

HEBREWS

The identity of the explicit audience and author is unclear. It appears at that time, believing Jews were worshipping with unbelieving Jews which may have been the basis of the book. The book of Hebrews was written to the believing Jews. Clearly, the recipients of this letter had endured hardship for their Christian beliefs (Hebrews 10:32-43).

The author may have been Paul (2 Pet 3:15-16) or possibly a more eloquent Apollos (Martin Luther's belief). Tertullian believed Barnabas (the Levite – Acts 4:36) wrote the book.

- The early church father, Clement of Alexandria (150AD - 215AD) believed that Paul initially wrote the book in Hebrew, then Luke translated the book into Greek.
- Although the book does not begin in the traditional Pauline manner (without the traditional greeting), the conclusion of the book is Pauline (Hebrews 13).
- Circa 200AD, Paul's books/epistles were consolidated into the "Corpus Paulinum" where Hebrews was included.
 - This author desires to revisit these believers just as Paul often did. (Hebrews 13:19)
 - This author uses the "*God of Peace*" (theos tēn eirēnēs – θεός τὴν εἰρήνης) as a title (Hebrews 13:20) which was only repeated in the Pauline Epistles. (Romans 15:33, 16:20; 1 Corinthians 14:33, 2 Corinthians 3:11; Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23)
- One of the closing recaps of the book is that this is a "*book of exhortation*" (Hebrews 13:22) which is a phrase that is also used in Acts 13:15 (by the Synagogue officials of Pisidia Antioch).
- The author is not Timothy (who is referenced in third person); however, the writer is a traveling companion of Timothy who defers to Timothy's agenda. (Hebrews 13:23).
 - Every time that Paul references Timothy as a "brother," Paul writes "*Timothy, our/the brother*" – Timotheos ho adelphos – Τιμόθεος ὁ ἀδελφός); however, in the Hebrews reference (Hebrews 13:23), the writer states "*our brother Timothy / the brother of us Timothy*" (ton adelphon hēmōn Timotheon - τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν Τιμόθεον)
- The writer of Hebrews clearly depends on others who had heard the gospel from Jesus in first-person; "*After it was at first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard...*" (Hebrews 2:3)
- The recipients of the Book of Hebrews know the writer who has been with them (Hebrews 13:19, 22-23).
 - The letters/Epistles would have been written on scrolls and rolled up for conveyance. The actual letter was on the front/inside of the scroll (the "Recto" side) while the recipients were written on the back/outside (the "Verso" side).
 - Recto (in Latin is rectum) meaning "right" or "correct" while Verso (in Latin as versus) means "turned" or "changed."
 - The verbiage on the "Recto" side has been tediously and intricately preserved throughout the ages while the names/addresses on the Verso side have been lost.

- The first historical record/occasion that the Book of Hebrews is cited by a secular source is by a church father – Saint Clement of Rome (circa 96AD). By the end of the first century, the Book of Hebrews is well recognized as a part of the New Testament.

The Book of Hebrews (similar to the Book of James) seems to be a “sectarian” document towards Jews (whereas the Books of Peter are targeted towards Gentiles). While it is assumed that the Book of Hebrews was written to believing Jews (Hebrews 3:1; Galatians 6:16; James 1:1), this Epistle does not explicitly state that is the case. Many Christian scholars find the text transitioning between a believing and unbelieving audience. The book of Hebrews is similar to the books of James, Peter and John in that each book emphasizes the responsibility to live a changed life after salvation. While salvation is by faith, there is a confirmation by works of a new Spirit filled life.

Messianic Jews are not called out of the Jewish culture; they can still enjoy the Jewish culture and understand that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. (1 Corinthians 7:18-20) Israel was told to keep the Sabbath forever – even beyond the Messiah (Exodus 31:16-17); the Hebrew culture extends beyond the Messiah. While the Greco-Roman philosophy (adopted by the West) treasures individualism (personalization), the Hebrew culture is an integrated, cohesive society (nationalization). The Jerusalem counsel (Acts 15) confirmed that Gentiles would not need to become Jewish to enjoy salvation through the Messiah; however, they did not direct the Jews to terminate their Jewish customs.

Other Examples of Jews Maintaining Jewish Culture & Customs	
Acts 10:34-48	Peter understood the vision as ministry to Gentiles instead of eating non-kosher foods
Acts 21:15-26	Paul agreed to a Nazarite vow to show support for Jewish customs
Acts 16:3; Galatians 2:3	Timothy (part-Jewish) was circumcised while Titus (Gentile) was not circumcised.

The Lord Jesus Christ is Superior...	
Hebrews 1:1-3	Over the Prophets
Hebrews 1:4 - 2:18	Over the Angels & the Torah
Hebrews 3:1 – 5:10	Over the Moses & the Promised Land
Hebrews 5:11 – 6:12	Over the Aaronic Priesthood
Hebrews 6:13 - 7:28	Of Believing Jews Over Unbelieving Jews
Hebrews 8:10 – 10:18	Over the Sacrifices & Mosaic Covenant
Hebrews 10:19 – 13:25	Worthy of Faith From Patriarchs & Us

4 Hebrews 1

Read Hebrews 1:1-3 ... The Lord Brought a more Powerful Message than the Prophets

1:1 Jesus is superior to all of the ways that God revealed himself to the Old Testament Israel.

- Hebrews is only 1 of 2 Epistles that do not have an opening greeting (with the other being 1 John). Hebrews is recorded like a sermon or theological paper; however, it does close like a letter.

- Verses 1-4 are a single sentence that reveal that Jesus was superior to the Old Testament Prophets in the quality of the revelation and the completeness of the message. Instead of prophets, God spoke through His family member (His son).
- 1:2 The days after the giving of the Spirit (Acts 2:16-22) are called the “last days” (ep’ eschatou tōn hēmerōn - ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν). (1 Peter 1:20; Jude 1:18).
- The term “heir” means to obtain something or possess, so Jesus has authority over all (physical & spiritual) things (Matthew 21:33-46; 28:18; Psalm 2:8). The Lord Jesus is the rightful owner of all of Creation which encompasses everything in existence outside of the Trinity itself.
 - All of creation was made through Jesus, and He continues to uphold all things (John 8:57-58; Philippians 2:6-7; Colossians 1:17). Jesus is the Word of God (John 1:1-18; 8) who spoke all things into existence (Genesis 1).
 - Jesus is also compared to the wisdom of God. (Proverbs 8:22-36)
 - Islam adamantly disagrees as they believe that God has no Son. Muslims have inscribed on the Dome of the Rock “He is God, the One! God, the eternally Besought of all! He begetteth not nor was begotten.”
- 1:3 Jesus is divine; Jesus is the same as God the Father – they are one.
- The Greek term for “radiance” (apaugasma ἀπαύγασμα) does not mean reflection, it means the illumination and the light exuded as glory. This is recorded in Scripture as the Shekinah glory. (Exodus 13:21; Matthew 17:2; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Revelation 21:23; Luke 2:9)
 - The Greek term for “perfect representation” (character χαρακτήρ) means the “exact expression.” This term was used to describe the perfect imprint of a signet ring on hot wax. (John 14:9-10)
 - At the center of every atom are multiple protons (positive forces) that should push away from each other, but instead, they hold together by the “nuclear binding force.” Science has no answer as to the origin or methodology of the nuclear binding force.
 - The Lord Jesus Christ has dealt with sin, so that the only sin that will not be forgiven is the sin of unbelief. Those who do not believe God at His Word will suffer for their sin (John 3:17-21; Matthew 12:31-32; Mark 3:29)
 - The act of “taking a seat” (ekathisen ἐκάθισεν) represents the finished work of Christ as a mediator for man. (John 19:30)

Description of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:2-3)		
1.	Heir of All Things	Sovereign God
2.	Manner of Creation for the World	Creator God
3.	The Radiance of God’s Glory	God’s Glory
4.	Exact Representation of God’s Nature	God’s Image
5.	Upholds All Things by His Word	Sustainer of Creation
6.	Made Purification of Sins	Divine Reconciler
7.	Sat Down at Right Hand of God the Father	Power of God

Read Hebrews 1:4-14 ... The Lord Brought a more Powerful Message than the Angels

Old Testament Quotes Supporting the Superiority of Jesus

(Hebrews 1:4-14)	
1. Hebrews 1:5	Psalm 2:7
2. Hebrews 1:5	2 Samuel 7:14
3. Hebrews 1:6	Psalm 97:7; Deuteronomy 32:43
4. Hebrews 1:7	Psalm 104:4
5. Hebrews 1:8-9	Psalm 45:6-7
6. Hebrews 1:10-12	Psalm 102:25-27
7. Hebrews 1:13	Psalm 110:1

1:4 Jesus is so much greater than the angels that they worship Him (Hebrews 1:6; Matthew 4:10; John 5:23)

- The Greek phrase “much superior/better” (tosoutō kreittōn - τοσούτω κρείττων) is the theme of Hebrews and is repeated 13 times in the book. (Hebrews 1:4, 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22, 8:6, 9:23, 10:34, 11:16, 35-36, 40, 12:24)
- While the angels delivered the Mosaic Law on Mount Sinai (Deuteronomy 33:2; Acts 7:18, 53; Galatians 3:19), Jesus has brought a greater divine message (the good news).
- The superior name (onoma ὄνομα) refers to “son-ship” (being a son) as superior to “servant-ship” (being a servant).
- Jewish Rabbis taught that angels were the intermediaries to man (angels brought the law to man). This passage was used to fight Gnosticism in the early church because Jesus was God incarnate with a message directly towards mankind.

1:5 It is amazing that the Lord Jesus left heaven to bring the good news to the world.

- The basis of this chapter is that the Old Testament is inspired by God (i.e., “*God said...*”) while being written by men. (Hebrews 2:5, 11).
- This verse is quoted from Psalm 2:7 in reference to the Messiah. (Hebrews 5:5)
 - In the Old Testament, when the word “son” is plural (“sons of God”), it is in reference to the angels. (Genesis 6:2; Job 1:6, 2:1; 38:7, Psalm 29:1, 8)
 - The term “son” is used for the entire nation of Israel (Hosea 11:1), but also in reference to the King who personified the faithful individual who walked with the Lord. (2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 89:23).
- The Greek term for “today” (sēmeron σήμερον) references the resurrection (Acts 13:33). Although Jesus has always been God, there was a time when His incarnation was fulfilled in the concept of “son-ship.”
 - The literal phrase is “*I, today, have begotten you*” (egō sēmeron gegennēka se - ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε)
 - The Greek term “begotten” (gegennēka γεγέννηκά) means to be born; although Jesus always existed prior to creation, the nativity story relates His birth at His incarnation. (Acts 13:33; Hebrews 5:5)
- This verse is quoted from 2 Samuel 7:14 in reference to King David having a son (Solomon) to build the Temple in the midst of the Messianic promise of the everlasting kingdom of God.

1:6 This verse is quoted from Psalm 97:7 (Deuteronomy 32:43). Scripture restrains acceptable worship to the genuine deity.

- Jewish Rabbi’s have always used the term “firstborn” in the concept of being foremost or preeminent. (Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:15,18; Revelation 1:5)

- 1:7 This verse is quoted from Psalm 104:4 with an emphasis on the changeability of angels, but the constancy of Jesus (Hebrews 1:7,8,11,12).
- The term “seraph” (saraph שרָפָן) literally means “burning one.”
 - Some Jewish rabbis believed that God created angels new every morning (Lamentations 3:23; Daniel 7:10).
 - Angels were not to be worshipped as God. (Colossians 2:18)
- 1:8 This verse is quoted from Psalm 45:6-7 as Jesus is called deity.
- The throne of Jesus is eternal – forever and ever. The literal translation is “*to the age of the age*” (eis ton aiōna tou aiōnos - εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος) (Ephesians 3:21)
 - Jesus is referenced as the scepter of righteousness; in ancient days, an individual could only approach the king if the scepter was extended to them. (Esther 4:11)
- 1:9 This verse speaks of the perfect life of Jesus as God the Father anointed Him with the Spirit of comfort and joy (Isaiah 53:11) above the disciples and other believers. (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32)
- 1:10 This verse is quoted from Psalm 102:25-27 as God the Son is the agent from which all of creation came into existence. Jesus was central to the creation of both the earth (material creation) and spiritual (heavenly creation).
- While the material was spoken into place, heaven may have been constructed “by God’s hand” in an anthropomorphic sense.
 - The phrase “works of their hands” is also used of man’s idolatrous constructs. (Acts 7:41; Revelation 9:20)
- 1:11 This aged earth will pass away (Isaiah 51:6; 2 Peter 3:10-12; Psalm 75:3; 102:25-26), and there will be a new heaven and earth. (Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1).
- 1:12 Corrupted creation will be changed like a soiled garment (Zechariah 3:1-5; Isaiah 64:6 → 61:10; Genesis 3:7 → 3:21); however, the perfect Lord Jesus Christ will not change.
- 1:13 This verse is quoted from Psalm 110:1 which is the most frequently referenced Old Testament verse in the New Testament. (Matthew 22:44; 26:64; Mark 12:36; 14:62; 16:19; Luke 20:42-43; 69; Acts 2:34-35; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Ephesians 1:20, 22; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12-13; 12:2)
- The “right hand” is an anthropomorphic description of strength, preeminence and authority.
 - This verse reveals the current state/position of Jesus between the first incarnation and second coming of Jesus. (Acts 2:34-36)
 - The current triumphant reign of the Lord Jesus Christ as King (Psalm 110:2) and Priest (Psalm 110:4) will climax with the subjugation of all of His enemies when He comes as the Judge (Psalm 110:6).
 - Psalm 110:1 begins with “*The LORD (Yahweh) says to my Lord (Adonai)*” which records God the Father speaking to God the Son.
 - When “LORD” is all capital letters, it represents the name Yahweh (יהוה).
 - Jews utilized the name “Adonai” (“Lord” with lower case letters - אֲדֹנָי) in order to not misuse the name Yahweh in vain.

- Scripture records Jesus quoting this verse three times during the final week of His ministry on earth (Mark 12:36) – two of which were connected with His trial (Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62).
 - The Lord Jesus Christ is currently a reigning King (Ephesians 1:20-23).
 - After battle, the victor would often place their foot on the neck of the vanquished to represent victory.
- 1:14 The angels minister to those who have been predestined for salvation (Matthew 18:10; Psalm 91:11-12 – Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43); this image was depicted in the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant

5 Hebrews 2

Read Hebrews 2:1-4 ... Remain Faithful to God's Revealed Truth

- 2:1 This is the first of many warnings in Hebrews. “*We must...*” (dei δεῖ) means “it behooves us,” “it is necessary” and “it is in our best interest.”
- This verse contains two nautical terms used as analogies for spiritual warnings:
 - The term “*pay attention*” (prosechein προσέχειν) was used in being careful that the boat not “drift away” from the dock.
 - The term “drift away” (pararyōmen παραρυῶμεν) conveys the concept of negligently “running past” the harbor because the sail wasn’t dropped/furled soon enough.
 - In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel was held accountable to receive the law from the angels; the Church is held even more accountable to receive the gospel from the Son of God.
- 2:2 Rabbis taught that angels delivered the Mosaic Law on Mount Sinai (Deuteronomy 33:2; Acts 7:18, 53; Galatians 3:19),
- The law was “unalterable” (bebaios βέβαιος) meaning that it required fulfillment. (Matthew 5:17-18)
 - This verse lists two different ways to offend and sin:
 - The Greek word for “transgression” (parabasis παράβασις) means to willfully or purposefully step across the line (i.e., going out of bounds on purpose) – to knowingly violate.
 - The Greek word for “disobedience” (parakoē παρακοή) means to choose to not listen; to willfully not hear.
- 2:3 Jesus has brought a greater divine message (the good news) for those who accept; those who deny His message and reject His crucifixion/resurrection will be judged appropriately.
- “*How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?*”
 - Every individual should consider the coming personal judgment in order to escape fair and just destruction (Acts 27:44)
 - This verse reveals that Paul did not write this book because he was taught directly by God firsthand (Galatians 1:11). This verse implies that the writer is a “second generation Christian” hearing the gospel from another’s firsthand testimony.
- 2:4 The miracles and signs of Jesus confirmed the good news and extended into the apostolic period after the resurrection of Christ. Miracles and signs are still valid today.

- Every believer has at least one gift for the glory of God, the edification of other believers and testimony to the world. (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18)

Read Hebrews 2:5-8 ... The World is Subject to Mankind

2:5 The angels are not privy to information of the future new heaven and new earth, but Jesus carries the gospel message to His chosen.

- God separated the nations of the world (Deuteronomy 32:8) and angels have responsibility over their nations (Daniel 10:10-14, 20-21). The Lord rules over all nations.

2:6 The term “*one has somewhere testified...*” is likened to the figure of speech “*as the saying goes...*”

- The term “son of man” refers to humanity that is also elevated in importance through the Lord Jesus Christ (the Son of Man”) who related to the “son of men.”

2:7 The author quotes Psalms 8:5-7. Psalms reads “lower than God” (’עֲלֹהִים מְלַלֵּם) instead of the Septuagint (LXX) which uses the term “angels” (angelous ἀγγέλους) which means “messengers.”

- Elohim is the plural form of El and one of the oldest designations for divinity in the world. The Hebrew word “Elohim” is in the first verse of the Bible. While El is used more than 200 times in the Hebrew Bible, Elohim is used more than 2,500 times.
 - The term “Elohim” is a category title that refers to the “heavenly” or “spiritual” realm.
 - “Elohim” is a title (not a name) similar to the titles of Dad, Friend or Neighbor
 - While “Yahweh” is a name, “Elohim” is a title.
 - Hebrews exalted Yahweh above all other spiritual entities (the “Elohim of Elohim”) Among all of the spiritual beings (Elohim), there is only one God (monotheism).

2:8 God gave mankind authority over this world (Genesis 1:26-28).

- Mankind is fallen and has not claimed his rightful authority.
- This passage continues to reference mankind; however, after this verse, Scripture focuses on the “ultimate human being” (the ideal “Son of Man”) – Jesus.

Read Hebrews 2:9-13 ... Jesus Joined Mankind to Make a Way for Man to Join Him

2:9 Jesus experienced death on the cross for the sinful world (1 Jn 2:2), and afterwards God crowned Him with glory and honor (2 Peter 1:17-18)

- Jesus is the ideal man (Daniel 7:13)
- The Lord Jesus Christ paid the penalty of sin for every man (1 John 2:2) that accepts Him through faith. (Romans 10:11, 13; John 3:18)

2:10 All of creation was made through Jesus, and He continues to uphold all things (Hebrews 1:2; John 8:57-58; Philippians 2:6-7; Colossians 1:17).

- Being made “perfect” is the thought of being “finished/completed” (Hebrews 5:9; John 19:30; Luke 13:32)
- The Greek term for “originator” (archēgon ἀρχηγόν) can be translated as “pathfinder,” “captain” and “archetype.” Jesus goes before mankind clearing the

way as the example of what man should be. Jesus has made available perfect fellowship between God and man.

- While remaining fully divine (He can never be anything less than God), Jesus took on humanity and became fully human to understand man to represent man knowingly through sufferings. (Hebrews 4:15)
 - Just as Jesus became a perfect representative through sufferings, believers will also go through sufferings to become Christlike. (Genesis 1:26; Galatians 4:19; 1 John 3:2; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:24)

2:11 God is the Father of those that he is sanctifying to be like Christ. (John 17:6)

- The Greek term “*sanctify*” (*hagiasai ἀγιάσαι*) consists of an initial act followed by a lifestyle process of separating from the world to become more like Christ.
- Jesus identifies with fallen, sinful believers and loves them.

2:12 The author quotes Psalms 22:22 which is a chapter of Scripture directly related to Christ’s crucifixion. Just as the Romans positioned the cross on a hill leading into Jerusalem as a testimony, the life of Christ was a testimony to who He is and who believers ought to be.

2:13 The author quotes Psalms 18:2 (or Isaiah 8:17) as the Lord trusted in God the Father just as believers should. (Luke 22:42)

- The author quotes Isaiah 8:18 to show that believers are a part of the family of God through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. Believers are called to lives of selfless suffering resulting in Christians becoming increasingly Christlike. (John 15:18)

Read Hebrews 2:14-18 ... Remain Faithful to God’s Revealed Truth

2:14 It was through death that Jesus destroyed the Devil who held “the power” of death – that is to say, the one who introduces sin which brings about death (1 Cor 15:55-56)

- The Greek term for “have partaken” (*kekoinōnēken κεκοινώνηκεν*) comes from another Greek term “*koinōnei*” (*κοινωνει*) which means “joint participation” and “mutual sharing.”
- Rabbis used the phrase “flesh and blood” to describe fallen human nature; however, Jesus became fully human without the sinful nature, so the actual Greek translation is flipped to “blood and flesh” (*haimatos kai sarkos - αἵματος καὶ σαρκός*).
- The Greek term for “destroy” (*katargēsē καταργήση*) means to annul or make inoperative (as in pulling the electrical plug on an electrical appliance). (Romans 6:6; 1 Corinthians 15:24, 26).
 - Jesus destroyed sin and death; although believers continue to sin and will die a physical death, sin and death have no power over a believer. (1 Corinthians 15:55)
- The Greek term “power” (*kratos κράτος*) refers to largescale deeds of sin that leads to death. (Romans 5:12, 6:23, 7:11; 1 Corinthians 15:21; James 1:15)

2:15 Satan has the power to bring the fear of death and judgment while confidence in salvation and life are offered by Jesus Christ which eliminates the fear of condemnation. (Romans 8:1, 15; Psalm 23:4; John 5:24; 1 John 4:18)

2:16 The salvation offered by Jesus is not for fallen angels, but for mankind who He has predestined – both Jew and Gentile (John 8:31-59; Galatians 3:7, 9, 29; Romans 2:28,29)

2:17 This verse gives a reason that Jesus became human. The Priesthood represented man to God; the Old Testament establishes that the Messiah will take a priestly position. (Psalm 110:4; Zechariah 3-4).

Duties of Priesthood	
Makes atonement for sin	Hebrews 2:17; 7:27; 9:14
Intercedes on believers' behalf	Hebrews 7:25; 9:24
Gives confidence to approach a holy God	Hebrews 10:19-21

- Jesus is from the tribe of Judah (the lineage of Kings) instead of the tribe of Levi from Aaron; however, like Melchizedek, Jesus represents a superior priesthood.
- Jesus is an “intercessor” (1 John 2:1), but beyond being the Priest, Jesus is also the offering.
- The Greek phrase “to make propitiation” (hilaskesthai ἱλάσκεσθαι) means to make amends, reparation or atonement for someone. In the Septuagint, the term "propitiation" represents the mercy seat (lid) over the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies where the blood was sprinkled as a sacrifice. (Exodus 25: 17-22; 37:6-9) The term “propitiation” means to appease an angry deity.

2:18 Satan had tempted Jesus in the wilderness at the start of His ministry (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13) as well as in the garden just before crucifixion; unlike innately sinful man, Jesus had no evil desires to grow, so the temptations were fruitless.

- Having experienced and overcome Satan’s tactics, Jesus paid the price to offer salvation and the Holy Spirit for victorious living. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

6 Hebrews 3

Read Hebrews 3:1-6 ... The Builder (Jesus) & Servant (Moses) of the “House” of God

3:1 Jesus serves as THE messenger of the gospel (“apostle” – messenger, delegate, appointed one, one who is sent) while also being man’s intercessor to the Father God (high priest).

- The Greek term for “apostles” (apostolōn ἀποστόλων) means to “to send with official authority” as Christ’s representatives.
 - Christians continue to be Christ’s representatives; the word “Christian” was first used in the church in Antioch to mean “Little Christ.” (Acts 11:26, 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16)
- Jesus fulfills bi-directional intercession:
 - As an “Apostle” from God to mankind
 - As a “High Priest” from mankind to God.
- The book of Hebrews is the only book that refers to Jesus as the High Priest.
- The Greek term for “saints” which originated from the term “holy” (hagioi ἅγιοι) means to be set apart for God’s service – as in “sanctuary.”
 - The term “saint” is not associated with man’s goodness, but is defined by God’s goodness imputed to man.

- A saint is a “separated one to an assigned task.” (Romans 1:7, 15:25-26, 1 Corinthians 1:2, 14:33, 2 Corinthians 1:1, Philippians 4:21)
 - While Judaism and all other groupings of people are earthly categorizations (callings/titles), as a follower of Christ, Christians have a heavenly calling
 - The term “confession” (homologies ὁμολογίας) speaks of “consent” as to the beliefs that Christians “subscribe to”; in a more specific way, “confession” refers to man’s sinful state and Jesus as Savior and Lord.
 - This term is used three times in Hebrews (Heb. 4:14, 10:23)
- 3:2 The Jewish belief was that Moses was singularly faithful and obedient (Exodus 40:16). Jesus should be esteemed as being even more faithful and true.
- 3:3 While Moses was deeply respected by Jews (Acts 21:21), Jesus is even more important (John 5:46).
- Moses established the Tent of Meeting (Exodus 33:7) and then gave the instructions for the requirements of the Tabernacle. (Exodus 35-40)
 - Hebrews (1:2) asserted that God is the builder of the universe through Jesus.
 - The death and resurrection of Jesus would result in every Christian being a “temple of God.” (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20)
- 3:4 Jesus is the very foundation (Ephesians 2:19-20) that the “family of God” is based upon (Galatians 6:10)
- Hebrews (1:2) has already established that Jesus was the agent in creation.
 - All of creation was made through Jesus, and He continues to uphold all things (John 8:57-58; Philippians 2:6-7; Colossians 1:17).
 - Jesus is the Word of God (John 1:1-18; 8) who spoke all things into existence (Genesis 1).
- 3:5 Moses was a faithful servant which was a testimony to those who came after him.
- 3:6 Although Moses was an honorable servant, Jesus was an honorable son. (Hebrews 1:2; 5:8; 7:28)
- The hope is one that Jesus has redeemed God’s children to live in glory with Him (Romans 8:23-24)
 - Believers are considered the “House of God.” (Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 2:5; 4:17)
 - There is a warning that begins with “if” (εἰ ἐὰν) that will continue through chapter 4.
 - The concept of “hope” (elpidos ἐλπίδος) often refers to the return of Jesus Christ.

The Hebrews Comparison of Moses & Jesus	
Moses	Jesus
Moses was a part of the house.	Jesus built the house.
Moses was a servant.	Jesus was a Son.
Moses failed in bringing followers into God’s rest	Jesus has succeeded in bringing Christians into God’s rest.

Read Hebrews 3:7-11 ... Respond to God Instead of Angering God

3:7 While Psalms 95:7-11 is quoted, the credit of authorship is said to be the Holy Spirit; the Biblical writers conveyed the words of the Spirit (Acts 4:25).

- Throughout the book of Hebrews, Scripture is attributed to God the Father (Hebrews 1:5,13; 2:6,11; 4:3,4; 10:9; 13:5)
- 3:8 The command “do not harden your hearts” (John 12:40, Mt 13:13) is repeated three times in the New Testament (Heb 3:15, 4:7); like salvation, hardening of the heart comes from man (1 Sam 6:6) who is impacted by God to behave a certain way (Exodus 14:17; Joshua 11:20).
- Man continues to be held accountable for his rebellion (Romans 9:18-21).
 - In ancient days, the source of the emotions was the belly/intestines while the center of the person was the heart.
- 3:9 Jewish patriarchs and ancestry had 1. tested 2. tried 3. saw God and experienced His workings (Exodus 7:2, 7:7) as He led His people through the pilgrimage of life (Acts 14:22).
- While miraculous acts often bolster faith in the moment, they rarely result in ongoing belief. God’s people are called to be faithful.
- 3:10 This wilderness discussion is timely in that the book of Hebrews was written approximately 40 years after Jesus’ death, and it was time for these Jewish believers to move beyond their “spiritual” wilderness.
- The way of man leads to wilderness wanderings, but God’s direct way is Jesus (John 14:6)
 - At Massah and Meribah, the Jews recognized their need for water, but instead of asking God, they complained to Moses (Exodus 17:1-7). The Jews needed to understand their need for the living water. (John 4:14; Jeremiah 17:13).
 - The Greek phrase “*have they known*” (εγνωσαν εγνωσαν) means a deep, intimate relationship with insights of the God by walking/talking with Him every moment of every day.
 - There is a difference between knowing about God contrasted to knowing Him personally (Genesis 4:1).
- 3:11 Peace follows grace, but God will not give peace to those not following Him (Numbers 32:9-11). God is so steadfast in unbelievers not entering His rest that He vowed that they would not. (Deuteronomy 12:9)
- Although the Israelites had faith to follow God in the Exodus out of slavery, they did not have the faith to follow God into the Promised Land. (Numbers 14:30)

Various Uses of the Term “Rest” (καταπαυσιν κατάπαυσίν)		
Deuteronomy 12:3	The Promised Land	Hebrews 3:1, 18; 4:8
Genesis 2:2	The Sabbath Rest	Hebrews 4:3, 4, 10
Matthew 11:28	The Kingdom of God	Hebrews 4:1, 9-11

Read Hebrews 3:12-19 ... God’s Judgment on Sinners Who Harden Their Hearts

- 3:12 Perseverance is a sign of a valid commitment. The greatest American Puritan, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) said, “*The sure pure proof of election is that one perseveres to the end.*” (Galatians 6:7; 1 John 2:19)
- Believers should be wary of disbelieving/distrusting hearts who will backslide away from God.

- “Apostacy” originates from the Greek term “apostasia” meaning a defection, a revolt, or to forsake.
 - God will sustain His people in their salvation even through human frailty and failings (Philippians 1:4-6, 2:12-13; John 6:38-40, 10:28-29; 1 John 2:19; 1 Corinthians 1:8)
- 3:13 Believers should daily fellowship and encourage each other (1 Thessalonians 5:11) because each day has a special purpose with unique opportunities (Luke 4:21; Numbers 14:39-45).
- Make the most of every day with God. Read His Word every day – what is missed cannot be made up on a following day when God has another truth to reveal; reading ahead is a premeditated thought that an individual will not take time to spend with God.
 - Believers should esteem at least one brother every day through encouragement and comfort (parakaleite παρακαλεῖτε).
 - The deception of sin may cause followers of Christ to backslide incrementally (Romans 7:11). Over time, believers who reject God’s call begin to grow callous and insensitive.
- 3:14 *“For we have become partakers of Christ if we keep the beginning of our commitment firm until the end.”*
- 3:15 This is a quote from Psalm 95:7-8. *“Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts...”*
- 3:16 Scripture documents literal historical facts while giving insight into the future and spiritual realm. (Romans 15:4)
- 3:17 The sin of God’s people angered God resulting in their deaths in the wilderness.
- Frequently in Scripture, the number 40 represents a time of testing and trials.
- 3:18 God told the unfaithful that they would not enter the Promised Land. God forgave His people at the behest of Moses, and He did not kill them; however, He also did not allow them to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14:19-24)
- 3:19 It was the unbelief of God’s people that kept them from entering the Promised Land. They were intimidated by the battles after assessing the worldly challenges instead of relying on God. (Numbers 13:25-33)

7 Hebrews 4

Read Hebrews 4:1-2 ... The Rest of God’s People Through Faith

- 4:1 Jesus offers His followers a peace (Mt 11:28-29; Hebrews 7:2) which is foreign to the world (Isaiah 48:22), but this peace comes after a fear of God instead of being fearful of the world (Mt 10:28).
- The Greek phrase “*come short of it*” (hysterēkenai ὑστερηκέναι) can either mean “to not go far enough” (Romans 3:23) or “to come too late.”
- 4:2 The gospel message is referenced as the “good news” (euaggelion εὐαγγέλιον) because it is initiated by the love and grace of God.
- The Israelite ancestors had every chance to believe God and enter into the Promised Land, but they did not have faith that He would complete what He said. (Numbers 13-14).

- Joshua and Caleb believed in the Promise of God and entered into the Promised Land; however, those who did not believe God’s promise died in the wilderness. (Ephesians 4:3)
- The Greek term for “faith/belief” (pistei πίστει) goes beyond intellectual or emotional consent to a commitment to God and a shifting of faith from self to God.

Read Hebrews 4:3-10 ... God’s Rest from His Works

4:3 His works of nature have been finished since creation (Genesis 2:2), and even in a spiritual sense, His followers had been chosen (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 1:2, 2 Timothy 1:9).

- The quote is repeated from Psalm 95:11 that God was angry and would not allow the unbelievers to enter His “rest” (the Promised Land).

4:4 The term “one has somewhere testified...” is likened to the figure of speech “as the saying goes...” (Hebrews 2:6)

- God references being “wearied” by man’s sins (Isaiah 43:24); how much more should believers take a Sabbatical from serving ourselves (Luke 10:38-42; Isaiah 56:2, 4, 6, 58:13)
- Jewish Rabbis taught that God’s seventh day rest (Genesis 2:2) never ended.
 - Every other day of creation, Scripture stated, “*And there was evening and there was morning, one day.*” (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31)
 - This statement is not made of the final, seventh day.

4:5 The quote is repeated again from Psalm 95:11.

4:6 The Greek term “disobedience” (apeitheian ἀπειθειαν) can also mean “unbelief.” Israel would continue in their “disobedience/unbelief” until God poured out His mercy on them. (Romans 11:32)

4:7 Today (sēmeron σήμερον), God has a calling for you - the choice of surrender for today’s calling will not come again (Numbers 14:39-45)

- The Greek term for “day” (hēmeran ἡμέραν) was used in the context of “setting a boundary/guideline” and can also mean “horizon.”
- The Septuagint listed David as writing Psalm 95.

4:8 The rest of Joshua (another man held in high esteem by the Jews) was situational (Joshua 21:44, 22:4; Judges 3:11) while rest of Jesus (Isaiah 11:10) is spiritual because He has redeemed the world.

- Joshua could not lead the people into the Promised Land; however, Jesus will lead His faithful people into the Promised Land as He is superior to Joshua.

4:9 This is the only time in Scripture where the term “Sabbath rest” is used; however, rest on the Sabbath is an ongoing theme throughout the Bible. (Deuteronomy 5:14; Luke 23:56)

4:10 God’s people lay aside our own self-effort and personal works of righteousness (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:20, 28; Galatians 2:16)

Rest for the Land of Israel	
Rest for the Land	Leviticus 25:2-7
Babylonian Captivity	Jeremiah 25:11
Reason for 70 years	2 Chronicles 36:21

- It has been said that a problem in modern culture is that “men worship their work, work at their play, and play at their worship.”

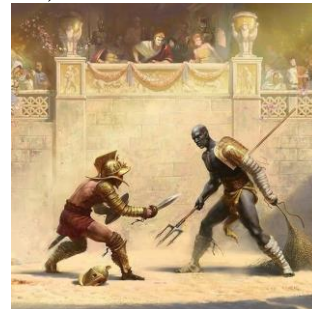
Read Hebrews 4:11-13 ... God Witnesses Man’s Sin

4:11 Men should strive to understand God – who He is and what He has done – so that disobedience will not remove the peace of God from them; this understanding occurs through His Word.

- The Greek term for “strive” (Spoudasōmen Σπουδάσωμεν) means to be earnest, diligent and make haste in eager pursuit. (2 Thessalonians 2:17; 2 Timothy 4:9)
- The story of Israel’s lack of faith resulting in wilderness wanderings is an example of disobedience/unbelief.

4:12 *“For the word of God 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.”* (Revelation 1:16, 2:12, 19:15)

- The Romans used a short two-edged sword (2’ long by 2 ½” wide) called a “Spanish Gladius” used for thrusting enemies.
 - Most enemies slashed with curved swords, so the Romans would block with their shield (faith) and thrust directly into the heart under the raised arm.
 - As with the use of God’s Word, the Roman method wasn’t reckless usage; instead, it was practiced skill. (Isaiah 49:2)



- Man doesn’t “have a soul,” man is a soul that has a bodily expression. The soul is treated as separate from the spirit. (1 Thessalonians 5:23) An individual could have two deaths:
 - The Physical: the body from the spirit/soul
 - The Spiritual: the soul from the spirit
 - Christianity is based on the “heart attitude” of love for God and others. God’s judgment will be on “thoughts” (enthymēseōn ἐνθυμήσεων) and “intentions” (ennoīōn ἐννοιῶν) instead of solely on the acts of sin that are the end result.
- 4:13 Throughout the Bible, when someone was naked, their true self (e.g., sins, fears, etc.) is easily seen. Man must answer for what he has done in this life; the Greek term for “answer” (logos λόγος) means a statement of reckoning.

Read Hebrews 4:14-16 ... Confidence in Approaching God through Jesus the High Priest

4:14 Jesus Christ is introduced as our great high priest representing people to God (1 Samuel 2:35; Romans 8:34)

- While the position of “high priest” rests on an individual that is “fully man,” in the Old Testament, the title “Son of God” represented a spiritual nature. Jesus was fully man and fully God. (1 John 4:1-6)
- Jesus is only called the High Priest in the book of Hebrews (1:3, 2:17-18, 3:1).
- The term “heavens” (ouranous οὐρανοῦς) is plural (Mark 1:10) as Jews believed the sky was the 1st heaven, space was the 2nd heaven, and the spiritual place of God was the 3rd heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2).
- Believers must “hold fast” (kratōmen κρατῶμεν) and persist in ongoing faithfulness in the walk with God. (Matthew 7:13-27; 13:18-23; 28:19-20; Ephesians 1:4; 2:10). A Christian’s life matures from decision to discipleship.
 - The Greek term “profession/confession” (homologies ὁμολογίας) means to “agree with.”

4:15 The Greek term “sympathize” (sympathēsai συμπαθεῖν) also carries the meaning of “suffering with.” (Hebrews 2:10, 17).

- Although Jesus was fully human, He doesn’t share the fallen nature of mankind. (Luke 23:41; John 8:46; 14:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:17-18; 7:26; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22; 3:18; 1 John 3:5)

4:16 *“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

- The Greek term “boldness” (parrēsia παρρησία) conveys the meaning of “freedom to speak.” This term “parrēsia” is only used in this verse and Acts (2:29, 4:29, 31, 28:31)

- Jesus was superior to Moses (as a Messenger) and Aaron (as a Priest).

8 Hebrews 5

Read Hebrews 5:1-4 ... The Weakness of Sinful High Priests from the Aaronic Lineage

5:1 Sacrifices would include blood while “gifts” were other offerings (Matthew 5:23, 8:4, 23:19)

Jesus Fulfilled the Role of the High Priest (Hebrews 5:1)	
Taken from Among Men	Jesus was fully human
Appointed on behalf of people in things pertaining to God	Jesus represents believers to God the Father
Offers both gifts and sacrifices for sins	Jesus gives spiritual gifts to mankind while being the sacrifice for man’s sin.

- Although the Levitical sacrifices covered unintentional sins (Leviticus 4:2,22,27; 5:15-18; 22:14; Numbers 15:22-31), there were no sacrifices for premeditated sins (Deuteronomy 1:43; 17:12,13; 18:20; Psalm 51).

5:2 God treats willful sin different from unintentional sin (Luke 23:34); premeditated sin was called the “sin of the high hand.”

5:3 Whereas the human high priest was flawed and sinful, Jesus is pure and sinless (Luke 23:41; John 8:46; 14:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:17-18; 7:26; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22; 3:18; 1 John 3:5)

5:4 Jesus fulfilled Aaron's Priesthood (Levitical) during the crucifixion and resurrection (in not tearing His clothes in preparing the night before to enter the holy of holies (Leviticus 21:10 - Matthew 26:65 – John 19:23-34), etc.) and He fulfilled Melchizedek's Priesthood (Spiritual) at the resurrection

Read Hebrews 5:5-10 ... Christ Selflessly Submitted to Becoming the High Priest

5:5 Jesus was anointed at baptism for priesthood (Acts 10:38) which was His ordination into priesthood at the age of 30 (Matthew 3:13-17; Leviticus 8)

- This verse is quoted from Psalm 2:7 in reference to the Messiah. (Hebrews 1:5)
 - In the Old Testament, when the word "son" is plural ("sons of God"), it is in reference to the angels. (Genesis 6:2; Job 1:6, 2:1; 38:7, Psalm 29:1, 8)
 - The term "son" is used for the entire nation of Israel (Hosea 11:1), but also in reference to the King who personified the faithful individual who walked with the Lord. (2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 89:23).

5:6 This verse is quoted from Psalm 110:4 which speaks of the priesthood. The author of Hebrews emphasizes that the Messiah will be both priestly and royal.

- The Jewish Essene society had actually anticipated two Messiahs – one royal from the tribe of Judah and one priestly from the tribe of Levi.
- Melchizedek ("my King is Righteousness") was possibly the greatest person mentioned in the Old Testament as the King and Priest of Salem (Genesis 14:17-24; Psalm 110:1-4; Zechariah 6:12-13) and we will be like him as priest (Rev 20:6) and king (1 Cor 4:8) both (1 Pet 2:9; Ezekiel 21:26; Rev 5:10)

5:7 Jesus was heard by God the Father because of His "reverence" (eulabeias εὐλαβείας) which means "godly fear." (Luke 22:42) This verse may allude to Psalm 116.

A Description of the Prayers of Jesus (Hebrews 5:7)
Pleas Loud Crying Tears

5:8 As Jesus followed the Father's will, He learned about difficulties, heartaches, and blessings firsthand. (Hebrews 2:10)

5:9 After the work of Jesus was completed, and He was "perfected" through resurrection (2 Cor 12:9; Heb 2:10, 4:15) to become Lord/King over all who are obedient while providing His subjects "eternal life" (a salvation that cannot be lost).

- The Greek term of "perfect" in this context does not mean without flaw; instead, "perfect" means fully equipped for an assigned task.

5:10 Jesus was born into the Tribe of Judah (the Line of Kings) while Priests came from the Tribe of Levi. However, Jesus was the "Son" (Hebrews 5:8) of God who appointed Him to be the "Priest King" similar to Melchizedek. (Genesis 14:17-18)

- As the writer of Hebrews moves beyond the comparison of Jesus to Melchizedek, he emphasizes that the spiritual immaturity of the recipients has become an obstacle to their understanding.

Read Hebrews 5:11-14 ...Spiritual Immaturity of Poor Listening & Lack of Understanding

- 5:11 The writer desires to provide more spiritual truths about Melchizedek and the comparisons to Jesus, but the recipient is limited.
- The Greek term for “dull” (nōthroi νωθοὶ) means “lazy” or “sluggish.” The term is used for an animal whose legs have grown smaller and weaker because of lack of use.
 - The term “nōthroi” is only used twice in Scripture. (Hebrews 6:12)
- 5:12 Many believers are content with salvation alone, and are unable to digest, teach, and discern God’s Word (Matthew 8:18-20).
- The message from God’s word is lost if it is not understood (Matthew 13:19)
 - Spiritual maturity has little to do with longevity.
 - For immature believers, it was necessary to re-teach the “*principles of the beginning of the oracles of God.*” (Stoicheia tēn archēs tōn logiōn - στοιχεῖα τῆν ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων)
 - The term for “*principles*” (stoicheia στοιχεῖα) is used as “elemental things” multiple times (Galatians 4:3, 9; Colossians 2:8; 2 Peter 3:10, 12). These are the “foundation truths” of the gospel that are built upon.
 - The term for “truths” (logiōn λογίων) means “actual words” or literally “oracles” which is used to reference the truths of the Old Testament (Acts 7:38; Romans 3:2)
 - Spiritual truths are revealed by God instead of discovered by man. “Whatever a man can talk someone into – another man can talk him out of...” Life changing truths are God-revealed instead of man-discovered.
 - The use of “milk” was a common metaphor for baby food. (1 Corinthians 3:2, 9:7; 1 Peter 2:2) Every new believer must learn the basics, and there is nothing wrong for an individual to “drink milk” at the appropriate time; however, believers must mature beyond that point.
 - There is a process of maturing in the Christian faith that believers must pursue.
- 5:13 Even the love for one another must be based on deeper knowledge and truth (Philippians 1:9)
- The phrase “word of righteousness” (logou dikaiosynēs – λόγου δικαιοσύνης) may refer to the message of “justification by faith alone” or it might refer to a Spirit-filled conscience that is used in wisdom and discretion to discern right from wrong.
- 5:14 Believers should become connoisseurs of life with discerning senses (Ephesians 4:14-15)
- The Greek term “mature” (teleiōn τελείων) means coming to “fullness” or “completeness.”
 - Spiritual Maturity is defined by various characteristics:
 - An understanding of right-doing (doctrinal & ethical) (Hebrews 5:13)
 - Spiritual truths are in constant use – applied and practiced.
 - Spiritual truths not applied cause atrophy and waste
 - The ability to distinguish between good and evil; to understand the lies of the world (John 12:40; 2 Corinthians 4:4)

- Hebrews 6 urges believers to now go beyond the basic messages of salvation; once a believer is saved it is necessary to learn how to walk in the Spirit under the Lordship of Christ
- The believing Jews were worshipping with the unbelieving Jews at the time.
 - Personal pronouns reveal the difference between believing Jews (“us/we” – Hebrews 5:11-14, 6:1-3, 9-12, 10:19-26, 30, 39) and unbelieving Jews (“they/them” - Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:28, 38).
- Salvation includes three different constructs: 1. Personal Relationship 2. Doctrinal Truth 3. Christlike Lifestyle

Elementary Fundamentals of the Message of Christ (Hebrews 6:1-2)			
1	Foundation of Repentance	Jesus	1 Cor 3:11
2	Dead Works	Self-effort	Eph 2:1; Col 2:13
3	Faith in God	Faith	Rom 5:1; Gal 3:22 & 26
4	Ritual Washings	Baptism	Jn 3:14; Mt 23:25
5	Laying on of Hands	Selection of Leaders	Acts 8:18-19; 1 Tim 4:14, 5:22; 2 Tim 1:6
6	Resurrection of the Dead	Afterlife	1 Cor 15:16
7	Eternal Judgment	Heaven/Hell	2 Tim 4:1; Mt 18:8, 25:41; Jude 1:7

Read Hebrews 6:1-8 ... The Expected Fruit of the Believer & Curse of Falling Away

6:1 Believing and unbelieving Jews would have shared the belief that a Messiah (Christ Χριστοῦ) was coming; however, they would have differed on whether Jesus was the expected Messiah.

- This references the shared belief of a Messiah to the unique belief of Christians that Jesus was the Messiah.
- The Greek term “beginning” (archēs ἀρχῆς) means “from the earliest stage” (Hebrews 5:12).
- The Greek phrase “teaching/speaking to maturity” (logon epi tēn teleiōtēta – λόγον ἐπὶ τὴν τελειότητα) refers to growth from an elemental teaching to a higher level of teaching.
- Salvation consists of two qualifications: turning away from sin/self (repentance) and turning to God (faith). (Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21)

6:2 This verse encourages the movement beyond Jewish traditions and common Jewish understanding.

- While basic doctrine includes baptism and laying on of hands, this verse seems to be referencing Jewish customs of ceremonial washings because the term “washings” (baptismōn βαπτισμῶν) is plural (Hebrews 9:10; Mark 7:4) – Christian baptism is always singular (baptismō βαπτισμῶ).
- The laying on of hands originated from the Jewish custom of blessing (Genesis 27:25-26; 48:14); preparation for calling (Numbers 8:10, 27:18) and relation (Leviticus 1:4; 4:15; 16:21; 24:14)

6:3 All things are in God’s control and according to His sovereign will

6:4-5 Beyond the salvation experience, Christians should be discussing “meatier” (more mature) insights including submission to His Lordship and the indwelling of the Spirit.

- Believers who backslide cannot experience “salvation” again; however, they can be restored in the Lord. Salvation is a one-time experience whereas restoration comes throughout a Christian walk.
- The Greek term “impossible” (adynaton αδύνατόν) always means that there is “no way” and “unachievable.” (Hebrews 6:18; 10:4; 11:6)
 - This Greek word “impossible” (adynaton αδύνατόν) is used three times outside of Hebrews, and in every situation, it references that it is impossible to man or the law; however, it is possible to God:
 - “Jesus said to them, ‘With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’” (Matthew 19:26)
 - “Jesus said, ‘With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.’” (Mark 10:27)
 - “For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did...” (Romans 8:3)
- Five characteristics describe Christians before they backslide: 1. enlightened 2. taste the heavenly gift 3. companion of the Holy Spirit 4. tasted God’s good word 5. experienced the powers of the future

Five Disregarded Blessings (Hebrews 6:4-5)		
Enlightened	Phōtisthentas φωτισθέντας	Instructed (Hebrews 10:42)
The Gift from Heaven (Romans 5:17; Hebrews 3:1)	Dōreas tēn epouraniou δωρεᾶς τὴν ἐπουρανίου	Eucharist/Lord’s Supper (Ephesians 4:7)
Companion by the Holy Spirit	Metochois pneumatōs hagiou Μετόχους πνεύματος ἁγίου	Conviction of the Spirit
Tasted God’s Good Word	Geusamenous theou rhēma Γευσαμένους θεοῦ ῥῆμα	Heard the Word of God
The Powers of the Future	Dynameis te mellontos aiōnos Δυνάμεις τε μέλλοντος αἰῶνος	Dark spiritual power

6:6 The term “crucify in themselves” (anastaurountas heautois - ἀνασταυροῦντας ἑαυτοῖς) reflects the suffering in themselves of Christ Jesus who came to bring life.

- Just as the cross was positioned on the hill of Golgotha as a testimony for those entering Jerusalem, the “open shame” (paradeigmatizontas παραδειγματίζοντας) is also a testimony to others. (Matthew 1:19)

6:7 The Holy Spirit is likened to rain (Hosea 6:3) that should add sustenance for growth of fruit; in the Bible, “thorns” represent sin (Matthew 27:29).

- This passage applies to the fruits of the believer instead of their salvation.
- Throughout Scripture, planting seed represents the Word of God being received and bearing fruit (Genesis 3:17-19; Isaiah 5:1-2; Matthew 13:18-23; John 15:5-6)

6:8 In the end-time judgment all works will be tested by fire (1 Corinthians 3:15, 9:24)

Two Judgments		
For Believers	Judgment Seat of Christ	Rom 14:10-12
For Unbelievers	Great White Throne Judgment	Rev 20:11-15

Read Hebrews 6:9-12 ... The Expected Rewards of Believers Who Work in Love

6:9 The better things connected with salvation points to the fruits (Galatians 5:22-23).

Salvation is not the consequence of good works, but good works are the consequence of salvation. Right living demonstrates the validity of a genuine salvation. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

6:10 As believers esteem each other, they prove a love towards God. The manner that believers love each other confirms their love for the Lord. (Matthew 25:34-46)

6:11 The life of a believer is one of perseverance and ongoing faithfulness.

- The concept of “hope” (elpidos ἐλπίδος) typically refers to the return of the Lord. (Revelation 3:11)

6:12 The promise is of eternal life through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit by receiving Christ as Savior (by faith) and as Lord (by perseverance).

- The Greek term for “sluggish” (nōthroi νωθοί) is the same description of immature believers who have atrophied spiritually (Hebrews 5:11).
- The spiritual life cycle of a Christian begins with faith (pisteōs πίστεως) which continues in endurance (makrothymias μακροθυμίας) and concludes with God’s promised (epangelias ἐπαγγελίας) rewards. (Romans 2:7; Galatians 6:9).

Read Hebrews 6:13-20 ... God’s Unchangeable Oaths to Bless Those Who Are Faithful

6:13 The promises of God are unbreakable and unchangeable just as His character is unchanging (Psalm 102:27; Malachi 3:6).

- Man should not swear because he has no control (Matthew 5:36-37; James 4:13-15, 5:12)

6:14 Abraham is the father of all believers (Romans 4:11); the promises of God to Abraham are throughout Genesis (12,15,17,18,22). Abraham would pay tithe to Melchizedek (Genesis 14). God swore an oath that there would be a priest forever similar to Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4).

6:15 One of the more difficult tasks that God calls His people to do is to wait patiently for Him (Isaiah 30:18; Romans 4:3; Genesis 22:16). Abraham waited until all hope was gone when he was 99 and Sarah was 89 years old. (Genesis 17-18; 21:4-7)

6:16 An oath establishes what is to happen regardless of any changes in the individual or circumstances. An oath “serving as confirmation” (meaning “in a contract”) settles any disagreements because the oath is elevated above the individual or circumstance.

6:17 God’s salvation is so certain and unchangeable that He swore a promise and an oath by Himself which elevates the certainty.

6:18 God cannot lie (2 Timothy 2:13; Titus 1:2; James 1:13).

- Hebrews references the symbols of the Old Testament like the cities of refuge that represent God’s protection (Deuteronomy 19; Joshua 20)
- For believers, God is like a “city of refuge” (Num. 35:6; Deut. 4:41-43; Joshua 20) and a “tower of refuge” (Psalm 18:1-2; 31:3; 91:2,9; 94:22; 144:2; Isaiah 17:10; 25:4; Jeremiah 16:19; Joel 3:16; Nahum 1:7)
- God can also provide a safe harbor for a ship (Psalm 107:30; Acts 27:8-12).

6:19 A sure firm anchor for the soul ties in the symbolism of the Sea being like the chaotic world system while the believer’s faith is the boat that is afloat and tossed about.

6:20 Jesus is the forerunner of believers as priest and king.

- The Greek term “forerunner” (prodromos πρόδρομος) is used as a scout to open up a way for those who follow.

10 Hebrews 7

- Chapter 7 is the central chapter of Hebrews and central theme of the book (Jesus as High Priest). This theme of High Priest covers four chapters of Hebrews (7-10).
- A “Christophany” is a reference to Jesus being seen in the Old Testament; Abraham may have met Jesus during his life with Melchizedek (John 8:56-58).

Read Hebrews 7:1-3 ... The Similarities Between the King/Priest Melchizedek & Christ

7:1 The unique characteristic of Melchizedek was that he was king and priest

- The “*slaughter of the kings*” refers to Abram’s 318 trained militia defeating Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim when they captured Lot’s family along with Sodom. (Genesis 14).
- The “greater” would bless the “lesser” (i.e., father to child), so Melchizedek was greater than Abraham. Those who bless continue to be great to this day. (Acts 20:35)

7:2 Abraham gave the king a tenth (tithe) as an honorary tribute to show that God owns it all.

- The name of Melchizedek first means “king of righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:5-6) and then “king of peace”. Righteousness always precedes peace (Is 32:17; Col 1:20; Rom 3:22-26, 5:1, 14:17)
- From the beginning to the end of the Bible, two cities are at war: Babel/Babylon against Salem/Jerusalem.
 - Babel always means confusion while Salem means peace.
 - Men can choose where they want to be a citizen.
- The Priestly line of Zadok will be the Priests during the millennium. (Ezekiel 40:46; 43:19; 44:15)
 - Zadok (“Zedek” means “righteous”), and Melchizedek’s name (Malki-Tzedek מלְכִי־צְדֵק) is translated “king of righteousness” (Genesis 14:17-19; Hebrews 7:10)
 - Zadok was continually faithful to the rightful King (Ezekiel 40:46) - King David versus insurrection of Absalom (2 Samuel 15:24-36; 2 Samuel 17:15, 2 Samuel 17:17-21) then Solomon versus Adonijah (1 Kings 1:8, 1 Kings 1:26, 1 Kings 1:32-45). After Absalom died, Zadok was also an intermediary preparing Judah for the rightful King’s return (2 Sam 19:11).
 - The faithful priests from their ancestor Zadok would be allowed to serve as well as have close fellowship to God (Ezekiel 40:46, 44:15, 48:11).
 - Zadok’s lineage descended from Aaron through Phinehas (Ezra 7:2-5) who received an eternal covenant of peace from God because of his zeal for the Lord (Numbers 25:10-13).

7:3 There is no genealogical record for Melchizedek (Jeremiah 33:16)

Read Hebrews 7:4-10 ... Abraham (& the Levitical Priesthood) Esteemed Melchizedek

- 7:4 The “lesser” would give an offering to the “greater,” so there were implications to Abraham’s respect for Melchizedek.
- 7:5 The lineage of Levi (the Tribe of Levi) was great (Numbers 3:12, 41) and also deserved an offering from the other Israelites Tribes. (Deuteronomy 14:22, 27-29; numbers 18:26).
- 7:6 Melchizedek was a Gentile Priestly King who was a Canaanite over the city of Salem (Jerusalem) which would later be referenced as Zion.
- Melchizedek collected a tithe in the same way as the Levites would collect a tithe.
 - Abraham did have the promise of Jesus (Galatians 3:14-18).
 - Abraham – Isaac – Jacob
 - Judah – Lineage of Kings
 - Levi – Lineage of Priests
- 7:7 “*The lesser person is blessed by the greater.*”
- Believers are called to bless others; those who bless others are greater. (Matthew 20:16, 25-28; Acts 20:35)
- 7:8 Although the Levitical priestly line is esteemed via tithes, they are only mortal and must ultimately experience death. However, no death is recorded of Melchizedek which symbolizes an eternal priesthood (Psalm 110:4).
- 7:9-10 Abraham lived circa 2000BC while Aaron lived circa 1500BC. Aaron, the ancestor of the priests, was in the loins of Abraham (as Levi) when Abraham paid tithe to Melchizedek, so the one receiving the tithe was greater than the line of Levite priests.
- In essence, the Levitical line paid tribute to Melchizedek through their ancestor, Abraham.

Read Hebrews 7:11-17 ... The Law Changed When the Priesthood Changed

- 7:11 The Levitical priesthood was not sufficient to purify God’s people on “the basis of the Law,” resulting in the need for a greater Priest to be provided in the Messiah.
- The Greek term for “perfection” (teleiōsis τελείωσις) means fully mature and complete – equipped for the assigned task. (Hebrews 5:11; 6:1)
 - The purpose of the Law was never to perfect man, but instead to reveal man’s imperfection (Galatians 3:24-25).
 - The Law (& Priests) were valid; however, they were inferior to Jesus Christ.
- 7:12 The law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2; James 2:12) brings salvation as it is superior to the Mosaic law that brings judgment (Romans 3:19-20; 5:20)
- The Greek term for “a change” (metathesis μετάθεσις) is associated with the term “metamorphosis.”
- 7:13 In the Old Testament, it was a sin for a King (in the Line of Judah) to enter the Temple as a Priest as is evidenced by the leprosy of King Uzziah. (2 Chronicles 26:16-21).
- 7:14 Jesus came from the Tribe of Judah (the “tribe of kings”) which was superior to the Tribe of Levi (the “tribe” of priests”).
- The Greek phrase “has spring” (anatetalken ἀνατέταλκεν) can be used as a stem of a plant shooting out of the stump. (Zechariah 3:8; 6:12; Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6)

- Jesus was in the lineage of the Davidic royal line of Judah (Genesis 49:8-12; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 9:6-7)
- 7:15 The Greek term for “another” (heteron ἕτερον) means another of a different kind. God appointed a new priest of a different kind.
- Melchizedek was not a Christophany (Christ appearing) in the Old Testament, but Melchizedek was a precursor to Christ as the Superior Priest King.
- 7:16 The Priesthood of Jesus transcended the worldly physical aspect of Levites to an eternal position.
- 7:17 This verse references Psalm 110:4 which refers to the eternal aspect of Jesus as Priest.

Read Hebrews 7:18-25 ... The Eternal Priest Brings Eternal Salvation

- 7:18 The law can only reflect; it cannot perfect. The law shows our imperfections, but is not the living water to cleanse.
- 7:19 While the law does not (in itself) purify and perfect an individual, it does reveal the need and hope for a Savior as the way to draw near to God.
- The ultimate function of a priest is to bring men to God.
- 7:20 The Levitical priesthood was without an oath, but Jesus came with God’s oath.
- 7:21 This verse quotes Psalm 110:4 (Hebrew 7:17) in that God established the Levitical Priesthood without an oath, but He established the new Priesthood of Christ by an oath.
- 7:22 The Greek term “guarantee” (engyos ἔγγυος) means “in the hand;” something that is sure, certain and present. Jesus is the certainty and assurance of a new, better covenant that is internal instead of an external covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34).
- Believers have a new covenant with God (Matthew 26:28); the covenant of Jesus instead of the covenant of Moses.
- 7:23 The Old Covenant had numerous priests that replaced each other when the individual in the priestly position died.
- 7:24 Jesus does not have successors to His office of High Priest because He is eternal.
- 7:25 Jesus continues to intercede for believers (Hebrews 9:24; Isaiah 53:12; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1).
- A relationship with God the Father is predicated on the intercession of God the Son. This is a universal offer to Jews and Gentiles that anyone can have a relationship with God through Christ.
 - *“He is also able to save forever those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”*
 - The Holy Spirit intercedes as well (Romans 8:26-27).

Jesus & the Law		
Jesus to the Law Matthew 5:17-18	Two Covenants (Sarah/Hagar) Galatians 4:21-31	Messiah through the Law John 19:6-7

Read Hebrews 7:26-28 ... The Holy & Perfect High Priest Is Above the Sinful Priesthood

- 7:26 Jesus as the high priest has five characteristics: 1. holy 2. innocent 3. undefiled 4. separated from sinners 5. exalted above the heavens
- The book of Hebrews is the only book that refers to Jesus as the High Priest.

- “Holy” (Psalms 16:10; Acts 2:27; 13:35) means devout loyalty for One who is set apart for God; “innocent” means without evil and blameless; “undefiled” means no passive pollutants.
- Some scholars believe that Hebrews 7:26 is a poem because of its rhythmic nature.

Characteristics of Jesus as the High Priest		
Holy	Hosios ὅσιος	Merciful; Set Apart
Innocent	Akakos ἄκακος	Harmless; Sinless
Undefiled	Amiantos ἀμίαντος	Unstained; Unblemished
Separated from the Sinners	Kechōrisimenos apo tōn hamartōlōn Κεχωρισμένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν	Although Jesus understands man’s temptations, He has no sinful nature
Exalted above the Heavens (Hebrews 4:14)	Hypsēloteros tōn ouranōn ὕψηλότερος τῶν οὐρανῶν	Glorified in the highest places.

7:27 Jesus was perfectly pure without need of a sacrifice for Himself; He sacrificed Himself once and for all while the sacrifices of human priests are continual and temporal.

- The Greek phrase “to offer up” (anapherein ἀναφέρειν) can mean to bear and was used to describe the smoke rising from the burned sacrifice (Isaiah 53:11).

7:28 The perfection of Jesus speaks of His complete obedience and the fulfillment of God the Father’s will.

- Just as David came after Moses, the oath of God (Psalm 110:4) came after the Mosaic Law.
- God appointed a family member (a son – His Son) to be the perfect priest. (Hebrews 1:2, 3:6, 5:8; Psalm 2:7, 110:1, 4).
- While the Mosaic Law could not make anyone perfect (Hebrews 7:19), Jesus remained perfect.

11 Hebrews 8

Read Hebrews 8:1-6 ... The Main Point is A Superior High Priest Before God

8:1 Levitical priests stood while performing their duties, but the work of Jesus had been completed (Zechariah 6:13; Hebrews 10:12)

- The Greek phrase “the main point” (Kephalaion Κεφάλαιον) literally means “at the head.” This phrase could mean “first of all...” or “in summation...”
 - In modern mathematics, figures are listed from top to bottom with a line and a sum underneath; however, in ancient times, the sum was on top with a line and the figures below (that added up – the phrase “add up”).
- This verse continues to reference Psalm 110:1 where “taking a seat” symbolizes a finished work.
- The “*right hand*” of God represents His strength, preeminence and authority. (Hebrews 1:3,13; 8:1; 10:12-13; 12:2; Acts 2:33-35)
 - Anthropomorphism is a compound word that describes God with human attributes and characteristics.
 - The term “anthropomorphism” comes from two Greek words Anthrōpos/Man (ἄνθρωπος) and Morphé/Form (μορφή).

- A modern colloquial phrase carrying the same meaning is someone's "right hand man."
- 8:2 Jesus Christ is a better ministry than Levitical priest as He is the true tabernacle (Revelation 21:22)
- The world is simply a representation of genuine realities in the spiritual realm.
 - The Athenian philosopher Plato (427BC – 347BC) proposed that things on earth were a mere copy of things in heaven.
 - God provided Moses a detailed structure of the Tabernacle (Exodus 25-27)
- 8:3 High Priests are appointed (by God) to give. Every High Priest gives gifts and sacrifices including the perfect High Priest Jesus. (Ephesians 4:7-8) Jesus gave Himself as a sacrifice for all men. (Hebrews 9:12)
- 8:4 Jesus descended from the tribe of Judah (the Tribe of Kings) and not Levi (the Tribe of Priests), and He only made one sacrifice – Himself.
- 8:5 The material world is simply a reflection of the spiritual world.
- The Greek term "copy" (hypodeigmati ὑποδείγματι) means an "example," a "tracing" or "outline."
 - A shadow is an outline when a light has been cast upon an object. (John 8:12)
 - Scripture holds deeper truths as signs and symbols of spiritual truths (Colossians 2:17)
 - The Greek term "make" (poiēseis ποιήσει) means to "carry out" or "do a task." (Philemon 1:21; 3 John 1:6)
 - The reference for the pattern shown on the mountain (Exodus 25:9, 40; 1 Chronicles 28:19; Acts 7:44)
- 8:6 Jesus is "mediator" (mesitēs μεσίτης) between man and God. Jesus is a better Priest, in a better sanctuary while providing better promises.

Read Hebrews 8:7-13 ... A New & Better Covenant Makes the First Covenant Obsolete

- 8:7 If the first covenant had been adequate and perfect, there would be no need for a second covenant.
- 8:8 The fault was not with the covenant, but with mankind. The issue (problem) with the first covenant was not the first covenant, it was the inability of man to keep the first covenant.
- God's Word was true and right in the first covenant; however, man's sinfulness caused the issue, (Romans 7:12, 16)
 - The writer will quote Jeremiah 31:31-34 as a Word from God ("*He said*"). The writer of Hebrews believes that the Old Testament is inspired.
 - Although described in Ezekiel 36:22-36, the "*new covenant/a covenant new*" (diathēkēn kainēn – διαθήκην καινήν) is only explicitly mentioned in Jeremiah 31:31-34.
 - In 922BC Jeroboam led a revolt of the Northern Kingdom of Israel from the Southern Kingdom of Judah led by Rehoboam. (1 Kings 12)
- 8:9 God led Israel by the hand as a loving Father with a child during the Exodus from slavery. (Hosea 11:1-4; Isaiah 42:6)
- Whether old or new covenant, it is possible to get consumed with the rituals and icons without walking in a loving, submissive relationship with the Lord.

- God wrote the old covenant on the hearts of Israel (Deuteronomy 6:6; 11:18; 30:6, 14) to be an inner relationship with God conforming to an outer stipulation; however, the focus became the outer conditions instead of the relationship with God.
 - *“For they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care about them, says the Lord.”* This phrase was included in the Septuagint, but not the Masoretic text.
- 8:10 The new covenant brings an internalization of the law – a loving relationship with God (Jeremiah 17:1, 31:31; Ezekiel 36:26-27; 1 John 2:27).
- The Law is written on the hearts of believers; all of life flows through the heart (Leviticus 17:11), and the Lord should impact all of life.
- 8:11 Each person would know the Lord through the indwelling of His Spirit instead of relying on the testimony of others
- The Greek term for “know” (Gnōthi Γνωθι) is focused primarily on an ongoing, intimate relationship instead of a list of facts. (Isaiah 11:9; 54:13; Habakkuk 2:14; John 6:45; 1 John 2:20, 27).
- 8:12 The new covenant also brought a forgiveness of sin (Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 44:22); while the old covenant gives insight into lifestyle choices that please God, only the new covenant brings salvation.
- 8:13 Jerusalem was sacked and destroyed in 70AD

12 Hebrews 9

Read Hebrews 9:1-5 ... The Physical Layout of the Tabernacle

- 9:1 In the Old Testament, God established acceptable worship from His people and an earthly sanctuary where His presence would be experienced. (Exodus 40:34-38)
- 9:2 The author documents the symbolic elements of the Tabernacle. 2/3 of the Tabernacle are called the “Holy Place” which included 1. the lampstand, 2. the table, and 3. the presentation loaves.
- While the Holy Place measured 20 x 10 cubits (Exodus 25-27), the Holy of Holies was a perfect square of 10 cubits.
- 9:4 In the “holy of holies” were 1.the incense 2.ark of the covenant 3.the mercy seat.
- In this description, the incense altar seems to be relocated from the “holy place” into the “holy of holies.” (Exodus 40:5, 26-27)
 - Instead of the actual “altar of incense,” this might refer to a censer (“fire pan”) which is the way the Septuagint translates this term (Leviticus 16:12; 2 Chronicles 26:19; Ezekiel 8:11)
 - Coals from the altar of sacrifice outside of the tabernacle were placed on this small stand. Then incense was placed on the coals to produce smoke.
 - The coals then could have been placed in a censer to be carried by the priest into the Holy of Holies.
 - The smoke served a spiritual purpose of representing prayers that rise to God and a practical purpose of obscuring the sight of the Priest from the presence of Yahweh in the Holy of Holies.
 - No one could survive actually seeing God (Exodus 33:20)

- Peter, James and John witnessed the glory of God at the Transfiguration and fell on their faces until Jesus stirred them. (Matthew 17:6-7)
- Contained within the ark of the covenant were 1. gold jar of manna 2. Aaron's rod 3. ten commandments
 - The manna may have represented God's provision (Exodus 16:18-21,22-25).
 - Aaron's rod may have represented God's leadership for His people (Numbers 17:1-11; 20:8-11)
 - The ten commandments may have represented the Mosaic Law. (Exodus 25:16; Deuteronomy 9:9,11,15;10:3-5; 31:18; 32:15)
 - God's people rebelled and fell away from Him ultimately leaving only the ten commandments (the Law) in the ark of the covenant (1 Kings 8:9)

Various Traditions of the Final Location of the Ark of the Covenant
Egypt: Pharaoh Necco II may have taken it when Josiah was killed
Babylon: Nebuchadnezzar II may have captured it in 605BC
Rabbinical Tradition: Jeremiah hid it on Mt. Nebo & Elijah will bring it back
Baruch II (in the apocrypha): An angel hid it
Ethiopia: Menelik I (son of Solomon & Queen of Sheba) took it leaving a replica

9:5 There were two (witness) angels looking down upon the mercy seat (Exodus 25:17-22), the angels are very curious of the salvation experience (1 Peter 1:12); however, Christ died for humans and not angels. *“For clearly God does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendants of Abraham.”* (Hebrews 2:16)

Variety of Angels (Cherubim: Keruvim - כְּרוּבִים – Χερουβίμ)	
Faces	
Two (2) Faces	Ezekiel 41:18
Four (4) Faces	Ezekiel 10:4; Revelation 4:7
Wings	
Two (2) Wings	1 Kings 6:24
Four (4) Wings	Ezekiel 10:21
Six (6) Wings	Revelation 4:8

Read Hebrews 9:6-10 ... Entry into the Holy of Holies Was Rare Requiring a Sacrifice

9:6 The Priestly duties occurred daily in the Holy Place; however, the High Priest only entered the “Holy of Holies” once each year during the “Day of Atonement” (Yom Kippur – Leviticus 16).

- Priestly duties in the Holy Place included:
 - Filling the menorah with oil (Exodus 27:20-21)
 - Replacing the showbread each week (Leviticus 24:8-9)
 - Placing incense on the altar of incense with coals from the altar of sacrifice (Exodus 30:7-8)

9:7 According to the Old Testament law, when the high priest entered the “holy of holies” once a year, he must offer blood sacrifices for himself and then the people.

9:8 All of this is symbolic (as is much of the Old Testament) where the deeper truths should be sought (Hebrews 9:23, 10:1).

- When Christ Jesus died on the cross, the veil was torn separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. (Matthew 27:50-51; Ephesians 2:18)
- 9:9 The Levitical Sacrifices only covered unintentional sins (Leviticus 1-7); however, Christ's death removes all sin.
- 9:10 The Levitical Sacrifices dealt with the regulatory Mosaic Law while the death of Christ covers the internal sins of the heart.
- Inner attitude (instead of outward acts) is the key to having a right relationship with God.
 - The “time of reformation” (kairou diorthōseōs - καιροῦ διορθώσεως) is also called the “time of setting things right.” The Rabbis used this phrase to describe the ultimate “Year of Jubilee” (Leviticus 25) when the Messiah returns.

Read Hebrews 9:11-14 ... Christ as the High Priest Opened the Holy of Holies for Eternity

- 9:11 The Messiah's coming as high priest (Deuteronomy 19; Leviticus 16:14, 15) is a precursor of blessings to come.
- The earthly Tabernacle was modeled after a heavenly structure (Exodus 25:9, 40; Hebrews 8:5; Revelation 15:5).
 - The physical Temple on earth was destroyed in 70AD; however, the bodies of believers are spiritual Temples being indwelt with the presence of God. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:16-20).
 - Throughout eternity, there will be no Temple in the New Jerusalem because Jesus will be the Temple (Revelation 21:22).
- 9:12 The sacrifice and redemption of Christ is eternal instead of the temporal offering of goats and cows (depending on financial ability, rank and coverage). The eternal ramifications are repeated throughout Hebrews (7:27; 9:28; 10:10)
- The Temple coverings represented spiritual truths:
 - Outer Covering – Waterproof Animal (i.e., badger) Skin – humanity
 - -1 Covering – Ram skin dyed red – Jesus' sacrifice of blood
 - -2 Covering – Black Goat Hair – Sin
 - Inner Covering – Linen – Purity
 - Jesus is the “Kinsman Redeemer” (Go'el)
 - The term “redemption” means that a close relative (Go'el) paid a ransom for someone's release and freedom. (Ruth 4; Isaiah 43:1; 44:22,23; 48:20; 63:9; Hosea 13:14).
- 9:13 The ashes of a scarlet red heifer were the only way to purify and dedicate the location of the Tabernacle (Numbers 19)
- 9:14 God has saved believers without effort on their part to serve Him with good works (Ephesians 2:8-10). Salvation costs an individual nothing, yet it costs everything.
- “*Dead works*” (nekrōn ergon - νεκρῶν ἔργων) includes anything not done for God and to His glory such as loving others while rejecting sin. (James 1:27)

Read Hebrews 9:15-22 ... Blood is a Necessity to Establish a Valid Covenant

- 9:15 The term “mediator” (mesitēs μεσίτης) acts under the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:6, 9:15). Jesus Christ is the only mediator for mankind. (Galatians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:5).

- The death of Christ Jesus covered the violations/transgressions (parabaseōn παραβάσεων) against the first covenant.
- 9:16 In order for a “last will/testament” to take effect, the one who establishes the will/testament” must die. (Galatians 3:15)
- 9:17 The inheritance and fulfillment of the “last will/testament” will not occur until the one who establishes the “last will/testament” dies.
- 9:18 The Old Covenant required the blood of animals (Exodus 24:3-8)
- 9:19 Water represented the cleansing; scarlet wool as the pure white lamb turned red from the blood sacrifice; and the “humble” hyssop as the porous implement of His blood sacrifice (used 12 times in the Bible – Psalm 51:7; Leviticus 14:5)
- Blood was sprinkled on the leper (symbolizing sinner – Leviticus 14:6-7) as well as the sacrifice altar (Exodus 24:1-9).
- 9:20 The author quotes from Exodus 24:8.
- 9:21 Any vessel that was to be used for God’s service must be sprinkled with sacrificial blood. (Exodus 24:8-9)
- 9:22 Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness. Sin brings death, and life is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11); when there is sin, there is death (Romans 6:23).
- The term “almost” (schedon σχεδόν) includes the flour offering (Leviticus 5:11), the fire from the altar (Leviticus 13:52,55; 16:27; Numbers 16:46; 31:22-23), washing by water, by incense (Numbers 16:46-48), by intercession (Exodus 32:30-32) and a broken heart of confession (Psalm 32, 51).

Read Hebrews 9:23-28 ... Christ’s Death Cleanses Man Forever

- 9:23 These rituals and traditions of Israel pointed to even greater truths (Hebrews 9:8, 10:1). This world is a reflection of greater spiritual truths as can be seen by the book of Daniel. (Ephesians 6:12)
- 9:24 Just as the presence of God was found in the Tabernacle’s Holy of Holies (2 Chronicles 7:4), Jesus comes before God the Father on the behalf of His people in Heaven as well.
- 9:25 Unlike the human priests who offer continuous sacrifices, Jesus Christ offers a single, one-time sacrifice the deals with sin forever.
- 9:26 Jesus is not limited to the elements of this world; He did not need to die when the world was established, but instead, He came at the perfect time to die for all sin throughout history.
- 9:27 This “one time” death must be referring to the spiritual death because those resurrected (like Lazarus) died again, and those taken in the rapture (1 Cor 15:51) will not die physically
- 9:28 The Messiah will come again (two visits (2 symbolizes “witness”) to bring salvation.
- An individual can either fear the judgment of sin which is coming, or they can eagerly await the coming of Jesus.
 - The culmination of salvation is called “glorification” where believers see Jesus as He is. (1 John 3:2)

Read Hebrews 10:1-3 ... Animal Sacrifices Are Merely Reminders of Sin

10:1 The Mosaic Law only points to spiritual realities. The sacrifices throughout the Old Testament do not atone for sin; however, they point to the sacrifice of Christ Jesus.

- Animal sacrifices are “of this world” while the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is a spiritual sacrifice that transcends this world, so that those who approach God in Christ are viewed as perfect (teleiōsai τελειῶσαι); the sense of making “perfect” means “to bring to completion” or “to fully accomplish.”

10:2 Animal sacrifices could never justify sinful man to a holy God.

- The phrase “*consciousness of sins*” (syneidēsin hamartiōn – συνείδησιν ἁμαρτιῶν) reflects the law as a schoolmaster to reveal sin (Galatians 3:24; Romans 3:20, 5:20)

10:3 The sacrifices of the Mosaic Law remind man of his sinful nature.

Read Hebrews 10:4-10 ... Christ was a Prepared Sacrifice Superior to Animal Offerings

10:4 The Greek term “impossible” (adynaton ἀδύνατόν) is repeated multiple times in Hebrews to mean without possibility.

The “Impossible” of Hebrews	
Hebrews 6:4	It is impossible to experience salvation twice
Hebrews 6:18	It is impossible for God to lie
Hebrews 10:4	It is impossible for animal sacrifices to remove sin
Hebrews 11:6	It is impossible to please God without Faith

10:5 The writer quotes Psalm 40:6-8. A body without the sinful nature was made for Jesus to become the acceptable sacrifice. (Psalm 51:16-17)

10:6 In the offerings of Leviticus (chapters 1 – 7), the only aromas that please God are the burnt, thanksgiving and fellowship offerings; there is no mention that God is pleased in the sacrifices of sin and trespass.

- Psalm 40:6 literally says “*You have opened my ears*” (kāriṭā ’āzənayim – קָרִיטָא אֲזַנַיִם) which might speak to the concept that if God created the entire body of the Savior with His ear (His hearing & obedience).

10:7 Jesus chose to be obedient to God the Father’s will as the Hebrew bondsman would commit himself to the Master of the household (Exodus 21:1-6; Deuteronomy 15:12-18).

- The bondsman was pierced to wood for his love of the master (Matthew 22:37).
- The gift of the bride from the master to the bondsman (John 17:6)
- Even when Jesus desired something different, He submitted to the will of the Father. (Luke 22:42)

10:8 Israel grew to depend on ritual and liturgy of sacrifices instead of genuinely repenting and seeking a personal relationship with God. (Psalms 51:16-17; Hosea 6:6; Isaiah 1:10-20; Micah 6:6-8)

- “*Does the Lord have as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than a sacrifice, and to pay attention is better than the fat of rams.*” (1 Samuel 15:22)
- In Christianity, attitude and motive are more important than the act.

10:9 Jesus Christ submitted to the will of God the Father to become a sinless sacrifice.

- The Greek phrase “He takes away” (anairei ἀναιρεῖ) is etymologically related to the harsh Greek term “kill/slay/put to death” (anairein ἀναιρεῖν).

- In context, this refers to the value of the Old (first) Covenant relative to salvation; only the New (second) Covenant would bring life through salvation.
 - Jesus said, “*Do not presume that I came to abolish (katalysai καταλύσαι) the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.*” (Matthew 5:17)
- 10:10 God’s people are sanctified (“to be made holy”) forever by the incarnate Word (John 1:1 → John 17:17)
- The “body” that was prepared for Christ’s incarnation (Hebrews 10:5) was sacrificed, so that the spiritual “body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12, 27; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:4) could live.

Read Hebrews 10:11-14 ... Christ Provided a Completed Sacrifice

- 10:11 The Priest must “stand” (symbolically) because their work is never done; they continue offering daily sacrifices.
- 10:12 “Sitting down” (ekathisen ἐκάθισεν) represents the completion of a task while the “right hand” (dexia δεξιὰ) represents power and preeminence.
- Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 7:55; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 12:2), but “stands” to welcome His faithful servant (Romans 8:34; 1 Peter 3:22).
- 10:13 The writer continues to reference Psalm 110:1 repeatedly; however, the enemies are mentioned only twice (Hebrews 1:13, 10:13).
- 10:14 The Greek term “perfected” (teteleiōken τετελείωκεν) means to be complete, full or adequate. The purpose of redemption through the sinless life of Christ is accomplished.
- Man can never be good enough for heaven without the sacrifice of Jesus (1 Peter 1:15; Matthew 5:48)

Read Hebrews 10:15-18 ... God’s Spirit Indwells Believers to Submit to God’s Will

- 10:15 The Holy Spirit is credited with the words from Jeremiah; the Holy Spirit is the one who testifies about the new covenant (Gal 3:2; Rom 7:6, 8:2; 2 Cor 3:5-6)
- 10:16 The writer quotes Jeremiah 31:33-34.
- In Hebrews 8, this quote is used to emphasize that the old is passing away, but in this passage, the emphasis is on the new that has come.
- 10:17 The writer quotes Jeremiah 31:34 (Isaiah 38:17; 44:22; Psalm 103:12; Micah 7:19)
- 10:18 God chooses not to remember His people’s sins; an animal sacrifice is no longer required because sins are removed by Christ’s death.

Read Hebrews 10:19-23 ... The Believer’s Response to the Sacrifice of Christ

- 10:19 Under the Old Covenant, the High Priest alone could enter the Holy of Holies once a year (Yom Kippur). Under the New Covenant, believers (1 Peter 2:5) can enter into God’s throne room with confidence at any time (Hebrews 4:16).
- The Greek term “confidence” (parrēsia παρρησία) is a recurring theme, and its original use was “freedom to speak.” (Hebrews 3:6, 10:35)
 - A related word is used in Hebrews 4:16 as “boldness” (parrēsia παρρησίας).
- 10:20 The tearing of the curtain (Ex 26:31-33) separating the “holy of holies” is likened to the tearing of Christ’s body on the cross (Mk 15:38; Lk 23:24)

- The Greek term “new” (prospaton πρόσφατον) is only used this one time in the New Testament, and its etymological origin was in reference to a freshly slain animal.
 - Jesus is the “living way” (hodon zōsan - ὁδὸν ζῶσαν).
 - The first church was initially called “the way.” (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22)
 - Jesus is the “way” and the “life.” (John 14:6)
 - A curtain separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. (Exodus 26:33, 40:3; Hebrews 9:3) limiting access to the presence of God. When Jesus died on the cross, the curtain was ripped apart (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38) providing intimate access to the presence of God.
- 10:21 Jesus intercedes for His people from a position of influence and power (1 John 2:1).
- The Greek term for “great” (megan μέγαν) is used three times in Hebrews for “Great” High Priest (Hebrews 4:14), “Great” Priest (Hebrews 10:21), and “Great” Shepherd (Hebrews 13:20).
- 10:22 The phrase “draw near” (proserchōmetha προσερχόμεθα) described the Priests drawing near to minister to God in the Temple. (Hebrews 4:16)
- The phrase “sprinkled clean” is literally only the word “sprinkled” (rherantismenoi ῥεραντισμένοι) because “clean” does not mean sinless; it means that sins are forgiven in the sacrifice of Christ.
 - The “sprinkling of blood” refers to the sacrifice for sin (Exodus 29:4; Leviticus 8:6; 16:4; Numbers 19:7-8)
 - Scripture repeatedly discusses the washing away of sin (Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21)
 - While the Priestly sacrifice was once a year (Yom Kippur – Leviticus 23:27-32), the laver was placed at the entrance of the Tabernacle (Exodus 30:17-21) to wash before serving the Lord. (Ephesians 5:25-27; Psalm 119:11)
- 10:23 The phrase “hold fast” (katechōmen κατέχωμεν) speaks of the perseverance of the saints. (Isaiah 40:31; Galatians 6:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:13; Hebrews 12:3; Revelation 2:3)
- The term “hope” (elpidos ἐλπίδος) is used in reference to the return of the Lord Jesus (the second coming).
 - The “promise” (epangeilamenos ἐπαγγειλάμενος) by God adds additional certainty and assurance for believers (Hebrews 6:13-18).

Let us... (Hebrews 10:22-24)		
Hebrews 10:22	Draw near	In faith (salvation) and cleansing (lordship)
Hebrews 10:23	Hold on	To the confession of our hope
Hebrews 10:24	Be concerned for others	To promote love and good works

14 Hebrews 10:24-39

Read Hebrews 10:24-31 ... A Greater Judgment for Sinners Who Rebel Knowingly

10:24 The Greek term for “consider” (katanoōmen κατανοῶμεν) means to know, think about and understand.

- The Greek term for “stir/stimulate” (paroxysmon παροξυσμὸν) can be used to incite positive or negative responses and actions.
 - A related term (paroxysmos παροξυσμός) was used to describe the disagreement between Barnabas and Paul. (Acts 15:39)
 - Believers should “inspire” each other for good and positive actions.
 - Believers are not saved by works, but believers are saved for good works (Ephesians 2:10)

10:25 Some believing Jews may have stopped going to the synagogue and then given up meeting altogether. Another option is that the believing Jews may have only gone to the synagogue on the (Saturday) Sabbath; however, they did not meet with their fellow Christians on Sundays (the first day of the week – “Resurrection Sunday”).

- The term for “assembling together” (episynagōgēn ἐπισυναγωγὴν) is the word for “synagogue” with the prefix “epi” (the Greek term “epi- (ἐπί) means “on” or “upon.”)
- The term “the day” (tēn hēmeran - τὴν ἡμέραν) is a reference to the hope of the Lord Jesus’ return. The second coming has been a “present hope” for every generation of believers.

10:26 The sin of unbelief is disastrous because Jesus is the only way of salvation; after that salvation experience for believers, there will be a judgment of believers at Christ’s (Bema) judgment seat (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).

- In the Mosaic Law, the animal sacrifices offered no relief for known and willful sin. There was allowance for unintentional sin (Leviticus 4:1-3, 15:22-29), but not for intentional sin (Leviticus 15:30-31).

10:27 An individual can either eagerly hope for the return of the Lord with blessings for His servants or the judgment of the Lord with woeful punishment.

10:28 Satan cannot be the only witness against believers (Zechariah 3:1-2), but there needs to be 2-3 witnesses (Deuteronomy 9:15, 30:9 & 31:26, Jeremiah 29:23, John 8:16-17)

10:29 There are gradations of punishment. While individuals will be judged for their sin, they will be judged more harshly (and penalized more severely) by the way that they treated the truth of Jesus.

- God the Father will punish those who offend God the Son and God the Spirit by rejecting the gospel message offered by the Trinity.

The Active Work of the Holy Spirit (John 14-16)
Convicts of Sin
Attracts to Christ
Understanding of Good News
Baptizes into Body of Christ
Indwells as Christ in Believer
Teaches & Forms to be Christlike

- There was a death penalty for offending the lesser covenant, so the rejection of the greater covenant would result in even more severe penalties.

10:30 The writer attributes Deuteronomy 32:35-36 (from the Song of Moses in the Targum - an ancient Aramaic paraphrase of the Tanakh) to a just and righteous God.

- The concept of God’s “vengeance” (ekdikēsis ἐκδίκησις) means “full of justice” (Romans 12:19). A wise believer does not want justice (dikaiosunē δικαιοσύνη), but instead, desires mercy (eleos ἔλεος).
- 10:31 The writer references their statement from Hebrews 3:12.
- *“It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God!”*
 - This verse is the inspiration of a famous sermon & the first “Great Awakening” (1740’s): “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” Jonathan Edwards, July 8, 1741 in Enfield, Connecticut
 - The “living God” is an emphasis on the covenantal name of Yahweh. (Exodus 3:14)

Large Scale U.S. Revival Periods		
1740’s	The First Great Awakening	George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, Theodore Frelinghuysen, David Brainard, Samuel Davies, Gilbert Tennent
1795-1835	The Second Great Awakening	James McGready, John McGee, Barton W. Stone, Timothy Dwight, Lyman Beecher, Nathaniel W. Taylor, Asahel Nettleton, Charles Grandison Finney
1880-1910	The Third Great Awakening	Dwight L. Moody, Ira D. Sankey, William & Catherine Booth, Charles Spurgeon, James Caughey.
1969-1979	The Fourth Great Awakening	Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Jerry Falwell

Read Hebrews 10:32-39 ... A Great Reward for Persecuted Believers

- 10:32 The recipients of this letter had been persecuted. As believing Jews, their persecution might have come from traditional Jews.
- 10:33 These “sufferings” were primarily verbal onslaughts. Those who befriended and supported the persecuted aligned themselves as targets of the persecution as well.
- The Greek term for “partners” (koinōnoi κοινωνοί) means to “share in.”
 - The phrase “being made a spectacle” (theatrizomenoi θεατριζόμενοι) is etymologically related to the word for theatre.
- 10:34 The persecuted believers supported the incarcerated Christians which resulted in the seizure and loss of their property. (Luke 6:22-23)
- This loss was assuaged by the knowledge of an eternal reward that awaited the persecuted believers.
- 10:35 The loss of worldly things is bearable; however, believers must not lose their confidence (faith) in Christ.
- 10:36 Christians should seek to do God’s will (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 6:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- 10:37 The writer quotes Habakkuk 2:3-4 from the Septuagint.
- 10:38 Believers should live by faith without answers and physical (earthly) security (Rom 14:23; Heb 11:6); His children should draw near (Heb 11:6) to Him instead of drawing away (Heb 10:22)
- The final two lines of Habakkuk 2:4 are reversed for emphasis.
- 10:39 Persecution is not equivalent to destruction (1 Peter 4:13-14); worldly loss is temporary while spiritual loss is the true destruction.
- Loss of worldly items is tolerable; however, one must defend and retain their faith while protecting their soul (themselves).

- A person is not a “body with a soul” ...instead, an individual is a “soul with a body.” An individual does not HAVE a soul; an individual IS a soul.

15 Hebrews 11:1-19

- Chapter 11 identifies several Old Testament examples of those who lived separated lives – many left the support and provision of the world to walk alone with God
- This chapter is in the context of the New Covenant being described as superior to the Old Covenant. Men who had great belief under the Old Covenant did not fully receive all that God promised during their time in this world. However, they kept an eternal perspective.

Read Hebrews 11:1-3 ... God Can Work Miracles with the Unseen

11:1 *“Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.”*

- Israel’s patriarchs under the Old Covenant believed God’s Word even though they did not live to see the salvation of the Messiah.
- The term “faith” (pistis πίστις) means to be firm, certain and sure; “pistis” is repeated 36 times in the New Testament.
 - The value of the faith is not determined by the amount of faith, but instead the value is determined by the object of the faith.
 - A primary theme of the Old Testament is the faithfulness of God.
 - Faith should not focus on man, but instead it should focus on God’s trustworthiness.
 - God (who is faithful) wants to make man faithful like Himself.
 - As God’s Word is heard, and faith is put into practice, it grows. (Romans 10:17)
- The Hebrew term for “assurance” (hypostasis ὑπόστασις) was used to mean “title deed” according to the ancient Papyri texts.
 - Egypt has trash dumps of ancient texts like the Papyri & Oxyrhynchus; these trash dumps show the use of the language in ancient times.
 - A related term of “reality/substance” (hypostaseōs ὑποστάσεως) is also used as “confidence.” (Hebrews 1:3, 3:14)
- The New Testament meaning of “hoped for” (elpizomenōn ἐλπίζομένων) is an absolute certainty that something will happen without knowledge of the timing of when it will happen.

11:2 The individuals of this chapter faithfully looked forward to God’s promises although they may have died without seeing the promises brought to fruition.

- The trust in God’s faithfulness by the patriarchs evidenced God’s Spirit in their lives (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11)

11:3 The power of the “spoken word” (rhēmati ῥήματι) is reflected in creation. God is able to perform the seemingly impossible; even all of creation can arise from something unseen. (Psalm 33:6, 9)

- The Greek term “the world” (aiōnas αἰῶνας) refers to activities in the spiritual and physical realms. (Hebrews 1:2; 6:5; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 1:20; 2:6,8; 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 1:21; 6:12)

- Jesus is the Word (Logos λόγος) of God (John 1:1-18; 8) who spoke (rhēmati ῥήματι) all things into existence (Genesis 1). All of creation was made through Jesus (Hebrews 1:2), and He continues to uphold all things (John 8:57-58; Philippians 2:6-7; Colossians 1:17).
- The Greek word for “created” (katērtisthai κατηρτίσθαι) actually means to be formed, framed or prepared while the Greek term for “made” (gegonenai γεγονέναι) means “to have been” or “was.”
 - Creation is the backdrop (setting) or frame (picture) of God’s relationship with man. (Romans 9:22-24)
 - Christians are a testimony to the physical and spiritual worlds (creation - Mark 16:15, Colossians 1:23, Romans 8:20-22, 10:18, 1 Corinthians 4:9), to angels, and to men. Christians are on display for angelic beings (Ephesians 2:7, 3:10).
- The Gnostics believed that matter and spirit have existed throughout eternity; however, “matter” did not pre-exist prior to creation. (John 4:24)

Read Hebrews 11:4-7 ... The Pre-Flood Faith of Abel, Enoch and Noah

11:4 The story of Adam and Eve’s son, Abel, and his elder brother, Cain, is in Genesis 4.

- The differentiating factor of the sacrifices of the two brothers was the faith of Abel. Abel’s faith did not cause his righteousness; his faith attested (testified) to existing righteousness.
- God judges the heart attitude; the actions are a result (or symptom) of the heart. *“The thoughts and intentions of the heart”* are priority (Hebrews 4:12).
- Even after death, Abel continued to speak; *“the voice of your brother’s blood is crying out to Me from the ground.”* (Genesis 4:10) Death did not bring finality as Abel continued to communicate with God.
 - Abel died as the first martyr for his faith in God; however, he lives in eternity.

11:5 Enoch’s actions testified to his pleasing God, so God removed him from this world.

- *“Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”* (Genesis 5:24)
- Enoch lived 365 years, so he annually walked with God for every day of the year. (Genesis 5:23) Instead of *“walked with God”* (in the Masoretic text), the Septuagint has *“well pleasing to God.”*
- Enoch prophesied about the second coming of the Lord Jesus saying, *“Behold, the Lord has come with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”* (Jude 1:14-15)

11:6 *“Without faith, it is impossible to please”* God. (Romans 14:23) God’s relationship with man is based on man’s faith response to God’s grace. God initiates, and man must respond.

- Beyond believing “in” God (James 2:19), believers must believe God and His judgment to come.
- The Greek term for “faith” (pisteōs πίστεως) also means “believe” and “trust.”

- God rewards those who seek Him. (Deuteronomy 4:29; 1 Chronicles 16:11; Psalm 14:2, 27:8 119:2, 10; Proverbs 8:17; Isaiah 55:6-7; Jeremiah 29:13; Lamentations 3:25; Amos 5:4; Zephaniah 2:3; Matthew 6:33, 7:7-8)
 - The wicked and prideful choose not to seek God; instead, they elevate themselves. (Psalm 10:4; Romans 3:10-11)
 - God seeks after men, and men are called to respond to His grace. (John 6:44, 65)

11:7 The story of Noah is documented in Genesis 6-8.

- Noah was the first man in Scripture called “righteous” (Genesis 6:9, 7:1; 2 Peter 2:5).
- Noah believed God, and God credits faith as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)

Read Hebrews 11:8-12 ... The Faith of Abraham & Sarah

11:8 The Babylonians attempted to consolidate their power to make a tower in order to make a name for themselves (Genesis 11:4); however, God confused and scattered them. (Genesis 11:8) Immediately afterward, God calls Abram out of Babylon to another land in order to make his name great. (Genesis 12:2)

- Abraham lived in tents without building a house, but he built many altars. (Genesis 12:7-8)

11:9 The Greek term for “stranger” (parōkēsen παρώκησεν) means “sojourner” or “outsider;” Abraham was not a citizen of the Promised Land, but he believed God’s promise (Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:29).

- Abraham believed God’s promise although he never saw it come to pass.

Fellow Heirs	
Romans 8:17	Believers are “ <i>fellow heirs</i> ” with Christ
Ephesians 3:6	Gentiles are “ <i>fellow heirs</i> ” with Jews
Hebrews 11:9	Isaac & Jacob are “ <i>fellow heirs</i> ” with Abraham

11:10 The term “the city” (polin πόλιν) is repeatedly used in Scripture to describe God’s future place for man. (Hebrews 11:16; 12:22; 13:14; John 14:2; Galatians 4:26; Revelation 3:12; 21:2)

11:11 Sarah considered God faithful and trustworthy to His Word.

- Initially, both Abraham (Genesis 17:17) and Sarah (Genesis 18:12) laughed at God’s promise.
- The Greek term for “power/strength” (dynamis δύναμις) is the root word for “dynamite” and is repeated 33 times in the New Testament.
 - This “power” is related to God the Father (Matthew 22:29; Mark 12:24; Romans 9:17), God the Son (Mark 5:30; 1 Corinthians 1:24, 5:24; Philippians 3:10) and God the Spirit (Acts 1:8).

11:12 God made a promise that did not appear possible or feasible; however, God was faithful to His promise. (Genesis 15:5; 22:17; 32:12)

- The “stars” (astra ἄστρα) are often considered Abraham’s spiritual offspring (Daniel 12:3) while the “grains of sand” (ammos ἄμμος) are considered the physical/biological offspring. (Revelation 20:8)
- The old adage “as good as dead” (nenekrōmenou νενεκρωμένου) means that death is imminent; Abraham was in his waning years. This may have originated from the culmination of redemption at death.

Read Hebrews 11:13-16 ... The Fulfillment of Unfulfilled Faith

11:13 These people of faith believed God as trustworthy to fulfill His promises although they did not see the fulfillment of God's promises.

- Believers are pilgrims whose home is in heaven (Hebrews 13:14) as they are not of this world (John 17:14-16)

11:14 Believers should not act as they have the rights of citizenship in this sinful and fallen world; this world is not home for believers. (Genesis 23:4; Psalm 39:12; Philippians 3:20; 1 Peter 2:11)

11:15 If these pilgrims of faith had focused and reminisced (emnēmoneuon ἐμνημόνευον) on the fallen things of the world, they would have been encumbered by them. (Luke 8:14; Matthew 6:33)

11:16 God is not ashamed of those (Matthew 22:32; Acts 7:32) who walk with Him according to His Word. (2 Timothy 1:8; Romans 1:16-17)

- God the Son will be ashamed of those who are ashamed of Him (Mark 8:38).
- God prepared the New Jerusalem for His people (Revelation 21; John 14:2)

Read Hebrews 11:17-19 ... The Faith of the First Patriarch: Abraham

11:17 God tests the hearts of His people for testimony and approval (Deuteronomy 8:2; 13:3; Psalm 7:9; 17:3; 26:2, 78:18, 139:23; Jeremiah 11:20, 17:10, 20:12; 1 Chronicles 29:17)

- A “Testimony” must begin with a “Test.”

11:18 This is a quote from Genesis 21:12 which preceded the test in the next chapter (Genesis 22:1-8). Immediately after the promise of God that Abraham's lineage would grow through this single person (Isaac), God tested Abraham to see if He believed in God's trustworthiness.

11:19 Abraham believed that Isaac would return with him alive (Genesis 22:5).

- The Old Testament is a foreshadowing of God's greater plan. Just as Abraham offered his “son of promise,” God would offer His Son to die before His Son conquered death to live forevermore.
- Faith is revealed through works, and faith increases as it is applied.

16 Hebrews 11:20-40

Read Hebrews 11:20-22 ... The Faith of the Patriarchs: Isaac, Jacob & Joseph

11:20 Near the end of Isaac's life, he believed that God would fulfill His promises through his sons: Jacob (Genesis 27:27-29) and Esau (27:38-41).

- Jacob believed God's promises, but he was tempted by Rebekah to use deceit to attain the blessing/promise of God (Genesis 27:10-19)
- Esau believed that he could kill Jacob and thwart God's blessing. (Genesis 27:41-42)

11:21 At the end of Jacob's life, he believed that God would continue to fulfill his promise through Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48:8-22).

- As Jacob blessed Joseph's boys, Jacob also had faith that God would fulfill the promise (Genesis 15:13-16; Acts 7:6-7) to bring Israel back into Palestine (Canaan/the Promised Land). (Genesis 48:21)

- The reference of “*leaning on the top of his staff*” is a quote from the Septuagint’s Genesis 47:31. The Masoretic Hebrew Text has slightly different wording as “*bowed at the head of the bed.*”
 - The Hebrew words for “bed” and “staff” have the same Hebrew consonants (mth - מטח) with only the vowels being different.
 - *mittāh* means “bed” (Masoretic)
 - *maṭṭeh* means “staff” (Septuagint)
 - The Septuagint was a translation of the Tanakh from the Hebrew text into the Greek language. The Masoretic Text was an insertion of vowels by the Masoretes (Jewish Rabbis) between 700AD-900AD.

11:22 At the end of Joseph’s life, he was so certain that God would faithfully return Israel to Palestine (Canaan/the Promised Land) that Joseph made his brothers (the sons of Jacob/Israel) swear to take his bones when they returned (Genesis 50:24-25; Exodus 13:19; Joshua 24:32).

- Joseph was ultimately buried in Shechem. (Joshua 24:32-33)

Read Hebrews 11:23-29 ... The Faith of Moses

11:23 Amram married his aunt, Jochebed, to become the parents of Moses (Exodus 6:20). Both were from the tribe of Levi in the line of Kohath (Exodus 6:18) who would ultimately be responsible to carry the holy items within the Tabernacle.

- The Septuagint translated the verse as “parents,” while the Hebrew Masoretic Text mentions only the “mother.”
- Jochebed did not fear Pharaoh’s murderous edict (diatagma διάταγμα), but trusted God.
- Moses was a uniquely attractive infant. (Acts 7:20; Hebrews 11:23; Exodus 2:2)

11:24 Moses rejected the royal Egyptian title of “son of Pharaoh’s daughter.”

- Moses rejected the royal culture of Egypt for the humble existence of God’s people.

11:25 Moses chose to live a persecuted life instead of the temporary royal pleasures of royalty. (2 Corinthians 4:18; Hebrews 11:25)

11:26 The name of “Christ” often represents the suffering servant who died for His people. In the same way, Moses may have suffered to lead his people from slavery.

- The “reproach of Christ” is the ancient persecution of Christians (Psalm 89:50-51) who follow Christ’s model of suffering and submission.

11:27 Moses persevered through ten plagues and did not fear the Pharaoh as he requested Israel’s exodus (Exodus 5-13). All of Israel was fearful of the Egyptian pursuit (Exodus 14:10), but Moses was not frightened as he had faith in God. (Exodus 14:13)

- “*He persevered, as though seeing Him who is unseen.*” Moses walked with God as if seeing Him prior to meeting Him on Mt Sinai (Exodus 19:18-20), interacting with Him in the Tent of Meeting (Exodus 33:7-11) and seeing the afterglow of His glory (Exodus 33:18-23).
- Earlier in his life, Moses had been afraid of being held accountable for the murder of an Egyptian (Exodus 2:14-15).

11:28 Moses believed God’s promise of the approaching first Passover; Moses witnessed to Pharaoh/Egypt and encouraged God’s people to prepare accordingly. (Exodus 11:1-13:16)

11:29 When the Red Sea separated, Israel walked in faith between walls of water as they trusted that God would keep them safe.

- The Egyptians doubted that God would be able to keep His people safe from their attack, so they drowned in the Red Sea.
- Between verses 29 and 30, the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness was not included because of the lack of faith

Read Hebrews 11:30-31 ... The Faith of Israel & Rahab at Jericho

11:30 Instead of attacking, the Israelites quietly obeyed as they silently marched around Jericho for six days and seven times on the seventh day (Joshua 6:1-5)

11:31 Rahab hid Israel’s spies because she understood that power and promises of God to His people; Rahab was loyal to the spies with the promise of life for her and her family (Joshua 2:11-14)

- Faith is even strong enough to save a Gentile prostitute (James 2:25).

Read Hebrews 11:32-34 ... The Faith of the Judges, King David & the Prophets

11:32 The writer does not have enough time of individuals recorded in the Old Testament who had faith in the Lord before they witnessed God be true to His word.

Faith of Judges, King David & Prophets		
<i>(Hebrews 11:32)</i>		
Key Attributes		
1	Gideon	Led Few Men to Win Battle
2	Barak	Blessed Israel instead of Cursing
3	Samson	Attained Strength from the Lord
4	Jephthah	Understood Victory as from the Lord
5	David	Fought in the Lord’s strength then Sought the Lord’s forgiveness
6	Samuel	Called by the Lord and foretold Israel’s future
7	The Prophets	Foretold Unpopular Future

11:33 There are a variety of blessings when living by faith:

- Conquering kingdoms (**Joshua** 6:21; 8:24-29; 11:10-15)
- Performing righteous acts (Revelation 19:8)
- Receiving more promises from a trustworthy God (Joshua 21:45; 2 Corinthians 1:20)
- Saved from martyrdom (Jeremiah 17:14; 26:19, 24)

11:34 Faith enables strength in trials and battles; however, regardless of the situation, whether victory or defeat, believers lived by faith.

- Quenched power of fire (Daniel 3:19-30)
- Escaped Sword (Jeremiah 51:50)
- Made strong in Weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)
- Mighty in War (1 Corinthians 1:27)
- Routed enemies in battle (Deuteronomy 28:7)

Read Hebrews 11:35-38 ... The Faith of the Persecuted and the Martyred

11:35 Individuals came back to life in the ministries of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17:17-23; 2 Kings 4:31-37)

- “Others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection.” (Matthew 5:11-12; Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 4:12-14)

11:36 Although some with Faith had victories, others suffered a great deal for an unseen eternal reward.

- Some persecutions were social offences including mocking, flogging, chains and imprisonment.

11:37 Others with faith suffered horrific tortures. Some were stoned (2 Chronicles 24:20-21; Luke 11:51); King Manasseh ordered Isaiah to be placed in a hollow log and sawed in two. The martyrs may have been tempted to reject Christ.

- The Greek phrase "*they were sawn in two*" (epristhēsan) is similar to the phrase "*they were tempted*" (epeirasthēan).
- Others rebels who were impatient to act on their hatred of God’s truth used the sword to silence God’s people. (1 Kings 19:10,14; Jeremiah 2:30; 26:23)

11:38 Believers throughout the ages kept the faith in spite of persecution. Although the world degraded God’s people, they were so valuable and honorable that “the world was not worthy” of them.

Read Hebrews 11:39-40 ... The Future Fulfillment of Unfulfilled Promises

11:39 Those who lived in faith did not experience the fulfillment of their faith while on earth; Jesus had not yet come to be crucified and believers continue to await His return as judge.

- God’s promises have not been fully realized under the Old Covenant, yet the faithful of the Old Testament continued in their faithfulness regardless of the situation.
- The recipients of this letter need to embrace the New Covenant by faith for the spiritual blessings that remain unseen (regardless of circumstances).
 - Believers should never view God through the difficulties of the current situation; believers should view the current situation through the correct view of God.

11:40 These faithful characters of the Old Testament are made complete in the same manner that modern believers are completed – through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hall of Faith (Hebrews 11)			
Foreshadowing of the Messiah			
1	Heb 11:4	Abel	Approved Sacrifice
2	Heb 11:5	Enoch	Raptured from Death
3	Heb 11:7	Noah	Built the Ark
4	Heb 11:8	Abraham	Followed Calling
5	Heb 11:11	Sarah	Miraculous Birth
6	Heb 11:17	Abraham	Sacrifice of Only Son
7	Heb 11:20-21	Isaac & Jacob	Gave Future Blessings
8	Heb 11:22	Joseph	Believed Future Exodus
9	Heb 11:23	Moses’ Parents	Did not fear Earthly King
10	Heb 11:24	Moses	Chose suffering versus earthly pleasures
11	Heb 11:27	Moses	Did not fear earthly punishment

12	Heb 11:28	Moses	Followed God's Passover commands & sacrificed the lamb
13	Heb 11:29	Israel	Crossed the Red Sea
14	Heb 11:30	Israel	Obedied God and collapsing earthly barricades
15	Heb 11:31	Rahab	Believed God's power & cared for His witnesses

17 Hebrews 12

Read Hebrews 12:1-3 ... Christ as the Best Example of Faithfulness

12:1 Modern believers reflect the same faith as those in the Old Testament, and join with them as the "Great Cloud of Witnesses" laying aside the worldly for the supernatural

- The Greek term "Therefore" (τοίγαρουν τοιγαροῦν) links this chapter to Chapter 11 (the "Hall of Faith").
- Just as God's faithful people of the Old Testament walked devotedly with Him while trusting in His divine promises, Christ Jesus was the ultimate example for believers.
- The modern-day church is associated with a larger, faithful circle of people from the past who believed that God is trustworthy in spite of the situation.
- The Greek term for "rid" (τοίγαρουν τοιγαροῦν) was used to describe the action of undressing or taking off clothing to prepare for an ancient athletic event.
 - Greek athletes would compete while nearly naked.
- The Greek term for "obstacle/impediment" (onkon ὄγκον) is literally "weight." (The term is used in ancient Greek literature as "pride")
- In Hebrews 12:1, "the sin" (hamartian ἀμαρτίαν) hampers the Christian walk. (John 8:34; Romans 7:14)
- The Greek term for "entangles" (euperistaton ἐπερίστατον) means "clings to" or "grab" which also infers "distraction."
- The Greek term for "race" (agōna ἀγῶνα) is the root word for "agony."

12:2 The focus of believers should be on Christ Jesus (purposeful living) as He not only saved His people, but also sanctifies them with His indwelling Spirit.

- Jesus is now sitting at the right hand of God (Psalm 110:1) representing a finished work (Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 7:55; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 10:12), but stands to welcome His faithful servant in (Romans 8:34; 1 Peter 3:22).
 - Jesus completed three achievements 1. the cross 2. overcoming sin 3. believer's intercessor
- The Greek term for "originator" (archēgon ἀρχηγόν) means to "founder" or "the one who goes before."
- The Greek term for "perfector" (teleiōtēn τελειωτήν) means the one who "matures" or "equips."

12:3 Believers should remember the suffering of Christ Jesus and fellow brothers who were persecuted for His message of love; this focus should encourage believers to persevere in faithfulness to the end.

Read Hebrews 12:4-11 ... The Love and Discipline of God the Father

12:4 Although these Jewish believers had suffered, they had not been physically accosted as yet (Hebrews 10:32).

12:5 This verse quotes Proverbs 3:11-12.

- Instead of being merely servants, believers are in the family of God. (Ephesians 5:1; 1 John 3:1-2)

12:6 Believers should expect punishment for wrongful deeds, thoughts and statements (Revelation 3:19) while understanding that spiritual discipline is beneficial (Psalm 141:5).

- God brings His children to maturity through sufferings (Matthew 5:10-12; Acts 8:1, 4; 14:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:4-10); Christ Jesus was also perfected (completed) through sufferings (Hebrew 5:8).

12:7 This concept of a loving parent is a disciplining parent goes back to the Torah, and God is the Heavenly Father of His children. (Deuteronomy 8:5; Hosea 11:1-4).

12:8 Difficult times often reveal the difference between those who are genuinely redeemed from those who are not. (1 John 2:19)

12:9 Children respect their earthly fathers who discipline them, and believers should respect the Father of their spirit (Number 16:22, 27:16) even more. (Matthew 7:9-11, 23:9)

12:10 While earthly fathers discipline subjectively “*according to what seems best to them*” (kata ta dokoun autē - κατὰ τὰ δοκοῦν αὐτῆ), God objectively disciplines for the individual’s good to increase His holiness in the believer.

- Believers are being recreated in the image of God the Son (Genesis 1:26; Galatians 4:19; 1 John 3:2; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:24)
- God is more concerned with “who” the individual genuinely is instead of the individual’s possession or position.

12:11 Although discipline is difficult at the time, those who are trained (gegymnasmenois γεγυμνασμένοις) by it will have the “peaceable fruit” (karpon eirēnikon - καρπὸν εἰρηνικὸν) of righteousness (dikaiosynēs δικαιοσύνης). (Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4)

- The Greek term for “train” (gegymnasmenois γεγυμνασμένοις) is etymologically related to “gymnasium” and “gymnastics.”
 - The Greek term for “naked” (gymnos γυμνός) was the root term for “gym,” and Greek athletes desired to “throw off every encumbrance” (Hebrews 12:1) to “train naked” (gymnazo γυμνάζω).
- It is in the best interest of believers to be disciplined and changed by the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:32).

Read Hebrews 12:12-17 ... Encourage & Strengthen the Body of Christ

12:12 The writer references Isaiah 35:3-10 with the idea of making the weak and fearful strong.

12:13 The writer quotes Proverbs 4:26.

- The ancient use of the phrase “*limbs being dislocated*” typically meant “hesitating between two decisions.” (Psalm 18:45; 1 Kings 18:21) This hesitancy made the “limb” (symbolic for individual) useless for God’s work; paralysis by analysis.
- Healing and restoration bring renewed relationships with God and others. As the inner character changes, relationships are restored.

12:14 To be an effective witness, believers should live in peace (Romans 12:18) with a separated walk from this world.

- The modern world mistakenly confuses “being offended” with morality. Prideful individuals spend their entire lives acting offended as if they have been disrespected while they create conflict. Believers should strive for peace as they serve each other in love.
 - Although mankind (humanity) cannot survive seeing God (Exodus 33:20; John 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:16; 1 John 4:12), man is going to see God (Job 19:25-27; Psalm 17:15; Matthew 5:8; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 22:4)
 - The writer is encouraging the reader to increase godliness (be like Him) now instead of waiting until the afterlife.
- 12:15 Believers should esteem and inspire each other to godly lives. The Greek term for “see to it” (episkopountes ἐπισκοποῦντες) literally means “observing” and is related to the Greek term for bishop/pastor/overseer (episkopon ἐπίσκοπον). (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 2:25)
- As believers learn and grow in the Lord, reliance and application of His word is critical. There was a great risk of apostasy by the Jewish Christians as they melded Jewish customs with Christian beliefs. God’s grace is sufficient. (2 Corinthians 12:9)
- 12:16 Believers should not take lightly the commands of God. Believers should not dally and tease (flirt) in sexual ways like the world.
- Esau belittled and demeaned his own birthright to the point of a single meal when he was hungry. (Genesis 25:34)
- 12:17 Esau had missed the opportunity for his father’s blessing that had already been given to his brother Jacob (Genesis 27:34). Once the promise is forfeited it cannot be corrected afterward. There is limited time to prioritize and live for the Lord. (Psalm 90:12; 1 Corinthians 7:29; James 4:14)

Read Hebrews 12:18-24 ... Fearful Mount Sinai Contrasted to Glorious Mount Zion

- 12:18 This verse references Israel at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19:16-25; Deuteronomy 4:11-14) where they were unable to receive the law much less keep the law itself; at the end of times, judgment will be much like the giving of the law (Isaiah 29:6)
- 12:19 God’s voice was as jarring as a blast of a trumpet (Exodus 19:16,19; 20:18); Israel was fearful of God’s voice, so they begged not to hear Him (Exodus 20:19; Deuteronomy 5:22-27; 18:16)
- 12:20 The writer quotes Exodus 19:12-13.
- 12:21 The writer quotes Deuteronomy 9:19; even Moses (who stood fearless before Pharaoh) was intimidated by the presence of the Lord.
- Zion was a mountain of Jerusalem, but it evolved into meaning the entire Temple area of Jerusalem. The term Zion was also used for the New Jerusalem and eternal dwelling of believers.
 - God has prepared a “city” (πολις πόλις) for His people (Hebrews 11:10); Scripture describes this city as the future place for believers. (Hebrews 11:16; 12:22; 13:14; John 14:2; Galatians 4:26; Revelation 3:12; 21:2)
- 12:22 In a real sense, believers do not “go to heaven,” but instead, “heaven comes to believers” in the manner of the New Jerusalem. (Revelation 21)
- 12:23 This description seems to be the messianic banquet.

- The phrase “*who are enrolled*” (apogegrammenōn ἀπογεγραμμένων) describes God’s people who are listed in the Lamb’s Book of Life. (Exodus 32:32-33; Psalm 69:28; Daniel 12:1; Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 17:8)
- God directs the function of Judgment (Genesis 18:25; Psalm 50:6; 96:13; 98:9; Isaiah 2:4; 51:5; Jeremiah 11:20; Lamentations 3:59; Ezekiel 7:3,27), and the awaited Messiah was also depicted as Judge (Isaiah 11:3-4; 16:5). God the Father has assigned all judgment to God the Son (John 5:22-23,27; 9:39; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5).

12:24 Jesus represents believers according to the New Covenant of grace and mercy. The sacrificial blood of Christ Jesus is so much superior in clarity and message to the cry of Abel’s blood to God. (Genesis 4:10).

Read Hebrews 12:25-29 ... The Response of a Believer to the Sovereign God

12:25 The writer repeats the warning of Hebrews 3:12 where he attributes this message of caution and encouragement for perseverance to God. “*See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking.*”

12:26 The power and presence of God often results in earthquakes (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 27:54, 28:2). God’s presence at the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai brought an earthquake (Exodus 19:18-19; Judges 5:5) and the heavens will shake as well (Haggai 2:6-9; 2 Samuel 22:8).

12:27 The Greek phrase “*Yet once more*” (eti hapax - ἔτι ἅπαξ) means that a new reality will be established (2 Peter 3:10). Just as the (superior) new covenant replaced an old covenant, the new heaven/earth will replace the existing heaven/earth without the curse and sin nature (Genesis 3:14,17; Zechariah 14:11; Revelation 22:3).

12:28 The current “kingdom” inside the hearts of believers will one day be consummated over all of the earth.

- A “Kingdom” (basileian βασιλείαν) requires a “King” to whom His subjects submit; God is the King of believers to submit and follow His laws while pleasing and praising Him.

12:29 God is a consuming fire (Exodus 24:17; Deuteronomy 4:24 & 9:3) – (Exodus 19:18; Psalm 50:3; Zechariah 2:5; 2 Thessalonians 1:7)

- Just as the New Covenant and New World are superior to the Old Covenant and Old World – the penalty for rejection, rebellion and disobedience is greater now than the judgment in the Old Testament.

18 Hebrews 13

Read Hebrews 13:1-6 ... The Believers Response to Christ with Love

13:1 The literal Greek translation of this verse is “*Brotherly love let abide.*” (hē philadelphia menetō - ἡ φιλαδελφία μενέτω) (Psalm 131:1)

- Love isn’t derived from man, but instead it is God’s love through man to others (John 13:34-45; 15:12,17; 1 John 2:10; 3:11,14,17-24; 4:7-21; 2 John 5).

13:2 Believers should show hospitality to strangers – the recipient could be an angel. (Hebrews 13:2)

- In ancient times, inns were very expensive and notorious for prostitution. It was incumbent on believers to assist traveling believers (especially when evangelists

visited to teach/preach). (Matthew 25:35; Romans 12:13; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; 1 Peter 4:9; 2 John)

- The itinerant teachers became an issue for the church over time. Around the second century, writings of an anonymous author were utilized by the early church as a book of practical guidelines and instruction. The author utilized the twelve disciples as pseudonyms and the writings are called the Didache (“The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.”)
 - At the beginning of the fourth century, the historian Eusebius referenced the Didache as an important document of the early church; however, it was not available – copies could not be found.
 - In 1873, a Greek Orthodox bishop (Philotheos Bryennios) found a preserved copy of the Didache in a monastery in Asia Minor (modern Turkey)
 - A longer title of the “Didache” is “The Teaching of the Lord, through the Twelve Apostles, to the Gentiles”
 - It only takes 20 minutes to read the entire Didache
 - The Didache offers ways to identify a false prophet:
 - If the itinerant teacher stayed longer at a house than two days...
 - If a teacher asks the congregation for money...
 - If the teacher tells you to make him a meal...

13:3 There were believers who were being persecuted and incarcerated at the time. (Hebrews 10:32)

- The apostle Paul did not receive adequate support while incarcerated in Rome the second (and final) time. (2 Timothy 4:16-18)
- Believers should relate to those who are suffering for Christ; empathize as if personally suffering (prison & torture) with fellow believers.
- In 2007, it was estimated that approximately 17,000 Christians are martyred annually around the world for their love of Jesus; this number was expected to rise.

13:4 Marriage should be respected and honored by believers. The importance of a pure commitment to each other should not be undermined.

- Two categories of sexual sin are listed as being judged by God:
 - “Sexually Immoral” (pornous πόρνους) is the root word for pornography. This would include fornication and other sexual sins for an unmarried individual.
 - Adulterers (moichous μοιχοὺς) were sexual sins committed by anyone who was married.

13:5 Believers should be satisfied in this temporary life.

- Believers have a greater possession in Christ than anything worldly
- The Greek phrase “without covetousness” (aphilargyros Ἀφιλάργυρος) consists of a compound word of “silver” (argurion ἀργύριον) and “love” (phileo φιλέω) with an “a” (alpha) prefix that is used as a negative (“not” or “un”). The literal definition is “not a lover of silver” (Luke 12:15; 16:14; 1 Timothy 3:3; 6:10,17-19; 2 Timothy 3:2)
- Regardless of the situation, believers should focus on God and His blessings (Philippians 4:11-13).

- Others might disloyal and untrustworthy, but God will never forsake His people (Deuteronomy 31:6-7; Joshua 1:5; 1 Chronicles 28:20; Isaiah 41:10,13,14,17).
13:6 The writer quotes Psalm 118:6 (Psalm 56:4, 11).
- The Lord promises to always be with His people, so there is no need to fear man. (Deuteronomy 1:17; Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4; Philippians 1:28)

Qualities of the Christian Life		
1.	Hebrews 13:1	Brotherly Love
2.	Hebrews 13:2	Hospitality
3.	Hebrews 13:3	Help the Needy
4.	Hebrews 13:4	Honor Marriage
5.	Hebrews 13:5	Avoid Greed
6.	Hebrews 13:5	Be Content
7.	Hebrews 13:7	Keep the Faith

Read Hebrews 13:7-10 ... Believers are to Remain Faithful to Enduring Truth

13:7 Observe the blessings of God on the obedient, faithful Christian and imitate their faith

- Believers are encouraged to remember those who shared the gospel with them and led them to Christ – their spiritual leaders. The recipients of this letter are encouraged to follow the example of:
 - The faithful men in the Old Testament (Hebrews 11)
 - The faithful men who led them to Christ and have died (Hebrews 13:7)
 - The faithful men who are the current spiritual leaders (Hebrews 13:17, 24)
- These godly examples were “true to the end” as they faithfully followed God until they died.
 - The Greek term for “result/outcome/end” (ekbasin ἔκβασιν) can also be used for a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13)

13:8 “*Jesus Christ - the same yesterday, today, and forever.*”

- Leaders are temporal, but Jesus Christ is a constant. While spiritual mentors may sin, die or move away, Jesus Christ remains faithful. (Matthew 28:20)

13:9 God is the provider of spiritual strength – not abstinence from certain types of foods.

- Scripture repeatedly reproves the eating of “special kinds of food.” (Matthew 11:15; Mark 7:18-23; Romans 14:1; 1 Corinthians 8:8; Colossians 2:16-19)
 - Food will not bring individuals to God nor keep anyone from God. Christianity is about the attitude of the heart and a relationship with the Lord.
- Rabbinical traditions around eating that originated with the Pharisees (like the Kosher guidelines) grew to numbering in the hundreds – much related to the separation of clean from unclean.
 - Kosher is not a style of cooking, so any kind of food (Mexican, Italian, Chinese, etc.) can be considered “kosher” if it is prepared in accordance with Jewish law.
- The recipients of the letter had been influenced by false teachers of the time. Gnostics were teaching false beliefs; asceticism was on the rise for individuals to hurt themselves.

13:10 “*No right to eat*” is a Rabbinical term and reference to Levitical laws. In this context, the writer transitions from food to Christ’s sacrifice. (Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; John 6:53-58; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:24) The altar would be equivalent to the sacrifice on the cross.

- Unbelievers have no right to eat of the sacrifice of Christ. (Leviticus 6:23, 7:23-27; 11:3-4, 8, 11, 13, 41-42, 47; 17:14; 19:23, 26; 22:6, 8).

Read Hebrews 13:11-14 ... Believers are to be Sanctified from the Sinful World

13:11 Just as Christ was taken outside of the camp to be crucified (John 19:16-20); God calls His people to remove themselves from sinful groups and assemblies. Believers should separate and sanctify themselves apart from societal sin.

- The recipients may have been believing Jews who continued to be deeply integrated with unbelieving Jews.

13:12 The Old Testament continuously points to Jesus; for instance, the altar sacrifice, whose blood was brought into the holy of holies, had been burned outside of the camp (Leviticus 4:2)

13:13 Jews believed that those who hung on a tree were cursed by God (Deuteronomy 21:22-23), and indeed, Jesus took the curse for believers by dying in their place. (Galatians 3:13),

- Believers are to reject the world and fully identify with Christ Jesus publicly.

13:14 Believers should seek to live in Mt. Zion (the heavenly Jerusalem – Revelation 21:10-27) of which Jesus has laid the foundation (Hebrews 11:10 & 16, 12:22).

- God has prepared a place for His people (John 14:2).

Read Hebrews 13:15-19 ... Believers are to be Sanctified from the Sinful World

13:15 A believer’s sacrifice is acceptable through Christ – the only way to God.

- The “sacrifice of praise” is mentioned repeatedly in Scripture. (Leviticus 7:2,3,5; 2 Chronicles 29:31; 33:16; Psalm 50:14,23; 107:22).
 - Worldly sailors also gave a vocal sacrifice to God on a ship (Jonah 1:16); believers can sacrifice anywhere and anytime.
- A believer’s mouth bears fruit in praise of God’s holy name (Isaiah 57:19; Hosea 14:3)

13:16 Beyond praise (Hebrews 13:15), another way for believers to sacrifice to God is by acts of goodness and testifying to Him which are pleasing sacrifices to God

13:17 Spiritual leaders will be held responsible to give an account for those under their influence and ministry.

- The Greek phrase to “watch over” (agrypnousin ἀγρυπνοῦσιν) literally means to lose sleep in order to guard as in an overnight shepherd with his flock.
- Believers will not be judged for the forgiven sin through Christ’s blood; however, Christians will be held accountable for their availability to God as well as the use of spiritual gifts.
- The joy of spiritual leaders is profitable to those in the fellowship.

13:18 A “good conscience” speaks of the heart attitude and pure motive of an individual.

- There is a risk of not pleasing the Lord while having a clear conscience:
 - A conscience can grow numb through repeated sin

- A conscience can be polluted, perverted and warped based on accepted social and cultural opinions.
 - Believers must be careful that their conscience aligns to the Spirit of God through His recorded Word (Scripture).
- 13:19 The writer desires to meet these believing Jews again just as Paul revisited the churches that he established.

Read Hebrews 13:20-25 ... Benediction of Hebrews

- A “benediction” is a blessing to the worshippers while a “doxology” is an act of praise to God.
- 13:20 The Greek term for “peace” (eirēnēn εἰρήνην) means to “bring back together that which was broken.”
- The Jewish greeting “Shalom” means “the presence of blessings and the absence of problems.”
 - This author uses the “*God of Peace*” (theos tēn eirēnēs – θεός τὴν εἰρήνης) as a title (Hebrews 13:20) which was only repeated in the Pauline Epistles. (Romans 15:33, 16:20; 1 Corinthians 14:33, 2 Corinthians 3:11; Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23)
 - The statement “*who brought up from the dead*” is the only reference to the resurrection of Christ Jesus in the entire book of Hebrews.
 - Just as the new covenant is superior to the old covenant, Moses was considered the shepherd of the flock of Israel (Isaiah 63:11); however, Jesus Christ is the “Great (megan μέγαν) Shepherd (poimena ποιμένα)”
 - Throughout the Old Testament, God was referenced as the Shepherd (Genesis 49:24; Psalm 23:1; 78:52; 80:1; Ecclesiastes 12:11; Isaiah 40:11; 63:11; Jeremiah 31:10; Ezekiel 34)
 - Israel was described as scattering without a shepherd (Numbers 27:17; 1 Kings 22:17; 2 Chronicles 18:16; Ezekiel 34:5; Zechariah 10:2); however, the Messiah came to shepherd His flock (Psalm 78:70-72; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24; Micah 5:4; 7:14; Zechariah 13:7; John 10:2,11,14; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4)
 - While the Old Covenant is not eternal (Hebrews 8:13) due to man’s shortcomings (Hebrews 8:8-9). The Lord Jesus offers the new (eternal) covenant which is much superior. (Hebrews 8:7-13)
- 13:21 The concept of “perfectly fit/equipped” (katartisai καταρτίσαι) is to be “mature” and “complete.” God will equip His people for the tasks in which He has called them. A primary goal of the church is to equip its members (Ephesians 4:12)
- God works through His people (Philippians 2:12-13); God’s power through the faithful, submissive receptivity of His people.
 - The word “Amen” is meant to be firm or certain; it means “so be it”, “I affirm” or “I agree.” The Greek term “Amen” is the transliterated word from Hebrew “Amen” (Hebrew: אָמֵן Greek: ἀμήν).
- 13:22 The Greek term “urge/exhort” (parakalō παρακαλῶ) is used repeatedly throughout Hebrews to implore/plead the believer to take the content seriously. (Hebrews 3:13; 10:25; 12:15; 13:15,22)

- The closing verses of Hebrews 13:22-24, are similar to the way that Paul concludes other letters penned by a scribe; Paul might himself add a small personal note and blessing.
- 13:23 The phrase that “Timothy has been released” may mean that he is free from incarceration (2 Tim. 4:11, 21 - Matthew 27:15; John 19:10; Acts 3:13; 4:21,23; 5:40) or that he has been released from past duties for a new ministry (Acts 3:3).
- Every time that Paul references Timothy as a “brother,” Paul writes “*Timothy, our/the brother*” – Timotheos ho adelphos – Τιμόθεος ὁ ἀδελφός); however, in the Hebrews reference (Hebrews 13:23), the writer states “*our brother Timothy / the brother of us Timothy*” (ton adelphon hēmōn Timotheon - τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν Τιμόθεον)
 - The writer of the book of Hebrews is a traveling companion of Timothy who defers to Timothy’s agenda.
- 13:24 The writer is very supportive of the leaders of the church and has written this book to bolster their leadership in Christ.
- The Greek term for “God’s people” (hagious ἁγίους) is the term for “saints” which originated with the term “holy” (to be set apart for God’s service – as in “sanctuary”). The term “saint” is not associated with man’s goodness, but is defined by God’s goodness imputed to man. A saint is a “separated one to an assigned task.”
 - Just as Paul was incarcerated in Rome, the writer is writing from Italy.
- 13:25 This was the characteristic closing for Paul’s Epistles. Paul’s focus was on grace and not merit; God’s trustworthiness and goodness is the beginning and conclusion of Christian faith.