

English: Unlocked Literal Bible for Hebrews

Formatted for Translators

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Bible Text: The English Unlocked Literal Bible (ULB)

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Notes: English ULB Translation Notes

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Introduction to Hebrews

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Hebrews

1. Jesus is superior to God's prophets and angels (1:1-4:13)
2. Jesus is superior to the priests who serve in the temple in Jerusalem (4:14-7:28)
3. Jesus's ministry is superior to the old covenant that God made with his people (8:1-10:39)
4. What faith is like (11:1-40)
5. Encouragement to be faithful to God (12:1-29)
6. Concluding encouragements and greetings (13:1-25)

Who wrote the Book of Hebrews?

No one knows who wrote Hebrews. Scholars have suggested several different people who could possibly be the author. Possible authors are Paul, Luke, and Barnabas. The date of writing is also not known. Most scholars think it was written before A.D. 70. Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70, but the writer of this letter spoke about Jerusalem as if it had not yet been destroyed.

What is the Book of Hebrews about?

In the Book of Hebrews, the author shows that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. The author did this in order to encourage the Jewish Christians and to explain that Jesus is better than anything that the old covenant had to offer. Jesus is the perfect High Priest. Jesus was also the perfect sacrifice. Animal sacrifices became useless because Jesus's sacrifice was once and for all time. Therefore, Jesus is the one and only way for people to be accepted by God.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Hebrews." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The Letter to the Hebrews" or "A Letter to the Jewish Christians."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Can readers understand this book without knowing about the sacrifices and the work of the priests required in the Old Testament?

It would be very difficult for readers to understand this book without understanding these matters. Translators might consider explaining some of these Old Testament concepts in notes or in an introduction to this book.

How is the idea of blood used in the Book of Hebrews?

Beginning in [Hebrews 9:7]

Beginning in [Hebrews 9:19]

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How are the ideas of "holy" and "sanctify" represented in Hebrews in the ULB?

The scriptures use such words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating into English, the ULB uses the following principles:

- Sometimes the meaning in a passage implies moral holiness. Especially important for understanding the gospel is the fact that God views Christians as sinless because they are united to Jesus Christ. Another related fact is that God is perfect and faultless. A third fact that Christians are to conduct themselves in a blameless, faultless manner in life. In these cases, the ULB uses "holy," "holy God," "holy ones," or "holy people."
- Sometimes the meaning indicates a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In these cases, the ULB uses "believer" or "believers." (See: 6:10; 13:24)
- Sometimes the meaning implies the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULB uses "sanctify," "set apart," "dedicated to," or "reserved for." (See: 2:11; 9:13; 10:10, 14, 29; 13:12)

The UDB will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Hebrews?

For the following verses, modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

- "you crowned him with glory and honor" (2:7). Some older translations read, "you crowned him with glory and honor and you have put him over the works of your hands."
- "those who did not unite in faith with those who obeyed" (4:2). Some older translations read, "those who heard it without joining faith to it."
- "Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come" (9:11). Some modern versions and older translations read, "Christ came as a high priest of the good things that are to come."
- "on those who were prisoners" (10:34). Some older translations read, "of me in my chains."
- "They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with the sword" (11:37). Some older translations read, "They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were tempted. They were killed with the sword."
- "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned" (12:20). Some older translations read, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned or shot with an arrow."

Hebrews

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in many ways.²But in these last days, he has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed to be the heir of all things. It is through him that God also made the universe.³He is the brightness of God's glory, the exact representation of his being. He even holds everything together by the word of his power. After he had made cleansing for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

⁴He has become just as superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than their name.⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,

"You are my Son,
today I have become your Father"?

Or to which of the angels did God ever say,

"I will be a Father to him,
and he will be a Son to me"?

⁶But again, when God brings the firstborn into the world, he says,
"All God's angels must worship him."

⁷About the angels he says,
"He is the one who makes his angels spirits,
and his servants flames of fire."

⁸But to the Son he says,
"Your throne, God, is forever and ever.
The scepter of justice is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of joy more than your companions."

¹⁰ "In the beginning, Lord, you laid the earth's foundation.
The heavens are the work of your hands.

¹¹ They will perish, but you will continue.
They will all wear out like a piece of clothing.

¹² You will roll them up like a cloak,
and they will be changed like a piece of clothing.
But you are the same,
and your years do not end."

¹³But to which of the angels has God said at any time,
"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

¹⁴Are not all angels spirits who serve, and who are sent to care for those who will inherit salvation?

Hebrews 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter describes how Jesus is more important to us than the angels are.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:5, 7-13, which is from the Old Testament.

"Our ancestors"

The writer wrote this letter to Christians who had grown up as Jews. This is why the letter is called "Hebrews."

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

The author uses rhetorical questions as a way of proving Jesus is better than the angels. Both he and the readers know the answers to the questions, and the writer knows that as the readers think about the answers to the questions, they will realize that God's Son is more important than any of the angels.

Poetry

Jewish teachers, like the Old Testament prophets, would put their most important teachings in the form of poetry so that the hearers would be able to learn and remember them.

Links:

- [Hebrews 1:1 Notes](#)
 - [Hebrews intro](#)
-

Hebrews 1:1

General Information:

Although this letter does not mention to whom it was sent, the author wrote particularly to Hebrews (Jews), who would have understood the many Old Testament references. This prologue provides the background for the whole book: the unsurpassing greatness of the Son, who is greater than all. The book begins by emphasizing that the Son is better than the prophets and the angels.

Hebrews 1:2

in these last days

"in these final days." This phrase refers to the time when Jesus began his ministry, extending until God establishes his complete rule in his creation.

through a Son

"Son" here is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

to be the heir of all things

The author speaks of the Son as if he will inherit wealth and property from his Father. Alternate translation: "to possess all things"

It is through him that God also made the universe

"It is through the Son that God also made all things"

Hebrews 1:3

the brightness of God's glory

"the light of his glory." God's glory is associated with a very bright light. The author is saying that the Son embodies that light and fully represents God's glory.

glory, the exact representation of his being

"glory, the image of God's being." The phrase "the exact representation of his being" is similar in meaning to "the brightness of God's glory." The Son embodies the character and essence of God and fully represents everything that God is. Alternate translation: "glory and is just like God" or "glory, and what is true about God is true about the Son"

the word of his power

"his powerful word." Here "word" refers to a message or command. Alternate translation: "his powerful command"

After he had made cleansing for sins

The abstract noun "cleansing" can be expressed as a verb: "making clean." Alternate translation: "After he had finished making us clean from sins" or "After he had finished purifying us from our sins"

he had made cleansing for sins

The author speaks of forgiving sins as if it were making a person clean. Alternate translation: "he had made it possible for God to forgive our sins"

he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "he sat down at the place of honor and authority beside the Majesty on high"

the Majesty on high

Here "Majesty" refers to God. Alternate translation: "God Most High"

Hebrews 1:4

He has become

"The Son has become"

as the name he has inherited is more excellent than their name

Here "name" refers to honor and authority. Alternate translation: "as the honor and authority he has inherited is superior to their honor and authority"

he has inherited

The author speaks of receiving honor and authority from his father as if it were inheriting wealth and property from his father. Alternate translation: "he has received"

Hebrews 1:5

General Information:

The first prophetic quotation (You are my Son) comes from the Psalms. The prophet Samuel wrote the second one (I will be a Father to him). The words "You" and "he" refer to Jesus, and the words "I" and "me" refer to God the Father.

For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son ... a Son to me"?

This question emphasizes that God does not call any angel his Son. Alternate translation: "For God never said to any of the angels, 'You are my Son ... a Son to me.'"

You are my Son ... I have become your Father

These two phrases mean essentially the same thing.

Hebrews 1:6

General Information:

The quotation, "All God's angels ... him," comes from one of the books that Moses wrote.

the firstborn

This means Jesus. The author refers to him as the "firstborn" to emphasize the Son's importance and authority over everyone else. It does not imply that there was a time before Jesus existed or that God has

other sons like Jesus. Alternate translation: "his honored Son, his only Son"

he says

"God says"

Hebrews 1:7

General Information:

The quotation, "He is the one who makes ... fire," is from the Psalms.

He is the one who makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire

Possible meanings are 1) "God has made his angels to be spirits who serve him with power like flames of fire" or 2) God makes the wind and flames of fire his messengers and servants. In the original language the word for "angel" is the same as "messenger," and the word for "spirits" is the same as "wind." With either possible meaning, the point is that the angels serve the Son because he is superior.

Hebrews 1:8

General Information:

This scriptural quotation comes from the Psalms.

But to the Son he says

"But God says this to the Son"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Your throne, God, is forever and ever

The Son's throne represents his rule. Alternate translation: "You are God, and your reign will last forever and ever"

The scepter of justice is the scepter of your kingdom

Here "scepter" refers to the Son's rule. Alternate translation: "And you will rule over your kingdom with justice" or "And you will rule over the people of your kingdom justly"

Hebrews 1:9

has anointed you with the oil of joy more than your companions

Here "oil of joy" refers to the joy that the Son felt when God honored him. Alternate translation: "has honored you and made you more joyful than anyone else"

Hebrews 1:10

General Information:

This quotation comes from another Psalm.

Connecting Statement:

The author continues explaining that Jesus is superior to the angels.

In the beginning

"Before anything existed"

you laid the earth's foundation

The author speaks of God creating the earth as if he built a building on a foundation. Alternate translation: "you created the earth"

The heavens are the work of your hands

Here "hands" refer to God's power and action. Alternate translation: "You made the heavens"

Hebrews 1:11

They will perish

"The heavens and earth will disappear" or "The heavens and earth will no longer exist"

wear out like a piece of clothing

The author speaks of the heavens and earth as if they were a piece of clothing that will get old and eventually become useless.

Hebrews 1:12

roll them up like a cloak

The author speaks of the heavens and earth as if they were a robe or another kind of outer garment.

they will be changed like a piece of clothing

The author speaks of the heavens and earth as if they were clothing that could be exchanged for other clothing.

they will be changed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will change them"

your years do not end

Periods of time are used to represent God's eternal existence. Alternate translation: "your life will never end"

Hebrews 1:13

General Information:

This quotation comes from another Psalm.

But to which of the angels has God said at any time ... feet?"

The author uses a question to emphasize that God has never said this to an angel. Alternate translation: "But God has never said to an angel at any time ... feet."

Sit at my right hand

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"

until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet

Christ's enemies are spoken of as if they will become an object on which a king rests his feet. This image represents defeat and dishonor for his enemies.

Hebrews 1:14

Are not all angels spirits ... inherit salvation?

The author uses this question to remind the readers that angels are not as powerful as Christ, but they have a different role. Alternate translation: "All angels are spirits who ... inherit salvation."

for those who will inherit salvation

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a

family member. Alternate translation: "for those whom
God will save"

2 ¹Therefore, we must give far more attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.

²For if the message that was spoken through the angels proved to be so reliable, and every transgression and disobedience receives just repayment,³how then can we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This is salvation that was first announced by the Lord and confirmed to us by those who heard it.⁴At the same time God testified to it by signs, wonders, and various miracles, and by distributing the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will.

⁵For it was not to the angels that God subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking.⁶But someone has somewhere testified, saying,

"What is man, that you are mindful of him?

Or a son of man, that you care for him?

⁷ You made man a little lower than the angels;
you crowned him with glory and honor. ¹

⁸ You put everything in subjection under his feet."

For it was to him that God has subjected all things. He did not leave anything not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see everything subjected to him.

⁹But we see him who was made lower than the angels for a little while, Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of his suffering and death, so that by God's grace he might taste death for everyone.¹⁰For it was proper for God, because everything exists for him and through him, to bring many sons to glory. It was proper for him to make the founder of their salvation complete through his sufferings.

¹¹For both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have one source. So he is not ashamed to call them brothers.¹²He says,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers,

I will sing about you from inside the assembly."

¹³And again,

"I will trust in him."

And again,

"See, here am I and the children whom God has given me."

¹⁴Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he shared in those things in the same way, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.¹⁵This was so that he would free all those who through fear of death lived all their lives subject to slavery.

¹⁶For surely it is not the angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants.¹⁷So it was necessary for him to become like his brothers in all ways, so that he could be a merciful and faithful high priest in relation to the things of God, and so that he could make atonement for the sins of the people.¹⁸Because Jesus himself has suffered and was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

¹Some important and ancient Greek copies add and you have put him over the works of your hands .

Hebrews 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:6-8, 12-13, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Brothers

The author probably uses the term "brothers" to refer to Christians who grew up as Jews.

- [Hebrews 2:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 2:1

Connecting Statement:

This is the first of five urgent warnings the author gives.

we must

Here "we" refers to the author and includes his audience.

so that we do not drift away from it

Possible meanings for this metaphor are 1) people who stop believing in God's word are spoken of as if they were drifting away, like a boat drifts from its position in the water. Alternate translation: "so that we do not stop believing it" or 2) people who stop obeying God's words are spoken of as if they were drifting away, like a boat drifts from its position in the water. Alternate translation: "so that we do not stop obeying it"

Hebrews 2:2

For if the message that was spoken through the angels

The Jews believed that God spoke his law to Moses through angels. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For if the message that God spoke through the angels"

For if the message

The author is certain that these things are true. Alternate translation: "Because the message"

every transgression and disobedience receives just repayment

Here "transgression" and "disobedience" stand for the people who are guilty of these sins. Alternate translation: "every person who sins and disobeys will receive just repayment"

transgression and disobedience

These two words mean basically the same thing.

repayment

This is a general term, but you may need to make explicit that the "repayment" here is just punishment. Alternate translation: "punishment"

Hebrews 2:3

how then can we escape if we ignore so great a salvation?

The author uses a question to emphasize that the people will certainly receive punishment if they refuse God's salvation through Christ. Alternate translation: "then God will certainly punish us if we do not pay attention to his message about how God will save us!"

ignore

"pay no attention to" or "consider unimportant"

This is salvation that was first announced by the Lord and confirmed to us by those who heard it

This can be stated in active form. The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "The Lord himself first announced the message about how God will save us and then those who heard the message confirmed it to us"

Hebrews 2:4

according to his will

"in just the way he wanted to do it"

Hebrews 2:5

Connecting Statement:

The writer reminds these Hebrew believers that the earth will one day be under the rule of the Lord Jesus.

For it was not to the angels that God subjected

"For God did not make the angels rulers over"

the world to come

Here "world" refers to the people who live there. And "to come" means that this is the world in the next age after Christ returns. Alternate translation: "the people who will live in the new world"

Hebrews 2:6

General Information:

The quotation here is from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament. It continues on through verse 8.

What is man, that you are mindful of him?

This rhetorical question emphasizes the insignificance of humans and expresses surprise that God would pay attention to them. Alternate translation: "Humans are insignificant, and yet you are mindful of them!"

Or a son of man, that you care for him?

The idiom "son of man" refers to human beings. This rhetorical question means basically the same thing as the first question. It expresses surprise that God would care for humans, who are insignificant. Alternate translation: "Human beings are of little importance, and yet you care for them!"

Or a son of man

The verb may be supplied from the previous question. Alternate translation: "Or what is a son of man"

Hebrews 2:7

a little lower than the angels

The author speaks of people being less important than angels as if the people are standing in a position that is lower than the angels' position. Alternate translation: "less important than the angels"

made man ... crowned him

Here, these phrases do not refer to a specific person but to humans in general, including both males and females. Alternate translation: "made humans ... crowned them"

you crowned him with glory and honor

The gifts of glory and honor are spoken of as if they were a wreath of leaves placed on the head of a

victorious athlete. Alternate translation: "you have given them great glory and honor"

Hebrews 2:8

his feet ... to him

Here, these phrases do not refer to a specific person but to humans in general, including both males and females. Alternate translation: "their feet ... to them"

You put everything in subjection under his feet

The author speaks of humans having control over everything as if they have stepped on everything with their feet. Alternate translation: "You have given them control over everything"

He did not leave anything not subjected to him

This double negative emphasizes the positive. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God made everything subject to him"

we do not yet see everything subjected to him

"we know that humans are not in control of everything yet"

Hebrews 2:9

Connecting Statement:

The writer reminds these Hebrew believers that Christ became lower than the angels when he came to earth to suffer death for forgiveness of sins, and that he became a merciful high priest to believers.

we see him

"we know there is one"

who was made

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God made"

lower than the angels ... crowned with glory and honor

See how you translated these words in Hebrews 2:7.

he might taste death

The experience of death is spoken of as if it were food that people can taste. Alternate translation: "he might experience death" or "he might die"

Hebrews 2:10

bring many sons to glory

The gift of glory is spoken of here as if it were a place to which people could be brought. Alternate translation: "save many sons"

many sons

Here this refers to believers in Christ, including males and females. Alternate translation: "many believers"

the founder of their salvation

Possible meanings of this metaphor are 1) the author speaks of Jesus as the one who establishes salvation, or makes it possible for God to save people. Alternate translation: "the one who makes their salvation possible" or 2) the word translated here as "founder" can mean "leader" and the writer speaks of salvation as if it were a destination and of Jesus as the person who goes before the people on the road and leads them to salvation. Alternate translation: "the one who leads people to salvation"

complete

Becoming mature and completely trained is spoken of as if a person were made complete, perhaps complete in all his body parts.

Hebrews 2:11

the one who sanctifies

"the one who makes others holy" or "the one who makes others pure from sin"

those who are sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom he makes holy" or "those whom he makes pure from sin"

have one source

Who that source is can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "have one source, God himself" or "have the same Father"

he is not ashamed

"Jesus is not ashamed"

is not ashamed to call them brothers

This litotes means that he will claim them as his brothers. Alternate translation: "is pleased to call them brothers"

brothers

Here this refers to all who have believed in Jesus, including both men and women.

Hebrews 2:12

General Information:

This prophetic quotation comes from a Psalm of King David.

I will proclaim your name to my brothers

Here "name" refers to the person's reputation and what they have done. Alternate translation: "I will proclaim to my brothers the great things you have done"

from inside the assembly

"when believers come together to worship God"

Hebrews 2:13

General Information:

The prophet Isaiah wrote these quotations.

And again,

"And a prophet wrote in another scripture passage what Christ said about God:"

the children

This speaks about those who believe in Christ as if they were children. Alternate translation: "those who are like my children"

Hebrews 2:14

the children

This speaks about those who believe in Christ as if they were children. Alternate translation: "those who are like his children"

share in flesh and blood

The phrase "flesh and blood" refers to people's human nature. Alternate translation: "are all human beings"

he shared in those things in the same way

"Jesus in the same way shared in flesh and blood" or "Jesus became human in the same way they did"

through death

Here "death" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "by dying"

has the power of death

Here "death" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "has the power to cause people to die"

Hebrews 2:15

This was so that he would free all those who through fear of death lived all their lives subject to slavery

The fear of death is spoken of as if it were making people live as slaves. Taking away someone's fear is spoken of as it were freeing that person from slavery. Alternate translation: "This was so he might free all people. For we lived like slaves because we were afraid of dying"

Hebrews 2:16

General Information:

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Hebrews 2:17

it was necessary for him

"it was necessary for Jesus"

like his brothers

Here "brothers" refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "like human beings"

he could make atonement for the sins of the people

Christ's death on the cross means that God can forgive sins. Alternate translation: "he could make it possible for God to forgive people's sins"

Hebrews 2:18

was tempted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Satan tempted him"

who are tempted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Satan is tempting"

³ Therefore, holy brothers, you share in a heavenly calling. Think about Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession.² He was faithful to God, who appointed him, just as Moses was also faithful in all the house of God.³ For Jesus has been considered worthy of greater glory than Moses, because the one who builds a house has more honor than the house itself.⁴ For every house is built by someone, but the one who built everything is God.

⁵ For Moses was faithful as a servant in God's entire house, bearing witness about the things that were to be spoken of in the future.⁶ But Christ is faithful as a Son who is in charge of the house of God. We are his house if we hold firmly to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

⁷ Therefore, it is just as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you hear his voice

⁸ do not harden your hearts
as in the rebellion,
in the time of testing in the wilderness.

⁹ This was when your ancestors rebelled by testing me,
after they had seen my deeds for forty years.

¹⁰ Therefore I was angry with that generation.
I said, 'They have always gone astray in their hearts.
They have not known my ways.'

¹¹ It is just as I swore in my wrath:
"They will never enter my rest."

¹² Be careful, brothers, that none of you has an evil heart of unbelief, a heart that turns away from the living God.

¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "today," so that no one among you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

¹⁴ For we have become partners of Christ if we firmly hold to our confidence in him from the beginning to the end.

¹⁵ About this it has been said,

"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts,
as in the rebellion."

¹⁶ Who was it who heard God and rebelled? Was it not all those who came out of Egypt through Moses?¹⁷ With whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness?

¹⁸ To whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, if it was not to those who disobeyed him?¹⁹ We see that they were not able to enter his rest because of unbelief.

Hebrews 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is about how Jesus is better than Moses, the greatest Israelite in the Old Testament.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:7-11,15, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Brothers

The author probably uses the term "brothers" to refer to Christians who grew up as Jews.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Harden your hearts

A person who hardens his heart is a person who will not listen to or obey God.

Rhetorical questions

The author uses rhetorical questions as a way of warning his readers. Both he and the readers know the answers to the questions, and the writer knows that as the readers think about the answers to the questions, they will realize that they need to listen to God and obey him.

Links:

- [Hebrews 3:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 3:1

Connecting Statement:

This second warning is longer and more detailed and includes chapters 3 and 4. The writer begins by showing that Christ is better than his servant Moses.

holy brothers

Here "brothers" refer to fellow Christians, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "holy brothers and sisters" or "my holy fellow believers"

you share in a heavenly calling

Here "heavenly" represents God. Alternate translation: "God has called us together"

the apostle and high priest

Here the word "apostle" means someone who has been sent. In this passage, it does not refer to any of the twelve apostles. Alternate translation: "the one whom God sent and is the high priest"

of our confession

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "confession" is expressed as the verb "confess." Alternate translation: "whom we confess" or "in whom we believe"

Hebrews 3:2

in all the house of God

The Hebrew people to whom God revealed himself are spoken of as if they were a literal house. Alternate translation: "to all of God's people"

Hebrews 3:3

Jesus has been considered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has considered Jesus"

Hebrews 3:4

the one who built everything

God's acts of creating the world are spoken of as if they were the actions of building a house.

every house is built by someone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "every house has someone who built it"

Hebrews 3:5

in God's entire house

The Hebrew people to whom God revealed himself are spoken of as if they were a literal house. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:2]

house, bearing witness about the things

This phrase probably refers to all of Moses's work. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "house. Moses's life and work pointed to the things"

were to be spoken of in the future

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God would speak about in the future"

Hebrews 3:6

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

who is in charge of the house of God

This speaks about God's people as if they were a literal house. Alternate translation: "who rules over God's people"

We are his house

This speaks of God's people as if they were a literal house. Alternate translation: "We are God's people"

if we hold firmly to our courage and the hope of which we boast

Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Here "courage" and "hope" are abstract nouns and can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "if we continue to be courageous and joyfully expect God to do what he has promised"

Hebrews 3:7

General Information:

This quotation comes from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament.

Connecting Statement:

The warning here is a reminder that the Israelites' unbelief kept almost all of them from entering into the land that God had promised them.

if you hear his voice

God's "voice" represents him speaking. Alternate translation: "when you hear God speak"

Hebrews 3:8

do not harden your hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's mind. The phrase "harden your hearts" is a metaphor for being stubborn. Alternate translation: "do not be stubborn" or "do not refuse to listen"

as in the rebellion, in the time of testing in the wilderness

Here "rebellion" and "testing" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "as when your ancestors rebelled against God and tested him in the wilderness"

Hebrews 3:9

General Information:

This quotation is from the Psalms.

your ancestors

Here "your" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

by testing me

Here "me" refers to God.

Hebrews 3:10

forty years

"40 years"

I was angry

"I was greatly unhappy"

They have always gone astray in their hearts

Here "gone astray in their hearts" is a metaphor for not being loyal to God. Here "hearts" is a metonym for minds or desires. Alternate translation: "They have always rejected me" or "They have always refused to obey me"

They have not known my ways

This speaks of a manner of conducting one's life as if it were a way or a path. Alternate translation: "They have not understood how I want them to conduct their lives"

Hebrews 3:11

They will never enter my rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "They will never enter the place of rest" or "I will never allow them to experience my blessings of rest"

Hebrews 3:12

brothers

Here this refers to fellow Christians, including males and females. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" or "fellow believers"

that none of you has an evil heart of unbelief, a heart that turns away from the living God

Here "heart" is a metonym that represents a person's mind or will. Refusing to believe and obey God is spoken of as if the heart did not believe and it physically turned away from God. Alternate translation: "that none of you refuses to believe the truth and stops obeying the living God"

the living God

"the true God who is really alive"

Hebrews 3:13

as long as it is called "today,"

"while there is still opportunity,"

no one among you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the deceitfulness of sin will not harden any of you"

no one among you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin

Being stubborn is spoken of as being hard or having a hard heart. The hardness is a result of being deceived by sin. This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "deceitfulness" is expressed as the verb "deceive." Alternate translation: "no one among you will be deceived by sin and become stubborn" or "you do not sin, deceiving yourselves so that you become stubborn"

Hebrews 3:14

For we have become

Here "we" refers to both the writer and the readers.

if we firmly hold to our confidence in him

"if we continue to confidently trust in him"

from the beginning

"from when we first began to believe in him"

to the end

This is a polite way of referring to when a person dies. Alternate translation: "until we die"

Hebrews 3:15

General Information:

This continues the quotation from the same psalm that was also quoted in Hebrews 3:7.

it has been said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the writer wrote"

if you hear his voice

God's "voice" represents him speaking. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:7]

as in the rebellion

Here "rebellion" can be stated as a verb. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:8]

Hebrews 3:16

Who was it who heard God and rebelled? Was it not all those who came out of Egypt through Moses?

The author uses questions to teach his readers. These two questions can be joined as one statement, if needed. Alternate translation: "All those who came out of Egypt with Moses heard God, yet they still rebelled."

Hebrews 3:17

With whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness?

The author uses questions to teach his readers. These two questions can be joined as one statement, if needed. Alternate translation: "For forty years, God was angry with those who sinned, and he let them die in the wilderness."

forty years

"40 years"

Hebrews 3:18

To whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, if it was not to those who disobeyed him?

The author uses this question to teach his readers. Alternate translation: "And it was to those who disobeyed that he swore they would not enter his rest."

they would not enter his rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "they would not enter the place of rest" or "they would not experience his blessings of rest"

they

The word "they" refers to the disobedient Israelites.

Hebrews 3:19

General Information:

Here "we" refers to the author and readers.

because of unbelief

The abstract noun "unbelief" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "because they did not believe him"

⁴Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest is still allowed to stand, let us fear, so that none of you may seem to have fallen short of it.²For we were told the good news just as they were. But that message did not benefit those who did not unite in faith with those who obeyed. ¹

³For we who have believed enter that rest, just as he said,

"As I swore in my wrath,
They will never enter my rest."

Even so, his works were finished from the foundation of the world.

⁴For he has somewhere spoken about the seventh day:

"And God rested on the seventh day from all his works."

⁵And again in this same passage he said,

"They will never enter my rest."

⁶Therefore, it remains for some to enter that rest, and those who previously had the good news proclaimed to them did not go in because of their disobedience.⁷So God again appointed a certain day, calling it "Today," when he spoke through David much later in words already quoted:

"Today if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts."

⁸For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken about another day.⁹So there remains a Sabbath rest reserved for God's people.¹⁰For he who enters into God's rest has himself also rested from his deeds, just as God did from his.¹¹Therefore let us be eager to enter that rest, so that no one will fall into the kind of disobedience that they did.

¹²For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword. It pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.¹³No thing that has been created is hidden before God, but everything is bare and open to the eyes of the one to whom we must give an account.

¹⁴Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us firmly hold to our confession.¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses. Rather, we have someone who has in all ways been tempted as we are, except that he is without sin.¹⁶Let us then go with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

¹Some important and ancient copies read, But that message did not benefit those who heard it without joining faith to it .

Hebrews 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter tells why Jesus is the greatest high priest.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 4:3-4, 7, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's rest

The word "rest" seems to refer to at least two things in this chapter. It refers to a place or time when God will allow his people to rest from their work ([Hebrews 4:3](#)), and it refers to God resting on the seventh day ([Hebrews 4:4](#)).

Links:

- [Hebrews 4:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 4:1

as they were

Connecting Statement:

Here "they" refers to the Hebrews' ancestors who were alive during the time of Moses.

Chapter 4 continues the warning to believers starting in Hebrews 3:7.

But that message did not benefit those who did not unite in faith with those who obeyed

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true" or "Since God will certainly punish those who do not obey"

The author is talking about two groups of people, those who received God's covenant with faith, and those who heard it but did not believe. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "But that message benefited only those who believed and obeyed it"

let us fear

This is probably a hyperbole that refers to being very careful. Alternate translation: "we must be very careful"

unite

join

entering his rest

Hebrews 4:3

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "to enter the place of rest" or "to experience God's blessings of rest"

General Information:

Here the quotation, "As I swore ... rest," is from a psalm.

we who have believed

none of you may seem to have fallen short of it

"we who believe"

God's promise is spoken of as if it were a place to which people were trying to go. Alternate translation: "none of you fail to enter into God's rest, which he promised to us" or "God allows you all to enter into his rest as he promised us"

we who have believed enter that rest

Hebrews 4:2

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "we who have believed will enter the place of rest" or "we who have believed will experience God's blessings of rest"

For we were told the good news just as they were

just as he said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For we heard the good news just as they did"

"just as God said"

As I swore in my wrath

"As I swore when I was very angry"

They will never enter my rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "They will never enter the place of rest" or "They will never experience my blessings of rest"

his works were finished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he finished creating" or "he finished his works of creation"

from the foundation of the world

The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "at the beginning of the world" or "from the time he created the world"

Hebrews 4:4

General Information:

The quotation, "God rested on ... works," is from Moses's writings.

the seventh day

The word "seventh" is the ordinal number for "seven."

Hebrews 4:5

General Information:

This quotation, "They will never enter ... rest," is from a psalm.

Hebrews 4:6

it remains for some to enter that rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God still allows some people to enter his place of rest" or "God still allows some people to experience his blessings of rest"

Hebrews 4:7

General Information:

Here we find out that this quotation from the Psalms was written by David (Hebrews 3:7-8).

if you hear his voice

God's commands to Israel are spoken of as if he had given them in an audible voice. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:7]

do not harden your hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's mind. The phrase "harden your hearts" is a metaphor for being stubborn. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:8]

Hebrews 4:8

Connecting Statement:

Here the writer warns believers not to disobey but to enter into the rest God offers. He reminds them that God's word will convict them and that they can come in prayer with the confidence that God will help them.

if Joshua had given them rest

A person causing someone to rest is spoken of as if the person were giving someone rest. Alternate translation: "if Joshua had been able to cause the people to rest" or "if the Israelites during the time of Joshua had experienced God's blessings of rest"

Hebrews 4:9

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Hebrews 4:10

he who enters into God's rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they are a place to enter. Alternate translation: "the person who enters into God's place of rest" or "the person who experiences God's blessings of rest"

Hebrews 4:11

let us be eager to enter that rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were a place to enter. Alternate translation: "we should also do everything we can to rest with God where he is"

will fall into the kind of disobedience that they did

Disobedience is spoken of as if it were a hole that a person could physically fall into by accident. This passage can be reworded so that the abstract noun "disobedience" is expressed as the verb "disobey." Alternate translation: "will disobey in the same way as they did"

that they did

Here "they" refers to the Hebrews' ancestors during the time of Moses.

Hebrews 4:12

the word of God is living ... It pierces ... is able

Here "word of God" refers to anything that God has communicated to humanity, whether through speech or through written messages. Alternate translation: "the words of God are living ... They pierce ... are able"

living and active

This speaks about God's word as if it were alive. It means when God speaks, it is powerful and effective.

sharper than any two-edged sword

A two-edged sword can easily cut through a person's flesh. God's word is very effective in showing what is in a person's heart and thoughts.

two-edged sword

a sword with a blade that is sharp on both edges

It pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow

This continues speaking about God's word as if it were a sword. Here the sword is so sharp that it can cut through and divide parts of the human that are very difficult or even impossible to divide. This means that there is nothing inside us that we can hide from God.

soul and spirit

These are two different but closely related nonphysical parts of a human. The "soul" is what causes a person to be alive. The "spirit" is the part of a person that causes him to be able to know and believe in God.

joints and marrow

The "joint" is what holds two bones together. The "marrow" is the center part of the bone.

is able to discern

This speaks about God's word as if it were a person who could know something. Alternate translation: "exposes"

the thoughts and intentions of the heart

"Heart" here is a metonym for "inner self." Alternate translation: "what a person is thinking and intends to do"

Hebrews 4:13

No thing that has been created is hidden before God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Nothing that God has created can hide from him"

everything is bare and open

This speaks about all things as if they were a person standing bare, or a box that is open. Alternate translation: "everything is completely exposed"

bare and open

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that nothing is hidden from God.

to the eyes of the one to whom we must give an account

God is spoken of as if he had eyes. Alternate translation: "to God, who will judge how we have lived"

Hebrews 4:14

who has passed through the heavens

"who has entered where God is"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

let us firmly hold to our confession

The word "confession" is a metonym for what a person believes and confesses. This is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could grasp firmly. Alternate translation: "let us continue to believe confidently in him, as we say that we do"

Hebrews 4:15

we do not have a high priest who cannot feel sympathy ... Rather, we have

This double negative is used to correct an incorrect idea that the reader might have, that the high priest cannot feel sympathy. Alternate translation: "we have a high priest who can feel sympathy ... Rather, we have"

who has in all ways been tempted as we are

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who has endured temptation in every way that we have" or "whom the devil has tempted in every way that he tempts us"

he is without sin

"he did not sin"

Hebrews 4:16

to the throne of grace

"to God's throne, where there is grace." Here "throne" refers to God ruling as king. Alternate translation: "to where our gracious God is sitting on his throne"

we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need

Here "mercy" and "grace" are spoken of as if they were objects that can be given or can be found. Alternate translation: "God may be merciful and gracious and help us in time of need"

5 ¹For every high priest, chosen from among people, is appointed to act on the behalf of people in the things concerning God, so that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.²He can deal gently with those who are ignorant and who have been deceived, because he himself is subject to weakness.³Because of this, he also is required to offer sacrifices for his own sins, just as he does for the people's sins.

⁴No one takes this honor for himself. Rather, he is called by God, just as Aaron was.⁵In the same way, neither did Christ glorify himself by making himself high priest. Instead, the one speaking to him said,

"You are my Son;
today I have become your Father."

⁶It is just as he also says in another place,

"You are a priest forever
after the manner of Melchizedek."

⁷During the days of his flesh, Christ offered up both prayers and requests with loud cries and tears to God, the one able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his godly life.⁸Even though he was a Son, he learned obedience from what he suffered.

⁹He was made perfect and became, for everyone who obeys him, the cause of eternal salvation.¹⁰He was designated by God as high priest after the manner of Melchizedek.

¹¹We have much to say about Jesus, but it is hard to explain since you have become dull in hearing.

¹²For though by this time you should be teachers, you still have need for someone to teach you the elementary principles of God's messages. You need milk, not solid food!¹³For anyone who only takes milk is inexperienced with the message of righteousness, because he is still a little child.¹⁴But solid food is for the mature. These are those who, because of their maturity, have their understanding trained for distinguishing good from evil.

Hebrews 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a continuation of the teaching of the previous chapter.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 5:5-6.

Special concepts in this chapter

High priest

Only a high priest could offer sacrifices so that God could forgive sins, so Jesus had to be a high priest. The law of Moses commanded that the high priest be from the tribe of Levi, but Jesus was from the tribe of Judah. God made him a priest like the priest Melchizedek, who lived at the time of Abraham, before there was a tribe of Levi.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Milk and solid food

The writer speaks of Christians who are only able to understand simple things about Jesus as if they were babies, who drink only milk and cannot eat solid food.

Links:

- [Hebrews 5:1 Notes](#)
-

Hebrews 5:1

weakness

Connecting Statement:

the desire to sin

The writer describes the sinfulness of the Old Testament priests, and then he shows that Christ has a better kind of priesthood, one not based on Aaron's priesthood but on the priesthood of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 5:3

he also is required

chosen from among people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God also requires him"

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God chooses from among the people"

Hebrews 5:4

takes this honor

is appointed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God appoints"

Honor is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could grasp in his hands.

takes this honor

to act on the behalf of people

"to represent the people"

The "honor" or praise and respect that people gave to the high priest stand for his task.

so that he may offer

he is called by God, just as Aaron was

The word "he" refers to a high priest.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God calls him, just as he called Aaron"

Hebrews 5:2

Hebrews 5:5

He can deal gently

General Information:

"The high priest can deal gently"

This quotation is from the Psalms in the Old Testament.

those ... who have been deceived

the one speaking to him said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those ... whom others have deceived" or "those ... who believe what is false"

"God said to him"

who have been deceived

You are my Son; today I have become your Father

"who believe false things and so behave badly"

These two phrases mean essentially the same thing. See how you translated them in [Hebrews 1:5]

is subject to weakness

Son ... Father

The high priest's own weakness is spoken of as if it were a another person who rules over him. Alternate translation: "is spiritually weak" or "is weak against sin"

These are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God the Father.

Hebrews 5:6

General Information:

This prophecy is from a Psalm of David.

he also says

To whom God is speaking can be stated clearly.

Alternate translation: "he also says to Christ"

in another place

"in another place in the scriptures"

after the manner of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "in the same way that Melchizedek was a priest"

Hebrews 5:7

During the days of his flesh

Here "the days" stands for a period of time. And, "flesh" stand for Jesus's earthly life. Alternate translation: "While he lived on earth"

prayers and requests

Both of these words mean basically the same thing.

the one able to save him from death

Possible meanings are 1) God was able to save Christ so that he would not die. Alternate translation: 'to save him from dying' or 2) God was able to save Christ after Christ's death by making him alive again. If possible, translate this in a way that allows both interpretations.

he was heard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God heard him"

Hebrews 5:8

a Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Hebrews 5:9

He was made perfect

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God made him perfect"

made perfect

Here this means being made mature, able to honor God in all aspects of life.

became, for everyone who obeys him, the cause of eternal salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "now he saves all who obey him and causes them to live forever"

Hebrews 5:10

He was designated by God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God designated him" or "God appointed him"

as high priest after the manner of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "to be the sort of high priest that Melchizedek was"

Hebrews 5:11

Connecting Statement:

Here the writer begins his third warning. He warns these believers that they are still not mature and encourages them to learn God's word so they can understand right from wrong.

We have much to say

Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Alternate translation: "I have much to say"

you have become dull in hearing

The ability to understand and obey is spoken of as if it were the ability to listen. And the ability to listen is spoken of as if it were a metal tool that becomes dull with use. Alternate translation: "you have trouble understanding it"

Hebrews 5:12

elementary principles of God's messages

Here "elementary principles" refers to the first things people should be able to understand. Alternate translation: "basic truths of God's messages" or "beginning lessons of God's word"

You need milk

Truths about God that are easy to understand are spoken of as if they were milk, the only food that infants can take. Alternate translation: "You have become like babies and can drink only milk"

milk, not solid food

Truths about God that are difficult to understand are spoken of as if they were solid food, suitable for adults. Alternate translation: "milk instead of solid food that adults can eat"

Hebrews 5:13

takes milk

Here "takes" stands for "drinks." Alternate translation: "drinks milk"

because he is still a little child

Spiritual maturity is compared with the kind of food that a growing child eats. Solid food is not for a tiny baby, and that is a figure describing a young Christian who only learns simple truths; but later, more solid food is given to the little child, just as when a person matures he can learn about matters that are more difficult.

Hebrews 5:14

who because of their maturity have their understanding trained for distinguishing good from evil

People trained to understand something are spoken of as if their ability to understand had been trained. Alternate translation: "who are mature and can distinguish between good and evil"

⁶ So then, let us leave the beginning of the message of Christ and move forward to maturity. Let us not lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith in God,² nor the foundation of teaching about baptisms, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.³ We will also do this if God permits.

⁴ For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, who tasted the heavenly gift, who were sharers of the Holy Spirit,⁵ and who tasted God's good word and the powers of the age to come,⁶ but who then fell away—it is impossible to restore them again to repentance. This is because they crucify the Son of God for themselves again, and publicly shame him.

⁷ For the land that drinks in the rain that often comes on it, and that gives birth to the plants useful to those for whom the land was worked—this is the land that receives a blessing from God.⁸ But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and is near to a curse. Its end is in burning.

⁹ But we are convinced about better things concerning you, beloved ones—things that concern salvation—even though we speak like this.¹⁰ For God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love you showed for his name, because you served his holy people, and you are still serving them.

¹¹ We greatly desire that each of you may show the same diligence to the end, in order to make your hope certain.

¹² This is so that you will not become lazy, but imitators of those who by faith and patience inherit the promises.

¹³ For when God made his promise to Abraham, he swore by himself, since he could not swear by anyone greater.

¹⁴ He said, "I will certainly bless you and give you many descendants."¹⁵ In this way, Abraham obtained what was promised after he had patiently waited.

¹⁶ For people swear by someone greater than themselves. At the end of each of their disputes, an oath serves as confirmation.¹⁷ When God decided to show more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable quality of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath.¹⁸ He did this so that by two unchangeable things—with which it is impossible for God to lie—we, who have fled for refuge, will have a strong encouragement to hold firmly to the hope set before us.

¹⁹ We have this as a secure and reliable anchor for the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,²⁰ where Jesus, who went before us, has entered into that place on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abrahamic Covenant

In the covenant that God made with Abraham, God promised to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation. He also promised to protect Abraham's descendants and to give them land of their own. (See: covenant)

Links:

- [Hebrews 6:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 6:1

let us leave the beginning of the message of Christ and move forward to maturity

Connecting Statement:

The writer continues with what immature Hebrew believers need to do to become mature Christians. He reminds them of the foundational teachings.

This speaks about the basic teachings as if they were the beginning of a journey and the mature teachings as if they were the end of a journey. Alternate translation: "let us stop only discussing what we first learned and start understanding more mature teachings as well"

Let us not lay again the foundation

The teachings of the faith are spoken of as if they were a building, and the basic, elementary teachings are the foundation. Alternate translation: "Let us not repeat the basic teachings"

dead works

Sinful deeds are spoken of as if they belonged to the world of the dead.

Hebrews 6:2

nor the foundation of teaching

The teachings of the faith are spoken of as if they were a building, and the basic, elementary teachings are the foundation. Alternate translation: "nor the basic teachings"

laying on of hands

This practice was done to set someone apart for special service or position.

Hebrews 6:3

General Information:

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Hebrews 6:4

those who were once enlightened

Understanding is spoken of as if it were illumination. Alternate translation: "those who once understood the message about Christ"

who tasted the heavenly gift

Experiencing salvation is spoken of as if it were tasting food. Alternate translation: "who experienced God's saving power"

who were sharers of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, who comes to believers, is spoken of as if he were an object that people could share. Alternate translation: "who received the Holy Spirit"

Hebrews 6:5

who tasted God's good word

Learning God's message is spoken of as if it were tasting food. Alternate translation: "who learned about God's good message"

the powers of the age to come

This means the power of God when his kingdom is fully present in all the world. In this sense, "the powers" refer to God himself, who holds all power. Alternate translation: "how God will work powerfully in the future"

Hebrews 6:6

it is impossible to restore them again to repentance

"it is impossible to bring them back to repent again"

they crucify the Son of God for themselves again

When people turn away from God, it is as though they crucify Jesus again. Alternate translation: "it is like they crucify for themselves the very Son of God again"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

Hebrews 6:7

the land that drinks in the rain

Farmland that benefits from much rain is spoken of as if it were a person who drinks in the rainwater. Alternate translation: "the land that absorbs the rain"

that gives birth to the plants

Farmland that produces crops is spoken of as if it gives birth to them. Alternate translation: "that produces plants"

the land that receives a blessing from God

Rain and crops are seen as proof that God has helped the farmland. The farmland is spoken of as if it were a person who could receive God's blessing.

a blessing from God

Here "blessing" means help from God, not spoken words.

Hebrews 6:8

is near to a curse

This speaks of "curse" as if it were a place to which a person could draw near. Alternate translation: "is in danger of God cursing it"

Its end is in burning

The farmer will burn everything in the field.

Hebrews 6:9

we are convinced

Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Alternate translation: "I am convinced" or "I am certain"

about better things concerning you

This means they are doing better than those who have rejected God, disobeyed him, and now can no longer repent so that God will forgive them ([Hebrews 6:4-6](#)). Alternate translation: "that you are doing better things than what I have mentioned"

things that concern salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "things that concern God saving you"

Hebrews 6:10

For God is not unjust. He will not forget

This double negative can mean that God in his justice will remember what good things his people have done. Alternate translation: "For God is just. He will certainly remember"

for his name

God's "name" is a metonym that stands for God himself. Alternate translation: "for him"

Hebrews 6:11

We greatly desire

Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Alternate translation: "I greatly desire"

diligence

careful, hard work

to the end

The implicit meaning can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "to the end of your lives"

in order to make your hope certain

Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Alternate translation: "in order to have complete certainty that you will receive what God has promised you"

Hebrews 6:12

imitators

An "imitator" is someone who copies the behavior of someone else.

inherit the promises

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "receive what God promised them"

Hebrews 6:13

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Hebrews 6:14

He said

God said

Hebrews 6:15

what was promised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God promised him"

Hebrews 6:16

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Hebrews 6:17

to the heirs of the promise

The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were to inherit property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "to those who would receive what he promised"

the unchangeable quality of his purpose

"that his purpose would never change" or "that he would always do what he said he would do"

Hebrews 6:18

we, who have fled for refuge

Believers, who trust in God for him to protect them, are spoken of as if they were running to a safe place. Alternate translation: "we, who have trusted him"

will have a strong encouragement to hold firmly to the hope set before us

The phrase "to hold firmly to the hope set before us" is a metaphor meaning to continue to hope in what God has promised to do. Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Alternate translation: "will continue to trust in God just as he encouraged us to do"

set before us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God has placed before us"

Hebrews 6:19

Connecting Statement:

Having finished his third warning and encouragement to the believers, the writer of Hebrews continues his comparison of Jesus as priest to Melchizedek as priest.

as a secure and reliable anchor for the soul

Just as an anchor keeps a boat from drifting in the water, Jesus keeps us secure in God's presence. Alternate translation: "that causes us to live securely in God's presence"

a secure and reliable anchor

Here the words "secure" and "reliable" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the complete reliability of the anchor. Alternate translation: "a completely reliable anchor"

hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain

Confidence is spoken of as if it were a person who could go into the most holy place of the temple.

the inner place

This was the most holy place in the temple. It was thought to be the place where God was most intensely present among his people. In this passage, this place stands for heaven and God's throne room.

Hebrews 6:20

after the order of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "in the same way that Melchizedek was a priest"

7 ¹It was this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him.²It was to him that Abraham gave a tenth of everything. First, the translation of his name means "king of righteousness"; then he is also "king of Salem," that is, "king of peace."³He is without father, without mother, without ancestors, with neither beginning of days nor end of life. And resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

⁴See how great this man was to whom the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the things that he had taken in battle.⁵The descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a command according to the law to collect tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, even though they, too, are descended from Abraham.⁶But Melchizedek, whose descent was not traced from them, received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him, the one who had the promises.

⁷There is no denying that the lesser person is blessed by the greater person.⁸In this case, mortal men receive tithes, but in that case, it is testified that he lives on.⁹And, in a manner of speaking, Levi, who received tithes, also paid tithes through Abraham,¹⁰because Levi was in the body of his ancestor when Melchizedek met Abraham.

¹¹Now if perfection were possible through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the manner of Melchizedek, and not be considered to be after the manner of Aaron?¹²For when the priesthood is changed, the law must also be changed.

¹³For the one about whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar.¹⁴Now clearly it is from Judah that our Lord was born, a tribe that Moses never mentioned concerning priests.

¹⁵What we say is even clearer when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek.¹⁶This one became a priest, not based on a law of physical requirement, but by the power of an everlasting life.¹⁷For scripture witnesses about him:

"You are a priest forever
according to the order of Melchizedek."

¹⁸For not only has the former command been set aside because it is weak and useless—¹⁹for the law made nothing perfect—but also a better hope is introduced, through which we come near to God.

²⁰And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath,²¹but he became a priest with an oath by the one who said to him,

"The Lord has sworn and he will not change his mind:
'You are a priest forever.'"

²²By this also Jesus has given the guarantee of a better covenant.²³The former priests were many in number, since death prevented them from continuing in office.²⁴But because Jesus continues to live forever, he has a permanent priesthood.

²⁵Therefore he is also able to save completely those who approach God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.²⁶For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, who is holy, innocent, pure, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

²⁷He does not need, unlike the high priests, to offer up daily sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He did this once for all when he offered himself.²⁸For the law appoints as high priests men who have weaknesses. But the word of the oath, which came after the law, appointed a Son, who has been made perfect forever.

Hebrews 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 7:17, 21, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

High priest

Only a high priest could offer sacrifices so that God could forgive sins, so Jesus had to be a high priest. The law of Moses commanded that the high priest be from the tribe of Levi, but Jesus was from the tribe of Judah. God made him a priest like the priest Melchizedek, who lived at the time of Abraham, before there was a tribe of Levi.

Links:

- [Hebrews 7:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 7:1

Connecting Statement:

The writer of Hebrews continues his comparison of Jesus as priest to Melchizedek as priest.

Salem

This is the name of a city.

Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings

This is refers to when Abraham and his men went and defeated the armies of four kings in order to rescue his nephew, Lot, and his family.

Hebrews 7:2

It was to him

"It was to Melchizedek"

king of righteousness ... king of peace

"righteous king ... peaceful king"

Hebrews 7:3

He is without father, without mother, without ancestors, with neither beginning of days nor end of life

It is possible to think from this passage that Melchizedek was neither born nor did he die. However, it is likely that all the writer means is that the Scriptures provide no information about Melchizedek's ancestry, birth, or death.

Hebrews 7:4

Connecting Statement:

The writer states that the priesthood of Melchizedek is better than Aaron's priesthood and then reminds his readers that the priesthood of Aaron did not make anything perfect.

this man was

"Melchizedek was"

Hebrews 7:5

The descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office

The author says this because not all of Levi's sons became priests. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Levi who become priests"

from the people

"from the people of Israel"

from their brothers

Here "brothers" means they are all related to each other through Abraham. Alternate translation: "from their relatives"

Hebrews 7:6

whose descent was not traced from them

"who was not a descendant of Levi"

the one who had the promises

The things that God promised to do for Abraham are spoken of as if they were objects that he could possess.

Alternate translation: the one to whom God had spoken his promises"

Hebrews 7:7

the lesser person is blessed by the greater person

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the more important person blesses the less important person"

Hebrews 7:8

In this case ... in that case

These phrases are used to compare the Levite priests with Melchizedek. Your language may have a way to emphasize that the author is making a comparison.

is testified that he lives on

It is never explicitly written in scripture that Melchizedek dies. The author of Hebrews speaks of this absence of information about Melchizedek's death in scripture as if it were a positive statement that he is still alive. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "scripture shows that he lives on"

Hebrews 7:9

Levi, who received tithes, also paid tithes through Abraham

Since Levi had not been born yet, the author speaks of him as still being in Abraham's body. In this way, the author argues that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham.

Hebrews 7:10

Levi was in the body of his ancestor

Since Levi had not been born yet, the author speaks of him as still being in Abraham's body. In this way, the author argues that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham.

Hebrews 7:11

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the manner of Melchizedek, and not be considered to be after the manner of Aaron?

This question emphasizes that it was unexpected that priests come after the order of Melchizedek. Alternate translation: "no one would have needed another priest, one who was like Melchizedek and not like Aaron, to arise."

to arise

"to come" or "to appear"

after the manner of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "in the same way that Melchizedek was a priest"

not be considered to be after the manner of Aaron

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "not be after the manner of Aaron" or "who is not a priest like Aaron"

Hebrews 7:12

For when the priesthood is changed, the law must also be changed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For when God changed the priesthood, he also had to change the law"

Hebrews 7:13

For the one

This refers to Jesus.

about whom these things are said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "about whom I am speaking"

Hebrews 7:14

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

it is from Judah that our Lord was born

The words "our Lord" refer to Jesus.

from Judah

"from the tribe of Judah"

Hebrews 7:15

when another priest arises

"when another priest comes"

in the likeness of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "in the same way that Melchizedek was a priest"

Hebrews 7:16

This one became a priest

The words "This one" refer to the one who became priest in the likeness of Melchizedek.

not based on a law of physical requirement

He became priest, but it was not because he met the physical requirement.

a law of physical requirement

This physical requirement is that only the descendants of priests could become priests. Alternate translation: "a law of human descent" or "a law that required priests to be descendants of priests"

Hebrews 7:17

General Information:

This quote comes from a psalm of King David.

For scripture witnesses about him

This speaks about scripture as if it were a person who could witness about something. Alternate translation: "For God witnesses about him through the scriptures" or "For this is what was written about him in the scripture"

according to the order of Melchizedek

There were two groups of priests. One was made up of the descendants of Levi. The other was made up of Melchizedek and Jesus Christ. Alternate translation:

"according to the line of Melchizedek" or "according to the priesthood of Melchizedek"

Hebrews 7:18

Connecting Statement:

The writer gives the first of two statements that explain [Hebrews 7:17](#).

has the former command been set aside

Here "set aside" is a metaphor for making something invalid. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has God made the commandment invalid"

Hebrews 7:19

Connecting Statement:

After a short statement that explains [Hebrews 7:18](#), the writer gives the second of two statements that explain [Hebrews 7:17](#).

the law made nothing perfect

The law is spoken of as if it were a person who could act. Alternate translation: "no one could become perfect by obeying the law"

a better hope is introduced

Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has introduced a better hope" or "God has given us reason for a more confident hope"

through which we come near to God

Worshiping God and having his favor are spoken of as coming near to him. Alternate translation: "and because of this hope we approach God" or "and because of this hope we worship God"

Hebrews 7:20

And it was not without an oath!

The word "it" refers to the act of God choosing Jesus to be the eternal priest. This can be stated in positive form, and it can be stated clearly who made the oath. Alternate translation: "And God did not choose this new priest without swearing an oath!" or "And God showed how important it was by swearing an oath!"

Hebrews 7:21

General Information:

This quote comes from the same psalm of David as Hebrews 7:17.

Hebrews 7:22

has given the guarantee of a better covenant

"has told us that we can be sure that there will be a better covenant"

Hebrews 7:23

Connecting Statement:

The writer then assures these Jewish believers that Christ has the better priesthood because he lives forever and the priests that descended from Aaron all die, stopping them from continuing to be priests.

Hebrews 7:24

he has a permanent priesthood

A priest's work is spoken of as if it were an object that the priest possesses. This can be worded to avoid the abstract noun. Alternate translation: "he is a priest permanently"

Hebrews 7:25

Therefore he

You can make explicit what "Therefore" implies. Alternate translation: "Because Christ is our high priest who lives forever, he"

those who approach God through him

"those who come to God because of what Jesus has done"

Hebrews 7:26

exalted above the heavens

"whom God has raised up to the highest heavens." The author speaks of possessing more honor and power

than anyone else as if it were a position that is up above all things. Alternate translation: "whom God has given more honor and power than anyone else"

Hebrews 7:27

General Information:

Here the words "He," "his," and "himself" refer to Christ.

Hebrews 7:28

the law appoints as high priests men who have weaknesses

Here "the law" is a metonym for the men who appointed the high priests according to the law of Moses. The focus is not on the men who did this, but on the fact that they did this according to the law. Alternate translation: "according to the law, men appoint as high priests men who have weaknesses" or "for according to the law, men who have weaknesses are appointed as high priests"

men who have weaknesses

"men who are spiritually weak" or "men who are weak against sin"

the word of the oath, which came after the law, appointed a Son

The "word of the oath" represents God, who made the oath. Alternate translation: "God appointed a Son by his oath, which he made after he gave the law, a Son" or "after he had given the law, God swore an oath and appointed his Son"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

who has been made perfect

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who has completely obeyed God and become mature"

8 ¹Now the point of what we are saying is this: We have a high priest who has sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.²He is a servant in the holy place, the true tabernacle that the Lord, not a man, set up.

³For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary to have something to offer.⁴Now if Christ were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the law.⁵They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. It is just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to construct the tabernacle: God said, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown to you on the mountain."

⁶But now Christ has received a much better ministry, just as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which is based on better promises.⁷For if that first covenant had been faultless, no occasion for a second would have been sought.

⁸For when God found fault with the people, he said,

"See, the days are coming—says the Lord—
when I will make a new covenant
with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah.

9 It will not be like the covenant
that I made with their ancestors
on the day that I took them by their hand
to lead them out of the land of Egypt.
For they did not carefully obey my covenant,
and I disregarded them—
says the Lord.

10 This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days, says the Lord.
I will put my laws into their minds,
and I will also write them on their hearts.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

11 They will not teach each one his fellow citizen
and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord.'
For they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful toward their evil deeds,
and their sins I will not remember any longer."

¹³By calling this covenant "new," he declared the first covenant to be obsolete, and what has become obsolete and old will soon disappear.

Hebrews 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The author finishes describing how and why Jesus is the most important high priest. Then he begins to speak about how the new covenant is better to the covenant God made with Moses. (See: covenant)

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 8:8-12, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

New covenant

The author tells how Jesus has established a new covenant that is better than the covenant that God established with the Israelites. (See: covenant)

Links:

- [Hebrews 8:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 8:1

Connecting Statement:

The writer, having shown that Christ's priesthood is better than the earthly priesthood, shows that the earthly priesthood was a pattern of heavenly things. Christ has a superior ministry, a superior covenant.

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

we are saying

Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Because the writer does not include his readers here, the word "we" is exclusive. Alternate translation: "I am saying" or "I am writing"

We have a high priest

The author is including the readers here, so the word "we" is inclusive.

sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Hebrews 1:3]

Hebrews 8:2

the true tabernacle that the Lord, not a man, set up

People built the earthly tabernacle out of animal skins fastened to a wooden framework, and they set it up in the manner of a tent. Here "true tabernacle" means the heavenly tabernacle that God created.

Hebrews 8:3

For every high priest is appointed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For God appoints every priest"

Hebrews 8:4

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

according to the law

"as God requires in the law"

Hebrews 8:5

They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things

The words "copy" and "shadow" have similar meanings and are metaphors meaning that something is not the real thing but it is similar to the real thing. These words emphasize that the priesthood and the earthly temple were images of Christ, the true high priest, and the heavenly temple. Alternate translation: "They serve what is a vague image of the heavenly things" or "They serve what is only similar to the heavenly things"

It is just as Moses was warned by God when he was

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is just as God warned Moses when Moses was"

was about to construct the tabernacle

Moses did not construct the tabernacle himself. He ordered the people to construct it. Alternate translation: "was about to command the people to construct the tabernacle"

See that

"Make sure that"

to the pattern

"to the design"

that was shown to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"that I showed you"

on the mountain

You can make explicit that "mountain" refers to Mount Sinai. Alternate translation: "on Mount Sinai"

Hebrews 8:6

Connecting Statement:

This section begins to show that the new covenant is better than the old covenant with Israel and Judah.

Christ has received

"God has given Christ"

mediator of a better covenant

A mediator is a person who helps two parties come to an agreement. Christ, as mediator, made it possible for a better covenant between God and humans to exist.

covenant, which is based on better promises

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"covenant. It was this covenant that God made based on better promises" or "covenant. God promised better things when he made this covenant"

Hebrews 8:7

first ... second

The words "first" and "second" are ordinal numbers. Alternate translation: "old covenant ... new covenant"

had been faultless

"had been perfect"

no occasion for a second would have been sought

The word "second" also describes a "covenant."

Alternate translation: "no one would have sought a way to establish a second covenant" or "there would have been no reason to establish a second covenant"

Hebrews 8:8

General Information:

In this quotation the prophet Jeremiah foretold of a new covenant that God would make.

with the people

"with the people of Israel"

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

the house of Israel and with the house of Judah

The people of Israel and Judah are spoken of as if they were houses. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel and with the people of Judah"

Hebrews 8:9

I took them by their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt

This metaphor represents God's great love and concern. Alternate translation: "I led them out of Egypt like a father leads his young child"

Hebrews 8:10

General Information:

This continues the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah.

the house of Israel

The people of Israel are spoken of as if they were a house. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

after those days

"after that time"

I will put my laws into their minds

God's requirements are spoken of as if they were objects that could be placed somewhere. People's ability to think is spoken of as if it were a place. Alternate translation: "I will enable them to understand my laws"

I will also write them on their hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's inner being. The phrase "write them on their hearts" is a metaphor for enabling people to obey the law. Alternate translation: "I will also put them in their hearts" or "I will enable them to obey my law"

I will be their God

"I will be the God they worship"

they will be my people

"they will be the people for whom I care"

Hebrews 8:11

General Information:

This continues the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah.

They will not teach each one his fellow citizen and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord.'

This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "They will not need to teach their neighbors or brothers to know me"

citizen ... brother

Both of these refer to a fellow Israelite.

Know the Lord ... will all know me

"Know" here stands for acknowledge.

Hebrews 8:12

toward their evil deeds

This stands for the people who committed these evil deeds. Alternate translation: "to those who did evil deeds"

their sins I will not remember any longer

Here "remember" stands for "think about."

Hebrews 8:13

he declared the first covenant to be obsolete

"he declared that the first covenant was no longer useful"

what has become obsolete

"what is no longer useful"

obsolete

Something that is obsolete is no longer useful because people can now use something better.

9¹ Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary.² For a tabernacle was prepared. The first room, in which were the lampstand, the table, and the bread of the presence, was called the holy place.

³ Behind the second curtain was another room in the tabernacle, called the most holy place.⁴ It had a golden altar for incense. It also had the ark of the covenant, which was completely overlaid with gold. Inside it was a golden jar that held the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant.⁵ Above the ark of the covenant, glorious cherubim overshadowed the atonement lid, which we cannot now talk about in detail.

⁶ After these things were prepared, the priests always entered the outer room of the tabernacle to perform their services.⁷ But only the high priest entered the second room, once each year, and not without blood that he offered for himself and for the people's unintentional sins.

⁸ The Holy Spirit showed that as long as the first tabernacle was still standing, the way into the most holy place had not yet appeared.⁹ This was an illustration for the present time. Both the gifts and sacrifices that are now being offered are not able to perfect the worshiper's conscience.¹⁰ They are only concerned with food and drink and various ceremonial washings, regulations for the body until the time of the new order.

¹¹ Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come. He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that was not made by human hands, one not belonging to this created world. ¹² It was not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood that he entered into the most holy place once for all and secured our eternal redemption.

¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of a heifer's ashes on those who have been defiled sanctifies them for the cleansing of their flesh,¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?¹⁵ For this reason, he is the mediator of a new covenant. This is so that, since a death has taken place to redeem those under the first covenant from their transgressions, those who are called will receive the promise of an eternal inheritance.

¹⁶ For where there is a will, the death of the person who made it must be proven.¹⁷ For a will is only valid when there has been a death, because it has no force while the one who made it is still alive.

¹⁸ So not even the first covenant was established without blood.¹⁹ For when Moses had given every command in the law to all the people, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water, red wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people.²⁰ Then he said, "This is the blood of the covenant that God has commanded for you."

²¹ In the same manner, he sprinkled the blood on the tabernacle and all the containers used in the ministry.

²² According to the law, almost everything is cleansed with blood. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

²³ Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in heaven should be cleansed with these animal sacrifices. However, the heavenly things themselves had to be cleansed with much better sacrifices.²⁴ For Christ did not enter into the most holy place made with hands, which is only a copy of the true one. Rather, he entered into heaven itself, to appear now in God's presence for us.

²⁵ He did not go there in order to offer himself many times, as does the high priest, who enters the most holy place year by year with the blood of another.²⁶ If that had been the case, then he would have had to suffer many times since the foundation of the world. But now he has appeared at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

²⁷ Just as man is appointed to die once, and after that comes judgment,²⁸ so also, Christ was offered once to take away the sins of many, and will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but for the salvation of those who are waiting for him.

¹ Some important and ancient Greek copies read, Christ came as a high priest of the good things that are to come .

Hebrews 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter describes how Jesus is better than the tabernacle and all its laws and rules. This chapter will be difficult to understand if the first five books of the Old Testament have not yet been translated.

Special concepts in this chapter

Will

A will is a legal document that describes what will happen to a person's property after he dies.

Blood

In the Old Testament, God had commanded the Israelites to offer sacrifices so that he would forgive their sins. Before they could offer these sacrifices, they had to kill animals and then offer not only the animal's body but also its blood. Shedding blood is a metaphor for killing an animal or person. Jesus offered his life, his blood, as a sacrifice when he allowed men to kill him. The writer of the Book of Hebrews is saying in this chapter that this sacrifice is better than the sacrifices of the Old Testament. (See: and covenant)

Return of Christ

Jesus will return to finish the work that he began when he died so that God would forgive his people's sins. He will finish saving those people who are waiting for him. (See: save)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

First covenant

This refers to the covenant that God made with Moses. However, before he made this covenant, God had made a covenant with Abraham. But this was the first covenant that God had made with the people of Israel. You may decide to translate "the first covenant" as "the earlier covenant."

Links:

- [Hebrews 9:1](#)

Hebrews 9:1	Now
Connecting Statement:	This word marks a new part of the teaching.
The author begins a description of the place in which God's faithful people worshiped during the time of the old covenant. He is describing a "tabernacle," a place where people dwell, in which there are two sections, each of which he also calls a tabernacle.	first covenant See how you translated this in Hebrews 8:7. had regulations
General Information:	"had detailed instructions" or "had rules"
The writer makes clear to these Jewish believers that the laws and the tabernacle of the old covenant were only pictures of the better, new covenant.	

Hebrews 9:2

For

The author is continuing the discussion from Hebrews 8:7.

a tabernacle was prepared

A tabernacle was constructed and made ready for use. This idea can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Israelites prepared a tabernacle"

tabernacle

Or "tent." This is perhaps a metaphor for a place in which the priests set the lampstand and other items.

The first room

"The first room." Some modern translations read the ellipsis as "The first room in the tabernacle" or "The first section of the tabernacle."

the lampstand, the table, and the bread of the presence

These objects are all accompanied by the definite article "the," because the author assumes that his readers already know about these things.

bread of the presence

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "presence" is expressed as the verb "display" or "present." Alternate translation: "bread on display before God" or "bread the priests presented to God"

Hebrews 9:3

Behind the second curtain

The first curtain was the outer wall of the tabernacle, so the "second curtain" was the curtain between the "holy place" and the "most holy place."

second

This is the ordinal word for the number two.

Hebrews 9:4

Inside it

"Inside the ark of the covenant"

Aaron's rod that budded

This was the rod Aaron had when God proved to the people of Israel that he had chosen Aaron as his priest by making Aaron's rod bud.

that budded

"from which leaves and flowers had grown"

tablets of the covenant

Here "tablets" are flat pieces of stone that had writing on them. This refers to the stone tablets on which the ten commandments were written.

Hebrews 9:5

glorious cherubim overshadowed the atonement lid

When the Israelites were making the ark of the covenant, God commanded them to carve two cherubim facing each other, with their wings touching, over the atonement lid of the ark of the covenant. Here they are spoken of as providing shade for the ark of the covenant. Alternate translation: "glorious cherubim covered the atonement lid with their wings"

cherubim

Here "cherubim" means figures of two cherubim.

which we cannot

Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Alternate translation: "which I cannot"

Hebrews 9:6

After these things were prepared

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After the priests prepared these things"

Hebrews 9:7

not without blood that he offered

Another possible meaning is "not without blood, which he offered."

not without blood

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "always with blood"

blood

This is the blood of the bull and goat that the high priest had to sacrifice on the Day of Atonement.

Hebrews 9:8

the most holy place

Possible meanings are 1) the inner room of the tabernacle on earth or 2) God's presence in heaven.

the first tabernacle was still standing

Possible meanings are 1) "the outer room of the tabernacle was still standing" or 2) "the earthly tabernacle and the sacrificial system still existed."

Hebrews 9:9

This was an illustration

"This was a picture" or "This was a symbol"

for the present time

"for now"

that are now being offered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the priests now offer"

are not able to perfect the worshiper's conscience

The writer speaks of a person's conscience as if it were an object that could be made better and better until it was without fault. A person's conscience is his knowledge of right and wrong. It is also his awareness of whether or not he has done wrong. If he knows he has done wrong, we say that he feels guilty. Alternate translation: "are not able to make the worshiper free from guilt"

the worshiper's conscience

The writer appears to refer to only one worshiper, but he means all those who go to worship God at the tabernacle.

Hebrews 9:10

until the time of the new order

"until God creates the new order"

new order

"new covenant"

Hebrews 9:11

Connecting Statement:

Having described the service of the tabernacle under God's law, the writer makes clear that Christ's service under the new covenant is better because it is sealed with his blood. It is better also because Christ has entered the true "tabernacle," that is, God's own presence in heaven, instead of entering, as other high priests, into the earthly tabernacle, which was only an imperfect copy.

good things

This does not refer to material things. It means the good things that God promised in his new covenant.

the greater and more perfect tabernacle

This refers to the heavenly tent or tabernacle, which is more important and more perfect than the earthly tabernacle.

that was not made by human hands

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that humans hands did not make"

human hands

Here "hands" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "humans"

Hebrews 9:12

most holy place

This means the most holy place in the heavenly tabernacle. It is most holy because God himself lives there.

Hebrews 9:13

sprinkling of a heifer's ashes on those who have been defiled

The priest would drop small amounts of the ashes on the people who were defiled.

for the cleansing of their flesh

Here "flesh" refers to the entire body. Alternate translation: "for the cleansing of their bodies"

Hebrews 9:14

how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

The author uses this question to emphasize that Christ's sacrifice was the most powerful. Alternate translation: "then certainly Christ's blood will cleanse our conscience even more from dead works to serve the living God! Because, through the eternal Spirit, he offered himself unblemished to God."

the blood of Christ

The "blood" of Christ stands for his death.

unblemished

A small, unusual spot or defect on a person's body is a metaphor for a small sin or moral fault. Alternate translation: "without even the smallest fault"

cleanse our conscience

Here "conscience" refers to a person's feeling of guilt. Believers no longer have to feel guilty for the sins they have committed because Jesus sacrificed himself and has forgiven them.

cleanse

Here "cleanse" stands for the action of relieving our consciences from guilt for the sins we have committed.

dead works

Sinful deeds are spoken of as if they belonged to the world of the dead.

Hebrews 9:15

For this reason

"As a result" or "Because of this"

he is the mediator of a new covenant

A mediator is a person who helps two parties come to an agreement. Christ, as mediator, made it possible for a better covenant between God and humans to exist. See how you translated a similar phrase in Hebrews 8:6.

first covenant

See how you translated this in Hebrews 8:7.

to redeem those under the first covenant from their transgressions

"to take away the transgressions of those who were under the first covenant." The abstract noun "transgressions" can be translated using the verb "transgress." Possible meanings are 1) here "their transgressions" is a metonym for the guilt of their transgressions. Alternate translation: "to take away the guilt of those who were under the first covenant." Or 2) here "their transgressions" is a metonym for the punishment for their transgressions. Alternate translation: "to take away the punishment that those who were under the first covenant deserved because they had transgressed"

those who are called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom God has called" or "those whom God has chosen to be his children"

inheritance

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member.

Hebrews 9:16

will

a legal document in which a person states who should receive his possessions when he himself dies

the death of the person who made it must be proven	Alternate translation: "the blood that brings into effect the covenant"
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone must prove that the person who made the will has died"	Hebrews 9:21
Hebrews 9:17	he sprinkled
General Information:	"Moses sprinkled"
This page has intentionally been left blank.	sprinkled
Hebrews 9:18	Sprinkling was a symbolic action done by the priests by which they applied the benefits of the covenant to people and to objects. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 9:19]
So not even the first covenant was established without blood	all the containers used in the ministry
This can be stated in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "So God established even the first covenant with blood"	A container is an object that can hold things. Here it may refer to any kind of utensil or tool. Alternate translation: "all the utensils used in the ministry"
first covenant	used in the ministry
See how you translated this in Hebrews 8:7.	This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priests used in their work"
blood	blood
The death of animals sacrificed to God is spoken of as if it were nothing but blood. Alternate translation: "the death of animals sacrificed to God"	Here the animal "blood" represents the animal's death.
Hebrews 9:19	Hebrews 9:22
took the blood ... with water ... and sprinkled ... the scroll ... and all the people	almost everything is cleansed with blood
The priest dipped the hyssop in the blood and the water and then shook the hyssop so drops of blood and water would fall on the scroll and on the people. Sprinkling was a symbolic action done by the priests by which they applied the benefits of the covenant to people and to objects. Here the scroll and the people's acceptability to God are renewed.	Making something acceptable to God is spoken of as if it were cleansing that thing. This idea can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priests use blood to cleanse almost everything"
hyssop	Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness
a woody shrub with flowers in summer, used in ceremonial sprinkling	Here "shedding of blood" refers to something dying as a sacrifice to God. This double negative can mean that all forgiveness comes through the shedding of blood. Alternate translation: "Forgiveness only comes when something dies as a sacrifice" or "God only forgives when something dies as a sacrifice"
Hebrews 9:20	forgiveness
the blood of the covenant	You can state explicitly the implied meaning. Alternate translation: "forgiveness of the sins of the people"
Here "blood" refers to the death of the animals sacrificed to carry out the covenant's requirements.	

Hebrews 9:23

the copies of the things in heaven should be cleansed with these animal sacrifices

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priests should use these animal sacrifices to cleanse what are copies of things that are in heaven"

the heavenly things themselves had to be cleansed with much better sacrifices

That is, better than the sacrifices used to cleanse the earthly copies. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as for the heavenly things themselves, God had to cleanse them with much better sacrifices"

Hebrews 9:24

the most holy place made with hands, which

Here "with hands" means "by humans." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the most holy place, which humans made, and which"

of the true one

"of the true most holy place"

Hebrews 9:25

Connecting Statement:

The writer emphasizes that Christ (now in heaven interceding for us) had to die only once for sins and that he will return to earth a second time.

He did not go there

"He did not enter heaven"

year by year

"every year" or "each year"

with the blood of another

This means with the blood of an animal victim, not with his own blood.

Hebrews 9:26

If that had been the case

"If he had had to offer himself often"

since the foundation of the world

The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since the creation of the world" or "since God created the world"

to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself

Doing away with sin represents having God forgive it. Alternate translation: "to cause God to forgive sins by sacrificing himself" or "to sacrifice himself so that God can forgive sin"

Hebrews 9:27

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Hebrews 9:28

Christ was offered once

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ offered himself once"

to take away the sins

The act of making us innocent rather than guilty for our sins is spoken of as if our sins were physical objects that Christ could carry away from us. Alternate translation: "so that God would forgive the sins"

the sins

Here "sins" mean the guilt that people have before God because of the sins they committed.

¹⁰ For the law is only a shadow of the good things to come, not the real forms of those things themselves. Those who approach God can never be made perfect by the same sacrifices that the priests continually bring year after year.² Otherwise, would the sacrifices not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed one time and would no longer have any consciousness of sin.³ But with those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year after year.⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

⁵ When Christ came into the world, he said,

"Sacrifices and offerings you did not desire,
but a body you have prepared for me;
⁶ with burnt offerings and sin offerings
you did not take pleasure.
⁷ Then I said, 'See, here I am—as it is written about me in the scroll—
to do your will, God.'"

⁸ First he said, "It was neither sacrifices, nor offerings, nor whole burnt offerings, nor sin offerings that you desired. Nor did you take pleasure in them." These are sacrifices that are offered according to the law.⁹ Then he said, "See, here I am to do your will." He takes away the first practice in order to establish the second practice.¹⁰ By that will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

¹¹ Day after day every priest stands and ministers, offering the same sacrifices again and again—sacrifices that can never take away sins.¹² But when Christ offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.¹³ He is waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.¹⁴ For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

¹⁵ The Holy Spirit also testifies to us. First he says,

¹⁶ "This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, says the Lord.
I will put my laws in their hearts,
and I will write them on their minds."

¹⁷ Then he adds,
"Their sins and lawlessness
I will remember no longer."

¹⁸ Now where there is forgiveness for these, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, we have confidence to enter into the most holy place by the blood of Jesus.²⁰ That is the new and living way that he has established for us through the curtain, that is, by means of his flesh.²¹ Because we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us approach with true hearts in the full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

²³ Let us also hold firmly to the hope we confess, for he who promised is faithful.²⁴ Let us think carefully about how to motivate one another to love and good deeds.²⁵ Let us not abandon meeting together, as some have done. Instead, encourage one another, and all the more as you see the day coming closer.

²⁶ For if we deliberately go on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, a sacrifice for sins no longer remains.²⁷ Instead, there is only a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume God's enemies.

²⁸ Anyone who has rejected the law of Moses dies without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses.²⁹ How much worse punishment do you think one deserves who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, who has regarded the blood of the covenant as unholy—the blood by which he was sanctified—and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

³⁰ For we know the one who said, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will pay back." And again, "The Lord will judge his people."³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

³² But remember the former days, after you were enlightened, how you endured a great struggle in suffering.

³³ Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution, and other times you shared with those who

were so treated.³⁴ For you had compassion on those who were prisoners, and you accepted with joy the seizure of your possessions. You knew that you yourselves had a better and everlasting possession. [1](#)

³⁵ So do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you need perseverance so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

³⁷ "For in a very little while,
the one who is coming will indeed come and not delay.
³⁸ My righteous one will live by faith.
If he shrinks back, my soul will not be pleased with him."

³⁹ But we are not any of those who turn back to destruction, but we are among those who have faith and preserve their souls.

[1](#) Some important and ancient Greek copies read, For you had compassion on me in my chains .

Hebrews 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, the writer finishes describing how Jesus's sacrifice was better than the sacrifices offered in the Temple. (See: lawofmoses)

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 10:5-7, 15-17, 37-38, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's judgment and reward

Holy living is important for Christians. God will hold people accountable for how they lived their Christian lives. Even though there will not be eternal condemnation for Christians, ungodly actions do and will have consequences. In addition, faithful living will be rewarded. (See: holy, godly and faithful and reward)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins"

The sacrifices themselves had no redeeming power. They were effective because they were a display of faith, which was credited to the person offering the sacrifice. It is ultimately the sacrifice of Jesus that "takes away sins." (See: redeem and faith)

"The covenant that I will make"

It is unclear whether this prophecy was being fulfilled as the author was writing or whether it was to occur later. The translator should try to avoid making a claim about the time this covenant begins. (See: prophet and covenant)

Links:

- [Hebrews 10:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 10:1

Connecting Statement:

The writer shows the weakness of the law and its sacrifices, why God gave the law, and the perfection of the new priesthood and Christ's sacrifice.

the law is only a shadow of the good things to come

This speaks about the law as if it were a shadow. The author means the law is not the good things that God had promised. It only hints at the good things that God is going to do.

not the real forms of those things themselves

"not the real things themselves"

year after year

"every year"

Hebrews 10:2

would the sacrifices not have ceased to be offered?

The author uses a question to state that the sacrifices were limited in their power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they would have ceased offering those sacrifices."

ceased to be

"stopped being"

the worshipers would have been cleansed one time and would

Here being cleansed represents no longer being guilty of sin. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sacrifices would have taken away the worshipers' sin once, and they would" or "God would have made the worshipers no longer guilty of sin once, and they would"

would no longer have any consciousness of sin

"would no longer think that they are guilty of sin" or "would know that they are no longer guilty of sin"

Hebrews 10:3

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Hebrews 10:4

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins

Sins are spoken of as if they were objects that animal blood could sweep away as it flowed. Alternate translation: "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to cause God to forgive sins"

the blood of bulls and goats

Here "blood" refers to these animals dying as sacrifices to God.

Hebrews 10:5

General Information:

Christ's words when he was on earth were foretold in this quotation from a psalm of David.

you did not desire

Here "you" is singular and refers to God.

a body you have prepared

"you have made a body ready"

Hebrews 10:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Hebrews 10:7

Then I said

Here "I" refers to Christ.

Hebrews 10:8

General Information:

Though changing the wording slightly, the author repeats these quotations from a psalm of David for emphasis.

sacrifices ... offerings

See how you translated these words in [Hebrews 10:5](#).

whole burnt offerings ... sin offerings

See how you translated similar words in [Hebrews 10:6](#).

that are offered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that priests offer"

Hebrews 10:9

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

He takes away the first practice in order to establish the second practice

The abstract noun "practice" here refers to a way of atoning for sins. Stopping doing it is spoken of as if it were an object that could be taken away. Starting the second way of atoning for sins is spoken of as establishing that practice. Alternate translation: "He stops people atoning for sins the first way in order to atone for sins the second way"

first practice ... the second practice

The words "first" and "second" are ordinal numbers. Alternate translation: "old practice ... the new practice"

Hebrews 10:10

we have been sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has sanctified us" or "God has dedicated us to himself"

through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ

The abstract noun "offering" can be expressed with the verb "offer" or "sacrifice." Alternate translation: "because Jesus Christ offered his body as a sacrifice" or "because Jesus Christ sacrificed his body"

Hebrews 10:11

Day after day

"Day by day" or "Every day"

can never take away sins

This speaks of "sins" as if they are an object that a person can take away. Alternate translation: "can never cause God to forgive sins"

Hebrews 10:12

he sat down at the right hand of God

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Hebrews 1:3]

Hebrews 10:13

until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet

Christ's enemies being humiliated is spoken of as if they were made a place for him to rest his feet. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until God humiliates Christ's enemies and they become like a footstool for his feet"

Hebrews 10:14

those who are being sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom God is sanctifying" or "those whom God has dedicated to himself"

Hebrews 10:15

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Hebrews 10:16

General Information:

This is a quotation from the prophet Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

with them

"with my people"

after those days

"when the time of the first covenant with my people has finished"

I will put my laws in their hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's inner being. The phrase "put my laws in their hearts" is a metaphor for enabling people to know his laws. Alternate translation: "I will enable them to know my laws"

I will write them on their minds

The phrase "write them on their minds" is a metaphor for causing people to remember his laws. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to remember my laws"

Hebrews 10:17

General Information:

This continues the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

Their sins and lawlessness I will remember no longer."

"I will no longer remember their sins and lawlessness." or "I will no longer think about their sins and lawlessness." This is the second part of the Holy Spirit's testimony

Their sins and lawlessness

The words "sins" and "lawlessness" mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize how bad the sin is. Alternate translation: "The things they did that were forbidden and how they broke the law"

Hebrews 10:18

Now

This is used to draw attention to the important point that follows. It does not mean "at this moment."

where there is forgiveness for these

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "forgiveness" is expressed as the verb "forgive." Alternate translation: "when God has forgiven these things"

there is no longer any sacrifice for sin

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "sacrifice" is expressed as the verb "make offerings." Alternate translation: "people no longer need to make offerings for sin"

Hebrews 10:19

Connecting Statement:

Having made it clear that there is only one sacrifice for sin, the writer continues with the picture of the most holy place in the temple, where only the high priest could enter each year with the blood of the sacrifice for sins. He reminds the believers that they now worship God in his presence as if they were standing in the most holy place.

brothers

Here this means all believers in Christ, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" or "fellow believers"

the most holy place

This means the presence of God, not the most holy place in the old tabernacle.

by the blood of Jesus

Here "blood of Jesus" refers to the death of Jesus.

Hebrews 10:20

living way

Possible meanings are 1) this new way to God that Jesus has provided results in believers living forever or 2) Jesus is alive, and he is the way believers enter into the presence of God.

through the curtain

The curtain in the earthly temple represents the separation between people and God's true presence.

by means of his flesh

Here "flesh" stands for the body of Jesus, and his body stands for his sacrificial death. Alternate translation: "by means of his death"

Hebrews 10:21

we have a great priest over the house of God

This must be translated in such a way as to make it clear that Jesus is this "great priest."

over the house

"in charge of the house"

the house of God

This speaks about God's people as if they were a literal house. Alternate translation: "all the people of God"

Hebrews 10:22

let us approach

Here "approach" stands for worshiping God, as a priest would go up to God's altar to sacrifice animals to him.

with true hearts

"with faithful hearts" or "with honest hearts." Here "hearts" stands for the genuine will and motivation of the believers. Alternate translation: "with sincerity" or "sincerely"

in the full assurance of faith

"and with a confident faith" or "and trusting completely in Jesus"

having our hearts sprinkled clean

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as if he had made our hearts clean with his blood"

hearts sprinkled clean

Here "hearts" is a metonym for the conscience, the awareness of right and wrong. Being made clean is a metaphor for being forgiven and being given the status of righteousness.

sprinkled

Sprinkling blood of a sacrifice was a symbolic action done by the priests by which they applied the benefits of the covenant to people and to objects. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 9:19]

having our bodies washed with pure water

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as if he had washed our bodies in pure water"

our bodies washed with pure water

Possible meanings are 1) "bodies" is a metonym that represents peoples' entire beings, and "washed with pure water" is a metaphor representing Christ making a person spiritually pure or 2) this is literal and it refers to Christian baptism.

Hebrews 10:23

Let us also hold firmly to the hope we confess

Here "hold firmly" is a metaphor that refers to a person determining to do something and refusing to stop. Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." The abstract noun "hope" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Let us be determined to continue confessing the things that we confidently expect from God"

Hebrews 10:24

General Information:

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Hebrews 10:25

Let us not abandon meeting together

You can make explicit that the people met to worship. Alternate translation: "Let us not stop coming together to worship"

as you see the day coming closer

A future time is spoken of as if it were an object coming closer to the speaker. Here "the day" refers to when Jesus will return. Alternate translation: "as you know that Christ will return soon"

Hebrews 10:26

Connecting Statement:

The writer now gives his fourth warning.

we deliberately go on sinning

"we know we are sinning but we do it again and again"

after we have received the knowledge of the truth

Knowledge of the truth is spoken of as if it were an object that could be given by one person to another.
Alternate translation: "after we have learned the truth"

the truth

The truth about God.

a sacrifice for sins no longer remains

No one is able to give a new sacrifice because Christ's sacrifice is the only one that works. Alternate translation: "no one can offer a sacrifice for which God will forgive our sins"

a sacrifice for sins

Here "sacrifice for sins" stands for "an effective way to sacrifice animals to take away sins"

Hebrews 10:27

of judgment

Of God's judgment, that is, that God will judge.

a fury of fire that will consume God's enemies

God's fury is spoken of as if it were fire that would burn up his enemies.

Hebrews 10:28

of two or three witnesses

It is implied that this means "of at least two or three witness."

Hebrews 10:29

How much worse punishment do you think one deserves ... grace?

The author is emphasizing the greatness of the punishment for those who reject Christ. Alternate translation: "This was severe punishment. But the punishment will be even greater for anyone ... grace!"

who has trampled underfoot the Son of God

Someone who has disregarded Christ and scorned him is spoken of as if that person had walked on him.
Alternate translation: "who has rejected the Son of God"

the Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

who has regarded the blood of the covenant as unholy

This shows how the person has trampled the Son of God. Alternate translation: "by regarding the blood of the covenant as unholy"

has regarded

or "has treated"

the blood of the covenant

Here "blood" stands for Christ's death, by which God established the new covenant.

the blood by which he was sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the blood by which God sanctified him"

the Spirit of grace

"the Spirit of God, who provides grace"

Hebrews 10:30

General Information:

The word "we" here refers to the writer and all believers. These two quotations come from the law that Moses gave in the Old Testament.

Vengeance belongs to me

Vengeance is spoken of as if it were an object that belongs to God, who has the right to do as he wishes with what he owns. God has the right to take vengeance on his enemies.

I will pay back

God taking vengeance is spoken of as if he were paying back the harmful things that someone has done to others.

Hebrews 10:31

to fall into the hands

Receiving God's full punishment is spoken of as if the person falls into God's hands. Here "hands" refers to

God's power to judge. Alternate translation: "to receive the full punishment"

Hebrews 10:32

the former days

"the time in the past"

after you were enlightened

Learning the truth is spoken of as if God shined a light on the person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after you learned the truth about Christ"

how you endured a great struggle in suffering

"how much suffering you had to endure"

Hebrews 10:33

Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People ridiculed you by insulting you and persecuting you in public"

you shared with those

"you joined those"

Hebrews 10:34

a better and everlasting possession

God's eternal blessings are spoken of as a "possession."

Hebrews 10:35

do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward

A person no longer having confidence is spoken of as if the person were to throw confidence away, like a person would discard something worthless. The abstract noun "confidence" can be translated with the adjective "confident" or the adverb "confidently." Alternate translation: "do not stop being confident, because you will receive a great reward for being confident" or "do not stop confidently trusting in God, who will reward you greatly"

Hebrews 10:36

General Information:

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Hebrews 10:37

General Information:

This is a quotation from the prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament.

For in a very little while

You can make this explicit. Alternate translation: "As God said in the scriptures, 'For in a very little while'"

in a very little while

"very soon"

Hebrews 10:38

General Information:

Here the author quotes from the prophet Habakkuk. This directly follows the quotation from the prophet Isaiah in the previous verse.

My righteous one ... If he shrinks ... with him

These refer to any of God's people in general. Alternate translation: "My faithful people ... If any one of them shrinks ... with that person" or "My faithful people ... If they shrink ... with them"

My righteous ... my soul will

Here "My" and "my soul" refer to God.

my soul

The soul is a metonym for the whole being.

shrinks back

stops doing the good thing he is doing

Hebrews 10:39

who turn back to destruction

A person who loses courage and faith are spoken of as if he were stepping back in fear from something. And

"destruction" is spoken of as if it were a destination.
Alternate translation: "who stop trusting God, whom
God will destroy"

who have faith and preserve their souls

Living eternally with God is spoken of as if it were
preserving one's soul. Here "soul" refers to the whole
person. Alternate translation: "who have faith, which
will result in our living with God forever"

11 ¹Now faith is being sure of the things hoped for and certain of things that are not seen.²For because of this the ancestors were approved for their faith.³By faith we understand that the universe was created by God's command, so that what is visible was not made out of things that were visible.

⁴It was by faith that Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he was attested to be righteous, and God spoke well of him because of his offerings, and by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.

⁵It was by faith that Enoch was taken up so that he did not see death. "He was not found, because God took him away." For before he was taken up, it was testified that he had pleased God.⁶Now without faith it is impossible to please him. For it is necessary that anyone coming to God must believe that he exists and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him.

⁷It was by faith that Noah, having been given a divine message about things not yet seen, with godly reverence built an ark to save his household. By doing this, he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith.

⁸It was by faith that Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and went out to the place that he was to receive as an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he was going.⁹It was by faith that he lived in the land of promise as a foreigner. He lived in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise.¹⁰For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

¹¹It was by faith, even though Sarah herself was barren, that she received ability to conceive. This happened even though she was too old, since she considered as faithful the one who had given the promise.¹²Therefore, from this one man—and he was almost dead—were born descendants as many as the stars in the sky and as countless as sand by the seashore.

¹³It was in faith that all these died without receiving the promises. Rather, they saw and greeted them from far off, and they acknowledged that they were foreigners and exiles on earth.¹⁴For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.

¹⁵If they had been thinking of the country from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return.¹⁶But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, since he has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷It was by faith that Abraham, when he was tested, offered Isaac. It was his only son whom he offered, he who had received the promises.¹⁸It was Abraham to whom it had been said, "It is through Isaac that your descendants will be named."¹⁹Abraham reasoned that God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead, and figuratively speaking, it was from them that he received him back.

²⁰It was also by faith about things to come that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau.²¹It was by faith that Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons. Jacob worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.²²It was by faith that Joseph, when his end was near, spoke of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt and instructed them about his bones.

²³It was by faith that Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents because they saw he was a beautiful child. They were not afraid of the king's command.²⁴It was by faith that Moses, after he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.²⁵He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a while.²⁶He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his reward.

²⁷It was by faith that Moses left Egypt. He did not fear the king's anger, for he endured as if he were seeing the one who is invisible.²⁸It was by faith that he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn should not touch the Israelites' firstborn sons.

²⁹It was by faith that they passed through the Sea of Reeds as if over dry land. When the Egyptians tried to do this, they were swallowed up.³⁰It was by faith that Jericho's walls fell down, after they had been circled around for seven days.³¹It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute did not die with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

³²What more can I say? For the time will fail me if I give a full account of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and about the prophets.³³It was through faith that they conquered kingdoms, committed righteousness,

and received promises. They stopped the mouths of lions,³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong when they were weak, became mighty in battle, and defeated foreign armies.
³⁵Women received back their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, not accepting release, so that they might experience a better resurrection.³⁶ Others experienced mocking and whippings, and even chains and imprisonment.³⁷ They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins. They were destitute, oppressed, mistreated.³⁸ The world was not worthy of them. They were always wandering about in the deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.
³⁹Although all these people were approved by God because of their faith, they did not receive the promise.⁴⁰ God planned something better for us, so that without us, they would not be made perfect.

¹Some important and ancient Greek copies read, They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were put to the test. They were killed with the sword.

Hebrews 11 General Notes

Structure

The writer begins this chapter by telling what faith is. Then he gives many examples of people who had faith and how they lived.

Important concepts in this chapter

Faith

In both the old and new covenants, God required faith. Some people with faith performed miracles and were very powerful. Other people with faith suffered greatly.

Links:

- [Hebrews 11:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 11:1	that are not seen
Connecting Statement:	This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that we still have not seen" or "that still have not happened"
The author tells three things about faith in this brief introduction.	Hebrews 11:2
Now	For because of this
This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here the author starts to explain the meaning of "faith."	"Because they were certain about events that had not happened"
faith is being sure of the things hoped for	the ancestors were approved for their faith
Here "hope" refers to having the confident expectation that God will do what he promised to do. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "faith is being sure of the things we hope for" or "when we have faith, we are sure that we will receive from God the things we confidently wait for"	This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God approved of our ancestors because they had faith"
	the ancestors
	The author is speaking to the Hebrews about Hebrew ancestors. Alternate translation: "our ancestors"

Hebrews 11:3

the universe was created by God's command

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God created the universe by commanding it to exist"

what is visible was not made out of things that were visible

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God did not create what we see out of things that were visible"

Hebrews 11:4

Connecting Statement:

The writer then gives many examples (mostly from Old Testament writings) of people who lived by faith even though they did not receive what God had promised while they lived on the earth.

he was attested to be righteous

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God declared him to be righteous" or "God declared that Abel was righteous"

Abel still speaks

Reading the scriptures and learning about Abel's faith is spoken of as if Abel himself were still speaking. Alternate translation: "we still learn from what Abel did"

Hebrews 11:5

It was by faith that Enoch was taken up so that he did not see death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It was by faith that Enoch did not die because God took him"

see death

This speaks of death as if it were an object that people can see. It means to experience death. Alternate translation: "die"

before he was taken up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "before God took him"

it was testified that he had pleased God

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "God said that Enoch had pleased him" or 2) "people said that Enoch pleased God."

Hebrews 11:6

Now without faith

Here "Now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

without faith it is impossible to please him

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "a person can please him only if he has faith"

that anyone coming to God

Wanting to worship God and belong to his people is spoken of as if the person is literally coming to God. Alternate translation: "that anyone who wants to belong to God"

he is a rewarder of those

"he rewards those"

those who seek him

Those who learn about God and make an effort to obey him are spoken of as if they were seeking to find him.

Hebrews 11:7

having been given a divine message

This can be stated in active form and in other terms. Alternate translation: "because God told him"

about things not yet seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "about things no one had ever seen before" or "about events that had not happened yet"

the world

Here "world" refers to the world's human population. Alternate translation: "the people living in the world at that time"

became an heir of the righteousness

Noah is spoken of as if he were to inherit property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "received from God the righteousness"

that is according to faith

"that God gives to those who have faith in him"

Hebrews 11:8

when he was called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when God called him"

went out to the place

"left his home to go to the place"

that he was to receive as an inheritance

The land that God promised to give Abraham's descendants is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that Abraham was to receive. Alternate translation: "that God would give him"

He went out

"He left his home"

Hebrews 11:9

he lived in the land of promise as a foreigner

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "promise" is expressed as the verb "promised." Alternate translation: "he lived as a foreigner in the land God had promised to him"

fellow heirs

"heirs together." This speaks about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as if they were heirs that would receive an inheritance from their father.

Hebrews 11:10

the city with foundations

"the city that has foundations." Having foundations indicates that the city is permanent. Alternate translation: "the eternal city"

whose architect and builder is God

"which is designed and built by God" or "which God would design and build"

architect

a person who designs buildings and cities

Hebrews 11:11

General Information:

Many versions interpret this verse as referring to Sarah, and others interpret it as referring to Abraham.

It was by faith

The abstract noun "faith" can be expressed with the verb "believe." Possible meanings are 1) it was by Sarah's faith. Alternate translation: "It was because Sarah believed God ... she" or 2) it was by Abraham's faith. Alternate translation: "It was because Abraham believed God ... he"

Sarah herself was barren

Sarah was not able to have children.

she received ability to conceive

Possible meanings are 1) Sarah received the ability to conceive a child. Alternate translation "she became able to bear a child" or 2) Abraham received the ability to father a child. Alternate translation: "he became able to have a child"

even though she was too old

Possible meanings are that 1) Sarah was too old or 2) Abraham was too old.

since she considered as faithful the one who had given the promise

"because she believed God, who had given the promise, to be faithful." Possible meanings are 1) Sarah considered God to be faithful or 2) Abraham considered God to be faithful.

Hebrews 11:12

descendants as many as the stars in the sky and as countless as sand by the seashore

This simile means that Abraham had very many descendants.

as countless as sand by the seashore

This means that just as there are so many grains of sand on the seashore that no one can count them all, Abraham had so many descendants that no one can count them all.

Hebrews 11:13

without receiving the promises

This speaks of promises as if they are objects that a person receives. Alternate translation: "without receiving what God had promised them"

they saw and greeted them from far off

Future promised events are spoken of as if they were travelers arriving from far away. Seeing and greeting the promised events is a metaphor for believing and being glad that the events will happen. Alternate translation: "they believed and were glad about what God would do in the future"

they were foreigners and exiles on earth

Here "foreigners" and "exiles" mean basically the same thing. This emphasizes that this earth was not their true home. They were waiting for their true home that God would make for them.

Hebrews 11:14

a homeland

"a country for them to belong to"

Hebrews 11:15

General Information:

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Hebrews 11:16

heavenly one

"heavenly country" or "country in heaven"

God is not ashamed to be called their God

This can be expressed in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "God is happy to have them call him their God" or "God is proud to have them say that he is their God"

Hebrews 11:17

when he was tested

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when God tested him"

Hebrews 11:18

to whom it had been said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to whom God said"

that your descendants will be named

Here "named" means assigned or designated. This sentence can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I will designate your descendants"

Hebrews 11:19

God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead

"God was able to cause Isaac to live again"

to raise up ... the dead

In this verse, "to raise up" is to make alive again. The words "the dead" speak of all dead people together in the underworld.

figuratively speaking

"in a manner of speaking." This means that what the author says next is not to be understood literally. God did not bring Isaac back from death literally. But because Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac when God stopped him, it was as if God brought him back from the dead.

it was from them

"it was from the dead"

he received him back

"Abraham received Isaac back"

Hebrews 11:20

General Information:

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Hebrews 11:21

Jacob worshiped

"Jacob worshiped God"

Hebrews 11:22

when his end was near

Here "his end" is a polite way of referring to death.
Alternate translation: "when he was about to die"

spoke of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt

"spoke of when the children of Israel would leave Egypt"

the children of Israel

"the Israelites" or "the descendants of Israel"

instructed them about his bones

Joseph died while in Egypt. He wanted his people to take his bones with them when they left Egypt so they could bury his bones in the land that God promised them.

Hebrews 11:23

Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses's parents hid him for three months after he was born"

Hebrews 11:24

had grown up

"had become an adult"

refused to be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "refused to allow people to call him"

Hebrews 11:25

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Hebrews 11:26

disgrace for the sake of Christ

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "disgrace" is expressed as the verb "disrespect."
Alternate translation: "being disrespected for the sake of Christ" or "the experience of people disrespecting him because he did what Christ would want"

he was looking ahead to his reward

Thinking about something that will happen in the future is spoken of as looking ahead to it. Alternate translation: "he was thinking about the reward he would receive"

Hebrews 11:27

he endured as if he were seeing the one who is invisible

Moses is spoken of as if he saw God, who is invisible.

the one who is invisible

"the one no one can see"

Hebrews 11:28

he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood

This was the first Passover. Moses kept it by obeying God's commands concerning the Passover and by commanding the people to obey them every year.
Alternate translation: "he commanded the people to obey God's commands concerning the Passover and to sprinkle blood on their doors" or "he established the Passover and the sprinkling of blood"

the sprinkling of the blood

This refers to God's command to the Israelites to kill a lamb and spread its blood on the doorposts of every house where Israelites lived. This would prevent the destroyer from harming their firstborn sons. This was one of the Passover commands.

should not touch

Here "touch" refers to harming or to killing someone. Alternate translation: "would not harm" or "would not kill"

Hebrews 11:29

they passed through the Sea of Reeds

"the Israelites passed through the Sea of Reeds"

they were swallowed up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the water swallowed up the Egyptians"

they were swallowed up

The water is spoken of as if it were an animal. Alternate translation: "the Egyptians drowned in the water"

Hebrews 11:30

they had been circled around for seven days

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Israelites had marched around the walls for seven days"

seven days

"7 days"

Hebrews 11:31

had received the spies in peace

"had peacefully received the spies"

Hebrews 11:32

Connecting Statement:

The writer continues to speak of what God did for the ancestors of the people of Israel.

What more can I say?

The author uses a question to emphasize that there are many examples that he could have quoted. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "And there are many more examples."

the time will fail me

"I will not have enough time"

Barak

This is the name of a man.

Hebrews 11:33

It was through faith that they

Here "they" does not mean that each person listed in 11:32 did all the things the author is about to mention. The author means in general these are the kinds of things that those with faith were able to do. Alternate translation: "It was through faith that men like these"

they conquered kingdoms

Here "kingdoms" refers to the people who lived there. Alternate translation: "they defeated the people of foreign kingdoms"

committed righteousness

Possible meanings are 1) "did righteous deeds" or "did what was right" or 2) "judged others fairly" or "administered justice."

They stopped the mouths of lions

These words begin a list of some of the ways God saved believers from death. Alternate translation: "They kept lions from eating them"

Hebrews 11:34

quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword

These are some of the ways God saved believers from death. Alternate translation: "they kept fire from burning them, they kept their enemies from killing them"

were made strong when they were weak

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they received strength from God when they were weak"

became mighty in battle, and defeated

"and they became mighty in battle and defeated"

Hebrews 11:35

Women received back their dead by resurrection

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "resurrection." The word "dead" is a nominal adjective. It can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Women received back alive those who had died"

Others were tortured, not accepting release

It is implied that their enemies would have released them from prison under certain conditions. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Others accepted torture rather than release from prison" or "Others allowed their enemies to torture them rather than doing what their enemies required of them in order to release them"

Others were tortured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Others allowed those who imprisoned them to torture them" or "Others endured terrible pain"

a better resurrection

Possible meanings are 1) these people will experience a better life in heaven than what they experienced in this world or 2) these people will have a better resurrection than those who did not have faith. Those with faith will live forever with God. Those without faith will live forever separated from God.

Hebrews 11:36

Others experienced mocking and whippings, and even chains and imprisonment

This can be reworded so that the abstract nouns are expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "People afflicted others by mocking and whipping them and even putting them in chains and imprisoning them"

Hebrews 11:37

They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with the sword

These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People threw stones at others. People sawed others in two. People killed others with the sword"

went about

"went from place to place" or "lived all the time"

in sheepskins and goatskins

"wearing only the skins of sheep and goats"

They were destitute

"They had nothing" or "They were very poor"

Hebrews 11:38

The world was not worthy

Here "world" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "The people of this world were not worthy"

They were always wandering about

This was because they had no place to live.

in caves and holes in the ground

"some lived in caves or in holes in the ground"

Hebrews 11:39

Although all these people were approved by God because of their faith, they did not receive the promise

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God honored all these because of their faith, but they did not themselves receive what God had promised"

the promise

This expression stands for "what God had promised them."

Hebrews 11:40

so that without us, they would not be made perfect

This can be stated in positive and active form. Alternate translation: "in order that God would perfect us and them together"

12 ¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a large cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and easily entangling sin. Let us run with perseverance the race that is placed before us.² Let us pay attention to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of the faith. For the joy that was placed before him, he endured the cross, despised its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.³ So think about him, the one who has endured such opposition from sinners against himself, so that you do not become weary and lose heart.

⁴You have not yet resisted or struggled against sin to the point of blood;⁵ and you have forgotten the encouragement that instructs you as sons:

"My son, do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline,
nor grow weary when you are corrected by him.

⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and he punishes every son he receives."

⁷Endure suffering as discipline. God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?⁸ But if you are without discipline, which all people share in, then you are illegitimate and not his sons.

⁹Furthermore, we had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live!¹⁰ Our fathers disciplined us for a short time as they thought best. But God disciplines us for our benefit, so that we can share in his holiness.¹¹ No discipline at the time seems to give joy, but to give sorrow. But later it produces the peaceful fruit of righteousness for those who have been trained by it.

¹²So strengthen your hands that hang down and your weak knees.¹³ Make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame will not be sprained but rather be healed.

¹⁴Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, for without it no one will see the Lord.¹⁵ Be careful so that no one lacks God's grace, and that no root of bitterness grows up to cause trouble, so that many do not become defiled by it,¹⁶ and that there is no one who is sexually immoral or profane, such as Esau, who for one meal sold his own birthright.¹⁷ For you know that afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, because he found no opportunity for repentance, even though he sought it with tears.

¹⁸For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched, a mountain of burning fire, darkness, gloom, and storm.¹⁹ You have not come to a trumpet blast, nor to a voice that speaks words whose hearers begged that not another word be spoken to them.²⁰ For they could not endure what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned."¹ ²¹So fearful was this sight that Moses said, "I am terrified and am trembling."

²²Rather, you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to tens of thousands of angels in joyful assembly.²³ You have come to the congregation of the firstborn, who have been registered in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous ones who have been made perfect.²⁴ And you have come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel's blood.

²⁵See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we turn away from the one who is warning from heaven.²⁶ At one time, his voice shook the earth. But now he has promised and said, "One more time I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens."

²⁷These words, "One more time," mean the removal of those things that can be shaken, that is, of the things that have been created, so that the things that cannot be shaken will remain.²⁸ Therefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful and in this manner worship God with reverence and awe.²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.

¹Some important and ancient Greek copies read, If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned or shot with an arrow .

Hebrews 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

After telling of the value of discipline, the author begins a series of exhortations. (See; exhort)

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 12:5-6, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Discipline

God wants his people to do what is right. When they do what is wrong, he needs to correct or punish them. He does this just as earthly fathers correct and punish children whom they love. (See: discipline)

Links:

- [Hebrews 12:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 12:1	easily entangling sin
General Information:	Sin is spoken of as if it were a net or something else that can trip people up and make them fall. Alternate translation: "sin that makes obeying God difficult"
The words "we" and "us" refer to the author and his readers.	Let us run with perseverance the race that is placed before us
Connecting Statement:	Following Jesus is spoken of as if it were running a race. Alternate translation: "Let us continue obeying what God has commanded us, just like a runner keeps going until the race is over"
Because of this great number of Old Testament believers, the author talks of the life of faith that believers should live.	Hebrews 12:2
we are surrounded by such a large cloud of witnesses	the founder and perfecter of the faith
The writer speaks about the Old Testament believers as if they were a cloud that surrounds the present-day believers. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "such a large cloud of witnesses surrounds us" or "there are so many examples of faithful people about whom we learn in the scriptures"	Jesus gives us faith and makes our faith perfect by causing us to reach our goal. Alternate translation: "creator and finisher of our faith" or "the one who enables us to have faith from beginning to end"
witnesses	For the joy that was placed before him
Here "witnesses" refers to the Old Testament believers in chapter 11 who lived before the race of faith that believers now run.	The joy that Jesus would experience is spoken of as if God the Father had placed it before him as a goal to reach.
let us lay aside every weight and easily entangling sin	despised its shame
Here "weight" and "easily entangling sin" are spoken of as if a person could take them off himself and put them down.	This means he was not concerned about the shame of dying on a cross.
every weight	sat down at the right hand of the throne of God
Attitudes or habits that keep believers from trusting and obeying God are spoken of as if they were loads that would make it difficult for a person to run while carrying.	To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Hebrews 1:3]

Hebrews 12:3

General Information:

The word "your" is plural and here refers to the readers.

become weary and lose heart

Here "heart" represents a person's thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "become tired and discouraged"

Hebrews 12:4

Connecting Statement:

The author of Hebrews has been comparing the Christian life to a race.

You have not yet resisted or struggled against sin

Here "sin" is spoken of as if it were a person whom someone fights in a battle. Alternate translation: "You have not yet had to endure attacks of sinners"

to the point of blood

Resisting opposition so much that one dies for it is spoken of as if one reached a certain place where he would die.

of blood

Here "blood" refers to death. Alternate translation: "of death"

Hebrews 12:5

the encouragement that instructs you

Old Testament scripture is spoken of as if it were a person who could encourage others. Alternate translation: "what God has instructed you in the scriptures to encourage you"

as sons ... My son

The word translated "sons" and "son" is specifically the word for a male child. In that culture the family line continued through the sons, not normally through the daughters. However, as stated by the UDB and some English versions, the author is directing his words to both males and females.

My son ... corrected by him

Here the author is quoting from the book of Proverbs in the Old Testament, which was the words of Solomon to his male children.

do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline, nor grow weary

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "take it very seriously when the Lord disciplines you, and do not grow weary"

nor grow weary

"and do not become discouraged"

you are corrected by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he corrects you"

Hebrews 12:6

every son he receives

The word translated "son" is specifically the word for a male child. In that culture the family line continued through the sons, not normally through the daughters.

Hebrews 12:7

Endure suffering as discipline

"Understand that during suffering God teaches us discipline"

God deals with you as with sons

The readers are God's sons, and so God deals with them the way a father properly deals with sons.

sons ... son

All occurrences of these words may be stated to include males and females. Alternate translation: "children ... child"

what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

The author makes the point through this question that every good father disciplines his children. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "every father disciplines his children!"

Hebrews 12:8

But if you are without discipline, which all people share in

You can restate the abstract noun "discipline" as the verb "disciplining." Alternate translation: "So if you have not experienced God disciplining you like he disciplines all his children"

then you are illegitimate and not his sons

Those whom God does not discipline are spoken of as if they are sons born to a man and a woman who are not married each other.

Hebrews 12:9

How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live!

The author uses an exclamation to emphasize that we should obey God the Father. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Therefore even more so, we should obey the Father of spirits and live."

the Father of spirits

This idiom contrasts with "fathers in the flesh." Alternate translation: "our spiritual Father" or "our Father in heaven"

and live

"so that we will live"

Hebrews 12:10

so that we can share in his holiness

This metaphor speaks of "holiness" as if it were an object that can be shared among people. Alternate translation: "so that we may become holy, as God is holy"

Hebrews 12:11

No discipline at the time seems to give joy, but to give sorrow

"At the time, it seems that no discipline brings joy; rather, discipline always brings sorrow"

it produces the peaceful fruit of righteousness

"Fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Alternate translation: "it produces the peaceful result of

righteousness" or "it produces righteousness, which results in peace"

who have been trained by it

"who have been trained by discipline." The discipline or correction done by the Lord is spoken of as if it were the Lord himself. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God has trained by disciplining them"

Hebrews 12:12

strengthen your hands that hang down and your weak knees.

Possibly this continues the metaphor about the race in [Hebrews 12:1]

Hebrews 12:13

Make straight paths for your feet

Possibly this continues the metaphor about the race in [Hebrews 12:1]

straight paths

Living so as to honor and please God is spoken of as if it were a straight path to follow.

what is lame will not be sprained

In this metaphor of running a race, "lame" represents another person in the race who is hurt and wants to quit. This, in turn, represent the Christians themselves. Alternate translation: "whoever is weak and wants to quit will not sprain his ankle"

will not be sprained

Someone who stops obeying God is spoken of as if he injured his foot or ankle on a path. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will not sprain his ankle"

rather be healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "instead become strong" or "instead God will heal him"

Hebrews 12:14

Pursue peace with everyone

Here the abstract noun "peace" is spoken of as if it were something that a person must chase after and can be

translated with an adverb. Alternate translation: "Try to live peacefully with everyone"

and holiness, for without it no one will see the Lord

This can be expressed as a positive encouragement. Alternate translation: "and work hard to be holy, because only holy people will see the Lord"

and holiness

You can state clearly the understood information. Alternate translation: "and pursue holiness"

Hebrews 12:15

no one lacks God's grace

"no one receives God's grace and then lets go of it" or "no one rejects God's grace after first trusting in him"

that no root of bitterness grows up to cause trouble, so that many do not become defiled by it

Hateful or resentful attitudes are spoken of as if they were a plant bitter to the taste. Alternate translation: "that no one becomes like a bitter root, which when it grows causes trouble and harms many people"

Hebrews 12:16

General Information:

The man Esau, who was told about in the writings of Moses, refers to Isaac's first son and Jacob's brother.

Hebrews 12:17

he was rejected

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his father, Isaac, refused to bless him"

because he found no opportunity for repentance

The abstract noun "repentance" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "because it was not possible for him to repent" or "because it was not possible for him to change his decision"

even though he sought it with tears

Here "he" refers to Esau.

Hebrews 12:18

General Information:

Here "you" and refers to the Hebrew believers to whom the author wrote.

Connecting Statement:

The author gives a contrast between what believers in Moses's time had while living under the law and what present day believers have after coming to Jesus under the new covenant. He illustrates the experience of the Israelites by describing how God appeared to them at Mount Sinai.

For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched

The implicit information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "For you have not come, as the people of Israel came, to a mountain that can be touched"

that can be touched

This means that believers in Christ have not come to a physical mountain like Mount Sinai that a person can touch or see. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that a person can touch" or "that people can perceive with their senses"

Hebrews 12:19

You have not come to a trumpet blast

"You have not come to a place where there is the loud sound of a trumpet"

nor to a voice that speaks words whose hearers begged that not another word be spoken to them

Here "voice" refers to someone speaking. The phrase "be spoken" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "or where God was speaking in such a way that those who heard him begged him not to speak another word to them"

Hebrews 12:20

General Information:

The quotation comes from the writings of Moses.

For they could not endure

"For the Israelites could not endure"

what was commanded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"what God commanded"

it must be stoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"you must stone it"

Hebrews 12:21

General Information:

God reveals in this passage in Hebrews that Moses said he shook at seeing the mountain.

Hebrews 12:22

Mount Zion

The writer speaks of Mount Zion, the temple mount in Jerusalem, as if it were heaven itself, the residence of God.

tens of thousands of angels

"an uncountable number of angels"

Hebrews 12:23

the firstborn

This speaks of believers in Christ as if they were firstborn sons. This emphasizes their special place and privilege as God's people.

who have been registered in heaven

"whose names are written in heaven." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose names God has written in heaven"

who have been made perfect

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"whom God has made perfect"

Hebrews 12:24

General Information:

The man Abel was the son of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve. Cain, also their son, murdered Abel.

the mediator of a new covenant

A mediator is a person who helps two parties come to an agreement. Christ, as mediator, made it possible for a better covenant between God and humans to exist. See how you translated this phrase in Hebrews 9:15.

the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel's blood

The blood of Jesus and the blood of Abel are spoken of as if they were people calling out. Alternate translation: "the sprinkled blood of Jesus that says better things than the blood of Abel"

the sprinkled blood

Here "blood" stands for Jesus's death, as Abel's blood stands for his death.

Hebrews 12:25

General Information:

The word "you" continues to refer to believers. The word "we" continues to refer to the writer and the readers who are believers.

Connecting Statement:

Having contrasted the Israelites' experience at Mount Sinai with the believers' experience after Christ died, the writer reminds believers that they have the same God who warns them today. This is the fifth main warning given to believers.

you do not refuse the one who is speaking

"you pay attention to the one who is speaking"

if they did not escape

The implicit information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "if the people of Israel did not escape judgment"

the one who warned them on earth

Possible meanings are 1) "Moses, who warned them here on earth" or 2) "God, who warned them at Mount Sinai"

if we turn away from the one who is warning

Disobeying God is spoken of as if it were changing direction and walking away from him. Alternate translation: "if we disobey the one who is warning"

Hebrews 12:26

General Information:

This quotation is from the prophet Haggai in the Old Testament.

his voice shook the earth

"when God spoke, the sound of his voice caused the earth to shake"

shook ... shake

Use the word for what an earthquake does in moving the ground. This refers back to [Hebrews 12:18-21](#) and what happened when the people saw the mountain where Moses received the law from God.

Hebrews 12:27

General Information:

Here the quotation from the prophet Haggai is repeated from the previous verse.

mean the removal of those things that can be shaken, that is, of the things

The abstract noun "removal" can be translated with the verb "remove." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "mean that God will remove the things that he can shake, that is, the things"

shaken

Use the word for what an earthquake does in moving the ground. This refers back to [Hebrews 12:18-21](#)[(/

18.md) and what happened when the people saw the mountain where Moses received the law from God. See how you translated "shook" and "shake" in [\[Hebrews 12:26\]](#).

that have been created

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God has created"

the things that cannot be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that do not shake" or "the things that cannot shake"

that cannot be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that do not shake"

Hebrews 12:28

receiving a kingdom

You can add the words "because we are" to make clear the logical connection between this statement and the next statement. Alternate translation: "because we are receiving a kingdom" or "because God is making us members of his kingdom"

let us be thankful

"let us give thanks"

with reverence and awe

The words "reverence" and "awe" share similar meanings and emphasize the greatness of reverence due to God. Alternate translation: "with great respect and dread"

Hebrews 12:29

our God is a consuming fire

God is spoken of here as if he were a fire that can burn up anything.

13 ¹Let brotherly love continue.²Do not forget hospitality for strangers. For through this, some have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

³Remember prisoners as if you were bound with them. Remember those who are mistreated since you yourselves also are in the body.⁴Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept pure, for God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers.

⁵Let your conduct be free from the love of money. Be content with the things you have, for God himself has said,

"I will never leave you,
nor will I abandon you."

⁶Let us be content so that we may have courage to say,

"The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.
What can a man do to me?"

⁷Consider your leaders, those who spoke God's word to you, and consider the result of their conduct. Imitate their faith.⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

⁹Do not be carried away by various strange teachings. For it is good that the heart should be strengthened by grace, not by foods that do not help those who walk by them.¹⁰We have an altar from which those who serve in the tabernacle have no right to eat.¹¹For the blood of the animals killed for sins is brought by the high priest into the holy place, while their bodies are burned outside the camp.

¹²So Jesus also suffered outside the city gate, in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.¹³Let us therefore go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he endured.¹⁴For we do not have a permanent city here. Rather, we are looking for the one that is to come.

¹⁵Through him, then, let us always offer up sacrifices of praise to God, praise that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.¹⁶Let us not forget doing good and sharing, for it is with such sacrifices that God is very pleased.¹⁷Obey and submit to your leaders, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give account. Obey so that your leaders will do this with joy, and not with groaning, which would be useless to you.

¹⁸Pray for us, for we are convinced that we have a good conscience and that we desire to live rightly in all things.

¹⁹I encourage you even more to do this, so that I will be returned to you sooner.

²⁰Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus, by the blood of the eternal covenant,²¹ equip you with everything good to do his will, working in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

²²Now I encourage you, brothers, to bear with the word of encouragement that I have briefly written to you.

²³Know that our brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I will see you if he comes soon.

²⁴Greet all your leaders and all God's holy people. Those from Italy greet you.

²⁵May grace be with you all.

Hebrews 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The author finishes the list of exhortations he began in chapter 12. Then he asks the readers to pray for him and ends the letter.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 13:6, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Hospitality

God wants his people to invite other people to come to their homes to eat food and even to sleep. His people should do this even if they do not know well the people they are inviting. In the Old Testament, Abraham and his nephew Lot both showed hospitality to people they did not know. Abraham served a costly meal to them, and then Lot invited them to sleep in his house. They learned later that those people were actually angels.

Links:

- [Hebrews 13:1 Notes](#)

Hebrews 13:1

since you yourselves also are in the body

Connecting Statement:

Possible meanings are 1) because you are human and can suffer likewise, or 2) as if you too were being mistreated.

In this closing section, the author gives specific instructions to believers on how they are supposed to live.

Hebrews 13:4

Let brotherly love continue

Let marriage be held in honor by all

"Continue to show your love for other believers as you would for a member of your family"

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone should hold marriage in honor"

Hebrews 13:2

let the marriage bed be kept pure

Do not forget

This refers to the act of sexual union as if it were the bed on which that act takes place. Alternate translation: "Let husbands and wives honor their marriage relationship to one another and engage in sexual activity with other people"

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Be sure to remember"

hospitality for strangers

Hebrews 13:5

"to welcome and show kindness to strangers"

Let your conduct be free from the love of money

Hebrews 13:3

Here "conduct" refers to a person's character or the way he lives, and "free from the love of money" refers to not greatly desiring to have more money. A person who loves money is not content with the amount of money he has. Alternate translation: "Let your conduct not be affected by the love of money" or "Do not greatly wish to have more money"

as if you were bound with them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as if you were tied up along with them" or "as if you were in prison with them"

Be content

who are mistreated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom others are mistreating" or "who are suffering"

"Be satisfied"

Hebrews 13:6

The Lord is my helper ... do to me

This is a quotation from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament.

I will not be afraid. What can a man do to me?

The author uses a question to emphasize that he does not fear people because God is helping him. Here "man" means any person in general. Alternate translation: "I will not fear what any person can do to me!"

Hebrews 13:7

spoke God's word to you

"told you what God has said"

the result of their conduct

"the outcome of the way they behave"

Imitate their faith

Here the trust in God and the way of life led by these leaders are spoken of as "their faith." Alternate translation: "Trust and obey God in the same way they do"

Hebrews 13:8

is the same yesterday, today, and forever

Here "yesterday" means all times in the past. Alternate translation: "is the same in the past, the present, and in the future forever"

Hebrews 13:9

Do not be carried away by various strange teachings

Being persuaded by various teachings is spoken of as if a person were being carried away by a force. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let others persuade you to believe their various strange teachings"

various strange teachings

"many, different teachings that are not the good news we told you"

it is good that the heart should be strengthened by grace, not by foods that do not help those who walk by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we become stronger when we think of how God has been kind to us, but we do not become stronger by obeying rules about food"

the heart should be strengthened

Here "heart" is a metonym for the "inner being." Alternate translation: "we should be strengthened inwardly"

foods

Here "foods" stands for rules about food.

those who walk by them

Living is spoken of as if it were walking. Alternate translation: "those who live by them" or "those who regulate their lives by them"

Hebrews 13:10

We have an altar from which

Here, "altar" is a metaphor. The Christians did not literally have an altar, nor did they offer animal sacrifices. The author means that Christians have a relationship with God that the Jews who work in the tabernacle do not know about. Alternate translation: "We have an altar, so to speak, from which" or "What we have is like an altar from which"

Hebrews 13:11

General Information:

This verse refers to animal sacrifices made by believers in God in Old Testament times, which covered their sins temporarily until the death of Christ came about.

the blood of the animals killed for sins is brought by the high priest into the holy place

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the high priest brings into the holy place the blood of the animals that the priests killed for sins"

while their bodies are burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "while the priests burn the animals' bodies"

outside the camp

"away from where the people live"

Hebrews 13:12

Connecting Statement:

There is a comparison here between Jesus's sacrifice and the tabernacle sacrifices of the Old Testament.

So

"In the same way" or "Because the bodies of the sacrifices were burned outside the camp" (Hebrews 13:11)

outside the city gate

This stands for "outside the city."

Hebrews 13:13

Let us therefore go to him outside the camp

Obedying Jesus is spoken of as if a person were leaving the camp to go out where Jesus is.

bearing the disgrace he endured

Reproach is spoken of as if it were an object that has to be carried in one's hands or on one's back. Alternate translation: "while allowing others to treat us with disgust just like people insulted him"

Hebrews 13:14

looking for

"waiting for"

the one that is to come

"for the city that will come" or "the permanent city that will come"

Hebrews 13:15

sacrifices of praise

Praise is spoken of as if it were incense or sacrifices of animals.

praise that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name

Praise is spoken of as if it were fruit produced by the lips of people. Alternate translation: "praise that is produced by the lips of those who acknowledge his name"

lips that acknowledge his name

Here "lips" represents people who speak. Alternate translation: "the lips of those who acknowledge his name" or "those who acknowledge his name"

his name

A person's name represents that person. Alternate translation: "him"

Hebrews 13:16

Let us not forget doing good and sharing

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Let us always remember to do good and share our goods with one another"

with such sacrifices

Doing good and helping others is spoken of as if they were sacrifices on an altar.

Hebrews 13:17

keep watch over your souls

The believers' souls, that is, the believers' spiritual well-being, are spoken of as if they were objects or animals that guards could keep watch over.

not with groaning

Here "groaning" stands for sadness or grief.

Hebrews 13:18

Pray for us

Here "us" refers to the author and his companions, but not to the readers.

we are convinced that we have a good conscience

Here "good" stands for being free from guilt. Alternate translation: "we are certain that we have no guilt"

Hebrews 13:19

that I will be returned to you sooner

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God will return me to you sooner" or "that God will quickly remove the things that stop my coming to you"

Hebrews 13:20

Connecting Statement:

The author closes with a blessing and greetings.

Now

This marks a new section of the letter. Here the author praises God and gives a final prayer for his readers.

brought back from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus

"raised the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus, to life"

from the dead

"from among all those who have died." The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To raise someone from among them speaks of causing that person to become alive again.

the great shepherd of the sheep

Christ in his role of leader and protector of those who believe in him is spoken of as if he were a shepherd of sheep.

by the blood of the eternal covenant

Here "blood" stands for the death of Jesus, which is the basis for the covenant that will last forever between God and all believers in Christ.

Hebrews 13:21

equip you with everything good to do his will

"give you every good thing you need in order to do his will" or "make you capable of doing every good thing according to his will"

working in us

The word "us" refers to the author and the readers.

to whom be the glory forever

"whom all people will praise forever"

Hebrews 13:22

Now

This marks a new section of the letter. Here the author gives his final comments to his audience.

brothers

This refers to all the believers to whom he is writing, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "fellow believers"

to bear with the word of encouragement that I have briefly written to you

"to patiently consider what I have just briefly written to encourage you"

the word of encouragement

Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "the encouraging message"

Hebrews 13:23

has been set free

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "is no longer in prison"

Hebrews 13:24

Those from Italy greet you

Possible meanings are 1) the author is not in Italy, but there is a group of believers with him who have come from Italy or 2) the author is in Italy while writing this letter.

Italy

This is the name of a region at that time. Rome is the capital city of Italy.

Hebrews 13:25

General Information:

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