

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 311 – November 7th – Hebrews 8:1-13

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Hebrews

Bruce, FF	<i>The Epistle to the Hebrews</i> , Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1964
Guthrie, Donald	<i>Hebrews</i> (Tyndale Commentary), IVP, Leicester, 1983
Hughes, Philip Edgcumbe	<i>A Commentary on The Epistle to the Hebrews</i> , Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1977
Westcott, BF	<i>The Epistle to the Hebrews</i> , Macmillan, London, 1889

Hebrews 8:1-6

The focus moves onto the theme of the new Sanctuary. There are not only aspects of discontinuity but also typological affinities between the old system of the sanctuary set up under Moses and the eternal order of Melchizedek established in Christ.

Verse 1

Κεφάλαιον δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις, τοιοῦτον ἔχομεν ἀρχιερέα, ὃς ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θρόνου τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, κεφαλαιον, ου n main point, summary

The main point is that "it is precisely *such a high priest that we have*: he is real and he is ours!" Hughes.

τοιοῦτος, αὐτῆ, οὗτον correlative pronoun and adjective *such, of such kind*

ἐκάθισεν ... for this phrase, cf. 1:3. The sense here is that Christ has 'taken his seat'.

θρόνος, ου m throne
οὐρανός, ου m heaven

τοῦ θρόνου τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς a reverential periphrasis for God.

"Unlike the earthly priesthoods, that of the Son of God is performed in heavenly glory with a dignity that is kingly and a power that is divine." Spicq.

Verse 2

τῶν ἁγίων λειτουργός καὶ τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς ἀληθινῆς, ἣν ἔπηξεν ὁ κύριος, οὐκ ἄνθρωπος, ἅγιος, α, ον holy

τῶν ἁγίων is probably to be taken as neuter, referring to holy things or to the sanctuary. A number of patristic authors treated it as masculine, 'among the saints,' or 'a minister of the saints.'

λειτουργός, ου m servant, minister

"Christ serves though He reigns and reigns in serving." Westcott. The noun λειτουργός specifically designates the priestly minister in Is 61:6 and Jer 33:21.

σκηνή, ης f tent, tabernacle, dwelling place

"The general thought is that of the immediate presence of God." Westcott

ἀληθινός, η, ον real, genuine, true

"In contrast to the perishable tent or tabernacle which accompanied the Israelites in their wilderness wanderings, the heavenly reality into which the ascended Lord has entered is the genuine sanctuary, the imperishable holy of holies." Hughes. Cf. 9:24.

Owen interprets the 'true tent' here and 'greater and more perfect tent' of 9:11 to mean the body or humanity of Christ. This sense is unlikely.

ἔπηξεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s πήγνυμι put up, pitch (a tent)

Cf. Num 24:6.

Verse 3

πᾶς γὰρ ἀρχιερεὺς εἰς τὸ προσφέρειν δῶρά τε καὶ θυσίας καθίσταται· ὅθεν ἀναγκαῖον ἔχειν τι καὶ τοῦτον ὃ προσενέγκη.

προσφέρω offer, present
δῶρον, ου n gift, offering

θυσία, ας f sacrifice

καθίσταται Verb, pres pass indic, 3 s
καθιστήμι see 7:28

ὅθεν where, from where, therefore, for which reason

ἀναγκαῖος, α, ον necessary

προσενέγκη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s
προσφέρω

"The one sufficient offering was made by Christ as the condition of entrance into the sanctuary *through His own blood* (9:12). On this His intercession is based. That intercession knows no end or interruption; and therefore no second offering is required ... Many have interpreted the $\tau\iota$ of 'the Blood'. But the Blood was not properly 'offered' in the Holy of Holies on the Day of atonement (yet see 9:7). It was used as the means of entrance and purification. Even so Christ entered into the Divine Presence through ($\delta\iota\alpha$) His own Blood (9:12), and by that purifies 'the heavenly things' (9:23) and the people (13:12); but we do not read that He 'offered' it." Westcott.

Bruce thinks that the aorist $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\gamma\kappa\eta$ indicates a reference to Christ's once-for-all sacrifice. Montefiore similarly argues that the offering is past, "Jesus' present ministry in heaven is intercession, not offering, and so it was in the past that he had to have had something to offer."

Verse 4

$\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ $\eta\acute{\nu}$ $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}$ $\gamma\eta\varsigma$, $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\delta'$ $\grave{\alpha}\nu$ $\eta\acute{\nu}$ $\iota\epsilon\rho\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$, $\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\nu$ $\tau\acute{\omega}\nu$ $\pi\rho\sigma\phi\epsilon\rho\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omega\nu$ $\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}$ $\nu\acute{\omicron}\mu\omicron\nu$ $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ $\delta\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$

$\gamma\eta$, $\gamma\eta\varsigma$ f earth, land

$\acute{\alpha}\nu$ particle indicating contingency

I.e. Christ was not of the tribe of Levi. Cf. 7:14.

$\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$, $\omicron\upsilon$ m law

$\delta\acute{\omega}\rho\omicron\nu$, $\omicron\upsilon$ n see v.3

"The statement in the present tense that 'there are priests who offer gifts according to the law,' is another of the indications in this epistle that the Levitical priesthood was still in existence when it was written, and thus that the Jerusalem temple was still standing, with the consequence that the date of composition must have been prior to AD 70." Hughes.

Verse 5

($\omicron\acute{\iota}\tau\iota\nu\epsilon\varsigma$ $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\gamma\mu\alpha\tau\iota$ $\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}$ $\sigma\kappa\iota\acute{\alpha}$ $\lambda\alpha\tau\rho\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu$ $\tau\acute{\omega}\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$, $\kappa\alpha\theta\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ $\kappa\epsilon\chi\rho\eta\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ Μωϋσῆς $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\lambda\omega\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ $\tau\eta\nu$ $\sigma\kappa\eta\gamma\eta\nu$, $\text{Ὅρα γάρ, φησίν, ποιήσεις πάντα κατὰ τὸν τύπον τὸν δειχθέντα σοι ἐν τῷ ὄρει}$ ·

$\omicron\acute{\iota}\tau\iota\nu\epsilon\varsigma$ Pronoun, m nom pl $\acute{\omicron}\sigma\iota\varsigma$, $\eta\acute{\iota}\tau\iota\varsigma$, $\acute{\omicron}$ $\tau\iota$ who, which

$\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\gamma\mu\alpha$, $\tau\omicron\varsigma$ n example

Here, maybe 'plan,' cf. Ezek 42:15 LXX.

$\sigma\kappa\iota\alpha$, $\alpha\varsigma$ f shadow, foreshadowing

Cf. 10:1; Col 2:17.

$\lambda\alpha\tau\rho\epsilon\upsilon\omega$ serve, worship

$\acute{\epsilon}\pi\omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$, $\omicron\upsilon$ heavenly

$\kappa\epsilon\chi\rho\eta\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s

$\chi\rho\eta\mu\alpha\tau\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ instruct, reveal

Carries the sense of Divine direction.

$\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\lambda\omega$ be going, be about, intend

$\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\omega$ complete, accomplish

Here has the sense of 'put into effect' rather than 'complete.'

$\sigma\kappa\eta\gamma\eta$, $\eta\varsigma$ f see v.2

$\acute{\omicron}\rho\alpha\omega$ see, observe; make sure

The reference here is to Ex. 25:40.

$\phi\eta\sigma\acute{\iota}\nu$ Verb, pres act indic, 3 s $\phi\eta\mu\iota$ say

$\tau\upsilon\pi\omicron\varsigma$, $\omicron\upsilon$ m pattern, example, type

It is claimed by some that the author of Hebrews is influenced by Philo, especially in his contrast between the earthly type and the heavenly $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\iota\nu\omicron\varsigma$. But, as Bruce puts it, the thought is rather that the whole of the Levitical order *foreshadowed* the spiritual order of the New Covenant (cf. 10:1). The new not only replaces the old, it fulfils it, for the old was designed to point to the reality of the new.

$\delta\epsilon\iota\chi\theta\acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\alpha$ Verb, aor pass ptc, m acc s

$\delta\epsilon\iota\kappa\nu\omega$ show

$\acute{\omicron}\rho\omicron\varsigma$, $\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ n mountain

Against the suggestion that the author of this Epistle is influenced by Philo, Hughes comments "It is idle to inquire concerning the manner in which Moses was shown the pattern of the tabernacle at Sinai... The instructions Moses received on the mountain were followed in the construction of the tabernacle, but we may be sure that we who live after the advent of Christ have a clearer comprehension of its typological significance than he had, man of faith though he was (11:23ff.; cf. 1 Pet 1:10-12)."

Verse 6

$\nu\upsilon\nu\acute{\iota}$ $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ $\delta\iota\alpha\phi\omega\rho\omega\tau\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha\varsigma$ $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\tau\upsilon\chi\epsilon\nu$ $\lambda\epsilon\iota\tau\upsilon\rho\gamma\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$, $\acute{\omicron}\sigma\omega$ $\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}$ $\kappa\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\tau\omicron\nu\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota\nu$ $\delta\iota\alpha\theta\acute{\eta}\kappa\eta\varsigma$ $\mu\epsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\tau\eta\varsigma$, $\eta\acute{\iota}\tau\iota\varsigma$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota$ $\kappa\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\tau\omicron\sigma\iota\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota\varsigma$ $\nu\epsilon\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\theta\acute{\epsilon}\tau\eta\tau\alpha\iota$.

$\nu\upsilon\nu\acute{\iota}$ (originally an emphatic form of $\nu\upsilon\nu$)

now

The force is primarily logical rather than temporal.

$\delta\iota\alpha\phi\omega\rho\omega\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$, α , $\omicron\upsilon$ superior, far superior (comp. of $\delta\iota\alpha\phi\omega\rho\omicron\varsigma$)

$\tau\acute{\epsilon}\tau\upsilon\chi\epsilon\nu$ Verb, perf act indic, 3 s $\tau\upsilon\gamma\chi\alpha\nu\omega$ obtain, receive

$\lambda\epsilon\iota\tau\upsilon\rho\gamma\acute{\iota}\alpha$, $\alpha\varsigma$ f service

$\acute{\omicron}\sigma\omicron\varsigma$, η , $\omicron\upsilon$ correlative pronoun, as much as $\kappa\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\tau\omicron\nu$ see 7:19

$\delta\iota\alpha\theta\eta\kappa\eta$, $\eta\varsigma$ covenant

$\mu\epsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\tau\eta\varsigma$, $\omicron\upsilon$ m mediator, intermediary

" $\mu\epsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\tau\eta\varsigma$ describes the action of Christ at the establishment of the New Covenant, as $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\gamma\upsilon\omicron\varsigma$ (7:22) describes the position which He holds towards men by assuring them of its validity." Westcott

ὅστις, ἡτις, ὅ τι who, which
ἐπαγγελία, ας f promise

Cf. Jn 1:17. The 'better promises' are those connected with the New Covenant as prophesied in Jer 31:31ff – cf. vv8-12.

νενομοθέτηται Verb, pluperfect pass indic, 3 s νομοθετεῖμαι be given the law; be based on

Westcott prefers 'enacted.' Hughes says the meaning is 'legally secured.'

Verses 7-13

"The teaching of the prophets bears witness to the superiority of the New order over the Old... for if the first Covenant had completely fulfilled the purpose to which a Covenant between God and man is directed, then there would have been no room for another." Westcott

Verse 7

Εἰ γὰρ ἡ πρώτη ἐκεῖνη ἦν ἄμεμπτος, οὐκ ἂν δευτέρας ἐζητεῖτο τόπος·

πρῶτος, η, ον first
ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that
ἀμεμπτος, ον blameless, faultless

The fault lay not with the Covenant itself but with those who received it as is clear from the opening words of the next verse.

δευτερος, α, ον second
ζητεῶ seek, search for, look for
τοπος, ου m place, opportunity

On this phrase, cf. 12:17; Rom 12:19; Acts 25:16.

Verse 8

μεμφομένοις γὰρ αὐτοὺς λέγει· Ἴδού ἡμέραι ἔρχονται, λέγει κύριος, καὶ συντελέσω ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰουδα διαθήκην καινὴν,

μεμφομαι find fault with, blame

The variants αὐτοὺς (8* A D *et al*) and αὐτοῖς (p⁴⁶ 8^c B D^c Byz *et al*) are fairly evenly supported. Metzger reports of the UBS Committee that "Observing the direction in which scribal corrections moved, a majority of the Committee preferred the reading αὐτοὺς." Hughes argues that αὐτοῖς makes more sense in context. He argues that God does not find fault with them but with the covenant and so reads, 'for he finds fault (i.e. with the first covenant) when he says to them...' The point, however, is arguable.

The quote that follows is from Jer 31:34ff

συντελεῶ complete, finish, bring about, establish

It will be entirely of God's doing.

οἶκος, ου m house, household, people
Ἰουδα Noun, gen s Ἰουδα

It will result in a united people of God, a covenant characterised by reconciliation.

διαθήκη, ης see v.6
καινος, η, ον new

"In 12:24 we read διαθήκη νέα. The distinction between καινος and νεος is clearly marked in the NT usage. Καινος expresses that which is new in regard to what has preceded, is novel in character or unused; νεος that which is new in regard to its own being, as having been in existence but a short time." Westcott

Verse 9

οὐ κατὰ τὴν διαθήκην ἣν ἐποίησα τοῖς πατέρας αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπιλαβομένου μου τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν ἐξαγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου, ὅτι αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἐνέμειναν ἐν τῇ διαθήκῃ μου, καὶ γὰρ ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν, λέγει κύριος.

ἐπιλαβομένου Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m & n gen s ἐπιλαμβάνομαι take hold of, seize
χειρ, χειρος f hand
ἐξαγαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐξαγω lead or bring out
γῆ, γῆς f earth, land

"The Old Covenant is connected with the first formation of the nation and with that sovereign display of God's power by which he separated externally a people from the world." Westcott

ἐνέμειναν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἐμμενω remain faithful to, obey
καὶ γὰρ a compound word = καὶ ἐγὼ
ἀμελεῶ disregard, reject

This follows the LXX, but the Hebrew has the verb לָבַד which is normally rendered "I was husband (or lord) to them." However, it is argued by Delitzsch and others that לָבַד with the preposition אֶל carries the force 'I rejected; I was displeased with, grew weary of them.'

The promise of the New Covenant provides remedy for the weaknesses of the Old in that it includes:

- i) The implanting of God's law in the heart;
- ii) Knowledge of God as a matter of personal experience;
- iii) The blotting out of sins.

Verse 10

ὅτι αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη ἦν διαθήσομαι τῷ οἴκῳ
Ἰσραὴλ μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκεῖνας, λέγει κύριος,
διδούς νόμους μου εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν, καὶ
ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν ἐπιγράψω αὐτούς, καὶ
ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς εἰς θεόν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μοι
εἰς λαόν.

διαθήσομαι Verb, fut midd dep indic, 1 s
διατιθεμαι make (of covenants)

μετα τας ἡμερας ἐκεινας corresponds to 'last
days' of 1:2.

διδούς Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s διδωμι
νομος, ου m law

The plural emphasises the detail, i.e. there will
not merely be a general desire to please but a
concern for detailed obedience.

διανοια mind, understanding, intentions
καρδια, ας f heart

Cf. 2 Cor 3:3

ἐπιγραφω write on or in

"The law which formerly was external and
accusing now becomes internal, an element of
the redeemed nature, and a delight to fulfil."
Hughes.

ἔσομαι Verb, fut indic, 1 s εἰμι
ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἰμι
λαος, ου m people, a people

Verse 11

καὶ οὐ μὴ διδάξωσιν ἕκαστος τὸν πολίτην
αὐτοῦ καὶ ἕκαστος τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, λέγων·
Γνωθὶ τὸν κύριον, ὅτι πάντες εἰδήσουσίν με
ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου αὐτῶν.

διδάξωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl διδασκω
teach

ἕκαστος, η, ου each, every
πολιτης, ου m citizen, fellow-citizen
γνωθὶ Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s γινωσκω
πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας
εἰδήσουσίν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl οἶδα
know, understand

μικρος, α, ου little, small, insignificant
ἕως prep with gen to, as far as
μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

One mark of the New Covenant is that there is
no priestly or privileged class. All have
immediate knowledge of God, from the least to
the greatest.

Verse 12

ὅτι ἕλεως ἔσομαι ταῖς ἀδικίαις αὐτῶν, καὶ τῶν
ἀμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν οὐ μὴ μνησθῶ ἔτι.

ἕλεως, ων merciful

ἔσομαι see v.10

ἀδικια, ας f wrongdoing, evil, sin

ἀμαρτια, ας f sin

μνησθῶ Verb, aor pass subj, 1 s μμνησκομαι
remember, call to mind
ἔτι still, yet

"The New Covenant ... rests upon forgiveness
on the part of God, not on performance on the
part of men. Its foundation is grace and not
works (John 1:17)." Westcott. The new
covenant has its focus in the perfect atoning
work of Christ, "this forgiving and reconciling
mercy has been procured for us by the high-
priestly mediation of our Saviour Christ."
Hughes.

Verse 13

ἐν τῷ λέγειν Καινὴν πεπαλαίωκεν τὴν πρώτην,
τὸ δὲ παλαιούμενον καὶ γηράσκον ἐγγὺς
ἀφανισμοῦ.

καινος, η, ου see v.8

πεπαλαίωκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s
παλαιωω make or declare old or
obsolete

πρωτος, η, ου see v.7

γηρασκω become old, age

ἐγγυς adv near

ἀφανισμος, ου m disappearing,
destruction

Further evidence that Hebrews was written
before 70 AD – the temple and its sacrifices
were still continuing, though declared obsolete.
Cf. 13:10.