



# Hebrews







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## *The Supremacy of the Son*

<sup>1</sup>On many past occasions and in many different ways, God spoke to our fathers through the prophets. <sup>2</sup>But in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom He made the universe.

<sup>3</sup>The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His nature, upholding all things by His powerful word. After He had provided purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. <sup>4</sup>So He became as far superior to the angels as the name He has inherited is excellent beyond theirs. <sup>5</sup>For to which of the angels did God ever say:

“You are My Son;  
today I have become Your Father”?

Or again:

“I will be His Father,  
and He will be My Son”?

<sup>6</sup>And again, when God brings His firstborn into the world, He says:

“Let all God's angels worship Him.”

<sup>7</sup>Now about the angels He says:

“He makes His angels winds,  
His servants flames of fire.”

<sup>8</sup>But about the Son He says:

“Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever,  
and justice is the scepter of Your kingdom.

<sup>9</sup>You have loved righteousness  
and hated wickedness;  
therefore God, Your God, has anointed You

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**1:1** “*Long ago*” referred to the time before the Messiah’s coming. For the author of Hebrews, this primarily meant the Old Testament era. Throughout that past era, “*God spoke many times and in many ways*”—through dreams, visions, mighty acts, stories, commands, exhortations, angelic appearances, and appearances of God himself. • “*The prophets*” were all those through whom God gave his revelation (see 2 Pet 1:19-21).

**1:2** “*These final days*” refers to the historical era inaugurated at Christ’s coming (see Isa 2:2; Acts 2:17). Whereas the revelation of the Old Testament era came in a wide variety of forms over time, God’s ultimate revelation was given “*through his Son*”, Jesus (see Heb 2:3-4). • “*as an inheritance*.” Christ is God’s royal heir; the author probably had Ps 2:8 in mind.

1:2 Or in His Son

1:2 Or the world; literally the ages

**1:3** The word translated “*radiates*”, found only here in the New Testament, includes an idea of intense brightness. “*God’s own glory*” is the glorious manifestation of his presence (Exod 16:7; 33:18; Isa 40:5). The Son’s glory is an expression of God’s glory—the Son of God manifests the person and presence of God (Luke 9:32; John 1:14; 2:11; 17:5; Rom 8:17). • The term translated “*expresses*”, used only here in the New Testament, was used of a distinguishing mark imprinted on an object such as a coin. The Son gives a clear picture of “*the very character of God*” (John 1:18; Phil 2:6; Col 1:15).

• “*the mighty power of his command*” (literally *his powerful word*): God’s word is the powerful, dynamic force that created and governs the world (Heb 11:3; Ps 33:6-11). Elsewhere the Son is called “*the Word of God*” (Rev 19:13; see also John 1:1-18). • “*cleansed us from our sins*.” See Heb 9:11-10:18. • “*he sat down*.” This clause is an allusion to Ps 110:1 (see also Heb 1:13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2), which foretold the exaltation of Christ after his suffering (see Matt 22:44; Acts 2:33; 1 Cor 15:25). “*The right hand*” of God indicates high honor, rank, and position (see 1 Kgs 2:19; Pss 16:11; 45:4, 9; 80:17).

**1:4** The Son’s exalted position “*shows that the Son is far greater than the angels*” in status or rank. First-century Jews were fascinated with angels and held them in high esteem, so the author of Hebrews establishes the Son’s superiority to them. • “*just as the name . . . is greater*.” Cp. 2 Sam 7:8-14. Some commentators believe that the title “*Son*” is the *name* implied here. Others think the name is *Yahweh*, the covenant name of God in the Old Testament (Exod 3:14-15; cp. Phil 2:9-11).

**1:5** “*God . . . said*.” This verse quotes Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14. By exalting Jesus to his right hand (see Acts 1:9-11; 2:32-36; 7:55-56), the Father proclaimed his unique relationship with the Son. • “*Today I have become your Father*” (or *Today I reveal you as my Son*): Jesus did not *become* the Son at the exaltation—he had been involved in creation (Heb 1:2)—but the exaltation verified his identity to all.

1:5 Psalms 2:7; literally today I have begotten You

1:5 2 Samuel 7:14; 1 Chronicles 17:13

**1:6** The “*supreme*” (or *firstborn*) “*Son*” shared the authority of the father, inherited most of his property, and was especially favored. In the New Testament, “*firstborn*” most frequently refers to Christ’s supremacy both in the church and in the created order; his resurrection is often given as the evidence for this status (Acts 13:33; Rom 1:4; 8:29; Col 1:15, 18; Rev 1:5; cp. Heb 12:23, where believers are called firstborn children). • “*Let all of God’s angels worship him*.” This quotation from Deut 32:43 demonstrates the lower status of the angels in that they worship the Son (see also Ps 97:7).

1:6 Deuteronomy 32:43 (see DSS and LXX)

**1:7** This verse quotes Ps 104:4 to show that the angels are messengers or “*servants*” and, therefore, of a lesser rank than the Son, whom they serve. • In the Old Testament, “*angels*” are sometimes associated with “*winds*” and “*fire*” (see Exod 3:2; Judg 6:21; 13:16, 20; 2 Sam 22:11; Pss 18:10; 35:5), which is why angels are mentioned in connection with God’s lordship over nature.

1:7 Psalms 104:4 (see also LXX)



above Your companions with the oil of joy.”

<sup>10</sup> And:

“In the beginning, O Lord, You laid the foundations of the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of Your hands.

<sup>11</sup> They will perish, but You remain;  
they will all wear out like a garment.

<sup>12</sup> You will roll them up like a robe;  
like a garment they will be changed;  
but You remain the same,  
and Your years will never end.”

<sup>13</sup> Yet to which of the angels did God ever say:

“Sit at My right hand  
until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet”?

<sup>14</sup> Are not the angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

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### **Salvation Confirmed**

<sup>1</sup> We must pay closer attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. <sup>2</sup> For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every transgression and disobedience received its just punishment, <sup>3</sup> how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

This salvation was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

<sup>4</sup> and was affirmed by God through signs, wonders, various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to His will.

### **Jesus like His Brothers**

<sup>5</sup> For it is not to angels that He has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. <sup>6</sup> But somewhere it is testified in these words:

“What is man that You are mindful of him,  
or the son of man that You care for him?

<sup>7</sup> You made him a little lower than the angels;

You crowned him with glory and honor

<sup>8</sup> and placed everything under his feet.”

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1:9 Psalms 45:6–7

1:12 BYZ and TR do not include like a garment.

1:12 Psalms 102:25–27

1:13 Psalms 110:1

1:14 Literally Are they not all

**2:1** “*The truth we have heard*” is the message of salvation delivered through Christ (2:3). • “*Drift away*” pictures a ship getting off course. Here it speaks of getting off track spiritually due to not listening “*very carefully*” to the Good News.

**2:2** According to Jewish tradition, “*the message God delivered*,” the law given on Mount Sinai (see Acts 7:38; Gal 3:19), was delivered “*through angels*”. • “*Violation of the law*” was punished (see Exod 22:19; Lev 20:10; Num 35:16–21), and punishment was inescapable (Prov 1:24–31; Jer 11:11).

**2:3** “*So what makes us think we can escape?*” Here the author presses the full force of the danger of turning away from Christ and his salvation. There is no escape from punishment for those who walk away, and the punishment will be of the greatest severity (cp. 6:4–12; 10:26–31; 12:29; Rom 2:5; 1 Thes 2:16). • “*Salvation*” refers to God’s acts on behalf of his people. For example, God saved his people through the exodus from Egypt (Deut 26:5–9). In the New Testament, salvation primarily refers to Christ’s work of rescuing people from the penalty of sin and giving them new life by his sacrificial death on the cross (Heb 5:9–10). This salvation was “*first announced by the Lord Jesus himself*” (e.g., Matt 4:17; 9:35; Mark 1:15; Luke 13:1–5). He “*then delivered*” (or *validated*) the message through “*those who heard him speak*” (e.g., Mark 6:12; Acts 2:38; 3:19–20).

**2:4** “*God confirmed the message*” (literally *God bore witness*): God himself confirmed the validity of the message of Christ and his followers “*by giving signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit*” (see Acts 2:22; Rom 15:19; 2 Cor 12:12).

**2:5** “*it is not angels:*” Cp. 1:13.

**2:6** “*What are mere mortals:*” These two lines of the psalm proclaim God’s special attention to human beings. • “*a son of man*” (or *the Son of Man*): The phrase *son of man* speaks of human existence; it parallels *mere mortals* in the previous line. In the Gospels Jesus frequently referred to himself with this phrase.

**2:7** “*them:*” Literally *him*. This refers to humanity in general and is applied specifically to Christ (see study note on 2:6–8). • Christ became “*a little lower than the angels*” (or *lower than the angels for only a little while*), like other human beings (see also Phil 2:5–8). As a result of his suffering, he was “*crowned*” . . . “*with glory and honor*” (see Heb 2:9; Phil 2:9–11).

2:7 Or a little while lower; also in verse 9

2:7 WH and TR include and set him over the works of Your hands.



When God subjected all things to him, He left nothing outside of his control. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.

<sup>9</sup> But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

<sup>10</sup> In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting for God, for whom and through whom all things exist, to make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. <sup>11</sup> For both the One who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. <sup>12</sup> He says:

“I will proclaim Your name to My brothers;

I will sing Your praises in the assembly.”

<sup>13</sup> And again:

“I will put My trust in Him.”

And once again:

“Here am I, and the children God has given Me.”

<sup>14</sup> Now since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity, so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

<sup>16</sup> For surely it is not the angels He helps, but the descendants of Abraham. <sup>17</sup> For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, in order to make atonement for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.

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### ***Jesus Our Apostle and High Priest***

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, set your focus on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. <sup>2</sup> He was faithful to the One who appointed Him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house.

<sup>3</sup> For Jesus has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. <sup>4</sup> And every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.

<sup>5</sup> Now Moses was faithful as a servant in all God’s house, testifying to what would be spoken later.

<sup>6</sup> But Christ is faithful as the Son over God’s house. And we are His house, if we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope of which we boast.

### ***Do Not Harden Your Hearts***

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you hear His voice,

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**2:8** “*You gave them authority over all things*” (literally *You have put all things under his feet*): See study note on 2:6-8. • “*nothing is left out*.” All things are ultimately subject to Christ and the church, but “*we have not yet seen*” the complete expression of this reality—it will be consummated at the end of the age.

2:8 Psalms 8:4-6 (see also LXX)

**2:9** “*What we do see is Jesus*.” How can the church persevere when evil and death are still in the world? We look to Jesus both in his human life in “*a position a little lower than the angels*” and in his exaltation, “*now crowned with glory and honor*.” His suffering as a human being led to his exaltation (see Phil 2:5-11; cp. Isa 52:13-53:12). See also Heb 12:1-13.

2:10 Or pioneer or founder

2:12 Psalms 22:22 (see also LXX)

2:13 Isaiah 8:17

2:13 Isaiah 8:18

2:17 Or to make propitiation

**3:1** “*dear brothers and sisters who belong to God*.” Literally *holy brothers*. Speakers and writers of the ancient world often addressed religious gatherings as “brothers” (Greek *adelphoi*), referring to both men and women. • “*think carefully about this Jesus*.” Focusing on Jesus is a primary means of persevering in the faith (2:9; 12:1-2). • “*God’s messenger*” (literally *God’s apostle*): This description might be highlighting the Son’s role in bearing a proclamation of God’s name and message (2:12; Matt 10:40; Mark 9:37; Luke 10:16).

**3:2** Jesus “*was faithful to God*” and to the task to which the Father had appointed him (5:7-10; 12:1-3; Phil 2:5-11), “*just as Moses*” had been (Num 12:7). Many Jews of the first century regarded Moses as the greatest person in history, of even higher status than the angels.

3:2 Literally just as Moses in all His house; SBL just as Moses in His house

3:5 Numbers 12:7

**3:6** We are part of Christ’s house “*if we keep our courage*”. The author could not give unqualified assurance to those who were drifting away from Christ and the church. Those who persevere in the faith have assurance that they are part of God’s house (see 3:14; Rom 8:9, 17; 11:22; 2 Cor 13:5; Col 1:22-23).

3:6 NE, WH, BYZ, and TR include to the end.



<sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts,  
as you did in the rebellion,  
in the day of testing in the wilderness,  
<sup>9</sup> where your fathers tested and tried Me,  
and for forty years saw My works.  
<sup>10</sup> Therefore I was angry with that generation,  
and I said,  
‘Their hearts are always going astray,  
and they have not known My ways.’  
<sup>11</sup> So I swore on oath in My anger,  
‘They shall never enter My rest.’”

### ***The Peril of Unbelief***

<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers, that none of you has a wicked heart of unbelief that turns away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But exhort one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

<sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly to the end the assurance we had at first. <sup>15</sup> As it has been said:

“Today, if you hear His voice,  
do not harden your hearts,  
as you did in the rebellion.”

<sup>16</sup> For who were the ones who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? <sup>17</sup> And with whom was God angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? <sup>18</sup> And to whom did He swear that they would never enter His rest? Was it not to those who disobeyed? <sup>19</sup> So we see that it was because of their unbelief that they were unable to enter.

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### ***The Sabbath Rest***

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be deemed to have fallen short of it. <sup>2</sup> For we also received the good news just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, since they did not share the faith of those who comprehended it.

<sup>3</sup> Now we who have believed enter that rest. As for the others, it is just as God has said:

“So I swore on oath in My anger,  
‘They shall never enter My rest.’”

And yet His works have been finished since the foundation of the world.

<sup>4</sup> For somewhere He has spoken about the seventh day in this manner: “And on the seventh day God rested from all His works.” <sup>5</sup> And again, as He says in the passage above: “They shall never enter My rest.”

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**3:8** “Israel” . . . “rebelled” and “tested” God in places such as Massah and Meribah, where there was a shortage of water (Exod 17:1-7; Num 20:2-13), and especially at Kadesh, where the disobedient Israelites refused to enter the Promised Land (Heb 3:10; see Num 14:1-25; Deut 1:19-46; Ps 106).

3:11 Psalms 95:7-11 (see also LXX)

3:15 Psalms 95:7-8

**4:1** To “fear” God means to experience an appropriate reverence, even awe, for God and his will. It would be the worst of tragedies to “fail to experience” what God has promised.

**4:2** “This good news” is the message of salvation (2:3-4). • “they didn’t share the faith of those who listened to God:” Some manuscripts read *they didn’t combine what they heard with faith*. In either case, the hearers were deficient in faith, distrusting God’s word of promise.

4:2 Literally not having been united in the faith of those who heard

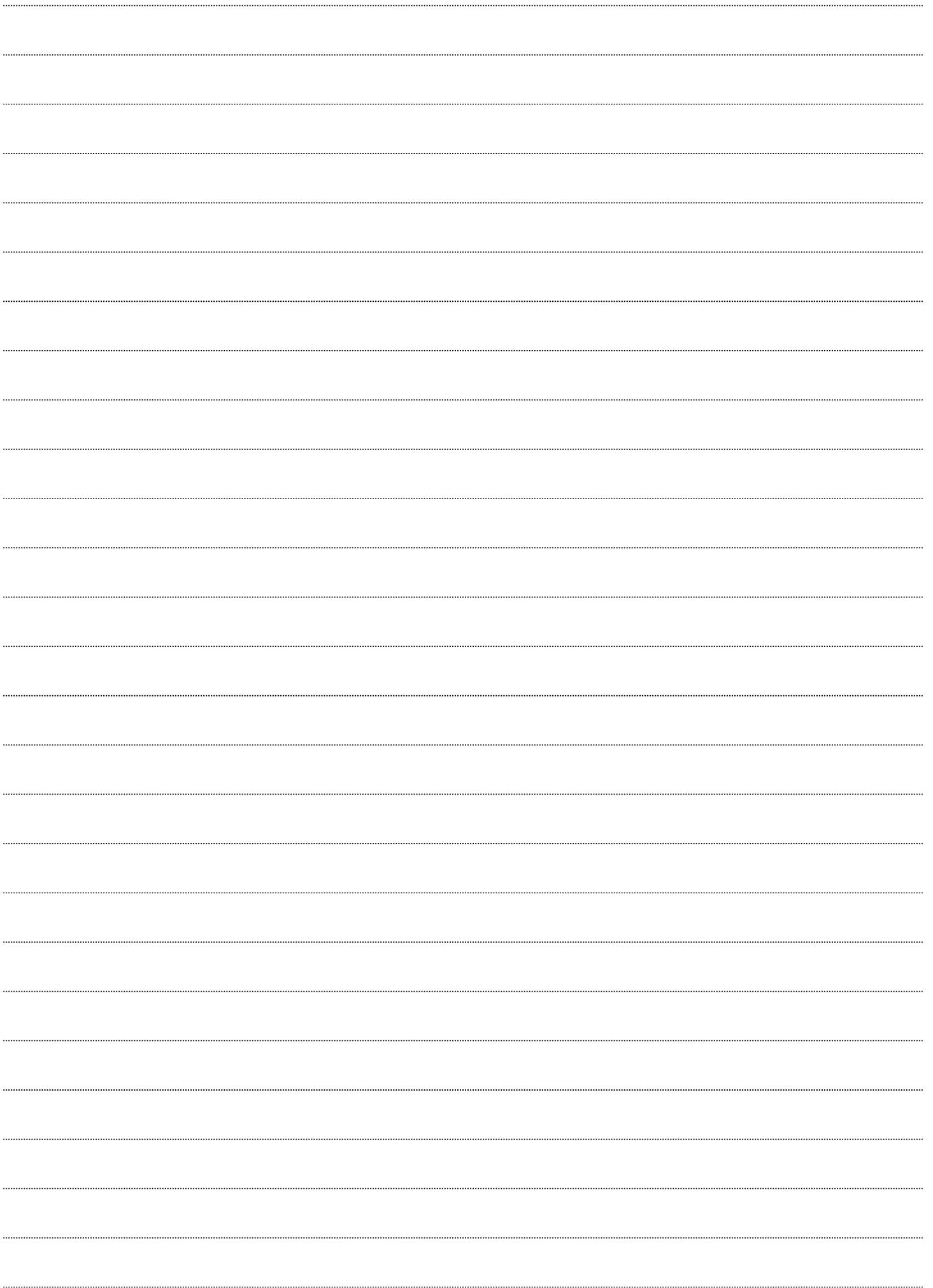
**4:3** People “who believe” the Good News are the true heirs of God’s “rest”, the salvation that God offers through Christ’s sacrifice. • “God said:” The quotation of Ps 95:11 reminds the reader that the unbelieving rebels in the wilderness would “never enter” God’s “place of rest” (cp. Heb 11:8, 10, 14-16; 12:22-24). • “since he made the world:” God’s rest means much more than physical entry into Canaan (see study note on 4:4).

4:3 Psalms 95:11; also in verse 5

**4:4** This verse quotes Gen 2:2 to demonstrate that the promised rest was established when “God rested” at creation.

4:4 Genesis 2:2

**4:5** This quotation of Ps 95:11 reiterates the point made in Heb 4:3.



<sup>6</sup>Since, then, it remains for some to enter His rest, and since those who formerly heard the good news did not enter because of their disobedience, <sup>7</sup>God again designated a certain day as “Today,” when a long time later He spoke through David as was just stated: “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.”

<sup>8</sup>For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. <sup>9</sup>There remains, then, a Sabbath rest for the people of God. <sup>10</sup>For whoever enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from His. <sup>11</sup>Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following the same pattern of disobedience.

### ***The Living Word***

<sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it pierces even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup>Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight; everything is uncovered and exposed before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we profess. <sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin. <sup>16</sup>Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

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### ***The Perfect High Priest***

<sup>1</sup>Every high priest is appointed from among men to represent them in matters relating to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. <sup>2</sup>He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and misguided, since he himself is subject to weakness.

<sup>3</sup>That is why he is obligated to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people.

<sup>4</sup>No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. <sup>5</sup>So also Christ did not take upon Himself the glory of becoming a high priest, but He was called by the One who said to Him:

“You are My Son;

today I have become Your Father.”

<sup>6</sup>And in another passage God says:

“You are a priest forever

in the order of Melchizedek.”

<sup>7</sup>During the days of Jesus’ earthly life, He offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the One who could save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence. <sup>8</sup>Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from

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**4:6** “So God’s rest is there:” Building on the discussion in 4:3-5, the author is about to argue that the promised “rest” is still available (4:7-10). But those who wandered in the wilderness, even though they “heard” the “good news” that the Promised Land was open to them, “failed to enter because they disobeyed God” (see Num 14:1-25; Deut 1:19-46; Ps 106).

**4:7** “So God set another time . . . and that time is today:” The logic here is that “David” wrote Ps 95 “much later” than the wilderness debacle, so God’s “rest” cannot be limited to that earlier generation. The “words already quoted” are from Ps 95:7-8; these words encourage us not to “harden” our “hearts” when hearing God’s “voice” so that we might enter the rest that the people in the wilderness were denied. This opportunity is available “today” (see Heb 3:13).

4:7 Psalms 95:7-8

**4:8** “Joshua” is the same name as Jesus (Greek *Iēsous*, Hebrew *Yehoshua*). It is normally translated *Joshua* in the Old Testament and *Jesus* in the New Testament (see also study note on Exod 17:9). The author is making a word play on Jesus’ and Joshua’s shared name. Joshua did lead God’s people into the Promised Land (Josh 3-4), but God had more in mind when he promised his people “rest”. God’s ultimate rest is provided by Jesus (Heb 3:13-14; 4:3, 9-11, 14-16).

**4:9** “a special rest:” Jesus’ sacrifice functioned as a Day of Atonement sacrifice (5:1-3; 9:13-22; see Lev 23:26-28, 32). Through Christ’s sacrifice, God’s promised rest for his people is available.

**5:1** “Every high priest:” This phrase introduces requirements for high priests in general. • “a man:” The high priest was one of the people, so Jesus had to become human (see 2:17-18). • A second requirement for high priests was that they would “represent other people” by offering “sacrifices” on their behalf (7:25-28). Only the high priest could offer the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement (Exod 29; Lev 16:1-25).

**5:2** A high priest was “able to deal gently” with those who sin because “he himself” was “subject to the same weaknesses”, i.e., he was sinful (5:3; cp. 4:15).

**5:3** On the Day of Atonement the high priest was required to “offer sacrifices” for himself and his household prior to offering sacrifices for the people (Lev 16:11).

**5:4** The role of “high priest” is by God’s appointment rather than human enlistment (see Exod 28:1; Lev 8:1-12; Num 16:1-26).

5:5 Psalms 2:7; literally today I have begotten You

5:6 Psalms 110:4

**5:7** The phrase “with a loud cry and tears” is probably an allusion to Christ’s suffering in the Garden (see Matt 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:40-46). “God heard his prayers” in the sense of affirming his righteousness and suitability for his role as high priest. Jesus’ faithful devotion is being presented as an example for the readers (cp. Heb 12:2-3).

**5:8** “he learned obedience from the things he suffered:” Jesus was not disobedient before his suffering, but he walked his path of human experience—all the way to his death on the cross—in complete submission to the Father’s will. We are expected to travel the same path (12:1-11).



what He suffered. <sup>9</sup> And having been made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him <sup>10</sup> and was designated by God as high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

### ***Milk and Solid Food***

<sup>11</sup> We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain, because you are dull of hearing. <sup>12</sup> Although by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to re-teach you the basic principles of God's word. You need milk, not solid food!

<sup>13</sup> For everyone who lives on milk is still an infant, inexperienced in the message of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained their senses to distinguish good from evil.

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### ***A Call to Maturity***

<sup>1</sup> Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith in God, <sup>2</sup> instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. <sup>3</sup> And this we will do, if God permits.

<sup>4</sup> It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup> who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age— <sup>6</sup> and then have fallen away—to be restored to repentance, because they themselves are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting Him to open shame.

<sup>7</sup> For land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is tended receives the blessing of God. <sup>8</sup> But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless, and its curse is imminent. In the end it will be burned.

<sup>9</sup> Even though we speak like this, beloved, we are convinced of better things in your case—things that accompany salvation. <sup>10</sup> For God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love you have shown for His name as you have ministered to the saints and continue to do so.

<sup>11</sup> We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. <sup>12</sup> Then you will not be sluggish, but will imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

### ***God's Unchangeable Promise***

<sup>13</sup> When God made His promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater to swear by, He swore by Himself, <sup>14</sup> saying, "I will surely bless you and multiply your descendants." <sup>15</sup> And so Abraham, after waiting patiently, obtained the promise.

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**5:9** "God qualified him as a perfect High Priest:" As used in Hebrews, *perfect* means "complete" or "mature" (see 2:10; 5:14; 7:11; 9:9-11). Jesus, through his sufferings, was qualified to be "the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him". • *High Priest* is not in the Greek text, but it is implied. • As the Son obeyed the Father (5:8), submitting completely to the Father's will, so those who come to him for *salvation* must *obey him*.

5:12 Or of the oracles of God

**6:1** "Let us go on:" Or *Let us be carried on*, suggesting that God initiates growth to maturity (Phil 2:12-13) and that it is an ongoing process. • "Repenting" and "faith" are the basic commitments that initiate a person to the new covenant and constitute the basic posture of a Christian's life (see Acts 20:21).

6:1 Or from acts that lead to death

**6:2** The term "*baptisms*" (or *washings*) is plural, so it must mean more than just Christian baptism. Instruction about various washings was prevalent in first-century Judaism (see Matt 15:2; Mark 7:3). The author might also have in mind the cleansing rituals of the Old Testament (cp. Heb 9:13; 10:22). • The "*laying on of hands*" was associated with healing (Mark 5:22-23; Luke 13:13), ritual blessing (Matt 19:13, 15), reception of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17; 9:17; 19:6), and acknowledgement of a person's ministry (Acts 6:6; 13:3). • "*resurrection of the dead*:" See "The Resurrection of the Dead" Theme Note. • "*eternal judgment*:" See Rev 20:11-15.

6:2 Or cleansing rites

**6:3** The author is implicitly exhorting his readers to maturity, not only in their "*understanding*" but in everything (cp. 4:11; 5:14; 10:23-39; 12:1-13).

**6:4** In Greek, the word "*impossible*" begins the sentence for emphasis—it absolutely cannot happen (see also 6:18; 10:4; 11:6). • They were "*once enlightened*" when they "first learned about Christ" (see 10:32 and corresponding study note). • The "*good things of heaven*" might allude to the manna given from heaven (Exod 16:4, 15; Ps 78:24) as an image of spiritual blessings.

**6:5** "*tasted the goodness of the word of God*:" These people had heard the word of God preached (2:3-4; 4:1-2) and had seen its effects. • "*the power of the age to come*:" They had witnessed signs and wonders when they heard the Good News (2:4; cp. Exod 7:3-4; Deut 7:19; Pss 66:3; 77:15-20; 78:9-16; 1 Cor 10:1-13).

**6:6** "*then turn*" (or *fall*) "*away*:" The image is reminiscent of the wilderness wanderers who turned away from obeying God and fell in the desert (3:17; 4:11; Num 14:1-4, 29-30). • "*to bring such people back to repentance*:" They had repented before, but had no fruit from their repentance (Heb 6:7-8). When people turn their back on Christ and his superior sacrifice, "*it is impossible*" for them to find any other means of repentance. • "*Rejecting the Son of God*" constitutes "*nailing him to the cross once again*". Crucifixion was the ultimate instrument of rejection and humiliation in the Greco-Roman world and brought "*public shame*". Those who turned away from Christ had in effect joined those who stood before the cross shouting insults, insisting that Jesus was not really the Messiah and Son of God but was instead worthy of shame (see Matt 27:39-44).

**6:9** "*We are confident*:" Skilled speakers and writers express confidence in those they address to motivate them (cp. Rom 15:14). • The author is confident that his hearers' lives give evidence of a true relationship with God, including "*salvation*". In the New Testament, *salvation* primarily refers to Christ's work on the cross (Heb 5:9-10; see also study note on 2:3); Hebrews places emphasis on the consummation of *salvation* at the end of the age (9:28).



<sup>16</sup>Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and their oath serves as a confirmation to end all argument. <sup>17</sup>So when God wanted to make the unchanging nature of His purpose very clear to the heirs of the promise, He guaranteed it with an oath. <sup>18</sup>Thus by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be strongly encouraged.

<sup>19</sup>We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, <sup>20</sup>where Jesus our forerunner has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.

— 7 —

### **Melchizedek and Abraham**

<sup>1</sup>This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, <sup>2</sup>and Abraham apportioned to him a tenth of everything. First, his name means “king of righteousness.” Then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.” <sup>3</sup>Without father or mother or genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God, he remains a priest for all time.

<sup>4</sup>Consider how great Melchizedek was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder. <sup>5</sup>Now the law commands the sons of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, from their brothers—though they too are descended from Abraham. <sup>6</sup>But Melchizedek, who did not trace his descent from Levi, collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. <sup>7</sup>And indisputably, the lesser is blessed by the greater.

<sup>8</sup>In the case of the Levites, mortal men collect the tenth; but in the case of Melchizedek, it is affirmed that he lives on. <sup>9</sup>And so to speak, Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham. <sup>10</sup>For when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the loins of his ancestor.

### **A Superior Priesthood**

<sup>11</sup>Now if perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on this basis the people received the law), why was there still need for another priest to appear—one in the order of Melchizedek and not in the order of Aaron? <sup>12</sup>For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed as well.

<sup>13</sup>He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. <sup>14</sup>For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, a tribe as to which Moses said nothing about priests.

<sup>15</sup>And this point is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, <sup>16</sup>one who has become a priest not by a law of succession, but by the power of an indestructible life. <sup>17</sup>For it is testified:

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

<sup>18</sup>So the former commandment is set aside because it was weak and useless <sup>19</sup>(for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

<sup>20</sup>And none of this happened without an oath. For others became priests without an oath, <sup>21</sup>but Jesus became a priest with an oath by the One who said to Him:

“The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind:

‘You are a priest forever.’”

<sup>22</sup>Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

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6:14 Genesis 22:17

7:1 “king of . . . Salem.” See Gen 14:18 and corresponding study note. • “also a priest of God Most High:” Unlike the Hebrew kings, Melchizedek combined the offices of king and priest, thus foreshadowing the Messiah. • “winning a great battle against the kings:” See Gen 14:1-17.

7:1 Genesis 14:18

7:2 Abraham was giving “a tenth” to the Lord by giving it to “Melchizedek”, his priest. This act anticipates the giving of tithes under the law (Lev 27:30, 32) and becomes a key point in the author’s argument (Heb 7:4). • “Melchi-” (Hebrew *melek*) means “king”. • “-zedek” (Hebrew *tsedeq*) means “justice” or “righteousness”. • “Salem” (Hebrew *shalom*) means “peace”. It was common for rabbis to bring out the theological significance of a biblical figure’s name by making associations between the name and other Hebrew terms.

7:3 That we have “no record” of Melchizedek’s “father or mother or any of his ancestors” is significant in light of the ancestral requirement upon which the Levitical priesthood was based. He appears from nowhere—it is as though there is “no beginning or end to his life”. The author is interpreting Gen 14:17-20 in light of Ps 110:4, which also understands Melchizedek as representing an eternal priesthood. • “He remains a priest forever:” This contrasts with a Levite, whose priesthood ended when he died (Heb 7:8, 23). • “resembling the Son of God:” Melchizedek was not an Old Testament appearance of Jesus. Rather, his priesthood and that of Jesus had characteristics in common, in light of Ps 110:4.

7:4 The point of this section (7:1-10) is to have the readers “consider” . . . “how great this Melchizedek was” by comparing him to the descendants of Levi. Melchizedek was so great that “Abraham” gave him “a tenth” of the spoils of “battle” (Gen 14:20).

7:8 Melchizedek’s “immortality” (7:3) is one aspect of his superiority to the Levites: The Levites “are men who die”, but Melchizedek “lives on”.

7:17 Psalms 110:4

7:21 Psalms 110:4



<sup>23</sup> Now there have been many other priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office. <sup>24</sup> But because Jesus lives forever, He has a permanent priesthood. <sup>25</sup> Therefore He is able to save completely those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to intercede for them.

<sup>26</sup> Such a high priest truly befits us—One who is holy, innocent, undefiled, set apart from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> Unlike the other high priests, He does not need to offer daily sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people; He sacrificed for sin once for all when He offered up Himself. <sup>28</sup> For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

— 8 —

### ***Christ's Eternal Priesthood***

<sup>1</sup> The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, <sup>2</sup> and who ministers in the sanctuary and true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.

<sup>3</sup> And since every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, it was necessary for this One also to have something to offer.

<sup>4</sup> Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are already priests who offer gifts according to the law.

<sup>5</sup> The place where they serve is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: “See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.”

### ***The New Covenant***

<sup>6</sup> Now, however, Jesus has received a much more excellent ministry, just as the covenant He mediates is better and is founded on better promises. <sup>7</sup> For if that first covenant had been without fault, no place would have been sought for a second. <sup>8</sup> But God found fault with the people and said:

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord,  
when I will make a new covenant  
with the house of Israel  
and with the house of Judah.

<sup>9</sup> It will not be like the covenant  
I made with their fathers  
when I took them by the hand  
to lead them out of the land of Egypt,  
because they did not abide by My covenant,  
and I disregarded them,

declares the Lord.

<sup>10</sup> For this is the covenant I will make  
with the house of Israel  
after those days,

---

7:25 Or forever

**8:3** “every high priest is required to offer gifts and sacrifices:” Making offerings is a general requirement of priests, so Jesus also had to offer a sacrifice. • This verse reiterates what is stated in the first verse of the previous discussion (5:1), indicating another major movement in the book.

**8:4** “If he were here on earth:” Under the old order Jesus “would not even be a priest”, as previously discussed (see 7:13-14). But Jesus is in heaven, which makes his priestly service distinct from and superior to that of the priests of the old covenant (8:5; 9:11, 24; 10:12).

**8:5** “a copy, a shadow:” The earthly place of worship was an imitation that pointed to “the real one in heaven”. That is why “God” warned “Moses” to make it “according to the pattern” (see Exod 25:40; 26:30; cp. Acts 7:44). Judaism and early Christianity both spoke of a heavenly Temple within a heavenly Jerusalem, which would come down to earth at the end of the age (see Rev 21:2). Hebrews suggests that this heavenly place of worship was shown to Moses so he would know how to build the earthly Tabernacle. It is the heavenly Temple, however, in which Jesus ministers as High Priest.

8:5 Exodus 25:40; see also Exodus 26:30.

**8:6** “the one who mediates:” A mediator works with two parties to bring them to agreement. Christ’s work of sacrifice established the “covenant” relationship between people and God. • “a far better covenant with God:” See “The New Covenant” Theme Note. This covenant is better because it is “based on better promises” (see 8:7-13).

**8:7** The “first covenant”, made at Sinai, was not “faultless”. It was not the end of God’s plan, because it didn’t solve human weaknesses (see 7:11-28; 8:9).

**8:8** “found fault with the people:” Because the people were unable to keep the terms of the old covenant (see study note on 8:7), God made a “new covenant”.

**8:9** God “made” a covenant “with their ancestors” at Sinai (Exod 19:1-8; 24:7-8; 34:27-28; Deut 4:13). • “I took them by the hand:” In rescuing his people from “the land of Egypt”, God “led them” as a parent might lead a child that could not fend for itself (see Exod 12-14). • “They did not remain faithful:” See Heb 3:7-19; Num 14:1-38; Deut 9; Ps 106. • “so I turned my back on them:” The covenant warned that if the people turned away, God would turn away from them (see Deut 28:15-68; 30:11-20; 1 Kgs 8:22-53; 2 Chr 6:12-42).



declares the Lord.

I will put My laws in their minds  
and inscribe them on their hearts.

And I will be their God,  
and they will be My people.

<sup>11</sup>No longer will each one teach his neighbor or his brother,  
saying, 'Know the Lord,'  
because they will all know Me,  
from the least of them to the greatest.

<sup>12</sup>For I will forgive their iniquities  
and will remember their sins no more."

<sup>13</sup>By speaking of a new covenant, He has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

— 9 —

### ***The Earthly Tabernacle***

<sup>1</sup>Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary.

<sup>2</sup>A tabernacle was prepared. In its first room were the lampstand, the table, and the consecrated bread. This was called the Holy Place. <sup>3</sup>Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, <sup>4</sup>containing the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. Inside the ark were the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. <sup>5</sup>Above the ark were the cherubim of glory, overshadowing the mercy seat. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now.

<sup>6</sup>When everything had been prepared in this way, the priests entered regularly into the first room to perform their sacred duties.

<sup>7</sup>But only the high priest entered the second room, and then only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.

<sup>8</sup>By this arrangement the Holy Spirit was showing that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing. <sup>9</sup>It is an illustration for the present time, because the gifts and sacrifices being offered were unable to cleanse the conscience of the worshiper. <sup>10</sup>They consist only in food and drink and special washings—external regulations imposed until the time of reform.

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8:12 Jeremiah 31:31–34 (see also LXX)

8:13 Literally In saying new; here and in Hebrews 9:1 and 18, covenant is included for clarity but is not contained in the Greek. A broader interpretation could also include priesthood or tabernacle.

9:1 Literally the first; also in verse 18; see the footnote for Hebrews 8:13.

**9:2** Israel's "Tabernacle" was a tent with "two rooms" (see Exod 25–31; 35:1–40:38). • "a lampstand:" Exod 25:31-40; 26:35. • "a table:" Exod 25:23-30. • The priests went into the "Holy Place" daily in their ritual duties (Heb 9:6; see Exod 28:43; Num 28:3-8).

9:2 Or the Bread of the Presence

**9:3** At the back of the first room of the Tabernacle was a "curtain" that separated the first room from the "second room called the Most Holy Place" (Exod 26:31-33). This curtain was a sacred barrier: Only the high priest could go behind it into the Most Holy Place, and only once a year on the Day of Atonement (Heb 9:7; see Exod 30:6, 10; Lev 16:2-34; 23:27-32).

9:3 Or the Holy of Holies

**9:4** The "gold incense altar" probably stood just outside the inner curtain (Exod 30:1-10); its location is ambiguous at points in the Old Testament, but it was closely associated with the Most Holy Place (Exod 30:6; Lev 16:13; 1 Kgs 6:22). • Since it represented the presence of God, the "Ark of the Covenant" was the most important item in the Tabernacle (see Exod 25:10-22). • The "gold jar containing manna" was a reminder of God's provision in the wilderness (Exod 16:32-34). • "Aaron's staff that sprouted leaves" (see Num 17:1-11) was a reminder not to rebel against God's chosen leaders (Num 17:10; cp. Heb 13:17). • The "stone tablets of the covenant" held the Ten Commandments and were to remind the people of the terms by which they were to live out the covenant (Exod 25:16; 31:18; Deut 9:9–10:5).

**9:5** "The cherubim of divine glory" were statues of angels formed into the Ark's cover. This category of angels is especially associated with God's glorious presence (Gen 3:24; Pss 80:1; 99:1; Isa 37:16). The "Ark's cover" itself was "the place of atonement", on which the blood from the Day of Atonement sacrifice was to be sprinkled (Lev 16:14-16). • "But we cannot explain these things in detail now:" The main focus of the discussion is the offering of sacrifices under the old covenant (Heb 9:6-10).

9:5 Or atonement cover

**9:7** The yearly duty was carried out on the Day of Atonement, when "the high priest" offered sacrifices for "the sins" not covered by other sacrifices during the previous year (Lev 16:1-25).

**9:8** "was not freely open:" Free entrance into the presence of God was not available to all of the people under the old covenant system. • The outer room of "the Tabernacle", which served as a sacred barrier keeping the people from the presence of God in "the Most Holy Place", was symbolic of the whole system. Under that system, people were kept out of God's presence rather than led into it.

9:8 Or the Holy Place; also in verses 12 and 25

**9:9** "This is an illustration:" The problem with "the gifts and sacrifices" of the old covenant is that they were "not able to cleanse the consciences of the people"—they could not remove people's guilt before a holy God (cp. 9:14; 10:2, 22; 13:18).



## ***Redemption through His Blood***

<sup>11</sup> But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that have come, He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made by hands and is not a part of this creation. <sup>12</sup> He did not enter by the blood of goats and calves, but He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, thus securing eternal redemption.

<sup>13</sup> For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that their bodies are clean, <sup>14</sup> how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, purify our consciences from works of death, so that we may serve the living God!

<sup>15</sup> Therefore Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, now that He has died to redeem them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

<sup>16</sup> In the case of a will, it is necessary to establish the death of the one who made it, <sup>17</sup> because a will does not take effect until the one who made it has died; it cannot be executed while he is still alive.

<sup>18</sup> That is why even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood. <sup>19</sup> For when Moses had proclaimed every commandment of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, along with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people, <sup>20</sup> saying, “This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep.”

<sup>21</sup> In the same way, he sprinkled with blood the tabernacle and all the vessels used in worship. <sup>22</sup> According to the law, in fact, nearly everything must be purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

<sup>23</sup> So it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. <sup>24</sup> For Christ did not enter a man-made copy of the true sanctuary, but He entered heaven itself, now to appear on our behalf in the presence of God.

<sup>25</sup> Nor did He enter heaven to offer Himself again and again, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. <sup>26</sup> Otherwise, Christ would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But now He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

<sup>27</sup> Just as man is appointed to die once, and after that to face judgment, <sup>28</sup> so also Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many; and He will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who eagerly await Him.

— 10 —

## ***Christ's Perfect Sacrifice***

<sup>1</sup> For the law is only a shadow of the good things to come, not the realities themselves. It can never, by the same sacrifices offered year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. <sup>2</sup> If it could, would not the offerings have ceased? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt the guilt of their sins.

<sup>3</sup> Instead, those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, <sup>4</sup> because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. <sup>5</sup> Therefore, when Christ came into the world, He said:

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,  
but a body You prepared for Me.

<sup>6</sup> In burnt offerings and sin offerings  
You took no delight.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘Here I am, it is written about Me in the scroll:

I have come to do Your will, O God.’”

<sup>8</sup> In the passage above He says, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings You did not desire, nor did You delight in them” (although they are offered according to the law). <sup>9</sup> Then He adds, “Here I am, I have come to do Your will.” He takes away the first to establish the second. <sup>10</sup> And by that will, we have been sanctified through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

<sup>11</sup> Day after day every priest stands to minister and to offer again and again the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup> But when this Priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God.

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9:11 BYZ and TR that are to come

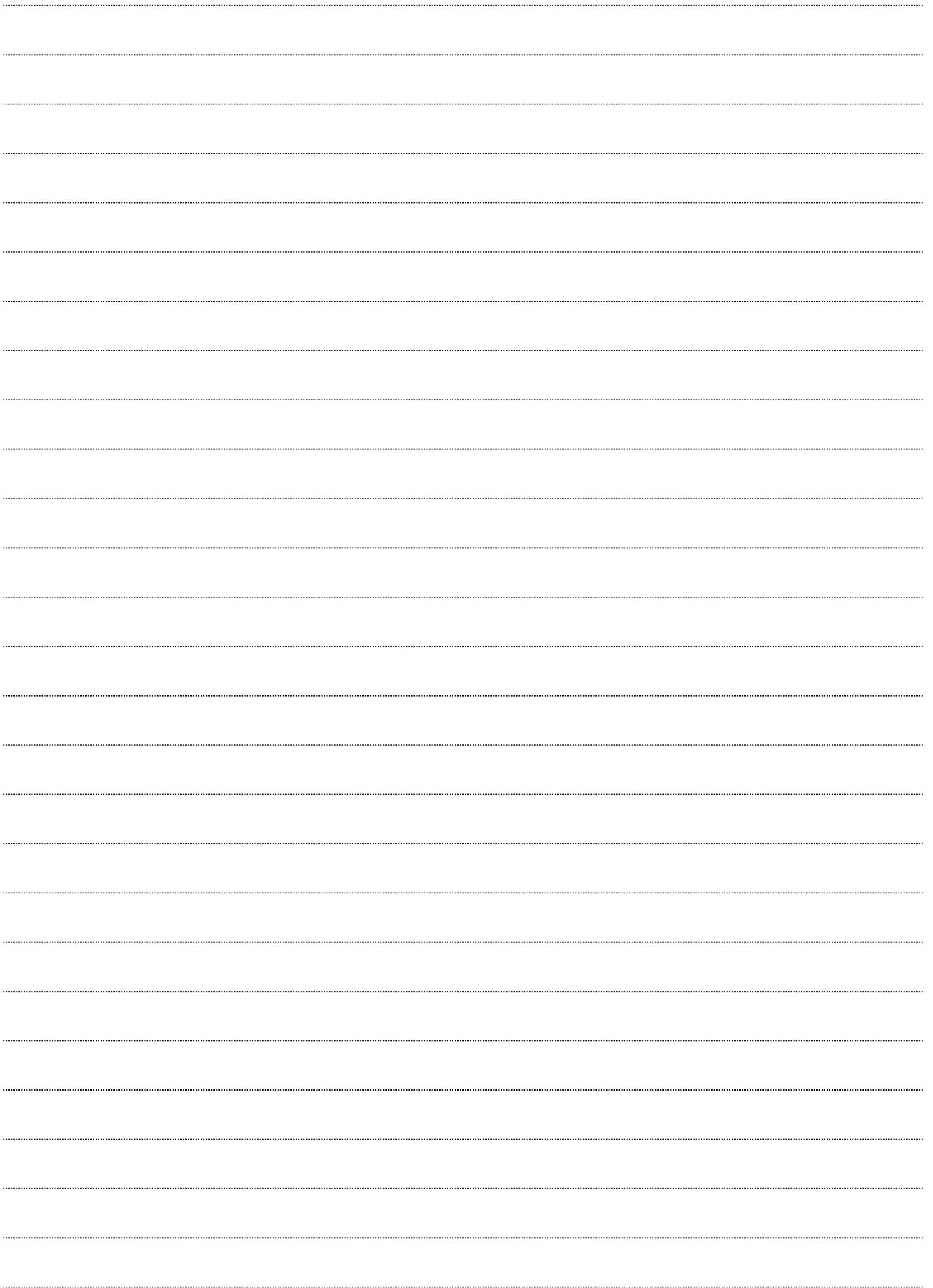
9:14 BYZ and TR your

9:16 Greek *diathēkē* is also translated as covenant throughout this chapter.

9:19 SBL does not include and goats.

9:20 Exodus 24:8

10:7 Psalms 40:6–8 (see also LXX)



<sup>13</sup>Since that time, He waits for His enemies to be made a footstool for His feet, <sup>14</sup>because by a single offering He has made perfect for all time those who are being sanctified.

<sup>15</sup>The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First He says:

<sup>16</sup>“This is the covenant I will make with them  
after those days, declares the Lord.

I will put My laws in their hearts

and inscribe them on their minds.”

<sup>17</sup>Then He adds:

“Their sins and lawless acts

I will remember no more.”

<sup>18</sup>And where these have been forgiven, an offering for sin is no longer needed.

### ***A Call to Persevere***

<sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by the new and living way opened for us through the curtain of His body, <sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

<sup>23</sup>Let us hold resolutely to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how to spur one another on to love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup>Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have made a habit, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

<sup>26</sup>If we deliberately go on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no further sacrifice for sins remains, <sup>27</sup>but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume all adversaries. <sup>28</sup>Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. <sup>29</sup>How much more severely do you think one deserves to be punished who has trampled on the Son of God, profaned the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

<sup>30</sup>For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine; I will repay,” and again, “The Lord will judge His people.” <sup>31</sup>It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

<sup>32</sup>Remember the early days that you were in the light. In those days, you endured a great conflict in the face of suffering. <sup>33</sup>Sometimes you were publicly exposed to ridicule and persecution; at other times you were partners with those who were so treated. <sup>34</sup>You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, knowing that you yourselves had a better and permanent possession.

<sup>35</sup>So do not throw away your confidence; it holds a great reward. <sup>36</sup>You need to persevere, so that after you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised. <sup>37</sup>For,

“In just a little while,

He who is coming will come and will not delay.

<sup>38</sup>But My righteous one will live by faith;

and if he shrinks back,

I will take no pleasure in him.”

<sup>39</sup>But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

— 11 —

### ***Faith and Assurance***

<sup>1</sup>Now faith is the assurance of what we hope for and the certainty of what we do not see. <sup>2</sup>This is why the ancients were commended.

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10:16 Jeremiah 31:33

10:17 Jeremiah 31:34

10:19 Or the Holy Place

10:20 Literally through the veil that is His flesh

10:30 Deuteronomy 32:35 (see also LXX)

10:30 Deuteronomy 32:36; Psalms 135:14

10:32 Or Remember when you were first enlightened.

10:38 BYZ and TR But the righteous will live by faith

10:38 Habakkuk 2:3–4 (see also LXX)



<sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

### ***The Faith of Abel, Enoch, Noah***

<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous when God gave approval to his gifts. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken up so that he did not see death: "He could not be found, because God had taken him away." For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.

<sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please God. For anyone who approaches Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

<sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in godly fear built an ark to save his family. By faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

### ***The Faith of Abraham and Sarah***

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, without knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he dwelt in the promised land as a stranger in a foreign country. He lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

<sup>11</sup> By faith Sarah, even though she was barren and beyond the proper age, was enabled to conceive a child, because she considered Him faithful who had promised. <sup>12</sup> And so from one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

<sup>13</sup> All these people died in faith, without having received the things they were promised. However, they saw them and welcomed them from afar. And they acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

<sup>14</sup> Now those who say such things show that they are seeking a country of their own. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> Instead, they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac on the altar. He who had received the promises was ready to offer his one and only son, <sup>18</sup> even though God had said to him, "Through Isaac your offspring will be reckoned." <sup>19</sup> Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and in a sense, he did receive Isaac back from death.

### ***The Faith of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph***

<sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning the future.

<sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

<sup>22</sup> By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites and gave instructions about his bones.

### ***The Faith of Moses***

<sup>23</sup> By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after his birth, because they saw that he was a beautiful child, and they were unafraid of the king's edict.

<sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he was grown, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. <sup>25</sup> He chose to suffer oppression with God's people rather than to experience the fleeting enjoyment of sin. <sup>26</sup> He valued disgrace for Christ above the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his reward.

<sup>27</sup> By faith Moses left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw Him who is invisible. <sup>28</sup> By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch Israel's own firstborn.

<sup>29</sup> By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to follow, they were drowned.

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11:5 Literally transferred or translated

11:5 Genesis 5:24 (see also LXX)

11:17 Or only begotten son or unique son

11:18 Genesis 21:12

11:29 Literally made an attempt



## ***The Faith of Many***

### ***(Joshua–Malachi)***

<sup>30</sup> By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days.

<sup>31</sup> By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies in peace, did not perish with those who were disobedient.

<sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? Time will not allow me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets, <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the raging fire, and escaped the edge of the sword; who gained strength from weakness, became mighty in battle, and put foreign armies to flight.

<sup>35</sup> Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused their release, so that they might gain a better resurrection. <sup>36</sup> Still others endured mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment.

<sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawed in two, they were put to death by the sword. They went around in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, oppressed, and mistreated. <sup>38</sup> The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and hid in caves and holes in the ground.

<sup>39</sup> These were all commended for their faith, yet they did not receive what was promised. <sup>40</sup> God had planned something better for us, so that together with us they would be made perfect.

— 12 —

### ***A Call to Endurance***

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off every encumbrance and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with endurance the race set out for us. <sup>2</sup> Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

### ***God Disciplines His Sons***

<sup>4</sup> In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. <sup>5</sup> And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons:

“My son, do not take lightly the discipline of the Lord,  
and do not lose heart when He rebukes you.

<sup>6</sup> For the Lord disciplines the one He loves,  
and He chastises every son He receives.”

<sup>7</sup> Endure suffering as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? <sup>8</sup> If you do not experience discipline like everyone else, then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. <sup>9</sup> Furthermore, we have all had earthly fathers who disciplined us, and we respected them. Should we not much more submit to the Father of our spirits and live?

<sup>10</sup> Our fathers disciplined us for a short time as they thought best, but God disciplines us for our good, so that we may share in His holiness. <sup>11</sup> No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields a harvest of righteousness and peace to those who have been trained by it.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore strengthen your limp hands and weak knees. <sup>13</sup> Make straight paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

### ***A Call to Holiness***

<sup>14</sup> Pursue peace with everyone, as well as holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup> See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God, and that no root of bitterness springs up to cause trouble and defile many. <sup>16</sup> See to it that no

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11:37 NE, WH, BYZ, and TR include they were put to the test,

12:2 Or pioneer or founder

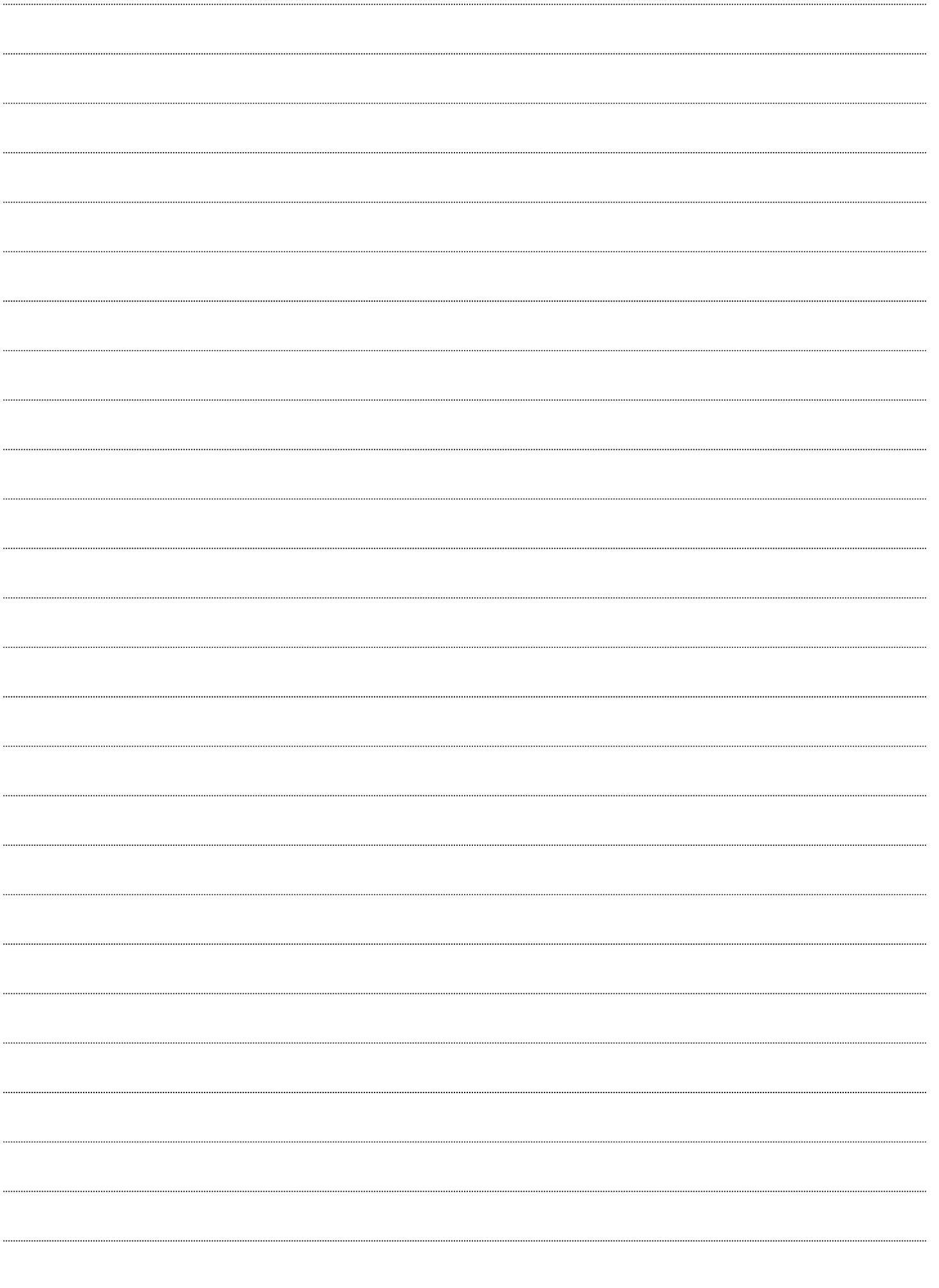
12:6 Literally and He flogs every son He receives; Proverbs 3:11–12 (see also LXX)

12:11 Or it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness

12:12 Isaiah 35:3

12:13 Proverbs 4:26 (see also LXX)

12:15 See Deuteronomy 29:18



one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his birthright. <sup>17</sup> For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected. He could find no ground for repentance, though he sought the blessing with tears.

### ***An Unshakable Kingdom***

<sup>18</sup> For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom, and storm; <sup>19</sup> to a trumpet blast or to a voice that made its hearers beg that no further word be spoken. <sup>20</sup> For they could not bear what was commanded: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.” <sup>21</sup> The sight was so terrifying that even Moses said, “I am trembling with fear.”

<sup>22</sup> Instead, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to myriads of angels <sup>23</sup> in joyful assembly, to the congregation of the firstborn, enrolled in heaven. You have come to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup> to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

<sup>25</sup> See to it that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if the people did not escape when they refused Him who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject Him who warns us from heaven? <sup>26</sup> At that time His voice shook the earth, but now He has promised, “Once more I will shake not only the earth, but heaven as well.” <sup>27</sup> The words “Once more” signify the removal of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that the unshakable may remain.

<sup>28</sup> Therefore, since we are receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us be filled with gratitude, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe. <sup>29</sup> “For our God is a consuming fire.”

— 13 —

### ***Brotherly Love***

<sup>1</sup> Continue in brotherly love. <sup>2</sup> Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. <sup>3</sup> Remember those in prison as if you were bound with them, and those who are mistreated as if you were suffering with them.

<sup>4</sup> Marriage should be honored by all and the marriage bed kept undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers.

### ***Christ’s Unchanging Nature***

<sup>5</sup> Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, for God has said:

“Never will I leave you,  
never will I forsake you.”

<sup>6</sup> So we say with confidence:  
“The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.

What can man do to me?”

<sup>7</sup> Remember your leaders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

<sup>9</sup> Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace and not by foods of no value to those devoted to them. <sup>10</sup> We have an altar from which those who serve at the tabernacle have no right to eat.

<sup>11</sup> Although the high priest brings the blood of animals into the Holy Place as a sacrifice for sin, the bodies are burned outside the camp. <sup>12</sup> And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate, to sanctify the people by His own blood. <sup>13</sup> Therefore let us go to Him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace He bore. <sup>14</sup> For here we do not have a permanent city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

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12:18 Literally to what can be touched and

12:20 Exodus 19:12–13

12:21 Deuteronomy 9:19

12:26 Haggai 2:6

12:29 Deuteronomy 4:24

13:5 Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5

13:6 Psalms 118:6 (see also LXX)



### ***Sacrifice, Obedience, and Prayer***

<sup>15</sup>Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise, the fruit of lips that confess His name.

<sup>16</sup>And do not neglect to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

<sup>17</sup>Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who must give an account. To this end, allow them to lead with joy and not with grief, for that would be of no advantage to you.

<sup>18</sup>Pray for us; we are convinced that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way. <sup>19</sup>And I especially urge you to pray that I may be restored to you soon.

### ***Benediction and Farewell***

<sup>20</sup>Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, <sup>21</sup>equip you with every good thing to do His will. And may He accomplish in us what is pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>22</sup>I urge you, brothers, to bear with my word of exhortation, for I have only written to you briefly.

<sup>23</sup>Be aware that our brother Timothy has been released. If he arrives soon, I will come with him to see you.

<sup>24</sup>Greet all your leaders and all the saints.

Those from Italy send you greetings.

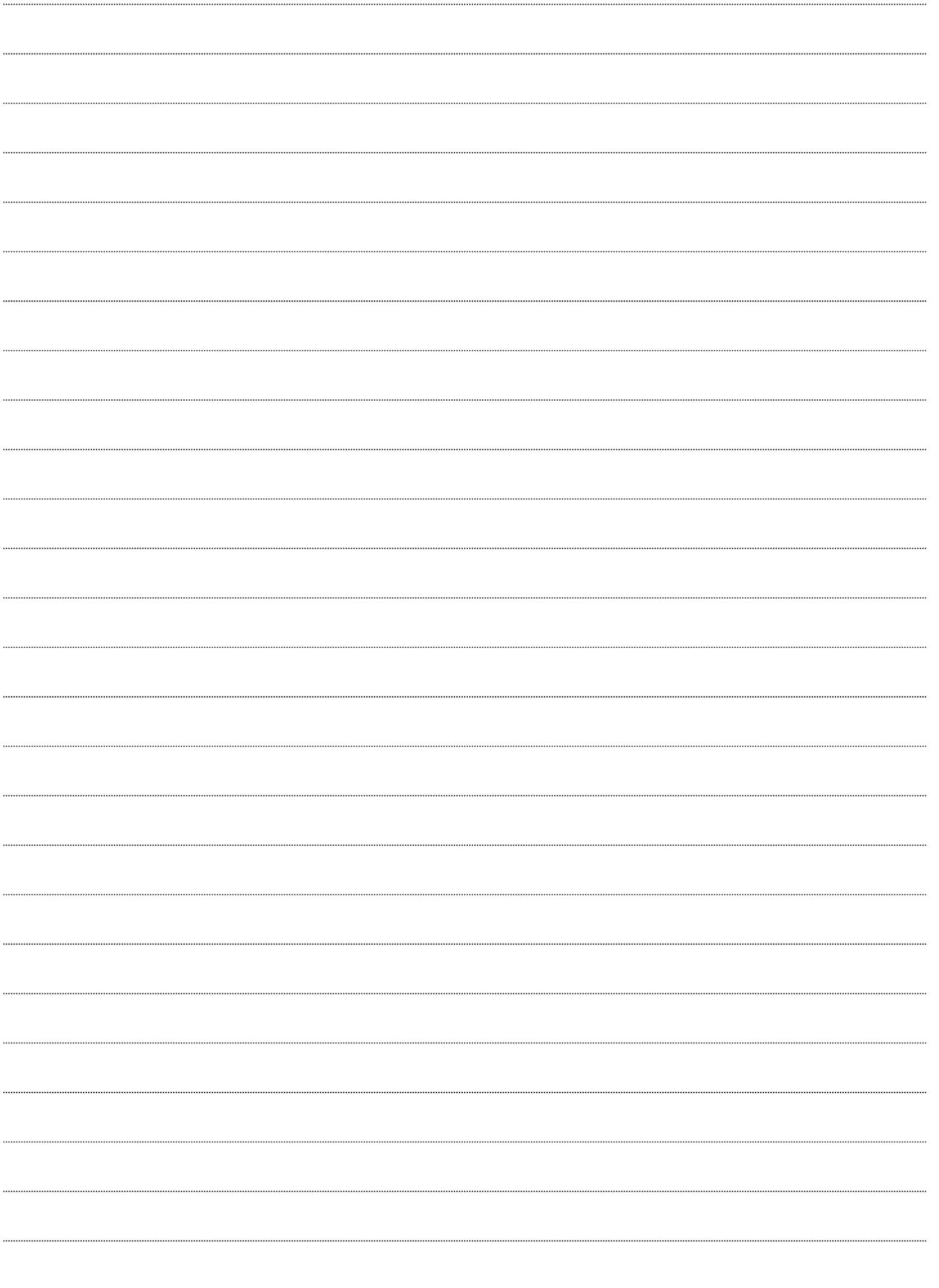
<sup>25</sup>Grace be with all of you.

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13:21 BYZ and TR every good work

13:21 BYZ and TR you

13:25 BYZ and TR include Amen.



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