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A Study of the Priestly Christology of the
Epistle to the Hebrews.

J.E.Allison.

This study of Hebrews examines both the paraenetic purpose of the author in choosing Priest as his central Christological title, and the typological structure of the argument as it contributes to that purpose.

Chapter One introduces the subject by taking an overview of the questions raised by the study. Chapter Two considers the work of other students of the epistle. Chapter Three looks more closely at the context for writing and suggests that the author's overriding aim was to address the sin of apostasy in a group for which he had pastoral oversight. Chapter Four posits the view that the epistle is the work of a second generation Christian, with an Alexandrian background, therefore inheriting diverse claims about Jesus from various sources.

The thesis now moves into a detailed study of the various titles for Jesus. Chapter Five considers the "archegos/prodromos" titles, whilst Chapter Six examines the theme of perfection, a major interest of the author as he strives to present the figure of the perfect priest. Chapter Seven considers the material centring around the title "Son" and asks its significance in relation to "Priest". The conclusion is that here is a vital foundation for the claim that Jesus as Priest is decisively effective for all time.

At Chapter Eight, the study looks more carefully at antecedents for the Priestly title, concluding that Psalm 110:4 was a key text with its reference to Melchizedek. Chapter Nine therefore looks closely at the purpose of the Melchizedek references. The final chapters consider the title of priest as it functions in the paraenesis. They conclude that it remains the central claim of the epistle, whose overarching purpose is to portray for a flagging flock, and from every angle of the author's ingenuity, one who represents the supreme climax of God's grace.

A STUDY OF THE PRIESTLY CHRISTOLOGY
OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

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M.A. THESIS

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.

This study of the Priestly Christology of the Letter to the Hebrews seeks to understand the great purpose which promoted it, and the ways in which the writer articulated his Christological claims to meet that purpose as effectively and as fully as he could. Whilst I shall make no attempt to uncover the actual destination of the letter, or the identity of the one who meticulously exercised his intellect in the project, my claim that his purpose is primarily paraenetic leads me to some specific assertions about writer and recipients.

The dating of the epistle has always been a point of contention. I would want to suggest that it is probably to be located post AD 70 and the destruction of the Temple, not so much because of its lack of interest in the Temple (although the emphasis on the tent sanctuary is clear), but rather because it seems to me that the author is building in his text on a number of statements about Jesus Christ which have already been formulated. He urges his readers, for instance, to "hold fast our confession" (4:14) with the obvious implication of the existence of an established kerygma. He speaks at 2:3 of receiving the faith from those who had actually listened to Jesus, with the inference that some time had elapsed: "It was declared at first by the Lord and it was attested to us by those who heard him." (2:3) His significant and creative interest in Psalm 110 throughout, alongside other quotations from what seems to have been a catena of existent proof texts, suggests to me that we are dealing here with a second generation Christian, who is developing the first and earliest traditions. Controversy over this issue still continues, but there is strong support for this conclusion. (1)

I believe that the epistle seeks to exhort and encourage a group of Christians, probably under the pastoral care of the writer, who were flagging in their Christian zeal and tempted to loss of faith

in the face of we know not what. Their temptation seems to have been to forsake their allegiance to Jesus Christ and embrace the securities of the Jewish cultic system, a denial of Christ's efficacy tantamount to committing apostasy. This could mean that they were either a Jewish Christian group who had found Christianity too demanding or Gentile Christians attracted to the much more ritualistic Jewish sacrificial system. For the purpose of this study, it does not matter which. But clearly it is a cause of great urgency to the author to prove to his readers that the way of Christian discipleship remains the "new and living way" - (10:20) - the only true way. He exhorts them to maintain fidelity to Jesus who is both the model for their faith, the pattern to which they must adhere, and the actual means to the fulfilment of their faith if they rely on him. All the Christological titles which we shall examine are therefore carefully woven together into the fabric of the work to promote obedient discipleship in the writer's flock.

The major underlying premise of this study then, is that the author's motive in writing is to combat apostasy and to persuade his flock to keep the faith. The creative Christology arises from his determination to convince them. It answers to his need to persuade them as effectively as possible by presenting them with one who is absolutely worthy of their trust and demonstrably superior to all others. And this in turn emerges from an underlying Covenant theology. By this I mean the author's consuming interest in the relationship between the earlier forms of God's revelation in the age of the old Covenant, and Jesus as their climax and completion inaugurating the age of the new, as it was prophesied by Jeremiah at Jeremiah 31:31-34 and repeated at Hebrews 8:8f.

This and the very centrality of the title of Priest seems to me to deny the claim made by some scholars that here in the epistle is a

polemic against the Jewish way of approaching God. On the contrary, my contention will be that the writer is himself a Jewish Christian whose cultural milieu was probably Alexandrian. I shall base this on the remarkable synthesis that can be shown within the text of both Hellenistic and Jewish influences, both of which we know were prominent in Alexandria during this period. Indeed one interesting subsidiary question that the thesis will address emerges from the, at times, unresolved tension in the epistle between these different influences. On the one hand we are confronted with the thought world of Logos speculation and Wisdom terminology and the "high" Christology emerging from them. On the other is evident a thought world dominated by a Jewish eschatological perspective, which looked to the coming of one or more anointed Messiahs. From this emerges a much more "adoptionist"-like Christology of one exalted to the highest status only at his resurrection. Indeed Attridge detects "fissures in the Christology" and writes of "barely or non-resolved antinomies in the text", focussing the problem at exactly this point. (2) We shall ask whether the writer was trying to reassert Jesus' humanity against the more exalted claims in his work, or whether in fact, his pastoral concern merely led him to weave different and not altogether consistent strands together, because together they gave the fullest possible characterisation of the great High Priest.

Whatever the answer to this ongoing subsidiary question, my much more major contention is that the Jewish inheritance of the author and the reverence he felt for the insights of that culture informed the task he set himself, which as we have claimed was to persuade his people in every possible way of Jesus as the most complete revelation of God, surpassing and finally superseding the ancient dispensation. The words at 13:8, "Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today and forever" are no mere adjuncts in a postscript,

but rather the succinct summary of the underlying Covenant theology. There is no suggestion that his flock should change direction, but rather, the stress is on the continuity of God's word, affirming the ancient revelations rather than denying them.

This portrayal of Jesus as the inaugurator of the new Covenant accounts for the typological structure of the epistle. The titles for Jesus congregate around a series of typological parallels, and we shall encounter these parallels at every level of our discussion. Thus we move from Jesus' relationship to prophets and angels (chapter 1), through to his relationship with Adam (chapter 2) and thence to the parallel between Jesus, Moses and Joshua (chapters 3 and 4). This is followed by a discussion of the relationship between Jesus, Aaron and priests in general (chapter 5), thence to the specific parallel with Melchizedek (chapter 7). In chapters 8, 9 and 10, the author turns to the parallel between the old Covenant and its system of Law and sacrifice, and the new Covenant inaugurated by the sacrifice of Jesus. As a final gesture, chapter 11 deals with the parallel between Jesus the faithful one par excellence and the faithful heroes of the past.

All these typological parallels underpin the paraenesis, focussing repeatedly on Jesus as the one who, in various contexts, fulfils that which was earlier promised. All these are shown to foreshadow that which Christ typifies. They are shown to prefigure that which Christ consummates. They are shown to be antitypes of the one who is the very type of all God's intention.

This Covenant theology also accounts for the idea of process in the text: of pilgrimage towards a goal, of development, and of growth towards perfection. So, whilst the theme of perfection has been claimed by Peterson as the crucial theme in the letter (3), I want to maintain that it actually occurs within this much more over-arching theme of the relationship between old and new, whereby Jesus is shown

to be perfected as he maintains his obedience to the vocation of Priest/Mediator of the new Covenant marked out for him, with all the sufferings which that entailed. His perfection is carefully contrasted with those who instigated the old Covenant, whose purpose was thwarted by human sin.

This returns us to the author's original motive in writing the epistle. For the theme of perfection, in demanding an answering perfection, belongs firmly within the paraenetic purpose of persuading his people that their following of Jesus will bring them to perfection for themselves. (4)

This then is the task which I believe the author sets himself, and this the standpoint from which he writes. Our task is to explore the ways in which he undertakes that task.

Having looked at various scholarly approaches to the epistle, we shall in chapter three pursue the claim that it was indeed the threat of apostasy which induced him to write. In chapter four we shall consider the various strands of tradition which he has brought into play in answer to the urgency of his purpose. The paraenesis is served by his drawing on many diverse earlier Christological affirmations about Jesus, in order to arm himself with the fullest possible array of evidence for Jesus' superiority. (5) This inevitably leads us into a detailed discussion of the various Christological titles attributed to Jesus, by which the author builds up his evidence for Jesus as the one to whom all earlier salvific figures and ordinances had pointed: Pioneer and Forerunner, Perfected One, Son. We shall note the double hinge inherent in each title, namely that each presents the reader with a model or example to follow, and the very means through which salvation can be achieved. And we shall go on to show that all these form the foundations for the claim that Jesus is Priest, at the crux of the author's creative Christology, the central

title to which all the other titles contribute in their different ways.

Before examining the function of the title Priest in detail however, chapter eight will look at the various influences on the writer which might have served as origins for his Christology, with especial reference to Psalm 110. We shall show that, unlike earlier thinkers, he looks beyond the familiar first verse to verse four, erstwhile untouched, and finds there a justification for his claim for the priestly role of Jesus, and a vindication of his non-Levitical descent: "Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." (5:6 et al.) This involves, at chapter nine, a very careful look at the function of Melchizedek in the epistle. We shall demonstrate that Melchizedek actually fits into the series of typological parallels outlined above, as they underpin the theme of promise and fulfilment. Finally, having laid the ground, we come at last in chapters ten and eleven to a fuller consideration of the central title of Priest and its function in both the paraenesis and the promise/fulfilment theme. We shall ask how precisely the author believed one who is Priest could answer to his people's needs. That answer involves an examination of the great paradox of the epistle, namely that Jesus the Priest, Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant is also the victim and the offering. It is in answering these final questions that we shall hope to draw near to the very heart of the author.

CHAPTER 2 A SURVEY OF SCHOLARLY STUDIES OF THE EPISTLE
TO THE HEBREWS.

Let it be noted here that this survey regrettably omits the work of non-English speaking scholars of the epistle, owing to the barriers imposed by language. Spicq, however, is included as French was not outside my scope.

a) Older Studies: B.F.Westcott,1889; A.B.Bruce,1899;
W.P.Dubose,1908; A.Nairne,1913; A.S.Peake; J.Moffatt,1924

There was no question that the Epistle to the Hebrews centred on the Priesthood of Jesus a century ago. Nairne entitled his commentary, "The Epistle of Priesthood". The Christological focus does not seem to have been in question, although the reasons motivating it seem to have been narrowed down, with a devotional emphasis that would not be present today. The Priestly work was understood primarily as one of forgiveness and of the renewal of access to God, and A.B.Bruce and Moffatt in particular, wrote eloquently of it. Bruce called this the "dogmatic centre of the epistle" (1) These scholars attributed the efficacy of the Priestly role without question to the divine nature of Jesus - to his divine Sonship. Moffatt is representative thus: "It was because Jesus was what he was by nature that his sacrifice had such final value . . . its atoning significance lay in his vital connection with the realm of absolute realities." (2)

But this basic assumption has a tendency to override these scholars' explorations of the other aspects of the Priesthood of Jesus, although all acknowledge the importance of Jesus' suffering humanity to greater or lesser degrees. Moffatt's emphasis on the sacrifice of blood has been especially helpful as will emerge, but both he and Nairne are defective in their grasp of the Promise/Fulfilment dimension. Bruce and Westcott however both

acknowledged the theme of the Old consummated in the New, though the theme of the two Covenants was not yet given the sharp focus which I believe it requires establishing Christ's priesthood as a covenant-inaugurating act. They may have assumed it but never made it explicit.(3)

The work of Dubose has however proved a remarkable resource. He grasped the theme of the fulfilment of the old regime in the sacrifice of Jesus, and attributed the priestly efficacy much more clearly to Hebrews' view of the significance of the obedience of Christ whose living out of God's will in his own life and death made it possible for all Christian disciples to live out the purposes of God in creation for themselves: "Relatively to the world and to ourselves, humanity became Son and God became Father in the person and by the act of Jesus Christ. The true nature and relation of each and both came to realization and fulfilment in Him" (4) It is my hope that this study is able to show the validity of Dubose's approach to the Epistle.

b) More Recent Work: Spicq,1952; F.F.Bruce,1963; Montefiore,1964; Sowers,1965; F.V.Filson,1967; R.Williamson,1970

The old stress on Sonship as the fundamental requirement for Priesthood was once more highlighted by the work of Spicq in 1952. Then in the 60s, Montefiore reiterated the same theme: "Only a high priest who is Son of God can have his rightful place at God's right hand." (5) Floyd Filson's "Yesterday" later used the same premise: ". . . a unique Christology. Jesus is the divine Son of God." (6) Filson simply viewed the titles in the epistle as ways of exploring aspects of who Jesus was and what he did. He talks about them "overlapping" (7) but without grasping the typological structure inherent in them.

F.F.Bruce however in 1963 was more interested in the priestly Christology in terms of the Promise/Fulfilment category and the

relationship of Old and New. And Williamson in 1970 writes of the Old Testament sacrifices as being in the writer's context, "the eschatological prototype pointing forward to its fulfilment." (8)

Yet even here in these studies the requisite covenantal emphasis and its direct link with the priestly Christology by means of the typological structuring of the epistle was never fully worked out. Of the work of the 60s, perhaps Sowers most nearly approached it in 1965 and shows a firm grasp on the typology: "Hebrews has incorporated the concept of perfection into the theology of the two covenants. So applied, perfection means the bringing into completion in the New Covenant of that which was anticipated in the Old." (9)

c) Recent Studies: L.K.K.Dey, 1975; M.D'Angelo, 1979; G.Hughes, 1979; D.Peterson, 1982; R.M.Wilson, 1987; H.Attridge, 1989

L.K.K.Dey's study of Hebrews (10) provided much useful background to an understanding of Philo, and the levels of status with which Philo handled the Logos. However, Dey's contention was that Hebrews centres on the theme of the perfection of Jesus Christ achieved through his participation in humanity and imperfection, in order to reinterpret the tradition of intermediaries and perfection for a thought-world predominantly influenced by Philo. This thesis rejects such a view and maintains the focus on the relationship between the two Covenants and the eschatological framework with which that coheres.

As the 70s merged into the 80s however, the theme of Covenant was explored much more fully within the broader evolution of New Testament study. Its influence on the theology of the early Church was beginning to be recognized. In 1979, D'Angelo's study (11) centring on Moses in the epistle certainly acknowledged the epistle's understanding of the continuity between the two covenants, but she

seems to have centred on the typology of Moses/Christ at the expense of balance in her work, losing a grasp on the priestly emphasis. Graham Hughes in Hebrews and Hermeneutics in the same year however, picked up the emphasis and to him I am indebted. He wrote: "The conception of Jesus as eschatological priest . . . arises pretty well spontaneously out of his own theological preoccupations with the relationship between the covenants." (12) Furthermore, he has grasped the paraenetic dimension of the work clearly, and it is to him I owe the useful paradigm of the model/means dichotomy. However because his focus is on the writer to the Hebrews as an exemplar of the early hermeneutical approach to the Old Testament, the actual outworking of the priestly Christology is not so important. This study will therefore move the focus back to the understanding of Jesus as priest as the central title which expresses the major thrust of the work.

The work of David Peterson on Hebrews and Perfection appeared in 1982. Peterson has however reverted to the theme of perfection (which was Dey's primary interest) at cost to the covenantal emphasis, as I have already indirectly suggested. He talks about Jesus as "a man with a difference because he has the freedom not to sin" (13), and suggests that we are dealing with a high Christology as of one who is ascended and perfected High Priest urging his people on to perfection. The theme of perfection must be carefully considered but in its relationship to the more over-arching concern of the author.

Wilson's commentary of 1987 (14) has made full use of these above-mentioned scholarly studies and it grasps the import of the Promise/Fulfilment theme and the relationship of the Old order and the New. He also remains very cautious about the Christological claims and is helpful on the unresolved synthesis of cultures in the text. Attridge's work (15) only became available when this study was almost completed, so it is interesting that his conclusions at certain points

are very similar. The underlying covenantal theme and the tensions between Christological claims are explicitly outlined and serve to confirm my view of the epistle. I have tried to include some references from Attridge's work at this late stage.

CHAPTER 3 THE SITUATION TO WHICH HE WRITES. THE MOTIVE FOR THE
EPISTLE : THE COMBATTING OF APOSTASY AS THE PRIMARY
PURPOSE : "THE SIN WHICH CLINGS SO CLOSELY" (12:1).

We are making the claim that the writer's main motive in writing is to persuade, and that the underlying thrust of the work is paraenetic. This will emerge at every stage of the discussion that follows.

In our assessment of the typological structure of the epistle which concentrates its every stage on the presentation of Jesus as the best and supreme figure on which to rely, we cannot but discern the anxious pastor, desperate to focus his people's attention in the right place. At 3:12. he warns them to "Take care!". And there are moments, such as at 8:1, where he seems to labour his point: "Now the point in what we are saying is this . . . "

In our consideration of the titles which he attributes to Jesus in answering the question of Jesus' adequacy as a present saviour, we will note the hortatory quality of the portrayal, which never remains at the level of a theological treatise, but is always turned to the service of the paraenesis. Thus, after a section of exegesis, the words, "Therefore" and "Let us" always link it back to the admonition. Chapters two, three, four, six and twelve all begin on this note. The whole of 10:19f. and chapter twelve consist in a series of entreaties and dire warnings: "How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the Son of God . . . ?" (10:29) And we read, "Strive" (12:14); "See to it" (12:15); and "See that . . . " (12:25) Finally, at 13:22, at the close of the epistle, after the great benedictory prayer, which is of itself evidence for his great concern for his people, he actually admits his purpose and apologises for it : "I appeal to you brethren, bear with my word of exhortation."

We shall also claim, in our study of the synthesis of cultures displayed by the epistle, that their diversity suggests a lack of

interest in resolving the tensions between them, because that is not the author's motive. On the contrary, he deliberately draws on earlier Christological affirmations in order to convey in every possible way the reasons for Jesus' superiority.

Graham Hughes exposes the paraenetic purpose clearly in his work, and provides a useful summary of this understanding of the epistle: "Hebrews is designed from beginning to end as a faith-engendering instrument. It is written to a crisis in confidence; its theology is expressly bent to the service of the paraenesis. The Christ who is presented in the course of this is unambiguously the exalted Christ; the declaration and exposition of Christ's high-priestly work is this writer's means of reviving his readers' hope, which is to say, the confidence and determination to press on with maintaining their confession which in turn . . . means faith." (1) Wilson too gives support to this theory in his commentary. (2)

Given then that the epistle has a primarily paraenetic function motivated by an urgent pastoral care for a flock that is either reverting to or embracing Judaism (for this study it matters not!), we are confronted with a writer whose Christology is put to the service of pastoral persuasion and flourishes creatively out of a heterogeneous cultural background. The "Therefore . . . let us . . ." of 12:1 captures the underlying thrust of the work. And yet the whole creative enterprise is disciplined by the maintenance of a profound respect for the older Jewish dispensation which he believes to be the inheritance of the New, and which is now consummated by it.

This view of the epistle as bearing a paraenetic purpose leads me to the conclusion that "Sin" in the epistle largely refers to the sin of apostasy, and that the author has no intention of condemning all post-baptismal sins to eternal retribution.(3) These are not what he warns them against. That is not what the epistle is about. The sin

of apostasy, whereby his flock might give up its faith in God and lose its hold on the ancient promises, is precisely that which motivates his argument and it is therefore that to which he addresses himself.

(4) It is precisely because they threaten to abandon their faith in Jesus Christ that he bends all his creative powers to the service of the portrayal of one who is supreme and can answer their every need. For if they do reject their confession, he believes they will be subject to the doom he outlines at 10:26-31: " . . . a fearful prospect of judgement and a fury of fire which will consume the adversaries . . . It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." This is the central issue, a truth recognized in recent studies. (5)

Such an interpretation of the author's intention coheres perfectly with his stress on the temptation of Jesus to sin, understood as apostasy, whereby Jesus is depicted as tempted by extremes of suffering to give up believing and trusting in God's purposes. It equally coheres with the repeated assurance to his flock that Jesus maintained faith without giving up. It properly acknowledges the eloquence, and indeed explains, the force of 4:15: "For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sinning." We shall grow repetitive in the course of this study as we maintain that Jesus' sinlessness is not a corollary of his pre-existent status, removing him from the realm of flesh and weakness (as Peterson concludes and as both Dey and Filson suggest (6)), but is rather the maintenance of obedience to his vocation in unchanging faith and under severe testing. C.K.Barrett used this particular point to draw links between Hebrews 11 and the writer of 2 Macc.7, whose depiction of the martyrdom of the seven brothers and their mother is also a portrayal of those who resist the particular sin of apostasy:

"Thus he also died unpolluted, trusting absolutely in the Lord. . ."

(7) This interpretation of sin does indeed also explain the motive force behind chapter 11 and its listed faithful ones. G.Hughes' definition of apostasy has the focus right: "Sin will be to relax one's hold on the futurity of the promise and cease from identification with the pilgrim people." (8)

And yet the temptation of the writer's flock is more precise in the life of the inaugurated New Covenantal life. It is, under whatever severe provocation, to abandon faith in Jesus as their great and perfected leader and perfecter and to lose sight of the goal which he alone has made possible, a goal which was never more than a promise for those in the Old dispensation: "And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness in realising the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (6:11 and 12) More specifically therefore, their apostasy consists of abandoning belief in the efficacy of the sacrifice on the cross, and in the establishment of the New Covenant in Jesus' blood: "For if we sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins . . . How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the Son of God and profaned the blood of the Covenant by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace ?" (10:6 and 29)

He has taken a further step here. Part of the promise of the New Covenant at Jer.31:31, reiterated at Heb.8:12, is that of "remembering their sins no more". Herein, I believe, lies some of the confusion of scholars about the author's definition of sin. Two separate, though interwoven, issues are involved. The epistle claims, as we shall go on to see, that the sacrifice on the cross establishes that particular promise of forgiveness for all sins and not just the

sin of apostasy ! But the primary purpose remains to combat the one major sin of apostasy ! At 10:26 we have a statement which actually involves both separate strands as the author incorporates them together. Without a clear grasp of the difference between the two definitions of "hamartia" in juxtaposition here, confusion can certainly result: "For if we sin deliberately" - that is, give up our faith in Jesus Christ and commit apostasy - "after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" - that is, the individual unnumbered sins which keep us apart from God, and which have been banished to oblivion by the cross.

That there is indeed a distinction in the author's usage of "hamartia" becomes evident from a closer look at all the verses which include it, as well as 10:26. Thus, when he is addressing the question of the sins which stand between mankind and God, from which he believes Jesus has saved mankind by his sacrifice on the cross and by his inauguration of the new Covenant thereby, he uses the word generally. We see this at 2:17, 9:28, 10:12 and 10:18. (For example: "But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins . . . " 10:12) Similarly, this use occurs in all references to the actions of the ordinary priests who made sacrifice for sins in vain in the old dispensation, for example at 5:1, 5:3, 7:27, 10:3 and 4 and 10:11. ("Every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sins." 10:11)

But on the contrary, when he is persuading his people that Jesus never abandoned faith but endured obediently and that therefore they too must maintain their confession, he uses the word quite specifically. For example at 3:12 and 13, he writes of "the deceitfulness of sin." Moffatt's comment on the verse highlights what is at issue: "As for "ἡ ἁμαρτία", it is the sin of apostasy which like all sin deceives men, in this case by persuading them that they will

be better off if they allow themselves to abandon the exacting demands of God." (9) This use is carried into 3:17, where the implication is that those who never reached the Promised Land failed because they abandoned their faith. We have already claimed the emphasis of 4:15 as denoting the temptation to apostasy on Jesus' own part. (10) And finally, the use of "hamartia" at 12:1 and 12:4 is linked very closely to the urgent plea the writer makes to his people to maintain their allegiance. "Sin" at 12:1 seems to be that encumbrance which prevents the disciple from the fulfilling of his discipleship, and "struggle against sin" seems to mean their struggle to keep faith in the face of possible martyrdom. So he reminds them that they have not yet been asked to shed blood, whereas Jesus' obedience led him to the blood of the cross.

Thus the priestly Christology includes a view of Christ's work as of expiation from all sin within its more over-arching purpose of promoting faith in the one who abnegated the power of sin in an act of absolute eternal significance. The apostasy of his flock will be, therefore, to give up believing in what Jesus has achieved through the sacrifice which alone brings salvation. If his people deny the centrality of that sacrifice, then they lose hold on the salvation offered. For this, their apostasy will go unforgiven. Attridge picks up the same point: "Our author's position on repentance is primarily theological, reflecting his estimate of the decisiveness of Christ's sacrifice." (11) This is where the driving power of the author's logic brings him and he is afraid that they will condemn themselves to it. Of the warning at 10:26-29, Attridge writes: "The object of this dire warning is not sin in general, but the sin of wilful apostasy. At the same time the Christological grounds for the warning are apparent. The unique sacrifice provides a single basis for forgiveness. To repudiate it means to abandon hope of reconciliation." (12)

It is therefore to keep his people from such a sentence brought about by their apostasy that the author writes for them this document of profound Christological thinking. It is in order to reawaken them to their Christian discipleship and to obedient endurance under temptation that he sets out his claims. And it is therefore our task to examine those claims as they have been used in the paraenesis. How does he persuade them that if they follow Jesus he will answer their every need?

CHAPTER 4 THE CREATIVE MANAGEMENT OF A CULTURAL HERITAGE.

I have claimed that the probability is that the author was of Alexandrian background and a Hellenistic Jew. It would be outside the scope of this study to discuss the many ramifications of this issue in depth. It must suffice here to summarise the main arguments.

Alexandria was a melting pot for a synthesis between Judaism and Hellenism and that same synthesis occurs within the epistle. As we examine the various titles employed by the author in more detail, the nuances of this synthesis will emerge more clearly.

a) Evidence of the Greek Philosophical Tradition

The Hellenistic world was indebted to the Greek philosophical tradition and the tradition had taken root and flowered in Alexandrian thinking. So Alexandria was familiar with the Platonic view of the world and of God, whereby the phenomenal physical world is believed to be a mere imperfect shadow of the real, eternal realities. It is only through the Reason, or Logos that man can leave behind the transient order of sensual things and attain to God. Philo, the great Jewish philosopher working in Alexandria had carefully and with reverence interpreted his familiar Jewish texts in terms of Greek dualism, by means of allegory. And he had also used the originally Stoic idea of the Logos as the medium between man and God. J.D.G.Dunn writes: "From Stoicism comes talk of divine reason (*logos*), immanent in the world, permeating all things and present also in man, the seminal *logos* (*logos spermatikos*) so that man's highest good is to live in accordance with and by assent to this divine reason." (1)

Both Dunn and Barrett (2) before him conclude that Philo drew on both Platonic and Stoic elements and in so doing extended and "radically reshaped" (3) both in his own system.

The epistle has many echoes of this particular philosophical position, so much so that scholars such as Spicq have traced there a very strong influence on the author by Philo. (Indeed, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this was an accepted dictum.) Spicq traces parallels of vocabulary in common metaphors and alliteration, and parallels in argument and exegesis: the argument of suitability at 2:10 and 7:26 particularly used by Philo; the rhetorical argument from greater or less to greatest; the argument from silence. Certain themes are also held in common, particularly the idea of perfection, a criterion of quality and value insisted upon by Philo, and an important aspect of the epistle. Spicq finds close affinities between the literary structure of Heb.11 and the Hymn of Hope in De Praem. et Poem.11, with the repetition of "μέγιστα", and asserts that the biographical catalogue of illustrious men in the epistle is well beloved by Philo. However, whilst these aspects of the epistle can be likened to Philo, there is a significant difference between the two authors as will emerge at more specific points in this study. One important one is that Philo does not touch on Psalm 110, which is such a central text for Hebrews. Furthermore, the treatment of Melchizedek by Philo sees in him the symbol of true Reason who communicates truth to mankind. But Hebrews sees in him only the prefiguration of Jesus who is infinitely superior. (See the later discussion of this issue in Chapter 8.) On the contrary, the allegorical interpretation is resisted by the writer. Similarly, Moses is for the writer only a leader in the progression of the old dispensation towards its fulfilment in Jesus, rather than a symbol of the perfect man created in God's image as Philo presents him. We deal in Hebrews not with allegory but with a typological structuring which constantly points the readers to Christ. And in general, the parallels of vocabulary and exegesis between Philo and the author can often be

attributed to the fact that both are Alexandrians and both therefore use characteristic Alexandrian motifs. Thus although we might want to argue that Philo's work could have been known to our author, affinities of language between them are not decisive, and we cannot agree with Ménégos that here is a Philonian converted to Christianity. Indeed the conclusion of this study will be closer to the work of Williamson who repudiates, albeit too drastically, Spicq's work, and finds little or no link at all between them.

Thus although the epistle reveals aspects of the Greek philosophical world and of Platonic idealism, the actual specific likenesses are only superficial. The dualistic concept of earthly copy in contrast to eternal reality emerges in the epistle as part of the typological patterning whereby certain phenomena prefigure or foreshadow "good things to come". But the "good things" have the most concrete and earthly basis of all: the life, suffering, humiliation and death of a human being. (4)

Nonetheless, the high Christological perspective of the first chapter particularly has notable likenesses to the world of Philo and the doctrine of the Logos, and suggests that the hypothesis of Alexandrian culture, lying in the background to the work, is still correct. I suggest that we can discern here the influence in Alexandria on both Philo and our writer of the great Wisdom tradition which had also flowered there.

b) Evidence of the Wisdom Tradition

Hellenistic Judaism was the seedbed in which the Wisdom myth had flourished, a myth by which divine Wisdom was understood as the great pre-existent agent of creation, the first born of all things, revealing Yahweh to mankind and mediating all that can be known about the world. The terms used about Wisdom were lavish indeed : Wisdom was

the "ἀπαύγασμα", the "χαρακτήρ" of God. (Wisdom 7:26/27). The two nouns are of course familiar to the student of Hebrews. At Heb.1:2 and 3, the Son is described in exactly these terms. Thus even as the author introduces the Greek idea of the Logos spoken by God in the Son at 1:2, it is immediately supplemented by the terminology of Wisdom 7, in order to portray Jesus in terms of the highest dignity. The synthesis here between Greek and Wisdom traditions is an eloquent one and supports the claim of this study that we deal in Hebrews with a most creative management of inherited cultural traditions. We shall look more closely at these influences in the following chapters. Suffice it to say here that the interplay of them contributes to the likelihood of an Alexandrian background.

c) Qumran

After the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, there were those who wanted to suggest that the influence of Qumran might have been in the background to the epistle. In 1958, Yadin hypothesised that the author was writing to prevent a reversion into a Qumran style of Judaism on the part of a flock who were originally Essenes, holding a view of two Messiahs, a Royal and a Priestly one. The author writes to convince them that Jesus combined the two functions in himself.(5) Then in 1959, Kosmala implied that the epistle was addressed to a non-Christian community with clear Qumran connections in order to persuade them that the New dispensation in Christ was superior to theirs. (6) In support of such a view, it would be possible to argue that the use of Jer.31:31-34, which is so important to our author, was also vital to such a community, who used it as a reason for their separation from the world as people of the Covenant, and even stricter allegiance to the ancient Jewish Law. However this alone makes such a link tenuous indeed, for nowhere in Hebrews is it suggested that the author's flock

should desert their encounter with the world of suffering humanity in order to keep the Covenant obligation, and indeed, the Jewish system is shown to be brought to an end. As we shall see later, living in the age of the New Covenant had quite different implications for the author of Hebrews. F.F.Bruce refuted the idea of links with Qumran in 1963 in an article in which he argued that the idea of Jesus as Priest of the tribe of Judah could never have been acceptable to anyone of Qumran background. (7)

Then with the discovery of the 11Q Melch. fragment in 1965, a further attempt was made to draw a link between them. De Jonge and Van der Woude put forward the theory that the figure of Melchizedek as 11Q Melch. portrays him - that is, as an angelic warrior figure - lay behind the author's interest in Melchizedek and caused him to compare Melchizedek's status as a heavenly mediatorial figure with the status of one who is the supreme mediator. We shall examine this argument in some detail at chapter eight, in order to measure the validity of claims that Qumran was part of the tradition which the author inherited. It remains to say here that this hypothesis is less well founded than is the case for Philonic and Wisdom influences.

d) The Primitive Eschatological Tradition

Of equal significance to a study of the epistle however is the fact that we here deal with an Alexandrian who was also first and foremost a Jew, imbued with a Jewish eschatological perspective. Charlesworth comments in his recent study of the Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament: "Its brilliance, its highly developed cosmology and eschatology, its comparisons of Christ to the angels and Moses, and especially the Christology that sees Jesus as the Son of God, the forerunner of the wandering people of God and the enthroned high priest, all reflect the world view and developed ideas of early

Judaism. There can be little doubt that the author of Hebrews is a Jew converted to Christianity." (8) Alongside the vertical perspective of the Greek who climbed upwards through Reason to God (8:5) is juxtaposed the horizontal perspective of a Jew who sees the whole of history as a progression towards a final eschatological goal (9:26). No wonder then that there is a certain unresolved tension in the whole! "There is an odd juxtaposition which characterises his writing, the unique synthesis of Platonic and Hebraic world views or more precisely Platonic cosmology and Judaeo-Christian eschatology." (9) Coming at the epistle from this direction, Jesus is one who appears in the fullness of time, and by living out his vocation as the High Priest of humanity in perfect obedience to the intention of God imprinted in his creation, is exalted to the highest honour after a death endured in absolute faith. In this aspect of the whole, resurrection/exaltation are the moments when the highest status is awarded to Jesus who is implicitly a Last Adam, a figure of the son of man of Psalm 8, who is at last "crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death." (Heb.2:9) Indeed the central thesis of this study will be that the author has primarily a Jewish eschatological perspective, claiming as it does that we are here dealing with a theology of Covenant, of the promise of the Old fulfilled at last in the coming of the New, inaugurated in Jesus' blood. As Williamson reminds us, the quotation of Jer.31:31 has no place at all in Philo's scheme of things. (10)

Nonetheless, the titles which we shall go on to examine emerge not merely from one or the other tradition, but are very much a product of the dynamic synthesis that has taken place across cultures in the profound thought and work of the author, and any "awkward tensions" in his presentation of Christ are "the result of his merging these two world views." (11)

Indeed perhaps it is a mistake to attempt to locate the Jesus of Hebrews on a scale of high or low Christology, simply because it is not his status as a pre-existent ideal or adopted Son that is primarily at question. We return to the paraenetic purpose which underlies it. He is working on behalf of a particular flock to persuade them to maintain the Christian confession in the face of trial. Perhaps it is natural then that he turns the perceptions of both world views to good account in the epistle. The subsidiary question of the author's Christological perspective however will arise at certain specific points in the study, and we shall hope to draw some conclusions.

CHAPTER 5 JESUS THE ARCHEGOS AND PRODROMOS.

We move now into a more careful examination of the titles which the author incorporates into the Christology of the epistle, titles which support and foster the Priestly Christology which is his focus, and which also function positively in the paraenesis underlying his work.

The twin titles of "archegos/prodromos" have a significant part to play in the epistle. Indeed, they have their own independent, inspirational value, emerging very much from the creative urgency of the author. He sets before his flock titles which would resonate with their experiences of other leaders, other pioneers of their merging cultures. At the same time, they were titles elsewhere barely touched on in relation to Jesus' relationship with his followers, except in the record of Peter's preaching in Acts. In fact, "prodromos" is never used elsewhere. They stem therefore from his originality.

In Hebrews, "archegos" appears early in the argument at 2:10. There we read, "For it was fitting that he . . . should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through suffering." Then it is used as part of the summarising exhortation at 12:2: " . . . looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith." "Prodromos" is cited at 6:20 in close juxtaposition with the idea of Jesus' priesthood: "We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever." Both titles are used to enable the author to express the way in which Jesus can relate to his own particular flock, and both promote the pursuit of Christian discipleship - to follow and keep on following. At the same time, both function as part of the claim that Jesus is the Priest. It is because Jesus is pioneer and forerunner that he is able

to exercise a priesthood superior to all others. We turn now to a closer examination of the contribution made by the two titles.

a) The Linguistic background

There are various interpretations of "archegos" as originator or author and source in Greek writing. Zeus is "ἀρχηγός φύσεως" (1). It also means chief: "ἀρχηγός ἑρεων" (2). Thus in Philo the patriarchs are called "ἀρχηγέτης". In the Septuagint, the meaning is more clearly leader, and it commonly translates "rô'sh", though its nuances range over eleven Hebrew words. "Rô'sh" is the principal one, giving the idea of command, thus a political or military leader, but also head as of a family: "Let us choose a captain and go back to Egypt." "καὶ εἶπαν ἕτερος τῷ ἑτέρῳ Δώμεν ἀρχηγὸν καὶ ἀποστρέψωμεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον" (Numbers 14:4). Or on the other hand: "These are the heads of their fathers' houses." "καὶ οὗτοι ἀρχηγοὶ οἴκων πατριῶν αὐτῶν" (Exodus 6:14), which phrase occurs commonly in the Chronicler: "These were the heads of their fathers' houses: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah and Jahdiel, mighty warriors, famous men, heads of their fathers' houses." (Chronicles 5:24) Another Hebrew word, "qāsin" meaning the elected charismatic leader in the time of emergency is also rendered "ἀρχηγός", as at Judges 11:6: "And they said to Jephthah, 'Come and be our leader that we may fight with the Ammonites.'" This occurs again at Judges 11:11. (Soggin in his commentary translates "general". (3))

Five times in the Septuagint, "archegos" is used in a more figurative application as the "leader/example", stirring others to follow as at Micah 1:13 and 1 Macc. 9:61 and 10:47. New Testament usage, apart from our author is only to be found in Acts at 3:15 and 5:31, as we have already noted. Here it is certainly figurative. In Peter's preaching, Jesus is "ἀρχηγός τῆς ζωῆς" (Acts 3:15) Both the idea of "leader" and "author" or "source" come into play in the Acts

references. At Acts 5:31, he is "ἀρχηγός και σωτήρ". Both ideas are contained within the nuances of meaning covered by "archegos".

And what of the linguistic background to "prodromos" ? References to "prodromos" in classical Greek literature usually mean "those who hurry on with others following" such as messengers or troops. Athletes too can be "prodromoi" and, in Aristotle, the Northern winds preceding the Etesian winds are "prodromoi". (4) There is also the metaphorical use as "precursor", heralding good things, at various points in the Greek background. Three Septuagint references are to "early figs" at Isaiah 28:4, "early grapes" at Numbers 13:20, and to hornets as "prodromoi" of God's avenging host, at Wisdom 12:8. The only New Testament reference is at Heb.6:20, so the author is alone in utilising a mainly Greek concept to serve his Christology, and it is used in close conjunction with archegos as will be shown.

Such is the background of these twin titles and it seems that the author has deliberately adopted terms with both Greek and Jewish nuances. "Archegos" then has the general idea of "originator, source", but equally of "captain, leader, pioneer". Wilson acknowledges a problem in trying to achieve the right emphasis here. One must, he points out, bear in mind "Johnston's warning against "paraphrases that must speak vividly to a Canadian woodsman"" ! (5) And yet the inspiring chord which "archegos" strikes seems to require us to accommodate such an interpretation. Ideas of "blazing the trail" and "path finding" lend a fervour and immediacy to the writer's Christology answering to the urgency of his pastoral purpose.

The juxtaposition of the two cultures which he bestrides is well served by the "archegos" title. Interpreted as "source, instigator, originator" of salvation and of faith, "archegos" can be said to represent the author's indebtedness to the influence of the Logos/Wisdom traditions.

Interpreted as "pioneer" and "captain", "archegos" also fits in with the Greek cult of the hero who is partly human and partly divine and earns immortality by rendering service to mankind. Heracles was a popular figure in this tradition. He served mankind and died a tragic death, but in death was exalted to divinity. If a view of a pre-existent Christ - the divine Logos - had made it necessary for the Hellenistic world to address the question of the genuinely human birth, then this hero-Christology d'après Heracles may have made it easier to explain to pagan minds reared on such traditions the significance of Christ. W.L.Knox suggests the concept was touched on by our author to make the humanity of Jesus more comprehensible to such minds: "It is the Hellenistic conception of the redeemer who attains to his godhead that made it possible for St.Paul and the writer to the Hebrews, to insist on the absolute humanity of Jesus, tempted at all points like as we are, yet without sin, and preserved for the Church the faith that the victory over sin and death was won, not by a divine epiphany, but by a life of service and suffering unto death, even the death of the cross." (6) Manson takes the same view, drawing it into his thesis of the epistle as part of the world mission theology originating with Stephen: "When the writer gives to the Son of God the title of pioneer - archegos - "Bahnbrecher" of our salvation, there slips in the note of what may be definitely called a Hero-Christology. Jesus is conceived as the leader or protagonist who, going in front of or at the head of, the redeemed host beats down the forces opposed to them and so becomes the founder or inaugurator of their salvation." (7) Montefiore picks up the same nuance and writes: "The word was used of Heracles, and it is probable that against this kind of Hellenistic background, the title of divine hero was ascribed to Jesus." (8)

On the other hand, interpreted as "leader, captain, guide, pioneer", "archegos" equally resonates with that more primitive Jewish strand translating "rô'sh" rooted firmly in Jesus' humanity. Westcott links it with the emphatic use of the personal name of Jesus, "always fixing attention on the Lord's humanity." (9) This is why Greer uses Hebrews as a useful focus for his discussion of the fifth century controversy between Cyril of Alexandria and Antiochene Christology, for titles such as "archegos" hold in equilibrium that "strong double judgement concerning Christ." He writes: "Hebrews would seem congenial to the Antiochene double predication." (10)

Similarly, the title of "prodromos" dovetails neatly with both strands of "archegos" and the double focus which is served. As "source, founder", alongside the high Christological accoutrements of "archegos", Jesus is forerunner on our behalf into the heavenly sanctuary, the means to salvation, who not only inspires but enables and effects. As "pioneer" in the old sense of the American frontier, alongside the other much more human nuances of "archegos", he is the "forerunner" who leads the way for others to follow. On this level, he runs before us a road of self-sacrifice and faith as our example and leader.

Thus if we ask why the writer to the Hebrews uses the concepts of "archegos" and "prodromos", we see that they serve his paraenetic purpose well. Not only do they suggest Jesus to be the model to follow, but they also suggest that he continues to make following possible. It will be useful to examine the double function in more detail here.

b) Archegos/Prodromos: Maintain fidelity to this example

The writer is appealing at one level then to the identification of Jesus with his own flock, to the truth that he is a man like them.

He is "ἄρχὴν" (2:11) with his fellows. Spicq writes: "Le fils et les fils marchent ensemble, associés et solidaires dans la même entreprise, comme un Pasteur et son troupeau; ils forment même et unique groupe de marche." (11) The typological structuring now becomes apparent. The twin titles evoke the memory of Moses and of Joshua, leaders of the people of God to the Promised Land, of whom Christ in his humanity is the type, and they the antitypes. They were leaders, he the leader par excellence, a patterning which we shall find maintained at every level. D'Angelo's study of the letter is a close survey of the Moses material and she writes: "Moses' exemplary function . . . is conformed to the climactic example of Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith . . . Like Moses, sharing the ill treatment of the people of God, he set aside the joy proposed for him to share in the contest proposed for us." (12) The idea of those who, like Moses and Joshua were obedient to God's way leads with powerful rhetoric to the supreme exemplar of obedience, in whom the New and better Covenant has its embodiment.

The example put before the writer's flock then is of one who is the pattern of faithful obedience. The listed people, exemplars of faith in chapter 11 are not simply an added extra to an epistle whose main concern is the proclamation of Christ's priesthood. They actually contribute actively to this focus. At 12:2, Jesus himself is the "pioneer and perfecter of faith", the one who at the climactical moment brings the list to completeness. There is a sense here then of Jesus as the one who as leader can bring the faith of the writer's flock safely to the end of the course simply because he himself has exercised faith obediently. And there is certainly no need to be afraid of acknowledging that Jesus participated in faith as well as being its object, as Graham Hughes suggests some English commentators are ! (13) On the contrary, the way of obedience and trust underpins

the humanity of Jesus and informs and deepens his priestly work. The writer does not shrink from portraying a Jesus who has suffered and been tempted in the same way as anyone else. Indeed he rejoices in this truth as something most valuable to a flock who are flinching and afraid. For he has recognized the value of shared experience as the great fount of compassion. To be able to say, "He knows how you feel" is a vital component in his argument.

So where Jesus is understood as "archegos/prodromos" - "captain, pioneer and forerunner" - it is as a model for Christians who follow him. (14) Wilson catches up this aspect of the Priestly work: "The thought here" - that is, on this side of the focus - "is not so much of looking in hope and expectation of vindication, as of looking to the supreme exemplar, the pioneer . . . the forerunner." (15) Here in the priest who offers himself as victim is the one to whom Christians give their devotion and faith. And here it is clear that he writes to encourage those who are falling away from Christ through fear of suffering and persecution. Hebrews "is designed from beginning to end as a faith-engendering instrument." (16)

c) Archegos/Prodromos: The Saving Efficacy of this example

At the second level, the writer is equally concerned to persuade his flock that if they will only maintain personal obedience to the example of Christ, they themselves will be brought to the promised inheritance and to New Covenantal existence. In this respect, we see the important and intricate interrelationship of these twin titles with the priestly one, the indelible link binding them. For it is to the vocation of Priesthood that the path of the Pioneer leads. It is a way of obedient self-sacrifice which he treads before them as their Forerunner. And this way and this sacrifice are the supreme expression of his priestly action. He is, in fact, a pioneer and

forerunner in the way he executes his priesthood: No priest has ever before him offered anything more than an animal victim, and no other priest has ever expected to be followed into the sanctuary! Hughes expresses this succinctly: "Its significance" - that is, of "pioneer/forerunner" - "lies in its expressing of an idea entirely new, lying altogether outside the Levitical system. The High Priest of Israel did not go into the most holy place as forerunner, but only as representative of the people. He went into a place where none might follow him, entering once a year in the people's stead, not as their pioneer. The glory and privilege of the perfect religion is that Christ as the High priest of our humanity goes nowhere his people cannot follow him." (17)

But there is still another step to be made, a step that takes the author from the level of the argument where Jesus is model and example, to the level at which he is also their actual means to salvation. The writer's resurrection faith is never explicitly outlined, at least until the final benediction at 13:20. He prefers to speak of Christ's exaltation in the terms of Psalm 110. But the fact that Jesus is resurrected is the foundation of the argument here. The saving efficacy of the priest to whom the author is recommending his followers rests in the fact that the suffering and temptation and self-loss, endured by him as pioneer and forerunner, brought him ultimately to the accolade of session at God's right hand, from whence he can exercise his Priesthood effectively and eternally for the sake of his people. The possibility for New Covenantal existence in the pattern of its inaugurator is therefore a real one, resting in a powerful vindication of Jesus' example. The figure of one who never demands more of his followers than he himself was able and prepared to endure has in fact been "brought again from the dead . . . by the blood of the eternal covenant." 13:20.

This vindication of the sacrifice is the hinge point of this level of the argument. Its eternal consequences become the reward of all who will follow and trust Jesus' pioneering example. This allows the author to claim that if only his flock can maintain their allegiance to Christ, that, of itself, will somehow carry them through to eternal redemption. Jesus himself will exert for them all the energies which their inadequacies cannot match.

d) Conclusions

It is interesting to put at this stage, the subsidiary question raised by this examination of the Christology of the epistle, a question I have suggested will be an ongoing one. At what point on the spectrum of Christological dignity does the author seem to place his portrait of Jesus? Where does the intricate interplay of these particular titles with the Priestly one lead him? It seems to me that, in this respect, the theme of his exaltation to the high point of Christological dignity through and after his suffering predominates. The claims for divine Sonship/divine Wisdom which he inherits and elaborates in chapter 1 are only mildly supported by the more Hellenistic strand of the "archegos" title as of "source, originator". Far more significant in this specific context however is the more primitive portrayal of the great pioneer and forerunner in the line of Moses and Joshua, as antitypes to type. It is difficult therefore at this stage of our discussion to maintain the claim of Moffatt and others that it is "his person" - that is, of one who is pre-existent and divine - "which renders his self-sacrifice valid and supreme" in the eyes of the author. (18) On the contrary, these particular titles seem to suggest that it is his exaltation to dignity after his pioneering sacrifice on the cross which validates his continuing efficacy.

As the "archegos" - the captain, pioneer and leader - Jesus is the one who, as a man like us, seeks to grasp hold of what it is to be human and give it its pattern and model. As the "archegos" - source and originator - and as "prodromos", he is the one who sacrifices himself willingly and effectively once and for all, so that God might vindicate the way of self-sacrifice, his way of being human. And as "prodromos", he supersedes the rites of the Old Covenant and brings all people into the trusting relationship with God to which he witnessed, in a way that no Levitical priest ever could.

Thus in the "forerunner" title, the author gathers the impetus for his paraenesis by revealing the Levitical system to be a mere foreshadowing of the Christian climax. Similarly in the inspirational value of the picture of the great pioneer, the urgency of his exhortation is enhanced: "It is somehow by his flesh that he has made the transition from earth to heaven and blazed a trail for us to follow He is there and we are here, he is the historical, individual person who has gone ahead of us so that he may enable us too to be there, like him." (19)

At this stage then, the argument hinges very much on the humanity of Jesus as it responded in perfect obedience to the vocation of priesthood. My claim then is that the "archegos/prodromos" titles in the epistle serve the whole thrust of the over-arching theme of Promise and Fulfilment, of Old Covenant brought to perfection in the New. They set before the writer's people a God who is intent on leading his people to glory, and was always faithful to that purpose in the old dispensation as well as the new. Thus the life, death and exaltation of one who is pioneer/forerunner, "archegos/prodromos", are no new intervention in his world, but rather the final stage in that ongoing purpose, the action of a God who has given man freedom and set him only a little lower than the angels, and who now in Christ

presents to mankind the supreme model by which to help each one become what he was meant to be from the very beginning: "And all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest." (Jer.31:31 and Heb. 8:11.) Furthermore, these twin titles promise those who follow the model, the vindication that Jesus himself received, when he was exalted. If, says the author to his flock, the potential of the pioneer and forerunner flowered triumphantly as he maintained obedience, so too will yours, if only you will keep the faith!

CHAPTER 6 JESUS, THE PERFECTED ONE.

The theme of the perfecting and perfection of Jesus in his personal experience of life and death and exaltation is an important theme for the author, and beside it, incorporated into it and of equal significance is the theme of the perfecting of his followers. Thus once again the Christology serves the paraenetic purpose of the epistle. A number of words are grouped together, all having the same root and centring on the theme of perfection. And, as is the case with the "archegos/prodromos" titles, they are all closely related to the central claim of the writer's Christology, by which Jesus is portrayed as the Priest for his people. His perfecting therefore, is at all times related to his vocation as perfect priest, as will emerge in the following study. We shall ask how the "perfecting" and "perfected" emphasis supports the Priestly theme. And we shall also consider how this particular strand of the epistle functions in the paraenetic purpose.

We find the word "τέλειος" as an adjective at 9:11: "τελειότερα σκηνή", to mean "the more perfect or excellent tabernacle". In its substantive form at 5:14, "τελειών" means those who are mature, full grown or adult as opposed to those who are immature - "νήπιοι". The word, "τελειότης" - "perfection" - at 6:1, describes those who have reached the state of the more intelligent, who are closer to moral and spiritual perfection. The verb "τελειόω" carries with it the sense of "making perfect", of accomplishing, fulfilling, finishing, consummating, and sometimes of consecrating. In this use at 7:19, the Law is said to have made nothing perfect. It cannot perfect the conscience, (9:9) and so cannot perfect those who draw near through it (10:1). But Jesus has perfected them for all time if they draw near through him, (10:14), even as God has perfected Jesus himself, the pioneer of salvation (2:10). In the passive voice, the verb describes those who have been

made perfect, (11:40 and 12:23), and at 5:9 and 7:28, it is Jesus who "has been made perfect for ever", where God is the agent and Jesus the recipient of what God has done in him. At 7:11, we find "τελείως" as consummation, used to show that the Levitical priesthood has not enabled men to be perfect. And finally, at 12:2, we find that unique usage of the word "τελειωτής" as a title for Jesus - the perfecter - a word attested nowhere else, but conjured up by our author for his purpose. Of this, Thayer writes, "One who has in his own person, raised faith to its perfection and so set before us the highest example of faith." (1)

Within these varying uses of the idea, there are therefore, different nuances of interpretation, as we shall discover. But what lies in the background to the idea ? Once again, we have a diversity of opinion amongst scholars, thanks to the fact that the author bestrides the Greek and Jewish cultures.

a) Background to the Theme of Perfection

i) Classical uses:

The idea of completeness and fulfilment certainly appears here. Aristotle used "τέλειος" as complete, with nothing left out", and thence in a vocational sense, as of one who is completely equipped for a task so as to be never better equipped. In Metaphysics 4, he describes it as "not primarily ethical . . . purely formal . . . and may refer to a physician, a flautist, an informer or a thief " ! (2) As we shall see, this definition is a very important one for an understanding of the writer to the Hebrews.

In Plato, the "τέλειος . . ἄνθρωπος" is the man who has attained insight and philosophical knowledge, who has pressed beyond the material world to the better world of spiritual things. (3) This is carried through into Philo's handling of the idea, and indeed no

author of antiquity insists upon perfection as does Philo, who uses it as his criterion of quality and value:

ii) Philo:

Philo uses the adjective "perfect" to demonstrate the ideal, whether he is discussing number - that is, the number seven - heaven, the king, the High Priest, knowledge or whatever. "τελείως" denotes that level of perfection which has reached to a vision of God, the supreme achievement of man, or the ideal of the Israelite. Philo's ideal is for the soul to be perfected by escaping from the body and reaching this vision on a level, no longer of shadows but of true reality, the very image of God, and he envisages a kind of mystic ascent to such a vision. Those who achieve the gradations of the ascent rise to unmediated access to God, and are the "τέλειοι", who are purified of their passions, possess all virtues and live through Reason. Amongst them, he numbers the patriarchs, Aaron, and the Levitical priesthood. Moses on the other hand is an example of a higher level still, of one who is already perfect by nature. Here Philo takes up and develops the idea of the Ideal Sage of the Stoics, the Divine Man of the Pythagoreans, the Saviour of the mysteries, who is the "νόμος ἑμψυχός" - the "incarnate representation of supreme and universal Law." (4) So it is Moses who administers the "perfect legislation of Judaism." It is on Sinai that Moses is said to be "made perfect in the most sacred mysteries" and will lead others up the ascent. (5) The Mosaic institution of the Law is for Philo the most perfect and enduring of all dispensations. In his discussion of Philo, Goodenough is convinced that he has laid down important philosophical foundations on which the Christian writers build. In the writer to the Hebrews, as we have already seen, where these epithets are transposed to the New Dispensation under Jesus, Philo's influence seems to have

been mediated through the Alexandrian culture in which the author worked.

iii) Dead Sea Scrolls:

In this context one who is "perfect" in its Aramaic version refers to one without defect in spirit and body, who totally fulfils God's will and keeps all the rules of the community. To such an ideal of perfect holiness, as interpreted by their Teacher of Righteousness, the community was devoted. And it is striking to note that the Community of the Scrolls thought of its members as "men of the New Covenant"! "As in the New Testament, the phrase "New Covenant" even became part of the idiom of the sect, "men of the Community" and "men of the New Covenant" being employed in their writings as synonyms."

(6) However, the New Covenantal obligation to perfection here was "materially the same as that of the Old, namely perfect obedience to the teachings of Moses and the prophets." (7) It is here of course that the parallel with the epistle breaks down, and indeed the most recent assessment by scholars of the parallels between them seems to be that, although they have some common ideas, of which perfection is one, Hebrews is probably "remote from Qumran". (8) Attridge remarks: "There are no indications in Hebrews of traditions or positions that are peculiar to or distinctive of the Dead Sea Sect." (9)

iv) The Old Testament:

That the author has used for his purposes a Greek text of the Old Testament has been shown by scholarly surveys. (10) There are certain cases in which the epistle's use of Old Testament quotation is clearly based on the LXX version as opposed to the Hebrew. For instance, at 10:5, the Hebrew "ears thou hast dug for me" of Psalm 40:7 is rendered by our author, "a body hast thou prepared for me", in accordance with the LXX text. (11) At times, it is true, the writer

even strays from extant LXX wordings, but Attridge concludes that the very early LXX text which he would have had at his disposal is more than likely to have been different from the fourth century versions available to us. (12)

What then of the Septuagintal use of "perfection"? Here the concept as "perfection and completeness" once again occurs, with slightly varying nuances. It can be defined as "moral blamelessness" at Proverbs 11:3 ; "integrity" of conduct between men at Judges 9:16; "completeness" at Wisdom 6:15, whilst at Jeremiah 2:2, it has the important sense of "wholeness of devotion", where the heart is undivided and wholly obedient to God's will. This is a fundamentally Jewish concept of the central principle of existence, which is to be in a relationship of total obedience to God whereby to know and fear him: "You shall be blameless before the Lord your God" (Deut.8:1) and "Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl.12:13), twin pillars of Judaism. It cannot be doubted that the epistle claims that Jesus fulfils this particular requirement of perfection as one whose heart is undividedly devoted to obedience to the will of God, for it is through the answering of this demand that he inaugurates the New Covenant. Finally at Exodus 12:5, "perfection" is specifically applied to the Passover Lamb which must be without bodily defect or blemish.

There is also a specific Septuagintal cultic formula which includes our concept: "τελείωσεις τὰς χεῖρας", literally "to fill the hands with offerings" and so be ordained as priests. This occurs at Exodus 29:9 and Lev.4:5. Where Exodus 28:41, 1Chronicles 29:5, 2Chronicles 29:31 and Ezekiel 43:26 use the same concept, the Greek verbs vary. It seems that τελείω is used synonymously to them. It is therefore possible to understand the author's use of "τελείωσις" in terms mainly of the cult. Schippers, for instance, implies that the usage nearly always

has cultic overtones. (13) However I would want to accept Peterson's scholarly study of the formula in Hebrews and Perfection, in which he stresses that only the whole explicit formula, the whole syntactical unit, meant "consecrate", and therefore, cultic and ritualistic connotations are not to be assumed when the verb is used alone. In fact, as he shows so clearly, "filling the hands" came to mean the high point of the consecration ceremony, at which the hands of the priest were perfected, or qualified so that the man could act as priest in offering sacrifices to God. (14) At page 45, he therefore concludes "an explicitly technical application of "τελειοῦν" in a cultic sense is a late development." It would be wrong therefore to restrict "τελειοῦν" to a cultic setting. Much more important, and for us in this study crucial, is that the idea of perfection which is here adopted always carries with it the qualification of someone for a specific vocation, and has a formal usage. It relates to a context in which a particular work is carried out. Thus Peterson concludes: "The verb is used here in a formal sense, identifying the perfecting of Jesus with the perfecting of his Messianic work." (15)

v) Conclusion:

The concept of perfection then, borrowing from both Old Testament and Hellenistic worlds in a remarkable alchemy, demonstrates the meticulous care with which our author investigates how it is that Jesus achieves adequacy as the agent of the New Covenant, how it is that he is qualified for a calling which at the heart of the Christology is Priesthood. Commentators have confirmed this conclusion. Even in earlier years, Nairne was saying: "In this group of words, what he chiefly lays stress upon is the simple idea of perfecting, of bringing a life to its particular completion." (16) And Westcott: "Perfection carries with it the conception of Christ's complete preparation for his priestly office." (17)

As Jesus' vocation is to priesthood, our author will studiously show how Jesus is prepared and disciplined into complete adequacy for the task so as to be able to fulfil its offices properly. The priest of the Old Covenant is not adequate - he is but the imperfect shadow of Jesus of the New Covenant, who is adequate. Yet both are real historical figures, not the ideal figures of Philonic allegory.

b) What then is it that qualifies Jesus to be the Perfect Priest ?

As I have already hinted in the survey of influences, the Septuagintal understanding of perfection as obedience to God's will as the characteristic of some one with an undivided heart, emerges at many points in an examination of the epistle. That Jesus learned to align himself with the purposes of God as he intended for man in creation (and here there is more than a hint of a Last Adam Christology), and that he maintained that alignment through severe testing, demonstrated his adequacy: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? " (9:14) The Priest's task is to enable others to stand in right relationship with God and approach him with confidence. And Jesus himself has consistently remained in right relationship with God, and is thereby qualified for his role. In 5:7f., that truth is pointed out clearly: "He learned obedience through what he suffered, and being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation . . ." His qualification was through the learning of complete dependence on God. Westcott puts it succinctly: "He had to learn the absolute dependence of humanity upon God in the fullness of personal communion with him." (18) We cannot doubt the significance of the Jewish inheritance here.

c) How is he qualified ?

Albeit stating the obvious, we assert first that it is God who perfects him. The importance of the section at 5:5f. cannot be overestimated. Jesus does not appoint himself or exalt himself, but is locked into God's will: "Being designated by God a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek." (5:9) This involves for him a discipline of suffering to the limits of human endurance. He is perfected, we are expressly told at 2:10, "through suffering", in order to be fully identified with mankind. There is no other way by which he can truly sympathise. This suffering goes to the limit because it includes death, and death on a cross, whose "shame" (12:2) he willingly undertakes. And it includes the temptations to which every human is susceptible under the force of such suffering, the temptation especially of succumbing to it and losing a hold on his vocation. "For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who, in every respect, has been tempted as we are . . . " (4:15) It includes, in other words, the temptation to disobey, to draw back from alignment with God's will, from sheer human fear, whose pinnacle must particularly have been Gethsemane. This is poignantly captured at 5:7. Here I would agree with Cullmann (19) in the face of Moffatt, F.F.Bruce, Wilson, including the RSV. I would argue that "ἀπὸ τῆς ἐνλαβείας" must surely mean his real fear of death which he then conquered, as opposed to his "godly reverence". I do not think "an awe . . . devoid of anything like nervous fear" (20) does justice to the point the writer is making, although the sense of reverence before God may be part of it. Bauer certainly defines it in those terms with "piety " uppermost, but points out the diversity of opinion on this interpretation. He cites Harnack and Strathmann as amongst those who render it "fear", or "anguish", and acknowledges their point of view to be well attested lexicographically, e.g. Plutarch, Fab.1:2;

Herodian 5:2:2; Wisdom of Solomon 17:8; Philo Leg.All. 3:113; Virtues 24; Josephus, Ant. 11:239; and 12:255. (21)

It seems to me that the whole tenor of the writer's theme demands the sense that Jesus was afraid like any of us, and that he was tempted to disobey. The phrase at 5:9 is not the mere "emathen - epathen" of the Greek ethical philosophers, but includes the lesson of obedience under the acute fear of an imminent death. His sufferings are in fact the cost of his obedience. Furthermore, the writer seems to imply that God exerts such a discipline on Christ, as any father might of any son. Suffering is God's way of qualifying him in obedience.

Indeed, without that experience, how could his humanity have achieved anything like that completeness which we have recognized as a significant requirement for Priesthood? At 2:17, that particular sequence of thought is fully and literally expressed for us: "Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect so that he might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the service of God . . . ". Once again the writer reveals Jesus' compassion as springing out of shared experience.

d) What then is the significance of "without sin" ?

Nowhere is sinlessness predicated for perfection in the various sources of definition and it is certainly not synonymous with it. We must consider the implications of that in this text, for we quickly stumble against a problem contained therein. At 4:15, having outlined the total identification of Jesus with mankind, our writer adds, "yet without sinning". It is as though, having carefully asserted Jesus' humanity in its fullness, the writer withdraws some of it at the last, and thereby poses a problem for the generations after. For it does seem that there is a modification of his humanity if he must needs be

intrinsically sinless. The question, however, hinges on the interpretation of those two words. What precisely does he mean by them and how do they fit in with his purposes in utilising the "τελείως" word group ?

The traditional approach maintains that the one who is equipped to make priestly satisfaction for all men is qualified to that unique task by being, in this one respect, different from the rest of mankind. Here, once again, commentators wish to introduce the subsidiary question of Jesus' status for the writer. Westcott writes, "Christ assumed humanity, though not with sinful promptings from within." (22) In this way then, he is "separated" from sinners (7:26). Perhaps Philonic influences are after all in the background here. Certainly the humanity of Philo's high Priest is suspended whilst he is discharging his duties (23) and he is almost equated with the divine Logos which has no staining contact with ordinary mortals at all. He is certainly sinless and Sowers asserts a link thus: "By being sinless, Christ fulfils not a condition of the priesthood of the O.T. but of the priesthood . . . according to Philo." (24) However I do not believe this argument holds water, when we consider how far removed from the Philonic high priest is Jesus as our writer portrays him, steeped in the "staining contact" of his ministry! We cannot condone an interpretation which would turn Jesus into a docetic figure who is not quite fully human. Or has "χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας" after all cultic overtones? Is it that Jesus who is to be victim as well as Priest in the offering of himself must be unblemished even as the lambs, bulls or goats for sacrificial slaughter as outlined in the Levitical code? This could account for 7:26 and the eloquent triad of adjectives found there: "holy, guileless, undefiled". Certainly they suggest that Jesus satisfied all the requirements for ritual purity demanded of the high priest and outlined in Leviticus 21: "Say to Aaron, None of your

descendents throughout their generations who has a blemish may approach to offer the bread of his God." (Lev.21:17)

Another way of answering the problem is to assert a development in Jesus which eventually arrives at a victory over sin, through a whole process of temptation, suffering, crucifixion and exaltation. This is Peterson's recent conclusion: "When Jesus is described as "perfected for ever" then the picture is not that of a heavenly being, completely unacquainted with human weakness, but of one who proved himself in the events of his human experience "devout, guileless, undefiled" and who is now "raised high above the heavens" and in that sense "separated from sinners". Once again, the immediate context (7:26f.) suggests that our writer meant by the perfecting of Christ, his proving in temptation, his death as a sacrifice for sins, and his heavenly exaltation." (25) The perfect tense at 7:28 - "He has been made perfect" - suggests that a whole process is behind him at last and he is now qualified. I do not think however, that Peterson has actually satisfactorily maintained this particular conclusion. At the very last, he falls back into a qualifying note. Jesus, he claims, is after all different from us because he has the freedom not to sin, which is why he could progress through experience towards victory over it. He goes on to suggest that because we have no such freedom, this puts "Christ and his people into different categories as Redeemer and redeemed . . . in the matter of overcoming sin." (26) Herein lies the flaw in his argument. He wants to avoid docetism but he hedges round the issue when he writes: "Such an emphasis on the uniqueness of Christ's person and work must not be exaggerated to the point of docetism, since that is plainly contrary to the author's presentation. On the other hand, Christ's likeness to us is certainly qualified when the judgement "without sin" is passed on his life." (27)

The real answer to the question seems on the contrary to lie in the definition of sin as the writer is using it here. My claim is that the epistle is largely concerned with sin as apostasy by which the sinner will lose a grasp on the promise of God's future intention for him, and, losing trust, give up faith. In this interpretation, Jesus can be both perfected though suffering and temptation, and yet remain always "without sin" because he never succumbs to the temptation to such apostasy. That is, under the same definition, he never loses his trust in the promise of God's future intention for him. Furthermore, and against Peterson, there is no need at all in this respect to qualify his likeness to us, no need at all here to include the question of his status before God. Thus at 4:15, the reference to "yet without sinning" is most specifically connected with the over-arching paraenetic concern of the writer to persuade his flock to keep from apostasy.

Under this definition of sin, it is therefore perfectly possible to maintain that Jesus did not sin and never sinned, whilst maintaining with Peterson, on the other that he developed in his capacity as Priest, and that he grew to the vocation through a process of perfecting.

e) The Idea of Process in the Text

In a theology based on the Old Covenant promise and the fulfilment of promise in the New Covenant, via the supersession of the old order, it seems to me that there is clearly the assumption that God's creation contains the potential to develop to its fullness, to achieve completeness out of incompleteness. The very use of the word group in which we are interested suggests it, as we have already seen. Indeed, the eschatological dimension in the epistle requires it. The assumption of a divine plan for salvation whereby "it is fitting" that

God should act in certain ways to bring all people to their proper inheritance requires it. The idea of pilgrimage towards a goal, prefigured in the wilderness journey of the Exodus account, including the concept of the pioneer who leads, the forerunner who goes ahead on the path, requires it. As "τελειωτής", he has reached the goal, but as archegos/prodromos, he is on a path. That pathway is one of obedience leading to his own perfecting, as has been discussed previously.

Given then, that there is a clear idea of development in the epistle, it is quite plausible that a development occurs in Jesus himself. There is in the text a clear portrayal of struggle and exertion, of extreme trial, which forms the background to the development purposed by God to make the priest perfect.

"Emathen/epathen" - "He learned through what he suffered" ! (5:8) It is a clear and positive statement. We cannot ignore it. "Wherever there is a vocation, growth and process are inevitable." (28) And T.H.Robinson has expressed this with all the attraction of simplicity: "We can speak of a perfect baby, but we cannot think of a baby as being the final form which a human being is intended to take." (29)

As soon as we accept the idea of development, we can at last adequately fit all the "becoming" words used by our author into the overall picture of the Christology: "He learned obedience"; "having been made perfect"; "becoming the source of eternal salvation" . . . The perfecting was the process by which he was equipped fully and properly for the "art of saving". (30) The whole idea of pilgrimage, of archegos/prodromos, of becoming, underpins the Christology. The riddle of "without sin" is therefore no riddle at all but is meant to convey the sense that he alone of all men has managed to resist the temptation to apostasy, but that the possibility of resisting has been open to all men from the creation, and is now open to the writer's flock in particular. In this way, Jesus is not any different - he has

no advantages of status and his development belongs in a learning process by which he gradually faces up to what it is to be fully human as God intended, and succeeds! I like Peake's simple exposition of 4:15. It has the ring of truth: " . . . without sin may mean that unlike us, Christ had no sin in himself. . . But perhaps it is better to regard the words as indicating the result of the temptation. It never issued in sin." (31) Jesus therefore succeeds because he manages to resist the temptation to disobey and give up, which was perhaps at its worst in Gethsemane. We have already maintained that his "εὐλαβεία" must be rendered "anguish" rather than "godly fear". So in that worst temptation of all - the temptation to give it all up - when he is really afraid as a man would be afraid of imminent death - then his prayer is answered and he is able to maintain obedience: "He was heard for his "eulabeia"." (5:7) The theme of obedient faith under the worst temptation anyone can undergo is therefore the key to the problem of "χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας".

f) When then does our author consider Jesus to have been perfected ?

Having now explored the "τελείωσις" word group and all its implications, we could have phrased this question: when does our author consider Jesus to have been made adequate for his priestly vocation ? When does he become the perfect Priest ?

It seems to me that the moment of perfect adequacy must be the consummation of temptation and endurance, the moment when his will was ultimately aligned with God's in perfect obedience, that is, in the death on the cross. It is the death that finally consummates the process of making perfect. Commentators over the years have arrived at this conclusion, if from different directions. The exaltation, the acknowledgement and the vindication follow, and then he is "separated from sinners" (which has nothing to do with sinlessness!). But the

death makes that possible, even as Peterson argued. I like the eloquence of the older commentators here. This is A.B. Bruce: "In obedience and by obedience even unto death . . . death being the final stage in his training . . . the great priestly act, the fact-basis of the whole doctrine of Christ's priesthood." (32) And this, Nairne: "We may be sure that the author of this epistle would bid us look for that supreme moment of earthly honour in the quite supreme moment of earthly shame, weakness, failure, and he would hardly be shocked at the suggestion . . . that the moment was reached in the cry, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani*."" (33)

Finally then, we must address the question of 12:2. Jesus is perfected and Perfecter. How is the concept of Jesus' perfection related to the specific paraenetic purpose of the epistle ?

g) How can the fact that he is perfect perfect the believer ?

One answer to this question lies in the sacrificial worth of the shed blood and this answer will be discussed at a later stage. But here we turn once again to the theme of obedience. In our examination of the twin concepts of "archegos/prodromos" we have already suggested that the path of the pioneer and forerunner, a path which led to death, was a path of faithful obedience, to which the reader can respond as to a model, example and inspiration. Moreover, we have claimed that the sin from which the author desperately seeks to protect his flock is that of apostasy. Thus he bids them look to this model and to pattern their own obedience on the pattern of his. In this way they will themselves resist apostasy, for even as Jesus has shown them that man can live as God intended in creation, that now becomes a possibility open to them if and as they maintain faith in him. They can themselves be "*ἀρχαί*". To talk about his "perfecting" them means that he thereby enables them to be in a proper relationship

of trusting hope in God which will give them the strength personally to resist apostasy: "God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline ?" (12:7)

We have claimed that the difference between Redeemer and redeemed did not rest in the fact that Jesus had the freedom not to sin in a way different from us, as Peterson argues. We have claimed that the possibility not to sin is open to all who will follow Jesus. And yet there is a difference, and it seems to lie in the fact, as our writer points it out, that Jesus' obedience unto death was not only complete, but resulted in vindication. Because the author believes God to have acted in power and exalted Jesus, the one who is model therefore becomes means also. The one whose vocation has been confirmed in this way is the priest par excellence whose saving work can be relied upon for ever (7:28). And this truth seems to lie at the heart of the writer's exhortation to his flock to maintain assurance, since they believe that God has vindicated him. The priest's work has been acknowledged by God. So there is the opportunity of full confidence before God: "Since then we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession." (4:14)

The fuller implications of the priestly work will be discussed later. But the "τελείωσις" theme works within the paraenetic thrust of the epistle because it enables the author to show how the one who is perfect is also able to make perfect. Jesus bears in himself the pattern for obedience and the promise of triumph.

h) Conclusion

The writer uses the concept of perfecting both of Christ and of his followers in a formal way, that is, as a preparing for adequacy of vocation. Christ's vocation is a priestly one and he is portrayed as perfected through a process by which fulfilment is reached in the sacrifice on the cross. During the process, temptation is at its most severe, and only the complete maintenance of obedience can answer to it. This, Jesus has achieved, and even so is portrayed as the one who, par excellence, offers himself in contrast to those priests of the old dispensation who offered sacrifices only imperfectly. Here we see the typological structure of the epistle once more in play. Jesus, the inaugurator of the possibilities of a New Covenantal existence consummates the work of the priests of the old dispensation.

Thus, through his use of the theme of perfection, the writer maintains the theology of Covenant which overarches his Christology, and successfully incorporates a LXX understanding of one whose heart is undividedly obedient to God's will with a classical understanding of one who is perfectly equipped for a specific task.

CHAPTER 7 JESUS THE SON.

Of all the titles in the letter to the Hebrews, the title "Son" at times appears to have at least as much significance as the title "Priest", so much so that some commentators have ascribed to it an equal importance in the Christology, claiming not that it supports the theme of Priest, but rather that the priestly theme underpins a Christology which is all about Sonship. My claim will be that it is the other way round, and that this albeit vital strand is subordinated to the Priestly Christology. Furthermore, this title will also be shown to function in the paraenetic purpose of the epistle.

a) Background Ideas

If we ask what ideas lie in the background to the use of Son in the epistle, we are once more plunged into the Alexandrian background of the writer and into his creative synthesis of Hellenism and Judaism. The blend of traditions is never more clear than in his understanding of Jesus as Son - "υἱός".

i) The Classical World

The idea of divine sonship was certainly not uncommon in the pagan world all around him. It was a familiar title for the emperor in the Graeco-Roman world. Augustus was called "θεοῦ υἱός" in inscriptions and equally frequently, "Divi filius" : "ὀμνύμι καίσαρα Αὐτοκράτορα θεοῦ υἱόν". (1) This usage went back to the Ptolemies who claimed the title from 331 BC on. (2)

Furthermore, in the Hellenistic environment, it was not only rulers who could thus be classified. The title became attached to historical personalities whose charisma had been particularly potent. Legends of divine origin sprang up around Pythagoras and Plato. (3) And even wonder-workers and prophets or those who possessed some kind

of divine power were called "θεῖον ἄνδρες", such as Apollonius of Tyana described by Philostratus, and Alexander of Abonoteichus described by Lucian. (4) This must have been fostered by the classical use of "υἱός" for sons of Zeus and other gods from Homer on. (5) Heracles and Dionysus are particularly interesting figures in classical mythology as sons of Zeus by mortal mothers, and especially Heracles, who lived the life of a mortal and only received his full divine honours at death. The figure is particularly striking for us, linked as we have seen already with ideas in the background to "archegos/prodromos" whereby the divine captain and hero was shown to serve the "hero Christology" which may have helped to mediate the significance of Christ to pagan minds. (6) There may also be a background nuance from such a legend even in the use of the title "υἱός".

ii) The Hebrew World

Turning to this aspect of the writer's background, we might have expected that the title "Son of God" would have been rarely used in the heavily monotheistic atmosphere of Judaism. And yet once we begin to delve deeper, there is a surprising quantity of evidence, implying that "Son of God" was not merely a Hellenistic import.

Certainly angels were sometimes called "υἱοὶ θεοῦ" in the LXX, for example at Psalm 28:1 and Psalm 88:7. Israel itself, moreover, was understood to be a first-born son, grounded in the Law. Hosea 11:1 and Exodus 4:22 bear this out: "When Israel was a child, I loved him and out of Egypt I called my son." (Hosea 11:1) "Thus says the Lord, "Israel is my first-born son." " (Exodus 4:22) And at Deut.14:1, the Israelites as a whole are called sons of God. Indeed, side by side with this, the king particularly was given the title, a usage that Israel must have copied from her near-Eastern neighbours. The enthronement Psalms such as LXX Psalm 88:27ff. and 2:7 bear this out: "You are my Son. Today I have begotten you." (Psalm 2:7) These psalms

clearly acknowledged the Davidic dynasty as having divine legitimation, and influenced the course of Messianic hopes. The Hebrew word translated "υἱός" in the Greek clearly denoted a personal status based in the family relationship but adoption conferred equal rights on one who did not share the blood tie. G.Fohrer suggests that the words at Psalm 2:7 may have been understood as such an adoption formula here used by Yahweh of the king. This must surely be a significant Jewish usage lying in the background for our author who actually incorporated it into his catena of texts at chapter 1. It had clearly been applied to the transfiguration at Luke 9:35, and to the resurrection at Acts 13:35f.: "This he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second psalm . . . " Psalm 2 then seems to have been part of the early church's kerygma. The other Old Testament text which our author also used, calling the king "Son", is at 2 Sam.7:14, wherein Nathan the prophet promises to David that Solomon will be incorporated into the divine purposes: "I will be his father and he shall be my son." This reference is only otherwise used at Qumran in 4Q Flor.1:10-13. But both references in chapter one are used to make the point that the Son of the Prologue is the fulfilment of the Davidic promise.

Equally important for our study is the Jewish idea of sonship in itself, containing as it does the inherent assumption that the good son is the one who is naturally submissive and obedient to his parents. G.Fohrer cites numerous examples in Proverbs. (7) But Deut.32 underlines this vital idea with regard to the people's relationship to Yahweh. The children of Israel who are perverse and unfaithful (32:5ff. and 18-20) come no longer under Yahweh's fatherhood, although at 32:43, the LXX text, as distinct from the Hebrew text, once more calls them sons of God. And at Isaiah 1:2 and Jeremiah 3:17-20, once again the idea of obedience and righteousness lies in the background

to the idea: "I thought how I would set you among my sons . . . Surely as a faithless wife leaves her husband so have you been faithless to me, O house of Israel." (Jer.3:19-20) The same idea appears at Judith 9:4 and 13, Wisdom 2:18 and 19, and Wisdom 5:5 and 12:21. This ethical sense of sonship whereby the devout are in a special sense sons of God (8) must have strong implications for our study as we shall discuss later. The Book of Tobit for instance illustrates God's providential care for the righteous who act faithfully in obedience to the Law. But taking a broader view of the Old Testament texts, this idea of sonship seems to have belonged within the wholeness of the Jewish sense of election as a chosen people within the Covenant, whereby the corresponding obligation was obedience. Cullmann expresses this clearly and carefully: "The O.T. and Jewish concept of the Son of God is essentially characterised not by the gift of a particular power, nor by a substantial relationship with God by virtue of divine conception, but by the idea of election to participation in divine work through the execution of a particular commission and by the idea of strict obedience to the God who elects." (9) Since my claim is that the letter to the Hebrews is very much centred on a theology of Covenant, and of Jesus' perfect fulfilment of the New Covenant obligation of obedience, I believe that Jewish ideas of sonship are very much a part of the author's intention when he entitles Jesus "Son".

iii) The Wisdom Tradition

Another important background influence on the author here is the Wisdom myth, as has already been suggested in chapter four. In chapter one of the epistle, the author picks up and adapts the terminology previously attributed to the divine and, incidentally, female personification of Wisdom, in order to supplement his definition of the Logos in terms of the Son: "But in these last days,

he has spoken to us by a Son." (1:2) From this starting point and this allusion to the Greek Logos with which as an Alexandrian we have already claimed he was familiar, he moves swiftly into an eloquent exposition of the Son's characteristics in terms precisely extracted from the earlier description of the Divine Wisdom: ". . . a Son . . . whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power." (1:2 and 3) And by this means he facilitates the claim for Christ's cosmic significance.

The Wisdom tradition's concept of Wisdom is of one who is pre-existent with God and sent from God to earth, mediating the divine/human relationship: "And with thee is Wisdom who is familiar with thy works and was present at the making of the world by thee . . . send her forth from the holy heavens and from the glorious throne bid her come down . . ." (Wisdom 9:9ff. but worked out through Wisdom 7:1 - 9-18). This figure was no mere attribute of God, "but was a way of speaking about Yahweh acting toward and in his creation." (10) C.K.Barrett has traced this rich seam of thought back out of the Judaistic world to beliefs in the goddess Isis, and to the Stoic conception of the Logos as the pervading power of the material order, "itself divine and the only god the Stoics recognized." (11) Already here at circa 1st. century BC. and much before our author, we meet a writer whose concern is to mediate the Hellenistic thought world to the Judaistic faith. And when we come across descriptions such as Wisdom, the "effulgence from everlasting light" and the "unspotted mirror of the working of God", an "image of his goodness", we are brought face to face with what must surely have formed clear foundations for our author's work, with especial reference to chapter 1. Yet let us merely note at this stage Dunn's important conclusion

that the author of Wisdom had "not the slightest thought of Wisdom as an independent divine being, and the wisdom of which he speaks is always the wisdom of Yahweh." (12)

iv) Philo

Philo, of course, had also come under the influence of such Jewish speculations about Wisdom, and Philo is another important Alexandrian Jewish thinker. His Logos doctrine - "ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγος" -springs from the synthesis of Stoic and Platonic worlds and Wisdom speculation: "To his Word, his chief messenger, highest in age and honour, the Father of all has given the special prerogative, to stand on the border and separate the creature from the Creator. This same word both pleads with the Immortal as suppliant for afflicted mortality, and acts as ambassador of the ruler to the subject . . . He glories in this prerogative and proudly describes it in these words, "and I stood between the Lord and you", that is neither uncreated as God, nor created as you, but midway between the two extremes, as surety to both sides." (13) So Philo's Logos plays the role of archangel, mediator, envoy and messenger of God, but - and this is especially significant for our study - Philo also sees in him the image and organ of God (14); the first-born Son (15) who creates and sustains and orders the world (16); the sinless mediator (17). Dey has carefully noted the "considerable fluidity between Logos, Sophia, angel, anthropos, and Son, as well as consciously wrought identifications between them." (18) Dunn calls it "a multifarious presentation of the Logos." (19) This leads to an important distinction which Dey points to in Philo, between levels of status: Status 1: God as universal mind, "Nous" and never "Logos"; Status 2: man according to the image of God, the heavenly ideal man who can be "Logos"; Status 3: mortal man who is composed of body and soul and senses, who is only "son" of the first-born Logos, where Logos

represents the whole intermediary world of interchangeable titles such as we have noted above. By this formulation, we can now see that the title of Son bears a double implication, for there are different levels of Sonship too. There are sons of God who belong in status 2 because they live in natural knowledge of God such as Isaac and Moses, and there are sons of the first-born Logos who belong in status 3 because they have to grow into their knowledge, such as Abraham. Dey has carefully exposed these levels in his study of Philo. (20) Thus the title Son of God in Philo is an exalted and involved concept and belongs within that fluidity of definition of his Logos as one of the ways with Sophia, angel, anthropos and priest, by which God's "rational energy" reaches into the world: "God himself insofar as he may be known by man." (21) In other words, all these concepts are metaphorical rather than bearing their own individual existence, though it is easy to see how they rapidly took on an existence of their own as speculation grew.

In summary then, it becomes clear, from the Alexandrian terminology which he has actually used in relation to "Son", that the influence of the Alexandrian Logos/Wisdom synthesis is important in the context of this title. The Philonic Logos is the instrument through which the world was made (for example, de Cher. 35:1:16) as is the Son in Hebrews 1:2. (Indeed, the implicit Logos doctrine of 1:2 becomes explicit at 11:3). The word "ἀπαύγασμα" at 1:3 is characteristically Alexandrian and used at Wisdom 7:25 and in Philo. The "χαρακτήρ" at 1:3 was used from Herodotus on in the Hellenistic world to imply the distinguishing features of a person, and Philo employed it to describe the "spirit" - "καὶ χαρακτήρα θείας δυνάμεως" - in Quod. Ded. Pot. Insid 23. The cosmological speculations of the Alexandrian culture were therefore picked up by the writer of the epistle and reinterpreted through the event of Christ. Montefiore

finds the "coincidence of usage remarkable" (22) and marshalls the evidence very efficiently: Logos =first-born Son (Quod Deus 31); image of God (de Con. Ling. 97); sun's ray (de Somn.1:239); agent in creation (de Spec.Leg.1:81). Wisdom = pre-existent figure with God before creation (Proverbs 8:30); by whom the foundations of the world were laid (Proverbs 3:19); sustainer and governor (Wisdom 8:1); reflection of eternal light and an unspotted mirror, image of his goodness (Wisdom 7:26).

Given such evidence, we can certainly locate the author firmly inside the Alexandrian synthesis of Logos/Wisdom (Hellenistic/Jewish) doctrines, with a glance at Philo. We must however constantly bear in mind that the Son title has been transformed by interplay with other equally important influences into something which is uniquely the invention of the author.

v) The Early Christian Traditions about Jesus

The early Christian tradition has also been traced in the Prologue in what seem to have been early Christological formulae, much as we find in Philippians 2, Colossians 1 and 1 Timothy 3:16. Montefiore points to a mainstream New Testament Christology, since these are all "written with an assurance which suggests that they contain commonly accepted beliefs." (23) Certainly there seems to have been an early general agreement that Psalm 110 could be applied to Jesus as an early formula. C.H.Dodd has suggested it was a fundamental text in the kerygma (24), and Sowers suggests it possibly lay side by side with Psalm 8 in some early catena consulted by Paul and Peter as well. (25) The use of Psalm 110 will be discussed at some length later.

We ask finally if it is possible that our author has picked up a tradition that goes right back to Jesus' own consciousness of Sonship. Certainly the gospels bear some witness to such a possibility, and Cullmann has explored it in Christology of the New

Testament stressing Jesus' own concept as one of obedience resting very much on the Old Testament view of sonship. (See above and (26)) The tradition does seem to have testified to Jesus' sense of intimate filial relationship: his use of "Abba" in the gospels; the parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard (Matthew 21:33ff. = Mark 12:6); Matthew 27:43; Matthew 28:19; Mark 13:32; the so-called Johannine verse of Matthew 11:27 = Luke 10:22 and many references in John's gospel, although the Johannine evidence must be handled as a developed rather than an original tradition. However, there is enough evidence to point to a tradition well known by our author of a remembered figure of a particular character, a character whose style of teaching was often in parables akin to Wisdom forms and may have inspired the application of the Wisdom myth to him initially (27). Dunn writes: "Our evidence is such that we are able to say, again with confidence, that Jesus understood and expressed his relationship to God in terms of *sonship*." (28)

vi) The Gnostic Redeemer Myth

One final possible background influence on the writer which has been suggested is the so-called Redeemer myth, of the redeemed Redeemer who leads his people back to the heights from which he came. Hamerton-Kelly writes of the author using the myth creatively (29), and Koester traces in the hymnic formulations of chapter 1 the poetic drama of incarnation, humiliation and exaltation. (30) But it is E.Käsemann who made the fullest exegesis of the idea in The Wandering People of God: "With this portrayal of the way of Christ, Hebrews 1 falls within the context of a broadly pervasive scheme . . . which in respect of its context is to be described as the scheme of the Gnostic anthropos doctrine." (31) For Käsemann, "ἐξ ἑνός" at 2:11 actually implies the heavenly pre-existence of all souls with God, and the

whole of the passage concerning the archeos at 2:10ff. is read through the prism of the Redeemer myth.

However with the benefit of more recent scholarship, we can safely dismiss this view of chapter one. Scholars have refuted the idea of such a myth as lying in the background to any of the New Testament canon, turning the theory on its head by asserting that any such concept was more likely to have grown from New Testament interpretation. The earliest Gnostic Redeemers, Simon and Menander, may have been 1st.century figures, but the ideology built around them is probably later: "All the indications are that it was a post-Christian (2nd.century) development using Christian beliefs about Jesus as one of its building blocks." (32) To do justice to Käsemann, he does ground his thesis in the reality of the historical Jesus, as a counter-balance to the "mythical fantasy" which he constantly discerns (33), and suggests that the priestly Christology forms the necessary boundaries. Nonetheless, we can at this stage refute this particular suggestion as an influence on the author to the Hebrews and his use of the Son title.

In summary then, we can see that the use of "υἱός" in the epistle emerges if not from this, yet from a veritable vista of sources, all of which must be properly addressed. We cannot concentrate on one at the cost of another.

b) The Function of the Title "Son" in the Epistle:

- i) Is this an ontological title ? Does the author claim for Jesus the substance and nature of God ?

Many scholars and commentators think the author to the Hebrews is making clear metaphysical assertions. For example, Westcott, writing at the end of the nineteenth century found it obvious in all the references to Son. The "ἐν υἱῷ" of 1:2, with the lack of article, he

finds to be compelling evidence, particularly as it contrasts with "ἐν τοῖς προφήταις" at 1:1. This contrast between a definite group of people and one who is Son points us, he argues, to the specific nature rather than the personality: "God spoke to us in one who has this character - that he is Son." (34) For Westcott, the use of different tenses in the Prologue is also noteworthy, suggesting the same concern: "The participles, "being", "bearing", describe the absolute and not simply the present essence and action of the Son. The "ὢν" in particular guards against the idea of mere "adoption" in the Sonship and affirms the permanence of the divine essence of the Son during his historic work. (35).

Spicq takes much the same line: "C'est le propre Fils de Dieu . . . Celle désignation, si fortement mise en lumière dès la première phrase du Prologue, est le fondement de toute la Christologie de Hébreux." (36) Snell writes: "It is not the writer's aim to describe how our Lord is Son of God; this is taken for granted. . . ." (37) These are a representative section of scholars only, but they show that this position is taken up widely, and the title of "Son" often contrasted with the use of "Jesus", where the one marks out his divine nature and the other his complete humanity. In this respect, 4:14 is seen as the key characteristic affirmation of the Christology of the epistle: "Jesus, the Son of God." This leads many scholars into a discussion of the writer's concept of the work of Christ as including dominion over all things ("heir"), as well as creation and providential care, but directly alongside intercession and mediation. In other words, those who claim a divine essence make larger claims about his work. Westcott meticulously analyses these different tasks allotted to the Son and writes, "What he does flows from what he is" (38), succinctly making the point.

Following through this understanding of the claims of the writer can lead us into an interpretation of the text as of a "katabasis/anabasis" Christology, whereby Christ the pre-existent one comes down from glory to incarnation and humiliation and thence returns to exaltation, glorious leader of those who believe. In this sort of context, it is easy to see how the story of Heracles might somewhere have stirred our author. Longenecker is one scholar who defends the katabasis/anabasis principle, citing Hebrews as an example of it (39). Indeed, many commentators ranging over the years, whilst not specifying katabasis/anabasis, have assumed it as part of their interpretation of Son as implying pre-existence and incarnation. (40) I leave it to A.B.Bruce to represent them: "For the Son of God it was a descent to be made even a little lower than angels by becoming man, partaker of flesh and blood." (41)

However, there are other equally valid ways of approaching the title "υἱός", and they are ways which undermine such clear conclusions and demand that we once again put the question of the status of Jesus as Hebrews understands it.

ii) Is this an adoptionist formula corresponding to the ascription of divine Sonship to the king ?

As we have already noted, the Jewish inheritance of the writer contained a view of the monarch as Son of God with divine authorisation, under divine election. The Psalm text at 1:5, namely Psalm 2:7, probably comes from such an enthronement of a Davidic king and may have been an ancient adoption formula. Is it then possible to argue a case for Son of God in Hebrews along adoptionist lines, given some of the strong tendencies in that direction suggested by vocabulary such as "appointed" at 1:2, "having become" at 1:4, "he learned" at 5:8 etc.? Such a case would certainly fit with the

evidence already gathered that his exaltation comes only at and after his accomplishment of suffering and death. (42)

In the present day, G.W.Buchanan has put forward a particularly idiosyncratic case in his commentary. He locates the epistle as directed to a Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem and as a Christian midrash on Psalm 110, and this interpretation allows him to understand Sonship as of a royal figure purified of his own sins as well as those of others, and exalted to the throne. It negates the view that Jesus was of the same substance with the Father and firmly points at an adoption formula. The "my" at 1:5a, he renders "to me" and continues, "The relationship of Jesus to God was certainly not understood by the author of Hebrews to be a physical relationship, whatever translation be accepted." (43) Furthermore it allows him to understand both Son of God and Son of Man at 2:6 as different formulations of the same concept of an all-powerful king, in the likeness of the Maccabean king-priest who ruled in Jerusalem in the Maccabean period. It seems to me however that Buchanan has forced the wide-ranging spectrum of different cultural ideas which we have already discussed through one particular idiosyncratic prism, picking out Son language which suits his argument (albeit a strand which must be included), and ignoring an enormous body of other material, such as the functions of intercession and expiation of the High Priest title and the theme of the inauguration of the New Covenant. Attridge dismisses Buchanan's case firmly: "The attempt by Buchanan to derive the High-Priestly Christology of Hebrews from Maccabean ideology in which the figure of the Son of Man is alleged, quite without evidence, to have played a part is much too facile." (44)

iii) Is "Son" to be located in an implicit Last Adam typology ?

This claim centres on the Old Testament idea of true Sonship stemming out of obedience and righteousness, as a relationship to the

Father to which all people must subscribe, thereby becoming themselves "sons" as they were meant to be. It claims Jesus is representative man, and links closely with much that we have been able to argue from the "archegos/prodromos" titles in the epistle, and with the view of Jesus as one who is brought to perfection in obedience to his vocation as priest. If we can claim it at all, it will therefore be tempting to do so.

Much hinges in this interpretation on the way we understand the function of Son at 2:6 in the quotation from Psalm 8, where Son is linked not to God, but to man: "Son of man". If Son of Man here refers to Jesus from the outset, picking up the use of Son earlier, then we are still involved in a world of exalted claims like those at Daniel 7. But if Son of man refers simply to all men in general who inherit the potential given to Adam in the beginning, then we can argue for a Last Adam exegesis. The potential in creation has never been fulfilled, for "we do not yet see everything in subjection to him" (2:8). However, we do see Jesus, who has been crowned at last, after death, thanks to his obedient submission to what God willed for him, and, through him, for all mankind (2:9). Jesus is therefore the Last Adam (albeit never explicitly) in whom the potential is fulfilled: "In other words it is Jesus who fulfils God's original intention for man - Jesus exalted after death. The risen Jesus is crowned with the glory that Adam failed to reach by virtue of his sin." (45)

If this is so, then can we not uncover, beneath the idea, the ancient understanding of the Jewish view of sonship, a sonship emerging from election and answering obedience, a sonship of a kind intended by God for Israel, but one which had remained a frustrated intention only? Jesus therefore brings "many sons to glory " (2:10) because as Last Adam, he has shown what sonship is about: "He becomes what Adam fell to by his disobedience, in order that Adam might become

what Christ was exalted to by his obedience." (46) As far back as A.S.Peake (47) this interpretation has had support. In the '60s F.F.Bruce took it up, (48) and in 1973, Hamerton-Kelly reasserted it (49). In the '80s, Dunn (see above) supported it. Indeed Dunn reminds us that Psalm 8 was drawn into the service of a Last Adam Christology with precisely this intention by being regularly attached to Psalm 110, one of the most important proof texts for the early Christians. (50)

One interesting piece of evidence for this argument, and one which has been rarely applied, comes from its links with 1:6: "Let all God's angels worship him". Wilson refers us to the work of C.H.Dodd in The Bible and the Greeks, where Dodd remarks that in Rabbinic tradition the angels were summoned to worship Adam (is Adam the first-born at 1:6 ?) when he was created ("brought into the world") and that this understanding could have influenced our author. Such evidence has of course remained in the background as any Rabbinic tradition emerged in all likelihood after the epistle was written. So Wilson concludes: "That may be too much to say." However he continues, "but it is at least possible that the author was familiar with such a tradition and transferred it from the first Adam to the Last." (51)

Wilson treads very carefully here and perhaps rightly so, for although we can formulate a very plausible thesis for a Last Adam Christology with support from the "archegos/prodromos" titles and the understanding of perfection, and although the above interpretation of 2:6 seems to me to be perfectly in tune with the author's over-arching paraenetic purpose, yet it is very difficult to maintain this interpretation alone in the light of the indisputable evidence of our earlier discussion in relation particularly to chapter 1, but also 3:6; 4:14; 7:3 and indeed 5:8. Once again there is a tension in the claim itself.

c) The Tension in the Christology of the Epistle

We have seen how many scholars have acknowledged the Prologue to be a setting out of the eternal status of the divine Son in which pre-existence is assumed. We have seen how easily the writer has drawn, in his catena of texts, on what was probably an already established kerygma which he uses without embarrassment. And though we cannot ignore possible underlying enthronement rituals in his use of Psalm 2:7 and Psalm 110, yet Buchanan's argument seemed rather to dictate his view to the text rather than to dialogue with it! Indeed there is an argument from a literary point of view that chapter 1 has a rhetorical quality, climbing as it does to its peak via question and answer: "To what angel did God ever say? . . ." The very nature of this literary structure, building up text by text seems to demand a climax of dignity resting in the one who is Son. And following from that point, texts incorporating "Son" at 3:6, 4:14 and 7:3 continue to demand the highest status attributable to the Son. The difference between Jesus and Moses at 3:6 does not rest in any difference in their faithfulness, although there are some who have interpreted it thus, but it rests in their status, one as servant, the other as Son. At 4:14, the point has already been made, that here in the title "Jesus, the Son of God" is an assertion of the synthesis of humanity/divinity. And at 7:3, the link with Melchizedek is made not by treating him as type and Jesus as anti-type, but rather the opposite. Jesus as Son is the type for Melchizedek who "resembling the Son of God . . . continues a priest for ever." The pre-existent motif must be assumed to be in play here: "In terms of earthly chronology, Jesus is of course later but from our author's point of view, Jesus is the archetype of whom Melchizedek is the earthly type." (52) This we shall address later.

The title of Son at 5:8 seems no less significant, though it requires more of a mental somersault than the others! The stress lies here in "Although he was a Son, he learned obedience . . . " If we consider this side by side with 12:7 the point strikes home. Here, the readers of the epistle are exhorted to endure discipline, for only so can they rejoice that God is treating them as sons: "For what son is there whom his father does not discipline ?" If then the Sonship of Jesus has the same significance as that of any other son, he should expect to learn obedience. 12:7 tells us so. But on the other hand, Jesus has learned obedience despite his sonship, which must imply status as of a special relation to the Father. Following the logic of the text, we cannot avoid such a conclusion. We allow Moffatt to put the point succinctly: "Here the remarkable thing is that Jesus had to suffer, not because, but although he was *"υἱός"*, which shows that Jesus is son in a unique sense. " (53)

One other aspect of the Prologue is used to adduce the high Christological significance inherent in *"υἱός"* and that is the use of the vocative in the quotation from Psalm 45: "O God" and "Lord" at 1:8 and 1:10. If it is the vocative, then the divine substance and nature of the Son are undoubtedly being asserted. Is this possible? Westcott for instance, translates 1:8: "God is thy throne", simply because he cannot imagine the king addressed as such in the original. However as we have already commented, Westcott came before modern research into ancient enthronement ritual as Wilson points out (54), and most modern commentators as well as A.S.Peake and including F.F.Bruce, Filson and Hughes argue that it is a positive reference to Jesus. Longenecker locates the positive possibility not only in the Jewish attitude to monarchy but equally in the Imperial cult which we acknowledged earlier.(55)

All this evidence means that, although we can trace a clearly discernible though implicit Last Adam Christology (chapter 7, section b,iii), and although we may want to be persuaded by the adoptionist language in parts of the Epistle (chapter 7, section b,ii), we cannot avoid the conclusion that there is a huge counter-weight, stemming from the Wisdom/Logos Hellenistic influence, particularly in chapter 1, which cannot be denied, and which maintains the remarkable tension in the Christology.

The claim of this thesis is that in fact our author was not actually concerned to resolve the tension with which he worked. Once more we return to the paraenetic purpose, which motivated his eloquence: He sets out to show as comprehensively as he can to a particular flock why they should maintain faith in one who is Son of God. He embraces a functional approach to Sonship, whereby Jesus is shown to be in a unique filial relationship of obedience to God, as the inaugurator of a New Covenant, and the one who is man as he was intended to be in the creation. But he equally embraces the established kerygma which, as a second generation Christian, he has inherited, and which includes the Hellenistic cultural accoutrements of a Wisdom/Logos Christology. He embraces both approaches because together they give him the most compelling portrait of the High Priest, to whom he wants his people to give their obedience, and because together they portray one who is the culmination and the supreme outworking of the purposes of God throughout history.

Thus the foundations for the great patristic discussions were laid, and thus it has been possible for some commentators to claim for the writer as high a Christology as John's gospel (56), whilst others maintain it as a stage on the way (57). But it really did not matter which, to the author! Attridge puts the point well: "His basic interest is to establish the significance of Christ for the present

and future of his addressees by indicating the superiority of the Son to any other agent of God's purposes." (58)

d) The Purpose of the Title "Son" given the various significances it contains

In earlier chapters of this study, we have found that the understanding of our author contains a vital distinction within the work of Christ, whereby he is not only the model for believers, but also the means, a distinction which influences the interplay of themes and titles in the epistle. We find that same distinction contained within the title "Son".

i) Son as Model:

In this respect, the title serves the paraenetic purpose of the writer. He is exhorting his readers to obey and follow the confession they profess even today (3:15), despite the tendencies to fall away. All the strands from Jewish ideas of sonship, as of one who is truly obedient to the Father, and that latent Last Adam Christology seem to be gathered in here. Jesus is the one who shows us how to conform to the will of God for his creation, as the obedient Son who brings his will totally into line with that of the Father. Being vindicated through and beyond his death, he is the model for all who follow, the Pioneer, the Perfecter, the Forerunner, the proper Son. This explains 12:7 as no mere adjunct to the main thrust of the letter, but incorporates it into the paraenetic purpose of the whole: "It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons . . . " Equally it explains the force of 4:11: "Let us therefore strive to enter that rest that no-one fall by the same sort of disobedience", coming after the section on the failure of the earlier generations at 3:7ff. The way in which the Son plays out his obedience is all-important. The status is not the key: "The main structure in the

author's "anthropology" are therefore not those of a flesh-spirit dualism, but of obedience or disobedience before the Word of God."

(59) For Hughes, the main thrust of the letter is as an exhortation to the reader to obey the Word as it comes to them in their own context, and he therefore stresses that the salient point here is not the status but the encouraging word to his readers in the model of the Son. (60) Karl Heim expresses all this beautifully: "The main object of the epistle to the Hebrews is to make clear that whatever the equipment of Christ for his life work, for the decisive deed in which he committed his will into his Father's hand, this equipment was not involved. He stood like a common soldier in the same trenches as we, and fought under the same conditions." It is all "καίπερ ὡν υἱός" (5:8) (61).

ii) Son as Means

However, the fact that the model put before the reader is one who is also exalted after his endurance of suffering and death to the highest possible status as Son at God's right hand makes him also the means whereby others can go on following. It makes his way of obedience to death in a single historical event significant as the climax and culmination of history, when God's purposes are brought to fulfilment. Here is the point where the author reaches across the tension he has set up for himself, to maintain in the fabric of his argument the structured rhetoric of chapter 1, weaving into the tapestry those nuances of the Wisdom myth and the Logos speculations belonging to his own Alexandrian background. They facilitate his claim for the absolute supremacy of Jesus across history: "the same, yesterday and today and forever" (13:8) and add to the force of his exhortation to his people to maintain their Christian discipleship.

iii) Son as part of the theme of Promise/Fulfilment

We have already asserted in earlier chapters the fact that, underpinning the theology of the epistle is a clear and important theme of the fulfilment of Old Testament promise, and the supersession of Old Covenant by New. We have acknowledged the Jewishness of the author as a vital element in his motive for writing. So we go on at this stage to affirm that this attribute is never more pronounced than here, in the importance he attaches to history and revelation. Looking back over the whole vista of the Covenant mediated through the heroes of the Old Testament, he draws a horizontal line through them to the event of Jesus in whom the ancient promises find fulfilment. The whole work then, belongs firmly in the Jewish dichotomy of history/eschatology, rather than the Greek philosophical dichotomy of shadow/reality, and addresses a particularly Jewish question: "Why then the Old Testament?" (62) The answer is supplied through the theme of promise/consummation and Old/New Covenant. (63)

The claim then that Jesus is Son holds in tension the continuity of God's revelation alongside that radical discontinuity which claims that, in the Son, the whole of preceding history is completed and superseded, so that the Old is now transformed into the New and brought to an end.

However, if we begin to ask how the New avails in an original way, it seems to me that we must look to that other key for our author, to the conception of Jesus as Priest. As we have already concluded in our discussion on perfection, it is not as Son he is perfected, but as Priest. He is made perfect for that particular vocation, and "perfecting" has a functional application. Accordingly we must now look at the title of Son in its relation to the title of Priest.

iv) The function of "Son" in relation to the title Priest in the epistle

Our claim is that the title Priest is the means by which the writer is able to show the perfect efficacy of the New Covenant mediated by Jesus in its relation to the believer. But we can also see that the title Son lays vital foundations for the Priesthood, asserting as it does that the model we have before us of obedience and proper sonship is also the actual means by which we can go on grasping at obedience still, thanks to his exaltation to a unique status of Sonship corresponding to the highest dignity of Wisdom or the Logos. It is this which marks him out as decisive for all time.

This truth is encapsulated in the Melchizedek citation, where the claim is that Christ is Priest after the order of Melchizedek, whose status is that of anti-type to the type of the Son: "He" - that is, Melchizedek - "is without father or mother or genealogy, and has neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a Priest for ever." (7:3) The priesthood theme then, turns upon the hinge of Jesus as Son, the one so much involved in the other that at times it is difficult to discern which has priority for the author. Yet it is the theme of Priesthood so carefully interwoven with the theme of Son which explains the way in which Jesus is able to help the writer's own flock: "But he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues for ever. Consequently, he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them." (7:24 and 25)

The range of commentators over the years have asserted this important bond between Son and Priest, through A.B.Bruce (64) and Peake (65) and Moffatt (66) to Campbell (67) and Snell (68) and thence to Montefiore (69), but I shall make Spicq their spokesman in his eloquence: "Parce qu'il est Fils de Dieu, le grand Prêtre de la

Nouvelle Alliance sera absolument pur de tout p  che, ce qui assure    son intercession une valeur hors pair . . . Dans sa saintet   absolue, il aurait pu consid  rer les hommes comme un juge des coupables, ou un Sup  rieur ses sujets. En r  alit  , il a une connaissance experimentale et vivante de la nature humaine et de ses faiblesses." (70)

e) Conclusions

We have seen how the different cultures of the Hellenistic/Jewish milieu of Alexandria have been brought together in a remarkable synthesis by our writer in relation to the theme of "archegos/prodromos" and the theme of Christ as "perfected" and Perfecter. Now we can see how important that is for his conception of Christ as Son. By using first one and then another of the nuances of these differing cultures, he has developed a Christology which stretches in tension between an implicit Last Adam Christology and a "katabasis/anabasis" Christology, with all the accoutrements of pre-existent status. We have stressed however that this is once again a functional title, serving his over-arching purpose of exhorting his readers to obedience and steadfastness, and to life in the New Covenant which he believes Jesus to have inaugurated. We must conclude, once again that the Christology serves the paraenesis.

CHAPTER 8 THE EMERGENCE OF THE PRIESTLY TITLE. A SURVEY OF SOME OF
THE POSSIBLE INFLUENCES ON THE AUTHOR.

In our exploration of the epistle to the Hebrews, we have now encountered various important aspects of its Christology, which we believe to have emerged from the synthesis of cultures in the author's Alexandrian background, but which have been transformed by his own most specific Christological understanding to supplement and support his paraenetic purpose. Thus we find in the epistle an "adoptionist" tendency, which seems to centre around the importance attached to the theme of a Jesus who "becomes" perfect, and who is exalted to the fullness of dignity through the suffering of death. Here we find that image of Jesus as the great leader and forerunner who pioneers the way of perfect manhood and enables others to attain to it also, a theme centring around the twin titles of "archegos/prodromos". Yet equally significantly, the epistle addresses and incorporates a very different tradition as of a "katabasis/anabasis" Christology which rests in the title "λόγος", suggesting that Jesus embodies in a new and archetypal way the attributes of the figure of Wisdom and the Logos.

Thus we see that the writer has felt able freely to build on earlier, diverse affirmations of the faith with which he was completely familiar as an Alexandrian Jew, owing a debt therefore to both his Jewishness and his Hellenism. There is a confession to which his readers can already relate - 3:1; 4:14 - but what makes the epistle such a remarkable Christological synthesis and throws up those astonishingly different, indeed paradoxical Christological claims, is the way he moulds them to his own purpose. Using them as vital components, he builds them into his priestly Christology, and this is what marks out his originality. We have constantly found ourselves affirming the importance of the title of Priest and the priestly Christology as that which they all "serve", and towards which they all

contribute in their very different ways. Thus it is to the vocation of priesthood that the process of perfecting is applied. It is in order to be the perfect priest that he learns through suffering to be the man in whom manhood fully and obediently meets the will of God. He pioneers the way that others might follow. And because he is at last exalted after the discipline of obedient sonship, he has shown that it is possible for others to overcome and attain for themselves to perfection.

We shall go on to explore the significance of the priestly title as our writer works it out. But it will be useful at this stage to ask what caused him to move into the theme of Christ's priesthood at all. What influences brought his creativity to light?

a) The Paraenetic Purpose of the Epistle

Here we cannot but encounter once again that question mark over the epistle which has been addressed and re-addressed over the centuries. To whom is our author writing and what is the situation he is addressing ? To these questions there is no definite answer, but our studies so far, supported by the weight of scholarly opinion over the years, have exposed a clear, paraenetic thrust, a hortatory purpose to the whole. (1) We have been at pains to stress that the Christological titles, not least that of Son, are functional rather than ontological. They are used to promote steadfastness and obedience in those who are backsliding and possibly even reverting back to Judaism and to the rituals of the cult. We get a clear sense of a group for whom the author has real pastoral care, a group which is disillusioned and apathetic, possibly desperate in the face of threatened persecution. To this group he writes, in order to reinspire and refresh, to encourage them once again to grasp hold of Jesus as

their example and advocate, to "hold fast our confession" (4:14). It is to the threatened sin of apostasy that he addresses himself.

It seems that here we find one of the answers to the question of the reason for the priestly Christology wherein the central logic of the epistle is to be found. For the figure of one who is portrayed as the supreme and perfect priest above all answers most fully the question which he faces: How can I persuade these people to maintain faith in Jesus Christ in the face of their fear and the growing temptation to return to the security of the tangible cult? The image of Jesus as himself Priest, emerging as it does from those important titles which he has also made his own - Pioneer, Forerunner, Perfected One, Perfecter and Son - answers to that need. For it combines both the obedient suffering of Christ, which is the basis for his undying and unsurpassed compassion, with his exaltation after death, which renders his mediation eternally efficacious. Here is the key by which he can restore their own obedience: "Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people." (2:17)

The suggestion is then that the priestly Christology is the result of his careful reflection on that which Christ effects in relationship with believers, so as to serve the paraenetic purpose which has in the first place evoked his efforts.

b) The Creative Use of Psalm 110

If we are correct in the assumption that our writer reflected carefully on the function of Jesus in relation to believers, and built his priestly Christology out of traditional Christological imagery which was already part of the primitive confession of Christ, we can be fairly sure that he had Psalm 110:1 as an early established

confession: "The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool." We find this reference many times in the New Testament as a proof text, and in proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus: Mark 12:36 and parallels; Mark 14:62 and parallels and Acts 2:34f.; Romans 8:34; 1 Cor.15:25; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; 1 Peter 3:22. (2) The Psalmist's proclamation of the king's exaltation is therefore appropriated by the early church, in its timeless sense, as prophecy of the one they believed to have been exalted in victory over death. The Psalm itself goes back to the period when the Jewish monarchy was at its peak, and probably referred originally to David himself. Hamerton-Kelly, for example, suggests the possibility that Psalm 110 represents a song of victory sung upon David's return to Jerusalem. (3) But whatever its actual source, the primitive tradition took this up in the light of the resurrection victory as an early Messianic proclamation and in all probability associated it with Psalm 8 to support an early Last Adam Christology. (4) This has already been discussed at greater length in Chapter 7, section b,iii.

But our author does not leave Psalm 110 there. Significantly he alone of all the New Testament writers cites verse 4: "You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" at 5:10, 6:20, 7:21, and 7:28, and uses it in careful interplay with 110:1. "Since only one early Christian writing" - that is, Hebrews - "ventures to explicate Psalm 110:4, we may infer that many believers found these words more mysterious than illuminating." (5) Not even in the Dead Sea Scrolls has any reference to 110:4 yet been found, despite Qumran's interest in Melchizedek. (6) Yet here in Hebrews at 8:1, we actually read: "Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven." So in 110:4 it seems, there is provided the necessary impetus

for his creativity. We can almost hear beneath those words the anxious pastor labouring the link he wants his readers to make between the Messianic claim to which they are accustomed, and his own claim for the soteriological role of the priestly Jesus in their personal relationship with him. (7) The author's use of Genesis 14 would then follow on from this. It forced him to focus on the figure of Melchizedek and the account of the story of Abraham's meeting with him which we find there, and hence the discussion at Hebrews 7. We will return to this in more detail in a later chapter. Here we must simply note that this use of Psalm 110:4 provides our author with the key by which he can move into his priestly Christology and make it intimately his own. This conclusion is supported by Hay's study of Psalm 110, where he writes: " . . . it is reasonable to suppose that the Psalm influenced not only the defence but also the conception of the Christology here set forth." (8)

This particular point reflects the author's reverence for the word of God as spoken in the Old Testament, and his belief that in Jesus that word has come to its fulfilment, not as any kind of change in God's dealings with humanity, but as a continuation of his gracious care for his people. The God who addressed the king in the words of the Psalm is the same God who provides the writer's flock with a priestly saviour, whose work is his central theme.

c) Was there already a view of Jesus as Priest ?

In opposition to Manson, Dodd and Lindars, Higgins, whilst acknowledging our author's innovatory use of 110:4, denies that he was the first to understand Jesus as priest. (9) He maintains that the suddenness "with which the notion of Jesus as merciful and faithful high priest is first introduced in 2:17 suggests that it is no invention of the writer, but was a belief already familiar to

Christians." (10) Nevertheless I would want to maintain that the writer is the one under whose pen the priestly Christology finds its most eloquent and carefully formulated statement. To admit to other priestly strands is not to denigrate his creativity, nor is it to question the illumination that Psalm 110 seems to have brought to him. However, it is important to look at these other strands at this point.

As we have consistently maintained, the priestly Christology is put to the service of the more over-arching theology of Covenant, and of the relationship between the promise of the Old and its fulfilment in the New. Jesus as the great high priest is the one who par excellence brings the old to its consummation. In this context, the priestly understanding of Jesus by the author seems also to occur in Paul's account of the Last Supper and in the synoptic accounts, and may indeed go back to Jesus' own consciousness of his work as a sacrifice, fulfilling the prophecy of the eschatological Covenant. (11) 1Cor.11:25, Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24 and Luke 22:20 can all be understood in this way. J.J.Hughes in his article on Hebrews 9:15 writes: "The tradition" - that is, the tradition on which our writer builds - "which originated with those who heard the Lord would likely have related covenant soteriology with the words of Jesus spoken at the Last Supper." (12)

Furthermore, we shall go on to maintain that one aspect of the priestly work as our author outlines it is also understood as one of intercession. At 12:24, Jesus will be called the "μεσίτης" of the New Covenant, a Greek term popularly understood as "mediator".

F.F.Bruce picks this up in the introduction to his commentary. (13) He cites Luke 22:32 where Jesus prays for Peter lest his faith should fail and reminds us that Jesus' use of the Son of Man title has the clear implications of intercession: Luke 12:8:, "Everyone who shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man

also confess before the angels of God." (cf. Matthew 10:32) The earliest Christian community surely embraced this particular aspect of the priestly Christology. One is reminded of Acts 7:56 and Stephen's view of Christ at God's right hand. A.J.B. Higgins finds a primitive Son of Man Christology here, and believes that the high-priest Christology of Hebrews emerged from it: "The immediate source of the Christology is to be sought in the teaching of Jesus himself about the Son of Man as the intercessor or advocate on behalf of those who had confessed Jesus on earth. (14) Because of this opinion, Higgins does not find the use of Psalm 110:4 such an important innovative idea, but more as a confirmatory one, given that 110:1 was already being used Christologically. (15)

We may acknowledge that the theme of intercession is very important for the writer of John's gospel. The priestly element of advocacy and intercession is developed at chapter 17: "And for their sake, I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth" (John 17:19) and at 1John 2:1f.: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous . . . " . But again, it is an implicit understanding of Jesus' work rather than an explicit one as in Hebrews. Similarly, in Paul, the doctrine of intercession is expressed: Jesus gives us access to God (Romans 5:2, Ephesians 2:18); Jesus intercedes for us at God's right hand (Romans 8:34). But it is not developed into a Christology of priesthood.

We can see that the early church was coming to an understanding of Jesus which contained the seeds of the Christology which was to flower in our epistle and which perhaps had already generated an atmosphere conducive to a writer whose purpose was to revive faith and check despair. But against Higgins, we may assert that the writer was able to focus that general view of Jesus in his relationship to the community of faith onto a specific one of Jesus in priestly

relationship to his own flock through the use of Psalm 110:4, originally left out of the earliest Christological formulations around 110:1, but now lifted from it, and brought into sharp relief. Williamson seems to achieve the proper balance here: "The basis is to be found, I believe, in the sayings preserved in our gospels which attribute to Jesus an understanding of his own life and death as in some sense a sacrifice, and if in addition, Jesus was believed to be the Messiah to whom Psalm 110 could be properly applied in its entirety, then it required only a very simple logical step to be taken, and the process represented by the development of a doctrine of high priesthood has been begun." (16)

d) Some Possible Influences in the Background of the Priestly Theme

It will be useful at this point to ask what influences came into play once the author had established 110:4 as a key text. What other philosophies incorporated a Priestly figure in a significant role? And what aspects of Melchizedekian speculation might have proved attractive for his purpose? Both at Qumran and in the writings of Philo, the figures of both High Priest and of Melchizedek are prominent, as we shall see.

i) The Merging of Royal and Priestly functions in the Maccabean Period

We know that the Maccabean rulers were high priests also, and Horton has noted a striking likeness between 110:4 and what was said to Simon when Demetrius II established his authority in 1Macc.14:41: ". . . the Jews and priests were well pleased that Simon should be their Governor and High Priest for ever. . . ." (17) However, Horton later denies that the Maccabean period was the context for the writing of Psalm 110 and claims a much earlier setting, as we have already discussed. As our author's interest will at chapter 7 focus on the

reference to Melchizedek in 110:4 and no other reference is made to Simon of the Maccabees, it seems reasonable to conclude that there is only a tenuous influence from this period. Perhaps the fact that a Royal priest once held power facilitated in some way our author's unique transformation of early traditions, but this can be no more than surmise.

ii) Qumran

I. The Two Messiahs of Aaron and Israel

At Qumran there is some evidence for the expectation of two Messiahs of Aaron and Israel (1QS ix:10f.). F.F.Bruce cites the scholars who have outlined this understanding, a list which includes himself. (18) Yadin and Kosmala have argued that the epistle was expressly written to those who had just such a two-fold Messianic hope. (19) Vermes, in his study of the Qumran texts comments that the Community Rule of Qumran expects three Messianic characters, Prophet, Messiah of Aaron, and Messiah of Israel, but that, in general, only two seem to appear, with little reference to the Prophet: "The king-Messiah was to be the Prince of the congregation, and the Priestly Anointed, the Messiah of Aaron and Israel, was to be the Interpreter of the Law . . . " (20)

However, others have taken the view that references in the Scrolls could be applied to one in whom the Priestly and Royal functions united. (21) Higgins thinks they expected only one actual Messiah because there is nowhere a separate reference in the documents to a Messiah of Aaron alone. Williamson speculates that our author's antecedents lay in thought of this kind represented by the Qumran documents, concerned with the future advent of the Priest-Messiah. (22)

If our author was writing to those with leanings towards such a belief, it is possible that he developed the priestly Christology in

order to proclaim Jesus as their expected one. However, it seems to me to be an unnecessarily limiting view, given so many other equally valid contexts for the author's creativity. Against those who consider this particular context the right one militates the fact that the priestly Messiah of Hebrews is of the tribe of Judah, which was a "radical departure" from Judaism in general and Qumran in particular. (23) Wilson quotes Herbert Braun's study of the parallels between Hebrews and Qumran (24) and writes: "In the end, Braun casts his vote for the view that Hebrews is remote from Qumran." (25) Perhaps Graham Hughes dismisses the idea most tellingly by reminding us that the crucial Christological purpose of the letter does not, after all, stop at 110:1 with Jesus' Messiahship, but has an entirely different thrust: "If it is not a concern of the author to demonstrate Jesus' Messiahship in the normal sense, it can hardly be his intention also to show him as "combining in his personality both the kingly and priestly Messiahs" - that is, as Yadin would have it. (26)

But what about Qumran's interest in Melchizedek? Does the sect's handling of Genesis 14 and 11Q Melch. provide material for the author's interpretation of the Psalm text?

II. Melchizedek at Qumran

Melchizedek appears in the Genesis Apocryphon (circa first century BC/early first century AD) at 22:14f., but as the section there is little more than a translation of Genesis 14 anyway, it bears little significance for us, except in so far as it shows that the Qumran community acknowledged Melchizedek. Indeed, the fact that it shows not a hint of speculation around the figure of Melchizedek has caused Dunn to suggest the possibility that the figure of Melchizedek in the 11Q Melch. fragment, published 1965, is totally unrelated to the figure of the priest/king in the Genesis account. 11Q Melch. has something quite different in mind, namely, the principal archangel

Michael with a reformulated title. (27) On examination of the 11Q Melch. fragment, it certainly seems clear that the sect had viewed Melchizedek as some sort of heavenly eschatological figure identical with the archangel Michael, who would exercise judgement. (28) "(And h)e will, by his strength, judge the holy ones of God, executing judgement as it is written concerning him in the Songs of David" (29). He also seems to have had an atoning function: "For he will cast their (lot) amid the po(rtions of Melchize)dek, who will return them there and will proclaim to them liberty, forgiving them (the wrong-doings) of all their iniquities." (30) And he is also portrayed as opposing and beating back the forces of evil, like some sort of angelic warrior: "And Melchizedek will avenge the vengeance of the judgements of God . . . and he will drag (them from the hand of) Satan and from the hand of all the sp(irits of) his (lot) . . ." (31) The implication is that Qumran viewed Melchizedek as an archangel overseeing the heavenly world.

Whether or not 11Q Melch. is interested in the figure at Genesis 14, it remains possible that its portrayal of Melchizedek may have facilitated our author's account of the same passage, and would help to explain the ease with which he moves into his seventh chapter. An exalted Melchizedek may indeed have been a familiar conception to his flock. But if Dunn's suggestion is accepted and if De Jonge and Van der Woude were correct in identifying there an "angelic warrior soteriology" centring on Melchizedek but with little interest in Melchizedek as high priest, then it is more tempting to conclude that the author's priestly Christology finds elsewhere its origins: "We must conclude that 11Q Melch. gives no certain references to a (high) priesthood of Melchizedek. He is so much God's warrior that his priestly activities remain completely in the shadow. (32)

De Jonge and Van der Woude's main conclusions were that Hebrews 7:3 is the clue to the author's interest in Melchizedek, and that that interest does not result from his priestly role at all. Their view is that the writer's major purpose was to present Jesus as the supreme agent of salvation to whom even the angelic mediators and Melchizedek in particular are subject. Taking 11Q Melch's view of the angelic warrior as lying in the background then, they interpret 7:3 - "resembling the Son of God, he continues a priest for ever" - as serving to emphasise "the subordination of the archangel Melchizedek to the preexistent Son of God." (33) Their overall theory is that the author approached his interpretation of the Melchizedek material as a first century Jewish Christian with a characteristic attitude to angelology, and thought therefore of Melchizedek as "an archangel who appeared to Abraham long ago" (34), and as the one "who would command the heavenly hosts in the struggle against Belial." (35) Interpreted thus, the typological casting of Melchizedek hinges around that strand of Hebrews' Christology which we have already discussed of an exalted Son of God with full preexistent status, to whom Melchizedek is merely antitype. They write: "Hebrews 7:3 and related texts are most naturally explained by the supposition that the author regarded Melchizedek as an angel inferior to the Son of God. It is no longer necessary to suppose that the conception of a heavenly high-priest in Hebrews was influenced by Hellenistic Jewish, Gnostic, and/or Philonic tradition." (36)

We must acknowledge with De Jonge and Van der Woude that 11Q Melch. can help us to understand certain characteristics of first century Judaism in relation to angelology and the struggle against evil and death. It certainly provides a context through which the references to Melchizedek's eternal life can be understood. It also helps us to understand better one context for chapters one and two of

the epistle. Certainly it can be shown that in this period "supreme angels were envisaged as sufficiently independent of God to act as intercessors on behalf of men before God, as intermediaries between man and God." (37) And Attridge in his recent commentary makes full use of this evidence to formulate his own theory. He considers the angelic intermediaries of pre-Christian Judaism to be the antecedents of Hebrews' priestly Christology, with Jesus as the chief angel. (38)

I would however plead for this evidence to be taken within a wider context. As we have already discussed at some length, the tension in the Christological structuring of the epistle at times attributes the highest status to one who is Son of God, but equally maintains a portrait of one who is the priest par excellence because he has been perfected and exalted only through and after his suffering. De Jonge and Van der Woude by claiming 11Q Melch. as the all-pervading influence on a Christology of the highest status are limiting the remarkable range of Christological strands which are in play. And I would ask Attridge also to address the question of the peremptory dismissal of angels in the comparison with Jesus at 1:5 and 1:13: "But to what angel has he ever said . . . ?" By chapter two, they no longer play any real part in the epistle's structure, and there is "no thought of angels becoming men in order to redeem." (39) No link with Melchizedek has yet been mentioned and the thesis has moved on.

Moreover, the reference at 2:14 and 15, far from being the key to the use of Melchizedek by revealing a consuming interest in the beating back of the forces of Belial - a key issue in 11Q Melch. - seems to be no more than a small acknowledgement of that Jewish thought world which the author was leaving behind. Thus to relate this epistle too closely to the world of Qumran and 11Q Melch. is to get the figure of Melchizedek out of its correct perspective in the

author's work. Horton, in his study of the Melchizedek tradition goes so far as to suggest that if the author had known of the claims for Melchizedek made in 11Q Melch., he would have been more likely to have missed him out altogether! (40)

iii) Philo

I. The Philonic High Priest

Part of Philo's doctrine of the Logos equated it with the high priest through whom the material world draws near to the eternal. Williamson explains this equation on the grounds of Philo's complex interworking of his Greek philosophical ideas with his preoccupation with the Torah: "He was faced with the task of extracting his philosophical notions by allegorical interpretation from OT passages which set out in detail the qualifications, dress, duties etc. of the Levitical priests who carried out the ritual of the Jewish sacrificial system." (41) For Williamson this is the only real link between our author and Philo. Whilst both owe a huge debt to the Old Testament for its priestly terminology, Philo abstracts and allegorizes an ideal figure from it. On the contrary, our writer locates it solidly in a person who has suffered in history as the fulfilment of all that the OT had promised: "The intellectualism of Philo's approach is entirely absent from the epistle. The writer of Hebrews was not attempting to solve metaphysical problems." (42) Thus although Philo had used a priestly metaphor as part of the interplay of his images of the Logos, and although our author may have been aware of the use, the differences of approach between the two are so fundamental that it would be difficult to maintain that Philo lay in the background here.

II. Melchizedek in Philo

Nonetheless, and despite this conclusion, it is possible that Philo's interest in the figure of Melchizedek could have influenced the author's seventh chapter.

In Philo, the interest in Melchizedek does centre around the Genesis 14 text, with its claim that Melchizedek is both king and priest who brings to Abraham food and drink. The philosopher allegorizes the story to the limits in his typical way. Melchizedek becomes the "βασιλεύς νοῦς" and even Logos (43): " . . . let him give souls unmixed wine to drink, that they may be seized by a divine intoxication which is more sober than sobriety itself; for he is a Priest, even Reason, and has as his portion the Existing One." Philo thus fits the figure of Melchizedek into his overall view of the Priest as a figure mediating between man and God, and therefore fittingly representing the function of the Logos. Like our author, Philo is interested in Melchizedek's lack of antecedents, albeit for different reasons. It enables him to equate him with the Logos as untutored Reason, which is also from the very beginning. Like our author, he is interested in the name of Melchizedek itself, containing the ideas of righteousness and peace. Indeed the use of the technical "which means" in order to facilitate the allegorical interpretation of the name appears repeatedly in Philo and only occurs in the New Testament at Hebrews 7:2 and John 1:42 and 9:7. For scholars such as Moffatt and Spicq, these factors all add up to an important influence exerted by Philo on the author. Can it be then that the Philonic approach to Melchizedek has contributed to the thinking of the writer and caused him to utilize Melchizedek in much the same way, so as to show that Jesus can be equated with the Logos also, as its most perfect and significant embodiment, and therefore very type of Melchizedek's anti-type?

I think not. Although there is the similar allegorical etymology, and although the argument from silence is a common factor, these similarities emerge from the Alexandrian style of exegesis, in which world both writers moved. Indeed their purposes move in a

parallel direction, but to a very different end. Philo expounds the Torah, and therefore Genesis 14, in order to show the supremacy of the Logos or Reason as it enables humanity to attain to a perfection which disclaims human relationships in favour of God. Our writer expounds Psalm 110 with Genesis 14 as background, to show the supremacy of Jesus as he enables humanity to attain to a perfection which can only be grasped through human suffering and compassion. I would suggest therefore that the differences between them are far more conclusive. One interesting reflection here is the fact that Philo makes much of the offerings which Melchizedek brings out to Abraham as part of his allegorizing. But our author, who could very fruitfully have made the parallel between Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine and the Christian sacramental elements chose not to do so, because that would not have served his purpose. Thus, whilst the figure of Melchizedek is subsumed by Philo within his allegorizing of the Torah in order to heighten its precepts, he functions in Hebrews only within the typological structure of the epistle in order to heighten the superiority of Christ.

e) Conclusion

As we move into further discussion of the high priestly Christology, it is valuable to note these various possible influences on our author. His is a large canvas and he draws from the established traditions, merging and including, one here, another there. Yet that which motivates and unifies his work is his urgent pastoral sense of his readers' situation, his desire to restore and inspire. From careful reflection on the way in which Jesus most closely relates to his followers, and the way in which that relationship is able to be effective and to encourage them to pursue their faith, he proceeds to focus his creative imagination on that neglected verse of Psalm 110,

verse 4, a verse which could have been implicitly accepted by other great exponents of Christ, though by no means necessarily as we have shown. In contrast with others, however, the author will now consider it explicitly, as a vital part of the hortatory thrust of his argument.

In order to deal adequately with that verse, it became necessary to reflect on the figure of Melchizedek, for the one who is Priest for ever is denoted priest "after the order of Melchizedek." His reflections however were, as we have seen, very much his own, and the Melchizedek theme was carefully, indeed ruthlessly, fitted into his overall paraenetic purpose, and the tight typological structuring of his argument.

CHAPTER 9 THE FUNCTION OF MELCHIZEDEK IN THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE
EPISTLE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PSALM 110 REITERATED.

Our claim is that the Melchizedek theme belongs within the typological structure of the epistle, and serves the paraenesis. In our analysis of the author's use of Melchizedek, it will become apparent that Psalm 110:4 provided the author of Hebrews with an important key by which he could move into a full-blown priestly Christology and make of it something wholly his own. The detail which confronted him there: "after the order of Melchizedek", caused him to enter in chapter 7 on something of a midrash on a figure who is only otherwise mentioned at Genesis 14. He therefore drew on the account there as the natural companion to the Psalm citation. Manson makes the point clearly: "The starting point of the Christian writer is of course 110:4, but, in order to develop the mystical overtones of the declaration in that Messianic Psalm, he goes back to the Melchizedek passage in Genesis 14:18-20, and constructs a midrash upon it." (1)

This means that Melchizedek, far from being important in himself is only important insofar as he appears in the oath which foreshadowed Christ. This is a truth not grasped by those who became involved in Melchizedekian claims because of the epistle, nor is it by those who make claims for the link with 11Q. Melch., or with the Philonic Melchizedek. The author looks to Genesis 14 to find there any aspects of Melchizedek which can support his claim for that oath of eternal priesthood, sworn by God of Christ. And this is his natural response to Psalm 110 as a converted Jew with a devout reverence for the Old Testament as the Word of God for all generations: "And it was not without an oath. Those who formerly became priests took their office without an oath, but this one was addressed with an oath: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: Thou art a priest for ever." (Heb. 7:20 and 21)

So, from Genesis 14, he skilfully draws on all those aspects of the story of Melchizedek which can be construed as typological pointers to Jesus Christ. He makes Melchizedek into a model of the new and radical high priest, who comes as the fulfilment of God's purpose, and Melchizedek himself is really quite unimportant, only useful in so far as he serves the paraenetic thrust, the appeal to his readers to consider Christ: " Melchizedek is only a shadow, a reflection of the Son of God (ἀφωμοιωμένος). He has no independent significance to salvation: He is simply a divine intimation of the Son." (2) Once that purpose is served - and that is by the middle of chapter 7 - the author moves into the contrast between the Levitical priesthood and Jesus effortlessly and without a backward glance at Melchizedek, stressing now that Jesus fulfils the ancient Levitical Covenantal provisions as the supreme priest.

a) Melchizedek, the Antitype, and his Function

We must needs return to the thought world of Alexandrian exegesis to understand some of the typological parallels our author draws. We must recognize his understanding of the texts of the Old dispensation as the direct Word spoken by God. We return with him to the plausibility of the argument from silence.

i) Melchizedek, the first priest mentioned in the Biblical record (7:6-10)

It is very important that Melchizedek is the first priest mentioned, and this well before the establishment of the Law and the Levitical succession. He is non-Levitical and without successor. Those who are priests to come are as yet only within the loins of Abraham. There is that lovely touch at 7:9, where he seems to recognize the idiosyncratic nature of his exegesis, and yet cannot resist making the point! By this means however, the author is able to show Melchizedek

as the antitype of the one who is the first Priest of the New Covenantal order, and who is also without successor. Horton has stressed that the concept of Melchizedek's being the first priest was important for both Philo and Josephus albeit for different reasons, but in both cases naturally assumed thanks to Jewish exegetical method.

Moreover, the first priest was clearly non-Levitical and this fact is used to legitimise the non-Levitical descent of Christ which may have been an acute stumbling block for the Jewish Christians to whom he writes. This partly explains the stress in chapter 7 on Melchizedek's lack of genealogy. Melchizedek has nothing at all of the familial requirements for priesthood and can therefore foreshadow one who does not have them either. In so doing he directly addresses the problem his readers may have about Jesus' descent from the tribe of Judah: "For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah and in connection with that tribe, Moses said nothing about priests." (7:14) Via the Jesus/Melchizedek typology he can address that issue directly. The other approach which Melchizedek's lack of genealogy provides is that, by the argument from silence, he is able to suggest that Melchizedek has always existed from creation, and to use that in relation to the Son title already discussed. He actually specifies the link: "He has neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he continues a Priest for ever." (7:3) Once again the Christological status of Jesus reaches another pinnacle, picking up echoes of chapter 1 and its designation of the attributes of Wisdom and the Logos to Jesus. If Melchizedek pre-existed, then he pre-figured one to whom the highest dignity has been given and to whom these characteristics were applied.

So the use of Melchizedek enables him to evoke yet another nuance of his Christological thinking.



ii) Melchizedek, the one who blesses Abraham (7:1,2 and 4)

Our author is interested in Abraham as the one who bears the promises and the blessing of God. He is interested in him for his own part in the Old Testament preparation for the New Testament fulfilment. But the function of Melchizedek in relation to Abraham enables him to draw another typological parallel between Melchizedek and Christ. Melchizedek actually blesses Abraham at Genesis 14:19 and Abraham actually pays tribute to him by tithing at Genesis 14:20. Thus Genesis 14 gives to Melchizedek albeit fleetingly a status greater than that of the actual bearer of God's promise. Our author sees here an opportunity once again to point forward to Christ. Melchizedek is an ideal antitype for the one whose status is greater than that of any Old Testament figure, not least Abraham.

At this point once again, the clear hinge of the typology seems to rest in status and therefore in Jesus' status as Son with all the exalted claims which are implied in that title.

However, I would not go so far as Westcott or Montefiore who reduce the force of the comparison between Melchizedek and Jesus to the one particular angle on this one point: " . . . the divine nature of the incarnate Son and not to his human nature." (3) As we have already seen, it is far too easy to read back into our writer later established Christological motifs, and we have claimed that our writer is not concerned to resolve the tensions in his Christology in order to make a precise and neat statement, but with a Christology which first and foremost serves the paraenesis. He therefore uses many different strands to articulate his purpose. So 7:3 can be looked at from either direction. The status of Melchizedek the antitype as the one to whom Abraham knelt serves to point his readers forwards as powerfully as possible to the one to whom he earnestly wishes them to kneel.

iii) Melchizedek, the one who lives for ever (7:3/7:16)

Using the Alexandrian style of exegesis, the author now makes use of the silence of scripture with regard to Melchizedek's death to infer that he has never died but has become a figure of the eternal priest. For us it is a difficult and convoluted step, but it need not detain us. It is no more than a step used in the typology to prefigure Jesus, who has been raised to God's right hand through his resurrection and is now the supreme and eternal priest. For the author, the silence of Genesis 14 at this point justifies the use he is making of Psalm 110. There is no requirement to become involved with an exalted or heavenly Melchizedek at all - (and does this not also give the lie to De Jonge and Van der Woude's theory ?) - and he will be discarded as the argument proceeds. F.F.Bruce expresses it clearly: "What was true of Melchizedek in this limited and "literary" sense is true absolutely of him who serves his people as High Priest in the presence of God." (4)

There is controversy over the interpretation we should put on 7:15 and 16: "This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life." Some commentators want to locate the phrase, "by the power of an indestructible life", with chapters 1 and 2, the title Son, and its relation to a Wisdom Christology. Attridge most recently interprets it thus: "Christ is indeed a heavenly being, whose priesthood is of the realm not of flesh but of "indestructible life". (5)

On the contrary, however, I believe the phrase to point to the resurrection, through which in conquering the death he faced, Jesus has been exalted to eternal priesthood: "The priesthood rests on the foundation of his indestructible life. It is a priesthood based on the

resurrection." (6) This interpretation also fits with the theme of progress to perfection which has already been discussed. So whilst the exegesis of the phrase in a sense embraces the tension of the whole epistle, the main point of the comparison with Melchizedek here seems to me to be that the writer can confidently offer to his readers the figure of one who has powerfully conquered death and lives for ever as their priest. Hay has a similar conclusion: "Again everything turns on the yoked premises of the resurrection/ascension and the application of 110:4 to Jesus." (7)

iv) Melchizedek as both King and Priest (7:1)

Genesis 14:18 states that Melchizedek was King of Salem and priest. The author sees in that combination of royal and sacerdotal qualities a direct pointer to, and evidence for, his view of Christ.

Melchizedek may well have been a king of Jebusite Jerusalem before David's conquest, with the political and religious prerogatives of a Jebusite Sheikh, and Psalm 110 could well have been an enthronement Psalm when David took them over. But Horton has reviewed the evidence carefully and concludes that those prerogatives do not imply that Melchizedek was a sacred Priest-king, but more likely a local chieftain probably put over Jerusalem by the Egyptian Pharaoh, perhaps with courtly and cultic duties, but more the figure of a warrior-prince than anything else. One wonders if the writer had anything of this in mind when he entitled Jesus "archegos", but it must be said that in chapter 7 his overriding interest lies in the royal/sacerdotal combination which Melchizedek represented at its face value, foreshadowing as it does the Messianic/sacerdotal claim for Christ to which his creative use of Psalm 110 has brought him.

v) The Name of Melchizedek (7:2) - Melchi/king;
Zedek/righteousness; Salem/peace

Perhaps the little aside on the meaning of Melchizedek's name at 7:2, so much in the Alexandrian style and so reminiscent of Philo, is the least important part of the typological use of Melchizedek. But perhaps the insertion of it reminds us that we are dealing first and foremost with one who is pastor and preacher to a flock. Maybe then, as an irresistible afterthought, he felt he could draw from the name of Melchizedek, conveying as it does both righteousness and peace, a neat preaching point!

b) Conclusions

What has emerged from our discussion here is that the function of Melchizedek is to serve first and foremost the typology of the epistle, and its great theme of promise/fulfilment, of the purposes of God through the Old Covenant, reaching to the New. Melchizedek foreshadows that which Christ embodies. He prefigures that which Christ consummates. He is antitype to the one who is the very type of all that God has intended in his creation and for his creation.

Behind the whole lies the creative encounter with Psalm 110:4 and a careful meditation on the Psalm as a whole, which has led him into the exploration of Genesis 14, vindicating as it does the Christological claim he makes for Christ as priest. All interest in Melchizedek therefore is limited to what the account in Genesis offers to his portrayal of the supreme high priest. Peterson makes the point well: "The remarkable restraint with which the writer interprets the narrative of Genesis 14:18 - 20 is due to the fact that the real basis of his argument in this chapter is Psalm 110:4. The Melchizedek story is only of interest to him insofar as it explains the assertions of that key verse of prophecy, and intimates the superiority of the priesthood "after the order of Melchizedek". (8)

Perhaps 8:1 is itself the best evidence for these conclusions. There the anxious pastor who longs to convince his flock of Christ's superiority and to persuade them to remain in the faith surfaces once more, and sums up the whole of chapter 7: "Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven." Having shown them the ideals of priesthood to which the account of Melchizedek led him, he now asserts that they have the very substance of those ideals available in Jesus and that that substance will be worked out in a very different kind of priesthood from Melchizedek's. The priest whom he portrays will be shown to affect his people as individuals involved in their own particular Christian discipleship, for unlike the Philonic Melchizedek/Logos, he will lead them back into an encounter with the realities and sufferings of humanity. And unlike the angelic warrior of the Qumran sect, he will not demonstrate the strength of the heavenly powers to "drag them from the hand of Satan . . ." (9), but on the contrary will maintain a faithful obedience whilst enduring all that humanity must endure in its weakness so as to encourage and enable them to do likewise.

The substance of his priesthood will embrace a most important paradox which Melchizedek had not embraced. His priestly sacrifice will actually be the offering of himself, and will therefore bring about the consummation of the Old dispensation and inaugurate the New. And so, once again, the whole purpose for writing reveals itself as one of pastoral urgency, with a theology of Covenant providing its major thrust. We now turn to a closer examination of the priestly work, and its relationship to that central theme.

CHAPTER 10 A COVENANT THEOLOGY: THE RELATIONSHIP OF PRIESTHOOD AND
SACRIFICE AS THEY FUNCTION IN THE AUTHOR'S PURPOSE.

We have maintained that the structure of Hebrews is typological because the writer's understanding of history is primarily based in Jewish eschatological thinking, whereby history is viewed as a process moving towards its consummation. Thus whilst the Alexandrian synthesis sometimes imparts a more vertical model to the epistle whereby there is a pattern reaching upwards to an ideal world (and here 8:5 probably finds its origin), the ideas of foreshadowing what is to come, of promise and fulfilment dominate from the outset.

Thus at chapter 1:1, the different forms of God's address are shown to be consummated in the Son to whom the highest dignity is ascribed. At chapter 2, the reflection is on one who is the true and Last Adam, fulfilling the destiny of man as God intended. At chapter 3, the comparison is with Moses and Joshua who led the people out of bondage only to find that the people imposed their own bondage upon themselves and were unable to live under the Covenantal obligation of obedience and Law: "And to whom did he swear that they should never enter his rest but to those who were disobedient ?" (3:18). Always the inference points forward to the one who will achieve what they could not: "Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant to testify to the things that were to be spoken later . . . " (3:5) And so the process in the text moves through to the comparison with Aaron and the Levitical priesthood which is shown to be superseded by the priesthood of Jesus "after the order of Melchizedek", and at chapter 7, Melchizedek himself is revealed as the mere antitype pointing forward to the type which is Christ, to whom all these had been pointing. Finally at chapter 11, the great exemplars of faithful obedience and trust are compared with Jesus, as the one who finally fulfils the life of faith. In every instance, Jesus is portrayed as

the one who consummates what came before, and who brings to perfection what they foreshadowed. And yet - and this is of vital importance to the claim that this epistle is a theology centring on the relationship between Old and New Covenants - Jesus is never considered in isolation from them, nor is it ever suggested that his coming marks a denial of that which they represented.

Thus the author maintains a deep reverence for the Old dispensation, in which the Jewish institutions existed to remind the people of their covenantal obligation to obedience. But he now sees that those institutions have been superseded by the mediation of one who offers the possibility of an effective forgiveness and thereby makes possible a New Covenantal relationship in terms of Jeremiah's prophecy, an inner and interior relationship with God. Nonetheless he respects and values the old structures of God's revelation so much so that his major interest lies in casting Jesus in the role of priest, a role always given the highest value by his Jewish forebears, and now ascribed the highest value by him personally.

It is readily acknowledged that the "characteristic function of the priest" and the "indispensable means to the fulfilment of his calling" (1) is to make sacrifice. It is to this aspect of the priestly Christology which we shall now look. How does the writer treat of the sacrifice of Jesus ?

Scholarly opinion has been divided as to whether or not the writer conceives of sacrifice more in terms of the shedding of the blood of the victim as the means of cleansing and forgiveness, or whether the important element in the sacrifice is his will subsumed to the will of God, which is symbolised by the life he voluntarily gives up. In order to understand better the way in which Jesus is portrayed as performing his priestly role in the epistle, we shall look at these

different possibilities and try to ascertain the writer's intention in this issue.

a) Blood for Sacrifice

Those who claim that the actual shedding of Christ's blood is the vital element in his sacrifice (2) go to Hebrews 9:22: "Indeed, under the Law, almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins." The Greek word here, "αἱματεκχυσία" does not appear elsewhere in the Bible, but the phrase "ἐκχεῖν αἷμα" in the Septuagint was used to denote killing (Gen.9:6; Lev.17:4) and the pouring out of blood over the base of the altar (Ex.29:12; Lev.4:7, 18-25,30 and 34; Lev.8:15 and 9:9). The belief was that the blood sprinkled on the altar by the priest made amends for the sin of the guilty person, and by its very offering made possible a renewed relationship with God. Indeed, at Lev.8:30, Moses consecrates Aaron to his priesthood by the sprinkling of blood. This understanding of the Old Testament function of sacrifice is based particularly in the Levitical provisions for the Day of Atonement at Lev.16 and at Lev.17:6, 11 and 14: "Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering which is for the people and bring its blood within the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat; thus he shall make atonement for the holy place because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins." (Lev.16:15 and 16) The efficacy of blood to make clean and to "cover" sin hinges on its potency as that wherein the life resides, which life is God's gracious gift: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it for you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement, by reason of the life." (Lev.17:11) Thus, in applying the blood to the altar, the

priest recalled to the people God's gracious dealings with them, and the truth that his was the provision of the life offered in expiation for their guilt, of his grace. This clearly abnegates any idea of propitiating an angry God. The stress is on God's grace which restores life in the sinner by this means. And the main element in the sacrifice is the manipulation of the blood in which the life is focused: "The visible act of slaying sheds the blood and sets it free for ritual sprinkling and offering." (3)

Key texts for us in Hebrews as well as 9:22 are 9:12-14: "He entered once for all into the holy place taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption", and 10:19: "Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus . . . " The stress here laid on "his own blood" offered as the sacrifice helps us to understand our author's purpose. We have noted the typological structuring of the epistle and its relation to the important theme of promise and fulfilment. Once again the ancient system of sprinkled blood is shown to foreshadow the sprinkling of Christ's blood, at the culmination of history. As God appointed and supplied the Levitical sacrifices of his grace in order to restore life to the people and a release from sin, so now in Christ, of his divine generosity he has supplied the gift of a priest who takes not a victim's blood to the altar in place of the guilty, but his own blood as the offering. And here is the crux. All the promise of that ancient system is brought to fulfilment in this one climactic offering, where the priest actually and paradoxically offers his own blood, thereby aligning himself completely with God's purpose of giving and restoring.

This paradox of the offerer who is actually also the offering at the consummation of the Old and the inauguration of the New - at the apex therefore of God's purposes - may find its source in Jewish

attitudes to martyrdom as having an atoning value. On this particular issue, Hebrews 11 must be addressed, for there we find references to those who have indeed been martyred for their faith, and martyred under threat of persecution and the temptation to apostasy which we have already shown to be the very situation into which our author casts his paraenesis. At 11:34, Moffatt suggests that "the last three clauses are best illustrated by the story of the Maccabean struggle" (4) and Wilson's recent commentary confirms that the author was probably familiar with 1 and 2 Maccabees. (5) At 2 Macc.6:24-31, the aged teacher of the Law, Eleazar, goes willingly to torture and death, rather than compromise his faith, and as an example to his friends. Then at 2 Macc.7, the seven brothers and their mother die appalling deaths expressing a clear hope of resurrection as reward for their faithfulness: "He in his mercy will give you back life and breath again, since now you put his laws above all thought of self." (2Macc.7:23) (6)

So the idea of a life offered as bearing a special significance, especially with relation to the temptation to commit apostasy, the very sin which most concerns the author, casts light on his use of this particular paradox. Louis Jacobs in his defence of the Jewish ethic comments that Judaism seems to have held dear the precept of self-sacrifice and viewed it as endowing the life sacrificed "with a significance it could not have possessed had the instinct of self-preservation prevailed." (7) He closes the article: "Jewish history has not lacked such "fools of God."" (8)

At 4 Maccabees however we find an even more interesting possible background to the presentation of the priestly Christology of Hebrews. Here, the martyred Eleazar is actually a priest, and exercises his priestly function by offering his life for purification and ransom (4Macc.6:27-29 and 7:9-12), praying that others may thereby

be saved. His martyrdom is understood as having an atoning value. S.K.Williams' study of the link between 4 Macc. and Hebrews suggests that here is a clear and creative source for our author: "In both treatises the one slain is both priest and offering." (9) He believes that this is no coincidence but that the author surely knew 4 Maccabees, which he dates around AD 35. He writes: "The idea that the precipitous and undeserved death of an exceptionally worthy person can effect expiation for the sins of others served as the lens through which the crucifixion of Jesus could be viewed and understood." (10) Williams is very convincing in this particular context. It seems to me that influences such as these may very well have provided the background thrust to the significance that is attached by our author to the paradoxical claim that Jesus is both priest and victim, mediator and bloody corpse, and that this particular paradox renders his death eternally valid as the crucial, final, "once-for-all" sacrificial offering of blood.

The priestly offering, then, involves the priest's own death. Yet, because of, and through that death he is exalted, and can therefore, in a way never before possible, maintain his priestly relationship with his people eternally. This, of necessity, brings the system of sacrifice to an end: "They" - that is, the victims of the Old dispensation - "might stand for or typify something which could take away sin and thus be a pledge and promise of the something that should do so . . . The difference was that Jesus by the single, consistent, life-long, cross-completed act of his own perfect holiness, of his own death in the flesh to sin and life in the Spirit to God, accomplished and was all that they at the best only represented and were not." (11)

This logic also sheds light on the debate over the meaning of "the new and living way which he opened for us " at 10:20. It suggests

that the "new and living way" is no less than the restored life of the offerer because he is now exalted (and the resurrection seems to be implicit). This interpretation seems to follow naturally from our argument here. F.F.Bruce understood it thus: "For, in effect, the ever-living Christ himself as his people's sacrifice and priest is the way to God." (12) And is not Moffatt correct in interpreting the "through the curtain" of 10:20 as the flesh of Jesus which allowed the blood of his sacrifice to be shed? (13)

Thus the view that the shedding of his own blood was a vital part of Christ's priestly work seems to emerge from this understanding of the key texts at 9:12-14, 9:22 and 10:19, and rests on the Old Testament concept of sacrifice. It serves the theme of promise and fulfilment and makes a vital contribution to the central theme of Christ's priesthood.

b) Blood to represent obedient death

Other scholars approaching Hebrews have however seen less stress on the actual shedding of the sacrificial blood and have understood the emphasis of the writer to lie in a rather different idea of the value of sacrifice. This too contributes its portion to the Christological structure, and must be taken into account.

In this approach, the particularity and specificity of the Levitical provisions for blood in sacrifice are considered insignificant compared with the motivation underlying Christ's sacrifice. This view of sacrifice looks to the will of the offerer who offers himself obediently and thereby sacrifices his own will for the sake of God's will. It looks to the death which is effected by the spilling of the blood as the crucial point, of which the blood is only the symbol. Vincent Taylor understood our author as intending to convey this: "The sacrificial system suggested that a surrendered and

dedicated life was the basis of true fellowship with God . . . No doubt the shed blood might be regarded as if it were endowed with magical properties, but the instructed and thoughtful worshipper knew that it was the symbol of dedicated life, and of a life with which he could identify himself." (14) So those who claim this point (15) go to 10:5-10 as their key text, a text which we have already considered earlier: "When he said above, "Thou hast neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings", then he added, "Lo, I have come to do thy will". And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." This use of Psalm 40:6-8 in the epistle answers to the psalmists' and prophets' critique of the cult with which our author was surely as familiar as he was with Leviticus. The great cry of these men was that God required mercy and not sacrifice, a sacrifice of will and not of ritual detail, a cry well represented by Psalm 40. Indeed both psalmists and prophets represented a tradition which emphasised that the sacrificial system was reduced to irrelevance when the heart and will of the offerer were not involved. Righteous living and justice in social relationships in absolute obedience to the will of God were demanded as priorities as opposed to Levitical ritual. (16) Even as we have encountered the great theme of the obedience of Christ in every aspect of this study, so this view of sacrifice emerges from it and complements it. The blood of sacrifice, then, could represent at different points Christ's life, his body given up to death, and his will which motivated it: "It is his life offered up to God that is alternatively spoken of as his body or his blood." (17)

This approach to our author's view of sacrifice and its relationship to Christ's priesthood creates two interesting exegetical questions, relating to the subsidiary question set up, of the tension

between the claims for Christ in the epistle. The one centres on 9:14: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience" Certain commentators want to assert, in perfect accord with their view of the high Christological stance of the epistle in general, that here is a clear reference to Christ's divine nature on the part of the author (18). Montefiore is representative: "He who in self-sacrifice offered to God his full and perfect humanity was himself eternal by nature, and because of this, the salvation that he procured is everlasting." (19) They go on to make his divine status the real reason why Christ fulfils all sacrifices in his. Others however, recognize the phrase "through the eternal Spirit" as belonging with the aspect of sacrifice under discussion, namely with all those voluntary acts of love and righteousness which share in God's will and are inspired by God's holy Spirit, and are, in Christ's case, committed to God's will to the uttermost, thereby securing the eternal validity of the sacrifice. F.F.Bruce objects to the former interpretation on the grounds that the writer could have said "His eternal Spirit" if that is what he meant, and finds the ideas of Isaiah 53 and the voluntary sacrifice of the Servant behind the verse. (20) R.M.Wilson suggests that it is surely the same Spirit which came upon many in the Old Testament as the work of God. (21) But once again, we will allow A.B.Bruce's eloquence to make the point: "It is the eternal Spirit of holy love, the righteous will fulfilling all righteousness, that gives the sacrifice of Jesus transcendent worth and makes it differ from the ritual sacrifices of Leviticalism." (22)

Such an interpretation is of course in equally perfect accord with a view of Christ as only exalted after the suffering and obedience of a human life. We have already suggested that the "new and living way" at 10:20 can be interpreted as the restored and exalted

life of Christ. This other aspect of sacrifice can throw up a rather different interpretation. It is equally possible that our author meant the will of Christ abandoned to God, which is the "new and living way" he has pioneered.

These exegetical points are both open to discussion, and show us that what we must constantly remember in our discussion of the blood of the sacrifice is that the text is able to embrace both points of view, juxtaposing them as it does so cogently. In a text where 9:12 and 22 stand alongside 9:14, and where 10:19 follows so closely on 10:5-10, it is difficult to concentrate on one at the expense of the other. Whatever else we claim, we must regard both as being vital elements in Christ's priestly action. Even as sacrifice is "the indispensable means to the fulfilment of (a priest's) calling" (23), so it belongs solidly at the centre of the epistle and incorporates in itself both the Levitical idea of God's gracious provision which found its fulfilment in the "sprinkled blood" and the psalmists'/prophets' demand for a righteous obedience in the offered will. Denney expresses it well: "What is contrasted in this passage" - that is, 10:5-10 - "is not sacrifice and obedience, but sacrifice of dumb creatures . . . with sacrifice into which obedience enters, the sacrifice of a rational and spiritual being, which is not passive in death, but in dying makes the will of God its own." (24)

c) Blood to inaugurate the Covenant

The use of the theme of the sprinkled blood in the epistle does not end here however. It has another significant contribution to make to the author's understanding of Christ's priesthood, in relation to the over-arching theme of Covenant. This theme appears explicitly at 8:6ff., in direct connection with the priestly ministry: "But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent

than the old, as the covenant he mediates is better . . . " There follows at 8:8-10 the first appearance of the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah concerning the promise of God for a New Covenant fulfilling and consummating the Old. Then at 9:18-21, we find a description of Moses' instigation of the Old Covenant in which once again the sprinkling of blood is a vital element, and at 10:16-18 a reiteration of Jeremiah's prophecy, leading into the claim that Christ's blood is the "blood of the (New) covenant" at 10:29. Finally at 12:24, we read: " . . . and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel", culminating with the great benediction of 13:20. So the priestly role of Jesus and its sacrificial worth belongs very clearly with the great theme of Covenant. The sacrifice is that which inaugurates the new dispensation and makes the New Covenant effective in and for his followers, enabling them also to live in restored Covenantal relationship with God, as Jeremiah outlined it.

We must at this point consider what our author understood by the word "Covenant" - "διαθήκη". The Hebrew "berith" translated by "διαθήκη", signified God's declaration of his will and purposes for a people or a person in a binding agreement. The Hellenistic use of "διαθήκη" meant a last will and testament, or disposition "made by one party with plenary power which the other party may accept or reject but cannot alter." (25) The translation of the Old Testament into the Greek Septuagint had to embrace these different nuances of meaning, and the result was that there is no clear and unequivocal concept of "διαθήκη" in the Septuagint, but "it hovers between the senses of covenant and disposition" and is explained "in terms of the complex content of the word . . . which the translators were seeking to grasp." (26) The main point for our study, however, is that the idea behind the Covenant of God with Israel was always of God's initiation,

of his grace towards the people. The people's response was not on an equal footing, but, properly, was acceptance and obedience.

Our writer reveals his interest in the ceremony of covenant making at 9:18ff, which clearly looks back to Exodus 24:1-11, where Moses uses the blood of sacrificial victims to throw half over the altar and half over the people whilst ratifying the covenant with Israel on God's behalf: "And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."" (Ex.24:8) In the background to this, and from the gathering of various texts, many scholars have understood the formula "to cut a covenant" to imply that the sacrifice of a creature whose body was cut or slit into two parts was a traditional rite at such a ratification. They look to Gen.15:10-18: "and he brought him all these, cut them in two and laid each half over against the other. . . .when the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold a smoking firepot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram". And they also look to Psalm 50:5 and to Jeremiah 34:18. Quell points out in this context that the actual sacrifice as such was not the important part of the covenant making, though it was in close proximity to it. But rather, the self-maledictory oath represented by the passing through the two halves of the victim was the key action. To those who disobey the oath to keep the covenant, a curse ensues, represented by the "bloody corpses". (27) In J.J.Hughes' study of covenant practice, he takes this up: "This act signified the pledge unto death of the ratifying party should he prove unfaithful to his oaths." (28) Thus in the ceremony of cutting the covenant, a sacrifice was made to symbolise the self-maledictory oath.

What then is happening at Exodus 24, the key passage for our author? Quell suggests that the phrase "the blood of the covenant"

(occurring again at Zech.9:11) must have been a well known expression implying that at this stage of the Old Testament story, blood had become "a constitutive element" of the covenant ratification ritual, whereby the blood itself symbolised the covenant between the two parties, who, after sprinkling, are inseparably linked to each other in a "fellowship of substance". (29)

We can return here to the importance of blood for our author's conception of the priestly ministry of Christ. He wants to assert that the Old Covenant type which he describes at 9:18-22 has failed because those on whom the blood fell (at Exodus 24) - that is, the people - could not match the obedience it required. So, in Christ, who mediates the New Covenant with blood, and blood which is his own, the old type is abnegated. The author, therefore, draws a typological parallel between the two Covenants and embraces the necessity for the shedding of Christ's blood as part of the parallel. (30) He was not innovative in this (see chapter 6), but must have based himself on the tradition of accounts of the Last Supper in which the same conclusion is drawn: "This is the blood of the New Covenant" (see 1 Cor.11:25, Matt.26:28, Mk.14:24, Lk.22:20). We can trace here that important theme of promise/fulfilment once again. Even as the atoning work of the high priest is brought to its consummation in the atoning work of Christ through his sacrifice of blood and will, so the work of Moses, who ratified the ancient covenant relationship with blood, is brought to its consummation in Christ whose own blood is shed to secure the New Covenantal relationship.

Thus the shedding of Christ's blood is an important element of his priestly work in bringing in the New Covenant, playing a significant part in the typological parallel which is drawn between Exodus 24 and the inauguration of the New Covenant. Once again, as in our discussion of blood for sacrifice, we must be constantly aware

that the ritual of blood, like the sacrificial atonement ritual, was firmly rooted in the belief that God had graciously provided for his people. It served as a reminder that God shared intimately with them and willed that relationship for them. So sacrifice was understood as that "means given by God himself for wiping away the sins which prevented his chosen people from fulfilling the obligations of the Covenant relationship." (31) It would be true to say that the provision of a system of sacrifice enabled the people to live in the Covenant as God intended. That they had not managed to do so lay in their own weakness not in any limitation of God's grace. J.J.Hughes actually calls Jesus' titles in the epistle "covenant offices" in this sense. (32)

But what are we to make of the use of "διαθήκη" at 9:16 and 17 ? "For where a will is involved" - and this is the RSV translation - "the death of the one who made it must be established. For a will takes effect only at death since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive." Are we to assume that our author has suddenly switched over into the Hellenistic concept of "διαθήκη" as last will and testament? Are we beginning to think of Christ's death as the means of bringing us into our inheritance? Then his blood may, after all, be synonymous with his death. The New Covenant is inherited by us because he has died. Philo certainly used the term thus in the Hellenistic sense. Murray interprets it thus (33) and this is taken up by F.F.Bruce (34). Moffatt thinks he uses the double sense of the term. (35)

However in some recent studies, this view has been refuted. G.D.Kilpatrick rejects the idea as confusing. (36) Both he and J.J.Hughes follow Westcott, who maintained it must be understood as "berith" in its Old Testament sense throughout. Given that we are dealing in typological parallels and in the promise/fulfilment theme

which serves the over-arching Covenant theology, the connotations of blood and sacrifice and ritual seem to underlie even 9:16 and 17. The translation of "ἐπὶ νεκροῖς" at 9:17 as "after death" to fit in with the view of "testament" is forced. The reason the plural is used here seems to point to the ongoing discussion about the sacrificial dead bodies through which the covenant is cut, and whose blood was used for ratification by Moses, looking back at Genesis 15:9 and Jeremiah 34:18 (37). Hughes takes "φέρεσθαι" at 9:16 as meaning to "represent" the death of the one who ratifies, rather than to "be established", and this reflects the Old Testament practice as discussed above. He goes on to translate 9:16 thus: "For where there is a covenant, it is necessary to bring forward (i.e. represent) the death of the one who ratifies it." (38)

Such an exegesis of 9:16 and 17, with its implications for our author's approach to covenant generally, emphasises the interrelation of the ideas of blood for sacrifice and blood for covenant. If this is what our author meant, then Jesus is understood as inaugurating the New Covenant by the blood ritual as it was practised, and, at one and the same time, himself paying the covenant penalty of death, due to those who broke the self-maledictory covenant oath. The Mediator therefore is also the representative "bloody corpse". The parallel paradox occurs when, juxtaposed beside this, he is understood as offering the sacrifice for atonement with himself in the role of both victim and offering, as discussed earlier. Both these aspects of the blood are therefore subsumed into the Christology of the great High Priest. Attridge in his recent commentary has made the same point. He calls the sacrificial offering not only "atoning" but also "covenant-inaugurating." (39)

We are recalled once more to the view that the epistle emerges from a "high" view of the ancient provisions for sacrifice and blood-

shedding, a view which takes them seriously and which makes a cogent use of the different nuances of their symbolism to demonstrate all those ways in which Christ as the great High Priest brings them to their fulfilment. Attridge writes of 12:24: "What Christians ultimately have approached is not some distant or ethereal eschatological reality but "blood". Like that of the Yom Kippur, Red Heifer and Covenant sacrifices, this blood is "sprinkled" and the epithet recalls the interpretation of Christ's death in terms of those various sacrificial acts of the Old Testament. It was through the "sprinkling" of Christ's blood that true atonement was effected and thereby a true and lasting Covenant relationship with God established." (40)

There are times when we might suspect the author of merging all these strands so completely that the symbolism takes over from Levitical exactness! So whilst Westcott congratulates him for the "representative completeness" of his references to Levitical sacrifices (41), Wilson, a century later, will complain that he is occasionally arbitrary and inaccurate. (42) This seems to speak for itself, for as we have discussed, the motive-force behind the priestly theme is always a paraenetic one. Here is the pastor who is earnestly evoking the figure of the High Priest who will most effectively speak to his desperate flock. If the great paradoxes of priest/victim and mediator/representative bloody corpse create that powerful alchemy which can persuade them, no matter that he might have said goats when he meant calves and bulls when he meant goats! Because that paradox is the new element in the ancient system, it brings that system to its end, and brings in the New. And here once again, we can recall the possible influence of Jewish martyrology behind the setting up of the paradox.

d) The Relationship of Sacrifice and Priesthood

From our study of blood for sacrifice and covenant, we have drawn near to our author's conception of the priesthood as it was under the old dispensation and as it is fulfilled in Christ. The oath which God speaks in the old dispensation to the King in Jerusalem in the words of Psalm 110:4 is manifested in Jesus Christ: "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." (5:6 and 7:21) The direct reference back to the oath appears at 7:19 and 20: "On the other hand, a better hope" - that is, a hope in Jesus - "is introduced through which we draw near to God. And it was not without an oath . . ."

If we ask how, under the old dispensation, the task of the priest was perceived, we have seen that the shedding of the sacrificial victim's blood and the sprinkling on the altar was believed to effect atonement as a generous provision for the people given of God's grace. That this had failed was due to the people's inability to grasp the meaning of the relationship with God which his grace required, and their resultant reduction of that provision to a ritual which could not truly cleanse, or truly bring them a sense of forgiveness. So where restoration, forgiveness and cleansing were albeit the aims of the priest as he offered up the blood of sacrifice, nonetheless those aims never achieved their objective. Within the over-arching theme of promise and fulfilment, a typological parallel is drawn with the priestly work of Christ, who is the priest par excellence, because he offers his own blood in willing and obedient response to God's will as one epitomising the New Covenantal possibility. He therefore makes an effective sacrifice, and one which is effective for all time, as its culmination and fulfilment: "For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the

flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?" (9:13 and 14)

Similarly, in the old dispensation, Moses in priestly role ratified the Covenant with sprinkled blood to signify that an oath was being taken, whereby the promises would be kept, and the two parties to the Covenant would be inseparably linked. Again, the Covenant had failed because the people were unable to maintain the obedience which it demanded on their part. So again the original aims of an intimate and righteous relationship between God and his people had been lost. And again, the typological parallel is drawn with Christ, who is the perfect mediator of the New Covenant because he chooses of his own will in proper obedience to the will of the Father to offer his own blood, as that which will bind God and his people inseparably together: "But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises." (8:6) The direct result of this New Covenant is proclaimed clearly by our author through the words of Jeremiah, having already clearly demonstrated to his readers that he believes the prophecy has found its fulfilment in Christ. The result is forgiveness, a proper relationship based on unwavering confidence in the promises, and open access to God: "I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach everyone his fellow or everyone his brother saying, "Know the Lord", for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more." (8:10-12 and 10:16 and 17)

We have already tried to grasp why the blood of Jesus given in sacrifice and as the inauguration of the Covenant is seen as the consummation of the ancient sacrifices and blood rituals. But why is

it efficacious ? Why should this one priestly sacrifice mean the end of the old dispensation ? The answer comes at different levels. We shall look at some of the answers to these questions briefly here, and then in greater depth in the following chapter.

It is effective because it is the blood of one who is proclaimed Son. (43) Denney puts this succinctly: "Christ's obedience is not merely that which is required of all men, it is that which is required of a Redeemer . . . " (44)

It is effective because it is the blood of one who has pioneered the way of true humanity, as forerunner of the author's flock and ours, and has plumbed the very depths of suffering without failing in obedience to the will of God. It is the blood of one who is the very type of that man of the New Covenant described by the prophecy of Jeremiah and by Psalm 40. And we might justifiably infer an implicit Last Adam Christology here. Dubose writes: " . . . the law, the obedience, the righteousness all realized and actual in a concrete, perfect human life, in the accomplished fact of humanity in his person perfected in its personal relationship with God." (45) And later: "The whole world of irresistible temptation, the whole flesh of mortal weakness, of impossible obedience, of unattainable holiness of life, died in and with him." (46)

It is also effective because it is the blood of one who has been made perfect through his suffering, and has, notwithstanding, remained "without blemish". He has maintained faith in the promises of God to the uttermost and remained innocent of apostasy. It has been shed at cost, so that the priest who offers it up understands better than any other what it is to suffer, and can therefore facilitate our obedience to perfection, from a position of compassion: "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens." (7:26)

Even so can we discern our author's intention here. He has a deep and anxious concern for his readers. He is concerned to reveal to them by means of the typological parallels which he draws between the work of the old dispensation and the work of the new, that in Christ the priestly ministry has come to its perfection. But more than that, he believes that Jesus' priestly ministry can effectually sustain and comfort and strengthen them. So he uses every energy to convince them to remain with the flock and not to revert back to those very rituals which have served their purpose and can serve no more. He cannot allow them to commit the sin of apostasy to which they are being tempted. He therefore asks them to remain with Christ "outside the camp" (13:13) - outside the cultic securities of the old regime: "The place of the Christian is not in holy places with the security which is offered in cultic performances, but in the uncleanness of the world." (47)

Thus it is that, through the means of those rituals of sacrifice and Covenant-making with which he and his readers were so familiar, he is able to argue for their consummation and end. He has reflected in "impressive depth" (48) on the sacrificial system. If we return to the division of opinion among scholars with which we opened this account as to whether or not the shedding of blood is significant for the author of itself, or only as a description of Christ's voluntary death in which his very will was sacrificed, then we must argue that the two are virtually inseparable. The author actually makes use of both aspects of sacrifice in juxtaposition with each other to serve a purpose which is always primarily paraenetic, as pastor to a flock. And that is because all these nuances of the sacrifice of Jesus enable him, at different levels and with a variety of emphases, to draw the typological parallels by which he cogently constructs the argument for Christ as the fulfilment of the old and the perfect and ultimate priest of the New.

CHAPTER 11 THE PRIESTLY TITLE. WHY IS PRIEST HIS CENTRAL TITLE ?

a) A Covenant Theology

We have claimed that the work of the writer to the Hebrews is an exhortation steeped in reverence for the Jewish scriptures, using typological parallels drawn carefully from them, in order to serve the central thesis, that in Christ the old dispensation is brought to an end, its purposes all fulfilled. We have shown that we are dealing with a theology of Covenant and of the relationship between the two Covenants, Old and New. The simple answer to the question of "Why priest ?", then, is that the work of priest was the Covenant office whereby the people were reminded of their Covenant obligation and restored to proper relationship with God by the sacrifice he made on their behalf. (1) Our author understood the office of Priest as belonging firmly within the gracious provision of God for his people, inside that system of sacrifice and blood-shedding which we have discussed in some depth. The title of Priest is therefore the natural claim for him to make. In Jesus, he is able to portray the one who is the ultimate Priest as the consummating gift of God's grace, the climax of God's initiative, and the new provision by which the people, and his flock in particular, may in future maintain their Covenant allegiance obediently: "The things that meant the taking away of sin were distinct promises from God of the thing that should take away sin. The blood of bulls and goats of course could not take away sin, but it spake of a blood that could and would." (2) Attridge has recognized this in his new commentary: "The implication is that Christ is the "heavenly" High Priest in the truest sense of the term in his covenant-inaugurating act." (3)

But if Priest is the most obvious vehicle for the Covenant theology which over-arches the epistle, we must ask how the author

understands Jesus to be able to fulfil his priestly function better than any other priest before him. He is, after all, dealing with the same sinful material as any priest of old. How does his priesthood change things ?

b) What makes Jesus different from other priests ? Jesus as victim/priest - "representative bloody corpse"/mediator

The main thrust of the author's answer to this question lies, I am convinced, in that great paradox which we have already discussed with its antecedents in martyrology, as being the new element introduced into the ancient system, whereby Jesus is not only offerer and mediator of the Covenant practices but also the one who offers himself as victim. Herein is his paramount superiority. Herein, he epitomises absolute abandonment to God's purposes, and a complete alignment with that will of God which is all of grace. The fulfilment of his vocation as Priest is achieved as he offers himself as victim, and willingly makes the ultimate sacrifice.

Moreover, his perfect obedience keeps him from sin, an attribute which no other priest could ever claim, as the author is at pains to point out: "he" - that is, every high priest - "is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people." (5:3) The sinlessness of Jesus, however, as we have already recognized, is not a corollary of any status he might possess, though some have so argued, but of the complete maintenance of obedience to his vocation in absolute trust and under severe testing and temptation to apostasy, without any kind of immunity: "For we have not a High Priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning" (4:15). And we might also cite 5:8: "He learned through what he suffered." This point is very important in its far-reaching consequences. It

means that the writer is not afraid to address the idea of Jesus as growing to and achieving perfection by a process of suffering, a point which has already been discussed at some length. But once grasped, we see the implications for the writer's argument: Jesus the priest who is also the willing victim is the perfect and ultimate priest because in every way and at every stage of his life, he fulfils in practice the prophetic utterance of Jeremiah at 31:31, of the New Covenant written on the heart. Jesus in whom the paradox meets embodies the man of the New Covenant in his life and death on the cross.

Jeremiah's prophecy at Jer.31:31 is quoted directly and in full at chapter 8. We must note how Jesus, as the epistle portrays him, fits it perfectly: I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people . . . for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest. I will be merciful toward their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more." Dubose, writing albeit many years ago, puts it eloquently: " . . . the law, the obedience, the righteousness all realized and actual in a concrete, perfect human life, in the accomplished fact of humanity in his person perfected in its personal relationship with God." (4) Jesus is clearly revealed in the epistle as the one who consistently maintained an obedient covenant relationship with God, and kept faith in that relationship in the darkest hour of temptation right to the cross.(5:7) Attridge makes precisely this point: " . . . as the High Priestly Son of God, . . . he made accessible " - to others who followed him - "a life of covenant fidelity and perfectly exemplified the faithful service that such a life involves." (5) Perhaps the best example of this point is the author's use of Psalm 40 spoken by Jesus at 10:9: "Lo, I have come to do thy will."

It seems to me that it is precisely here, in the meticulous detail of the New Covenant whose Priest he is, that we once again discern a latent Adam Christology in the epistle. It is not worked out explicitly but exists "in nuce" (6). It is there in the portrayal of Jesus as the one who lives out his life as God intended in creation in a proper relationship of trust and obedience and without sin. And here, sin is specifically apostasy: "He was himself the supreme demonstration and manifestation of the fact that man attains or becomes himself, not by nature nor by self but by God. And yet, in fulfilling God" - that is, God's intention for man - "he fulfils himself, and in fulfilling himself, he fulfils his nature." (7)

But the writer's exposition does not remain here. It belongs within the broader paraenesis. He wants to claim that this perfect priesthood understood in these terms is of eternal significance because it instigates a time in which those who follow Jesus - and he is particularly concerned for his own flock - can now reach the fulfilment of God's will for them in creation. As we have consistently maintained, the Christology remains in the service of the paraenesis. Thus those who confess Jesus Christ may now be "God's people", in right and intimate relationship with him, their sins forgiven. And to put this in terms of the Covenant theology of the writer, it is now possible for all to be within the New Covenant. This priesthood therefore opens new possibilities to those who follow Jesus.

We return therefore to the question of what precisely the author understands Jesus' priestly work to achieve in the lives of the flock to which he is devoting his energies.

c) Priest because through his Priestly action the author's people are enabled to "enter the Rest" of knowing God

Here I once again believe that the contrast between the Old and New dispensations is the hinge point of the argument. In chapter three, the author shows how, under Moses and the ancient Covenant, the people failed through disobedience and lack of faith to "enter the Rest" of God: "And to whom did he swear that they should never enter his rest but those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief." (3:18) "The Rest" to which those Old Testament words applied was the Promised Land, but that concrete and actual Rest is taken by the writer and transformed into what can only be called an eschatological Rest, which is both "now" for his followers and "not yet". Many scholars have acknowledged this tension between the Now and the Not yet in the epistle. Moffatt (8), Manson (9) and Barrett (10) did so earlier, but very recent scholars such as G.Hughes and Wilson (11) understand the writer's point to be that believers are already entering the Rest as part of the process which will lead to eschatological completion. G.Hughes represents the position well when he writes: "Jesus stood firmly within the history of this people who must look to the future believingly, while as priest, he is now the means of their participating already in the eschatological realities." (12)

F.F.Bruce on the contrary thinks the Rest only comes at the Christian's death, (13) but this view does not really account for the fact that the opportunity of living in the new dispensation brought about by Christ is already available, offering as it does a chance of sharing, as Jesus did, in the perfection of God's ultimate purpose for mankind. Thus at chapter 4, he claims the Rest now for those who have confessed Christ - "For we who have believed enter that rest" (4:3) - whilst maintaining the urgent paraenetic thrust to keep faith lest the

Rest be ultimately denied: "Therefore while the promise of entering his rest remains, let us fear lest any of you be judged to have failed to reach it." (4:1) It is apparent from this that both faith and obedience are the keys to entering the rest, and Jesus is the one who as their "ἀρχηγός/πρόδρομος" and priest will enable them to reach it. The Rest of the New Covenant seems to be equated in the logic of the argument at the close of chapter 4 with a confident access to the Father, based in a knowledge of him and a personal relationship with him for themselves. Even as Jesus embodies the prophecy of Jeremiah, so he embodies the Rest understood in these terms: "Since then, we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who, in every respect, has been tempted as we are yet without sinning. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace . . . "

(4:14-16) Later, at 7:19, confident access to the Father will be equated with the "better hope" to which the writer exhorts his flock to "hold fast", a point in the text which A.B.Bruce called "the dogmatic centre of the epistle." (14) This perception cannot be too far from the truth. The priestly work of both old and new dispensations was to bring the people back into a right relationship with God consisting in knowing him for themselves. To be in that relationship is, I would claim, to "enter the Rest". The author maintains that this is possible in the "now" of his readers and in their "not yet" because of the figure of Jesus, the High Priest par excellence. He helps them because he has shown them the example of one who lived "in the Rest" as perfect embodiment of the New Covenantal life, and yet at the same time went on to achieve it through his death and exaltation.

This latter aspect of his "rest" is located firmly within the theme of his exaltation to the right hand, in the terms of Psalm 110: "He sat down at the right hand of God." (10:12) David Hay's study of the relationship between Psalm 110 and Hebrews has stressed the importance of the heavenly session of Jesus, and suggests that it may be equated with Jesus' own personal entrance into the Rest. The Rest then can be interpreted as implying "existence in the saving presence of God." (15) And he too acknowledges the paraenetic thrust of the argument: "Believers are summoned to guide their pilgrimage by looking to Jesus, considering both his earthly career and his celestial glory. Their conduct should be modelled on his earthly perseverance, but they are also to meditate on his session, the reward of that perseverance." (16)

Finally, I would return to the model/means dichotomy which we have found a useful way of understanding the function of the titles which the author draws into the service of the paraenesis. Our discussion of "the Rest" must not remain only with the example of Jesus - model, pattern, pioneer. For there is more than a mere "imitatio Christi" here. The writer consistently retains the sense of Jesus the Priest who goes on exercising his Covenantal office still, as the very means of salvation. There is within the theme of Rest, with its rather precarious eschatological balance, the sense that the session has vindicated Jesus' example so as to give him "the power of an indestructible life" (7:16), whereby he can continue to be the very agent of their attaining the Rest for themselves.

d) Priest, because through his Priestly action the writer's people receive expiation for their sins

Once again we must remind ourselves that here we are dealing with what is primarily a theology of Covenant, imbued with enormous

reverence for the ancient provisions of God. We still remain with the prophecy of Jeremiah as quoted at 8:12, but now with particular reference to the words: "I will remember their sins no more."

As agent of the old dispensation, the priest was the one who dealt with the people's sin in the way God had provided, the way of sacrifice. The understanding of the value of sacrifice has been discussed at length in the preceding chapter, but it is important to stress the central point, which is that God's gift was provided by his grace, to remind the people of his constant love and mercy towards them. The priest's work on the Day of Atonement was expiatory: to cleanse the consciences of the sinful people and bring them back to a proper Covenantal relationship once more (2:17). That he failed in the ancient times was a problem of the people's weakness not a limitation of grace. And now at last, in Christ, the grace of God is at its fullest: He offers Jesus himself once and for all as the provision of the New dispensation. This sacrifice is full and perfect, undiminished by sin and weakness, and is therefore able to work at the level of conscience. What was only working provisionally and at a more superficial level in the old dispensation now achieves its proper purpose: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?" (9:14)

One subsidiary issue is raised by this. At 7:25, but also 2:17 and 18, 4:14-16, 8:2 and 9:24, it seems that the writer thinks of the sacrifice on the cross as sufficient, whilst at the same time maintaining that Jesus is fully effective priest because he is exalted and can go on interceding for sinners so that no further sins can prevent their access to God. So whilst on the one hand there is the sense of a completed work, on the other hand at these points we find a sense of a work which continues in heaven where Jesus as advocate

pleads on our behalf. David Hay pinpoints the problem: "Why should he need to intercede after offering an utterly adequate sacrifice ? . . . if the intercession is central to the author's soteriology, why does he make it only once" - that is, the claim specified at 7:25 - "and never discuss it systematically as he does Jesus' death ?" (17) Hay's answer is that the intercessory strand belongs with a foreign element which was part of a tradition about Jesus which he assumed (see Romans 8:34) but whose implications he did not necessarily address.

Peterson's answer is that the image of the intercessor is used to stress the compassion of Jesus which remains always available and accessible to the faithful who may be struggling. (18) Peterson seems to have struck the right note. As we have already commented in our discussion of the "archegos/prodromos" titles, the writer has recognized the value of shared experience as the great fount of compassion. The importance of 7:25 and the other verses we have mentioned always seems to rest here, in the absolute sympathy and understanding and sufficiency of Jesus, to which the author points his people as part of his plea for them to maintain faith. Because Jesus has experienced everything that they might have to experience, they can be secure: "For'because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted." (2:18)

I suspect this fairly unresolved tension between complete/incomplete has accounted for the attitude some scholars have adopted to the sacrifice of Jesus. Nairne seems to suggest that by some continuous liturgical action in heaven, Christ goes on pleading the sacrifice made on Calvary: "It is repeated in each believer when he absolutely offers himself in Christ to God . . . And so the course of argument leads to the sacrifice which we each and all in Christ offer at Holy Communion." (19) And B.A.Demarest has "shown how Roman Catholic interpretation of the concept of intercession tended to be

more literal." (20) This view is untenable in my opinion. The sacrificial aspect of the priestly work is surely completed on the cross, and hence the constant stress on "once-for-all" - "ἐφάπαξ". And the theme of exaltation and session also seems to refute it.

Thus the portrayal of Jesus as priest who offers expiatory sacrifice for sin is located firmly in the theme of Covenant. It facilitates the writer's claim that through the offering on the cross, it is now possible for "sins to be remembered no more" (8:12), thereby fulfilling that key Old Testament prophecy. Under this interpretation, the theme of intercession, viewed as a subsidiary thrown up by a much more major intention can be understood as a useful pastoral tool. It actually enables him to temper the urgent thrust of the paraenesis with a most comforting reassurance. It shows us the compassion he himself had for a flock whose temptation to grasp cultic security was so great: "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (4:16) The priest he portrays is one who will always understand because he has shared in humanity.

e) Priest because even as the suffering of his priestly offering is vindicated, so the writer's people will also be vindicated if they maintain faith

Finally we address the eschatological dimension of the writer's exhortation, one which we have already touched on under the theme of Rest. He seeks to persuade his flock to "hold fast", to remain loyal followers of Jesus in the light of the promise of an ultimate triumph and reward. Once again, this aspect of the priestly work is intimately tied in to the theme of Covenant and of blood sacrifice. Once again therefore, the title of Priest must be understood as a covenant-inaugurating office: "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city

of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . . and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel." (12:18-24) And once again, there is a tension between the "even now" and the "not yet". They may even now follow the example of the one who fulfils the meaning of new covenantal obligation in a "concentration of sacrificial devotion and dedication" (21), and they may trust his exalted energies to procure salvation for them as they follow his lead. Herein of course lies the significance of chapter 13, which is no mere adjunct to the epistle, but a climax of the paraenesis worked out in practical advice: " . . . For he has said, "I will never fail you nor forsake you." Hence we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper. I will not be afraid; what can man do to me ?"" (13:5 and 6). The maintenance of faith in the face of the temptation to apostasy will certainly lead "outside the camp" (13:13), that is, outside the cultic securities to which they were clinging and which seemed a safe retreat, outside with Jesus Christ in a life lived to its fullness as people of the New Covenant. 13:20 is therefore the eloquent and powerful summation of the whole careful and complex structure: "Now may the God of Peace who brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." (13:20 and 21) (22) Attridge notes the phrase, "brought again from the dead" as typical of the author's interest not in resurrection language but in the language of exaltation, and has a similar comment on the value of 13:20 and 21. He writes that the phrase, "blood of the eternal covenant", "rehearses in an extremely condensed way the exposition of Christ's sacrificial act." (23)

f) Conclusions

Having now examined the priestly claim in some detail, we can see it within the overall context of the whole thrust of the writer's concern. This particular title answers that concern supremely, because Priest is a Covenantal office, readily accessible and comprehensible to minds already steeped in the ways of the old dispensation. Through it, the writer seeks to persuade his fellow Christians to maintain their faith as partakers in the new. Jesus, Covenant-inaugurator, victim and offerer, embodies par excellence the Priest who can effect in them all that is needed to partake in the new fully and eternally.

As we have already considered, the other Christological titles are all of vital importance as he sets up his own particular emphasis. Each one facilitates the over-arching concern. Jesus the great pioneer and forerunner leads the way to be followed but also through his faith somehow enables their faith. Jesus the Son, who has grown to his perfection and is now exalted, remains both pattern and agent of help and strength. But the priestly title incorporates the interplay of functions and embraces all these complex and varied nuances, offering to the reader the key affirmation which unlocks the rest. (24)

CHAPTER 12 A LAST WORD.

Having carefully examined the background of the epistle with its many strands, and the function of the various titles attributed to Jesus as they relate to the paraenetic purpose which first motivated the author, we return finally to a reassertion of the claim that we are dealing here with what is primarily a theology of Covenant. The writer's reverence for the older Jewish dispensation has emerged at every point. His respect for the ancient Jewish ways of approaching God, the system of sacrifices by which the people were enabled to remain in the covenant relationship, cannot be in question. But he is concerned to show that that system has now been superseded by the mediation of one who offers the possibility of forgiveness by the sacrifice, not of other victims, but of himself. This sacrifice makes possible a new covenantal relationship in terms of Jeremiah's prophecy, an inner and interior relationship with God.

That the one who offers it should be cast into the role of Priest is the natural consequence of his theology. We have, therefore, examined his original and creative enterprise in portraying Jesus in this role. It was an enterprise in which he explored every possible avenue which would facilitate his portrayal of the great High Priest, including other diverse, Hellenistic influences relevant to his theme, influences which he merged together into the powerful synthesis which comprises this epistle. At the same time, we have stressed that this creative Christology never remained at the level of a treatise undertaken for its own sake. But instead, it was put to the service of the author's underlying motive in writing, his urgent pastoral concern for his own flock. For he had surely seen their temptation to apostasy and he believed that to be the sin from which there would be no return. The question then which most preoccupied him was how to show his people that Jesus as their Priest was the culmination of all that

preceded him, both their supreme example and the only possible deliverer.

We have examined the various other important titles which he brought into play in the epistle, and have claimed them as the foundations for the title of Priest. We have seen that Jesus is entitled "pioneer" and "forerunner" in order for the author to show that he has learned through experience willingly undergone the priestly compassion commensurate with his task. We have examined the way the author portrays him in a process of perfecting through suffering in order to claim that his priesthood is rooted in an understanding of humanity, after having fulfilled, in and for humanity, all that God intended in first creation, all that "Adam" failed to fulfil. We have considered the way in which the author shows one who already has cosmological significance undergoing the discipline of obedient sonship in order to be exalted to eternal priesthood, whereby he can continue to enable all who are trying to follow: "Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people." (2:17)

At the same time, we have shown that the typological structure of the epistle underpins all the titles, so that in every context and every claim, he is able to point to Jesus as the perfect exemplar of it - the one who, par excellence, is pioneer, perfected one, perfecter and Son. All these, we have claimed, contribute to the central portrait of the Priest, who is Priest in the truest sense in his covenant-inaugurating, unblemished, and totally obedient offering of his very self.

The tension in the Christological titles, such as that between Son and Pioneer, and between Perfected One and Perfecter, has caused

some scholars to claim a full-blown pre-existent emphasis in the epistle, and this has remained a subsidiary question throughout. Some have rested the efficacy of the Priest in his status as pre-existent Son of God. Indeed, on the surface, chapters 1 and 2 with their use of Wisdom/Logos terminology can suggest such a status if taken in isolation from the remainder of the text. However, it is the claim of this study that the writer uses such terminology because it was part of his Alexandrian intellectual background, and because for him, there was no need to reconcile such language with much more directly "adoptionist" language of more primitive approaches. In this approach, as we have seen, Jesus is perfected through a process of suffering and exalted to the highest status only after death and resurrection (which is implicit, but never worked out). If then the author's motive was to persuade by means of all the language which might help him, then it was not his concern neatly to reconcile the different strands. The typological structuring of the epistle underpinning the theme of promise and fulfilment was certainly served by a glance at the forms of God's address leading up to that which is God's supreme address in Christ. But equally, it was served by a glance at Moses and Joshua, who were pioneers and forerunners into the Promised Land, and who, in the case of Moses, instigated the Old Covenant, leading up to the portrait of the pioneer/forerunner par excellence and the one who inaugurated the New Covenant. Similarly a glance at the dignity of the priesthood of Melchizedek, a familiar figure in Alexandrian philosophy prefiguring the ultimate authority of Christ's priesthood, is juxtaposed with a glance at the Levitical priesthood as it prepared the way for the priest who, in offering himself, rendered all other sacrifices unnecessary. Indeed in some senses, all these are antitypes and images only of the type which is Christ, a point well supported by Dunn's stress that Wisdom/Logos terminology at this period remained

firmly metaphorical, as ways of comprehending God's interaction with his world: "However much the language used of them may depict them as independent entities, it never rises above the vivid metaphors and poetic imagery of Hebrew thought." (1)

In answer then to the subsidiary question of status in the epistle, we have shown that there are points in the text at which it would be easy to claim a view of Christ as pre-existent, but that they can be equally understood in terms of the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, or in terms of an implicit Adam Christology, which in my view is certainly the source for the reference to Psalm 8 in chapter 2, rather than the idea of a pre-existent one descending from heaven to save.

The Christology of this epistle is therefore primarily functional, created from a veritable seedbed of different and sometimes conflicting ideas, but focussing on the portrayal of Jesus as Priest. And it is because the author is so much steeped in his Jewish inheritance, that this supreme title answers for him better than any other title (though all have their contribution to make) the needs of his flock.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter 1.

1. For example, see J.Moffatt, Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, (T.& T.Clark, Edinburgh, 1911), p.452 ; W.G.Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, (SCM Press, London 1965), pp.278 and 282 ; J.D.G.Dunn, Christology in the Making, (SCM Press, London 1980), p.55 ; R.M.Wilson, Hebrews, (Wm.B.Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1987), pp.14-15.
2. H.Attridge, The Epistle to the Hebrews, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1989), p.25.
3. D.Peterson, Hebrews and Perfection, (Cam. Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1982).
4. G.Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, (Cam. Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1979), p.72.
5. See H.Attridge, op.cit., p.21. He writes, and his point supports my contention, "The paraenesis is not a perfunctory afterthought to a dogmatic treatise, and the pastoral thrust of the work is clear. Yet neither is the doctrinal exposition an unimaginative repetition of well-worn truths adduced to support an exhortation. Rather, in that exposition, we find a highly creative adaptation of early Christian traditions."

Chapter 2.

1. A.B.Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews, An Exegetical Study, (T.& T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1899), p.271.
2. J. Moffatt, Epistle to the Hebrews, (T.& T.Clark, Edinburgh, 1924), p.124.
3. This study has not had the benefit of the commentary of W.Wrede, 1906, who apparently wrote that Hebrews is "a study concerning the relationship of the old and the new covenants." See S.G.Sowers, The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews, (Evz.-Verlag, Zurich, 1965), p.93, note 11.
4. W.P.Dubose, Highpriesthood and Sacrifice, (Longmans, Green and Co., London 1908), p.163
5. H. Montefiore, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, (A.& C. Black, London, 1964), p.96.
6. F.V.Filson, Yesterday: A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Chapter 13, (SCM Press, London, 1967), p.83.
7. F.V.Filson, op.cit., p.41.
8. R.Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews, (E.J.Brill, Leiden, 1970), p.175.
9. S.G.Sowers, op.cit., p.113.
10. L.K.K.Dey, The Intermediary World and Patterns of Perfection, (Scholars Press, Montana, 1975).
11. M.D'Angelo, Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews, (Scholars Press, Montana), 1979.
12. G.Hughes, op.cit., pp.30 and 97.
13. D.Peterson, op.cit., p.198.
14. R.M.Wilson, op.cit.
15. H.Attridge, op.cit.

Chapter 3.

1. G.Hughes, op.cit., p.78.
2. See R.M.Wilson, op.cit., pp.218, 237 and 254-255.
3. Of Chapter 6, F.F.Bruce writes: "Our author's meaning can be exaggerated to the point of distortion when he is understood to say that for sins committed after baptism, there can be no repentance." He reminds us of Tertullian's "rigorist interpretation", which F.C.Burkitt reiterated in 1912. F.F.Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews, (Wm.B/Eerdmans, Michigan, 1964), p.123.
4. G.Hughes expresses it well: ". . . the apostasy-sin which hangs so ominously over the community." G.Hughes, op.cit., p.79.
5. For example: F.F.Bruce, op.cit., pp.258-259 ; G.Hughes, op.cit., p.46 and p.171, note 140 ; R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.194 ; H Attridge, op.cit., p.22. But J.Moffatt earlier had made the same point, op.cit., pp.47, 59, 149.

6. As L.K.K.Dey, op.cit., p.211 and F.V.Filson, op.cit., p.38 want to argue.
7. 2 Maccabees 2:7, cited by C.K.Barrett, The New Testament Background, Selected Documents, (SPCK, London, 1956), p.26.
8. G.Hughes, op.cit., p.46.
9. J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.47.
10. See J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.59 ; R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.92.
11. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.169.
12. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.292.

Chapter 4.

1. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.222.
2. ed. C.K.Barrett, op.cit., p.184
3. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.222.
4. W.Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1951), p.142, comments on 9:28, whilst acknowledging an "Alexandrian section": "The apocalyptic distinction of the two Ages of Time, though crossed by the idealistic antithesis of the two worlds of reality, has not been absorbed into, or lost, in the latter." F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.226, comments on 10:1 that "the shadow is used not so much in the Platonic sense of a copy of the heavenly and eternal idea, as in the sense of foreshadowing." See also R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.170. R.Williamson's comment is more biting: "The idea that such a heavenly ministry could begin as a result of an event on earth . . . is about as far removed from Platonism as one could wish to get." R.Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews, (E.J.Brill, Leiden, 1970), p.158.
5. Y.Yadin, The Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews, Scripta Hierosolymitana IV, 1958.
6. H.Kosmala, Hebräer-Essener-Christen, Studia Post Biblica, Vol.I, (E.J.Brill, Leiden, 1959).
7. F.F.Bruce, "To the Hebrews or To the Essenes ?", NTS 9, 1962-3, p.223.
8. J.H.Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament, (Cam.Univ.Press, Cambridge, 1985) p.84.
9. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.52.
10. R.Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews, op.cit., p.181.
11. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit. p.53.

Chapter 5.

1. Cleanthes Fr.537,2, quoted by G.Kittel, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol I, (W.R.Eerdmans Pub.Co., Michigan, 1964), p.487.
2. A.Boeckh, Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum 6798, quoted in H.G.Liddell and Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1951), p.252.
3. J.A.Soggin, Judges, (SCM.Press, London, 1981), p.204.
4. G.Kittel, op.cit., Vol.VIII, p.235.
5. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.55.
6. W.L.Knox, "The Divine Hero Christology in the New Testament", Harvard Theological Review, Vol.XLI, 1948, pp. 248-249.
7. W.Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews, (Hodder and Stoughton, London 1950), p.102.
8. H.Montefiore, op.cit., pp.60/61.
9. B.F.Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, (Eerdmans Pub.Co., Michigan, 1889), p.45.
10. R.A.Greer, The Captain of our Salvation, A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews, (J.C.B.Mohr, Tübingen, 1977), p.6.
11. C.Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux, (Librairie Lecoffre, J.Gabalda et Cie, Paris, 1952), p.301.
12. M.D'Angelo, op.cit., p.34.
13. G.Hughes, op.cit., pp.79-80.
14. G.Hughes, op.cit., pp.79-80.
15. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.220.
16. G.Hughes, op.cit., p.78.
17. G.Hughes, op.cit., p.78.
18. J.Moffatt, op.cit., pp.xli-xlii.
19. C.Moule, The Origin of Christology, (Cam.Univ.Press, 1977), p.101.

Chapter 6.

1. Note on "τελειωτής", J.H.Thayer in Grimm's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, translated, revised and enlarged, (T.& T.Clark, Edinburgh, 1901).
2. G.Kittel, op.cit., Vol.VIII, p.68.
3. G.Kittel, op.cit., Vol.VIII, p.68.
4. E.R.Goodenough, An Introduction to Philo Judaeus, (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1962), p.34.
5. E.R.Goodenough, op.cit., p.151.
6. G.Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, (Penguin, 1979), p.35.
7. See G.Vermes, op. cit., p.35. The Damascus Rule, circa 100BC., contains the evidence for this conclusion. For example, at XVI, we read, "(For God made) a Covenant with you and all Israel; therefore a man shall bind himself by oath to return to the Law of Moses, for in it all things are strictly defined." (G.Vermes, op.cit., p.109.)
8. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.25, assessing Montefiore, Bruce, Braun.
9. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.29.
10. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.23.
11. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.175.
12. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.23.
13. In C.Brown, New International Dictionary of the New Testament, (Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1975), Vol.2, p.63.
14. D.Peterson, op.cit., p.28.
15. D.Peterson, op.cit., p.34.
16. A.Nairne, The Epistle of Priesthood, (T.& T.Clark, Edinburgh, 1913), p.105.
17. B.F.Westcott, op.cit., p.129.
18. B.F.Westcott, op.cit., p.66.
19. See O.Cullmann, Christology of the New Testament, (SCM Press, London 1963), pp.94-96.
20. J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.30. And see F.F.Bruce, op.cit., pp.101-102, and R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.99.
21. W.Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, (Cam.Univ.Press, Cambridge, 1957), p.322.
22. B.F.Westcott, op.cit., p.107.
23. R.A.Stewart, "The Sinless High Priest", NTS,14, 1967-8, p.130.
24. S.G.Sowers, op.cit., p.22.
25. D.Peterson, op.cit., p.118.
26. D.Peterson, op.cit., p.190.
27. D.Peterson, op.cit., p.190.
28. J.Moffatt, op.cit., quoting Robertson-Smith in The Expositor ii, pp.425/6.
29. T.H.Robinson, The Epistle to the Hebrews, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1933), p.63.
30. A.B.Bruce, op.cit., p.98.
31. A.S.Peake, Hebrews, (T.C.and E.C.Jack, Edinburgh), p.131.
32. A.B.Bruce, op.cit., p.189.
33. A.Nairne, op.cit., p.71.

Chapter 7.

1. J.H.Moulton and G.Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1963), p.649.
2. W.von Martitz, in G.Kittel, op.cit, Vol.VIII, p.336.
3. W.Bauer, op.cit., p.842.
4. O.Cullmann, op.cit., p.272.
5. Homer, Iliad 5,683; Odyssey II,568 and IV,10275,5f.
6. See Chapter 5 above.
7. G.Fohrer, in G.Kittel, op.cit., Vol.VIII, p.343.
8. W.Bauer, op.cit., p.841.
9. O.Cullmann, op.cit., p.275.
10. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.219.
11. C.K.Barrett, The New Testament Background, Selected Documents, (SPCK, London, 1956), p.221.
12. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.173.
13. Philo, Quis.Rer.Div.Heres, 205f., cited by C.K.Barrett, op.cit., p.184.
14. Philo, Som I,215; Conf.Ling.146.
15. As note 14.
16. Philo, Agric.51; Fug 112.
17. Philo Som.I, 215.
18. L.K.K.Dey, op.cit., p.12.
19. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.248.

20. L.K.K.Dey. op.cit., p.30.
21. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.248.
22. H.Montefiore, op.cit., p.36.
23. H.Montefiore, op.cit., p.37.
24. C.H.Dodd, According to the Scriptures, p.35, cited by R.M.Wilson, Hebrews, p.43.
25. S.G.Sowers, op.cit., p.85.
26. O.Cullmann, op.cit., p.282.
27. This is R.G.Hamerton-Kelly's suggestion. See Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man, (Cam.Univ.Press, Cambridge, 1973), p.241.
28. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.32.
29. R.G.Hamerton-Kelly, op.cit., p.249.
30. J.M.Robinson and H.Koester, Trajectories through Early Christianity, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1971), p.220f.
31. E.Käsemann, The Wandering People of God, (Augsburg Pub., Minneapolis, 1984), p.115.
32. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.99 and p.277, note 65, citing R.M.Grant in Gnosticism, an Anthology.
33. E.Käsemann, op.cit., p.151.
34. B.F.Westcott, op.cit., p.7.
35. B.F.Westcott, op.cit., p.9.
36. C.Spicq, op.cit., p.288f.
37. A.Snell, New and Living Way, (The Faith Press, London 1959), pp.40/41.
38. B.F.Westcott, op.cit., p.13.
39. R.Longenecker, The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity, (SCM Press, London, 1970), pp.60ff.
40. For example: Nairne, Peake, Moffatt, Héring, Montefiore, Wilson.
41. A.B.Bruce, op.cit., p.77.
42. A.B.Bruce, op.cit., p.35, note 1. His note remarks that Ménégos in his Theology of Hebrews maintains that the Christology is Arian.
43. G.W.Buchanan, To the Hebrews, (Doubleday and Co., New York, 1972), p.14.
44. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.98.
45. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.109.
46. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.113.
47. See A.S.Peake, op.cit., pp.98 and 102.
48. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.36.
49. R.G.Hamerton-Kelly, op.cit., p.248.
50. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.115.
51. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., pp.40f., discussing C.H.Dodd, The Bible and the Greeks, p.156f.
52. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., pp.122/3.
53. J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.66.
54. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.41.
55. R.Longenecker, The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity, (SCM Press, London, 1970), p.140.
56. A.B.Bruce, op.cit., p.35.
57. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.56 and p.257.
58. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.55.
59. G.Hughes, op.cit., p.160, note 35.
60. G.Hughes, op.cit., p.57.
61. K.Heim, Jesus der Welt-Vollender, cited by J.C.Campbell, "In a Son: The Doctrine of Incarnation in the Epistle to the Hebrews", Interpretation 10, 1956, p.29, note 9.
62. M.Hooker, "In his own Image?", What about the New Testament? (SCM Press, London, 1975), p.41.
63. W.G.Morrice, "New Wine in Old Wineskins: Covenant", Expository Times 86, 1974-5, p.134.
64. A.B.Bruce, op.cit., p.441.
65. A.S.Peake, op.cit., p.62.
66. J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.64.
67. J.C.Campbell, op.cit., p.28.
68. A.Snell, op.cit., p.101.
69. Montefiore, op.cit., p.96.
70. C.Spicq, op.cit., p.296.

Chapter 8.

1. See the discussion at the beginning of chapter 3.
2. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit. p.108 and note 45, p.309.
3. F.L.Horton, The Melchizedek Tradition, Cam.Univ.Press, Cambridge, 1976, p.34.
4. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.108 and 115.
5. D.M.Hay, Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity, Abingdon Press, New York, 1973, p.34.
6. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.153.
7. This view has support from Manson, 1950; C.H.Dodd, 1952 (See A.J.B.Higgins, "The Old Testament and some aspects of New Testament Christology", Promise and Fulfilment, ed. F.F.Bruce, T. & T.Clark, Edinburgh, 1963, p.137); Lindars, 1961 (See A.J.B.Higgins, "The Priestly Messiah", NTS 13, 1966-7, p.235); and R.Williamson, op.cit., p.432.
8. D.M.Hay, op.cit., p.153.
9. A.J.B.Higgins, op.cit.
10. A.J.B.Higgins, op.cit., p.235.
11. Behm in Kittel, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.133/4.
12. J.J.Hughes, "Hebrews 9:15ff. and Gal.3:15ff.. A Study on Covenant Practice and Procedure", Novum Testamentum 21, 1979, p.52.
13. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.liii.
14. A.J.B.Higgins, op.cit.
15. A.J.B.Higgins, Promise and Fulfilment, op.cit., p.140.
16. R.Williamson, op.cit., p.432.
17. F.L.Horton, op.cit., p.30.
18. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.94 and note 26, p.94.
19. Y.Yadin, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews", Scripta Hierosolymitana IV, 1958, pp.36ff. Also, H. Kosmala, Hebräer-Essener-Christen, op.cit., pp.xxviiiiff.
20. G.Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, Penguin, Middlesex, 1962, pp.48/9.
21. A.J.B.Higgins, The Priestly Messiah, op.cit., p.218.
22. R.Williamson, op.cit., p.431.
23. A.J.B.Higgins, The Priestly Messiah, op.cit., p.233.
24. H.Braun, Qumran und das Neue Testament, Tübingen, 1966.
25. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.25.
26. G.Hughes, op.cit., p.29.
27. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.153.
28. Please note that I have followed the text reproduced by G.Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, Penguin, pp.266-268.
29. G.Vermes, op.cit., p.267.
30. G.Vermes, op.cit., p.266.
31. G.Vermes, op.cit., p.267.
32. M.De Jonge and A.S.Van der Woude, "11Q Melchizedek and the New Testament", NTS.XII, 1965-6, p.306.
33. M.De Jonge and A.S.Van der Woude, op.cit., p.321.
34. Ibid, p.321.
35. Ibid, p.322.
36. Ibid, p.322.
37. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.152.
38. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.100.
39. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.252.
40. F.L.Horton, op.cit., p.169.
41. R.Williamson, op.cit., p.418.
42. R.Williamson, op.cit., p.430.
43. Philo, Leg.All.III, 79-82.

Chapter 9.

1. W.Manson, op.cit., p.112.
2. Michel in G.Kittel, op.cit., Vol.IV, p.570.
3. B.F.Westcott, op.cit., p.173, and see H.Montefiore, op.cit., p.96.
4. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.141..
5. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.26.
6. R.Williamson, op.cit., p.442.
7. D.Hay, op.cit., p.148.
8. D.Peterson, op.cit., p.106.
9. G.Vermes, op.cit., p.267.

Chapter 10.

1. J.Denney, The Death of Christ, p.217.
2. For example, A.Nairne, J.Moffatt, H.Montefiore, W.E.Brooks, T.C.G.Thornton.
3. A.Nairne, op.cit., p.171.
4. J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.186.
5. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.216.
6. And see C.K.Barrett, The New Testament Background, SPCK, London, 1956, p.226.
7. L.Jacobs, "Greater Love hath no Man: The Jewish Point of View of Self-Sacrifice", Judaism, Vol.6, 1957, p.47.
8. L.Jacobs, op.cit., p.47.
9. S.K.Williams, Jesus' Death as Saving Event. The Background and Origin of a Concept, Scholars Press, Missoula, Montana, 1975, p.241.
10. S.K.Williams, op.cit., p.254.
11. W.P.Dubose, op.cit., pp.146/7.
12. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.245.
13. J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.143.
14. V.Taylor, Jesus and his Sacrifice, Macmillan and Co., London, 1937, p.57.
15. For example: A.B.Bruce, who counts it "mere blood", op.cit., p.378; J.Denney, op.cit., p.231; G.Hughes, op.cit., p.177, notes 63 and 66; A.Snell, op.cit., p.169, and R.Williamson, op.cit., pp.175-6.
16. F.Young, Sacrifice and the Death of Christ, SPCK, London, 1975, p.33.
17. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.lv.
18. For example, J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.124.
19. H.Montefiore, op.cit., p.155.
20. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.205.
21. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.156.
22. A.B.Bruce, op.cit., p.438.
23. J.Denney, op.cit., p.217 and see chapter 10, introductory section above.
24. J.Denney, op.cit., p.233.
25. J.H.Moulton and G.Milligan, op.cit., p.148.
26. Behm in Kittel, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.126/7.
27. Quell in Kittel, op.cit., Vol.II, p.116.
28. J.J.Hughes, op.cit., p.41 and footnote 40.
29. Quell in Kittel, op.cit., Vol.II, p.115.
30. See F.Young, op.cit., p.69.
31. F.Young, op.cit., p.21.
32. J.J.Hughes, op.cit., p.30.
33. Murray, The Covenant of Grace, p.30.
34. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.213.
35. J.Moffatt, op.cit., pp.123/4.
36. G.D.Kilpatrick, Diatheke in Hebrews, ZNT. 68, 1977, P.263.
37. See Kilpatrick op.cit., p.263f. and J.J.Hughes, op.cit., p.44. The use of "mediator" at 9:15 is cited by them both in confirmation of their view, because it is a patently Jewish idea, and unknown in terms of "will" and "testament".
38. J.J.Hughes, op.cit., p.42.
39. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.253.
40. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.376.
41. B.F.Westcott, op.cit., p.290.
42. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., pp.151 and 161.
43. See J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.124; H.Montefiore, op.cit., p.155, and F.Filson, op.cit., p.57.
44. J.Denney, op.cit., p.233.
45. W.P.Dubose, op.cit., p.160.
46. W.P.Dubose, op.cit., p.160.
47. H.Koester, "Outside the Camp, Hebrews 13, 9-14", Harvard Theolog. Review, 55 (1962), p.301.
48. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.175.

Chapter 11.

1. His thinking here juxtaposes the sacrifice made by the Priest for forgiveness alongside the Covenant-making ceremony. That is not to imply that the Covenant sacrifice was of itself a sin-offering, but a representation of the self-maledictory oath which pledged the fidelity of the one who made it. (See the discussion in Chapter 10 above.) The ideas and rituals of both are merged together within the author's understanding of Jesus' Priesthood, in order to make the point. And, once again, the detail of their differences was not his concern, since his aim was to persuade by every possible means. But this has led him to a certain intricacy which it is important to grasp.
2. W.P.Dubose, op.cit., p.180.
3. H.Attridge, op.cit., pp.26/7.
4. W.P.Dubose, op.cit., p.160.
5. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.1.
6. C.Moule, The Origin of Christology, Cam.Univ.Press, Cambridge, 1977, p.101.
7. W.P.Dubose, op.cit., p.148.
8. J.Moffatt, op.cit., p.51.
9. W.Manson, op.cit., p.58.
10. C.K.Barrett, The Background of the New Testament, ed. W.D.Davies and D.Daube, Cam.Univ.Press, Cambridge, 1956, p.372.
11. R.M.Wilson, op.cit., p.82.
12. G.Hughes, op.cit., p.97.
13. F.F.Bruce, op.cit., p.79.
14. A.B.Bruce, op.cit., p.271, and see also Moffatt's Commentary, p.100.
15. D.M.Hay, op.cit., p.96.
16. D.M.Hay, op.cit., p.95.
17. D.M.Hay, op.cit., pp.149-50.
18. D.Peterson, op.cit., pp.114-115.
19. A.Nairne, op.cit., p.202.
20. B.A.Demarest, "Priest after the Order of Melchizedek. A History of Interpretation of Hebrews 7 from the Era of the Reformation to the Present", PhD.thesis, University of Manchester, 1973, cited by D.Peterson, op.cit., p.245, note 40, and p.248, note 64. W.E.Brooks in "The Perpetuity of Christ's Sacrifice in the Epistle to the Hebrews", *JBL*.89, 1970, p.70, has the same view: "The cross is not the sacrifice. It is rather part of the preparation for the heavenly sacrificial ministry of our high priest, and is thereby essential but not all-sufficient."
21. R.Williamson, op.cit., p.175.
22. See H.Koester, op.cit.
23. H.Attridge, op.cit., p.406.
24. H.Attridge, op.cit., footnote p.147: "The complex High-Priest motif thus holds together the most fundamental affirmations of the work."

Chapter 12.

1. J.D.G.Dunn, op.cit., p.253.

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