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**THE CONCEPT OF FAITH
AND HEBREWS 11:1**

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the least known of the New Testament books is the Epistle to the Hebrews. This is not because it occupies a secondary position as far as depth and profundity of thought is concerned, for the anonymous Epistle presents some of the most exalted Christology to be found in the New Testament canon. And in its presentation it treats the whole field of Christian doctrine from its common Christological center. However, the Epistle does not become lost in a maze of theory, for every point is applied directly to the situation of the readers. It is thus both theoretic and practical, applying the enduring foundation which is in Christ to the everyday situations which confront the Christians. It is likely that the Epistle has never gained popularity because the Christian Church has built up its systematics largely upon Pauline terminology, and the thought and expression of Hebrews is rather foreign. Whatever the cause, the Epistle has been, and is being, neglected. It has never found the position which it truly ought to occupy in Christian thinking and expression.

The concept of $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$, which we are going to study in this paper, is no exception to this general neglect of the Epistle. Concerning Hebrews 11:6, Michel says:

Der Hb kann eine alte Wendung wieder aufnehmen: man an Gottes Existenz und Vergeltung glauben (XI 6), die in

ihrer Isolierung zu mancherlei Miszverstaendnissen fuehren koennte; doch weisz unser Brief sehr wohl dass eine derartige einzelne Formulierung das Wesen des Glaubens nicht erschoeft.¹

We might say the same thing of Hebrews 11:1. By itself, it can also lead to many misunderstandings, as it indeed has in the past. For example, Luenemann states:

Die Leser, im Besitz eines solch' erhabenen Hohenprie-
ters und des durch ihn vermittelten Sagens sollen mit
Entschiedenheit und Beharrlichkeit festhalten am Christen-
glauben. . . . Der Verfasser definirt hierauf das Wesen
der πίστις, die er von den Lesern fordert.²

And Weiss explains: "Von dem, was der Glaube bewirkt (10,38 f.) geht der Verf. mit δὲ ueber zu dem, was der Glaube seinem Wesen nach ist."³ Thus, many exegetes consider this verse as a definition of faith. Some are more careful in their terminology, since they fully realize that this is no complete definition of faith. And, with Davidson, they propose: "We have not a definition of faith but a description."⁴ And, they proceed to treat it as a definition.

It was also the purpose of the writer, as he began this

¹Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Hebraeer (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), p. 25.

²Gottlieb Luenemann, Kritisch Exegetisches Handbuch ueber den Hebraeerbrief (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht's Verlag, 1878), p. 55.

³Bernhard Weiss, Kritisch Exegetisches Handbuch ueber den Brief an die Hebraeer (Fifth edition; Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht's Verlag, 1888), p. 280.

⁴A. B. Davidson, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1950), p. 219.

study, to determine upon the basis of 11:1 what the concept of faith according to Hebrews actually is. However, upon a study of the Epistle itself, we have come to the conclusion that this verse neither defines nor describes faith. Rather it sets forth the only way in which it is possible to have a firm foundation for hope. It makes the assertion that it is by faith that one can have a basis and foundation for eschatological blessings, and certainty in the unseen spiritual realm.

Our problem has, therefore, really broken into two parts. In the first place we will have to study the verse itself to determine whether it is definition, description, or statement of fact. Secondly, we will study the whole Epistle to determine, if possible, what the concept of faith is which is set forth. We are forced to study both of these problems because we are, in the first place, primarily interested in faith; but, secondly, we are using 11:1 as the locus for our word study. For this reason we also have to take issue with it.

In regard to the mechanics of the paper, perhaps a word is in place. Most of our work is with the Greek text itself. We cannot agree that there is a great deal of virtue in multiplying commentaries. Originally, we had intended to use English material only. However, it soon became apparent that this was not possible. We have, therefore, used such German works as were found to be necessary for the study. All English quotations are taken from the King James Version of

the Scriptures, unless otherwise indicated. This version is identified by the letters KJV throughout the study. Unless otherwise specified, all Scripture references are to the book of Hebrews itself. In citing them, only chapter and verse reference is given, thus: 11:1. References within quotations will, necessarily, vary with the particular author from whom they are taken.

We have chosen to treat the topic in five chapters: 1) a consideration of the background of the Epistle; 2) a consideration of the thought development within the Epistle; 3) an exegetical study of 11:1; 4) a synthesis of the concepts of 11:1; and 5) summary and conclusion. It is our desire that this study may serve to the glory of God and the edification of man.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND FOR THE STUDY

For a complete understanding of the exegetical material which we wish to present in this thesis, it is necessary to know a little about the background of the Epistle. This is particularly so in view of the fact that Hebrews is not written to cover general conditions, but "ist aus einer bestimmten konkreten Situation herausgewachsen wie jeder andre prophetische und apostolische Buszruf."¹ A general overview of the introductory material is, therefore, quite in order at this point. Due to the lack of definite evidence, there are many ramifications which could be discussed. However, we will limit ourselves to three items which have specific interest for this study: 1) the destination; 2) the date of writing; and 3) the purpose of the Epistle.

In the second verse of the first chapter, we note that the writer characterizes the readers and himself as the ones to whom God has spoken by Christ as He once spoke by the prophets to the fathers.² In addition to this, the oldest

¹Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Hebraeer (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), p. 16.

²Bernhard Weiss, Der Hebraeerbrief in zeitgeschichtlich Beleuchtung (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1910), p. 4.

manuscripts (ⲛ AB) carry the title $\Pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \text{ Ἑβραίων}$; and the same title is used, at times in expanded form, in many of the early versions.³ This would indicate that the Epistle was written for Christians who had formerly been Jews.

Von Soden upholds the thesis that the recipients were not Jewish Christians but believers of Gentile background. He bases this contention primarily upon the fact that the Epistle does not state definitely that the danger threatening the group addressed is a relapse into Judaism.⁴

However, closer study shows that the group is not composed of Gentile, but rather Jewish Christians. It is difficult to suppose that the author would have directed apology of the type used here to a group which was Gentile in origin, for "every point he makes has a definite bearing on the Old Testament."⁵ While this of itself is not conclusive, it is definitely indicative. And when one adds to this the manner in which the author uses the Old Testament, there is but little evidence for Christian recipients of Gentile

³Brooke Foss Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. xxvii.

⁴H. Von Soden, "Hebraeerbrief, Briefe des Petrus, Jakobus, Judas," Hand-commentar zum Neuen Testament (Leipzig: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1899), III, 15-18.

⁵H. A. A. Kennedy, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," The Theology of the Epistles (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., 1919), p. 185.

extraction.

Zahn points out that the term *πρὸς Ἑβραίους* was used in a double sense. It could either designate those who were Jews by birth, but who were not living in Palestine, and who had taken up the usage of the Greek language; or, it could be applied to those who were living in Palestine and had retained the Hebrew language. Of these two possibilities, he believes that the former group is the most logical conjecture.⁶ On the other hand, Thiessen is just as surely convinced that they were Jewish Christians living in Jerusalem and its surrounding country.⁷

Two of the arguments that Zahn uses are particularly worth noting. In the first place, it is logical to assume that the Epistle was written to a Greek speaking group as Greek is the language which the author uses.⁸ Secondly, he shows in an extended discussion that the author's arguments throughout the whole Epistle are not directed against the specific sacrifices of the temple in Jerusalem. Rather the author disputes the mediation value of the Old Testament system.⁹ Had he been inveighing against the mother Church

⁶Theodore Zahn, Introduction to the New Testament, translated from the Third German edition by John Moore Trout, et. al., (Grand Rapids: Kriegel Publications, 1953), II, 296.

⁷Henry Clarence Thiessen, Introduction to the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1943), p. 303.

⁸Zahn, op. cit., p. 296.

⁹Ibid., p. 334.

in Jerusalem, he would have been using invalid arguments, and have neglected many considerations of importance. For example, the Christians in Jerusalem had not made a clean break with temple worship immediately, and the early Apostles and teachers did their teaching in the temple. Let us permit Zahn to speak for himself concerning this point:

The fact that . . . none of these questions [whether to break off with temple worship, or to permit a continuance of it, as was the case for some time in Jerusalem] entered the author's mind, proves that he did not have the mother Church in view, and that he is writing to Christians who prior to their conversion had no connection with the Jewish sacrificial worship.¹⁰

By the same line of reasoning, he comes to the conclusion that the destination of the Epistle was not some other place in Palestine either.

Where, then shall we go to find the recipients? Alexandria has been suggested by some, but it really has nothing to support it.¹¹ It will not be possible to follow all the arguments both pro and con. Let it, therefore, suffice to say that Zahn presents convincing evidence for directing our attention to a congregation at Rome. That place supplies all the necessary requirements to satisfy the internal evidence of the Epistle.¹²

The second question we wish to consider concerns the

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 334 f.

¹¹Ibid., p. 344.

¹²Ibid., pp. 344 ff.

approximate date of the Epistle. As in the foregoing, evidence is rather meager. There are a number of facts upon which we can base our conclusions: 1) that it was quoted by Clement of Rome around 96 A.D.; 2) the mention of the name of Timothy (13:23), whom we believe to have been born about 25 A.D., and who might have lived until the end of the first century; and 3) that the readers were first generation Christians.¹³ It is definite that Clement of Rome quoted the Epistle around the turn of the first century. That means that the Epistle was in existence and known, at least to a very limited extent, at that time. This would set the terminus ad quem around 90 A.D.

However, from the Epistle itself, we can limit this time still more. Internal evidence speaks of the temple worship in the present tense (8:4 f.; 9:6; 10:1 ff.; 13:1 ff.). This use of the present tense seems indicative of the fact that the temple was still standing. Furthermore, we do not find in the entire Epistle any reference to "such a national calamity as the Jewish war" which could hardly have gone unnoticed. The destruction of Jerusalem would have been a cogent argument for the author's case if it had already taken place. These facts place the Epistle before the commencement of the Jewish war. Perhaps the reference to the "approach of that day" (10:25) refers to this event.¹⁴ If this argument is

¹³Ibid., p. 351.

¹⁴Westcott, op. cit., p. xlii.

correct, we are forced to place the writing of the Epistle before the year 67.

We also turn to the Epistle to hear what it has to say about the earliest possible date for its coming into existence. From 2:3 we learn that the readers had not learned from the Apostles themselves, but had first embraced Christianity from those who had been taught by the Apostles. This would put their conversion around 50 at the very earliest. And, since they had been Christians for a long time,¹⁵ the earliest possible date can perhaps be set at 60 to 65 A.D. It is difficult, if not impossible, to be more accurate. It is true that the Epistle also speaks of a persecution which the readers had undergone earlier (10:32). However, in the light of the general troubled conditions of the times, not much of importance can be attached to this. We are likely not far wrong when we set the date for the composition of the Epistle between 60 and 67 A.D.¹⁶

What is the import of all this? Anyone who is sympathetic to the turmoil of these years, and the pending doom -- so clearly inevitable -- can hardly fail to realize that these were perilous times. The conditions must surely have initiated thorough introspection by all concerned. Furthermore, many were becoming disappointed in the delay of the

¹⁵Thiessen, op. cit., p. 304.

¹⁶Westcott, op. cit., p. xlii.

Parousia (II Peter 3:4-10). It is thus hardly an exaggeration to say with Thiessen: "Many were beginning to wonder whether they had been carried away by an unfounded enthusiasm."¹⁷ Now would be the time to determine that before the day of the Lord. Then it would be too late. It is to conditions such as these, and against such misgivings, that our Epistle is directed.

We now turn to a consideration of the purpose of the Epistle. On this point we will be able to glean most of the material from specific references within the Epistle itself. To these references, quite naturally, many conjectures have become associated. As much as possible, we will attempt to avoid the conjectural material, and to present only such as is relevant to the study.

The Epistle is a "word of exhortation" (13:22). From other references, we note a number of reasons for this exhortation. The readers were in danger: 1) of losing the confidence of their hope (3:6); 2) of despising the promise (3:12; 4:1,11); and 3) of falling away from Christ (4:6,12). "Hence, the whole exhortation may be summed up in the words of iv.14: 'Let us hold fast our (Christian) confession.'¹⁸

The author's purpose is to prevent the readers, Jewish

¹⁷Thiessen, op. cit., p. 303.

¹⁸Kennedy, op. cit., p. 185.

Christians, from relapsing into the old ceremonial Judaism. He directs them to the foundation of faith in the promise of God as it has been revealed in Christ, Who has superseded the Old Testament order of things.¹⁹ It is only under such conditions that the many statements concerning the worship, which are presented in profusion of detail, can be understood. It is the author's intention "to show that the readers cannot find in the Old Testament worship what they have found in Christ, and must lose by apostacy from Him."²⁰ Under the press of trials and persecutions, the readers are in danger of growing lax and of losing the merit they have gained through Christ. Already they are casting longing eyes on the sacrificial system of the Old Testament and wondering whether they have done right in leaving it.²¹

Such was the condition, and the Epistle has a definite remedy for it. By its constant comparisons between the Old Testament and the New, it shows that the New Testament was latent in the Old and that the Old is laid open in the New.²² However, the author does not recognize both Old and New Testament as equally efficacious. Rather "in the last times God

¹⁹Frederick W. Farrar, The Early Days of Christianity (London: Cassell, Pether, Galpin & Co., 1882), pp. 346-349.

²⁰Bernhard Weiss, A Manual of Introduction to the New Testament, translated from the German by A. J. K. Davidson (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, Publishers, 1889), II, 31.

²¹Zahn, op. cit., p. 329.

²²Farrar, op. cit., p. 357.

has spoken to us through His Son" (1:2), Who "now once in the end of the world appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (9:26). "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (9:28). The Epistle sets Christ up as the representative of God to man, and of man to God. He it is to Whom the Old Testament pointed in all its pronouncements, Who fulfills them, and reveals their real character.²³ "The purpose of the writer . . . is to demonstrate to his readers that Christianity is the religion of 'the better hope by which we draw near to God' (vii.19)."²⁴

There is therefore only one answer which the readers can make. That is to break with Judaism, and to cling to the faith of Christianity, (10:39).²⁵ Thus the writer stresses the note throughout the whole Epistle that they keep their confidence firm in faith. No longer will the Old Testament sacrifices avail them anything. There is only one thing to do. That is that they make a radical break with the Old Testament worship forms and go over decidedly to faith (13:12,13). And to show that this is not idle talk, he brings forth the great chapter on the heroes of faith (11), showing that they all conquered by their faith.²⁶

²³Michel, op. cit., pp. 16-18.

²⁴Kennedy, op. cit., p. 187.

²⁵Ibid., p. 186.

²⁶Farrar, op. cit., p. 452.

In summary, the author wants to lay a foundation of assurance -- not merely the rudimentary knowledge and faith. He wants to lead them on into the mysteries that they may avoid the *ἡ πορτολαῖς εἰς ἀπόλεικν* (10:39) from which there is no return. He wishes to see "a greater tensity of forward-looking and expectant faith. He sees them listless, uncertain, not keyed to the standard of those who by faith and patience attain the promised inheritance of God."²⁷

²⁷William Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1951), pp.59-65.

CHAPTER III

THE THOUGHT DEVELOPMENT

Before proceeding with the specifically exegetical part of this study, we will do well to trace the progress of the thought in the Epistle. Our purpose will be to examine the way in which the author develops his line of argument, and to examine the method he uses to present his "exhortation" (13:22). In the first place, we will look at the Epistle in outline, tracing the thought development verse by verse and chapter by chapter.¹ Secondly, we will take notice of the specifically hortatory sections in relation to the theoretic sections in an attempt to analyze the contribution they make. And, finally, we will pay particular attention to the parenthetic section (5:11-6:20) to determine its relevance to the whole Epistle.

Outline of Epistle

In the section from 1:5-2:5 the author compares Christ to the Angels showing that Christ is superior to the Angels. But, he says, Christ was made a little lower than the Angels, and became like to the nature of Abraham, that He might be a sympathetic high Priest and make reconciliation for the sins of the people (2:6-18). Christ is also compared to Moses

¹A detailed outline can be found in the Appendix.

(3:1-6), showing that He is superior to Moses in that Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ as a Son. Upon this follows an admonition to hold fast to the promise of rest by faith (3:7-4:16).

From 5:1-7:28, the author again takes up the comparison. This time he compares Christ to the priesthood of the Old Testament system. With the exception of a short section extending from 5:11 to 6:20, the author pursues this theme and shows that Christ is a Priest who is ordained of God (5:5,6). But, He is not a Priest as the Levites were because He is a Priest according to "the order of Melchisedec" (5:6-10) -- that is by a special oath of God. He is thus superior to the Levitical priesthood (7:4-22) who had to offer sacrifices daily for their own and the people's sins (7:22,23,27). But, Christ offered up Himself once and for all and is thus the better Priest (7:27,28). He is the Son, consecrated forever (7:28).

In the same manner, the author takes up for consideration Christ and His relation both to the Old Covenant (8:1-13), and to the Old Testament sacrificial system (9:1-10:18). In both cases, he shows that Christ is the final utterance of God (8:6,13 and 9:13,14,23-28; 10:11,12). Where the other means all were inadequate, Christ has once and for all made the crucial sacrifice and ushered in the New Covenant. In all of these comparisons we see the finality of Christ's work. It was a work that was performed by the Son (5:8,9) in the

heavenly tabernacle (9:24). It is thus not a sacrifice that needs to be repeated. ⁴ut it is a final act of God whereby He has made the perfect atonement for the sins of men.

Because of the nature of the sacrifice and work of Christ, the author admonishes the readers to "draw near with . . . full assurance of faith" (10:19-22). "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith," and avoid falling into sin (10:23-31). By pointing them to the former days after they had first come to faith (10:32-34), the author reminds them of the assurance and confidence they once had. And he exhorts them to hold fast that confidence in faith. By faith they will be able patiently to do the will of God, and receive the promise. By faith they will be patient to await the Parousia and work out the salvation of their souls. (10:35-39).

The author, having struck the note of faith so loudly and clearly (10:19-59), now goes over to a consideration of faith (11:1-40). Thus he brings example upon example from the Old Testament to show that the heroes there had conquered all manner of trials by faith. He shows that faith was the thing that sustained them in these trials and hardships (11:13-16; 33-38). And in view of this, he takes up once again the exhortations to hold fast the hope of blessing, and not to throw it away as Esau had (12:1-13:17). These exhortations find their culmination in 13:10-14:

We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by

the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

This is a grand exhortation to make a decisive, once and for all, break with Judaism and the sacrificial system. Having, thus, reached the close of the exhortation, the author quickly brings the letter to a close with a prayer (13:20,21), personal greetings (13:22-24), and benediction (13:25).

Hortative Sections

Closely bound together with the theoretic sections, that we have considered in the foregoing, we find hortatory sections interspersed throughout the whole work. Of these parts Davidson says:

The key-note of the Epistle is struck and heard throughout in the hortatory parts, to which the doctrinal elements are subservient. Religion being conceived under the idea of a covenant between God and men, that is a state or relation between God and a people who worship Him, the idea of the Epistle is that faith of Christ is the true and final religion.²

It is therefore relevant to our study to pay particular attention to these parts (2:1-5; 3:6b-4:16; 12:1-17; and 13:1-21). The harsh section from 5:11-6:20 is also a hortatory section. However, it presents some particular problems, and will be considered separately.

²A. B. Davidson, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1950), p. 22.

After having considered the superiority of Christ to the Angels in the first chapter, the author goes over to the second, and right into his exhortation, with the words "therefore it is necessary" ($\Delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\ \delta\epsilon\iota\lambda$). Because of the preceding facts -- that Christ is superior to the Angels, that He is Lord -- therefore we ought to take care that we do not let the things we have heard slip away from us (2:1). God has spoken to us (2:4) by signs, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit. We ought, therefore, to remain firm in the things we have heard.

In the second section (3:6b-4:16), the author brings before the readers the example of the fathers in the wilderness where they wandered and tempted God for forty years, and were finally cast out (3:8-11). He leads into the section with a comparison of Christ and Moses (3:1-6) showing that Moses was indeed faithful, but as a servant, while Christ was faithful as a Son (3:5,6). And we will be partakers of the blessings of the "house . . . if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (3:6). From this he goes over into a consideration of the "rest of God." He shows that God has prepared a rest. And he encourages them to "come boldly unto the throne of grace" (4:16) and enter into the rest, by faith.

After the long theoretic section (5:1-10:18) the author goes right into the new hortative section (10:19-39) with $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon$. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest

by the blood of Jesus let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (10:19-22), the author admonishes. In this section, the great theme that he holds up for the readers is that of faith. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith" (10:23), he says. And the reason: "for he is faithful that promised" (10:23). There is no other way. If we fall into sin now there is no more sacrifice for that sin (10:26), but only the judgement to look for (10:27-31). He, therefore, urges them to hold fast their confidence, because we "are . . . of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (10:39). We have come to faith, and only by perseverance and patience of faith will we receive the promise. Such is the dominant note of this section.

Before the next part (12:1-17) the author has interposed the great chapter on the heroes of faith in the Old Testament. With his constant reference to the fact that it was "by faith" that they persevered and received the verdict of having "a good report" before God, he prepares the readers for the exhortation to imitate these heroes. We have a great cloud of witnesses to the fact that faith is an efficacious power to salvation (12:1). Let us therefore imitate them in their faithfulness and perseverance unto the end. The author also warns them with the example of Esau who became impatient and for "one morsel of meat sold his birthright." He reminds them that Esau "when he would have inherited the blessing, . . . was rejected" (12:14-17). His advice and exhortation to them is

therefore to "run with patience the race looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (12:1,2).

The last exhortation (13:1-21) is more specific than the others. It brings the admonition to hold fast in faith down into the two spheres: the social and the religious. On the social level, the author shows that faith is worked out in "brotherly love" (13:1,2), sympathy for those who suffer persecution (13:3), uprightness in marriage and all social contacts (13:4,5), and trust in God in all walks of life (13:6). In the realm of religious exhortations, the author warns against being taken up by "strange doctrines with meats" (13:9) as grace is the means for establishing the heart. Because of this, the author exhorts them to make the complete break with Judaism (13:9-14), "for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (13:14).

In conclusion, it is clear from this study that the predominant theme of the hortative parts of the Epistle is faith. Both the theoretic and the hortative sections are interested in urging upon the readers a steadfastness in the faith which they have received from their leaders.

The Special Admonition

We will now go over to a consideration of the parenthetical section of exhortation that is inserted in the discussion of the Priesthood of Christ. It is significant especially when one considers that this is the second time in the Epistle

that the author has broken the line of continuity in his discussion of the Priesthood (2:17 and 5:10).³

In the last four verses of chapter five, the author admonishes the readers because of the fact that they are "become such as have need of milk" (5:12). They are thus not such as "by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (5:14). From this he leads over to the sixth chapter and shows them that they ought really to be going on to the principles of sanctification rather than all the time "laying the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgement" (6:1,2). He deplores the fact that they have not gotten beyond the rudiments of Christian training. But this is to be construed, as Michel says: "Es geht im Hb. letztlich doch um . . . Glauben, und nicht um Gnosis."⁴ It is concerning the furtherance of the sanctification of the readers that the author is concerned, not the impartation of some special revelation for those who are of the elect and select few.

The writer understands the significance of the once-for-all character of the work of Christ. He, therefore, wants to

³Brooke Foss Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 131.

⁴Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Hebraeer (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), p. 22.

help this group to go on from "faith to faith" (Romans 1:17). They were in danger of falling away from Christ into new doctrines which exclude faith but encourage participation in O. T. worship and sacrifice.⁵ In answer to this, the writer shows that "religion was not a matter only of repenting and obtaining forgiveness, but of irrevocable commitment of life to a supernatural end."⁶ He can thus tell them: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened. . . . if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh" (6:4-6). They are lacking this commitment; and are, as a consequence thereof, still babes who are not able to follow the argument which the author is about to present to them.

In order, then, to get back to the theme of the Priesthood, the author reminds them of the promise of God. He shows them that God has bound Himself with an oath "that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul" (6:18,19). Our forerunner, Jesus, he points out, has entered into the holiest for us as a high Priest "consecrated for evermore" (7:28).

⁵Bernhard Weiss, A Manual of Introduction to the New Testament, translated from the German by A. J. K. Davidson (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, Publishers, 1889), II, 42-44.

⁶William Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1951), p. 85.

The theme of this section is not essentially different from that of the other exhortations. As the others, it also admonishes and exhorts to faith and endurance. It is an earnest warning not to lose their zeal, but to press on.⁷ It is an exhortation to press on and ". . .run with patience the race that is set before us" (12:1).

⁷Frederick W. Farrar, The Early Days of Christianity (London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., 1882), pp. 379-391.

CHAPTER IV

EXEGETICAL STUDY OF VERSE 11:1

We are now in a position to begin a study of 11:1 itself. There are a number of specific subjects which have to be considered before we can begin to relate 11:1 to the Epistle as a whole. In the first place we must establish the correct reading of the Textus Receptus, hereafter to be identified by TR. Secondly, we will study the four words: *πίστεις*, *ἰλιπὲς*, *ὑπόστασις*, and *ἔλεγχος* to determine their meanings. Finally, we will make a study of the usage of *ἔστιν* at the beginning of sentences, and more specifically of *ἔστιν δὲ*.

Reading of the Textus Receptus

There are two variants given in Nestle's text:¹ the inversion of the word order between *ὑπόστασις* and *πραγμάτων* and the shifting of the comma to include *πραγμάτων* in the first phrase. The first of these, the inversion of the word order between *ὑπόστασις* and *πραγμάτων* follows a reading in P13. Although this is a fourth century papyrus, little value can be attached to it for two reasons: a) all other manuscript evidence is to the contrary; and b) the same papyrus has not accurately reproduced the two words which it has inverted,

¹Eberhard Nestle, Novum Testamentum Graece, novis curis elaboravit Erwin Nestle (Editio vicesima; Stuttgart: Privileg. Wuertt. Bibelanstalt, 1950), p. 565.

but reads ἀπόστασις in place of ὑπόστασις. This inversion is undoubtedly an attempt to determine more accurately the proper word (ἐλπίζομένων or βλεπομένων) which πραγμάτων should modify. Its position, as assigned by Nestle, could modify either. Thus many early scholars have understood it to modify ἐλπίζομένων. James Moffatt shows that this can hardly be the case. It is true that the construction is possible according to Greek usage. However, to place the comma after πραγμάτων, as well as to invert the order of the two words, is an unlikely construction, as it would upset the balance of the rhythm.² They are, consequently, little more than interesting variants. The fact that P13 reads ἀπόστασις instead of ὑπόστασις has little authoritative value as it would destroy the sense of the passage entirely.

Westcott gives two readings which are not reported in Nestle's critical material.³ The first of these, found in Codex Claromontanus, is the variant ὑπόστασιν for ὑπόστασις. This reading cannot but be considered a corruption. This manuscript, in the words of Westcott, is quite unreliable, as the "variations . . . are wholly different in character, and have more the character of glosses than true variants."⁴

²James Moffatt, "A Critical & Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), p. 159.

³Brooke Foss Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 349.

⁴Ibid., pp. xviii.

The other reading from Westcott is the substitution of *βουλομένων* for *βλαπομένων*. This reading is found in Codex Alexandrinus. However, it has no other attestation. It is probably an attempt to render a more acceptable reading by someone who understood *ἔλεγχος* in its sense of reproof.

From the material presented, there is little textual evidence to support the possible variations of the text of Nestle's twentieth edition. The great bulk of the manuscript evidence is for the reading that he there presents. Our TR will, therefore, be the reading found there: Ἔστιν δὲ πίστις ἐλεγχόμενων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλαπομένων.

Πίστις in the Epistle

In tabulating *πίστις* and its cognates, *πιστός*, *πιστεύω*, and *ἀπιστία*, the Epistle employs these words a total of forty-one times. In breaking this down into individual statistics, we have thirty-two occurrences of *πίστις*; eighteen of which are the instrumental dative, *πίστει*, in that particular form. *Πιστεύω* is also used twice. The adjective, *πιστός*, is used five times. And, finally, *ἀπιστία* occurs twice. In addition to this, there are four direct references by means of the preposition with the pronoun. Let us now study these usages separately and in detail.⁵

Ἐπίστις: 4:2; 6:1, 12; 10:22, 36, 39; 11:1, 6, 7, 13, 33, 39; 12:2; and 13:7. *Πίστει*: 11:5, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31. *Πιστεύω*: 4:5; 11:6. *Πιστός*: 2:17; 3:2, 5; 10:23; and 11:11. *Ἀπιστία*: 3:12, 19. With pronoun: 11:2, 4, 7.

Farrar says:

. . . the writer uses the word (*πίστις*), not in its specifically Christian sense (Gal.ii.16; iii.26; Rom.iii.24), but in its general Old Testament sense of faithfulness resulting from trust in God (Gen.xv.6&c.). . . .⁶

While this may not be completely in accord with the facts, it does point up the truth that Hebrews does use faith in a much more Jewish sense than some of the other New Testament writers.⁷ For this reason we will begin our study with a consideration of those passages in which the adjective *πίστως* occurs.

Ἐλεσίων is set into parallel with *πίστως* concerning Christ (2:17). In 3:2, we read that Jesus was *πίστως* to Him who appointed Him. The context at this point is comparing Christ with Moses. It shows that Moses was faithful as a servant,⁸ but that Christ was faithful as a Son.⁹ The thought here is that, just as Moses was faithful in carrying out the commands of God, so also Christ is faithful in doing the Will of the Father. God Himself is designated as *πίστως* (10:23; 11:11) in relation to His promise. In the first case, the author exhorts the readers to hold fast the confession of their faith "for He God is faithful." The other instance

⁶Frederick W. Farrar, The Early Days of Christianity (London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., 1882) p. 453, n. 2.

⁷The exception that we take to this assertion by Farrar is that the Epistle to the Hebrews is part of the Scripture which determines the Christian concept of *πίστις*. Had he said, as I am sure he intended, that the Epistle does not use the word in the Pauline sense, we would take no issue with him.

⁸Cf. 11:23-29.

⁹Cf. 12:2,3.

speaks of Sarah receiving strength to conceive "because she judged him faithful who had promised." In conjunction with this, we might compare 6:13-20:

Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. (6:17,18)

These passages all carry the sense of the Old Testament firm, unmoving; and then faithful to the purpose set before one.

In turning to the word πίστις, we note that it is coupled with a) μακροθυμία (6:12-15), b) ὑπομονή (12:1,7; 10:36; 12:2), c) ἔλπίς (11:1), and d) δικαιοσύνη (10:38; 11:4,7). There are also many other facets to faith. We have tried to put them under specific headings, but they do not all permit of classification.

It is not the purpose of the author to continue laying the foundation of Christianity, but to go on to perfection (6:1). Consequently, he does not treat justifying faith to any great extent. However, the concept of faith as one of the basic elements of Christianity is not lacking. In 6:1,2 he parallels it with repentance from dead works, the doctrine of baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection from the dead, and the eternal judgement. This is perhaps the closest our author comes to Pauline usage. But, he tells us, it is not his purpose to discuss this phase of it. He wants to go on unto perfection (6:1).

In the second place, faith is the *περιποίησιν ψυχῆς* (10:39). This is the real center of the whole Epistle, and is the most important for our study. It is here that a large number of strands are woven together to form the basic woof of the concept. It is difficult to know where to begin to draw out all the many strands as they pervade the whole presentation.

Those who will enter "the rest of God" are called *οἱ πνευματούχοι* (4:3). And it is to such that the Epistle is directed. Because of this, the whole Epistle is full of modifying phrases, descriptive of such people. While it is not always specifically mentioned that they are such as are *πνευματούχοι*, the implication is nevertheless always present. We will do well, therefore, to look at some of these characterizations.

In 4:1 ff. the author speaks of those who avoid coming short of entering the rest. They are such as successfully combine the Word of promise with life so that they may benefit. Chapter six, verse twelve, and the whole eleventh chapter speak of those who inherit the promise. Those who are imitators of the ones who inherit the promise are such as are not *ἠδύομαι* (6:12). In this connection we might compare 5:11-14 where the author chides the readers for being such as are still babes, and have their hearing dulled so that they are not able to go on into sanctification.¹⁰ The readers themselves are such as have

¹⁰Supra, pp. 21-24.

been illumined (10:32). Those who are *παιτιδοὶ* are *δικαιοὶ* (10:38,39; 11:2,4,5,7). They have received life (10:38), and God is their God (11:14-16). They are the "house" of God and "partakers of Christ" (3:6-14).

The result of their faith is also brought out in various passages. So we read in 4:14 that faith results in holding fast the confession of Christ. 10:23 speaks of this as holding fast the confession of hope. This is the same concept as above but in different terms. Faith also enables one to come to the throne of grace (4:16), to enter the holiest place (10:19), and to live one's life patiently (12:1). We have already seen that it receives the verdict of *δικαιοσύνη* for the saints, (10:38,39; 11:2,4,5, and 7). Faith enables one to please God (11:5,6).

When we inquire into the content of faith, the Epistle also has some definite things to tell us. It is the means by which we understand that the world was created out of things which were not visible (11:2). The content of faith is that God exists, and that He is a God who rewards those who seek Him (11:6). The realm in which faith is operative and from which it receives its content is that of the unseen (11:1,3, and 7). In this context, we ought also compare 11:27.¹¹

Finally let us consider the instances in which words are paralleled, or closely associated, with *πίστις*; and, conversely, the words which are contrasted with, and put in antithesis to,

¹¹This concept will be discussed in chapter V.

faith. From these we can also build up our concept.

In the first place boldness, *παρρησία*, is a recurring theme. Thus we read: "But Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence (*παρρησία*) and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (3:6). Again the writer encourages the readers to come boldly, *μετὰ παρρησίας*, to the throne of grace (4:16). In 10:19-35, the author also exhorts them to "boldness to enter into the holiest" (10:19), and that they do not throw away their confidence (10:35). He calls this boldness, or confidence, holding fast in *πληροφορία πίστεως* (10:22).

Secondly, we notice a parallel with endurance, *ὑπομονή*. The Epistle (10:32) speaks of endurance in great afflictions after they had been enlightened. Then after the great chapter on the heroes of faith, the author exhorts them to run the race *δι' ὑπομονῆς* (12:1), pointing them to Jesus who endured the cross (12:2). Very close to this concept is that of patience, *μακροθυμία*. This word is used twice (6:12,15). The first use is directly parallel with *πίστις*. The author says that it was through *πίστεως* and *μακροθυμίας* that certain ones obtained the promise. In the other case, he says that Abraham obtained the promise after having endured (6:15). The KJV says (6:15): "And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."

In speaking of Abraham, the Epistle says that he obeyed when he had heard the call of God. Thus we see that obedience

ὑπακοή, is another facet of faith. We also hear of Christ that He was obedient (5:8). And because of this fact, He is the author of salvation to all them that are obedient to Him (5:9). With this we can compare 3:1-4:16, especially 3:7-19. Here the theme is developed concerning obedience and disobedience. Those who entered not into the rest are characterized as having an evil heart of unbelief (3:18). Because of this unbelief they were not able to enter into the rest (3:19). And, the author warns his readers to avoid the same thing (4:1,2).

In contrast to *πίστεις* we have *ἄπιστία* (3:12,19). Let us consider this term a little closer to find out of what it is that it consists. The Epistle calls it an evil heart, and it consists in *ἀποστῆναι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ζῶντος*. The author further characterizes *ἄπιστία* as *ἄπειθεία*, disobedience, rebellion, or disloyalty.¹² Those who did not enter the rest because of *ἄπιστία* are *ἀπειθήσαντες* (3:18). *Ἀπειθεία* is the thing that will keep the readers from entering the rest (4:6), as they have the example of the others who did not receive the promise (4:11). Rebellion is the principle element of *ἄπιστία*. It is apostacy from God. For the concept of withdrawing from God, the writer also uses the term *ὑποτροπή* in antithesis to *πίστεις* (10:38,39). Here he shows that God has no pleasure

¹²Alexander Souter, A Pocket Lexicon to the New Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916), p. 29.

in the person who draws back, but that it is through faith that the righteous live. The end of drawing back, ὀπισθολαγία, is destruction; while that of πίστις is πραγματοποιήσιν ψυχῆς. The requirement is total commitment and enduring confidence unto the end.

Ἐλπίς in the Epistle

In the Epistle to the Hebrews the area that we have to do with by faith is that of hope.¹³ This concept is of prime importance for an understanding of the πίστις concept. We, therefore, go over to a consideration of ἔλπις.

There are five occurrences of the noun, ἔλπις.¹⁴ There is one occurrence of the participial form, ἐλπίζομένων (11:1). Hope is something which the readers have come to have, and which they should continue to hold fast (3:6; 6:18; 10:23). "The hope in each case appears to be fixed upon the realization of a complete divine fellowship... ."¹⁵ It is fulfillment of earthly being, already become established for us in Christ.¹⁶ The author presupposes that the Old Testament knew of a hope which was mediated by the Levitical priesthood. In

¹³A. Schlatter, "Der Brief an die Hebräer," Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921), Dritter Band, 123.

¹⁴3:6; 6:11,18; 7:19; and 10:23.

¹⁵Westcott, op. cit., pp. 323-f.

¹⁶Ibid.

the middle of the comparison of this priesthood with that of Christ, the author says that a better hope has entered (7:19). It is by this hope that we draw near to God, "for the law made nothing perfect" (7:19). In 6:13 ff. we hear that this hope is closely connected with the promise that God made to Abraham when He blessed him. Weiss says that the ἔλπιζόμενα are for the New Testament covenant the contents of the covenant promise.¹⁷

In his article on ἐλπίς, Kittel says: "Der nt.liche Hoffungsbegriff ist wesentlich durch den at.lichen bestimmt."¹⁸ In the Epistle itself, it is closely linked to God's dealings with the people of the Old Testament as a hope of entering into the rest of God (3:1-4:16). It is a hope of salvation (2:1-5); deliverance from bondage of death, the devil, and entrance into glory (2:9-15). The hope is one of a New Covenant in which God will be the God of the people and they shall serve Him in freedom, having their sins forgiven, and receiving mercy (8:2-13). In short, the hope is one of eternal inheritance (9:15).

More specifically the ἔλπιζόμενα of 11:1 point back to 10:1. There we read of good things to come of which the law was but a shadow. Although Christ has come and offered Himself up once for the sins of all (7:27), they nevertheless do

¹⁷Bernhard Weiss, Biblical Theology of the New Testament, translated from the Third Revised Edition, by James E. Duguid (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1879), II, 225 f.

¹⁸Gerhard Kittel, Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 527.

not see Him in His glory. But they see Him made a little lower than the Angels (2:9). The people knew Jesus as a man. Their leaders had preached to them of the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, but they did not see this. And, yet, their future blessings depended upon this fact. So, for them, the hope was also a hope of things to come. Their hope was one of the "saving of the soul" (10:39).

The Concept ὑπόστανσις

The third word which we will study is ὑπόστανσις. The verse under consideration says that faith is the ὑπόστανσις of hope. In order, therefore, to come to an understanding of the relation between faith and hope, it will be necessary also to look into this word. However, since the word is used in the Epistle only twice (1:3 and 3:14) outside of the use in 11:1, we will have to extend our investigation to include a greater range of material. Thus we will consider the uses in the other New Testament writings. Inasmuch as the author has been influenced to a great extent by the thought of the LXX, we will also look into it to see the manner in which it uses the word.¹⁹ Finally we will consider early secular usage as reflected by the papyri. When considering this word, one must be careful not to attribute to it the peculiar coloring which

¹⁹The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament with an English Translation and with Various Readings and Critical Notes (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons Limited, n.d.), passim.

it received during the early Trinitarian controversies.

ὑπόστασις is placed in parallel with δόξα (1:3) as a circumlocution for the word God. At first this may not appear so evident, but looking at the whole passage will bring this into more clarity. "ὁς ἐν ἀπαύρασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτῆρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ" is the way the passage reads. The word δόξα is a translation of the concept of תְּכָרָה glory, majesty "in the sense of the absolute perfection of the deity!"²⁰ Here it comes very close to meaning God Himself. With that ὑπόστασις is placed in parallel by καὶ . τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ is, thus, a reference to God. Primarily it is "that which is the foundation." From there it is modified to mean the substantial quality, nature, of any person or thing as it means in this verse.²¹

In 3:14 we have a different coloring for the word. It begins with the same basic meaning of foundation, but shades over to mean confidence,²² or hope. Either of these meanings is possible. In this case, it is colored by the Hebrew הִתְקַוָּה and תִּקְוָה, both of which may have the meaning: to expect, to hope, to wait.²³ Gremer says that:

²⁰Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament: being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti (Corrected edition; New York: American Book Co., c.1889), p. 156.

²¹Ibid., pp. 644 f.

²²Westcott, op. cit., p. 85.

²³Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, translated by Samuel Frideaux Tregelles (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), pp. 346 and 726 f.

. . . the LXX have translated $\tau\lambda\acute{\iota}\pi\eta$, Ps. xxxix.8, and $\tau\lambda\acute{\iota}\pi\eta$, in Ruth i.12, Ezek. xix.5, by $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\iota\varsigma$, . . . because the Greek word $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\pi\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ lacked the psychological definiteness of the Hebrew word, . . . It must therefore, as a synonym of $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\pi\acute{\iota}\varsigma$, $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\omicron\mu\omicron\nu\eta$, be translated by confidence, assurance, Heb. iii.14.²⁴

We might also compare the parallel between this verse and $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\pi\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ in 3:6. However, the sense here (3:14) need not be specifically hope. We cannot agree that these are clear examples.

$\acute{\upsilon}\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\iota\varsigma$ is used twice in St. Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians. The first of these, II Cor. 9:4, occurs in the middle of St. Paul's exhortation to that congregation that they continue in their work of charity. He has written, vv.1 f., that he has been boasting of them concerning their liberality. In vv.3 f. he exhorts them to be ready with continued generosity so that, should he come again with those to whom he had boasted, they might not be ashamed in $\tau\eta\ \acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\varsigma\ \tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\ \acute{\epsilon}$. One can supply almost anything for $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\iota\varsigma$ here. It might mean no more than in this matter. On the other hand, as it stands, it can hardly mean more than in this boast. II Cor. 11:17, the second case, is almost parallel to the one discussed above, except that it adds $\tau\eta\varsigma\ \kappa\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ in the text. The same is also a variant of the former with the attestation of the Koine tradition, many Latin manuscripts, and the Syriac tradition. The KJV renders the passages: confident

²⁴Herman Gremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, translated from the German of second edition, by William Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878), p. 314.

boasting (9:4), and confidence of boasting (11:17).

In the LXX ὑπόταξις can mean almost anything. It will, therefore, suffice for us to give a few examples and try to extract from them some general concept that pervades them all. Moses, in speaking to the people, Deut. 1:12, says: "How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your ὑπόταξις, and your strife?" Judges 6:4 reads: "And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no ὑπόταξις for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass." Ps. 38:5 reads: "Behold thou hast made my days as an handsbreadth; and mine ὑπόταξις is as nothing before thee." The same Psalm continues in verse 7: "And now, Lord, what wait I for? Is it not the Lord? my ὑπόταξις is in thee." Again Ps. 68:2, we read: "I sink in deep mire, where there is no ὑπόταξις: I am come into deep waters, and the floods overflow me." In all these examples, the particular context has to determine the exact meaning of the word. It seems, though, that the basic meaning is essential, fundamental thing. More specific than that it is impossible to be.²⁵

Moulton gives several examples of secular usage in the papyri. These might be summed up: a) agreement of sale, b) declaration of property, and c) body of documents bearing on the ownership of property. The word seems to have enjoyed

²⁵Other places where the word occurs in the Old Testament are: Deut. 11:6; Ruth 1:12; I Kings 13:21,23; 14:4; Job 22:20; Psalm 38:47; 138:15; Wisdom 16:21; Nahum 2:7; Jeremiah 10:17; 23:22; Ezekiel 19:5; 26:11; 43:11.

some popularity as title-deed to property -- something underlying visible conditions and guaranteeing future possession.²⁶

A couple of examples will suffice. Papyrus Oxyrhynchus, Vol. III (ii-iii A.D.). *πλίσιον τῆς ὑποτάξεως μου ἐν ὄλη ἐρούρη μιᾶ* -- more land than I had by one whole aroura. Papyrus Oxy. Vol. X (iii A. D.) *ἐπὶ δὲ ταύτης τῆ(σ) ὑποτάξεως δηλω ὀφείλειεν τὸν ἀνδρα μου ἐμοῖ* -- and out of this estate I declare my husband owes. . . .²⁷ The word is also quite general here, taking its coloring from the context. The meaning is very close to basic thing.

Mathis, in a Doctor's thesis at the Catholic University of America, has surveyed the whole field of Greek literature concerning the meaning of *ὑπόστασις*.²⁸ While we cannot accept all of his conclusions, it is well to look into some of his study. He comes to the conclusion:

. . . we may say that this investigation has established historically that certainly two senses of *ὑπόστασις*, -- "REALITY" in contrast to "MERE APPEARANCE" and "that which stands or settles" as opposed to "that which passes away or can be drained," . . . were current when Heb.xi:1 was written.²⁹

Later he adds:

²⁶James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949), pp. 659 f.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Michael Ambrose Mathis, The Pauline Pistis-Hypostasis according to Heb. XI:1: An Historico-Exegetical Investigation (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1920), passim.

²⁹Ibid., p. 126.

Secondly . . . it also shows the untenableness of the interpretation . . . which has become today the more common . . ., -- i.e., ἐπότρεις = "CONFIDENCE."³⁰

Finally, he summarizes his whole consideration:

The Pauline ἐπότρεις, as a qualification of πίστις in Heb.xi:1, is the PRESENTATION OF "REALITY" in contrast to "MERE APPEARANCE." Scientifically, no other interpretation is possible. Such explanations as "fiducia," "expectation," etc., are perversions of the historical evidence.³¹

We cannot agree that it is necessary to limit ἐπότρεις to reality as Mathis does, for we have found that the word can also mean basis, foundation. However, we are heartily in accord with him that confidence and conviction do not have good attestation.

The Concept Ἐλεγχος

When we come to this word we have more of a problem than with the other words which we have had to analyze. The source of this trouble is that 11:1 is the only place in which the word occurs in the entire body of New Testament literature. In II Tim. 3:16, we have the word ἐλεγμόν. A number of manuscripts, P Koine Western, et al., give the variant reading of ἔλεγχος in place of ἐλεγμόν in this passage. The verse says that all Scripture is useful . . . for ἐλεγμόν. The same verse places διδασκαλία, ἐπικύρηταις, and παιδεία ἐν δικκιοσύνη in parallel with ἐλεγμόν. The purpose of Scripture, according to these, is that man may become perfect unto all good

³⁰Ibid., p. 127.

³¹Ibid., p. 151.

works (3:17). Ἐλεγμὸν, is, therefore, a method God uses in dealing with man. KJV terms it reproof. That term will have to suffice until we have studied it further.

Though the substantive, ἔλεγχος, is not found in the New Testament outside of 11:1, the cognate term ἐλέγξειν "is not unfrequent."³² The verb is used in Hebrews 12:5, as well as eighteen other times in the New Testament.³³ All of these uses carry the concept of accusation or reproof. However, it is generally not reproof and accusation in a judging, condemnatory, sense, but rather for the purpose of leading into correct living and relationship with God and men. It comes close to being a call to repentance. A few examples will suffice as illustrations. Matt. 18:15: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and ἔλεξον him his fault between thee and him alone." In Luke 3:19, we read: "But, Herod the tetrarch, being ἐλεγχόμενος by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife. . . ." John 3:20 says: "Everyone who doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be ἐλεγχθῆναι." At times, the element of judgement and condemnation, however, is present: "And when he is come, he will ἐλέγξει the world of sin," John 16:8.

³²Westcott, op. cit., p. 351.

³³Matt. 18:15; Luke 3:19; John 3:20; 8:9,46; 16:8
I Cor. 14:24; Eph. 5:11,13; I Tim. 5:20; II Tim. 4:2
Titus 1:9,13; 2:15; James 2:9; Jude 15,22; Apoc. 3:19.

The LXX usage of *ἐλέγχος* is invariably to render the word $\Pi\Omega\text{?}$ in its various forms. In Job the word is found five times, generally in the sense of argument. Job 13:6 reads: "hearken to the *ἐλέγχον* of my lips." Job 23:4 reads: "I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with *ἐλέγ - χων* ." The other Old Testament book to use the word to any extent is the book of Proverbs. There we find the word used fourteen times, in eight of which it is paralleled with *παιδεία*, training. Twice it is paralleled with counsel. The form of $\Pi\Omega\text{?}$ which it renders is the substantive, $\Pi\Omega\text{?}$. According to this usage it becomes very closely allied with training, and likely means reproof or punishment. Perhaps discipline would be more exact as that also suggests the thought of corrective measures and training. Prov. 6:23 reads: "the *ἐλέγχος* of instruction are the way of life." Prov. 12:1 "Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth *ἐλέγχους* is brutish." In the prophets, the word takes on new coloring, approaching closer to judgement. In Hosea 5:9 we read: "Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of *ἐλέγχου* ." Hab. 2:1: "And I will watch to see what he shall say unto me, and what I shall answer concerning my *ἐλέγχον* ." ⁵⁴ Compare Ezek. 13:14: "And I will put it upon the earth, and its foundations shall be uncovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed with *ἐλέγχων* ." ⁵⁵ From these examples we can see

⁵⁴KJV treats this as a verb, thus the italics are my own translation.

⁵⁵According to the LXX.

that the word has some of the concept of testing or conviction by trial.³⁶

Westcott tells us that "the sense of 'proof' is found in classical writers from Euripides downwards."³⁷ This is closer to the way it is used in 11:1. The papyri give proof as the meaning of the word. "Then if he has confidence in the ἔλεγχος of his accusation, he shall enter upon the more serious lawsuit." Thus, the meaning comes close to papers of testimony.³⁸ Perhaps this is the way it is to be understood in 11:1 also. "Hb. 11:1 . . . ist ἔλεγχος nicht "Zurechtweisung," sondern Beweis, Ueberfuehrung."³⁹

*Ἔστιν δὲ at the Beginning of Sentences

The accented copula at the beginning of a sentence is not at all rare in New Testament usage. Thayer tells us:⁴⁰ "Sometimes the copula ἔστιν (with the accent . . .) stands at the beginning of a sentence to emphasize the truth of what the sentence affirms of denies. . . ." John 21:25, "Ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ ἃ ἐποίησεν. . .," is an example of this. Another example may be found in Luke 8:11, "Ἔστιν δὲ αὐτῶν ἡ παραβολή."

³⁶Other uses of ἔλεγχος : Job 6:26; 16:22; Ps. 72:14; Pr. 1:23, 25, 30; 5:12; 13:18; 15:10; 16:3, 17; 27:5; 28:13; 29:1, 15; Wi. 1:9; 2:14; 11:6; 17:7; 18:5; Si. 16:12; 19:31; 21:6.

³⁷Westcott, op. cit., p. 351.

³⁸Moulton, op. cit., p. 202.

³⁹Kittel, op. cit., p. 473.

⁴⁰Thayer, op. cit., p. 178.

Here, however, it is more in the form of a definition or explanation than a mere affirmation of the truth of the statement.

Many have also thought that 11:1 is no more than a sterile definition. However, this is hardly the case. "The order ($\xi\sigma\tau\epsilon\nu \delta\acute{\iota} \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\varsigma$) shows that the object of the writer is not to give a formal definition of Faith but to bring out characteristics of Faith which bear upon his argument. It seems to suggest the affirmation of the reality of faith [sic] as well as the nature of faith. . . ."⁴¹ Certainly the $\delta\acute{\iota}$ ties this verse up so closely to 10:39⁴² that we cannot say with Luene-mann that the usage of $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ in 11:1 without the article indicates that the author does not have the Christian $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ specifically in mind.⁴³ In the context, $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ can mean nothing but the Christian faith, as the particle $\delta\acute{\iota}$ also affirms. By this word, 11:1 is tied closely to 10:39, and speaks of the same faith which is there presented. The faith of 10:39 is that which avoids $\kappa\acute{\alpha}\tau\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota\kappa\epsilon\nu$ and serves to the $\pi\epsilon\pi\epsilon\pi\acute{o}\iota\eta\sigma\iota\nu$ of the soul. This can be no other than the Christian faith.

⁴¹Westcott, op. cit., p. 349.

⁴²Thayer, op. cit., p. 125.

⁴³Gottlieb Luene-mann, Kritisch Exegetisches Handbuch ueber den Hebraeerbrief (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht's Verlag, 1878), p. 346.

CHAPTER V

SYNTHESIS OF CONCEPTS

Our object, in this chapter, will be to relate the various concepts of 11:1 to the Epistle as a whole and to one another. We have considered the parallels with the important words in the verse, and the manner in which they are used. We now wish to penetrate behind this and see how the thought of the whole Epistle is summed up in 11:1. We might thus get to the bottom of the concept *πίστις* as it is presented by the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Westcott says that there are two matters which have to be considered in 11:1: a) the object of faith, and b) the office of faith. Thus we will have to look at *ἐλπίσματα* and *οὐ βλεπόμενα* as objects; and at *ἐπιόψοντες* and *ἔλεγχος* as office.¹ We will do this by considering the relation of *ἐλπίς* to the argument of the Epistle, and considering the relation of *πίστις* to *ἐλπίς* as its *ἐπὶσταντις*. Secondly, we will look at the concept of *οὐ βλεπόμενα* in the Epistle, relating *πίστις* to it as its *ἔλεγχος*. Finally, we will consider the relation of 11:1 to the Epistle.

Faith and Hope

By combining two passages from the Old Testament (Gen.2:2

¹Brooke Foss Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 350.

and Psalm 95:11) the author shows that God has prepared a rest for which man is destined. And from the fact that this rest exists, and that it was never filled, the author draws the conclusion that this rest is still open as a promise of God. He argues from the fact that the people who had been brought up out of the land of Egypt had been promised rest (Deut. 31:7 and Joshua 22:4). However, much later, David says in Psalm 95 that this rest still exists as it has not been filled. And because of this the author understands that the promise of God is still valid, and that the readers still have a hope. We have already seen how the thought of a hope runs through the whole Epistle.² And it is in view of this hope that his whole argument is built up.

But the purpose of the author is not to assure his readers that this hope still exists. Rather it is to show them how they may avoid coming short of entering the rest (4:1-16). This is the reason for dwelling on the rest of God, showing that it is not a mere Word but that it is the Promise of God prepared in Christ for us.³ For this reason, the proper relationship that must exist between the people and this Word of promise is that of "having the Word incorporated by faith in them that hear" (4:2). Faith has always been the characteristic

²Supra, pp. 34-36.

³A. Schlatter, "Der Brief an die Hebräer," Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921), Dritter Band, 124.

of the people of God.

In 11:1, the author says that this faith which the readers must have to relate the hope to themselves is the ἐπίστασις of hope. In our consideration of ἐπίστασις above, we saw that it had a variety of meanings, and we could determine the exact coloring from the context only. The basic meaning was foundation, fundamental thing. Perhaps this is the meaning to be preferred here. That Weiss⁴ and others (e.g., Manson⁵) see in the word the concept of confidence does not agree with Greek usage in general. Nowhere did we encounter the meaning confidence. It is rather difficult to determine where the exegetes get this meaning. According to Mathis,⁶ it is not in the classical usage of the word. We have found that it is not in the Scriptural usage, nor that of the papyri. Sometimes in the LXX it might come close to meaning hope. However, nowhere does it mean confidence.

So we have arrived at the conclusion: the relationship of πίστις to ἐλπίς is that of ἐπίστασις -- foundation, basis, that which remains firm. Westcott says that ἐπίστασις in 11:1 must be "that which gives true existence to an object."⁷

⁴Bernhard Weiss, Biblical Theology of the New Testament, translated from the third revised edition, by James E. Duguid (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1879), II, 224.

⁵William Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1951), p. 75.

⁶Michael Ambrose Mathis, The Pauline Pistis-Hypostasis according to Heb. XI:1: An Historico-Exegetical Investigation (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1920), passim.

⁷Westcott, op. cit., p. 350.

We might translate this part of the verse: "Faith gives true existence to hope," or "faith is the basis of hope."

At this point we wish to take note of the fact that there is confusion of the concepts of πίστις and ἔλπις. Thus Gremer says under the article concerning ἔλπις: "Hope is the necessary safeguard of faith amid the contradictions of this present life, 'the high courage that abides firm in every attack' (Luther)."⁸ However, this is hardly the case. The hope is constant, having been prepared by God; but it does not safeguard faith, as the record of the rebellious people in the desert shows. Rather, it is faith which must seize on the hope and make it of benefit for the hearers (4:2).

Schlatter, in commenting on the relation of faith to the invisible, which we shall see are the elements of our hope, says much the same:

The invisible⁹ appears to us as the unreal, shadowy, and worthless. We are in need of a conviction so that our thinking and desires are freed from that which lies before the eyes. If this conviction is not repelled by us, it accomplishes its purpose, so that the invisible becomes certainty for us. Then faith is present.¹⁰

But, he does not say in what it is that this conviction

⁸Herman Gremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, translated from the German of Second Edition, with additional matter and corrections by the Author, by William Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878), p. 254.

⁹The elements of our hope. (Infra, pp. 50-53.)

¹⁰A. Schlatter, Der Glaube im Neuen Testament (Calw. & Stuttgart: Verlag der Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1896), pp. 33 f.

consists, nor how we get that conviction. He merely says that after we have gotten the conviction, faith is present. It is, however, more logical and correct to say that the conviction arises out of the fact that faith is the basis of hope than that the conviction gives rise to faith.

Faith and the Unseen

The second part of the "definition" is set into apposition with the first. It is not an additional sphere, but a further explanation of the first.¹¹ It states that the object of faith is that which is not seen. We wish now to consider what this concept, *οὐ βλεπόμενα*, includes. Stevens sees in this expression an almost philosophic concept.¹² Without the context, this would probably be true. However, we do not need to go outside the bounds of the Epistle to determine what the *οὐ βλεπόμενα* are. In fact, we must confine ourselves to it for there we find ample material.

Let us begin with the general statement of Weiss: "*Οὐ βλεπόμενα* are the institutions and blessings of salvation presented in the covenant."¹³ However, as Schlatter shows, we hope for the institutions and blessings which we do not see.

¹¹Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), p. 247.

¹²George Barker Stevens, The Theology of the New Testament (Revised edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1918), p. 516.

¹³Weiss, Biblical Theology of the New Testament, p. 226.

Therefore faith is operative in the realm of the unseen.¹⁴ While the believer does not see the hoped for, he must believe.¹⁵

The method of the author in the preceding chapters has been to set forth Christ's superiority to the Angels (1:4-2:18), Moses (3:1-6), and the Levitical priesthood (5:1-7:28); the superiority of Christ's sacrifice to the sacrifices of the Old Testament (9:1-10:18); and the superiority of the New Covenant to the Old Covenant (8:1-13). In the comparison between Christ and the Angels, the author says (2:8):

Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

This gives an indication of the sphere of the *οὐ βλεπόμενα*. The readers had heard of the superiority of Christ, but they were not able to see that except by faith. Later 11:3 adds to this the thought that it is by faith that we understand that the world was formed by the Word of God -- a thing of which we have no empirical evidence. Schlatter sums up the thought of the Epistle concerning the *οὐ βλεπόμενα* in the words: "Was die Gemeinde als wahrnehmbares Ergebnis seiner Geschichte vor sich hat, ist Jesu Menschheit, Sterben und Verborgtheit." Yet, while all this is true, still: "zwar steht

¹⁴Schlatter, Der Brief an die Hebraeer, p. 123.

¹⁵Schlatter, Der Glaube im Neuen Testament, p. 331.

Jesus hoch erhaben ueber allen Engeln . . . ueber Mose . . . ueber Aaron. . . . Aber all dies ist unsichtbar, 2,8.9."¹⁶

Gerhardt speaks of the same thing in his commentary on Hebrews, where he says:

Duo sunt in fidei objecto consideranda, quorum alterum est materiale, alterum formale. Materiale objectum fidei videri potest, sed formale objectum est invisibile. Apostoli Christum videbant, quod autem Christus sit Dei Filius, promissus Messias, mundi Salvator, non videbant, sed credebant.¹⁷

He gives this in answer to the question: "If the apostles believed in Christ, whom did they then see?"¹⁸ This brings up the question of what the unseen actually is. Is it future? From the quotation above, we can see that this is not necessarily the case. The unseen also is the spiritual nature of Christ's work. That Christ offered Himself and, as high Priest, has entered the most holy place (10:22) are things we do not see. They are not perceptible to experience except by faith.¹⁹ The οὐ βλεπόμενα are the integral elements of hope.

Of these οὐ βλεπόμενα, πίστις is the ἔλεγχος. In our consideration of ἔλεγχος ²⁰ we came to the conclusion that it may mean reproof, argument, discipline, testing, or convincing. Westcott says that it can hardly express a state.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 328.

¹⁷Johannes Gerhardus, Commentarius super Epistolam ad Ebraeos (Editio secunda; Hamburg: Guth/Bibliop., 1641), p. 395.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Schlatter, Der Glaube im Neuen Testament, pp. 330 f.

²⁰Supra, pp. 41-44.

From this he concludes that it means a "test by which the reality of the unseen is established."²¹ Kittel says that it is an objective, active convincing.²² Moffatt considers it to be a subjective conviction.²³ In many instances in the LXX, we noticed that it was paralleled with *πειδεία* as a method of being wise and in the way of life. Because of the fact that *πίστις* is the way of entering into the Rest, we believe that *ἔλεγχος* is also close to the LXX usage here. The usage which most closely fits the thought of 11:1 is that of argument in the sense of proof.

Relation of 11:1 to the Epistle

There is a special consideration which we must treat at this point. It concerns the relation of 11:1 to the rest of the Epistle. More specifically, it is the question of where the accent falls in the verse. Many scholars are convinced that the accent should fall on *ἐπιδοκίμοις ἑλεγχόμενων* and *πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων* as theses posited of faith. On the other hand, the possibility also exists that the accent might fall on *πίστις* so that the predicates become expressive

²¹Westcott, op. cit., p. 350.

²²Gerhard Kittel, Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), Zweiter Band, 473.

²³James Moffatt, "A Critical & Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), p. 159.

only of the realm in which faith is active, and the accent is upon the reality and efficacy of faith. This is the position that was taken by many older scholars. We will try to determine which of the two is the most acceptable in this particular context. Linguistically, neither possibility is preferred nor excluded.

To consider the position of those who hold to the first of these interpretations, we might quote from the article of Buechsel in Kittel:

To see the convincing subject in faith, as the old exegetes generally do, endangers the necessary parallel between *ὑπόστασις* and *ἔλεγχος* A faith which has within itself the proof of the unseen things or that brings such out of itself, is not the faith of Hebrews. It stands upon the revelation, the Words, the promises of God, and brings nothing else to it than what it receives therefrom.²⁴

We agree with the second part of this statement, but are not able to agree that the first follows from it. To say that the faith must find within itself, or within the object, the proof (if it is to be the proof or foundation for the unseen) is to misunderstand the whole Epistle. Michel has presented the case rightly when he says of faith: "Der Glaube ist der Weg zu Gott (XI 6), die Antwort auf Gottes Offenbarung (XI 2). Er klammert sich an das Dasein Gottes und an seine Vergeltung (XI 6)."²⁵ That is the teaching of the Epistle. It places the emphasis upon God. Faith is the answer to God's revelation

²⁴Kittel, op. cit., pp. 473 f.

²⁵Michel, op. cit., pp. 24 f.

and promise. It is God that works the faith, as Buechsel rightly says: "If it is necessary to name a convincing subject that can be God alone."²⁶ However, it is the faith which gives rise to confidence.

That Buechsel contends that presenting faith as the convincing subject would destroy the necessary parallel between *ἐπιόρτασις* and *ἐλεγχος*, is valid only if one insists that *ἐπιόρτασις* need mean conviction. If one does that, then one would quite naturally see *ἐλεγχος* also as conviction or some similar term. However, we have seen that there is little warrant for insisting upon *ἐπιόρτασις* as conviction. Rather we must consider it as foundation, or that which gives foundation; and *ἐλεγχος* as that which provides proof. The parallel is then also preserved.

Moffatt points out that the writer does not say that it is faith which gives reality to the unseen nor that it is faith which tests, or rather attests, their reality. Rather the writer assumes the reality of the unseen and the things that are hoped for. Thus, Moffatt continues, the writer is not defining it, but describing it, as an active conviction which moves and moulds human conduct.²⁷ We rather think that the writer is proposing the thesis that it is faith which alone can effect the reception of the unseen blessings of the

²⁶Kittel, op. cit., pp. 473 f.

²⁷Moffatt, op. cit., pp. 159 f.

Christ which he has presented in the first nine and a half chapters. It is not without reason that the author has stressed the fact that it was through faith that it is possible to incorporate the Word into the lives of the people (4:2), inherit the promise (6:12), draw near in full assurance (10:22), live (10:38), and save the soul (10:39). The same theme is also dominant in the eighteen occurrences of πίστις in chapter eleven. To make of 11:1 a description loses sight of the active character of faith throughout the whole Epistle.

We have already seen that the Epistle was written to such as were in danger of falling away from faith and thereby of losing their opportunity of entering into the rest. They were not falling away from hope, but were in danger of relaxing their hold upon the means of realizing that hope. For this reason the author stresses the efficacy of Christ as the final act of God for the salvation of the people. Unfailing trust in this decisive act is necessary for the realization of the hope held forth in the promise. It is only by having a faith which endures undimmed to the end that the readers will have the Word incorporated into their very lives, and thereby benefit by it (4:2).

In its context, 11:1 follows upon an exhortation to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith . . . for we are not of them who draw back to perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (10:19-39). Immediately thereafter the Epistle goes over to a presentation of the efficacy of faith, showing by example upon example that the

heroes of the Old Testament had all conquered by faith. Although the author does not make the application at this point, the implication is there that the ὑπότακτις for hope is not sacrifice and ceremony, as might be supposed from the Old Testament record (9:11-28). Rather, God Himself will write the law into the hearts of the people, "and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (9:15-18).

The author opens the paragraph on the efficacy of faith with the topic sentence: Ἰστέν δὲ πίστις ἐλεγχόμενων ὑπότακτις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων (11:1).

This sets the theme for the whole eleventh chapter. He connects this verse with the preceding by the particle δὲ, of which Thayer says:

It is joined to terms which are repeated, and with such additions as tend to explain and establish them more exactly; in this use of the particle we may supply a suppressed negative clause (and give its force in Eng. by inserting I say, and that, so then, etc.).²⁸

Commentators generally consider δὲ as linking 11:1 to 10:39.

Thus Westcott can say:

The reference to Faith, as the characteristic of the true people of God, leads the writer of the Epistle to develop at length the lesson of Faith given in the records of the Old Covenant.²⁹

However, this is not the first reference to faith as the indispensable characteristic of the people of God. As early as

²⁸ Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament: being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti (Corrected edition; New York: American Book Co., c.1889), p. 125.

²⁹ Westcott, op. cit., p. 349.

3:12 we have specific warning against unbelief which is "falling away from the living God." In 4:3, the author characterizes those who will enter the rest as *οἱ πιστεύοντες*. In fact, faith is a dominant note throughout the whole first section of the Epistle. It is, therefore, unlikely that the author decides to describe it because of the reference to faith in 10:39. We, consequently, believe that the particle *δε* links 11:1 ff. with the whole preceding section rather than linking *πίστις* of 11:1 with the reference to it in 10:39. And, because the preceding section has dwelt on the sacrificial system and the dispensation of the Old Covenant, the author here posits the thesis that it is faith which is the means of realizing the hopes and the invisible things of God's eschatological purpose.

Although Westcott does not agree with this conclusion, he nevertheless is not convinced that it is to be entirely excluded. He sums up his consideration on this verse with the statement that it

... is in virtue of Faith that things hoped for are now, so that Faith is their essence in regard to the actual experience of the believer.

Thus the general scope of the statement is to shew that the future and the unseen can be made real for men by Faith.³⁰

However, his whole consideration generally tends to the other side, even though he does make the above admission.

³⁰Westcott, op. cit., p. 351.

We might also look at a couple of examples which are very similar to the one we have in 11:1. A very similar construction is found in I Tim. 6:6, where we read: *ἔστιν δὲ πορισμὸς μέγας ἢ εὐερέβεια μετὰ . . .* In this instance, St. Paul is holding before the readers the ideal of Christianity toward which they should strive, and how their lives will reflect their faith. In the verse immediately preceding our text, he has characterized some as being such who think that "gain is godliness." To them he says: "It is godliness with contentment which is great gain." The KJV also sets this up in a form that is very close to a definition. John 8:54 is another similar instance: *ἔστιν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ δοξάζων με.* This comes out of a context of Jesus' disputation with the Jews about His own relation to God, the Father. The Jews absolutely refuse to accept the testimony of Jesus that He is the great Prophet sent from the Father, greater than Abraham, and their Deliverer from bondage. They thus accuse Him of exalting Himself to a place of honor which He does not deserve. And Jesus answers them: "If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me." Here the KJV has rightly caught the emphasis upon the subject.

The argument that we have with those who would turn this verse into a description is not so much with the characterization of faith they present. Essentially, their conclusions are correct. However, we do not see that 11:1 actually says what they posit of it. It is true that the Epistle does

present faith as a firm confidence and as abiding by the supernatural character of God's promises in Christ as the ultimate eschatological Word. However, 11:1 does not say this. Neither of the words used, *ὑπόστασις* nor *ἔλεγχος* as predicates of faith, carry this thought in this verse. These thoughts must be brought in from other parts of the Epistle (6:12; 10:22; 10:39). To make this verse into a description breaks the continuity of the thought throughout the whole Epistle and weakens the effect of the long list of witnesses it introduces.

Our conclusion is that, after having reminded the readers that they are such as are of faith, the author says: "It is faith which is the foundation for hopes, the proof of things not seen" (11:1). By this he is warning them that there is really only one foundation for hope and that foundation is faith which alone can properly incorporate the Word of Promise into their lives.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We have now come to the point where we have to make an attempt at a summary of the material that we have put forward in the preceding chapters. The purpose of this survey is that we might determine the concept of faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews and make a study of 11:1. Our study of 11:1 has showed us that it is not possible to use it to determine the concept of faith as it is not a definition or description as has often been thought. Our problem in this conclusion is, therefore, to summarize the presentation of the whole Epistle. Schlatter alleges:

Wenden wir die Untersuchung auf das, was das Neue Testament als Glauben vorhaelt, so verzehrt sie sich nicht an einem leeren, abstrakten Formbegriff, sondern tritt an konkrete, aktuelle Glaubensbethaetigung heran.¹

This is also the case with the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is concerned with a presentation of such a faith as is concrete and which expresses itself in the daily life of the people. Kennedy expresses it well, when he states: "A faith so daring and yet so closely linked to actual experience already spans the gulf between earth and heaven."² So, we will summarize

¹A. Schlatter, Der Glaube im Neuen Testament (Calw. & Stuttgart: Verlag der Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1896), p. 6.

²H. A. A. Kennedy, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," The Theology of the Epistles (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., 1919), p. 221.

what this faith actually is. For the sake of convenience, and clarity, we might divide this summary into two parts: a) Faith as relation to God; and b) Faith as power for life.

Faith as Relation to God

We will begin this consideration with the general statement of Kennedy:

It [faith] has become a new attitude, of which Christ is the founder and perfecter. With altogether fresh cogency they [the Christians] may be convinced of the reality of the invisible world, because now they are able to draw near to God without restriction.³

Faith is an intimate relation to God, by which the believing seize and cling to God's promises in Christ. By the antithesis that the Epistle makes between faith and drawing back (10:38 f.) we see that loyalty to the Christian position is a large thing in faith. It is to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us" and to "run with patience the race that is set before us" (12:1). That is, faith is to submit oneself to the order which God has decreed, and is perfecting, for the salvation of man. Living thus has always been the characteristic of the heroes of the Old and New Testament. Thus it is a relationship with God whereby man permits God to make the New Covenant effective in him, forgiving his sins (10:16-18).

This faith expresses itself in several ways. In the first

³Ibid., p. 219.

place, the believer must believe that God is (11:6) and live according to that conviction. He must permit God to be the guiding principle in his life. Faith is, therefore, moral implication in the designs of God, and not merely intellectual. Secondly, the believer must acknowledge that God is a rewarder of those that seek Him (11:6). This is really very close to the first, except that it stresses more the submission to God. And it stresses submission to the purpose which God has established for the salvation of man. Thus it is by faith that it is possible to perceive that the world was created out of that which is invisible -- by the Word of God (11:3). In short, faith is a whole reorientation of one's philosophy of life to see in history the working out of the eschatological purposes of God (12:18-29). And it is incorporation into the redemptive plan. It is incorporation into the house of God (3:6).

Faith as Power in Life

However, this faith, as we said above, is not an abstract thing, but reaches into the very lives of the saints and influences those lives. It is the dynamic which is behind a life that is pleasing to, and receives the verdict of *δικαιος* from God. We will, consequently, also look at faith from the angle of its effect upon man.

Faith is one of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity (6:2). In this reference it is placed side by side with other doctrines: repentance, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection from the dead, and eternal judgement. However, we are not

to understand that it is thereby equated with these others as one means of grace among several. The emphasis upon faith as the way in which we have assurance to come before God (10:22) indicates that faith is basic to these other teachings. We might, thus, say with Kennedy: ". . . faith, in the author's sense of confiding in the revelation of God, belongs not merely to the progress but also to the starting-point of a Christian course."⁴ Faith is the basic principle of justification, although the author does not stress this part of it (6:1). This is also evident from the emphasis that is put upon faith as the means of attaining to the status of *δικαιος* (10:38; 11:4,7).

But faith is more than the power for justification. It is also the strength for the life that follows upon justification. Thus after having encouraged the readers to come with full assurance of faith (10:22) he goes on to encourage them: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith . . . let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works . . . not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" (10:23-25). And, after the great chapter on faith, the author again takes up the theme of sanctification in 12:1 ff.: "Let us run with patience the race . . . lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees . . . make straight paths for your feet . . . follow peace . . . looking diligently lest any

⁴Ibid., p. 220.

man fail of the grace of God" (12:1-15). Likewise in 13, we read: "Let brotherly love continue . . . let your conversation be without covetousness . . . remember them which have the rule over you . . . be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines . . . let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach, etc." Such is the tone of the Epistle, and all of these exhortations arise out of the faith which is the power that the readers have for life. Faith is, thus, the principle of sanctification also. It is the means whereby we can gain the victory and finally inherit the promises of God.

We might express this in the words of Stevens: "The author depicts the religious life chiefly in terms of faith and hope. Salvation is appropriated by faith which remains a constant factor in the development of the Christian character."⁵ Manson expresses much the same thing:

Everything which is not of faith, which in this case means taking of the eyes off the Christian goal of life, every relaxation of the eschatological tension of the soul, would be sin.⁶

In the words of the Epistle, faith is that we "lay aside every sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and

⁵George Barker Stevens, The Theology of the New Testament (Revised edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1918), p. 515.

⁶William Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: and Stoughton Ltd., 1951), p. 57.

finisher of our faith" (12:1 f.). Faith is complete trust in and reliance upon God as benefactor of man.

Strictly speaking, however, these are fruits of faith rather than faith itself. This is faith in the wider sense. It is in this sense that we may say that faith is confidence, boldness, or endurance to the end. In the narrow and strict sense, faith is the relationship to God which is the foundation for all the fruits of faith. Consequently, we may say that faith is confidence, etc., only because it is out of the relationship of *μέτοχος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* that such confidence arises. This is the manner in which the Epistle to the Hebrews presents the concept of faith. It is a very concrete thing, which gives rise to concrete fruits. In the language of St. Paul it would be *ἐν Χριστῷ*. We cannot agree with Kennedy when he insists:

For Paul, faith means that surrender of the whole being to the once crucified and now risen Christ which keeps us in union with Him and makes us sharers in all His experiences. In Hebrews the profound conception of union with Christ is lacking. Faith chiefly implies confidence in the reality of the heavenly world, and the assurance of that glorious heritage to which God has pledged Himself. Since all these future blessings are guaranteed in Christianity, faith is really synonymous with loyalty to the Christian position.⁷

The emphases of the Epistle upon the fact that the Christians are *μέτοχοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ* (3:14; 6:4) and the *οἶκος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* (3:6) point to the contrary. Such expressions are as close to St. Paul's *ἐν Χριστῷ* concept as it is possible to get without actually using the phrase.

⁷Kennedy, op. cit., p. 190.

APPENDIX

OUTLINE OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

INTRODUCTION	1:1-3.
I. CHRIST COMPARED TO THE ANGELS.	1:4-2:18.
He is superior to the angels	1:4-2:5.
He was made lower than the angels.	2:6-8.
This humiliation was for a purpose	2:9-15.
He became man, not angel	2:16-18.
II. CHRIST COMPARED TO MOSES	3:1-6.
Christ and Moses were both faithful.	3:1-2.
Christ is worthy of more glory than Moses because He is God.	3:3-4.
Christ was faithful as a Son; Moses as a Servant	3:5-6a.
We are the House of God if we hold fast the hope to the end	3:6b.
III. ADMONITION TO HOLD FAST THE PROMISE OF REST BY FAITH.	3:7-4:16.
The example of the fathers	3:7-11.
We should be careful not to fall into the same example of unbelief	3:12-4:3.
The Rest of God.	4:4-16.
IV. CHRIST COMPARED TO THE PRIESTHOOD.	5:1-7:28.
Every priest must be ordained.	5:1-3.
It is God Who ordains priests.	5:4-10.
Special admonition to the readers.	5:11-6:20.
Christ as a high Priest according to the order of Melchisedec	7:1-22.
Christ as a much better Priest	7:22-28.
V. THE COMPARISON OF THE TWO COVENANTS.	8:1-13.
Christ is minister in the true tabernacle	8:1-2.
His is a more excellent ministry	8:3-6.
He is the minister of the New Covenant The description of the New Covenant.	8:6-9. 8:10-12.
The New has superseded the Old Covenant	8:13.

VI. COMPARISON OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST WITH THOSE OF THE OLD TABERNACLE. . .	9:1-10:18.
Description of the worldly tabernacle	9:1-5.
Services of the first tabernacle. .	9:6-10.
Christ has sacrificed His Own blood	9:11-12.
Meaning of blood for purification .	9:13-17.
Christ has made a better sacrifice.	9:18-28.
Sacrifices of the law compared with Christ's sacrifice.	10:1-18.
VII. EXHORTATION TO STAND FAST IN FAITH. .	10:19-39.
Let us draw near with full assurance of faith.	10:19-22.
Let us hold fast the profession of our faith	10:23-25.
Let us avoid falling into sin . . .	10:26-31.
Remember your former enthusiasm . .	10:32-34.
Hold fast your confidence in faith.	10:35-39.
VIII. FAITH EXEMPLIFIED	11:1-40.
Faith as eyes in the realm of the realities	11:1-3.
Faith of the antediluvians.	11:4-6.
Faith of Noah and Abraham	11:7-22.
Faith during the time of Moses. . .	11:23-31.
Faith of later heroes and martyrs .	11:32-38.
The result of this faith.	11:39-40.
IX. EXHORTATION IN VIEW OF THE PRECEDING.	12:1-17.
Run the race with patience.	12:1-4.
Remember the factors inherent in sonship	12:5-13.
Avoid the sin of Esau	12:14-17.
X. THE VOICE OF GOD IN THREE UTTERANCES.	12:18-29.
The voice at Sinai.	12:18-21.
The voice at Zion	12:22-25.
The final utterance of God.	12:26-29.
XI. FURTHER EXHORTATIONS.	13:1-21.
Exhortations on a social level. . . .	13:1-6.
Exhortations on a religious level .	13:7-17.
Exchange of Prayers	13:18-21.
XII. CLOSING WORDS AND GREETINGS	13:22-25.

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