

**This book is a letter that was  
written to Jewish believers. We  
call this book  
Hebrews**

*Hebrews 1:1-3*

*God formerly communicated with us through the prophets, but now he has communicated with us through his son, who is just like God.*

<sup>1</sup> Long ago God communicated frequently to our ancestors in various ways by what the prophets *said and wrote*. <sup>2</sup> But now when this final age *is beginning*, God has communicated to us *just once* by means of what ◀his Son/the man who was also God▶ *said and did*. God appointed him in order that he would possess everything *that truly belongs to God*. God also appointed him in order that he would create the universe. <sup>3</sup> He manifests God's glory. He exactly represents *what God is like*. He ◀sustains everything by means of his powerful words. When he had *enabled people to be freed from the guilt of their sins* [MET], he sat down in heaven [EUP] *to rule* at the place of greatest honor [MTY] with God [MTY].

*God's son is greater than the angels.*

*Hebrews 1:4-14*

<sup>4</sup> By doing that, he *showed that he was very much greater than the angels, to the extent that his relationship* [MTY] *to God, as his Son, is more*

excellent than the relationship the angels *have to God*. <sup>5</sup> *We know that because in the Scriptures no one [RHQ] ever reported that God said to any angel what he said to his Son,*

You (sg) are my Son!

Today I have declared to all that I am your Father [DOU]!

And he said in another Scripture passage, I will be his Father, and he will be my Son [DOU].

<sup>6</sup> *And we know his Son is greater than the angels because in another Scripture passage someone wrote this about God's esteemed Son, when God was about to send him into the world: All God's angels must worship him.*

<sup>7</sup> *And in the Scriptures it is written that someone said this about the angels: God makes the angels who serve him to be changeable like [MET] winds and flames of fire.*

<sup>8</sup> *But on the other hand, in the Scriptures it is written that God said this to his Son: You (sg) who are also God will rule forever [MTY], and you will reign righteously over your kingdom [MTY].*

<sup>9</sup> *You have loved people's righteous deeds and you have hated people's lawless deeds. So I, your God, have caused you to be more joyful [MTY] than anyone else.*

<sup>10</sup> *And we also know that his Son is superior to angels because in the Scriptures the Psalmist wrote that someone said to God's Son,*

Lord, it was you who created the earth in the beginning.

You also made *the rest of* the universe (OR, the *things in the sky*) [MTY].

<sup>11</sup> Everything in the universe will disappear, but you will keep on living *forever*.

They will wear out as clothing *wears out*.

<sup>12</sup> You will dispose of them as one rolls up an *old coat before getting rid of it*.

*Then, you will exchange everything that is in the universe for what is new, as someone puts on a new garment in exchange for an old garment* [SIM].

But you *are not like what you created*;

You stay the same, and you live forever [LIT]!

<sup>13</sup> *We also know that his Son is superior to angels because no one ever stated* [RHQ] *in the Scriptures that God said to any angel what he said to his Son,*

*Sit in the place of honor next to me and rule with me* [MTY]

while I put all of your enemies completely under your control [MET]!

<sup>14</sup> The angels are *only* spirits who serve *God* [RHQ]. *God sends them to earth* in order to help those he has saved (OR, those whom he will save).

## 2

*We will not escape God's punishment if we ignore such a great message of salvation.*

*Hebrews 2:1-4*

<sup>1</sup> So, *since that is true*, we must pay very careful attention to what we have heard *about God's Son*, in order that we do not drift away from it, *as a boat drifts off its course when people do not guide it* [MET]. <sup>2</sup> *God's laws that were given by angels were valid*, and God justly punished all who rejected them and all who disobeyed [DOU] them. <sup>3</sup> So, we will certainly not escape *God punishing us* if we ignore such a great *message about how God* [MTY] saves us! [RHQ] This *new message* was first spoken by the Lord *Jesus* {The Lord *Jesus* first spoke this *message*}. Then it was confirmed to us by those who heard *what the Lord told them* {those who heard *what the Lord told them* confirmed it to us}. <sup>4</sup> God also confirmed to us *that this message was true* by *enabling believers to do* many things that showed God's power, to do other miraculous things [DOU], and *to do other things* by the gifts that the Holy Spirit distributed to them according to what *God* desired.

*God has determined that Christ, not angels or people, will rule everything.*

*Hebrews 2:5-9a*

<sup>5</sup> God has determined that the angels will not rule over everything. *Instead, he has determined that Christ will rule in the new world that God will create. That is the new world* about which I am writing. <sup>6</sup> Someone spoke to *God about this* somewhere *in the Scriptures*, saying,

◀No one is worthy enough for you to think about him!/Who is *worthy enough* for you to think about him?▶ [RHQ]

◀No human is *worthy enough* for you to care for him!/Is any human *worthy enough* for you to care for him?▶ [RHQ]

<sup>7</sup> *So it is surprising that you have caused people to be for a little while inferior in rank to angels.*

You have greatly honored [DOU] them [MET], as *kings are honored with a crown.*

<sup>8</sup> You have put everything under people's control [MET].

God has determined that people will rule over absolutely everything [LIT]. But now, at this present time, we perceive that people do not yet have authority over everything. <sup>9</sup> But we do know about Jesus, *who truly has authority over everything!*

*Jesus, the creator of everything, is the one who died for us, makes us holy, and proclaims us to be his brothers and sisters.*

*Hebrews 2:9b-13*

Jesus, for a little while, became inferior *in rank* to angels in order to die on behalf of [MET] everyone. He became inferior when he suffered *and died*, as God kindly *planned*. But now he has been greatly *honored* [DOU] *by being crowned as kings are.* <sup>10</sup> It was fitting that *God make Jesus* ◀perfect/all that God intended him to be▶. God was enabling many people who would belong to him [MET] to share his glory. *God is the one who created all things, and he is the one for whom all things exist. He perfected Jesus* by causing him to suffer *and die.* *Jesus is the one whom God uses to save people.* <sup>11</sup> *Jesus is the one who*

◀makes people holy/sets people apart for God▶, and they all belong to God's family. *As a result, Christ gladly [LIT] proclaims them to be like his own brothers and sisters.* <sup>12</sup> *The Psalmist wrote what Christ said to God about us becoming his brothers, in these words:*

I will proclaim to my brothers how awesome you are (OR, what you ▶are like/have done▶) [MTY].

I will sing praise to you in the presence of the congregation!

<sup>13</sup> And a prophet wrote *in another Scripture passage what Christ said about God,*

I will trust him.

And in another *Scripture passage, Christ said about those who are like his children,*

I and the ones that God has given me are here.

*It is Jesus, not angels, who became a human to help us as our Supreme Priest.*

*Hebrews 2:14-18*

<sup>14</sup> So, since those *whom God calls his children* are all human beings [MTY], Jesus also became a human being *just like them.* The devil has the power to cause people *to be afraid* to die, but Christ became human in order that by his dying he might make the devil powerless. <sup>15</sup> *Jesus did that* to free all of us who are like slaves [MET] all the time we live, because we are *forced to be afraid to die.* <sup>16</sup> Because *Jesus became a human being,* it is not angels whom he wants to help. No, it is we who trust God as Abraham did whom he wants to help. <sup>17</sup> So, *since he came to help humans, not angels,* he had to be

made exactly like *us whom he calls* his own brothers *and sisters*. He wants to be a Supreme Priest who *acts mercifully to all people* and who faithfully does what God wants, so that people who had sinned would be declared no longer guilty. <sup>18</sup> *Specifically*, he is able to help those/us who are tempted *to sin*. He can do that because he suffered, and he was also tempted *to sin like we are tempted to sin*.

### 3

*Our Supreme Priest, Jesus, deserves more honor than Moses does.*

*Hebrews 3:1-6*

<sup>1</sup> My fellow believers, *God* has set you apart and has chosen you, just like he chose me. So consider Jesus. *He is God's messenger to us*. He is also the Supreme Priest whom we say we believe in. <sup>2</sup> He faithfully *served God*, who appointed him, just like Moses faithfully *served God's people* [MTY]. <sup>3-4</sup> Just like every house is made by someone {as someone makes every house}, Jesus made everything, and he is God/Divine. So God has considered that Jesus is worthy *that people honor him more than they honor Moses*, just like the one who builds a house deserves that people honor him more than they should honor the house *he built*. <sup>5</sup> Moses very faithfully *served God as he ◀helped/cared for▶* [MET] God's people, just like a servant *faithfully serves his master*. The result was that Moses testified about what Jesus would say later. <sup>6</sup> But Christ *faithfully serves God as he ◀helps/cares*

for► his own people [MTY, MET], just like a *son helps/cares for his own family*. And we are God's people [MTY] if we continue to confidently *believe in Christ* and if we continue to confidently wait for *what God will do for us*.

*Do not stubbornly rebel against God as their Jewish ancestors did.*

*Hebrews 3:7-11*

<sup>7</sup> The Holy Spirit *caused the Psalmist to write these words in the Scriptures to the Israelites:*

Now, when you (*pl*) hear God speaking to you [MTY], <sup>8</sup> do not stubbornly ◀*disobey/refuse to obey him*► [IDM], *as your Jewish ancestors stubbornly disobeyed him when they rebelled against him in the desert.*

*At that time, God said to your ancestors, "They tried to determine how many things that displeased me they could do in the desert without me punishing them."* <sup>9</sup> Your ancestors repeatedly tested *whether I would be patient with them, even though* for 40 years they saw all the amazing things I did.

<sup>10</sup> So, I became disgusted with those people who saw those things, and I said *about them, "They are constantly disloyal to me, and they do not understand how I wanted them to conduct their lives."*

<sup>11</sup> As a result, because I was angry with them, I solemnly declared, *"They will not enter the land of Canaan where I would let them rest [MTY]!"* "

*Beware that you do not stop trusting in Christ.*  
*Hebrews 3:12-15*

<sup>12</sup> So, my fellow believers, be careful that none of you is so evil that you stop trusting *in Christ*. That would cause you to reject God who is all-powerful. <sup>13</sup> Instead, each of you must encourage each other every day, while *you still have* the opportunity [IDM], in order that none of you may stubbornly *reject God* by *letting others* deceive you (OR, as you deceive yourselves), *with the result that you (sg) sin* [PRS]. <sup>14</sup> *We must encourage one another*, because we (*inc*) benefit from *all Christ has done* only if we firmly keep trusting *in him* from the time when we first confidently *trusted in him* until *the time when* we die [EUP]. <sup>15</sup> *We can do this* by paying attention to *what the Psalmist wrote in that Scripture passage in which* God said,

Now, when you hear me speaking *to you(pl)* [MTY], do not stubbornly disobey me as *your ancestors stubbornly disobeyed me* when they rebelled *against me*.

*It was your ancestors, ones for whom God did great things, who rebelled against God.*

*Hebrews 3:16-19*

<sup>16</sup> ◀*You must keep trusting in God* because you must remember who it was who rebelled against God although they heard him speaking to them./Do you remember who it was who rebelled against God although they heard *him speaking to them?*▶ [RHQ] It was people who had certainly experienced [LIT] God's power. It was all those people whom Moses led miraculously out of Egypt. [RHQ] <sup>17</sup> And ◀*you must remember*

who it was that God was disgusted with for 40 years./do you *remember* who it was that God was disgusted with for 40years?► [RHQ] It was those same people who had sinned like that, and who as a result died in the desert! [RHQ] <sup>18</sup> And ◀*you must remember* about whom God solemnly declared, “They will not enter the land where I would let them rest.”/do you *remember* about whom *God* solemnly declared, “They will not enter the land where I *would let them rest*”?► [RHQ] It was those Israelites who disobeyed God. <sup>19</sup> So, from that example we (*inc*) realize that it was because they did not keep trusting *in God* that they were unable to enter *the land where they would rest*.

## 4

*The Israelites failed to enter the place where they would rest; we must be careful not to act like them.*

*Hebrews 4:1-5*

<sup>1</sup> *The Israelites did not enter the place where they would rest. But God has still promised us that we can enter the place of resting in heaven eternally. So we must beware of the possibility that God may consider that some of you have failed to enter the place of resting eternally as the Israelites did not enter the place where they would rest.* <sup>2</sup> *We have heard the message about Christ, just like the Israelites heard what God promised. But just like the message did not benefit most of those who heard it because they did not believe it as Joshua and Caleb did, it will not benefit us*

*eternally if we do not keep believing it.* <sup>3</sup> We who have believed in Christ are able to enter the place of resting *eternally*. We know there is a place where we will rest *eternally* because God said, Because I was angry with them, I solemnly declared, “They will not enter *the land where* I would let them rest.”

God said that even though he ceased his work of *creating things* after he created the world. <sup>4</sup> What someone wrote somewhere *in the Scriptures* about the seventh day *after he had spent six days creating the world*, supports that: Then, on the seventh day, God rested from his work of *creating everything*.

<sup>5</sup> But note again what God said about the Israelites *in the passage* that I quoted previously: They will not enter *the land where* I would let them rest.

*The Scriptures support the claim that there is a time when God’s people will rest eternally.*

*Hebrews 4:6-10*

<sup>6</sup> Some people experience entering that *place of resting eternally*. But those Israelites who first had the good message preached to them {first heard the good message} *about what God promised them* did not enter *that place of resting*, because they refused to believe God. <sup>7</sup> But God appointed another time *when we may enter that place of resting*. That time is now! We know that is true because much later than when the Israelites rebelled against God in the desert, he caused King David to write what I have already quoted,

Now, when you understand what God is saying *to you*, do not stubbornly disobey him.

<sup>8</sup> If Joshua had led the Israelites to enter the place of resting, God would not have spoken later about another *time when we could rest* [MET]. *So we know God was speaking about another time when some people would enter that place of resting eternally.* <sup>9</sup> So, just like *God rested on the seventh day after he finished making everything*, there remains a time when God's people will rest eternally. <sup>10</sup> Specifically, whoever enters God's place of resting has ceased doing things *to gain God's favor*, just like God ceased doing his work *of creating everything*.

*We must be careful not to be insincere about trying to enter the place of eternal rest.*

*Hebrews 4:11-13*

<sup>11</sup> God severely punished the *Israelites because they disbelieved his message*. So we must strive to experience entering that *place of resting eternally*, in order that he will not severely punish any of us for not believing *his message*. <sup>12</sup> *Beware of being insincere about doing this*, because the message God *has given us* very powerfully penetrates our thinking more than a two-edged sword *penetrates flesh* [MET]. It penetrates *deeply* into our souls and spirits, as *a sharp sword can penetrate* into our joints and marrow. That is, *by his message God* [PRS] discerns all that we think about, and he discerns all that we desire *to do* [MTY] (OR, *His message exposes to us all our thoughts and all our desires*). <sup>13</sup> God

knows everything about everyone. Everything is completely exposed [DOU] to him, *and he is the one [SYN] who will say whether he approves of what we have done.*

*Let us come boldly to Christ, our Supreme Priest, to receive his gracious help.*

*Hebrews 4:14-16*

<sup>14</sup> We have a great Supreme Priest who ascended through the heavens *when he returned to God's presence*. He is Jesus, ◀God's Son/the man who is also God▶. So let us firmly profess *what we believe about him*. <sup>15</sup> Our Supreme Priest can indeed [LIT] compassionately deal with us who tend to sin easily, because he also was tempted *to sin* in every way that we are *tempted to sin*, and yet he did not sin. <sup>16</sup> So, let us come boldly to *Christ* [MTY], who rules [MET] *from heaven* and does for us what we do not deserve, in order that we might experience *his acting* mercifully *toward us*, and in order that we might experience his helping us in a kind way whenever we need *help*.

## 5

*As Christ suffered, he learned to be a compassionate Supreme Priest by obeying God.*

*Hebrews 5:1-10*

<sup>1</sup> Every *Jewish* Supreme Priest was chosen by *God* {*God* chose every *Jewish* Supreme Priest} from among *ordinary* men. They were appointed {*He* appointed them} in order that they would come before him on behalf of the people.

*Specifically, God appointed them in order that they would bring gifts to him on behalf of the people, and in order to sacrifice animals to him for people who sinned.* <sup>2</sup> The Supreme Priests could deal gently with those who ignorantly sinned, since the Supreme Priests themselves tended to sin easily. <sup>3</sup> As a result, they had to offer something to God for their own sins, just like *they had to offer something to God for other people who sinned.* <sup>4</sup> Furthermore, *it is an honor to be a Supreme Priest* so no one honors himself by *appointing himself to become a Supreme Priest.* Instead, God chose each man *to become a Supreme Priest*, as he chose Aaron *to be the first Supreme Priest.* <sup>5</sup> Similarly, Christ also did not honor himself by appointing himself to become a Supreme Priest. Instead, God *appointed him by saying to him what he never said to any other priest, what the Psalmist wrote in the Scriptures,*

You (sg) are my Son! Today I have declared that  
I am your Father!

<sup>6</sup> And he also said *to Christ what the Psalmist wrote in another Scripture passage,*  
You are a priest eternally just like Melchizedek  
was a priest.

<sup>7</sup> When Christ lived on the earth [MTY], he prayed [DOU] to God and tearfully cried out loudly to him. *Specifically, he asked God, who was able to help him, that he would not fear the sufferings just before he died.* As a result, God listened to him, because Christ reverently submitted *to what God wanted him to do.* <sup>8</sup> Although

Christ is *God's own Son*, he learned to obey *God* by suffering *before he died*. <sup>9</sup> By becoming ◀*all that God intended him to be/perfect*▶, *he has now become fully qualified to be our Supreme Priest*. As a result, *he is the one who saves eternally all who obey him*. <sup>10</sup> Furthermore, God has designated him to be *our Supreme Priest* in the way that Melchizedek was a Supreme Priest.

*You are not ready for more advanced spiritual truth.*

*Hebrews 5:11-14*

<sup>11</sup> Although there is much to say to you(pl) about *how Christ resembles Melchizedek*, this is hard for me to explain to you because you now understand things so slowly. <sup>12</sup> *You became Christians long ago*. So by now you should be teaching *spiritual truths to others*. But you still need someone to teach you again the truths that God has revealed. *I am talking about the truths that we teach people when they first believe in Christ*. You need *those elementary truths* like babies need milk [MET]. You are not *ready for advanced teaching, which is like the solid food which mature people need* [MET]. <sup>13</sup> Remember that those *who are still learning these elementary truths* [MET] have not become familiar with *what God says concerning becoming/being righteous*. They are *just like* [MET] babies *who need milk!* <sup>14</sup> But *the more advanced spiritual truth* is for people who are *spiritually* mature, just like [MET] solid food is for *people who are physically* mature. They can tell the difference between

what is good and what is evil, because they have trained themselves *to keep doing that*.

## 6

*If you believers later reject the message about Christ, God will reject you.*

*Hebrews 6:1-8*

<sup>1</sup> So, we (*inc*) must not keep *discussing* the elementary principles about Christ. Instead, we must proceed *to the teaching that will make us spiritually mature* [MTY]. We must not *be people who always need someone to teach them the elementary truths about Christ that are like* [MET] a foundation. *I am referring to the teaching that people who do sinful things must turn away from their sinful behavior, things that those who are spiritually* [MET] *dead do. I am referring to the teaching that people must believe in God.* <sup>2</sup> *I am referring to the teaching about what various Jewish and Christian rituals for purifying people signify. I am referring to the teaching about how elders enable people to receive spiritual gifts by laying hands on them* [MTY]. *I am referring to the teaching that God will* ◀*cause those who have died to live again/raise people from the dead*▶. And *I am referring to the teaching that God will judge some people and punish them eternally.* <sup>3</sup> *Instead of continuing to discuss these elementary truths, we (inc) (OR, I) will go on to give people mature teaching, if God allows it.* <sup>4</sup> *I will explain why it is important to do that. Some people have at one time fully*

understood *the message about Christ* [MET]. They have experienced *a relationship with Jesus Christ* that God [EUP/MTY] gave *to them*. They have received the Holy Spirit the same as *others have*.<sup>5</sup> They have experienced that God's message is good. And by what they have experienced *now*, they know how *God will work* powerfully in the future. If those people reject *the message about Christ*, it will not be possible for anyone to persuade them to turn away from their sinful behavior again!<sup>6</sup> What those *believers who later renounce the message about Christ do is as though* [MET] they themselves are nailing the Son of God to a cross again! They are causing others to publicly despise Christ.<sup>7</sup> Think about this: It is land on which rain has frequently fallen [PRS] and on which plants grow [PRS] that is useful for the people who prepare the land that God has blessed. *Similarly, it is those believers who have received many good things from God and who do good deeds/things that please God, whom God will bless* [MET].<sup>8</sup> But *what will happen to believers who do deeds/things that do not please God will be like what happens to land on which only thorns and thistles grow* [MET]. *Such land* is worthless. It has almost become land that God will curse, and eventually he will burn *its vegetation* [MTY].

*But God will not overlook all you have done for him.*

*Hebrews 6:9-12*

<sup>9</sup> Although I am writing *to you* like this as a *warning*, I am certain concerning you whom

I love that *you are doing* better than that. Specifically, I am sure that *you are doing* the things that are appropriate *for those whom God* has saved. <sup>10</sup> Since God always acts justly [LIT], he will not overlook all you have done *for him*. *He will also not overlook* [MTY] *your showing that you love him* by the way you helped your fellow believers and *by the way you still help* them. *Instead, God will reward you for doing good deeds.* <sup>11</sup> I very much want each of you to diligently continue to fully expect to receive *what God has provided for you*, until you finally *receive everything that you have confidently expected to receive.* <sup>12</sup> I do not want you to be lazy. *Instead, I want you to imitate those who, because they patiently continued to trust in God, are receiving what he promised them.*

*We are confident that God will bless us as he promised; he made an oath to confirm that he would do that.*

*Hebrews 6:13-20*

<sup>13</sup> When God promised to *do things for Abraham*, he said that he would punish himself *if he did not do that*, because there was no one of greater importance to ask to punish him *if he did not do it.* <sup>14</sup> He said to *Abraham*, “I will certainly bless you (sg), and I will certainly increase *the number of your descendants* [SYN].” <sup>15</sup> As a result, after Abraham patiently waited *for God to do what he promised*, he received what God promised him. <sup>16</sup> *Keep in mind that when people promise something, they ask a more*

important person to punish them if they do not do what they promise. Furthermore, when people ask God to punish them *if they do not tell the truth*, that causes people who are disputing to stop disputing. <sup>17</sup> So, when God wanted to demonstrate very clearly ◀to us/to those people▶ who would receive what he had promised that he would not change what he had purposed *to do*, he solemnly guaranteed that he would declare himself guilty if he did not do what he promised. <sup>18</sup> He did that to strongly encourage us as a result of our *knowing* that *God has done* two things that cannot change. *Namely, he promised to bless us, and he solemnly declared that he would declare himself guilty if he did not bless us.* We know that God, who did those things, cannot lie. We have fled *to him* in order that we might continue confidently to expect to receive what he promised us. <sup>19</sup> *Our confidently expecting* [SYN] *to receive what he has promised is like* an anchor [MET] that very firmly [DOU] *holds us fast.* *The one we confidently expect to help us* [SYN] *is Jesus, who goes into God's very presence, just like the Supreme Priests went* behind the curtain into the innermost *part of the tent in the barren area* [MET]. <sup>20</sup> Jesus went *into God's presence* ahead of us (*inc*) to *help* us when he became a Supreme Priest eternally in the way that Melchizedek was a Supreme Priest.

## 7

*There are ways in which Melchizedek was like*

### *God's Son.*

#### *Hebrews 7:1-3*

<sup>1</sup> Now I will say more about this man Melchizedek. He was the king of Salem city and was a priest of God, the one who is greater than anyone else. He met Abraham who was returning home after he and his men had defeated the armies of four kings [SYN]. Melchizedek asked God to bless Abraham. <sup>2</sup> Then Abraham gave to him one tenth of all the spoils he took after winning the battle. Melchizedek's name means firstly 'king who rules righteously', and since Salem means 'peace', he was the 'king who rules peacefully'. <sup>3</sup> In the Scriptures there is no record of who his father was, nor is there any record of who his mother was, nor is there any record of who his ancestors were. There is no record of when he was born, nor is there any record of when he died. For these reasons, it is as though he continues to be a priest forever, and for this reason he is like God's Son.

#### *Melchizedek was greater than Abraham.*

#### *Hebrews 7:4-10*

<sup>4</sup> You can realize how great this man Melchizedek was from the fact that Abraham, our famous ancestor, gave him ◀a tithe/one tenth▶ of the spoils from the battle. <sup>5</sup> According to the laws God gave Moses, the descendants of Abraham's great-grandson Levi, who were priests, should take tithes from God's people who were their relatives, even though those people also were Abraham's descendants. <sup>6</sup> But this man Melchizedek, who was not among the

descendants of *Levi*, took tithes from Abraham. He also *asked God* to bless Abraham, the man to whom *God* promised *many descendants*. <sup>7</sup> We know for certain that it is the more *important people* who *ask God* to bless the less important people. *And Melchizedek blessed Abraham. So we conclude that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham.* <sup>8</sup> In the case of the *priests who are descendants of Levi*, men who some day will die receive tithes. But in the case of *Melchizedek* it is as if *God* testifies that he was still living, since there is no record in *Scriptures* about his death. <sup>9</sup> And it was as though *Levi* himself, and *all the priests descended from him*—who received tithes from the people—paid tithes to *Melchizedek*. And when Abraham paid tithes, it was as though *Levi* and *all the priests descended from him* acknowledged that the work *Melchizedek* did as a priest was greater than the work *Levi* did, <sup>10</sup> since the sperm from which all those priests were eventually born was still in Abraham's body [EUP] when *Melchizedek* met Abraham.

*The former Jewish priests were not adequate, so a new one like Melchizedek had to come.*

*Hebrews 7:11-19*

<sup>11</sup> *God* gave his laws to his people at the same time he gave regulations about the priests. So, if what the priests who were descended from *Levi* did could have provided a way for *God* to completely *forgive* people for *disobeying those laws*, certainly no other priest like *Melchizedek* would have been necessary. [RHQ] Instead, priests who were descended from *Aaron*, *Levi's*

*descendant, would have been adequate.* <sup>12</sup> *But we know they were not adequate, because a new type of priest like Melchizedek has come. And since God has appointed a new type of priest, he also had to change the regulations concerning how priests were appointed {he appointed priests}.*

<sup>13</sup> *Jesus, the one about whom I am saying these things, is a descendant of someone else, not a descendant of Levi. None of the men from whom Jesus descended ever served as priests [MTY].*

<sup>14</sup> *We know that since it is obvious that it is from the tribe of Judah that our Lord was descended. Moses never said that any of Judah's descendants would become priests.* <sup>15</sup> *Furthermore, we know that the priests who were descended from Levi were inadequate, since it is even more obvious that another priest has appeared who is like Melchizedek.* <sup>16</sup> *Jesus became a priest, but not because he fulfilled what God's law required about being a descendant of Levi. Instead, he has the kind of power that came from a life that nothing can destroy (OR, enabled him to live again after he was killed).* <sup>17</sup> *We know this since God confirmed it in the Scripture passage in which he said to his Son,*

You (sg) are a priest eternally just like Melchizedek was a priest.

<sup>18</sup> *On the one hand, God canceled what he commanded previously concerning the priests because it failed in every way to enable anyone to become all that God intended.* <sup>19</sup> *Remember that no one was able to become all that God intended by obeying the laws that God gave*

Moses. On the other hand, *God caused that we could confidently expect better things than we could expect by obeying God's laws. He did that by his establishing Christ as priest.* Now by means of *Christ sacrificing himself for us* we can come near to God.

*Jesus lives eternally as a Supreme Priest to plead with God for us.*

*Hebrews 7:20-25*

<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, *when God appointed Christ, it was when God solemnly declared that Christ would be a priest [LIT]. When God appointed former priests, it was not by his solemnly declaring that they would be priests.* <sup>21</sup> However, when he *appointed Christ to be a priest, it was by these words that the Psalmist wrote in Scripture:*

The Lord has solemnly declared *to the Messiah,*  
—and he will not change his mind—

“You will be a priest forever!”

<sup>22</sup> Because of that, Jesus guarantees that *the new covenant will be better than the old one.*

<sup>23</sup> And formerly, the priests could not keep serving *as priests, because they all died [PRS].* So there were many priests *to take the place of the ones who died.* <sup>24</sup> But because *Jesus lives eternally, he will continue to be a Supreme Priest forever.* <sup>25</sup> So, he can completely and eternally save those who come to God by *trusting in what Jesus has done for them, since he lives forever to plead with God to help them.*

*Jesus is the kind of Supreme Priest we need, because he was sinless.*

*Hebrews 7:26-28*

<sup>26</sup> Jesus is the kind of Supreme Priest that we need. He was holy; he did no wrong; he was completely innocent. God has now taken him up to the highest heaven separated from *living among sinners*. <sup>27</sup> *The other* Supreme Priests need to sacrifice *animals* day by day as well as year by year. They do this, firstly, *to atone* for their own sins, and then *to atone for other people who have sinned*. But because Jesus never sinned, he does not need to atone for his own sin. The only thing *he needed to do to save people* was to sacrifice himself once! <sup>28</sup> *We need a Supreme Priest like him*, because in the laws that God gave Moses [PRS] the ones who would be appointed to be priests would be men who tended *to sin easily*. But God solemnly declared [PRS] after he had given his laws to Moses that *he would appoint* ◀his Son/the man who is also God▶ *to be a Supreme Priest*. Now ◀his Son/the man who is also God▶ has forever become all that God intends him to be.

## 8

*The rituals that were performed by the Jewish high priests were only a model of what Jesus our high priest does in heaven.*

*Hebrews 8:1-6*

<sup>1</sup> The main point of *all* that I have written is that we have a Supreme Priest like that. He has sat down to rule [MTY] with God [EUP] at the

place of greatest honor in heaven. <sup>2</sup> He ministers in the Most Holy Place, that is, in the true place *of worship in heaven*. That is a place that *Moses' tent represented*. The Lord set up the true place of worship. No human *set it up*.

<sup>3</sup> Every Supreme Priest was appointed {*God appointed every Supreme Priest*} to offer *to God gifts and sacrifices for people who sinned*. So, since *Christ became a Supreme Priest*, he also had to offer something. <sup>4</sup> Since there are already *Jewish* priests who offer gifts as God's laws *require*, if Christ were *now living* on the earth, he would not be a Supreme Priest. <sup>5</sup> The *Jewish* priests perform rituals which are only a model [DOU] of *what Christ would do in heaven* [MTY]. What *God* told Moses when Moses was about to set up the tent *for worshipping him supports the idea that those rituals were only a model*. *God* said, "Be sure that you (sg) make everything according to the model that I showed you on *Sinai Mountain!*" <sup>6</sup> But now as it is, *Christ* ministers in a more excellent way *than the Jewish priests do*. Likewise, the *new* covenant that he established *between God and people* is better *than the old one*. *When the new covenant was established* {*God established the new covenant*}, he promised us better things *than the laws that God gave Moses did*.

*The first covenant was not adequate, so God needed a new one.*

*Hebrews 8:7-13*

<sup>7</sup> If that first covenant had been perfectly adequate [LIT], God would not have thought

that he needed another *covenant/agreement to replace it*. But *it was not adequate, so he needed a new one*.<sup>8</sup> Because God declared that the Israelites were guilty of not obeying the first covenant, he wanted a new covenant. This is what ◀*a prophet/Jeremiah*▶ wrote about that:

The Lord says, “Listen! There will soon be a time when I will make a new covenant with the people [MTY] of Israel and the people [MTY] of Judah.

<sup>9</sup> That covenant will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I led them out of Egypt [MET] *like a father leads a child by the hand*.

They did not continue to *obey* my covenant, so I rejected them,” says the Lord.

<sup>10</sup> “This is the covenant that I will make with the Israelites [MTY], after *the first covenant has ended* [MTY],” says the Lord:

“I will enable them to understand my laws [MTY], and I will enable them to obey them (OR, truly know them) [MTY] sincerely.

I will be their God, and they will be my people [DOU].

<sup>11</sup> As a result, no one will need to teach a fellow citizen or tell his fellow kinsmen, ‘*You need to know the Lord,*’

because all *my people* will know me:

*My people* of every status will know me.

<sup>12</sup> I will mercifully *forgive them for* the wicked things they have done.

I will no longer *consider* that *they are guilty for* [DOU] *their sins.*”

<sup>13</sup> Since God spoke about a new *covenant*, he considered that the first *covenant* was no longer in use, and that it would soon disappear, just like *anything that gets old will disappear* [MET, DOU].

## 9

*A description of the man-made sanctuary that accompanied the first covenant.*

*Hebrews 9:1-5*

<sup>1</sup> *To continue:* In the first *covenant*, God regulated how people *should perform* rituals, and *he told them to make* [MTY] a sanctuary. <sup>2</sup> *That sanctuary* was a tent that *the Israelites* set up. In its outer room there was the lampstand and the table *on which they put* the bread that *the priests* presented to God. *That room* was called ‘the holy place’. <sup>3</sup> Behind the curtain inside *the holy place* there was *another* room. That was called ‘the very holy place’. <sup>4</sup> It had an altar, *made from gold, for burning* incense. *It also had the chest which they called* the chest of the covenant. All its sides were covered with gold. In it was the golden pot which contained *pieces of the food they called* manna. *That was the food with which God miraculously fed the people before they entered the promised land.* In the chest there was also Aaron’s walking stick that budded *to prove that he was God’s true priest.* In the chest were also the stone tablets *on which God had written* the Ten Commandments. <sup>5</sup> On top of *the chest* were *figures of winged creatures that symbolized*

God's glory. Their wings overshadowed the chest's lid where *the high priest sprinkled the blood* ◀to atone for/to forgive▶ *those who had sinned*. I do not need to write about these things in detail now.

*Offerings that were made under the first covenant were not able to remove a sense of guilt for sin.*

*Hebrews 9:6-10*

<sup>6</sup> After all those things were prepared {After they had prepared all those things like that} *in the two rooms of the tent*, the Jewish priests habitually went into the outer room of the tent to perform their rituals. <sup>7</sup> But into the inner room, only the Supreme Priest *went*, once a year. He always took [LIT] the blood of animals that they had slaughtered. He offered them to God for his own sins and for the sins that other people had committed. They included sins that they did not realize were sinful. <sup>8</sup> By those things the Holy Spirit indicated that just like God did not reveal the way for ordinary people to enter into the inner room while the outer room still existed [MET], *similarly he did not reveal the way for ordinary people to enter the presence of God while the Jewish system of offering sacrifices was in effect*. <sup>9</sup> *The things that the priests did inside the outer room* [MTY] symbolized what was true during the time when the first covenant was in effect. According to the first covenant (OR, *In that outer room*), priests offered gifts and other sacrifices to God. But *by offering them*, the people who brought them were unable to make

themselves feel that they were no longer guilty for having sinned. <sup>10</sup> *They brought those gifts and made those sacrifices according to regulations concerning things to eat and drink, and according to rules that required people to wash various things. God declared that those regulations about our bodies were to be in effect until he put into effect the new covenant; that was a better system.*

*Christ redeemed us by offering his own blood as a sacrifice.*

*Hebrews 9:11-14*

<sup>11</sup> But when Christ came as our Supreme Priest, *he brought* the good things that are now available. When he appeared, *he went into God's presence in heaven. That is like a* [MET] very great and perfect tent not made by humans {which no human made} [SYN]; that is, it is not part of the world *God* created. It was better *than the tent Moses set up here on earth.* <sup>12</sup> *When a Supreme Priest goes into the inner room in the tent each year, he takes goats' blood and calves' blood to offer as a sacrifice.* But Christ did not *do that. It was as though* he went into that very holy place only once, taking his own blood with him. By doing that, he eternally redeemed us. <sup>13</sup> *The priests sprinkle on people goats' blood and bulls' blood and the water that has been filtered through the ashes of a red heifer that has been completely burned. By performing that ritual, they can ritually cleanse the bodies of those who are ceremonially unclean. Furthermore, performing those rituals enabled people to have fellowship*

with God again. <sup>14</sup> *So, because we know what Christ accomplished when his blood flowed when he died for us [PRS, MTY], we will be very certain that we are not guilty of having done those things that those who are spiritually dead do. As a result, we can serve God, who is all-powerful. The priests always offer to God animals with no defects. Similarly, when Christ offered himself as a sacrifice to God, he was sinless [MET]. He did that as a result of God's eternal Spirit helping him.*

*Christ has put the new covenant into effect with his own blood.*

*Hebrews 9:15-22*

<sup>15</sup> *By dying for us, Christ ◀redeemed/set free from the penalty for their sins▶ even those who disobeyed the conditions of (OR, during the time of) the first covenant. So, because no one could be made perfect by obeying the old covenant, now Christ establishes between God and people a new covenant. He does that in order that those whom God has chosen may eternally have the blessings that God has promised them. <sup>16</sup> A covenant is like a will. In the case of a will, in order to put its provisions into effect, someone must prove that the one who made it has died. <sup>17</sup> A will goes into effect only when the one who makes the will has died. It is not in effect when the one who made it is still alive. <sup>18</sup> And so God put the first covenant into effect only [LIT] by means of animals' blood that was shed when they were slaughtered. <sup>19</sup> After Moses had declared to all the Israelites everything that God commanded in the laws that*

God gave him, he took calves' and goats' blood mixed with water. He dipped into it scarlet wool that he tied around a sprig of hyssop. Then he sprinkled with some of the blood the scroll itself containing God's laws. Then he sprinkled more of that blood on all the people,<sup>20</sup> saying to them, "This is the blood which brings into effect the covenant that God commanded that you obey."<sup>21</sup> Likewise, he sprinkled with that blood the tent and every object that they used in performing rituals.<sup>22</sup> It was by sprinkling blood that they ritually cleansed almost everything. That was what was stated in God's laws. If blood is not shed when people offer a sacrifice, God cannot forgive the person who is making the sacrifice.

*The Jewish priests kept offering the blood of animal sacrifices every year, but Christ sacrificed himself once to take away our guilt.*

*Hebrews 9:23-28*

<sup>23</sup> So, by rituals like that, it was necessary for the priests to cleanse the things that symbolized what Christ does [MTY] in heaven. But God has to consecrate the people who will enter [MTY] heaven by means of better sacrifices than those.<sup>24</sup> Christ did not enter a sanctuary that humans made. That one only represented the true sanctuary. Instead, he entered heaven itself, in order to now be in God's presence to plead with God for us.<sup>25</sup> The Jewish Supreme Priest enters the very holy place once every year, taking blood that is not his own, to offer it as a sacrifice. But when Christ entered heaven, it was not in order to offer himself repeatedly like that.

<sup>26</sup> *If that were so, he would have needed to suffer and shed his blood repeatedly since the time when God created the world. But instead, in this final age, Christ has appeared once in order that by sacrificing himself he could cause that people no longer will be punished for their sins.* <sup>27</sup> All people must die once, and after that God will judge them *for their sins.* <sup>28</sup> Likewise, when Christ *died, God offered him once to be a sacrifice, to punish him instead of the many people who had sinned. He will come to earth a second time, not in order to sacrifice himself again for those who have sinned, but in order to complete his saving those who expectantly wait for him.*

## 10

*The blood of animals can never take away the guilt for sins.*

*Hebrews 10:1-4*

<sup>1</sup> Just like a shadow vaguely represents the thing that it is a shadow of, the laws that God gave Moses only poorly represent [MET] the good things that were to come later. Those laws were not all the good things themselves that God has promised. So, by offering the same kinds of sacrifices every year, people [PRS] who approach God can never become ◀perfect/all that God intends them to be▶. <sup>2</sup> If God had removed the guilt for having sinned of those who brought the sacrifices, they would not feel that they were still guilty. So they would certainly have stopped offering those sacrifices! [RHQ] <sup>3</sup> But rather, the

fact that they offer those sacrifices each year reminds them that they are still guilty for their sins. <sup>4</sup> The principle is that blood of animals such as bulls or goats can never remove the guilt of those who have sinned.

*Christ set us apart for God by offering his own body once as a sacrifice.*

*Hebrews 10:5-10*

<sup>5</sup> So, as *Christ* was coming into the world, he spoke to his *Father* about offering himself as a sacrifice for people's sin. The *Psalmist* wrote this that *Christ* said:

It is not sacrifices and offerings that you (sg) have wanted,  
but you have prepared for me a body to serve you.

<sup>6</sup> Animals that are completely burned up as sacrifices have not pleased you, and other sacrifices that atone for those who have sinned have not pleased you.

<sup>7</sup> Then because of this, I said, "My God, ◀listen! here I am!▶

I have come here in order to do what you want me to do,  
just like has been written {as they have written} about me in the Scriptures."

<sup>8</sup> First, *Christ* said, "It is not sacrifices and offerings and animals that the priests have completely burned up and other offerings to atone for those who have sinned that you have really wanted. They have not pleased you." *Christ* said that even though those things were offered {they offered all those things} according to the laws *God* gave

Moses! <sup>9</sup> Then, *concerning his offering himself as a sacrifice to atone for people's sin*, he said, "Listen! I have come *here* to do what you want me *to do*!" In that way Christ got rid of the first *way of atoning for sin*, in order to establish the second *way of atoning for sin*. <sup>10</sup> Because of Jesus Christ *doing what God* wanted him to do, we have been dedicated to {*he has set us apart for*} God by his offering his own body only once *as a sacrifice, a sacrifice that will not need to be repeated*.

*Scripture supports the claim that Christ made one sacrifice that will be adequate forever.*

*Hebrews 10:11-18*

<sup>11</sup> As every Jewish priest stands daily *in front of the altar*, he performs rituals and offers the same kind of sacrifices that could never remove *the guilt from anyone who sinned* [MTY]. <sup>12</sup> But Christ offered a sacrifice that *will be adequate* forever, and he offered it only one time! Then he sat down *to rule* with God at the place of highest honor [MTY]. <sup>13</sup> From now on, he is waiting for *God* to completely subdue *all* Christ's enemies [MTY]. <sup>14</sup> By offering himself once, he has provided that those whom *God* has set apart will be eternally made ◀perfect/all that God intends them to be▶. <sup>15</sup> The Holy Spirit also confirms to us *that this is true*. First the Lord says:

<sup>16</sup> When the time [MTY] *when the first covenant that God made* with my people has ended, I will make a new covenant with them [MTY]. I will do like this for them:  
I will cause them to understand my laws

and I will cause them to obey them (OR, enable them to know them sincerely).

<sup>17</sup> Then *the Lord said*:  
*I will forgive them for their [DOU] sins,*  
and I will *consider* that they are no longer *guilty*  
*for having sinned.*

<sup>18</sup> When *God* has forgiven someone's sins, that person does not *need to make* any more offerings *to atone for his sin!*

*Let us come to God and let him make us pure and help us to keep believing his truth and do things that please him.*

*Hebrews 10:19-25*

<sup>19</sup> So, my fellow believers, because we *trust in what Jesus accomplished when his own blood flowed for us*, we can confidently go into *God's very presence* that was *symbolized* by the very holy place *in the tent* [MTY]. <sup>20</sup> Jesus enabled us to go into *God's presence* by making a new and effective way. *Specifically*, he *offered* his body as a *sacrifice* for us *in order that nothing would stop us* from entering *God's presence*, just like [MET] the curtain of the very holy place *prevented people from entering God's presence.* <sup>21</sup> Christ is a great priest *who rules over us*, *who are God's people* [MTY]. <sup>22</sup> *Just like the priests were sprinkled {as Moses sprinkled the priests} with blood* [MET] to symbolize that they were no longer guilty for having sinned, we also no longer are *guilty for having done evil. Just like the priests ceremonially washed their bodies with pure water to prepare themselves to serve God*, we are allowing *God*

to continually make us pure. So, we (*inc*) must approach *God* sincerely by confidently trusting *in him*.<sup>23</sup> We must unwaveringly keep holding tight *to what we believe*. Since *God* faithfully *does all* he promised *to do*, we must confidently expect *him to keep doing that*.<sup>24</sup> Since *God* faithfully *does all that* he promised *to do*, let us consider how each of us can motivate other believers, in order that *believers* will love each other, and in order that each one will do good things.<sup>25</sup> We must not stop assembling ourselves *to worship the Lord*, as some people have done. Instead, each one of us must encourage/exhort other believers. *Let us do that* even more since we know that the day *that the Lord will return* [MTY] is near.

*If we have known and then rejected the message about Christ, God will surely punish us.*

*Hebrews 10:26-31*

<sup>26</sup> *We(inc)* must *do those things*, because if we deliberately and habitually sin after we have known the true *message about Christ*, no other sacrifice will remove our guilt for having sinned in that way.<sup>27</sup> Instead, we must fearfully expect that *God* will judge and angrily *punish* his enemies in a furious fire [MET].<sup>28</sup> Everyone who rejected the laws *that God* gave Moses was mercilessly killed when *at least two or three* people testified that they had done that.<sup>29</sup> *That was severe punishment*. But *Christ* is ◀*God's Son/ the man who is also God*▶. His blood, by means of which *he put into effect* the new covenant, is sacred. Because of *Christ's* [MTY] blood *flowing*

*for us when he died, God freed us from our guilt. So, you can be sure [RHQ] that anyone who shows contempt for those truths and who insults the Spirit of God, the one who acts with kindness toward us in a way we do not deserve, deserves to be punished even worse than those Israelis were punished [MET]! <sup>30</sup> We can be sure of that (OR, need to think about that carefully) since we know that God said, “I myself will get revenge on those who sinned, and I will punish them as they deserve [DOU].” Moses wrote, “The Lord will judge his people.” <sup>31</sup> It will be a terrible thing if God who is all-powerful [MTY] seizes and punishes you [IDM]!*

*Remember how you accepted persecution because of your faith in Christ, and do not be discouraged if you are persecuted now.*

*Hebrews 10:32-39*

<sup>32</sup> Recall previous times when you *first* understood [MET] *the message about Christ*. You endured a hard struggle, but you *continued to trust him* when you suffered *because you believed in Christ*. <sup>33</sup> At times you were publicly insulted {people publicly insulted you} and you suffered {people persecuted you}. But you showed great concern for those who were treated like that. <sup>34</sup> You not only were kind to those who were in prison *because they believed in Christ*, but you also accepted it joyfully when *unbelievers* took away your possessions. You accepted it because you yourselves knew very well that you have eternal possessions *in heaven* that are much

better *than those that they took from you!* <sup>35</sup> So, do not become discouraged *when they cause you to suffer {you are persecuted}*, because *if you continue to trust in God*, he will greatly reward you. <sup>36</sup> You must patiently continue *to trust in him* in order that, because of your doing what God wants you to do, he will give you what he has promised. <sup>37</sup> *You must do that since a prophet wrote in the Scriptures that God said about the Messiah,*

In just a short time the one *I promised* would come will surely come;  
he will not delay coming.

<sup>38</sup> But those whom I have summoned, who *act righteously*, must continually live trusting in me,  
because if they, in a cowardly manner, cease *to trust in me*, I  
◀will not be pleased/will be angry▶ with them.

<sup>39</sup> But we are not ones who in a cowardly manner stop *trusting in God*, with the result that God will severely punish us. Instead, we are ones who trust in him, with the result that *God* will save us [SYN] eternally.

## 11

*Because of our faith, we confidently expect to receive God's promises.*

*Hebrews 11:1-3*

<sup>1</sup> It is because people trust *God* that they are sure that they will receive the things that they confidently expect *God to give them*. They are also certain *that they will see those things*, though

no one sees them yet. <sup>2</sup> It was because our ancestors trusted in God that they pleased him. <sup>3</sup> It is because we trust in God that we understand that he formed the universe by commanding *it to exist*. The result is that the things that we see were not made from things that already existed.

*Because of his faith, Abel offered a better sacrifice than his brother Cain did.*

*Hebrews 11:4*

<sup>4</sup> It was because *Adam's son* Abel trusted God that he sacrificed something better to God than what *his older brother* Cain offered to God. Because Abel did that, when God spoke well about what Abel sacrificed, God declared that Abel was righteous. And although Abel is dead, we still learn from him *about trusting God*.

*Because of their faith, God blessed Enoch, Noah, and Abraham.*

*Hebrews 11:5-12*

<sup>5</sup> It was because Enoch believed *God that God* took him *up to heaven*. The result was that he did not die. No one found him, because he was taken up {*God had removed him*} from the earth *to heaven*. Before *God* took him away, *he* testified that Enoch pleased him well. <sup>6</sup> It is possible for people to please God only if they trust God, because anyone who wants to come to God must first believe that God exists and that he rewards those who seek *to know* him.

<sup>7</sup> It was because Noah trusted *God* that after he was warned by God {*after God warned him*} about *a flood that* had not yet happened, Noah *showed that he* revered God by building a huge

ship to save his family. By doing that, he *showed all the people who did not believe him* [MTY] *that they deserved to be condemned* {that God would condemn them}. He was someone whom God declared to be righteous because of his trusting in God.

<sup>8</sup> It was because Abraham trusted God that when he was told to go {when *God* told him to go}, he obeyed *God*, he left *his own country*, and went to a place that God would give him. Abraham left his own country, even though he did not know where he would be going. <sup>9</sup> It was because Abraham trusted God that he lived as though he was a foreigner in the land that *God* had promised to him. Abraham lived in tents, and his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob did also. God promised to give to Isaac and Jacob the same things that he promised to give Abraham.

<sup>10</sup> Abraham was waiting to live in a city *in heaven* that would exist forever [MET]. It was a city that God is building [DOU]. <sup>11</sup> It was because Abraham trusted God that God gave Abraham strength so that he *was* able to produce a son. Even though his wife Sarah was past the age *when women bear children*, *God* promised *that he would give her a son*, and Abraham considered that God would do what he promised to do. <sup>12</sup> So, although Abraham was also too old to have children, so many people descended from that one man that they were as numerous as the stars in the sky and are as countless as the grains of sand along the seashore, *just like God promised him*.

*All those people who trusted in God died*

*without receiving what God promised.*

*Hebrews 11:13-16*

<sup>13</sup> It was while they still trusted in God that all those people died. Even though they had not yet received the things that God had promised to give them, *it was as though* they saw those things in a distance. They were glad *to know* about what God promised. It was as though they admitted that they were not from this earth, but that they were only here temporarily. <sup>14</sup> As for those people who talk like that, they clearly show that they long for *a place that will become* their true native land. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking about *that place being* the place from which they had come, they would have taken the opportunity to return there. <sup>16</sup> But, instead, they desired a better *place in which to live*; that is, they desired *a home* in heaven. So God has prepared a city for them to live *with him*, and he is pleased [LIT] for them to say that he is their God.

*It was because Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, the Israelite people, and Rahab trusted God that he blessed them.*

*Hebrews 11:17-31*

<sup>17</sup> It was because Abraham trusted *God* that he *was ready to kill* his son Isaac as a sacrifice when *God* tested him. This same man to whom *God* promised *to give* ◀*a son/many descendants*▶ was going to sacrifice *that same son*, the only son *whom his own wife had borne!* <sup>18</sup> It was to Abraham that *God* said, “It is *only* from Isaac that I will consider your family to descend.” <sup>19</sup> Abraham considered that *to fulfill that promise,*

God could make *Isaac* live again *even if* he had died *after Abraham sacrificed him!* The result was that when Abraham did receive Isaac back *after God told him not to harm Isaac*, it was as though he received him back even after he died.

<sup>20</sup> It was because Isaac trusted God that he *prayed that after he died, God would bless his sons Jacob and Esau.*

<sup>21</sup> It was because Jacob trusted God that, as he was dying, he *prayed that God would bless each of the sons of his own son Joseph.* He worshipped God as he leaned upon his walking stick *before he died.* <sup>22</sup> It was because Joseph trusted God that, when he was about to die *in Egypt*, he anticipated the time when the Israelis would leave Egypt; and he instructed *that his people should carry his bones with them when they left Egypt/returned to Canaan*.

<sup>23</sup> It was because Moses' father and mother trusted God that they hid *their son* for three months shortly after he was born, because they saw that he was so beautiful. They were not afraid of *disobeying* what the king of Egypt had commanded, *namely, that all the Jewish male babies must be killed.* <sup>24</sup> The daughter of the king, *whom they called Pharaoh, raised Moses*, but when he had grown up, it was because he trusted God that he refused to *accept the privileges that would have been his if people considered that he was the son of the king's daughter/the king's own grandson*. <sup>25</sup> He decided that it was better for others to mistreat him for a time along with the Israeli people, than to temporarily enjoy

living sinfully *in the King's palace*. <sup>26</sup> This is because he decided that if he suffered for the Messiah, it would be worth far more *in God's sight* than his owning all the treasures of Egypt *that he would receive as Pharaoh's heir*. *He decided that* because he looked forward to the time when *God would give him an eternal reward*.

<sup>27</sup> It was because he trusted God that he left Egypt. He was not afraid that the king would be angry *because of his doing that*. He ◀kept going/did not turn back▶ because *it was as though* he kept seeing *God*, whom no one can see. <sup>28</sup> It was because Moses believed *that God would save his own people* that he instituted the *festival called* Passover. He did that *by commanding that the people should kill lambs and* sprinkle their blood *on their doorposts*. They did that in order that *the angel who* causes people to die would not kill [EUP] the oldest male Israelites *when he killed the oldest sons in each Egyptian family*.

<sup>29</sup> It was because they trusted God that *when the Israelite people* walked through *where the Red Sea had been*, *it was as though they walked on dry land!* But, when the *army of Egypt* also attempted to *cross that same water*, they drowned, because *the sea came back and flooded them!*

<sup>30</sup> It was because the *Israeli people* trusted God that the walls around *Jericho city* collapsed, after the Israelis marched around the walls for seven days.

<sup>31</sup> *Rahab had been* a prostitute, but because she trusted God, she did not perish with those *inside Jericho* who disobeyed God. *Joshua sent*

*some spies into the city in order to find ways to destroy it, but God saved her because she welcomed those spies peaceably.*

*Some who trusted God gained great victories and others were tortured and killed.*

*Hebrews 11:32-38*

<sup>32</sup> I do not know what more I should say [RHQ] *about others who trusted in God*. It would take too much time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the *other* prophets. <sup>33</sup> It was because they trusted God that some of them *did great things for him*. Some conquered lands ruled by powerful men. Some ruled *Israel* and justly *punished those men and nations who rebelled against God*. Some obtained *from God* the things that he promised to give them [MTY]. <sup>34</sup> Some forced lions to keep their mouths shut. Some escaped from being destroyed by fire. Some of those people escaped from *being killed with a sword* [MTY]. Some of those *people who trusted God* were made strong {became mighty} again after they had once been weak. Some became powerful when they fought wars. Some caused armies *that came from foreign lands* to run away from them. <sup>35</sup> Some women *who trusted God* received *their relatives* back again when God *made them live again after they had died/raised them from the dead*. But *others who trusted God* were tortured until they died. They were tortured because they refused to agree when *their captors said, "We will release you if you deny that you believe in God."* *They refused to do that, because*

they wanted to live with God forever, which is better than *continuing to live on earth* after having almost died. <sup>36</sup> Other *people who trusted God* were mocked; *some had their backs cut open by being struck* with leaded whips. Some were chained and put in prison. <sup>37</sup> *Some of those believers were stoned to death* {People killed some of those believers by throwing stones at them}. Others were cut completely in two. Others were killed with swords. Others of these people who trusted God wandered around the land *wearing garments made only of skins* from sheep and goats. They did not have any money. They were continually oppressed and tormented {People continuously oppressed them and tormented them}. <sup>38</sup> *The people on earth who caused those who trusted in God to suffer were so bad that they did not deserve to live with people who trusted God. Some who trusted God* wandered in deserts and on mountains. Some lived in caves and in other *large holes* in the ground.

*Only when we are together with all these people who trusted God will we receive all God has promised.*

*Hebrews 11:39-40*

<sup>39</sup> Although all these people were commended *by God* {God commended all these people} because they trusted him, God did not give them all that he promised them *while they were alive*. <sup>40</sup> God knew ahead of time that what he would give us and them *later* would be better than giving them *immediately what he promised*. What

God intends is that only when they and we are together will we have all that God intends us to have.

## 12

*Since we know so many people with faith like that, we must put aside anything, especially sin, which hinders us, and we must strive to achieve God's will and concentrate on Jesus.*

*Hebrews 12:1-2*

<sup>1</sup> We know about many people like that *who showed they trusted in God*. They are like a crowd of spectators *who are cheering for us inside a stadium* [MET]. Knowing that, we must put away all the things that hinder us, *as a runner puts aside everything that would hinder him because they are heavy* [MET]. Especially we must put away sinful actions that *hinder us, as a runner sets aside clothes he does not need, clothes that would entangle him* [MET]. Let us *wholeheartedly strive to achieve what God has planned for us, as someone in a race wholeheartedly runs the course that is before him* [MET]. <sup>2</sup> And let us *keep our minds on Jesus, as a runner keeps his eyes on the goal* [MET]. Jesus is the one we should imitate in the way he perfectly trusted God. *When he died on the cross he endured it as he suffered greatly* [MTY], instead of *thinking about the things he would rejoice about later*. He disregarded being disgraced by *dying that way*. He is now sitting at the place of highest honor [MTY] at the throne *where God rules*.

*Do not become discouraged when you are suffering as you struggle against evil.*

*Hebrews 12:3-6*

<sup>3</sup> Jesus patiently endured it when sinful people acted so hostilely against him. Try to act the way he did, so that you do not give up *trusting* God or become discouraged. <sup>4</sup> While you have struggled against *being tempted to sin*, you have not yet bled *and died because of resisting evil, as Jesus did*. <sup>5</sup> Do not forget [RHQ] these words *that Solomon spoke to his son, that are the same as God would exhort you as his children*:

My child, pay attention [LIT] when the Lord is disciplining you,  
and do not be discouraged when the Lord punishes you [DOU],  
<sup>6</sup> because it is everyone whom he loves whom the Lord disciplines,  
and he punishes everyone whom he accepts as his child.

*Since our sufferings are to discipline us, if we have not experienced God's discipline we are not his true children. We should accept God's discipline, because it is always to help us.*

*Hebrews 12:7-11*

<sup>7</sup> It is in order that God may discipline you that he requires you to endure the disagreeable things *that happen to you*. *When God disciplines you* he is treating you as a father treats his children. All fathers [RHQ] discipline their children [LIT]. <sup>8</sup> So, if you have not experienced God disciplining you just like he disciplines all his other children, you are *not true children of*

God [MET]. *You are like illegitimate children; no father disciplines them.* <sup>9</sup> Furthermore, our natural fathers disciplined us *when we were young*, and we respected them for doing that. So we should certainly more readily accept God our spiritual Father disciplining us, with the result that we live eternally [RHQ]! <sup>10</sup> Our natural fathers disciplined us for a short time in a way that they considered right, *but it wasn't always right*, but God always disciplines us *in a right way*, to help us. He does it so that we may be holy as he is. <sup>11</sup> During the time that God is disciplining us, that does not seem to be something about which we should rejoice. Instead, it is something that pains us. But later it causes those who have learned from it to be peaceful and to *live righteously*.

*Renew yourselves spiritually; go forward in your Christian life; try to live peacefully with everyone; seek to be holy; guard against bitterness; do not be immoral; and do not refuse to listen to God.*

*Hebrews 12:12-17*

<sup>12</sup> So, *instead of acting as though you were spiritually exhausted*, renew yourselves [MET] spiritually. <sup>13</sup> Go straight forward *in your Christian life* [MET], in order that believers who are uncertain about their faith *will imitate you* and not *◀leave God's way/become useless to God▶* [MET]. Instead, they will be spiritually restored [MET] as an injured and useless limb is restored. <sup>14</sup> Try to live peacefully with all people. Seek to be holy, since no one will see the Lord if he is not

holy. <sup>15</sup> Beware that none of you stops *trusting in God, who has done kind things for us that we did not deserve* (OR, Beware that you have never *experienced* God kindly saving you). Be on guard lest any of you *act in an evil way towards others*, because your doing that will *grow like* [MET] a root *grows into a big plant*, and the result of your doing that will be that many believers will sin and become unacceptable to God. <sup>16</sup> Do not let anyone be immoral, or be irreligious as Esau was. He exchanged the rights he had as a firstborn son for only one meal. <sup>17</sup> You know that after he did that, he wanted to receive *what his father would promise to give him if he blessed him*. But *his father* was unable to *change what he had already done*. And Esau found no way to change things, even though he sought tearfully to do that.

*You have not experienced the terrifying things your ancestors did; you have come to Christ and benefited from his blood flowing for you.*

*Hebrews 12:18-24*

<sup>18</sup> In coming to God you have not *experienced things like what the Israeli people experienced at Sinai Mountain*. They approached a mountain that God told them they should not touch. They approached a blazing fire, and it was gloomy and dark [DOU], and there was a hurricane/cyclone. <sup>19</sup> They heard a trumpet sounding and they heard God speak. The result was that those who heard it pleaded for God not to speak to them like that again. <sup>20</sup> When God commanded them saying, “If a person or even an animal

touches this mountain, *you must kill him/it by* throwing stones at him/it,” they were terrified.

<sup>21</sup> Truly, because Moses was terrified after seeing what happened *on the mountain*, he said, “I am trembling because I am very afraid!” <sup>22</sup> Instead, *it is as though* you have come to *the presence of God in heaven* [MET]. *That is like what your ancestors did when they came to worship God* on Zion Hill, in Jerusalem, in the city of God who is all-powerful. You have come (OR, you are coming) to where there are countless angels, who are rejoicing as they have gathered together.

<sup>23</sup> You have joined all the believers *who have privileges like* firstborn sons, whose names *God* has written down in heaven. You have come to God, who will judge everyone. You have come to where the spirits of God’s people are, people who lived righteously *before they died*, and who now have been made perfect *in heaven*. <sup>24</sup> You have come to Jesus, who arranged a new covenant *between us and God*. You have accepted *what he accomplished when his blood flowed when he died on the cross*. *His doing that made it possible for God to forgive us*. That is better than the blood of Abel, *who just* wanted revenge because his brother Cain murdered him.

*We should be in awe before God, who will punish us if we reject him.*

*Hebrews 12:25-29*

<sup>25</sup> Beware that you do not refuse to listen to *God* who is speaking to you. The Israeli people did not escape *God punishing them* when Moses (OR, *God*) warned them here on earth. So we

shall surely not escape *God punishing us* if we reject him when he warns us from heaven! [RHQ] <sup>26</sup> The earth shook [PRS] then when he spoke [MTY] *at Sinai Mountain*. But now he has promised, “I will shake the earth again, one more time, but I will shake heaven too.” <sup>27</sup> The words “again, one more time” indicate that things *on earth* will be shaken {that *he* will shake things *on earth*}, meaning that he will set aside all that *he* has created, in order that the things *in heaven* that cannot be shaken {that nothing can shake} may remain forever. <sup>28</sup> So, let us thank God that we are becoming members of a kingdom that nothing can shake. Let us worship/serve God in a way that pleases him by being greatly in awe [DOU] before him. <sup>29</sup> Remember that the God we *worship/serve* is like a fire that burns up everything *that is impure* [MET]!

## 13

*Love one another; be hospitable, and help imprisoned and other mistreated believers.*

*Hebrews 13:1-3*

<sup>1</sup> Continue to love your fellow believers. <sup>2</sup> Do not forget to be hospitable to needy travelers [LIT]. You need to know that by being hospitable, some people have entertained angels without knowing it. <sup>3</sup> Remember *to help* those who are in prison *because they are Christians*, as though you were in prison with them. Remember those who are being mistreated {whom people are mistreating} *because they are believers*. *As you do*

*that*, consider that you you could suffer as they do.

*Respect the marriage relationship, and avoid covetousness.*

*Hebrews 13:4-6*

<sup>4</sup> You must ◀respect/keep sacred▶ the marriage relationship in every way, and you must keep sexual relations [EUP] pure, because God will surely condemn those who act immorally and those who act adulterously. <sup>5</sup> Live without constantly coveting money, and be content with the things you possess, remembering what *Moses* wrote *that God* has said *about supplying what you need*,

I will never leave you,

I will never stop providing for you [DOU].

<sup>6</sup> So we can say confidently *as the Psalmist said*, Since the Lord is the one who helps me, I will not be afraid! People can do nothing to me *that will deprive me of God's blessings* [RHQ].

*Remember how your former spiritual leaders lived and imitate their faith; since Christ never changes, do not be diverted to strange teachings.*

*Hebrews 13:7-9*

<sup>7</sup> Your spiritual leaders used to tell you the message from God *before they died*. Remember how they conducted their lives. By considering ◀how they died/what resulted from how they lived▶, imitate how they believed *in Christ/God*. <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same now as he was previously, and he will be the same forever. <sup>9</sup> So, do not let yourselves be diverted {let anything

divert you} so that you believe various teachings *that are contrary to God's truth*. It is good that God acts kindly toward us so that we may be strengthened spiritually. *Obedying rules about various foods, rules that have not benefited those who obeyed them, will not benefit us.*

*We must stop practicing Jewish sacrifices and rituals, and go to Jesus to be saved, since we do not have a city like Jerusalem where we must offer sacrifices, but instead we wait for a future everlasting heavenly city.*

*Hebrews 13:10-14*

<sup>10</sup> We have *Jesus* [MTY]. All those who continue to observe the Jewish rituals [MTY] of sacrifice have no right to obtain the benefits of his sacrifice [MET]. <sup>11</sup> After the high priest brings into the most holy place the blood of animals *that they have sacrificed to atone* for sins, the bodies of those animals are burned {they burn the bodies of those animals} outside the camp. <sup>12</sup> Similarly, *Jesus suffered and died* outside the gate of *Jerusalem* in order that he might make us, his people, holy by *offering* his own blood as *a sacrifice to atone for our sins*.

<sup>13</sup> So, we must abandon *performing Jewish sacrifices and rituals* [MET] *in order to be saved*, and let us go to *Jesus to be saved*. As we do that, we must *be willing* to let others reproach us just like people reproached *Jesus*. <sup>14</sup> Here on earth, we believers do not have a city *such as Jerusalem where we must continually offer sacrifices* [MET].

Instead, we are waiting for a future *heavenly city that will last forever*.

*Since Christ sacrificed himself for us, let our continual praise of God be our sacrifice.*

*Hebrews 13:15*

<sup>15</sup> With *the help of Jesus*, we must continually praise God. That will be something we can sacrifice to him [MET] *instead of our sacrificing animals only at specific times*. Specifically, we must say openly [MTY] *that we have trusted in Christ [MTY]*.

*Continually do good deeds and share with others, because this too will be a sacrifice pleasing to God.*

*Hebrews 13:16*

<sup>16</sup> Be continually [LIT] doing good deeds for others, and be continually sharing with others *the things you have*, because doing things like that will also be *as though you are offering sacrifices that will please God*.

*Obey your spiritual leaders.*

*Hebrews 13:17*

<sup>17</sup> Obey your *spiritual leaders*; do what they tell you, since they are the ones who are looking out for your spiritual welfare [SYN]. *Some day* they will have to stand before God so that he can say if he approves of what they have done. Obey them in order that they can do the work of guarding you joyfully, and not have to do it sadly, because if you cause them to do it sadly, that will certainly not help you at all (OR, they will not be able to help you at all).

*Pray for me that God will quickly remove the things that hinder my coming to you.*

*Hebrews 13:18-19*

<sup>18</sup> Pray for me. I am certain that I have not done anything that displeases God. I have tried to act honorably *toward you* in every way. <sup>19</sup> I urge you earnestly to pray that *God will quickly remove the things that hinder my coming to you.*

*May God equip you with everything good that you need, and may Christ be praised forever.*

*Hebrews 13:20-21*

<sup>20</sup> Jesus *provides for us, protects us, and guides us* as a great shepherd does for his sheep [MET]. And God, who gives us *inner* peace, brought our Lord Jesus back to life. By doing that, God ratified his eternal covenant with us by the blood *that flowed from Jesus when he died on the cross.* <sup>21</sup> So I pray that God will equip you with everything good *that you need in order* that you may do the things that he desires. May he accomplish in our lives whatever he considers pleasing as a result of Jesus Christ *equipping us.* May Jesus Christ be praised forever. ◀Amen!/May it be so!▶

*Patiently consider what I have written in this short exhortation.*

*Hebrews 13:22*

<sup>22</sup> My fellow believers, I appeal to you that you patiently consider *what* I have written in this short letter, to exhort you.

*Since Timothy has been released from prison, he will accompany me when I go to see you.*

*Hebrews 13:23*

<sup>23</sup> I want you to know that our fellow believer Timothy has been released {*the authorities have released our fellow believer Timothy*} *from prison*. If he comes here soon, he will accompany me when I go to see you.

*Greet your spiritual leaders and all other believers; the believers who are from Italy send you their greetings.*

*Hebrews 13:24*

<sup>24</sup> Tell all your *spiritual* leaders and all the *other* fellow believers *in your city* that ◀I am thinking fondly about them/I am sending them my greetings▶. The believers *in this area who have come* from Italy *want you to know they are* ◀thinking about you/sending you their greetings▶.

*May God act graciously to you all.*

*Hebrews 13:25*

<sup>25</sup> *I pray that you will continue to experience God's acting kindly toward you all.*

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