

A Critical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews

by

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Note: These analyses are the author's summaries of each chapter. In the book, he follows each analysis with a detailed commentary on that chapter.

Analysis Chapter 1

The author commences with a comparison of the revelation made to the Fathers and that made to themselves in v. 1. He does this with an evident view to the application of his argument in chap. 2:1-4. He then appropriately introduces his subject by declaring the exalted character of Christ (vv. 2, 3), concluding with the assertion of his superiority to angels (v. 4). This is the first proposition to be proved, as at once laying a solid foundation for his own argument and undermining a pillar in the Jewish faith. This superiority he argues,

1. From the *title* bestowed on him. He is called *Son* in a sense in which that term is never bestowed on angels (v. 5).
2. The angels are commanded to worship him (v. 6).
3. The angels are represented as servants, like the winds and lightning (v. 7), but the Son is addressed as God, seated on an everlasting throne, swaying a sceptre of righteousness, the Founder of the Earth and Maker of the heavens, who, after creation itself had waxed old and changed, should remain forever and unchangeably the same (vv. 8-12). The whole argument is, of course, from the Jewish Scriptures.

A supplement to this argument, establishing the main proposition, adduces a passage which represents Christ as exalted till all enemies are subdued, whereas the angels are sent forth to minister to his people (vv. 13, 14).

Analysis Chapter 2

The Apostle interrupts his argument for a moment in order to apply the truth he has now established to the confirmation of his readers (vv. 1-4); and then resuming the argument, after briefly showing that Christ's humanity argued no inferiority (vv. 5-9), he exhibits the reasons of his becoming man (vv. 10-18).

To be more particular, on account of what he had said and proven (Διὰ τοῦτο), they ought more carefully to attend to the things which they had heard of Christ (v. 1). For if transgressors of a covenant ministered by angels were certainly and justly punished, those who neglected the dispensation of Christ, which effected so great a salvation and was wonderfully confirmed by divine seals, could not escape (vv. 2-4).

The resumption of his argument is logical. How shall we escape the punishment due to such neglect? For (γὰρ) not to the angels has God committed this dispensation (v. 5) but to one whom David foresaw and foretold, as human it is true (vv. 6-8), but in terms which teach his infinite exaltation (vv. 6-8), and exaltation, of course, above angels. For (γὰρ) universal subjection is promised, the fulfilment of which is seen only in Christ. (Of course, more than the supremacy of man merely over the lower creatures in this world is meant (v. 8), for we see in process of fulfilment a higher and more literal accomplishment in Christ.) He having been made a little lower than the angels on account of the suffering of death, has been crowned with glory, that he may extend the benefits of his death to all his people (v. 9).

The *rationale* (γὰρ) of all this ensues. It became God, in saving his people, to perfect the author of their salvation, i.e. to bring him to his glorious end (τελειῶσαι) through sufferings. For in the nature of the case, the Redeemer and the redeemed are (or must be) in all proper respects one. Hence he condescends to call them brethren. Like them he puts his trust in God, and he claims them as the children whom God had given him (vv. 10-13). Since, then, the children partook of flesh and blood, He took part of the same: first, that by his own death he might frustrate and destroy the power of Satan, whose captives they were by nature, and deliver those who in fear of deserved death were all their lives in bondage (vv. 14, 15). For (γὰρ) He did not undertake for the angels (then indeed [δήπου] he might have

appeared in a different nature of form), but for the seed of Abraham (i.e. in the faith) who were flesh and blood. Wherefore, second, He must in all proper respects be like them in order that He may be a *compassionate* and *faithful High-Priest* for them in matters pertaining to God, to make propitiation of their sins. Such a High-Priest he is--for having been tried to the extreme, he can succour those that are tempted (vv. 16-18).

Analysis Chapter 3

From the views of Christ just presented, the author takes occasion again to commend Him to the diligent attention of the Hebrew Christian (v. 1), claiming for Him the faithfulness in his commission which he concedes to Moses in the station he occupied (v. 2); and thus he introduces a comparison between the two, which is the second main topic of the Epistle (vv. 2-6). In this comparison, with a view to sustain his exhortation (*γὰρ*) and to secure the great object of his writing the Epistle, he demonstrates the superiority of Christ over Moses; declaring, first, that the comparative honour due to Moses was to that due to Christ as the honour due a house is to the builder or founder of it. For (*γὰρ*) Christ was the divine Disposer of all things (see in proof of this ch. 1), including the ceremonial dispensation in which Moses was a minister (*ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ*) (vv. 3, 4); and declaring, 2nd, that Moses was merely a steward, or minister (*θεράπων*) in the economy (*ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ*) to which he belonged while Christ was a Son (*υἱὸς*) over (*ἐπί*), or at the head of His dispensation (vv. 5, 6), in which dispensation both the author and his readers had saving interest if they held firm to the end (v. 6).

(*Διό.*) Hence he again exhorts them against apostacy (vv. 7-19), reminding them (by a quotation from the 95th Psalm) of the conduct and end of their fathers, when in the wilderness they tried the goodness and forbearance of God by disaffection and distrust till they provoked the curse of exclusion from his rest (vv. 7-11). He admonishes them against like unbelief and apostacy and to exhort one another daily against a like hardening by the deceitful workings of sin, telling them again, for their incitement (*γὰρ*), that perseverance in the faith was the proof of an interest in Christ; and urging them by no means to tread in the footsteps of their fathers (vv. 12-15), for (*γὰρ*) they all, with few exceptions, grieved God and perished in the wilderness and thus were cut off from the promised rest by sin and unbelief (vv. 16-19).

Analysis Chapter 4:1-13

The author exhorts his readers against like failure of the rest (v. 1) which he proves is promised to believers of every age--a true spiritual rest (vv. 2-10), and then resumes the exhortation (vv. 11-13).

More particularly, in view of the example of our fathers (οὖν), we should fear lest we come short of the promised rest (v. 1), for (γὰρ) the promise is to us as well as to them, though from want [lack] of faith they were not profited; for (γὰρ) *believers do enter into rest* (that is, God's spiritual rest promised also to the fathers, who came short of it as they did of the type). This is manifest, 1st, from the oath as expressed through David, Psalm 95:11 (compared with Num. 32:11, 12, Deut. 1:35) in which God declares that *unbelievers* are excluded, calls the rest from which he had excluded their unbelieving fathers *His rest*, and speaks for the instruction of *that* (David's) *generation*, to whom by implication the promise was still held forth and to whom it was of course only a spiritual promise, since they were already in possession of the types (vv. 2,3). These points, which are clear from the terms and circumstances of the oath, are elucidated in the following verses. This oath we have (as announced through David, still holding out God's rest to believers), although His works (καίτοι) were finished from the foundation of the world; for (γὰρ) we read concerning the seventh day (Gen. 2:2) that on it God rested from all his works. And then here in the oath we have God's rest represented as forfeited by the fathers through unbelief, and still offered to believers through David. God's rest, therefore, after the creation was not one which had no relationship to men but one into which God intended to admit believers (vv. 3-5). And thus we see the explanation of the exhortation by David. (Compare Num. 32:11, 12, Deut. 1:35.)

The leading truth of the passage is manifest, 2nd, from the following view. Hence (οὖν) seeing that (ἐπει) some must enjoy God's rest and they to whom it was first offered did not [enjoy it] through unbelief, again, a long time after speaking by David to a generation then enjoying the type, He straightly charges them "today to hear his voice and not to harden their hearts" as their fathers did and thus exclude themselves from it, which plainly supposes a spiritual rest still remaining for believers (vv. 6, 7). For if (Εἰ γὰρ) the earthly Canaan of which Joshua had instrumentally given them possession had been all the rest that was promised, God would not, after that, have given an exhortation which implied a rest not yet possessed and

liable still to be forfeited (v. 8). There remains therefore ($\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha$) for the people of God a rest of which the earthly are but types, a true spiritual rest with God; for ($\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$) he that has entered upon it has ceased from his labours as God did from his (vv. 9, 10). Hence ($\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$), he continues his exhortation to zealous endeavours to enter into this rest lest ($\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\ \mu\grave{\eta}$) we perish after the example of the unbelieving in the wilderness; for ($\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$) the word of God by which we are to be tried is living, powerful truth, probing the very heart, searching out its sins, analyzing its thoughts and motives and desires. Nor is there anything concealed from the view of Him to whom we must account (vv. 11-13).

As a summary. There are two steps in the argument. 1. From the oath, v. 3, confirmed and illustrated in vv. 3-5. 2. From the accompanying admonition, vv. 6, 7, confirmed in v. 8. Conclusion, v. 9, further illustrated in v. 10. The particular internal logical connexion of the thoughts must be sought in the particles.

Analysis Chapter 4:14-5:10

The Apostle here takes occasion to exhort his hearers to a persevering and confiding adherence to Christ as our great High-Priest (vv. 14-16), thus introducing the third leading topic of the Epistle, viz. His priesthood in comparison with that of the Old Testament dispensation, upon the discussion of which he now enters, 5:1-10, which discussion he continues to 10:18.¹

Or, more particularly, he proceeds thus: Having then (οὕτως) a most exalted High-Priest, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast, for (γὰρ) He can sympathize with us in our infirmities, having been tried as we are but without sin. Let us therefore (οὕτως) come with holy boldness to God through Him for mercy and seasonable grace (4:14-16).

These exhortations he sustains (γὰρ) by the development of Christ's priestly character which he proceeds to make. He commences by laying down the leading characteristics of the high-priest of the old dispensation. First, he was appointed to minister between God and man at the altar, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin (v. 1). Second, he is able by reason of his own infirmities to compassionate those of the people, and for the same reason must offer sacrifices for himself as well as for them (vv. 2, 3). Third, he receives his appointment from God, as Aaron did (v. 4).

Comparing Christ in the inverse order, the author shows, first, that He assumed not the office to himself but received his appointment from the Father (vv. 5, 6). Second, that by reason of the frailties and trials to which His human nature exposed Him while on earth, He had learned by experience the sufferings incident to obedience, though he was the Son of God (vv. 7, 8). And third, that having been perfected in heaven, He became the author of salvation to all who obey him, being by the appointment of God a High-Priest after the order of Melchizedek (vv. 9, 10).

This third and last statement involved several important points, as the dignity of the priest and the priesthood, the sanctuary in which he officiates, the nature and efficacy of his services, which the Apostle purposes more fully to unfold. But he here stops to reprove the dulness of his readers and to exhort them to higher attainments. This exhortation occupies 5:11-14 and 6:1-20.

¹ With a single appropriate interruption from 5:11 to 6:20.

Analysis Chapter 5:11-6:12

The author delays the discussion by stopping to reprove the dulness of those whom he addressed (5:11-14), and to incite them to make higher attainments (6:1-12).

Concerning Christ as a Priest he had much to say, and difficult on account of their dulness; for (γὰρ) whereas they ought to be teachers, they needed to be taught the very elements of the oracles of God and to be fed on milk, not strong food (vv. 11, 12). Thus were they dull, for (γὰρ) (to make an appeal to a general truth which confirmed his complaint in their particular case), those that fed on milk were unskilled in the word, for (γὰρ) they were babes. But strong food was for the mature, who had senses trained by habit to discern good and evil (vv. 13, 14).

Hence (Διὸ) he exhorts them to leave the elements and go on to higher attainments, not always working at the foundation only (6:1, 2). And in order to point them to their dependence on God as the source of all grace and prepare the way for the first incitement which he offers, he adds, "This will we do if God permit." For (γὰρ), 1st, there are spiritual advantages and privileges from which if men apostatize it is utterly impossible (in the economy of the grace of God, who has thus ordained) to bring them again to repent; for (γὰρ), speaking figuratively, the well-watered and fruitful ground is blessed of God, but that which in spite of good culture and watering bears only thorns and briers is rejected of Him, to be cursed and burnt (vv. 3-6, 7, 8). But 2nd (δέ), for their encouragement, though he thus spake, he was persuaded of better and saving things concerning them. For God would not forget their love shown unto His name in both past and present services (vv. 9, 10). But yet (δέ) he adds, he would have them show this same zeal to be fully assured of their hope unto the end, that they might be not sluggards in the faith but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (vv. 11, 12).

This last idea he proceeds, 3rd, to illustrate and enforce in the remainder of the chapter.

Analysis Chapter 6:13-7:10

The Apostle, in his exhortation to higher advances in the divine life, had just held up for imitation "those who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (v. 12). To illustrate and enforce this ($\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$) he selects the example of Abraham, who received the promise confirmed by an oath (vv. 13, 14), and accordingly ($\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega$), after patient expectation amidst trials and discourage-ments, obtained the fulfilment (v. 15). He thus, in the selection of his *example*, brings to view at the same time the *certainty* of the promise as an additional incentive to his readers.

This he confirms by unfolding the rationale ($\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$) (v. 16) of the divine transaction in the matter. Men swear by Him that is greater, and the oath establishes the point; wherefore ($\text{Ἐν } \tilde{\phi}$) God, in order to show to the heirs of the promise the immutability of His will, interposed with an oath, that by a double assurance, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to the hope which He holds out (vv. 16-18); a hope, he adds, which we have as an anchor to our souls and which embraces heavenly things in the sanctuary above, whither Jesus has gone before us, and for us, being a High-Priest forever after the order of Melchisedek (vv. 19, 20). And thus he is brought back to his argument at the point where he left it (compare on 5:9, 10), and in terms which prepare the way ($\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$) for the logical assumption of it.

The statement (6:20) that Christ was, after the order of Melchisedek, a High-Priest forever, claims for Him a priesthood superior to the Levitical. This superiority he proceeds to illustrate and establish in ch. 7, first, by explaining Melchisedek's typical priesthood and comparing it with that of Aaron (vv. 1-10). The connexion may perhaps be better exhibited thus: "Jesus is High-Priest forever after the order of Melchisedek (6:20); for this Melchisedek, king of Salem, a priest of the most high God (who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, and whose name being interpreted is king of righteousness and king of peace), being without father, mother, beginning of days or end of life, because a type of Christ, abides a priest forever" (7:1-3).

The Apostle therefore commences by detailing the historic circumstances of the type, explaining the name of Melchisedek and his being king of Salem as, in important senses, typical, and by declaring that his standing in the historical account of him--without genealogy, without origin or end, but

made like (i.e. a type of) the Son of God--was designed to constitute him (though only in a typical sense, of course) a priest forever (vv. 1-3).

He then directs attention more fully to the type, in view of other historical circumstances and in comparison with the Levitical priesthood, and shows his superiority (vv. 4-10):

1. How great was he to whom Abraham the patriarch paid tithes. The Levitical priests indeed, in virtue of *their office*, receive tithes of *their* brethren, although descended equally with themselves from the loins of Abraham. But here one [Melchisedek] that had no genealogy (to boast), tithed Abraham himself [received tithes from him], and furthermore blessed him [Abraham] who had the promises. And without controversy, the less is blessed of the greater (vv. 4-7).

2. In the one case men that die [the Levitical priests] receive tithes; but in the other he [Melchisedek] who, according to the account, still lives [receives tithes] (v. 8).

3. We may say that through Abraham even Levi, who receives tithes, was tithed [paid tithes]; for he was yet in his father's loins when Melchisedek met him [Abraham] (vv. 9, 10).

Analysis Chapter 7:11-28

Having argued the superiority of Christ's priesthood to the Aaronic from the superior order of the type (vv. 1-10), the author continues the same argument by a more direct comparison to the end of the chapter (vv. 11-28).

1. The raising up of a priest after the order of Melchisedek, different from that of Aaron which was the basis of the old dispensation, showed that perfection (*τελείωσις*, see Commentary) was unattainable by the Levitical priesthood; and the more, since a change of this priesthood inferred a change of the whole economy (vv. 11, 12). There has been such a change, for (*γὰρ*), first, He, i.e. Christ, of whom these things were said (as in Ps. 110:4) was of *a tribe that had nothing to do at the altar*, which was manifest (v. 14, *γὰρ*) from the notorious fact that our Saviour was sprung from Judah, to whose tribe Moses gave no priestly functions (vv. 13, 14). Second, it is yet further manifest that there has been such a change of the priesthood, and consequently of the economy, if a priest of *a different order* has been raised up not according to a carnal institute but by virtue of a life that is indissoluble, which is plain from the oath of institution (*γὰρ*, vv. 15-17). For (*γὰρ*, v. 18) there is thus the abrogation of the first ordinance on account of its weakness and inefficiency, for the law brought nothing to perfection; and by the substitute there is the introduction of a better hope, even one by which we are brought near to God (vv. 18, 19).

2. The institution of Christ's priesthood with the solemnity of an oath, which was wanting at the appointment of the Aaronic, argues Him a sponsor of a better dispensation (compare v. 11; vv. 20-22).

3. In the one case there are many *successive* priests because they die. But Christ who continues forever the same, holds the priesthood without succession and therefore can save to the uttermost, since He lives always to intercede for His people (vv. 23-25).

4. For (*γὰρ*) such a High-Priest became (was needful for) us, who finally was spotlessly pure and exalted to heaven; who thus had no need, as the Levitical high-priests have daily, to offer sacrifices first *for their own sins*, then for those of the people. For He has offered himself *once only for the people* (vv. 26, 27). The *rationale* of all which is (*γὰρ*) that the law makes

weak and sinful men priests, but the oath succeeding the law and superseding it appoints to the priesthood the Son, glorified forever (v. 28).

Analysis Chapter 8

Having given many reasons for the superior order of Christ's priesthood and his superior qualifications for the office, the Apostle proceeds further to show the superior excellence of this priesthood in view of the higher sanctuary in which it is exercised (vv. 1-5), with functions corresponding to the better dispensation with which it is connected (vv. 6-13).

Of the *matter in hand*, the chief thing is that we have so excellent a High-Priest who is seated at the right hand of God, *a minister in the sanctuary of the true, even the heavenly tabernacle* (vv. 1,2). *A minister or officiator--for* (γὰρ, v. 3) every high-priest is appointed to make offerings; *in the heavenly sanctuary--for* (γὰρ, v. 4) He could not exercise the office upon earth since there were priests to whose tribe and order he did not belong, appointed by the law, who served in the tabernacle which was but a type of the heavenly, as we learn from the charge to Moses when about to build it (vv. 3-5). But (δὲ) now, instead of officiating upon earth in the type which Moses caused to be built (compare μέν, v. 4), He has obtained a more excellent ministry *corresponding to the superior dispensation of which He is the mediator* (v. 6).

The superiority of this dispensation he proves (γὰρ) by the fact that, the first being faulty, a place was sought for a second (v. 7). This he shows by a quotation from Jer. 31:31-34, in which the first dispensation is repudiated because the people did not keep it, and God was displeased with them. In other words, under it they continued rebellious, and God's anger still burned; while a second is promised which shall have the effect to write the law of God on their hearts and to unite them and Him in the closest covenant, under which the knowledge of God shall be universal and sins shall be wholly remitted (vv. 8-12). Upon this quotation the author remarks: In calling this dispensation *new*, he represents the first as old and therefore (by general analogy) near its dissolution (v. 13).

Analysis Chapter 9:1-14

Having shown the superior order of Christ's priesthood and priestly character (ch. 7), the superior sanctuary in which it was exercised (that is, the heavenly), and its superior functions comports with the superior dispensation to which it belonged (ch. 8), the author now enters upon a more particular consideration and comparison of the nature and value of the services of the two priesthoods; exhibiting the typical and temporal character of those performed by the Levitical priests, and the efficacious and all-sufficient character of those rendered by Christ (chs. 9-10:18).

He begins by reciting the leading arrangements of the ancient tabernacle and the disposition of its furniture (9:1-5), and the principal daily and yearly services that were performed in it (vv. 6, 7). This perpetual exclusion of all but the high-priest from the holy of holies, and even of him except on a single day in the year (and his entrance on that day with special sacrifices for himself and the people), the author declares imported [conveyed] that while the former tabernacle stood, the way was not yet opened for free access to God. That is, the Aaronic sanctuary had no power by its services to procure such access; it was a mere type until the time then present. Its offerings and sacrifices, still presented, could not perfect the conscience of the server and were only imposed with other carnal ordinances til the new dispensation should take effect (vv. 8-10).

On the other hand ($\delta\epsilon$ being opposed in v. 11 to $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ in v. 1), Christ, the High-Priest of the good things to come, had done a more excellent and efficacious work: (a) He had entered through the tabernacle that was better and more perfect, (b) not with the blood of goats and calves but His own, (c) once for all into the heavenly sanctuary, (d) having effected a true redemption (vv. 11, 12). This last crowning result he argues ($\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$) from the superior nature of the sacrifice. If the blood of bulls, goats, &c. removed certain temporary, penal liabilities under the theocracy, how much more would the blood of Christ, who with an eternal spirit offered Himself without spot to God, free us from the pollution and condemnation of dead works unto the service of the living God? (vv. 13, 14).

Analysis Chapter 9:15-28

The Apostle continues his exhibition of the relative value of the offerings and services of the two priesthoods.

On account of the superior nature and efficacy of the offerings of Christ (*διὰ τοῦτο*, v. 14), He was made mediator of a new dispensation, that He might by means of His own death (availing even to the remission of sins under the first) secure to all who are called the everlasting inheritance (v. 15); for after the law of testaments generally, to which this transaction bears some strong points of resemblance, it was His death which gave it all its validity (vv. 16-18). Wherefore, the first dispensation, that it might as a type set forth this great fundamental fact, was not ratified without blood; for Moses sprinkled with it the book, the people, the tabernacle, &c., and under the law almost everything was purified by blood, and without the shedding of blood there was no remission (vv. 19-22).

It was then necessary--befitting the nature of the two dispensations and the ends in view--that the types be purified by such means as these, but that the heavenly and true be purified with better. For (as has been already shown, 8:4-6), Christ has entered (1) not into the sanctuary built by hands and type of the true (where indeed such sacrifices would have answered), but into heaven itself to appear now before God in our behalf; (2) not to offer himself often (as the high-priest entered the inner sanctuary every year with the blood of victims), for then, in the first place, contrary to notorious facts and the meaning of the type as already given in v. 8 must He often have died since the foundation of the world, but now once for all at the end of the world has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And in the second place, as it is appointed to men *once* to die and then is the judgment fixing the destinies of all, so Christ having once been offered up to bear the sins of His people shall appear again, not to bear iniquity but for salvation to those who look for Him (vv. 23-28).

After the consideration of the type (vv. 1-10), then, the superiority of Christ's sacrifice as developed in this chapter appears, first, in its nature and efficacy (vv. 13, 14); 2nd, in its fundamental relationship to the new and better dispensation of which the first was but typical (vv. 15-22); 3rd, in that His blood, so to speak, was sprinkled in the heavenly sanctuary (vv. 23, 24); and 4th, in that it was offered only once for all (vv. 25-28).

Analysis Chapter 10:1-18

The author finishes the comparison of the sacrifices under the two dispensations, showing the insufficiency of the former and the efficacy of the latter, and thus the necessity or reason of the offering of Christ.

More particularly, as was prefigured by the types, Christ had made an offering of Himself more excellent than they (ch. 9), for (γὰρ) the offerings under the law being but shadows of future good things were wholly unavailing to perfect those who presented them. Otherwise, first, would they not have ceased to be offered, having accomplished the work of purifying the worshippers (vv. 1, 2)? Second, instead of this, however, there was a recognition of sins by them year after year (v. 3); for, third, it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins (v. 4). Hence, fourth, the Old Testament, predicting the coming of Christ in the world, represents Him as declaring that these sacrifices could not satisfy God and that He himself was come to render that satisfaction (vv. 5-7), thus abolishing them as ineffectual and substituting Himself as all-sufficient; by which will of God, setting them aside and substituting Him, we have been redeemed by the once offering of Christ (vv. 8-10). Fifth, moreover the Levitical priests all stood day-after-day offering their unavailing sacrifices; but Christ, having offered His sacrifice once, had forever set down on the right hand of God awaiting the consummation in due time of the glorious results. For by one offering He has forever secured the perfection of all the redeemed (vv. 11-14). Sixth, thus the Holy Spirit witnesses in the Old Testament Scriptures; for to the announcement of a new dispensation the Lord annexes a promise to rectify the hearts and forgive the sins of His people, thus plainly implying the perfection of the offering (vv. 15-18).

This closes the third and last great topic in the general argument. The rest of the Epistle is chiefly practical and hortatory.

Analysis Chapter 10:19-39

Having finished the argument, the author proceeds to exhortation, the scope and aim of which is a faithful, persevering, and patient adherence to the profession and practice of the gospel, to enforce which he suggests a variety of considerations.

These are, 1st, the nature and excellency of the offering and the priest, securing freedom of access to God (vv. 19-22); 2nd, the faithfulness of Him that has promised the gospel blessings (v. 23); 3rd, the near approach of the day of trial (vv. 24, 25); 4th, the awful condition and prospects of those who reject Christ (vv. 26, 27); 5th, the divine vengeance on those who contemn [hold in contempt] Him and His blood, and insult the Spirit of Grace (vv. 28-31); 6th, their former patience under afflictions and trials for the sake of the gospel (vv. 32-34); 7th, the great reward of persevering to the end (vv. 35, 36); which reward, finally, Christ would speedily come to adjudge to the faithful, while he visited his displeasure on apostates (vv. 37, 38). And in this connexion, and for the same end, the Apostle expresses again his goodly persuasion concerning them (v. 39).

Analysis Chapter 11:1-31

The great object of this Epistle is to enforce faith in Jesus Christ as the mediator of the new dispensation and to guard against apostacy from that faith, especially back to Judaism. Having shown Christ's pre-eminence and excellence, and that in Him was the foundation of all the benefits of redemption, the author has just exhorted his readers to perseverance and patience in their profession, that they may inherit the promises and receive the salvation of their souls.

Suitably to the scope of the whole Epistle and of the immediate context in particular, the Apostle, for the further establishment of his readers (compare 12:1 and seq.), after a general and practical definition of faith proceeds to show that the fathers had, by perseverance and patience in its exercise, regulated their lives and received their reward. This is proved by the example of Abel (v. 4); of Enoch (vv. 5, 6); of Noah (v. 7); of Abraham (vv. 8-19); of Isaac (v. 20); of Jacob (v. 21); of Joseph (v. 22); of Moses or his parents (vv. 23-28); of the Israelites in their exodus (vv. 29, 30); and of Rahab (v. 31).

To sum up, Christ and the completeness of His redemption are the main subjects of the Epistle. The exercise of soul by which we embrace Him and secure His redemption is faith. Perseverance in this grace is inculcated on the Hebrew Christians by showing that it was the principle which governed the admired conduct of the models of Jewish piety.

Analysis Chapter 11:32-12:11

The author, to save time, *briefly* refers to other examples of the ancient worthies (11:32-38), declaring in conclusion that though they all obtained a good testimony through faith, yet in the divine arrangement they enjoyed not the advantages of the Christian dispensation, God having reserved this glorious privilege for us who thus receive what they saw by faith, and what alone secures to them and us the perfection which we need (vv. 39, 40).

The Apostle then resumes his exhortation to his readers, to patient and persevering adherence to their profession notwithstanding all the trials to which it subjected them (12:1-13). First, in view of the bright examples which have been just referred to (v. 1). Second, above all, the efficient help of Christ to whom they must ever look, and the glorious example which He has set, which they must attentively consider (vv. 2, 3). Third, the comparative lightness of their trials; they had not yet reached the extreme (v. 4). Fourth, the proofs of God's love in them, declared in a quotation which represents them as chastisements upon His children (vv. 5, 6); upon which the Apostle remarks that the proof of their sonship depended upon their patient endurance and that to be without trials argued desertion by God, as though they were not true children (vv. 7, 8). Fifth, we revered our earthly parents who, subject to all the infirmities of humanity, chastened us as appeared good to them. Much more should we cheerfully submit to the chastisements of our spiritual Father, who by them seeks to promote our sanctification and salvation (vv. 9, 10). Sixth, this gracious end, though the means were grievous for the present, would certainly follow (v. 11).

Analysis Chapter 12:12-29

The Apostle takes occasion from the considerations just advanced to encourage his readers in their Christian life (vv. 12, 13), adding several appropriate exhortations and cautions (vv. 14-17). He still has in view the confirmation of his readers, and enforces (γὰρ) his exhortations by an animated and sublime contrast of the awful terrors of the old dispensation on the one hand (betokening its own insufficiency to clothe in garments of grace the God of justice, vv. 18-21), and on the other [hand] the glorious and merciful character of the new [dispensation], uniting in one family believers on earth to the angels and saints in heaven, to a reconciled God and to Jesus, whose mediation and atoning blood secured this wonderful triumph of grace (vv. 22-24).

He again exhorts them not to reject Christ, admonishing them of the far greater destruction which awaited those who did so than overtook those who refused to hear Moses of old; and reminding them that He whose voice caused the earth to tremble at the setting up of the old dispensation would, according to the prophet, set up another, better and enduring forever, as intimated by the terms and imagery of the prediction (vv. 25-27).

He concludes by calling upon them therefore again, as they lived under such a dispensation, to have grace by which to serve God acceptably, for God was still to his enemies a consuming fire (vv. 28, 29).

Analysis Chapter 13

The Apostle urges various practical exhortations (vv. 1-19), concluding with a prayer for the perfection of his readers and a doxology (vv. 20, 21). He then entreats a favourable reception for his Epistle, promises conditionally a visit, sends salutations, and closes with the usual benediction (vv. 22-25).

Some of the exhortations have a very intimate connexion with the object of the Epistle. So vv. 7-15. Compare also the prayer and doxology.

These analyses are from *A Critical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* by Francis S. Sampson, edited from the manuscript notes of the author by Robert L. Dabney (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1856).

Note: The text has not been modified, except that punctuation and KJV-era pronouns and verb forms have been modernized and long paragraphs have been divided.