unseen (**which enters the Presence behind the veil**).

i. You don't need an **anchor** for calm seas. The rougher the weather, the more important your **anchor** is.

· We need the anchor to hold the ship and keep it from being wrecked.

· We need the anchor to stabilize the ship and keep it more

comfortable for those on board.

· We need the anchor to allow the ship to maintain the progress it has made.

ii. The ship must have hold of the anchor, even as we must lay hold of hope. The anchor itself may have a strong grip and be secured to the ocean floor, yet if it isn't securely attached to the ship, it is of no use. But there is also a sense in which the anchor has hold of the ship, even as hope has hold of us.

iii. But the **anchor** analogy doesn't apply perfectly. We are anchored *upward in heaven*, not down in the ground; and we are anchored to *move on*, not to stand still.

iv. "Our anchor is like every other, when it is of any use it is out of sight. When a man sees the anchor it is doing nothing, unless it happens to be some small stream anchor or grapnel in shallow water. When the anchor is of use it is gone: there it went overboard with a splash; far down there, all among the fish, lies the iron holdfast, quite out of sight. Where is your hope, brother? Do you believe because you can see? That is not believing at all." (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us:** This confident, anchor-like hope sees us into the very **presence** of Aleim. **Hope** is exactly the medicine discouraged Followers need.

c. **The forerunner... even IESO:** We are assured of this access into the presence of Aleim because IESO has entered as a **forerunner**. The Scriptures (Old Testament) great priest did not enter the veil as a *forerunner*, only as a *representative*. But IESO has entered into the immediate **presence** of Aleim the Father so that His people can follow Him there.

i. A **forerunner** (the ancient Greek word *prodromos*) was a military reconnaissance man. A **forerunner** goes forward, knowing that others will follow behind him.

ii. "We are told next that as a fore-runner our Ruler has *for us* entered – that is entered to take possession in our name. When IESO The Anointed One went into heaven He did as it were look around on all the thrones, and all the palms, and all the harps, and all the crowns, and say 'I take possession of all these in the name of My redeemed. I am their representative and claim the heavenly places in their name.' " (Edgar Phillips)

iii. Yet if IESO is the forerunner, we are then the *after-runners*. There is no forerunner if there are no after-runners. We should follow hard after IESO, and run hard after Him. He has gone before us and He is our pattern.

d. **Behind the veil... having become Great Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek:** The temple analogy (**behind the veil**) reminds the writer to the Hebrews of his previous start into the subject of IESO as our **Great Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek** (in [Hebrews 5:6-10](#)). This thought continues into the next chapter.

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 7

A Better Priesthood, a Better Great Priest

A. The theme of Hebrews 7.

1. The writer to the Hebrews now explains a theme that he introduced back in Hebrews 2:17: IESO as our Great Priest.

a. He began to discuss the issue in Hebrews 5:10 but had to spend some time warning these discouraged Followers about the danger of not continuing and progressing in their Follower life.

b. Like the writer of a good detective story, the writer to the Hebrews draws out a character from the Scriptures (Old Testament) that many might think insignificant, and he brings that character into real prominence.

2. These Followers from a Jewish background were interested in IESO as their Great Priest, but had a significant intellectual objection to the idea. This is because IESO did not come from the priestly tribe (the tribe of Leui) or the priestly family in that tribe (the family of Aarhon).

a. The writer to the Hebrews wants to remove these intellectual problems the Jewish Followers had with the Glad Tidings. These intellectual hang-ups kept them from continuing on to maturity in IESO.

b. In the same way, many Followers are hung up on intellectual issues that *could* be resolved, allowing them to move on with IESO. If a Follower is hung up on issues like creation and evolution, the validity of miracles, or other such things, they should get the issues resolved so they can move on with IESO.

3. This chapter is also important because it shows us how we should think of the Scriptures (Old Testament) institutions of the priesthood and the Law.

B. Melchizedek and his relation to the Aarhonic priesthood.

1. (Hebrews 7:1-3) What we know of Melchizedek from 1st MoUse (Genesis) 14:18-20.

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High Aleim, who met Abrahm returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abrahm gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,” without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of Aleim, remains a priest continually.

a. **Who met Abrahm returning from the slaughter of the kings:** After Abrahm defeated the confederation of kings who took his nephew Lot captive, he met with a mysterious **priest** named **Melchizedek**, who was also **king** over the city of **Salem** (an ancient name for the city of Jeru-salem).

i. History shows the danger of combining religious and civic authority. Therefore Aleim did not allow the kings of Israhel to be priests and the priests to be kings. **Melchizedek**, who was **king of Salem** and **priest of the Most High Aleim** is an unique exception.

b. **Priest of the Most High Aleim:** Melchizedek was not merely a worshipper of the true Aleim. He had the honored title **priest of the Most High Aleim**. The greatness of Aleim magnified the greatness of Melchizedek’s priesthood.

i. “Any priesthood is evaluated according to the status of the deity who is served, which means that Melchizedek’s must have been of a highly exalted kind.” (Edgar Phillips)

c. **And blessed him:** Melchizedek blessed Abrahm, and Abrahm gave Melchizedek a tithe, which is **a tenth part of all** (all the spoils of battle, as mentioned in 1st MoUse (Genesis) 14:20).

d. **First being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace”:** The name **Melchizedek** means “king of righteousness,” and he was also “king of peace” (because the name **Salem** means “peace”).

i. The order is subtle but important. First, Melchizedek in his very name is called “**king of righteousness**.” *Then* he is called “**king of peace**.” As always, **righteousness** comes before **peace**. Righteousness is the only true path to peace. People look for that peace in *escape*, in *evasion*, or in *compromise*, but they will only find it in righteousness. “Peace without righteousness is like the smooth surface of the stream before it takes its awful Niagara plunge.” (Edgar Phillips)

ii. The fact that these names have meaning, and that the Holy Spirit explains the meaning shows that each word is important and inspired by Aleim. “A teaching was intended by the Holy Spirit in the names: so the apostle instructs us in the passage before us. I believe in the verbal inspiration of Scripture; hence, I can see how there can be instruction for us even in the proper names of persons and of places. Those who reject verbal inspiration must in effect condemn the great apostle of the Nations, whose teaching is so frequently based upon a word. He makes more of words and names than any of us should have thought of doing, and he was guided therein by the Spirit of the Ruler, and therefore he was right. For my part, I am far more afraid of making too little of the Word than of seeing too much in it.” (Edgar Phillips)

e. **Without father, without mother:** There is nothing said about the genealogy of Melchizedek in the 1st MoUse (Genesis) 14 passage or anywhere else. As far as the Scriptural record is concerned, he has no **father** or **mother**, no **beginning of days nor end of life**. “We see but little of him, yet we see nothing little in him.” (Edgar Phillips)

i. Though virtually all the commentators disagree with each other on this point, some think that **without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of Aleim** means that Melchizedek was a heavenly being, if not a pre-incarnate appearance of IESO Himself.

f. **Made like the Son of Aleim:** Melchizedek was **made like the Son of Aleim**. It really isn’t that IESO has Melchizedek’s kind of priesthood. Instead, Melchizedek has *IESO*’ kind of priesthood.

i. **Made like** in Hebrews 7:3 translates the ancient Greek word *aphomoiomenos*, a word used nowhere else in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament). “It is a suggestive word, used in the active of ‘a facsimile copy or model’ and in the passive of ‘being made similar to’.” (Edgar Phillips)

ii. “It was as if the Father could not await the day of His Son’s priestly entrance within the veil; but must anticipate the

marvels of His ministry, by embodying its leading features in miniature.” (Phillip Prins)

g. **Remains a priest continually:** Either this refers to the continuation of the priestly order of Melchizedek, or it is evidence that Melchizedek was actually IESO appearing in the Scriptures (Old Testament). IESO’ priesthood does remain to this day, and into eternity.

2. (Hebrews 7:4-10) Melchizedek is greater than Abrahm because Abrahm paid tithes to Melchizedek and because Melchizedek blessed Abrahm.

Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abrahm gave a tenth of the spoils. And indeed those who are of the sons of Leui, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abrahm; but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abrahm and blessed him who had the promises. Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. Even Leui, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abrahm, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

a. **Abrahm gave a tenth of the spoils... the sons of Leui... have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law:** The priesthood of Leui received tithes from Israhel as a **commandment**. Abrahm *voluntarily* gave tithes to Melchizedek. This makes Abrahm’s *giving* to Melchizedek greater than Israhel’s *payment* of tithes to the priesthood instituted by MoUse.

i. **A tenth of the spoils:** Spoils is literally *the top of the heap*, referring to the choicest spoils of war. When Abrahm tithed to Melchizedek he literally “took it off the top.”

b. **Even Leui, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abrahm, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him:** Because the whole tribe of Leui was genetically **in the loins of Abrahm** when he did this, we see the Scriptures (Old Testament) priesthood paying tithes to the priesthood of Melchizedek. This shows Melchizedek is in a position of authority over Abrahm and his descendant Leui.

i. The phrase, “**so to speak**” in Hebrews 7:9 is important. The writer to the Hebrews knows he is making an allegorical point, so he doesn’t want to be taken *too* literally.

c. **The lesser is blessed by the greater:** This principle also shows that Melchizedek was **greater** than Abrahm because he **blessed** Abrahm. On his part, Abrahm accepted that Melchizedek was **greater** when Abrahm received the blessing.

i. “The blessing here spoken of... is not the simple *wishing of good* to others, which may be done by inferiors to superiors; but it is the action of a person *authorized* to declare *Aleim’s intention* to bestow good things on another.”

C. The need for a new priesthood.

1. (Hebrews 7:11) The Levitical priesthood never made anything perfect.

Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what

further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aarhon?

a. **If perfection were through the Levitical priesthood:** This shows the *need* for a different order of priesthood. If **perfection** could come **through the Levitical priesthood**, there would be no need for another priesthood.

i. The simple fact that Aleim describes a **priest... according to the order of Melchizedek** in Psalm 110:4 shows there is something lacking in the priesthood **according to the order of Aarhon**. Aleim would not establish an unnecessary priesthood.

ii. The term **Levitical priesthood** simply describes the Jewish priesthood of the Scriptures (Old Testament). It is called **Levitical** because most of the instructions for the Scriptures (Old Testament) priesthood are found in the Book of 3rd MoUse (Leviticus).

b. **Under it the people received the law:** The Scriptures (Old Testament) priesthood is the priesthood associated with the Law of MoUse. The priesthood of Melchizedek is associated with Abrahm, not with MoUse.

2. (Hebrews 7:12) The changing priesthood and the change of the place of MoUse’ Law.

For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.

a. **The priesthood being changed:** This is logically developed from Psalm 110:4. Aleim would never introduce a new priesthood if it were not necessary, and He would never introduce an inferior priesthood. The mere mention of *the order of Melchizedek* shows that Aleim wanted the priesthood to be **changed**.

b. **Of necessity:** The priesthood of Aarhon was connected to the Law of MoUse. So if the priesthood is changed we should also anticipate some change of the Law’s status or place.

3. (Hebrews 7:13-14) IESO could not be a priest according to the Mosaic Law because He is from the wrong tribe.

For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Ruler arose from Judah, of which tribe MoUse spoke nothing concerning priesthood.

a. **Another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar:** Under the Law of MoUse, Aleim strictly commanded that only those from the family of Aarhon could serve **at the altar** in sacrifice.

b. **He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe:** IESO is obviously not from the family of Aarhon or even the tribe of Leui. The tribe of **Judah** (the tribe of IESO’ lineage) had nothing to do with Aarhon’s priesthood, the priesthood associated with the Law of MoUse. Therefore according to the priesthood of Aarhon and the Law of MoUse, IESO could never be a priest. If He is our Great Priest, it must be under another principle.

4. (Hebrews 7:15-17) Aleim’s declaration that the MoUse belongs to another order of priesthood in Psalm 110:4.

And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies:

“You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

a. **Not according to the law of a fleshly commandment:** IESO’s priesthood is not based upon law or heredity (**a fleshly commandment**), but upon the power of Aleim’s **endless life**.

b. **You are a priest forever:** This could be said of the MoUse, who was a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. It could never be said of a priest according to the order of Aarhon, none of who had **the power of an endless life** and each of who served a limited term as priests – limited to their own life span.

c. **According to the power of an endless life:** Matthio 27:1 says, *When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against IESO to put Him to death.* Among those who conspired to put IESO to death, there were priests of the order of Aarhon. But by the **power of an endless life** IESO showed that His priesthood was superior when He triumphed over death.

5. (Hebrews 7:18-19) Why the law is set aside as the way of establishing our relationship and access to Aleim.

For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to Aleim.

a. **Because of its weakness and unprofitableness:** In its **weakness** and **unprofitableness**, the law **made nothing perfect**. The law does a great job of setting Aleim’s perfect standard but it does not give the power to keep that standard.

i. “Let all legalists mark this: **The Law made nothing perfect**. Let the Seventh Day Adventists mark: **The Law made nothing perfect**. Let all those who dream of the Law as a rule of life remember: **The Law made nothing perfect**.” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **The law made nothing perfect:** Therefore, the law is valuable as it shows us Aleim’s perfect standard, but it was not ultimately intended to be the basis of a man’s walk with Aleim. This is because the law is *weak* and *unprofitable* when it comes to saving my soul or giving me power over sin.

i. The law provides expert diagnosis of our sin problem, which is absolutely essential. But the law does not provide the cure to our sin problem. Only IESO can save us from our sin problem.

c. **On the other hand:** Since now, in IESO, we have a **better hope, through which we draw near to Aleim**, we are wrong to go back to building our Follower walk on the law. Therefore the law is “annulled” or set aside in the sense that it no longer is the dominating principle of our life, especially of our relationship with Aleim.

i. “The Greek word translated disannulling [**annulling**], *athetesis*, is the same as appears in Hebrews 9:26 for the *putting away of sin* ‘by the sacrifice of Himself.’ *The disappearance of the Law is as absolute, therefore, as the putting away of sin!*” (Edgar Phillips)

ii. The law does not give you a **better hope**. The law does not **draw** you **near** to Aleim the way Aleim’s grace given in IESO does. Yet many Followers live a legal relationship with Aleim instead of a grace relationship with Him.

iii. “Although the law performed a valuable function, its essential *weakness* was that it could not give life and vitality even to those who kept it, let alone to those who did not. In fact its function was not to provide strength, but to provide a standard by which man could measure his own moral status. Its *uselessness* must not be regarded in the sense of being totally worthless, but in the sense of being ineffective in providing a constant means of approach to Aleim based on a totally adequate sacrifice.” (Edgar Phillips)

d. **Annuling of the former commandment... bringing in of a better hope:** The writer came to the same conclusion about the law as Paulo did in Galatians 3:19-25, but he got there in a totally different way. In Galatians, Paulo showed the law as a tutor that brings us to IESO. In Hebrews the law is associated with a priesthood that has been made obsolete by a superior priesthood.

i. “Cease to think of cleansing, and consider the Cleanser; forbear to speculate on deliverance, and deal with the Deliverer.” (Phillip Prins)

e. **A better hope, through which we draw near to Aleim:** Because we have a better priesthood and a better Great Priest, we also have a **better hope** and **draw near to Aleim**. Our hope is in IESO, not in the Law of MoUse or in our ability to keep it.

i. This should temper our excitement about the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. The small cadres of dedicated Jews absolutely committed to rebuilding the temple have an exciting place in Aleim’s prophetic plan. But anyone who restores the Aarhonic priesthood and resumes Levitical sacrifice (especially for atonement of sin) denies the superior priesthood and ultimate sacrifice of IESO.

D. The superiority of our Great Priest.

1. (Hebrews 7:20-21) IESO was made Great Priest by the direct oath of Aleim.

And inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: “The Ruler has sworn and will not relent, ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek’”),

a. **He was not made priest without an oath:** The priesthood of IESO was established with an oath. It is recorded in Psalms 110:4: *The Ruler has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”*

a. **They have become priests without an oath:** The great priest of the order of Aarhon was appointed by heredity, not by personal character or by an oath of Aleim. Not so with IESO and the priestly **order of Melchizedek**. Aleim even sealed His choice by an **oath**.

2. (Hebrews 7:22) IESO: our guarantee of a better covenant.

By so much more IESO has become a surety of a better covenant.

a. **IESO has become a surety:** The ancient Greek word translated **surety** (*egguos*) described someone who gave security, who cosigned a loan to guarantee payment, or put up bail for a prisoner. **IESO Himself** is the guarantee of a **better covenant**.

b. **A better covenant:** The Old Covenant had a mediator (MoUse), but no one to guarantee the people’s side of the

covenant. Therefore they continually failed under it. But the New Covenant – **a better covenant** – has a cosigner to guarantee it on our behalf. Therefore, the New Covenant depends on what IESO did, not on what we do. *He* is the **surety** and *we* are not.

c. **Covenant**: The word used for **covenant** (the ancient Greek word *diatheke*) is not the usual term for “covenant” (*syntheke*). The literal meaning of *diatheke* is closer to the idea of a “testament” in the sense of a “last will and testament.” Perhaps the writer is trying to stress that while a covenant might be thought of as an agreement that two equal parties arrive at, the testator *dictates* a testament. The “agreement” under which we meet with Aleim through IESO is not something we have *negotiated* with Him. He has *dictated* the terms to us, and we will accept or reject the terms.

d. **By so much more**: This **much more** – the overwhelming superiority of IESO The Anointed One – proves He is worthy and able to be our guarantee, our cosigner of **a better covenant**.

3. (Hebrews 7:23-25) An unchanging priesthood means a lasting salvation.

Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to Aleim through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

a. **Also there were many priests**: The priesthood under the Law of MoUse constantly changed, and so was better or worse through the years depending on the character of the priest. In contrast, IESO **has an unchangeable priesthood**. IESO will never die and has a *permanent* priesthood. We don’t need to worry about a “bad priest” replacing Him.

b. **Continues forever**: This ancient Greek word has the idea of “remaining as a servant.” IESO **continues forever**, and He **continues** as a servant, even after He ascended into heaven.

c. **He is also able to save to the uttermost**: The unchanging nature of IESO’s priesthood means that the salvation He gives is also unchanging, permanent, and secure. Most people read this verse as if it says IESO is **able to save from the uttermost**. But it really says IESO is **able to save to the uttermost**. Because He is our Great Priest **forever**, He can *save forever*.

i. The evangelist Billy Sunday had a great sermon, speaking passionately about how Aleim saved him “from the gutter-most,” because he was a gutter-drunk when Aleim saved him. This was a great line from a great preacher, but it was not true to what the Scriptures says – we are saved not *from* but *to* the uttermost.

ii. “The verb ‘to save’ is used absolutely, which means that The Anointed One will save in the most comprehensive sense; he saves from all that humanity needs saving from.” (Peter Damonse)

d. **Those who come to Aleim through Him**: This tells us *whom* IESO is able to save. It means those who abide in the Son and have fellowship with the Father. It also shows where we have to come for salvation – **to Aleim**. It is one thing to come to Ekklesia ; it is another thing to **come to Aleim**.

i. This shows the place of *abiding* in the security of the believer. When we **come to Aleim through Him**, He saves us **to the uttermost**. In IESO there is complete security of salvation.

e. **He ever lives to make intercession for them**: It strengthens us to know that IESO prays for us, and that **He ever lives to pray** for us. This is tremendous encouragement to anyone who feels like giving up.

i. **Romans 8:33-34** shows that the Apostle Paulo considers this intercessory work of IESO on our behalf important. There, he pictured IESO defending us against every charge or condemnation through His intercession.

ii. “Our blessed Ruler is interceding for us, but He is in no sense appeasing Aleim. All that Aleim’s holy Being and righteous government could demand was once for all, completely and forever, satisfied at the Tree.” (Edgar Phillips)

iii. IESO’s intercession on our behalf is not a matter of placating an angry Father who wants to destroy us. It is not a matter of continually chanting prayers on behalf of His people. It means that He continually represents us before the Father so that we can draw near through Him, and that He defends us against satan’s accusations and attacks.

iv. **Louka 22:31-32** gives an example of IESO’s intercession for His people: *Simon, Simon! Indeed, satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren*. IESO prays to strengthen us in trials and seasons of attack, and against satan’s accusations.

4. (Hebrews 7:26-28) IESO is better qualified to be a Great Priest than any priest from the order of the Law of MoUse.

For such a Great Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those great priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as great priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

a. **For such a Great Priest was fitting for us**: The priests under the Law of MoUse did not have the personal character of the Son of Aleim. IESO is **holy, harmless** (without guile or deception), **undefiled, separate from sinners** (in the sense of not sharing in their sin). IESO is far superior in His personal character than any earthly priest.

i. The believer should *glory* in these passages exalting IESO and showing His superiority. “The superiority of our Ruler IESO The Anointed One is a topic that will not interest everybody. To many persons it will seem a piece of devotional rapture, if not an idle tale. Yet there will ever be a remnant according to the election of grace to whom this meditation will be inexpressibly sweet.” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Has become higher than the heavens**: Two facts prove the perfect character of IESO. First, His exaltation in heaven. Second, that He did not need to **offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins** – which the other priests needed to do **daily**.

c. **When He offered up Himself**: This is totally unique. A priest may bring a sacrifice and offer it on the altar. But IESO

was *both* the priest *and* the sacrifice. This is the *best* sacrifice brought to Aleim the Father by the *best* priest.

i. When He offered up Himself it was a *willing* offering. “Oh, this makes the sacrifice of The Anointed One so blessed and glorious! They dragged the bullocks and they drove the sheep to the altar; they bound the calves with cords, even with cords to the altar’s horn; but not so was it with The Anointed One of Aleim. None did compel him to die; he laid down his life voluntarily, for he had power to lay it down, and to take it again.” (Edgar Phillips)

d. **For the law appoints as great priests men who have weaknesses:** Under the Law of MoUse the priests were always men with **weaknesses**. But IESO is a **Son who has been perfected forever**. Because He is a perfect Great Priest, He was able to **offer up Himself** as a perfect sacrifice for our sin. IESO is *perfectly* qualified to be our *perfect* Great Priest – **perfected forever**.

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 8

A New, Better Covenant

A. IESO, our heavenly priest.

1. (Hebrews 8:1-2) A summary of points previously made regarding IESO as our Great Priest.

Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a Great Priest, who is seated at the right side of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Ruler erected, and not man.

a. **This is the main point of the things we are saying:** The writer of Hebrews brings together the **main point** of the previous chapter. We have a **Great Priest** – IESO The Anointed One – who ministers for us from a position of all authority in heaven (**seated at the right side of the throne of the Majesty**).

b. **Who is seated at the right side of the throne:** Additionally, IESO is **seated** in heaven, in contrast to the continual service of the priesthood under the Law of MoUse.

i. The tabernacle and the temple of the Old Covenant had beautiful furnishings, but no place for the priests to *sit down* because their work was never finished. The work of IESO is finished – He is **seated** in heaven.

c. **A Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle:** IESO doesn't serve as a priest in an earthly tabernacle or temple. He serves in the **true tabernacle which the Ruler erected**, the **original** made by Aleim. The tabernacle of MoUse was a *copy* of this **original**, and it was made by man (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 25:8-9).

i. Some suppose the **true tabernacle** is the Ekklesia or IESO's earthly body. But it is best to understand it as the heavenly reality that the earthly tabernacle imitated.

2. (Hebrews 8:3) IESO's priesthood had a sacrifice – and a better sacrifice.

For every great priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer.

a. **Every great priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices:** Sacrifice for sin is essential to the concept of priesthood. IESO represented a superior priesthood and offered a superior sacrifice. He laid down His own life to atone for sin.

b. **It is necessary that this One also have something to offer:** Though IESO never offered a sacrifice according to the Law of MoUse He did offer a better sacrifice – the sacrifice of Himself.

3. (Hebrews 8:4-5) IESO's priesthood had a temple – and a better temple.

For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as MoUse was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

a. **If He were on earth, He would not be a priest:** IESO is not qualified to serve in the inferior earthly priesthood. **There**

are priests – plenty of them – qualified to serve in the priesthood according to the Law of MoUse.

b. **Who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things:** There were plenty of priests who could serve in the **copy and shadow** on earth. But IESO is the only One qualified to serve in the superior heavenly priesthood. The earthly service, though it was glorious in the eyes of man, was really only a **copy and shadow** of the superior heavenly service.

c. **Copy and shadow of the heavenly things:** 2nd MoUse (Exodus) 25:40 tells us that MoUse's tabernacle built on earth was made according to a *pattern* that existed in heaven. This was the *pattern which was shown to you* [MoUse] *on the mountain* (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 25:40). Therefore, there is a **heavenly** temple that served as a pattern for the earthly tabernacle and temple. IESO's ministry as our Great Priest takes place in this **heavenly** temple, not in the **copy and shadow** built on earth.

i. First century Jews took tremendous pride in the temple and did so for good reason: it was a spectacular architectural achievement. However glorious the Jerusalem temple was, it was of man (and mostly built by Herod the Great, a corrupt and wicked man). Therefore it is *nothing* compared to the glory of the heavenly temple that IESO serves in.

4. (Hebrews 8:6) The result: IESO presides over a superior priesthood with a better covenant and better promises.

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

a. **He has obtained a more excellent ministry:** No earthly priest could take away sin the way IESO did. Therefore IESO's **ministry** is far better than the ministry of the priesthood under the Law of MoUse.

b. **Mediator of a better covenant:** IESO has mediated for us a **better covenant**, a covenant of grace and not of works, guaranteed for us by a cosigner (Hebrews 7:22). It is a **covenant** marked by believing and receiving instead of by earning and deserving.

i. IESO is our **Mediator** for this greater covenant. **Mediator** is the ancient Greek word *mesites*, which means "one who stands in the middle between two people and brings them together." (Edgar Phillips)

ii. MoUse was the mediator of the Old Covenant because he "brought the two parties together." IESO is the **Mediator** of the New Covenant, a **better covenant**, bringing us to Aleim the Father.

iii. IESO's covenant is a **better covenant**, better than any of the previous covenants Aleim made with men. The covenant of IESO fulfills the other covenants described in the Scriptures.

· There is an *eternal covenant* between the members of the Diety that made possible the salvation of man (Hebrews 13:20).

· Aleim's redemptive plan was continued through the covenant He made with *Abrham* (1st MoUse (Genesis) 12:1-3).

· The *Mosaic covenant* was another step in Aleim's redemptive plan (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 24:3-8).

· The *Dauidic covenant* was yet another step in Aleim's redemptive plan (2 Samouel 7:1-16).

· The redemptive plan of Aleim was fulfilled in the *New Covenant* (Louka 22:14-20).

c. **Which was established on better promises:** IESO has for us **better promises**. These are **promises** to see us through the most desperate and dark times. These are **promises** that become alive to us through the Spirit of Aleim. These are **promises** of blessing and undeserved favour instead of promises of cursing.

B. The superiority of the New Covenant.

1. (Hebrews 8:7) The fact that Aleim mentions another covenant proves that there is something lacking in the Old Covenant.

For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

a. **If that first covenant had been faultless:** It is in the nature of man to come up with things that are “new” but not needed. Aleim isn’t like that. If Aleim established a New Covenant, it means that there was something lacking in the Old Covenant.

2. (Hebrews 8:8-12) The New Covenant as it is presented in the Scriptures (Old Testament) (quoting from Ierhemia 31:31-34).

Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Ruler, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isrhael and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Ruler. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Isrhael after those days, says the Ruler: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their Aleim, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Ruler,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”

a. **Finding fault:** In Ierhemia 31 Aleim showed that something was lacking in the Old Covenant – because a *New Covenant* was promised. In the days of Ierhemia the New Covenant was still in the future, because he wrote “**Behold the days are coming.**”

i. In its context, Ierhemia’s prophecy probably comes from the days of Iosia’s renewal of the covenant after finding the law (2 Kings 23:3). This renewal was good, but it wasn’t enough because Ierhemia looks forward to **a new covenant**.

b. **I will make:** The Ruler makes it plain that this covenant originates with Aleim, not with man. At Sinai under the Old Covenant the key words were *if you* (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 19:5), but in the New Covenant, the key words are **I will**.

c. **A new covenant:** This means truly **new**, not merely “new and improved” in the way products are marketed. Today, products are said to be “new and improved” when there is no substantial difference in the product. But when Aleim says “**new**,” He means **new**.

i. There are two ancient Greek words that describe the concept of “new.” *Neos* described newness in regard to *time*. Something may be a copy of something old; but if it is

recently made, it can be called *neos*. The ancient Greek word *kainos* (the word used here) described something that is not only **new** in reference to time, but is truly **new** in its quality. It isn’t simply a new reproduction of something old.

d. **With the house of Isrhael and the house of Judah:** The New Covenant definitely began with Isrhael but it was never intended to end with Isrhael (Matthio 15:24 and Acts 1:8).

e. **Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers:** This covenant is *not like* the **covenant** Aleim made with the **fathers** of ancient Isrhael. Again, this emphasizes that there is something substantially *different* about the New Covenant.

f. **Because they did not continue in My covenant:** The weakness of the Old Covenant was not in the Covenant itself but in the weakness and inability of man. The reason the Old Covenant didn’t “work” was **because they did not continue in My covenant**.

g. **I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts:** The New Covenant features transformation from within, not regulation through external law.

i. The Old Covenant came in with such awe and terror that it should have made everyone obey out of fear. But they sinned against the Old Covenant almost immediately. The New Covenant works obedience through the law written **in their mind and on their hearts**.

h. **I will be their Aleim, and they shall be My people:** The New Covenant also features a greater intimacy with Aleim than what was available under the Old Covenant.

i. “The best way to make a man keep a law is to make him love the law-giver.” (Edgar Phillips)

i. **Their sins and lawless deeds I will remember no more:** The New Covenant offers a true, complete cleansing from sin, different and better than the mere “covering over” of sin in the Old Covenant.

3. (Hebrews 8:13) The significance of a *New Covenant*.

In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

a. **He has made the first obsolete:** Now that the New Covenant has been inaugurated, the Old Covenant is thereby **obsolete**.

b. **What is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away:** The message is clear to these discouraged Jewish Followers, who thought of going back to a more Jewish faith. They simply *can’t* go back to an inferior covenant, which was ready to completely **vanish away**.

i. The system of sacrifice under the Law of MoUse soon did **vanish away** with the coming destruction of the Temple and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

C. Differences Between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant

1. They were instituted at different times.

· The Old Covenant around 1446 b.c.

· The New Covenant around a.d. 33

2. They were instituted at different places.

· The Old Covenant at Mount Sinai.

· The New Covenant at Mount Zion.

3. They were spoken in different ways.

- The Old Covenant was thundered with fear and dread at Mount Sinai (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 19:17-24).
 - IESO The Anointed One, Master the Son, declared the New Covenant with love and grace.
4. They have different mediators.
- MoUse mediated the Old Covenant.
 - IESO is the mediator of the New Covenant.
5. They are different in their subject matter.
- The Old Covenant *demand*ed a covenant of works.
 - The New Covenant *fulfills* the covenant of works through the completed work of IESO.
6. They are different in how they were dedicated.
- The Old Covenant was dedicated with the blood of animals sprinkled on the people (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 24:5-8).
 - The New Covenant was dedicated with IESO' blood (signifying His sacrificial death) spiritually applied to His people.

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 9

The Old Covenant and the New Covenant Compared

A. Features of the Old Covenant described.

1. (Hebrews 9:1-5) The Old Covenant's tabernacle and its furnishings.

Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aarhon's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

a. **The earthly sanctuary:** The tabernacle ordained by the Old Covenant was planned by Aleim, but planned for an earthly service.

b. **For a tabernacle was prepared:** The tabernacle was a tent 45 feet (15 meters) long, 15 feet (5 meters) wide, and 15 feet (5 meters) high, divided into two rooms. The larger room (**the first part**) was a 15 feet (5 meter) by 30 feet (10 meter) room called the "holy place." **Behind the second veil** was a smaller room 15 feet (5 meter) by 15 feet (5 meter), and this room was called **the Holiest of All**.

c. **The lampstand:** This setting for the lamps of the tabernacle had a middle stem and six branches stood in **the first part**. It was of an unspecified size, made of pure gold and provided the only *light* for the tabernacle (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 25:31-40).

d. **The table:** This sat in **the first part** and was made of acacia wood covered with gold, 3 feet (1 meter) long, 1½ feet (½ meter) wide, and 2 feet 3 inches (.68 meter) high. It held twelve loaves of **showbread**, each representing Aleim's fellowship with the twelve tribes of Israhel (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 25:23-30).

e. **The sanctuary:** This refers to **the first part**, known as the "holy place." A **veil** (a thick curtain) separated **the first part** from the **Holiest of All**, also known as the "holy of holies" (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 26:31-33).

f. **The golden altar of incense:** This was made of acacia wood covered with gold, 1½ feet (½ meter) square, and 3 feet (1 meter) high. It stood at the veil before the "holy of holies" and was used to burn incense (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 30:1-8).

g. **The ark of the covenant:** This stood inside the **Holiest of All** and was a chest made of acacia wood covered with gold, 3¾ feet (1.15 meters) long, 2¼ feet (.68 meter) wide, and 2¼ feet (.68 meter) high, with rings for polls along its side to carry it without touching the ark itself (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 25:10-22).

i. Inside the ark were **the golden pot that had the manna** (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 16:33), **Aarhon's rod that budded** (4th MoUse (Numbers) 17:6-11), and **the tablets of the covenant** (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 25:16).

· The **manna** reminded Israhel of Aleim's provision and their

ungratefulness

· **Aarhon's rod** reminded Israhel of their rebellion against Aleim's authority

· The **tablets of the covenant** reminded Israhel of their failure to keep the Ten Commandments and the rest of the law

h. **The mercy seat:** This was the ornate "lid" for the ark of the covenant, made with the designs of cherubim upon it. The blood of sacrifice was sprinkled upon it for the forgiveness of Israhel's sin on the Day of Atonement (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 25:17-22).

i. As Aleim looked down into the ark, He saw the symbols of Israhel's sin, rebellion, and failure. But when the blood of sacrifice was applied to the mercy seat, Aleim saw that blood covering over the sin of Israhel, and He looked at the blood instead of the sin of Israhel.

2. (Hebrews 9:6-7) Priestly service in the tabernacle under the Old Covenant.

Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. But into the second part the great priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance;

a. **The priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services:** The priests, as appointed, went daily into the holy place to perform priestly functions such as tending the lampstand and replacing the showbread.

b. **But into the second part the great priest went alone once a year:** The "holy of holies" was entered only **once a year** by the great priest **alone**, on the Day of Atonement.

c. **The great priest went alone once a year, not without blood:** His entrance into the **second part** was not for fellowship, but only for atonement. The atoning **blood** was first for his own sins and then for the sins of his people.

i. Access into the Holiest of All was thus severely restricted. Even when someone could enter, it wasn't for real fellowship with Aleim.

ii. The ancient Jewish Rabbis wrote of how the great priest did not prolong his prayer in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, because it might make the people think he had been killed. When he came out he threw a party for all his friends, because he had emerged safely from the presence of Aleim.

d. **The people's sins committed in ignorance:** Sins of **ignorance** were the specific aim of the Day of Atonement. It was assumed that *known* sin would be taken care of through the regular sin offerings and the daily sacrifices.

i. In this respect, IESO's work is far greater than the work done on the Day of Atonement. IESO's work on the tree is sufficient to atone for both the sins we do in ignorance and sins that we know.

3. (Hebrews 9:8-10) The Holy Spirit gives understanding regarding the priestly service under the Old Covenant.

The Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered

which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience; *concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.*

a. **The way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing:** The old had to pass away before Aleim's new way could be revealed.

b. **It was symbolic for the present time:** Symbolic is the ancient Greek word *parabole*. The tabernacle itself and all that the Old Covenant represented were suggestive of deeper truths, *parables* of the New Covenant.

c. **Cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience:** The priestly service under the Old Covenant could not make the priests offering those sacrifices perfect and clean in regard to the conscience.

i. If the cleansing is incomplete for the priest, how much more for the person the priest worked on behalf of!

d. **Fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation:** The weakness of the priestly service under the Old Covenant was its inability to address the need for inner transformation in man. Therefore it was only imposed until the time of reformation.

B. Features of the New Covenant described.

1. (Hebrews 9:11) The superior sanctuary of the New Covenant.

But The Anointed One came as Great Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

a. **The greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands:** IESO, as our Great Priest, ministers in a superior sanctuary – the very throne room of Aleim. This is obviously a place greater than anything human hands could make.

2. (Hebrews 9:12-15) The superior sacrifice of the New Covenant.

Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of The Anointed One, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to Aleim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Aleim? And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

a. **The blood of goats and calves:** Animal sacrifice was sufficient for a temporary covering of sin, but only a perfect sacrifice could obtain eternal redemption.

i. IESO's sacrifice was superior in that it was *perfect, voluntary, rational, and motivated by love.*

b. **For if the blood of bulls and goats... sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of The Anointed One:** If these imperfect sacrifices were

received as sufficient by Israhel, then they should much more regard the ultimate sufficiency of the perfect sacrifice.

i. The **ashes of a heifer** refer to the remains of a burnt offering that was preserved. The ashes were sprinkled in the laver of washing to provide water suitable for ceremonial cleansing (4th MoUse (Numbers) 19:1-10).

ii. This was a shadow, fulfilled and done away with when IESO offered a perfect cleansing. Therefore there is no value in "holy water" used by the Roman Catholic Church.

iii. Reportedly, there is a search for a "red heifer" that can be sacrificed, and its ashes used as part of a restoration of priestly functions for a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem.

c. **How much more shall the blood of The Anointed One... cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Aleim?** The sacrifice of IESO is sufficient to even restore our damaged conscience.

i. Our **conscience** is a wonderful tool from Aleim. But it isn't perfect. Our conscience can be *seared* (1 Timothy 4:2). Our conscience can be *defiled* (Tito 1:15). Our conscience can be *evil* (Hebrews 10:22).

d. **Cleanse your conscience from dead works:** The idea behind **dead works** is probably of sin in general, in the sense of "works that bring death." But it must also speak to the vain continuation of Old Covenant sacrifice, which is certainly a **dead work** – and the very type of thing these discouraged Jewish Followers were tempted to go back to.

e. **To serve the living Aleim:** The believer is cleansed, conscience and all, not to live unto himself but **to serve the living Aleim**. The ancient Greek word translated **serve** here is *latreuo*, which speaks of religious or ceremonial, priestly service.

i. "And, dear friends, do keep in mind that you are henceforth to 'serve the living Aleim.' You that are acquainted with the Greek will find that the kind of service here mentioned is not that which the slave or servant renders to his master, but a worshipful service such as priests render unto Aleim. We that have been purged by The Anointed One are to render to Aleim the worship of a royal priesthood. It is ours to present prayers, thanksgivings, and sacrifice; it is ours to offer the incense of intercession; it is ours to light the lamp of testimony and furnish the table of shewbread." (Edgar Phillips)

f. **He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death:** IESO's work as a Mediator is fundamentally accomplished at His **death**. His heavenly work of mediation looks back to that perfect sacrifice.

g. **For the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant:** IESO's payment on the tree accomplished **redemption** for those under the **first covenant**. Every sin offering made in faith under the Law was an IOU cashed in at the tree.

3. (Hebrews 9:16-22) The necessity of IESO's death.

For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood. For when MoUse had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet

wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, “This *is* the blood of the covenant which Aleim has commanded you.” Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

a. **For a testament is in force after men are dead:** A testament (in the sense of a “last will and testament”) only takes effect when the person who made the testament dies. Therefore IESO had to die for the testament – the covenant – to take effect.

i. “If there be a question about whether a man is alive or not, you cannot administer to his estate, but when you have certain evidence that the testator has died then the will stands. So is it with the blessed Glad Tidings: if IESO did not die, then the Glad Tidings is null and void.” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood:** Clearly, death was necessary to the Old Covenant. Virtually every part of the sacrificial system under the Law of MoUse was touched by **blood** in some way or another.

c. **Without shedding of blood there is no remission:** This is a foundational principle of Aleim’s dealings with men. Modern people think that sin is remitted (forgiven) by *time*, by *our good works*, by our *decent lives*, or by simply *death*. But there is **no** forgiveness without the shedding of blood, and there is no *perfect* forgiveness without a *perfect* sacrifice.

i. The shedding of IESO’s blood is Aleim’s *answer* to man’s problem of sin. In his sermon *The Blood-Shedding*, Edgar Phillips began by presenting three fools. The first is a soldier wounded on the field of battle. The medic comes to the soldier, and immediately the soldier wants to know everything about the rifle and the soldier that shot him. The second fool is a ship captain, whose ship is about to go under in a terrible storm. The captain is not at the wheel of the ship, trying to guide it through the crashing waves; he is in his room studying charts, trying to determine where the storm came from. The third fool is a man who is sick and dying with sin, about to go under the waves of Aleim’s justice, yet is deeply troubled about the *origin* of evil. We should look to the *solution* more than to the problem.

4. (Hebrews 9:23-28) The perfect sanctuary receives a perfect sacrifice.

Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For The Anointed One has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of Aleim for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the great priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another; He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so The Anointed One was offered once to bear

the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

a. **It was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these:** It was acceptable for the copies of the things in the heavens in the earthly sanctuary to be “purified” with imperfect sacrifices. But the heavenly things themselves could only be purified with a perfect offering.

b. **For The Anointed One has not entered the holy places made with hands... but into heaven itself:** IESO’s sacrifice was made on earth, but it is the basis for His continuing work as our mediator and Great Priest in heaven. The writer to the Hebrews proclaims it: **now to appear in the presence of Aleim for us.** It’s not hard to believe that IESO does **appear in the presence of Aleim.** But to believe that He appears there **for us** is glorious!

c. **Not that He should offer Himself often:** IESO’s ministry for us continues in heaven, *but not in the sense of continuing to atone for our sin.* His ministry continues **for us** in intercession and defending us against the accuser of Aleim’s people (Revelation 12:10). But it does **not** continue in the sense that **He should offer Himself often.** His sacrifice was once-for-all, and perfectly satisfied Aleim’s holy justice.

i. This passage and principle is a direct rebuke to the Roman Catholic *practice* and *theology* of the mass. In the mass, the Roman Catholic Church desires to *repeat* – not remember, but *repeat* – the atoning sacrifice of IESO innumerable times. This is absolutely indefensible Scripturally, and *denies* the finished work of IESO The Anointed One on the tree. The Scriptures make it plain: **not that He should offer Himself often.**

d. **He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world:** If the sacrifice of IESO were not *perfect*, then it would have to be *continual* and *constant* – even **since the foundation of the world.** Imperfect sacrifices must be repeated continually, but a perfect sacrifice can be made once for all time, and genuinely **put away sin** (not just *cover* sin, as with sacrifice under the Old Covenant). The message is clear: **He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.**

i. This principle of sacrifice explains why the suffering of hell *must* be eternal for those who reject the atoning work of IESO. They are in hell to pay the penalty of their sin, but as imperfect beings they are unable to make a perfect payment. If the payment is not perfect, then it has to be *continual* and *constant* – indeed, for all eternity. A soul could be released from hell the moment its debt of sin was completely paid – which is another way of saying *never*.

e. **And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so The Anointed One was offered once to bear the sins of many:** Just as certainly as we **die once** and then face **judgment**, so IESO only had to die **once** (not repeatedly, not continually) to **bear** our sins.

i. It is not the intention of the writer to the Hebrews to discuss the issue of reincarnation. That is a side issue; he simply brings up the obvious point, **it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.** Just as that is obvious, so it is plain that **The Anointed One was offered once to bear the sins of many.** For the writer to the Hebrews, the truth that

it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment is an indisputable principle.

ii. “A man dies once, and after that everything is fixed and settled, and he answers for his doings at the judgment. One life, one death – then everything is weighed, and the result declared: ‘after this the judgment.’ So The Anointed One comes, and dies once; and after this, for him also the result of what he has done, namely, the salvation of those who look for him. He dies once, and then reaps the fixed result, according to the analogy of the human race, of which he became a member and representative.” (Edgar Phillips)

iii. Though it was not really the point of the writer to the Hebrews to discuss reincarnation, he certainly and completely *denies* it here. We do not die and live and die and live, facing an eternal reckoning some number of lives down the road. This life is it, and then we face judgment. This means that *there are no second chances beyond the grave. Now is the time to choose for IESO The Anointed One, because when we die we simply face the judgment.*

iv. It is important to note that the principle of **it is appointed for men to die once** is not an *absolute principle*. There are some unique, remarkable exceptions. Enoch (1st MoUse (Genesis) 5:24) and Elia (2 Kings 2:11) never *died once*. Several people in the Scriptures were raised from the dead (1 Kings 17:22, 2 Kings 13:20-21, Matthio 9:25, Ioanne 11:43-44, Acts 20:9-11), and therefore *died twice*. Those taken in the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:17) will never *die once*. Yet these remarkable, unique exceptions do not deny the principle of **it is appointed for men to die once**; they are *exceptions that prove the rule*.

f. **He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation**: The focus of IESO’ first coming was to deal with the sin problem through His atoning sacrifice. But now, having dealt with the sin problem perfectly, He comes again **apart from sin** – for the **salvation** (in the sense of *rescue*) of His people.

i. **To those who eagerly wait for Him**: It is *assumed* that all believers will **eagerly wait for Him**. It’s a sad case that this assumption doesn’t always play out as true.

ii. “It ought to be a daily disappointment when our Ruler does not come; instead of being, as I fear it is, a kind of foregone conclusion that He will not come just yet.” (Edgar Phillips)

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 10

Holding Fast With a Perfect Sacrifice

A. The once for all sacrifice of IESO.

1. (Hebrews 10:1-4) Sacrifice under the Old Covenant could not truly take away sin.

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

a. **Having a shadow of the good things to come:** The idea that the Old Covenant (**the law**) is a mere **shadow** of the substance that is the New Covenant is also communicated in Colossians 2:17 and Hebrews 8:5. **Shadow** means that the law communicated the outline and the figure of the fulfillment in IESO, but was **not the very image of the things**.

i. **Shadow** isn't a bad thing. Sometimes a **shadow** can tell you a lot. But the **shadow** is not the substance. The Old Covenant and its law were not themselves bad or evil, they are only *incomplete* and *insufficient* to bring total cleansing from sin, and to save. The **shadow... can never... make those who approach perfect**.

ii. Edgar Phillips notes that here the law is called a **shadow** and **not the very image of the things** – it is *not* an *eikon*. “An image, or *eikon*, like a good statue or a photograph, reveals features and facts accurately. This a shadow cannot do.... Now **The Law had only shadows.**” (Edgar Phillips)

iii. “For example, you need a load of wood: you go to the wood man, and he takes you to a large oak tree in the far corner of the lot. Pointing to the long shadow it casts, he offers to sell you this *shadow*. Will you take it? Now, if Aleim says that in the Law there was a *shadow*, not even the very image of the things – and of course, not the things themselves, why will you hold to the shadow?” (Edgar Phillips)

iv. “In effect he is saying: ‘Without The Anointed One you cannot get beyond the shadows of Aleim.’ ” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Would they not have ceased to be offered?** The writer to the Hebrews repeats a familiar argument: the *repetition* of sacrifice shows its inherent *weakness*. If animal sacrifice had “fixed” the sin problem, then they could **have ceased to be offered**.

i. **For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year:** Every repeated sacrifice was a **reminder of sins**. It brought the **consciousness of sins** to the people again and again. But the work of IESO on the tree *takes away sin*!

c. **For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins:** Animal sacrifice under the Old Covenant could *cover* sin. The Hebrew word for *atonement* is *kophar*, which literally means, “to cover.” But animal sacrifice could never **take away sins**. Only IESO, the Perfect Sacrifice of the New Covenant, takes sins **away**.

2. (Hebrews 10:5-10) A prophetic foundation for IESO’s perfect sacrifice under the New Covenant.

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come; in the volume of the book it is written of Me; to do Your will, O Aleim.’ ” Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and *offerings* for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure *in them*” (which are offered according to the law), then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O Aleim.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of IESO The Anointed One *once for all*.

a. **He said:** This quotation is taken from the Septuagint version of Psalms 40:6-8 (the Septuagint is the ancient Greek translation of the Scriptures (Old Testament) that was the most commonly used Scriptures in the first century). It shows that prophetically IESO declared the insufficient character of Old Covenant sacrifice and declared His willingness to offer a perfect sacrifice under the New Covenant.

i. **Sacrifice and offering You did not desire:** More animal sacrifices, made under the law, would not please Aleim.

ii. **But a body You have prepared for Me:** Instead, what pleased Aleim could only come through IESO, the incarnate Son of Aleim.

iii. **Behold, I have come... to do Your will, O Aleim:** IESO’s submission to Aleim’s the Father’s will had its ultimate fulfillment in His obedience to the tree. This desire to do Aleim’s will was shown in the Garden of Gethsemane (Louka 22:39-44).

b. **Behold, I have come to do Your will, O Aleim:** The sacrifice of IESO was determined before the foundation of the world (1 Petrho 1:20; Revelation 13:8). But it was still an act of His will to submit to the tree at the appointed time and **by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of IESO The Anointed One**.

i. Our sanctification – our being set apart to Aleim – is founded on the **will** of IESO, not our own will. It is founded on the **offering** of IESO, not on our own offering or sacrifices for Aleim.

c. **Once for all:** These are the important words of this passage, and the writer to the Hebrews repeats the theme over and over again: **once for all**.

3. (Hebrews 10:11-18) The finished work of IESO The Anointed One.

And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right side of Aleim, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Ruler: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless

deeds I will remember no more.” Now where there is remission of these, *there is no longer an offering for sin.*

a. **Every priest stands ministering daily:** The priests had to *stand* continually in their work. Their work continued **daily** and sacrifices had to be **repeatedly** offered. The priests could never sit down! But IESO **sat down at the right side of Aleim**, having finished His work of sacrificing for sin.

i. The seated posture of IESO is important. It shows that His work is finished. He doesn't need to stand **ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices** as priests under the Old Covenant had to do. IESO still ministers in heaven – He has a ministry of intercession for His people. But that ministry flows from His completed work, so He can adopt a posture of *rest* – He **sat down at the right side of Aleim**.

ii. Edgar Phillips pointed out that the comma can be placed differently in the sentence, **after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right side of Aleim**. It is possible to translate, **after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down at the right side of Aleim**. Either one is permitted and either one is correct, though the common translation is probably preferred.

b. **He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified:** This makes it plain that the work of IESO is effective only for **those who are being sanctified**. The work of IESO is *capable* of saving every human being, but it is only *effective* in saving **those who are being sanctified** (set apart to Aleim).

i. “What a glorious word! Those for whom The Anointed One has died were perfected by his death. It does not mean that he made them perfect in characters so that they are no longer sinners, but that he made those for whom he died perfectly free from the guilt of sin. When The Anointed One took their sins upon himself, sin remained no longer upon them, for it could not be in two places at one and the same time.” (Edgar Phillips)

c. **The Holy Spirit also witnesses to us... says the Ruler:** In this passage, the writer to the Hebrews clearly shows that the **Holy Spirit is the Ruler**, *IEUE* of the Scriptures (Old Testament). When the **Holy Spirit** speaks, the **Ruler** speaks.

d. **This is the covenant:** In the passage quoted from Ierhemia, the writer to the Hebrews makes note of the promises of the new **covenant**, instituted by the MoUse.

i. **I will make with them after those days:** The new covenant is *new*. It comes **after those days**.

ii. **I will put My laws into their hearts:** The new covenant has to do with an *inner transformation*. Aleim changes the heart of man and writes His law **into their hearts**.

iii. **Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more:** The new covenant offers *complete forgiveness*. The forgiveness is so complete that Aleim can say that He doesn't even **remember** our sins in light of the new covenant!

iv. The Follower must endeavor to do with their sin exactly what Aleim has done: forget about it. As well, this reminds us that the believer is *in no way* on probation. Before Aleim, past sin has no bearing on Aleim's present dealing.

e. **Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin:** Where sins are really forgiven and forgotten (**remission of these**), there no longer must be an offering for sin.

i. “In the words, **No more offering for sin**, we reach the conclusion of the doctrinal part of this great epistle to the **Hebrews**.” (Edgar Phillips) What follows after is mainly *exhortation*.

ii. “The Anointed who died on Calvary's tree, will not have to die again for my new sins, or to offer a fresh atonement for any transgressions that I may yet commit. No; but, once for all, gathering up the whole mass of His people's sins into one colossal burden, he took it upon his shoulders, and flung the whole of it into the sepulcher wherein once he slept, and there it is buried, never to be raised again to bear witness against the redeemed any more forever.” (Edgar Phillips)

iii. The work of IESO for atonement is *finished*. If it is not enough for us, then nothing will be. “Aleim has set forth The Anointed One for you as guilty sinners to rest on; and if that is not enough for you, what more would you have? The Anointed One has offered himself, and died and suffered in our stead, and gone into His glory; and, if you cannot depend upon Him, what more would you have him do? Shall he come and die again? You have rejected Him once; you would reject Him though He died twice.” (Edgar Phillips)

B. Encouraging the discouraged in light of IESO' perfect sacrifice.

1. (Hebrews 10:19-22) Knowing IESO has opened the way, let us draw near to Aleim.

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of IESO, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a Great Priest over the house of Aleim, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

a. **Having boldness:** Access is given to us for a bold approach to Aleim. The point is simple: we must take advantage of this access, and take it with **boldness**. On the Day of Atonement, the great priest entered the holiest place of all with fear and trembling, but we can **enter the Holiest with boldness**.

i. We can have **boldness** because we **enter the Holiest by the blood of IESO**. If we entered as the Scriptures (Old Testament) great priest did, with the blood of animals, we wouldn't have **boldness**. But with the **blood of IESO** providing a **new and living way which He consecrated for us**, we really can come into the presence of Aleim with **boldness**.

ii. This **boldness** is a complete contrast to the way the Great Priest entered the Holy Place under the Old Covenant. “He went with fear and trembling, because, if he had neglected the smallest item prescribed by the law, he could expect nothing but death. Genuine believers can come even to the throne of Aleim with confidence, as they carry into the Divine presence the infinitely meritorious blood of the great atonement; and, being justified through that blood, they have a right to all the blessings of the eternal kingdom.” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **A new and living way:** This means that the sacrifice of IESO is *always fresh* in the mind of Aleim. Though it happened centuries ago it is not “stale.” It means that a **living** IESO ushers us into the presence of Aleim.

i. Edgar Phillips on a **new and living way**: “It is eternally as if *just now* He had borne our sins in His own body on the Tree, as if *just now* He had said, ‘It is finished,’ and the soldier had pierced His side and there had come forth blood and water. He is evermore **freshly-slain**.”

ii. “This is evidently an allusion to the blood of the victim *newly shed, uncoagulated*, and consequently proper to be use for *sprinkling*. The blood of the Jewish victims was fit for sacrificial purposes only so long as it was *warm and fluid*.” (Edgar Phillips)

iii. It is a **living way**. Under the Old Covenant, the Great Priest had access because of the blood of a dead animal. Now under the New Covenant we have access because of the perfect sacrifice of the sinless Son of Aleim, and it is as if the living, resurrected IESO ushers us into the throne room of Aleim.

c. **Through the veil**: The **veil** separated the **Holiest** from the holy place. To enter into the **Holiest**, you had to pass **through the veil**. But this veil separating man from Aleim’s intimate presence is forever open, being torn into two from top to bottom (**Matthio 27:51**).

i. **That is, His flesh**: The writer to the Hebrews makes an analogy between the veil that stood between Aleim and man and the body of IESO. IESO’ body was “torn,” and so was the veil, each indicating that now we can come to Aleim boldly.

d. **Having a Great Priest over the house of Aleim**: We have a Great Priest who presides over the heavenly courts to make certain the believer has total access.

e. **Let us draw near**: With the perfect cleansing available to us, cleansing both the inner man (**hearts sprinkled**) and the outer man (**bodies washed**) we can **draw near** to Aleim in a way never available to someone under the Old Covenant. The work of IESO makes us able to draw near in a **full assurance of faith**.

f. **Let us draw near**: We can **draw near** because several issues are settled. The problem of access to Aleim has been settled. The problem of a perfect Great Priest has been settled. The problem of moral and spiritual pollution has been settled.

i. The encouragement to **draw near** wouldn’t be given unless it was necessary. These discouraged Followers had a problem in drawing near. This was their *real* problem: they lost their intimate relationship with IESO, and nothing else is going right.

ii. Perhaps they thought they had many problems: persecution, difficult relationships, hard times with culture or economy. But the real problem was that their relationship with Aleim wasn’t on track. They didn’t draw near to Aleim on the basis of what IESO did on the tree, through the empty tomb, and in heaven..

iii. When we are in tough times, we should remember that many people have gone through worse times and have had a better attitude, and more joy, than you do now. What is the difference? They knew how to **draw near**.

iv. Just as importantly, the original readers of this letter are reminded that they will never regain that intimacy coming through the institutions of the Old Covenant.

2. (**Hebrews 10:23**) Let us hold fast to the truth.

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

a. **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering**: Discouragement made them waver from the truth. A renewed confidence in the greatness of IESO and in the New Covenant will make them stand strong in the faith.

b. **For He who promised is faithful**: The reason we can stand strong is because **He who promised is faithful**. It is far better to trust in His faithfulness instead of ours!

3. (**Hebrews 10:24-25**) Let us pursue the community of Aleim’s people.

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

a. **Let us consider one another**: Discouragement made them avoid community at the very time they needed it most. IESO meets us in one another to **stir up love and good works**.

b. **Forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**: Forsaking fellowship is a sure way to give place to discouragement. This festers where Aleim’s people are not **exhorting one another**.

i. Many go to Ekklesia if they feel they “need it” at the time. But our motivation for fellowship must be to obey Aleim and *to give to others*. We can go to Ekklesia looking to encourage someone who needs to hang in there against a tide of discouragement.

ii. “Follower exhortation means the expression of our hearts to others to urge them to continue on the Follower’ path. It may include testimony, and often will necessitate warning.” (Edgar Phillips)

c. **So much the more as you see the Day approaching**: As the Day of IESO’ coming draws nearer, we should be *more* committed to the fellowship of Aleim’s people, the **assembling of ourselves together**.

C. Another warning to endure.

1. (**Hebrews 10:26-31**) The danger of a willful rejection of IESO’ perfect sacrifice for us.

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected MoUse’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of Aleim underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Ruler. And again, “The Ruler will judge His people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living Aleim.

a. **For if we sin willfully**: To **sin willfully** is defined in **Hebrews 10:29**. It speaks of someone who has **trampled the Son of Aleim underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which**

b. **He was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace**. It is a knowing, deliberate rejection of IESO’ great work for us on the tree.

i. **Sin willfully:** In a sense, *every* sin is a “willful sin.” But here, the writer to the Hebrews spoke of something much more severe and relevant to these discouraged Jewish Followers who contemplated a retreat from a distinctive Our Faith and a coming to Judaism with its sacrificial system. This is turning your back on IESO.

ii. “It has nothing to do with *backsliders* in our common use of that term. A man may be overtaken in a fault, or he may deliberately go into sin, and yet neither renounce the Glad Tidings, nor deny the Ruler that bought him. His case is dreary and dangerous, but it is not *hopeless*.” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **There no longer remains a sacrifice for sins:** If IESO’ sacrifice for sin is rejected, there remains *no other* sacrifice that can cleanse.

c. **How much worse punishment:** If someone *does* reject IESO’ sacrifice, fearful judgment is **certain**, even more certain than it was under the Old Covenant.

d. **If we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth:** When we **sin willfully** by rejecting IESO’ work on the tree as sufficient, we have:

i. **Trampled the Son of Aleim underfoot:** We disgrace Him by rejecting His greatest work. We devalue Him by devaluing what He did.

ii. **Counted the blood of the covenant... a common thing:** We consider IESO’ blood of no greater importance than the countless animals sacrificed under the Old Covenant.

iii. **Insulted the Spirit of grace:** We offend the Holy Spirit, whose purpose it is to present IESO and His work to us (Ioanne 16:8-15) when we reject IESO and His finished work on our behalf.

e. **It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living Aleim:** It is **fearful** indeed to one-day face the Aleim you have rejected and offended so greatly.

i. “To **fall into the hands of the Living Aleim** is, therefore, to have resisted His love, refused His salvation, despised the warnings of His Spirit, and to have persisted thus past the point where Aleim can consistently show further grace.” (Edgar Phillips)

2. (Hebrews 10:32-34) Take heart in your discouragement, and remember how you have stood for Aleim in tough times before.

But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.

a. **But recall the former days:** These Followers had already suffered for IESO, being rejected from their Jewish community and perhaps being counted as dead. This came after they trusted in IESO (**after you were illuminated**).

b. **A great struggle with sufferings:** Their persecution was a **struggle** that came in many different ways. They were **made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations**. They were **companions of those who were so treated** – including the writer to the Hebrews himself (**you had compassion on me in**

chains). They also had faced economic persecution (**the plundering of your goods**). But the point is that they had faced these things, and had **endured** them. They could take a look at their past endurance and be encouraged to keep standing strong in the future.

i. Edgar Phillips on **a great struggle with sufferings:** “Here we have an allusion to the combats at the Grecian games, or to the exhibitions of gladiators at the public spectacles.”

c. **Knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven:** They made it through the time of persecution by keeping a heavenly perspective. The writer to the Hebrews’ point is clear: you can make it through *this* present time of discouragement also.

3. (Hebrews 10:35-39) Draw on your past experience to gain strength to endure for the future.

Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of Aleim, you may receive the promise: “For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.” But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

a. **Therefore do not cast away your confidence:** These discouraged Followers were in danger of casting **away their confidence** in IESO and relapsing into an Old Covenant relationship with Aleim.

b. **You have need of endurance:** They, and we, **have need of endurance** to receive the promise of Aleim after we **have done the will of Aleim**. The toughest and most discouraging trials are when we are called to obey Aleim’s will when the fulfillment of His promise seems so far away. This is why we need **endurance**. Faithfulness during the time when the promise seems unfulfilled is the measure of your obedience and spiritual maturity.

i. This **endurance** is built through trials, the testing of our faith (Iakobo 1:2-4).

c. **Now the just shall live by faith:** We need to follow in the footsteps of the **just** who will **live by faith**, and endure to see the promise fulfilled.

i. Every word in Abakkuk 2:4 is important, and the Ruler quotes it three times in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) just to bring out the fullness of the meaning.

· In Romans 1:17 Paulo quotes this same passage from Abakkuk 2:4 with the emphasis on *faith*: “The just shall live by **faith**”

· In Galatians 3:11 Paulo quotes this passage from Abakkuk 2:4 with the emphasis on *just*: “The **just** shall live by faith”

· Here in Hebrews 10:38 the emphasis is on *live*: “The just shall **live** by faith”

d. **But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul:** This is a confident conclusion. We *will* be those who endure on and gain the promise of Aleim. We will not **draw back** into old traditions or into an Old Covenant relationship with Aleim – or any other replacement for IESO

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 11

Examples of Faith to Help the Discouraged

A. Faith defined.

1. (Hebrews 11:1) A definition of faith.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

a. **Now faith is the substance:** Just as our physical eyesight is the sense that gives us evidence of the material world, **faith** is the “sense” that gives us evidence of the invisible, spiritual world.

i. Faith has its reasons. The Scriptures doesn’t recommend a “blind leap” of faith. But the reasons can’t be measured in a laboratory; they have to be understood *spiritually*. “Faith extends beyond what we learn from our senses, and the author is saying that it has its reasons. Its tests are not those of the senses, which yield uncertainty.” (Peter Damonse)

ii. “Physical eyesight produces a conviction or evidence of visible things; faith is the organ which enables people to see the invisible order.” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Of things hoped for... of things not seen:** If you have the substance before you or if you can see it, there is no use for **faith**. Faith is needed for what we *can’t* see and *can’t* touch.

i. Faith does not contradict reason, though it may go beyond reason. One may objectively prove the Scriptures is the most unique book ever published and has impacted society more than any other book. But only faith can *prove* that the Scriptures is the *Word of Aleim*. Therefore, this is a belief *beyond* reason but not in *contradiction* to reason or *against* reason.

c. **Faith is the substance... the evidence:** Faith is *not* a bare belief or intellectual understanding. It is a willingness to trust in, to rely on, and to cling to.

2. (Hebrews 11:2) Faith enabled people in the past to overcome.

For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.

a. **For by it the elders:** The great examples of godliness all had different circumstances and personalities, but they all had one thing in common – faith.

b. **Obtained a good testimony:** These Jewish Followers were discouraged and thought of giving up on IESO and a distinctive Our Faith. They needed **a good testimony**, and so they needed these examples of faith to break them out of discouragement.

3. (Hebrews 11:3) Faith gives understanding to the invisible world.

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of Aleim, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

a. **By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word:** This happened when Aleim simply commanded, “*Let there be light*” (1st MoUse (Genesis) 1:3). As the Psalmist explains: *By the word of the Ruler the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth... For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast*” (Psalms 33:6, 33:9).

b. **By faith we understand:** We did not see this act of creation; we only know of it by **faith**. We also know this by

reason, because we know the world was created and created by an intelligent Designer. Again, this is faith going *beyond* but not in *contradiction* to reason.

i. Even in times when it seems Aleim expects a faith that contradicts reason, closer examination reveals He does not. For example, it might seem contrary to reason for Aleim to expect Abrahm to believe that Sarha’s dead womb could bring forth a child. But it is not unreasonable to believe that the Aleim who created life and the womb could do this, and that He would do it according to His promise.

c. **By faith we understand:** This text *does not* say that Aleim created the world *with* or *by* **faith**. Since Aleim sees and knows all things, “faith” in a human sense does not apply to Him. Since we understand faith as *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*, we know that Aleim sees everything and does not “hope” for anything.

d. **So that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible:** Most scientists at the time the Book of Hebrews was written believed the universe was created out of existing matter, not out of nothing. They believed the world was made out of **things which are visible**. But the Scriptures corrects this misunderstanding, clearly saying that the world was **not made of things which are visible**.

B. Faith at the beginning of man’s history.

1. (Hebrews 11:4) Abel’s faith.

By faith Abel offered to Aleim a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, Aleim testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

a. **By faith Abel offered to Aleim a more excellent sacrifice:** The difference between the sacrifice of Cain and the sacrifice of Abel (1st MoUse (Genesis) 4:3-5) was not between animal and vegetable. The difference was that Abel’s sacrifice was made **by faith**.

i. “Abel’s sacrifice was preferred to his brother’s for no other reason than that it was sanctified by faith; for surely the fat of brute animals did not smell so sweetly, that it could, by its odour, pacify Aleim.” (Peter Damonse)

b. **Aleim testifying of his gifts:** It is likely that Aleim testified of His pleasure with Abel’s sacrifice by consuming it with fire from heaven, as happened at the dedication of the tabernacle (3rd MoUse (Leviticus) 9:24), the temple (2 Chronicles 7:1) and upon offerings made by David (1 Chronicles 21:26) and Elia (1 Kings 18:38).

c. **Through it he being dead still speaks:** Right off with his example of Abel, the writer reminds us that faith is not necessarily rewarded on earth. But Aleim Himself testifies to the righteousness of the faithful. Abel’s blood still speaks to us, reminding us of the value of eternity.

2. (Hebrews 11:5-6) Enoch’s faith.

By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because Aleim had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased Aleim. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Aleim must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

a. **By faith Enoch:** Enoch is one of the mystery men of the Scriptures (Old Testament) being mentioned only in 1st

MoUse (Genesis) 5:21-24 as the man who *walked with Aleim and he was not, for Aleim took him*.

i. Many Jewish and Follower traditions make Enoch the recipient of some spectacular and esoteric revelations. Iouda recognizes him as a prophet (Iouda 14-15). But the value of other prophecies attributed to him is uncertain at the very best.

b. **By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death:** The writer to the Hebrews assumes that only a man of faith can enjoy close communion with Aleim. Anyone with this of fellowship with Aleim must obviously please Aleim, and in pleasing Aleim Enoch fulfilled the purpose for which man was created (Revelation 4:11).

c. **But without faith it is impossible to please Him:** This is the basic faith required of any who seeks Aleim. One must **believe that He is**, and one must believe **He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him**. We must believe that Aleim is there, and that He will reveal Himself to the seeking heart.

i. The writer to the Hebrews doesn't say that it is *difficult* to please Aleim without faith. He says that it is **impossible**.

ii. "These two elements seem most simple, but, alas, how many professing Followers act as if Aleim were not living; and how many others, though seeking after Him, are not *expecting from Him* as Rewarder!" (Edgar Phillips)

3. (Hebrews 11:7) Noe's faith.

By faith Noe, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with divine fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

a. **Noe, being divinely warned of things not yet seen:** Noe was warned of something that had never happened before. His faith was shown in not merely agreeing that the flood would come, but in doing what Aleim told him to do regarding the flood – he was **moved with divine fear**.

b. **Prepared an ark:** Real faith will always *do* something. The book of Iakobo repeats this theme over and over again.

c. **He condemned the world:** We shouldn't think that Noe was a man who preached sermons of condemnation to the world. Instead, the mere conduct of the divine, without any preaching at all, can feel like condemnation to the world.

C. Faith in the life of Abrahm and the Patriarchs.

1. (Hebrews 11:8) Abrahm's obedience by faith.

By faith Abrahm obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

a. **By faith, Abrahm obeyed:** Abrahm did step out in faith, going to the place Aleim promised him; but his faith was less than perfect. This is seen by comparing 1st MoUse (Genesis) 12:1-5 with Acts 7:2-4, where it is evident that Abrahm first went half way to where Aleim called him, and only *eventually* obeyed completely. Yet thousands of years later, Aleim did not "remember" the delayed obedience, only the faith.

2. (Hebrews 11:9-10) Abrahm's sojourning life of faith.

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaak and Iakob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is Aleim.

a. **By faith, he dwelt in the land of promise:** Abrahm lived as a "sojourner" in the land Aleim promised, never owning any of it except the plots that he and Sarha were buried on. **Dwelt** translates the ancient Greek word *paroikos*, describing a "resident alien" – one who lives somewhere, but doesn't have permanent status there.

i. A resident alien or a sojourner is evident. The way they talk, the way they dress, their mannerisms, their entertainment, their citizenship, and their friends, all speak of their native home. If someone is the same in all these areas as the "natives," they are no longer sojourners – they are permanent residents. Followers shouldn't live as if they are permanent residents of planet earth.

b. **Dwelling in tents with Isaak and Iakob:** Because they had no permanent home, Abrahm, Isaak and Iakob lived in **tents** instead of houses. They looked forward to a better city – **the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is Aleim**.

3. (Hebrews 11:11-12) Sarha's faith and its results.

By faith Sarha herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude; innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

a. **By faith Sarha:** Sarha's faith was not perfect. She first laughed in unbelief (1st MoUse (Genesis) 18:9-15) and then she learned to laugh in faith (1st MoUse (Genesis) 21:6).

b. **Because she judged Him faithful who had promised:** Faith comes down to judging that Aleim is faithful and able to keep His promises. It was this faith that enabled Sarha to **receive strength to conceive seed**. Aleim gave the strength, but Sarha received it by faith.

c. **Were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude:** Because of the faith of Sarha and Abrahm, thousands – millions – of descendants were born. Their faith had an impact on more lives than they ever dreamed of.

4. (Hebrews 11:13-16) What the faith of Abrahm and Sarha teaches us.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to coming. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore Aleim is not ashamed to be called their Aleim, for He has prepared a city for them.

a. **These all died in faith, not having received the promises:** The promise of the MoUse was made to Abrahm and Sarha, and they believed the promise. Yet they **died** having never received it, only seeing it **in faith**.

i. They **saw the promises afar off**, willing to look at and consider the promise of Aleim, even though the fulfillment seemed so far away.

ii. They **were assured of them**, carefully considering the promise, assured that the promise was valid because *Aleim* made the promise.

iii. They **embraced them**, taking the promise and embracing it in faith. Abrham and Sarha probably thought many times each day about the son Aleim promised to them and each time they **embraced** the promise. “*The saints ‘embraced’ the promises.* The Greek word signifies ‘salutes,’ as when we see a friend at a distance.” (Edgar Phillips)

iv. They **confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims**: Abrham and Sarha always took the promise with the understanding that this world was not their home. They knew Aleim had a better and more enduring home for them in heaven.

v. If these examples of faith endured through difficulty and discouragement without **having received the promises**, then we who *have* received the promises have even more reason for endurance.

iv. **These all died in faith**:

- They did not need to seek faith on their deathbed. They **died in faith**.

- Though they did have faith, they did also die. We do not have faith to escape death, but to die **in faith**.

- They never went *beyond* faith and “grew beyond” simple dependence on Aleim.

- They never went *below* faith or lost faith.

b. **They seek a homeland... they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country**. Living by faith is easier when we remember that this world is not our home. It is easier when we remember that on this side of eternity, not everything is settled and not every wrong is righted. That is why they **seek a homeland** and a **better... heavenly country**.

i. Faith is very difficult when we live as “practical atheists.” This describes someone who may have a theoretical belief in Aleim, but the belief doesn’t *matter* in what they do from day to day. When we remember there is a spiritual reality – a heavenly home that is our real home – faith is much easier.

ii. The great theme of modern times is *naturalism*, the belief that only what can be found and measured in nature is “real.” Scientists and educators who trust in naturalism may be content to let us believe in Aleim, just as long as we agree that Aleim is a fairy tale – someone not *real*. But when we believe in the *reality* of Aleim and of heaven and of His Word, it is completely unacceptable to those who live by naturalism.

iii. H.L. Mencken said faith is the “Illogical belief in the occurrence of the impossible.” This would only be true if there is no Aleim or if He does not matter. Since Aleim *is* and since He *does* matter, faith is entirely logical.

c. **Therefore Aleim is not ashamed to be called their Aleim**: For those courageous enough to believe in Aleim, and to believe in Him as *real*, and heaven and eternal life as *real*, **Aleim is not ashamed to be called their Aleim, for He has prepared a city for them**.

i. We often consider the idea that we should not be ashamed of Aleim, but we must also consider that we may make Aleim ashamed of us. When we do not regard Aleim and heaven and eternity as *real*, there can be a sense in which Aleim is **ashamed to be called our Aleim**.

5. (Hebrews 11:17-19) Abrham’s faith was great enough to know Aleim was able to raise the dead, and that Aleim was able to keep His promises.

By faith Abrham, when he was tested, offered up Isaak, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, “In Isaak your seed shall be called,” concluding that Aleim was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

a. **By faith Abrham, when he was tested, offered up Isaak**: The verb tense for **offered up** indicates that as far as Abrham was concerned the sacrifice was complete. In his will and in his purpose he really did sacrifice his son.

b. **Offered up his only begotten son**: Though Abrham had another son (Ishmael, the son of his fleshly attempt to fulfill Aleim’s promise), Aleim did not recognize the other son (1st MoUse (Genesis) 22:1-14) – so Isaak could be called **his only begotten son**.

c. **Accounting that Aleim was able**: The ancient Greek word translated **accounting** means just what it sounds like in English. It is a term from arithmetic expressing “a decisive and carefully reasoned act.” (Edgar Phillips) This means that Abrham calculated Aleim’s promise worthy of confidence.

d. **From the dead, from which he also received him**: As far as Abrham was concerned, Isaak was as good as dead and it was from the dead that he received him back, in a manner that prefigured the resurrection of IESO.

i. Edgar Phillips wonders if this is not the incident that IESO referred to in Ioanne 8:56 when IESO said: *Your father Abrham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad.*

ii. When Abrham was confronted with a promise and a command from Aleim which seemed to contradict each other, he did what we all should do: he obeyed the command and let Aleim take care of the promise. Aleim was more than able to do this.

6. (Hebrews 11:20) Isaak’s faith.

By faith Isaak blessed Iakob and Esau concerning things to come.

a. **By faith Isaak blessed Iakob**: Isaak was really in the *flesh*, not in **faith**, when he first intended to bless Esau instead of Iakob. He wanted to bless Esau with the birthright for carnal reasons. He liked Esau as a more “manly” man, and he liked the wild game he brought home. Instead he should have chosen Iakob, whom Aleim chose.

b. **By faith Isaak blessed**: Yet Isaak came to the place of **faith** when he discovered that he had actually blessed Iakob instead of Esau. 1st MoUse (Genesis) 27:33 says, *Isaak trembled exceedingly*. When *Isaak trembled exceedingly*, he was troubled because he knew that he had tried to box Aleim in, to defeat Aleim’s plan, and that Aleim beat him. He realized that he would always be defeated when he tried to resist Aleim’s will, even when he didn’t like it. And he came to learn that despite his arrogant attempts against the will of Aleim, Aleim’s will was glorious.

c. **By faith**: The **faith** in Isaak’s blessing came in after Isaak’s attempt to thwart the will of Aleim was destroyed, when he said of Iakob, *and indeed he shall be blessed* (1st MoUse (Genesis) 27:33). He knew that his puny attempt to box Aleim

in was defeated, and he responded in the faith that said, “O.K. Aleim, You win. Let Isaak be blessed with the birthright, and let Esau be blessed after him in his own way.”

7. (Hebrews 11:21) Iakob’s faith.

By faith Iakob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Ioseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

a. **By faith Iakob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Ioseph:** Iakob led a rather carnal life. Yet his faith could also look beyond death – and he blessed each of his sons.

b. **And worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff:** Iakob had to lean **on the top of his staff** because he was given a limp many years before when Aleim confronted him at Peniel (1st MoUse (Genesis) 32:24-32). As he leaned on his staff he remembered that Aleim was great and held his future and the future of his descendants. Therefore he **worshipped**, demonstrating his faith and dependence on Aleim.

8. (Hebrews 11:22) Ioseph’s faith.

By faith Ioseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Isrhael, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

a. **By faith Ioseph:** Ioseph made mention of the departure of the children of Isrhael in 1st MoUse (Genesis) 50:24, when he said: *Aleim will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abrham, to Isaak, and to Iakob.* He knew Aleim’s promise was true!

b. **Gave instructions concerning his bones:** When Ioseph died he was never buried. His coffin laid above ground for the 400 or so years until it was taken back to Canaan. It was a silent witness all those years that Isrhael was going back to the Promised Land, just as Aleim had said.

i. “The Holy Spirit in this chapter selects out of good men’s lives the most brilliant instances of their faith. I should hardly have expected that he would have mentioned the dying scene of Ioseph’s life as the most illustrious proof of his faith in Aleim... Does not this tell us, dear brethren and sisters, that we are very poor judges of what Aleim will most delight in?” (Edgar Phillips)

c. **By faith Ioseph:** Ioseph’s faith testified for years after his death. All during that time, when a child of Isrhael saw Ioseph’s coffin and asked why it was there and not buried, they could be answered, “Because the great man Ioseph did not want to be buried in Egypt, but in the Promised Land Aleim will one day lead us to.”

D. Faith in the people of Isrhael.

1. (Hebrews 11:23) The faith of MoUse’s parents.

By faith MoUse, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s command.

a. **By faith MoUse... was hidden three months by his parents:** MoUse’s parents showed faith when they perceived that he was specially by Aleim; they took measures of faith to save his life despite danger.

2. (Hebrews 11:24-26) The faith of MoUse in Pharaoh’s court.

By faith MoUse, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of Aleim than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of The

Anointed One greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

a. **Refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter:** MoUse showed faith when he let Aleim chart his destiny instead of allowing Pharaoh or raw ambition do it.

b. **Choosing rather to suffer affliction:** This choice had consequences. MoUse knew that to go Aleim’s way meant to **suffer affliction** rather than **to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin**. Sin does have its pleasures; but MoUse properly saw them as passing, even if they should last our entire *earthly* life.

c. **The reproach of The Anointed One:** MoUse probably didn’t know it at the time, but this persecution he suffered put him in the company of IESO – who suffered to set men free.

3. (Hebrews 11:27) The faith of MoUse when he left Egypt.

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

a. **By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king:** MoUse’s natural eyes could see the danger from Pharaoh, and understood the danger in remaining anywhere near Egypt. Yet his eye of faith could see **Him who is invisible**, and he understood that Aleim was a greater fact in his situation than an angry Pharaoh was.

4. (Hebrews 11:28) MoUse showed faith when he led Isrhael in the Passover, in obedience to Aleim’s command.

By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

a. **By faith he kept the Passover:** It took faith to believe that the blood of a lamb on the doorpost would save a household from the terror of the angel of death. But MoUse had that faith and led the nation in observing **the Passover**.

5. (Hebrews 11:29) The faith of the nation of Isrhael when crossing the Red Sea.

By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

a. **By faith they passed through the Red Sea:** The difference between the Israelites crossing the Red Sea and the Egyptians who followed them was not courage, but faith. The Egyptians had as much (or more) courage than the Israelites, but not the same **faith** – and they each had different fates. The Israelites **passed through** and the Egyptians **were drowned**.

6. (Hebrews 11:30) The faith of the nation of Isrhael when circling around Jericho as Aleim had commanded.

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.

a. **By faith the walls of Jericho fell down:** At Jericho, the people of Isrhael had a *daring* faith. There was no turning back, having already crossed the river Jordan at flood stage, which cut off any line of retreat.

b. **After they were encircled for seven days:** At Jericho the people of Isrhael had an *obedient* faith. They did not really understand what Aleim was doing, yet they obeyed nonetheless.

c. **After they were encircled for seven days:** At Jericho the people of Isrhael had a *patient* faith. The walls did not fall down for the first six days, yet the Israelites kept marching as Aleim commanded.

d. **For seven days:** At Jericho the people of Israhel had an *anticipating* faith. They knew Aleim would act on the seventh day when they shouted.

7. (Hebrews 11:31) The faith of Rhaab.

By faith the harlot Rhaab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

a. **By faith the harlot Rhaab did not perish:** Ieso 2 tells us of **Rhaab**, who might seem an unusual example of faith. But her trust in Aleim and willingness to identify with His people despite the cost is worthy of praise.

b. **When she had received the spies with peace:** When the Hebrew spies came to Rhaab, she declared *He is Aleim in heaven above and on earth beneath* (Ieso 2:11). This was proof of her faith. It was not strong faith and it was not perfect faith, but her faith was commendable nonetheless.

i. Klement of Rome, the earliest Follower writer outside of the Scriptures, was the first to see a symbol of the blood of IESO in the scarlet cord that Rhaab set outside her window (Ieso 2:18).

8. (Hebrews 11:32) Other heroes of faith.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barhak and Samson and Iephtha, also of Daud and Samouel and the prophets:

a. **Gideon:** He boldly destroyed idols and was mightily used of Aleim to defeat a much larger army of Midianites (Judges 6-7). Yet he was also a man who doubted Aleim's Word to him at first and repeatedly asked for confirmation.

b. **Barhak:** He led the people of Israhel in a dramatic victory over the Canaanites (Judges 4). Yet he hesitated and went forward only when Deborah encouraged him.

c. **Samson:** He was used mightily of the Ruler to defeat the Philistines. Yet he never lived up to his potential and had a tragic ending to his life after being enticed by Delila (Judges 13-16).

d. **Iephtha:** He was used of Aleim to defeat the Ammonites. Yet Iephtha made a foolish vow and stubbornly kept it (Judges 11).

e. **Daud:** The great king of Israhel was a remarkable man of faith. Yet he also failed with Bathsheba and with his own children.

i. Each one of these were men of faith, yet had notable areas of failure in their life. Still, Hebrews 11 commends their faith and lists them in the "Hall of Faith." This shows that weak faith is better than unbelief, and you don't have to be perfect to make it into Aleim's "Hall of Faith."

9. (Hebrews 11:33-35a) By faith, some were victorious *over* circumstances.

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again.

a. **Subdued kingdoms:** Some of these were Daud, Ieso, King Asa, Ieoshaphat, King Ezekia, and King Iosia.

b. **Worked righteousness:** Some of these were Elia, Elisha, and the other prophets in general; King Iosia also.

c. **Obtained promises:** Among these we could include Kaleb, Gideon, and Barhak.

d. **Stopped the mouths of lions:** These include Daniel, Daud, and Benaia (one of Daud's mighty men).

d. **Quenched the violence of fire:** Among these are Shadrhak, Meshak, and Abednego.

e. **Escaped the edge of the sword:** Daud escaped the sword of Goliath and the sword of Saul; MoUse escaped the sword of Pharaoh; and Elia escaped the sword of Iezebel.

f. **Out of weakness were made strong:** Among these are Sarha, Gideon, Abrham, Estherh, and King Ezekia.

g. **Became valiant in battle:** Some of the many in this description are Daud, King Asa, and Ieoshaphat.

h. **Women who received their dead raised to life again:** The Scriptures (Old Testament) mentions at least two who fit this description, the widow of Zarhepheth and the Shunamite woman.

10. (Hebrews 11:35b-38) By faith, some were victorious *under* their circumstances.

And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

a. **Tortured:** This is a brutal word in the ancient Greek language. It carries the idea "to beat with a stick or a baton."

b. **A better resurrection:** As IESO said in Ioanne 5:29, there is a resurrection unto life *and* a resurrection unto condemnation. These worthies received the **better resurrection**.

c. **Trial of mockings:** Isaak endured the cruel mocking of Ishmael, and Samson was mocked at the feast of the Philistines.

d. **Chains and imprisonments:** Ioseph was cast into prison for his faith, and the evil King Aab imprisoned the prophet Mikaia.

e. **They were stoned:** Zekariah was stoned to death between the altar and the temple and Naboth was stoned to death by Iezebel's henchmen.

f. **Sawn in two:** According to reliable tradition Isaia was **sawn in two** and killed.

g. **Were tempted:** Among these terrible physical tortures, the writer brings up being **tempted** in the same context. Some think the text was corrupted here and the writer to the Hebrews originally wrote, "branded," "burnt alive," "mutilated," or "strangled." But for those who know the pain of temptation, it is not unreasonable to think that the writer regarded overcoming temptation as a true triumph of faith.

i. " 'They were tempted': it does not say how. If one form of temptation had been mentioned, we should have surmised that they did not suffer in other ways, but when the statement is, 'they were tempted,' we shall not be wrong in concluding that they were tried in any and every form." (Edgar Phillips)

h. **Were slain with the sword:** Such as the eighty-five priests murdered by Doeg, or the prophets murdered in Elia's day.

i. **Wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins:** Such as Elia, who wore this kind of humble clothing and did not mind the humility or the discomfort.

j. **Of whom the world was not worthy:** The world is not necessarily friendly to people of faith, and the world isn't necessarily **worthy** of them either.

i. "The despised and ill-treated group of servants of Aleim was of greater real worth than all the rest of humanity put together." (Peter Damonse)

k. **In dens and caves of the earth:** Daudid, Elia, and prophets under the leadership of Obadia were all forced to flee and hide in caves.

11. (Hebrews 11:39-40) Conclusion: We have even more reasons for faith, more reasons to hold on to faith, than these heroes of the faith did.

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, Aleim having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

a. **Having obtained a good testimony through faith:** Though they obtained this good testimony, they **did not receive the promise**, the testimony of the completed work of the MoUse on their behalf. If these followers of Aleim were steadfast without receiving the promise, those who have received the promise have even more reason to continue on through trials and difficulty.

b. **Aleim having provided something better for us:** We are **provided something better** (seeing and enjoying the completed work of IESO on our behalf) and therefore have *much more reason* to hold on to faith, and to not let discouragement and tough times defeat us.

c. **They should not be made perfect apart from us:** The idea of **perfect** is "complete." They could not be made complete until the work of IESO. They looked forward to IESO and to His work, we look at it from behind – and enjoy the fruit of His work.

i. Their faithfulness makes our faith a little easier. The writer to the Hebrews began this chapter speaking of faith in the *present* tense: *Now faith is...* *By faith we understand* (Hebrews 11:1 and 11:3). The end of the chapter reminds us that faith *is* and it is for *we* who follow in the footsteps of the faithful men and women of previous ages.

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 12

Reasons to Endure Discouraging Times

A. Look unto IESO.

1. (Hebrews 12:1) Application of the examples of enduring faith in Hebrews 11.

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

a. **Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses:** In the mind's eye, the author pictures these previous champions of faith as spectators from the heavens, cheering us on as we press on to overcome present discouragement as in an athletic competition.

i. The idea of the past heroes of faith as spectators, watching as we live the life of faith makes some think that in heaven, people can and do observe what goes on earth. This single passage may *suggest* this, but it is inconclusive to *prove* this.

ii. We rightly think of heaven as a place where people are always happy and untroubled. It is hard to think that those in heaven are happy and untroubled if they see what is happening on the earth. So, it is difficult to say that people in heaven are actually observing us.

iii. Others consider that these **witnesses** are not witnessing *us* as we conduct our lives. Instead, they are **witnesses to** us of faith and endurance.

iv. "Both the *Greeks* and the *Latins* frequently use the term *cloud*, to express a *great number* of persons or things." (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Lay aside every weight, and the sin:** Sin can hold us back. But there are also things that may not be sin (**every weight**) but are merely hindrances that can keep us from running effectively the race Aleim has for us.

i. Our choices are not always between right and wrong, but between something that may hinder us and something else that may not. Is there a **weight** in your life you must **lay aside**?

c. **So easily ensnares us:** The words **easily ensnares** translate a difficult ancient Greek word (*euperistaton*), which can be translated four ways: "easily avoided," "admired," "ensnaring," or "dangerous."

i. Let us **lay** them **all aside**:

- Some sins can be *easily avoided*, but are not.
- Some sins are *admired*, yet must be laid aside.
- Some sins are *ensnaring* and thus especially harmful.
- Some sins are more *dangerous* than others are.

ii. If such ensnaring sins were really the work of demonic possession or demonic influence in the Follower, this would be an ideal place for the Holy Spirit to address this. Yet we are never given reason to blame our sin on demons; the appeal is simply for us to, in the power of the Holy Spirit, **lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us**.

d. **Let us run with endurance:** What is needed is **endurance**, to finish what we have begun in IESO The Anointed One – a **race that is set before us**.

i. Aleim has set before you a **race**. You must run it, and it will involve effort and commitment. Being passive never runs or

wins a race. Aleim wants us to run the race and to finish it right.

ii. **Endurance** is needed to run that race. **Endurance** translates the ancient Greek word *hupomone*, "which does not mean the patience which sits down and accepts things but the patience which masters them... It is a determination, unhurrying and yet undelaying, which goes steadily on and refuses to be deflected." (Edgar Phillips)

iii. In Acts 20:24, Paulo pictured himself as a runner who had a race to finish, and nothing would keep Paulo from finishing the race with joy. In that passage, Paulo speaks of *my race* – he had his race to run, we have our own – but Aleim calls us to finish it with joy, and that only happens with **endurance**.

e. **The race that is set before us:** **Race** is the ancient Greek word *agona*, a word used for conflict or struggle of many kinds, and it was a favourite word of the Apostle Paulo (Philippians 1:30, Colossians 2:1, 1 Thessalonians 2:2, 1 Timothy 6:12, 2 Timothy 4:7).

2. (Hebrews 12:2) The ultimate example: IESO The Anointed One.

Looking unto IESO, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the tree, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right side of the throne of Aleim.

a. **Looking unto IESO:** The *New American Standard Version* translates this beautifully as, *fixing our eyes on IESO*. We can only run the race as we look to IESO and have our eyes locked on to Him. He is our focus, our inspiration, and our example.

i. In the ancient Greek, **looking unto IESO** uses a verb that implies a definite *looking away* from other things and a present *looking unto* IESO.

ii. "The Greek word for 'looking' is a much fuller word than we can find in the English language. It has a preposition in it which turns the look away from everything else. You are to look from all beside to IESO. Fix not thy gaze upon the cloud of witnesses; they will hinder thee if they take away thine eye from IESO. Look not on the weights and the besetting sin-these thou hast laid aside; look away from them. Do not even look upon the race-course, or the competitors, but look to IESO and so start in the race." (Edgar Phillips)

iii. We must guard against seeing IESO as *only* an example; He was and is so much more. But He also remains the ultimate example of Follower endurance.

b. **The author and finisher of our faith:** IESO is not only the **author** of our faith; He is the **finisher** of it also. The idea of *He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of IESO The Anointed One* (Philippians 1:6) is comforting indeed to these discouraged Followers.

c. **Who for the joy that was set before Him:** IESO did not regard the tree itself as a joy. But He could look past the horror of the tree to enjoy the joy beyond it. The same mentality will enable these Jewish Followers (and we ourselves) to endure.

d. **Despising the shame:** One of the prominent elements of the torture of the tree was its extreme **shame**. IESO did not welcome this shame – He *despised* it – yet He endured through it to victory.

i. **Shame** is a significant trial. Daniel 12:2 says that shame will be an aspect of the terrors of hell: *And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt*. IESO bore this hellish shame to accomplish our redemption.

- IESO bore a shameful accusation: blasphemy.
 - IESO bore shameful mocking.
 - IESO bore a shameful beating.
 - IESO wore a shameful crown.
 - IESO wore a shameful robe.
 - IESO bore shameful mocking even as He prayed on the tree.
- ii. This is a stumbling block to many. They will do just about anything for IESO *except* endure shame or embarrassment. Edgar Phillips spoke boldly to Followers who could not bear the shame that comes from the world for following IESO: “Yet you are a coward. Yes, put it down in English: you are a coward. If anybody called you so you would turn red in the face; and perhaps you are not a coward in reference to any other subject. What a shameful thing it is that while you are bold about everything else you are cowardly about IESO The Anointed One. Brave for the world and cowardly towards The Anointed One!”

iii. “I heard of a prayer the other day which I did not quite like at first, but there is something in it after all. The good man said, ‘Ruler, if our hearts are hard, make them soft; but if our hearts are too soft, make them hard.’ I know what he meant, and I think I can pray that last prayer for some of my friends who are so delicate that a sneer would kill them. May the Ruler harden them till they can despise the shame!” (Edgar Phillips)

e. **And has sat down at the right side of the throne of Aleim**: This speaks of IESO’s glorification. The same promise of being glorified (in a different sense) after our shame is true for the Follower.

3. (Hebrews 12:3-4) Consider IESO.

For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

a. **You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin**: These Jewish Followers were so discouraged because they started to experience significant social and economic persecution (though **not yet** to the shedding of blood).

b. **Consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself**: Even in their difficulty if they **consider** IESO they can be *encouraged*, not *discouraged*, knowing that they are following in the footsteps of IESO. As Paulo wrote, *if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together* (Romans 8:17).

c. **Lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls**: Knowing that IESO doesn’t ask more of us than what He has Himself experienced, and that He knows exactly what we are going through keeps us from becoming **weary and discouraged in your souls**.

B. Why Aleim allows difficult times: the chastening of Aleim.

1. (Hebrews 12:5-6) Remember the exhortation regarding the discipline of the Ruler.

And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: “My son, do not despise the chastening of the Ruler, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Ruler loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.”

a. **You have forgotten**: One great reason for the discouragement among these Jewish Followers was because they saw no reason why Aleim would allow difficult times to arise. But they have forgotten principles regarding the chastening of the Ruler.

i. Much difficulty in our Follower life can be traced back to those three words: **you have forgotten**. Perhaps it is some principle we remember in our minds, but we **have forgotten** it with our hearts – and we must remember it again.

ii. In times of trial or stress many Followers forget some of the basics. They seriously wonder if Aleim is still in control or if He still loves them. We must admit that Aleim does *allow* everything that happens; so He must at least passively approve of it, because He certainly has the power to stop bad things that happen.

iii. Of course, Aleim can *never* be the author of evil. But He does allow others to choose evil, and He can use the evil choices others make to work out His ultimately good purpose, even if only to demonstrate His justice and righteousness in contrast to evil.

b. **Which speaks to you as sons**: The quotation from Proverbs 3:11-12 reminds us that Aleim’s chastening should *never* be taken as a sign of His rejection. It is rather a sign of His treating us as His children.

i. Only the most proud Follower would claim they never need correction from Aleim. No one is above this kind of training.

c. **Do not despise the chastening of the Ruler**: When chastening comes it is an offence to Aleim when we **despise** it. It is His loving tool of correction and we should receive it gratefully.

i. “I have often heard a father say, ‘Boy, if you cry for that you shall have something to cry for by-and-by.’ So, if we murmur at a little Aleim gives us something that will make us cry. If we groan for nothing, he will give us something that will make us groan.” (Edgar Phillips)

ii. **Chastening** should not be regarded as the *only* reason Aleim allows difficult times, but it is an important one. For example, we know that Aleim allows difficult times so that we can, at a later time, comfort someone else with the same comfort Aleim showed towards us in our crisis (2 Corinthians 1:3-7).

iii. This is why Iakobo recommends a prayer for wisdom in the context of enduring trials (Iakobo 1:2-5). We need to know how to react differently when Aleim does different things.

2. (Hebrews 12:7-8) Chastening a sign of being a son of Aleim.

If you endure chastening, Aleim deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

a. **Aleim deals with you as sons**: Many people claim an inability to relate to Aleim as a loving Father because they

never knew a loving human father in their own experience. Yet, even these can still receive the love of Aleim the Father.

i. Not everyone knows by *experience* what a model father is, but we all know by *intuition* what a good father is like. Aleim is that perfect Father, and He gives us that intuition. One feels cheated or disappointed by a *bad* father because they intuitively compare the bad father to our *good* Father in heaven.

b. **Aleim deals with you as sons:** Aleim's correction is never to punish us or make us *pay* for our sins. That was done once and for all at the tree. His correction is motivated *only* by His love, not by His justice; He chastens us without anger.

i. "While he shall never be arraigned before Aleim's bar as a criminal, and punished for his guilt, yet he now stands in a new relationship-that of a child to his parent: and as a son he may be chastised on account of sin." (Edgar Phillips)

c. **If you are without chastening... you are illegitimate and not sons:** Those who consider themselves "beyond" Aleim's chastening mark themselves as **illegitimate** children of Aleim.

d. **Illegitimate and not sons:** Aleim shows His wrath when He ignores our sin, allowing it to pass without correction. His inactivity is never due to ignorance or a lack of initiative, as may be true with a human father.

3. (Hebrews 12:9-10) Aleim's chastening is superior to that of human fathers.

Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

a. **We paid them respect:** We should be even more submissive and respectful to our Heavenly Father's correction than to an earthly Father's correction.

b. **Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live?** Therefore, we must never despise Aleim for His chastening, though it is unpleasant. When we resent it, we consider ourselves virtual equals with Aleim instead of His children.

i. It can be humiliating and bitter to be chastened by an equal, but it isn't the same to be chastened by someone who is legitimately our superior. Resentment at chastening shows how we see Aleim and how we see ourselves.

c. **But He for our profit:** Human fathers, even with the best of intention, can only chasten imperfectly because they lack perfect knowledge. The all-knowing Aleim can chasten us perfectly, with better and more lasting results than even the best earthly father.

4. (Hebrews 12:11) See the *result* of chastening more than the *process* of chastening.

Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

a. **No chastening seems to be joyful for the present:** Trials are trials and chastening is chastening. If it does not hurt or press us, then trials do not serve their purpose. We sometimes want trials that are not trials and chastening that is not chastening.

i. "If affliction *seemed* to be joyous, would it be a chastisement at all? I ask you, would it not be a most *ridiculous* thing if a father should so chasten a child, that the child came down stairs laughing, and smiling, and rejoicing at the flogging. Joyous? Instead of being at all serviceable, would it not be utterly *useless*? What good could a chastisement have done if it was not felt? No smart? Then surely no benefit!" (Edgar Phillips)

b. **The peaceable fruit of righteousness:** This **fruit** must be evident in the life of the Follower. The reason why many experience a "one-crisis-after-another" life is because they are either blind to Aleim's chastening or they resist it. They are not **trained by it** and therefore the **peaceable fruit of righteousness** is not evident.

i. **Trained** in the ancient Greek language is a word from the world of athletics. The training of an athlete is marked by some agony and so is our training as Aleim's "spiritual athletes."

ii. Aleim has a purpose for training you. Think of David after a lion attacked when he was just a boy tending the sheep. He could easily despair and ask, "Why did Aleim allow such a terrible thing to happen to me? I barely escaped!" But if David could see ahead, he could see Aleim had a giant named Goliath he was destined to face, and the battle with the lion prepared him ahead of time. Aleim always has a purpose. We can trust Him.

c. **Afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness:** A "heavenly spanking" smarts, but we must look beyond the *process* to the *result*. The result does not come *immediately*, but **afterward**.

i. "Many believers are deeply grieved, because they do not at once feel that they have been profited by their afflictions. Well, you do not expect to see apples or plums on a tree which you have planted but a week. Only little children put their seeds into their flower-garden, and then expect to see them grow into plants in an hour." (Edgar Phillips)

C. Application: Get strong, get right, get bold, and watch out.

1. (Hebrews 12:12-13) Get strong.

Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

a. **Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down:** Almost like a coach or a military officer, the author tells his "players" to get with it. He gave exhaustive *reasons* to be strong in the Ruler and to put off discouragement, so now is the time to *do it*.

b. **But rather be healed:** The pictures here (strengthened **hands and knees**, "straight-ahead" **feet**) speak of readiness to work and move for the Ruler. This readiness is first to go when one surrenders to discouragement.

2. (Hebrews 12:14-17) Get right.

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Ruler: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of Aleim; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the

blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

a. **Pursue peace with all people, and holiness:** Get right with both men (**pursue peace with all men**) and with Aleim (**and holiness**). Discouragement makes us sloppy and unconcerned with our personal relationships.

i. Regarding holiness, we are told **without which no one will see the Ruler**. A lack of holiness is a critical obstacle to a close relationship with Aleim.

ii. “Unholy Followers are the plague of the Ekklesia . They are spots in our feasts of charity. Like hidden rocks, they are the terror of navigators. It is hard to steer clear of them: and there is no telling what wrecks they may cause.” (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Lest anyone fall short of the grace of Aleim:** We must get right with Aleim’s grace. So look diligently to keep both yourself and others from a coming to legalism in either outward form or inward attitude that falls short of Aleim’s grace, **lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble**.

i. “A *bitter root* is a root that bears bitter fruit... So it is possible for the seed of bitterness to be sown in a community and, though nothing is immediately apparent, in due time the inevitable fruit appears.” (Peter Damonse)

ii. Bitterness corrupts many, rooted in a sense of personal hurt, and many hold on to the bitterness with amazing stubbornness. What they must do is remember the grace of Aleim extended to them, and start extending that grace towards others – loving the undeserving.

iii. Edgar Phillips wrote that the phrase **fall short of the grace of Aleim** might also be translated *failing to keep up with the grace of Aleim*. The idea is that the grace of Aleim is moving on, past the pain and hurt of the past. We should move on also.

c. **Lest there be any fornicator or profane person:** Get right with your moral conduct. Remember that there are blessings reserved only for the *pure in heart: they shall see Aleim* (Matthio 5:8).

i. **Like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright:** Many Followers today sell a birthright of intimacy with Aleim as cheaply as Esau sold his birthright (1st MoUse (Genesis) 25:29-34 and 27:30-40).

ii. **For he found no place for repentance:** “It is not a question of forgiveness. Aleim’s forgiveness is always open to the penitent. Esau could have come back to Aleim. But he could not undo his act.” (Peter Damonse)

iii. **Though he sought it diligently with tears:** Esau’s birthright wasn’t restored simply because he *wished* it back. It could never be regained because he *despised* it.

3. (Hebrews 12:18-24) Get bold.

For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. (For they could not endure what was commanded: “And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.” And so terrifying was the sight that MoUse said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”) But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living

Aleim, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Ekklesia of the firstborn *who are registered in heaven*, to Aleim the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to IESO the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of Abel*.

a. **For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire:** 2nd MoUse (Exodus) 19:10-25 explains what it was like when Israhel came to Mount Sinai. The mountain was fenced off; there was no trespassing on pain of death. The Israelites were commanded to wash their clothes and abstain from sexual relations. There was thunder, lightning and a thick cloud. There was the sound of a trumpet, calling forth the nation to meet with Aleim. There was more smoke, like a furnace, and earthquakes; then the trumpet sounded long – until MoUse spoke, and Aleim Himself answered. Aleim spoke to Israhel from Sinai, but warned them in every way possible to *stay away*.

b. **So that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore:** The reaction of Israhel was understandable: they were terrified (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 20:18-21). They wanted the experience to *stop*, not to continue.

i. This fear did not succeed in promoting holiness among the people of Israhel. It did not succeed in changing the heart of Israhel. 40 days later, they worshipped a golden calf and said this was the aleim that brought them out of Egypt.

c. **For you have not come to the mountain:** We are in a different place. Our relationship with Aleim is not modeled after Israhel’s experience on Mount Sinai. We come to Aleim’s other mountain: Zion, the name of the hill upon which Jerusalem sits.

i. Consider the contrasts between Mount Sinai and Mount Zion.

· Mount Sinai was marked by fear and terror – Mount Zion is a place of love and forgiveness.

· Mount Sinai is in the desert – Mount Zion is the city of the Living Aleim

· Mount Sinai spoke of earthly things – Mount Zion speaks of heavenly things.

· At Mount Sinai, only MoUse was allowed to draw near to Aleim – at Mount Zion, an **innumerable company**, a **general assembly** is invited to draw near.

· Mount Sinai was characterized by guilty men in fear – Mount Zion features **just men made perfect**.

· At Mount Sinai, MoUse was the mediator – at Mount Zion, IESO is the mediator.

· Mount Sinai brings an Old Covenant, which was ratified by the blood of animals – Mount Zion brings a New Covenant, which is ratified by the blood of Aleim’s precious Son.

· Mount Sinai was all about exclusion, keeping people away from the mountain – Mount Zion is all about invitation.

· Mount Sinai is all about Law – Mount Zion is all about grace.

d. **But you have come to Mount Zion:** The lesson is plain. We shouldn’t come to Mount Zion as if we were coming to Mount Sinai. So put away your hesitation and get bold in coming to Aleim.

i. Of course, the idea of the superiority of the New Covenant is also repeated. It shows that these Jewish Followers should not even consider going back and preferring the religion of Mount Sinai to the relationship of Mount Zion.

e. **The blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel:** The **blood of Abel** does not mean the blood he shed in his martyrdom. Rather, it was the blood of the sacrifice he made – the first recorded sacrifice from man to Aleim in the Scriptures. The blood of IESO **speaks better things** than the blood of animal sacrifice, the blood of Abel.

4. ([Hebrews 12:25-29](#)) Watch out.

See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.” Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve Aleim acceptably with reverence and divine fear. For our Aleim is a consuming fire.

a. **See that you do not refuse Him who speaks:** If we refuse to get strong, to get right, and to get bold, then we should not remain ignorant of the consequences.

b. **They did not escape:** There were consequences for rebelling at Mount Sinai. There should be even greater consequences for resisting Aleim’s greater work at Mount Zion.

c. **Whose voice then shook the earth... Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven... things which cannot be shaken:** Aleim is shaking the present order, and these beleaguered Jewish Followers felt it. But the things of Aleim and the people of Aleim will remain.

d. **Since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace:** The kingdom itself will never be shaken. So we must seize Aleim’s unmerited approval in IESO, helping us to **serve Aleim acceptably**.

i. “Glory be to Aleim, our kingdom cannot be moved! Not even dynamite can touch our dominion: no power in the world, and no power in hell, can shake the kingdom which the Ruler has given to his saints. With IESO as our monarch we fear no revolution and no anarchy: for the Ruler hath established this kingdom upon a rock, and it cannot be moved or removed.” (Edgar Phillips)

ii. Some wrongly argue that “too much” grace gives license and breeds disrespect towards Aleim. Actually, grace gives us **reverence and divine fear**. Perhaps those who think grace gives them license to sin aren’t walking in grace at all.

e. **Our Aleim is a consuming fire:** Since Aleim is in fact a **consuming fire**, we do best to come to Him on *His* terms. These are the terms of unmerited approval in IESO. He will consume all that is outside of that sphere.

i. The truth that **Aleim is a consuming fire** is a *comfort* to the believer. They realize that the Father poured out His **consuming fire** of judgment on the Son in our place. When

He did, it completely *consumed* the guilt of sin in all who believe. The penalty of sin was *consumed* in IESO at the tree.

Patrick Damonse :: Study Guide for Hebrews 13

Living A Positive Follower Life

A. Instructions for body life.

1. (Hebrews 13:1-3) Express brotherly love.

Let brotherly love continue. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. Remember the prisoners as if chained with them; those who are mistreated; since you yourselves are in the body also.

a. **Let brotherly love continue:** The writer to the Hebrews used the ancient Greek word *philadelphia* here. He *assumed* there was **brotherly love** among Followers. He simply asked that it would **continue** among them.

i. In the ancient Greek language of the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament), there were four words at hand that we might translate *love*.

· *Eros* was one word for love. It described, as we might guess from the word itself, *erotic* love, referring to sexual love.

· *Storge* was a second word for love. It referred to family love, the kind of love there is between a parent and child or between family members in general.

· *Agape* was another word for love. It is the most powerful word for *love* in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament), and was often used to describe Aleim's love towards us. It is a love that loves without changing. It is a self-giving love that gives without demanding or expecting re-payment. It is love so great that it can be given to the unlovable or unappealing. It is love that loves even when it is rejected. *Agape* love gives and loves because it wants to; it does not demand or expect repayment from the love given – it gives because it loves, it does not love in order to receive. *Agape* love isn't about *feelings*; it is about *decisions*.

ii. But the word for **love** used in Hebrews 13:1 is *philadelphia*, coming from the root *philia*. This ancient Greek word spoke of brotherly friendship and affection. It is the love of deep friendship and partnership. There should always be plenty of this kind of love among Followers, and it should **continue**.

b. **Do not forget to entertain strangers:** Hospitality is an important virtue and often it is commanded of Followers and leaders (Romans 12:10-13, 1 Timotheo 3:2, Tito 1:7-8, 1 Petrho 4:9). In the ancient world, where "motels" did exist, they were notorious for immorality. It was important for traveling Followers to find open homes from other Followers. This was simply a practical way to **let brotherly love continue**.

i. Because of the free offer of hospitality, Followers had to watch out for people just masquerading as Followers so they could leech off the generosity of Aleim's people. As time went on, Follower leaders taught their people how to recognize these deceivers.

ii. The Didache was an early Ekklesia "ministry manual," written perhaps somewhere between 90 and 110 a.d. It had this to say about how to tell if a false prophet abused the hospitality of those in the Ekklesia :

Let every apostle that comes to you be received as the Ruler. But he shall not remain except one day; but if there be need, also the next; but if he remains three days, he is a false

prophet. And when the apostle goes away, let him take nothing but bread... but if he asks for money, he is a false prophet. And every prophet that speaks in the Spirit you shall neither try nor judge; for every sin shall be forgiven, but this one sin shall not be forgiven. But not everyone that speaks in the Spirit is a prophet; but only if he holds the ways of the Ruler. Therefore from their ways shall the false prophet and the true prophet be known. (From *The Ante-Nicean Fathers*, Volume 7, page 380)

c. **Strangers:** The point is that we do this for other Followers who are **strangers** to us. If you invite your best friends over for lunch, that is wonderful – but it doesn't fulfill this command. A wonderful way to fulfill this command is to meet and befriend **strangers** at Ekklesia and to **entertain** them with hospitality.

i. The ancient Greek word for *hospitality* (used in passages like Romans 12:13) is literally translated, "love for strangers."

Brotherly love means love for all our brothers and sisters in IESO, not just those who are currently our friends.

d. **For by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels:** When we are hospitable to others, we really welcome IESO (Matthio 25:35), and perhaps angels. Abrahm (1st MoUse (Genesis) 18:1-22) and Lot (1st MoUse (Genesis) 19:1-3) are examples of those who **unwittingly entertained angels**.

e. **Remember the prisoners as if chained with them:** **Prisoners** here probably has first reference to those imprisoned for the sake of the Glad Tidings. But it can also be extended to all who are in prison. This is just another way to **let brotherly love continue**.

2. (Hebrews 13:4) Honour marital love.

Marriage is honourable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers Aleim will judge.

a. **The bed undefiled:** The Scriptures strictly condemns sex outside of the marriage commitment (**fornicators and adulterers Aleim will judge**). But the Scriptures celebrates sexual love within the commitment of marriage, as indicated in *The Song of Solomon*.

i. "Fornication and adultery are not synonymous in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament): adultery implies unfaithfulness by either party to the marriage vow, while the word translated 'fornication' covers a wide range of sexual irregularities." (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Marriage is honourable among all, and the bed undefiled:** Perhaps through a past of sexual sin many find it difficult to believe that the marriage **bed** is **undefiled**. Guilt and sexual hang-ups are appropriate to extra-marital sex, but not in marital sex. Yet this is where the guilt and sexual hang-ups often exist and where they most frequently cause trouble.

i. The enemy of our souls wants to do everything he can to encourage sex *outside* of the marriage **bed** and he wants to do everything he can to discourage sex *inside* the marriage **bed**. Followers must recognize this strategy and not give it a foothold.

ii. Though Aleim allows great freedom in the variety of sexual expression in marriage, all must be done with a concern for the needs of their spouse and in love (1 Corinthians 7:2-5 and Ephesians 5:21-33).

3. (Hebrews 13:5-6) Learn contentment over covetousness.

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say: "The Ruler is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

a. **Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content:** **Covetousness** is the opposite of *contentment*. Often **covetousness** and greed are excused or even admired in today's culture, and are simply called "ambition."

b. **Be content with such things as you have:** Contentment has much more to do with what you *are* on the inside rather than what you *have*. The Apostle Paulo had the right idea in Philippians 4:11-13: *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through The Anointed One who strengthens me.*

i. Someone asked millionaire Bernard Baruch, "How much money does it take for a rich man to be satisfied?" Baruch answered, "Just a million more than he has."

c. **I will never leave you nor forsake you:** "You that are familiar with the Greek text know that there are five negatives here. We cannot manage five negatives in English, but the Greeks find them not too large a handful. Here the negatives have a fivefold force. It is as though it said, 'I will not, not leave thee; I will never, no never, forsake thee.' " (Edgar Phillips)

i. "Here it is – 'For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' This is the reason why we must not be covetous. There is no room to be covetous, no excuse for being covetous, for Aleim hath said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' We ought to be content. If we are not content, we are acting insanely, seeing the Ruler has said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' " (Edgar Phillips)

ii. "I cannot under the influence of this grand text find room for doubt or fear. I cannot stand here and be miserable to-night. I am not going to attempt such a thing; but I cannot be despondent with such a text as this, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' I defy the devil himself to mention circumstances under which I ought to be miserable if this text is true. Child of Aleim, nothing ought to make you unhappy when you can realize this precious text." (Edgar Phillips)

d. **So we may boldly say: "The Ruler is my helper."** Real contentment comes only when we trust in Aleim to meet our needs and to be our security. Strangely we are often more likely to put security and find contentment in things far less reliable and secure than Aleim Himself.

4. (Hebrews 13:7) Follow your leaders.

Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of Aleim to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.

a. **Remember those who rule over you:** We are told to recognize and follow divine leadership in the body of The Anointed One, leadership shown to be legitimate by faithfulness to the **word of Aleim** and by divine **conduct**.

i. Paulo advised Timotheo along the same lines: *Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you* (1 Timotheo 4:16).

b. **Whose faith follow:** Such leaders should be recognized (**remember those**) and followed. Just as much as a Ekklesia needs divine leaders, it also needs divine *followers*.

B. Instructions in worship.

1. (Hebrews 13:8) The enduring principle: the unchanging nature of IESO.

IESO The Anointed One is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

a. **IESO The Anointed One is the same:** The unchanging nature (which theologians call *immutability*) of IESO The Anointed One could be inferred from His deity, even if it were not explicitly stated. Aleim doesn't change over the ages, so neither does IESO, who is Aleim.

b. **Yesterday, today, and forever:** His unchanging nature provides a measure for all Follower conduct, particularly in the word and in worship. We should not expect something completely "new" as if it were from a "new IESO." The nature of IESO as it is revealed in the Scriptures is the same nature of IESO that should be seen in the Ekklesia today.

2. (Hebrews 13:9-14) Following the rejected IESO.

Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the great priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore IESO also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.

a. **Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines:** There is never a shortage of **various and strange doctrines** in the Ekklesia. The ones specifically in mind here seem to deal with a coming to Mosaic ceremonies and laws that were fulfilled in IESO.

b. **For it is good that the heart be established by grace:** Our hearts will only be **established by grace**. We are **established** by an understanding and appropriation of Aleim's undeserved approval of us, and not by an assumed approval gained through keeping a list of rules (**not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them**).

c. **We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat:** Other Jews probably branded these Jewish Followers "illegitimate" because they did not continue the Levitical system. But the writer to the Hebrews insisted that **we have an altar**, and it is an altar that those who cling to the Levitical system have no **right** to.

i. Essentially, our **altar** is the tree – the centerpiece of the Follower Glad Tidings and understanding (1 Corinthians 1:18-24 and 1 Corinthians 2:1-5).

d. **IESO... suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach:** If

our Saviour was rejected and His sacrifice (performed at the tree, our **altar**) was branded illegitimate, we expect no better. Identifying with IESO often means **bearing His reproach**, the very thing many are unwilling to do.

i. **Outside the camp**: The **camp** refers to institutional Judaism, which rejected IESO and Our Faith. Though these Followers from Jewish backgrounds were raised to consider everything **outside the camp** as unclean and evil, they must follow IESO there.

ii. "It means, first, let us have fellowship with Him. He was despised; He had no credit for charity; He was mocked in the streets; He was hissed at; He was hounded from among society. If I take a smooth part, I can have no fellowship with Him: fellowship requires a like experience." (Edgar Phillips)

iii. "A sorry life your Master had, you see. All the filth in earth's kennels was thrown at Him by sacrilegious hands. No epithet was thought coarse enough; no terms hard enough; he was the song of the drunkard, and they that sat in the gate spoke against him. This was the reproach of The Anointed One; and we are not to marvel if we bear as much. 'Well,' says one, 'I will not be a Follower if I am to bear that.' Skulk back, then, you coward, to your own damnation; but oh! Men that love Aleim, and who seek after the eternal reward, I pray you do not shrink from this tree. You must bear it." (Edgar Phillips)

iv. "If you can dwell with the wicked, if you can live as they live, and be 'hail-fellow well met' with the wicked, if their practices are your practices, if their pleasures are your pleasures, then their aleim is your aleim, and you are one of them. There is no being a Follower without being shut out of the world's camp." (Edgar Phillips)

e. **For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come**: The difficult job of **bearing His reproach** is easier when we remember that the city or society we are cast out from is only temporary. We **seek** and belong to the permanent city yet to come.

i. In **bearing His reproach** we face great difficulty and suffering. The good news is that for those who bear **His reproach**, this world is the *worst* they will ever have it. For cowards who turn their back on IESO, this life is the absolute *best* they will ever have it.

3. (Hebrews 13:15-16) Our sacrifice.

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to Aleim, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices Aleim is well pleased.

a. **Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to Aleim**: Because we do have an *altar* (the tree) and we do have a Great Priest (IESO), we should always offer sacrifices. Yet they are not the bloody sacrifices of the old covenant but the **sacrifice of praise**, the **fruit of our lips**.

i. The writer to the Hebrews explains several essentials for proper praise.

- Praise that pleases Aleim is offered **by Him**, that is **by IESO** The Anointed One, on the ground of His righteousness and pleasing Aleim

- Praise that pleases Aleim is offered **continually**, so that we are always praising Him

- Praise that pleases Aleim is a **sacrifice of praise**, in that it may be costly or inconvenient

- Praise that pleases Aleim is **the fruit of our lips**, more than just thoughts directed towards Aleim. It is spoken out unto the Ruler, either in prose or in song. "What proceeds from the lips is regarded as *fruit*, which reveals the character of its source, as the fruit of a tree reveals the nature of the tree." (Edgar Phillips)

ii. "Loving hearts must speak. What would you think of a husband who never felt any impulse to tell his wife that she was dear to him; or a mother who never found it needful to unpack her heart of its tenderness, even in perhaps the inarticulate croonings over the little child that she pressed to her heart? It seems to me that a dumb Follower, a man who is thankful for The Anointed One's sacrifice and never feels the need to say so, is as great an anomaly as either of these I have described." (Edgar Phillips)

iii. "So, then, we are *to utter* the praises of Aleim, and it is not sufficient *to feel* adoring emotions." (Edgar Phillips)

b. **But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices Aleim is well pleased**: Praise is not the only sacrifice that pleases Aleim. We also please Aleim with sacrifice when we **do good** and **share**. Praise and worship are important, but the Follower's obligation does not end there.

4. (Hebrews 13:17) Follow your leaders.

Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

a. **Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive**: We are to **be submissive** to the leaders Aleim gives us (assuming they have the character mentioned in Hebrews 13:7). We are simply told to **obey those who rule** over us. When speaking on the authority of Aleim's Word, leaders *do* have a right to tell us how to live and walk after Aleim.

i. Sadly, some take the idea of submission to leaders in the Ekklesia much too far. The "Shepherding Movement" was a clear example of this kind of abuse (which many seem to welcome, wanting someone else to be responsible for their lives). "A teacher should teach us to submit to Aleim, not to himself."

b. **As those who must give account**: We **obey** and **submit** to our leaders because Aleim put them in a place of responsibility and accountability over us. Of course, this does not relieve individual responsibility but it puts an *additional* accountability and responsibility upon leaders.

c. **Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you**: Cooperative conduct is not only a joy to leaders, but it is profitable for the whole body. It is for *our own sake* that we should **obey** and **submit** to Aleim-appointed leaders.

C. Concluding remarks.

1. (Hebrews 13:18-19) A request for prayer.

Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honourably. But I especially urge you to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

a. **Pray for us:** The writer to the Hebrews considered it important that others pray for him. We all need and should welcome the prayers of others.

i. In the grammar of the ancient Greek language, **pray** is in the *present imperative* verb tense. It indicates continuous activity and implies that they were already praying for the writer of this letter.

b. **That I may be restored to you the sooner:** Obstacles prevented the writer from being reunited with his readers. He knew that prayer could remove those obstacles.

i. **I especially urge you to do this:** As far as the writer to the Hebrews was concerned, their prayers determined *if* and *when* he is reunited with them. This shows how seriously he regarded their prayers for him.

2. (Hebrews 13:20-21) A blessing is pronounced.

Now may the Aleim of peace who brought up our Ruler IESO from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through IESO The Anointed One, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

a. **Now may the Aleim of peace:** This is a blessing in the style of the priestly blessing of 4th MoUse (Numbers) 6:22-27: *The Ruler bless you and keep you; the Ruler make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Ruler lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.*

i. After asking his readers to pray for him, the writer to the Hebrews prays for his readers. "The apostle had exhorted the Hebrew believers to pray for him in the words, 'Pray for us;' and then, as if to show that he did not ask of them what he was not himself. Willing to give, he utters this most wonderful prayer for them. He may confidently say to his congregation, 'Pray for me' who does unfeignedly from his soul pray for them." (Edgar Phillips)

b. **Now may the Aleim of peace:** In this blessing Aleim is first recognized in His attributes: **peace**, power (**brought up our Ruler IESO from the dead**), loving care (**that great Shepherd**), and ever giving love (**the blood of the everlasting covenant**).

i. Some take the idea of **the everlasting covenant** to express the **covenant** that existed before the foundation of the world between the Persons of the Diety, working together for the salvation of man. Other passages which may speak to this **everlasting covenant** are Revelation 13:8, Ephesians 1:4, and 2 Timotheo 1:9.

ii. Some however simply take **the everlasting covenant** as another name for the New Covenant.

c. **Make you complete in every good work:** This expresses the desire for blessing, wanting Aleim's **working in you**, and all **through IESO The Anointed One**.

3. (Hebrews 13:22-25) Conclusion to the letter to the Hebrews.

And I appeal to you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation, for I have written to you in few words. Know that our brother Timotheo has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly. Greet all those who rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you. Grace be with you all. Amen.

a. **Bear with the word of exhortation, for I have written to you in few words:** The writer to the Hebrews reminds us of his purpose. His desire was to write a **word of exhortation** to encourage discouraged Followers, both then and now.

i. In Acts 13:15 the phrase **word of exhortation** refers to a sermon. Perhaps the writer to the Hebrews means in Hebrews 13:22 that he gives his readers a written sermon.

b. **Know that our brother Timotheo has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly:** These final words give us a few tantalizing hints of the writer's identity. But these words only tell us that the writer knew **Timotheo** and that he planned to visit his readers soon. It also tells us that his readers were based in Italy (**Those from Italy greet you**), probably in the city of Rome.

c. **Grace be with you all:** This is a fitting end for a book that documents the passing of the Old Covenant and the institution of the New Covenant. **Grace be with you all** indeed, under what Aleim has given through the superior Saviour, IESO The Anointed One. Amen!