
Ivrym

*A Concise Commentary
on the Book of Hebrews*

*By
ovadyah ben yisrael*



Ivrym

**A Concise Commentary
on the Book of Hebrews**

By Ovadyah ben Yisrael

**Ivrym: a concise commentary on the book of
Hebrews**

Copyright© 2017 by Ovadyah ben Yisrael

All rights reserved

Published by Sabbath Keepers Fellowship
P.O. Box 972 Malakoff, TX 75148
www.sabbathkeepersfellowship.org

In cooperation with Qehilath Haderek –
The Fellowship of The Way
P.O. Box 363
Athens, TX 75751
www.qehilathhaderek.org

For the Qedoshym:

Let me die the death of the upright and let my end be like his!

Table of Contents

Glossary.....	p.iii
Introduction	p.v
Foreword	p.vi
Chapter One	p.2
Chapter Two.....	p.6
Chapter Three.....	p.10
Chapter Four.....	p.14
Chapter Five	p.18
Chapter Six.....	p.22
Chapter Seven	p.26
Chapter Eight	p.30
Chapter Nine	p.34
Chapter Ten.....	p.38
Chapter Eleven.....	p.48
Chapter Twelve	p.54
Chapter Thirteen.....	p.60

Glossary of Terms

Aharon	Aaron
Avinu	Our Father
Besorah	Glad Tidings
Beyth Hamiqdash.....	Set-Apart House
Chazon	Revelation
Qol v'chomer	Lesser to greater
Elohym.....	Mighty Ones
Ger (ym).....	Sojourner(s)
Hamashiach.....	The Messiah
Heykal.....	Temple
Kehunnah.....	Priesthood
Kohanym.....	Priests
Koheyn.....	Priest
Koheyn Gadol.....	High Priest
Leviym.....	Levites
Malak (ym)	Messenger(s)
Mashiach.....	Messiah
Megillah.....	Letter
Menorah.....	Lampstand

Miqdash	Set-Apart Place
Mishkan	Dwelling Place
Mishkanoth	Dwelling Places
Mishle	Proverbs
Mitzrayim	Egypt
Moshe	Moses
Pesuk.....	Verse
Qedoshym	Set-Apart Ones
Qodesh	Set-Apart
Qodesh Qodeshym.....	Most Set-Apart Place
Ruach Haqodesh	Set-Apart Spirit
Sefer	Book
Shadday.....	Almighty
TaNak.....	Torah,Nevi'im,Kethuvym
Tehillym.....	Psalms
Tov	Excellent
Yerushalayim.....	Jerusalem
Yeshayahu.....	Isaiah

Introduction

The letter to the Hebrews - Megillah Ivrym - may be the most beautiful, well-written and most misunderstood epistle of the Kethuvym Hatalmidym - the Writings of the Disciples. Magnificent in its depiction of the spiritual and messianic realities underlying the physical symbols of the ancient Ahronic priesthood and its Temple service, it has nevertheless been misinterpreted and "passage picked" over centuries by those ignorant of Judaism's precepts and its Torah until its message and meaning have become almost completely lost.

The antiquity of the letter to the Ivrym is well established. It is quoted in writings by Clement of Rome, Polycarp, and Theophilus of Antioch. Tellingly, early anti-Semites such as Marcion rejected it as inspired scripture because of its overtly Judaistic theme. The letter's authorship is most often attributed to Shaul of Tarsos, but this remains uncertain for various reasons. Shaul mentions his own name in each of his other epistles, unlike the author of Ivrym who does not. In addition, the writer of this letter employs only the Septuagint in its scriptural cites, while Shaul quoted from both the Septuagint and the Masoretic texts.

Today, various groups in both Messianic and Christian circles are polarized over Megillah Ivrym. They are not necessarily polarized between one another, but rather among themselves. Some like it, and some do not. Some embrace it, and others reject it outright. One thing all seem to do, is have an opinion on it. This brief commentary is not designed to stifle those opinions, but to enhance and inform them. It is our hope, and that of the commentary's author, that it will help to restore the message and meaning originally intended in the letter, and that the proper understanding of it that was once lost will again be found.

b'shalom,
Sabbath Keepers Fellowship

Foreword

Before beginning this study of the book of Hebrews, clear your mind of all the previous things you think you have learned or might know about it. Approach it as if for the first time ever. Read it as you would a letter from a trusted friend, one chapter building upon the previous until it reaches its own final conclusion. Above all, let the book say what it has to say without embellishment - it means what it says, and it says what it means - nothing need be added or taken away in order to understand it. And it is in accordance with the Torah and other scriptures, in accord and not contradicting them one whit. They are all of a single piece.

May YHWH Shadday open your eyes wide and bless you with understanding.

Ovadyah ben Yisrael

Adar 2, 5777



Chapter One

¹Elohyim, having of old spoken in many portions and many ways to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by the son, whom He has appointed heir of all, through whom also He made the ages, ³who being the brightness of the esteem and the exact representation of His substance, and sustaining all by the word of his power, having made a cleansing of our sins through himself, sat down at the right hand of the Greatness on high, ⁴having become so much better than the malakym, as he has inherited a more excellent name than them. ⁵For to which of the malakym did He ever say, "You are My son, today I have brought you forth?" And again, "I shall be to him a Father, and he shall be to Me a son?" ⁶And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "Let all the malakym of Elohyim do reverence to him." ⁷And of the malakym indeed He says, "... who is making His malakym spirits and His servants a flame of fire." ⁸But to the son He says, "Your throne, O Elohyim, is forever and ever, a sceptre of straightness is the sceptre of your kingdom. ⁹You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. Because of this, elohym, your Elohyim, has anointed you with the oil of gladness more than your companions." ¹⁰And, "You, master, did found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ¹¹They shall perish, but you remain. And they shall all grow old like a garment, ¹²and like a mantle you shall fold them up, and they shall be changed. But you are the same, and your years shall not fail." ¹³And to which of the malakym did He ever say, "Sit at My right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?" ¹⁴Are they not all serving spirits sent out to attend those who are about to inherit salvation?

In Chapter one, the author of the letter written to the Ivrym clearly establishes the identity and authority of Yehoshua Hamashiach. He recites to his readers the attributes and accomplishments of this one who is called the savior of the world, a perfect man, the Word of

YHWH, and His anointed king. He uses messianic passages from the TaNaK itself to support his assertions and make his case.

Beginning with verse three, the author shows that Yehoshua is distinct from YHWH, and yet he is still an exact representation of the brightness and esteem of the Most-High. He calls him the "firstborn," of all creation and of all living. He claims to have made "cleansing" of sin for those the letter is written to. He also states that, while not being one and the same as YHWH Himself, he is so integral to the workings of the Creator that all things were made through him, and that through his power as the Word he continues to sustain all things.

In order to establish the hierarchy of the heavens and Yehoshua's place in it, verses four through seven state that he has ascended from below the status of the malakym even to above them, as a son ascends above a servant once he matures, and that ultimately the malakym will serve as "ministering spirits" to all humankind that inherit salvation.

Verses eight through fourteen show that this ascension was accomplished by Yehoshua through straightness, righteousness, by hating lawlessness, and further states that his kingdom will extend throughout the ages.

With the clarity and directness of this opening passage in his letter, the author leaves no doubt about whom it concerns nor of Yehoshua's supremacy. He has stated his own doctrinal position and the credentials of the Messiah in such a way that there can be no credible reason for misunderstanding or misinterpretation of them in the passages that follow. He will next build the case for his audience just as scripture prescribes: "line upon line, precept upon precept" until its conclusion is reached in a logical and indisputable fashion.

Chapter Two

¹Because of this we have to pay more attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away. ²For if the word spoken through malakym proved to be firm, and every transgression and disobedience received a right reward, ³how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which first began to be spoken by the master, and was confirmed to us by those that heard, ⁴Elohyim also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Ruach Haqodesh, distributed according to His own desire? ⁵For it is not to malakym that He has subjected the world to come, concerning which we speak. ⁶But somewhere one has witnessed, saying, "What is man that You remember him, or the son of man that You look after him?" ⁷You have made him a little lower than the malakym. You have crowned him with esteem and respect, and set him over the works of Your hands. ⁸You have put all in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left none that is not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all subjected to him. ⁹But we do see him who was made for a little while lower than the malakym, Yehoshua, because of the suffering of death crowned with esteem and respect, that by the grace of Elohyim he should taste death for everyone. ¹⁰For it was fitting for him, because of whom all are and through whom all are, in bringing many sons to esteem, to make the princely leader of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹For both He who makes qadosh and those who are being made Qedoshym are all of One, for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brothers, ¹²saying, "I shall announce Your Name to my brothers, in the midst of the congregation I shall sing praise to You." And again, "I shall put my trust in Him." ¹³And again, "See, I and the children whom Elohyim gave me." ¹⁴Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he himself similarly shared in the same, so that by means of his death he might destroy him having the power of death, that is, the

devil, ¹⁵and deliver those who throughout life were held in slavery by fear of death. ¹⁶For, doubtless, he does not take hold of malakym, but he does take hold of the seed of Avraham. ¹⁷So in every way he had to be made like his brothers, in order to become a compassionate and trustworthy Koheyn Gadol in matters related to Elohyim, to make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For in what he had suffered, himself being tried, he is able to help those who are tried.

Chapter two begins by admonishing the reader that, if the Word we have previously heard in the TaNaK is true, and disobedience and transgression were punished because of it, then how much moreso will it be punished if we neglect this same Word that has been spoken and confirmed by Messiah himself? This is called a "qol v'chomer" - a teaching device which means from "lesser to greater," and it is confirming the Torah and the Prophets.

It is stated that the entirety of the kingdom will someday be ruled by the sons of men, and not malakym. To effect this, the chapter teaches that Yehoshua, the perfect one and our master, was temporarily made lower than the malakym, in order to subject him to all of the suffering of mankind and become like them, while yet remaining sinless himself, and to thereby make him worthy to die for the sins of all mankind so that they can be made fit to rule over all in the coming kingdom. In this, Yehoshua himself says that he is not ashamed to call the Qedoshym his "brothers."

Verses fourteen through eighteen sum up the chapter's arguments by claiming that, in our shared similarities, Yehoshua not only became worthy to suffer for sins in our place, but that with his sinless success in this he also destroyed death and the devil, effecting our everlasting salvation and atonement.

Interestingly, and as an aside, you will see in verses fifteen and sixteen a comparison between humans and malakym that implies malakym do not die, while men do. This is an idea which is borne out in other places in scripture, such as 1st Kepha 3, and 2nd Kepha 2.

Chapter Three

¹Therefore, qadosh brothers, partakers of the heavenly calling, closely consider the emissary and Koheyn Gadol of our confession, Messiah Yehoshua, ²who was trustworthy to Him who appointed him, as also Moshe in all His house. ³For this One has been deemed worthy of more esteem than Moshe, as much as He who built the house enjoys more respect than the house. ⁴For every house is built by someone, but He who built all is Elohim. ⁵And Moshe indeed was trustworthy in all his house as a servant, for a witness of what would be spoken later, ⁶but Messiah as a son over his own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the boldness and the boasting of the hope firm to the end. ⁷Therefore, as the Ruach Haqodesh says, "Today, if you hear His voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, ⁹where your fathers tried Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. ¹⁰Therefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.' ¹¹As I swore in My wrath, 'If they shall enter into My rest ...'" ¹²Look out, brothers, lest there be in any of you a wicked heart of unbelief in falling away from the living Elohim, ¹³but encourage one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened by the deceivableness of sin. ¹⁴For we have become partakers of Messiah if we hold fast the beginning of our trust firm to the end, ¹⁵while it is said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." ¹⁶For who, having heard, rebelled? Was it not all who came out of Mitzrayim, led by Moshe? ¹⁷And with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸And to whom did He swear that they would not enter into His rest, but to those who did not obey? ¹⁹So we see that they were unable to enter in because of unbelief.

At the beginning of Chapter three, the author identifies to whom he is writing his letter - the Qedoshym - the set-apart brothers who are answering to the "heavenly calling." A heavenly calling is something not offered to anyone else in scripture. These are the chosen and elect of YHWH, those who have given all in this life in order to be resurrected and then reign with Messiah at his coming.

According to scripture, they come from both the twelve tribes of Yisrael, and from the great multitude out of the nations who have turned to him and purified themselves in obedience to the entirety of the commandments of YHWH, and to the whole testimony of Yehoshua Hamashiach.

Next, the author compares the "*trustworthy Moshe*" to Yehoshua Hamashiach in matters of faith. He alludes to the familiar "*Moshe My servant*" (Yehoshua 1:2), as contrasted with "*Messiah as a son over his own house.*" The argument is another qol v'chomer, comparing Moshe as the house, to the greater status of Yehoshua as the one over the house. He further states that the Qedoshym are also members of the house itself, built on faith, if they hold fast that faith, hope and obedience which they have so far exhibited firmly to the end. In another place, it is written of them, "*You also, as living stones, are being built up, and a spiritual house, a qadosh Kehunnah, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Elohyim through Yehoshua Hamashiach.*"

And finally, the author warns by quoting Tehillah 95, "*Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion...*" He says that the Qedoshym should encourage one another daily, while it is still today, lest they be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. He warns that, if even those who saw Pharaoh defeated at the sea of reeds and who came out of Mitzrayim following YHWH, whose presence was manifested as a fiery pillar at night and a towering column of smoke by day, could lose faith and fall through sin and disobedience, then so even can the Qedoshym possibly fall if their hearts become hardened and rebellious in sin, which is defined by Yochanan as the transgression of Torah law. And, if they do fall? He says that they will lose their special place in the perfect "rest" that YHWH has promised to those who are His in Messiah when he comes again.

Chapter Four

¹Therefore, since a promise remains of entering into His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. ²For indeed the Besorah was brought to us as well as to them, but the word which they heard did not profit them, not having been mixed with faith in those who heard it. ³For we who have believed do enter into that rest, as He has said, "As I swore in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest..." And yet His works have come into being from the foundation of the world. ⁴For somewhere He has said thus about the seventh day, "And Elohyim rested on the seventh day from all His works," ⁵and in this again, "If they shall enter into My rest..." ⁶Since then it remains for some to enter into it, and those who formerly received the Besorah did not enter in because of disobedience, ⁷He again defines a certain day, "Today," saying through David so much later, as it has been said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." ⁸For if Yehoshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken of another day after that. ⁹So there remains a Sabbath of rest for the people of Elohyim. ¹⁰For the one, having entered into His rest has himself also rested from his works, as Elohyim rested from His own. ¹¹Let us therefore do our utmost to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience. ¹²For the Word of Elohyim is living, and working, and sharper than any two-edged sword, cutting through even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all are naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him with whom is our account. ¹⁴Therefore, since we have a great Koheyn Gadol who has passed through the heavens, Yehoshua the son of Elohyim, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a Koheyn Gadol unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who was tried in all respects as we are, apart from sin. ¹⁶Therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, in order to receive compassion, and find grace for timely help.

Chapter four begins oddly. It says, "Since a promise remains of entering into His rest..." Which promise, specifically, would this be? And what is the nature of this rest he speaks of? We must infer from context that it is the promise of physically entering into His

land and having safety on all sides. The text also implies that this can be taken figuratively as a spiritual rest from our personal efforts to merit salvation through works of Torah, as well as the future rest prophesied of the messianic kingdom to come. The author's evidence for this is, again, Tehillah 95, where David enjoins us not to harden our hearts, but to enter into His rest. He points out that David writes of a rest "today," even though the exodus had occurred some 400 years prior to his writing. The author then argues concerning the entry of the people of Yisrael into the promised land, *"For if Yehoshua (ben Nun) had given them rest, he (David) would not have spoken of another day after that."* And finally he concludes his argument, *"So, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of Elohyim."*

The idea espoused here is that Yehoshua Hamashiach has achieved this rest for us both physically and spiritually, once and for all, but that we should still continue to follow his example and strive in excellent works, not falling into "disobedience." We are also told we should fear, *"lest we seem to have come short,"* because the Besorah was also preached to those who fell in the wilderness, but because of disobedience and a lack of faith, it did not profit them:

"For the Word of Elohyim is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

It is YHWH's Word and how we respond to it – or do not – that truly discerns who we are and will be before Him; whether we will be members of His Qedoshym and belonging to Messiah at his return - or not.

Finally, chapter four concludes with a consolation. It says we now have a worthy Koheyn Gadol in Yehoshua who can sympathize with our weaknesses, having been himself tempted just as we are, yet was without sin. It says that he has passed through the heavens and now stands before the throne of grace to intercede on our behalf before YHWH when we need him.

Chapter Five

¹For every priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in matters relating to Elohyim, to offer both gifts and offerings for sins, ²being able to have a measure of feeling for those not knowing and being led astray, since he himself is also surrounded by weakness. ³And on account of this he has to offer for sins – as for the people, so also for himself. ⁴And no one obtains this esteem for himself, but he who is called by Elohyim, even as Aharon also was. ⁵So also the Messiah did not extol himself to become Koheyn Gadol, but it was He who said to him, "You are My son, today I have brought you forth." ⁶As He also says in another place, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Malkitzedeq," ⁷who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and petitions with strong crying and tears to Him who was able to save him from death, and was heard because of his reverent fear, ⁸though being a son, he learned obedience by what he suffered. ⁹And having been perfected, he became the causer of everlasting salvation to all those obeying him, ¹⁰having been designated by Elohyim a Koheyn Gadol "according to the order of Malkitzedeq," ¹¹concerning whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹²For indeed, although by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first elements of the Words of Elohyim. And you have become such as need milk and not solid food. ¹³For everyone partaking of milk is inexperienced in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature whose senses have been trained by practice to discern both excellence and evil.

Chapter five begins to describe Yehoshua's qualifications as Koheyn Gadol and compares these with the Levitical and Malkitzedeq priesthoods. It says that all kohanim, including him, are appointed to offer both gifts and sin sacrifices on behalf of men. It says that the Koheyn Gadol must be one who has compassion on all of those who are ignorant and going astray. And it says that no one is permitted to take this honor upon themselves, but only those who are called by Elohyim, as were Aharon and his sons. In response to these requirements, the author again cites the Tehillah as his textual proof:

"So also Messiah did not extol himself to become Koheyn Gadol, but it was He who said to him: 'You are My son, today I have begotten you.' As He also says in another place, 'You are a Koheyn forever, according to the order of Malkitzedeq.'"

The remainder of chapter five and most of chapter six seems to deviate from this progressive building up of the credentials of Messiah Yehoshua and his priesthood that we have seen thus far. Instead, it begins to chide the Qedoshym for their present immaturity in faith and lack of progress toward complete enlightenment. While it may appear at first that the author has left his train of thought, he has not, as we will see in subsequent chapters. He now tells the Qedoshym to whom he is writing, that they have become "dull of hearing." This could be an allusion to Yeshayahu chapter six, where it says:

"Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. ¹⁰Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their heart, and return and be healed."

Indeed, this allusion is supported in the final words of chapter five, where the author complains that the Qedoshym ought to, by now, have become teachers, yet are still needing to learn the first principles of their faith. He says they still need "*milk and not solid food*," meaning that they are only babes and "*unskilled in the Word of righteousness*." They somehow do not yet clearly see and understand as one fully matured in the faith. He gives the distinct impression that such immaturity is quite unseemly for the Qedoshym of the Most High - those who will someday reign over, judge and minister to both malakym and men - indeed, over all creation. He even goes so far as to tell them that in their present state it would be difficult to explain to them the true nature of the Malkitzedeq priesthood in such a way that they could comprehend it, and that this is to their shame.

Chapter Six

¹Therefore, having left the word of the beginning of the Messiah, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward Elohim, ²of the teaching of immersions, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of everlasting judgment. ³And this we shall do, if Elohim indeed permits. ⁴For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, ⁵and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Ruach Haqodesh, and have tasted the excellent Word of Elohim and the powers of the age to come, ⁶and fall away, to renew them again to repentance - having impaled for themselves the son of Elohim again, and put him to open shame. ⁷For ground that is drinking the rain often falling on it, and is bearing plants fit for those by whom it is tilled, receives blessing from Elohim, ⁸but if it brings forth thorns and thistles, it is rejected and near to being cursed, and ends up by being burned. ⁹But although we speak in this way, beloved, we are persuaded, concerning you, of better things, yes things which possess salvation. ¹⁰For Elohim is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His Name, in that you have attended to the Qedoshym, and still attend. ¹¹And we desire that each one of you show the same eagerness, to the entire confirmation of hope until the end, ¹²in order that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. ¹³For Elohim, having promised Avraham, since He could swear by no one greater, swore by Himself, ¹⁴saying, "Truly, blessing I shall bless you, and increasing I shall increase you." ¹⁵And so, after being patient, he obtained the promise. ¹⁶For men do indeed swear by the one greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all disputes. ¹⁷In this way Elohim, resolving to show even more clearly to the heirs of promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, confirmed it by an oath, ¹⁸so that by two unchangeable matters in which it is impossible for Elohim to lie, we might have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us, ¹⁹which we have as an anchor of the life, both safe and firm, and entering into that within the veil, ²⁰where Yehoshua has entered as a forerunner for us, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Malkitzedeq.

Chapter six continues the reasoning of the previous chapter by encouraging the Qedoshym to move on from continually learning and relearning the *"elementary things of Messiah,"* such as repentance, faith, immersions, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment - to even *"better things, yes things which possess salvation."* They are told that in order to do this, they should *"not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."* The example that they are given for this is Avraham.

The author reasons that when YHWH made a promise to Avraham, because He could swear by none greater, He swore by Himself, saying, *"Surely blessing I will bless you, and increasing I will increase you,' and so, after being patient, he obtained the promise."* This is said in past-tense, even though Avraham died before he saw all of YHWH's promises to him fulfilled. He knew in his heart that they *would* be fulfilled, and thus Avraham's faith and patience were perfected and secured his hope. He truly *"believed Elohyim"* - and this is the type of faith and patience the Qedoshym are told to imitate.

Verses nineteen and twenty return us to the primary message of the book: verse nineteen says, *"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters behind the veil..."* This is surely an allusion to Ezra nine, where it says:

⁸"And now for a little while grace has been shown from YHWH Eloheynu, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us an anchor in His Beyth Hamiqdash, that our Elohyim may enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage."

The word "anchor" is, in Hebrew, "yatheid," a nail, stake, or a tent-peg which also is a symbol of Messiah. This Beyth Hamiqdash which is *"behind the veil"* is the Qodesh Qodeshym - the Most Set-Apart Place – where YHWH dwells between the Keruvym. It is the exclusive meeting place where no man in this present world may enter, save the Koheyn Gadol who makes intercession for the children of Yisrael, once yearly on Yom Hakippurym, but in the World to Come will be openly available to all.

Then verse twenty concludes, "*...where the forerunner has entered for us, even Yehoshua, having become Koheyn Gadol forever according to the order of Malkitzedeq.*" From Avraham's time to the present day, even since the beginning, our hope and our anchor behind the veil is and always has been Yehoshua Hamashiach.

Chapter Seven

¹For this Malkitzedeq, king of Shalem, priest of the Most High Elohyim, who met Avraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ²to whom also Avraham gave a tenth part of all, his name being translated, indeed, first, 'King of Righteousness,' and then also King of Shalem, that is, 'King of Peace,' ³without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but having been made like the son of Elohyim, remains a priest for all time. ⁴Now see how great this one was, to whom even the ancestor Avraham gave a tenth of the choicest booty. ⁵And truly, those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a command to receive tithes from the people according to the Torah, that is, from their brothers, even though they have come from the loins of Avraham; ⁶however, the one whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Avraham, and blessed the one who held the promises. ⁷And it is beyond all dispute that the lesser is blessed by the better. ⁸And here it is men who die that receive tithes, but there it is someone of whom it is witnessed that he lives. ⁹And one might say that through Avraham even Levi, who received tithes, gave tithes, ¹⁰for he was yet in the loins of his father when Malkitzedeq met him. ¹¹Truly, then, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood - for under it the people were given the Torah - why was there still need for another priest to arise according to the order of Malkitzedeq, and not be called according to the order of Aharon? ¹²For with the priesthood being changed, of necessity there must take place a change of law also. ¹³For he of whom this is said belongs to another tribe, from which no one had attended at the altar. ¹⁴For it is perfectly clear that our Master arose from Yehudah, a tribe about which Moshe never spoke of concerning priesthood, ¹⁵and this is clearer still, if another priest arises in the likeness of Malkitzedeq, ¹⁶who has become, not according to the Torah of fleshly command, but according to the power of an endless life, ¹⁷for he does witness, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Malkitzedeq." ¹⁸For there is indeed to be a setting aside of the former command because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹for the Torah perfected naught, but the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to Elohyim. ²⁰And it was not without an oath! ²¹For they indeed became priests without an oath,

but he became Priest with an oath by Him who said to him, "YHWH has sworn and shall not regret, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Malkitzedeq.' ²²By as much as this Yehoshua has become a guarantor of a better covenant. ²³And indeed, those that became priests were many, because they were prevented by death from continuing, ²⁴but he, because he remains forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵Therefore he is also able to save completely those who draw near to Elohim through him, ever living to make intercession for them. ²⁶For it was fitting that we should have such a Koheyn Gadol - kind, innocent, undefiled, having been separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens, ²⁷who does not need, as those Koheyn Gadol, to offer up sacrifices day by day, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, for this he did once for all when he offered up himself. ²⁸For the Torah appoints as Koheyn Gadol men who have weakness, but the word of the oath which came after the Torah, appoints the son having been perfected forever.

In chapter seven, the author expands upon the theme of the Malkitzedeq priesthood. He begins by pointing out that Malkitzedeq blessed Avraham, who gave him a tenth of his spoils of war and deferred to him. He further points out that the name Malkitzedeq translates as "King of Righteousness," and he is also called "King of Shalem" - peace. He notes that there is no record of this one's birth or death, which is taken to imply a type and a symbol of an eternal priesthood. The author then cites the scriptural precept that the lesser is always blessed by the greater, and concludes from all of these points combined that Malkitzedeq was a type and symbol of a very great priest-king, superior in status even to Avraham avinu who possessed the covenant promises of YHWH.

The author's analysis of Malkitzedeq leads logically to a comparison of the Levitical and Malkitzedeq priesthoods and the question is asked: if the Levitical priesthood is perfect under the offices of Torah, then why should there be a need for another Malkitzedeq priesthood to arise? The answer given is that the Levitical priesthood and Torah have perfected nothing, but have brought only a symbolic hope through which those who belong to

Messiah can, in faith, draw near to Elohim. The Malkitzedeq priesthood of which Yehoshua, has become the true and final realization, brings with it a better hope and the concrete promise of everlasting life to all who trust in and follow after him.

It is stated that, if the priesthood is transferred to someone not of Levi, a change in Torah law must also accompany it, and it is common knowledge that Yehoshua is from the tribe of Yehudah. This is the "*setting aside of the former command*" that the author mentions. It is in the singular, not the plural, and in no way implies that all of Torah law has been set aside or "done away with" in any way. The specific law being referred to here is that regarding the priesthood, and from which tribe of Yisrael it should come. This law was given in the book of B'midbar, where it says:

"And YHWH spoke to Moshe, saying, 'Bring the tribe of Levy near, and set them before Aharon the priest, and they shall serve him, and shall guard his duty and the duty of all the congregation before the Tent of Appointment, to do the service of the Mishkan. And they shall guard all the furnishings of the Tent of Appointment, and the duty of the children of Yisrael, to do the service of the Mishkan. And you shall give the Leviym to Aharon and his sons. They are the given ones, given to him from among the children of Yisrael. And appoint Aharon and his sons, and they shall guard their priesthood. And the stranger that comes near shall be put to death.'"

Therefore, even though the Levitical priesthood is still commanded and in authority here on earth until the day that it and the heavens pass away through the fiery wrath of the Most High, in the true and eternal Beyth Hamiqdash, made without the hands of men, that change in law and service has already been made by YHWH. Yehoshua is now able to save, finally and completely, those who draw near to Elohim there through him, ever living to make intercession for them. The change has been made and is finished once and for all in the heavenlies, even if for a time mankind must still wait for the new Yerushalayim to be manifested and the final realization of Messiah's reign on earth.

Chapter Eight

¹Now the summary of what we are saying is: We have such a Koheyn Gadol, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Greatness in the heavens, ²and who serves in the Beyth Hamiqdash of the true Mishkan, which YHWH set up and not man. ³For every Koheyn Gadol is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. So it was also necessary for this One to have somewhat to offer. ⁴For if indeed he were on earth, he would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the Torah, ⁵who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly, as Moshe was warned when he was about to make the tent. For He said, "See that you make all according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." ⁶But now he has obtained a more excellent service, inasmuch as he is also mediator of a better covenant, which was constituted on better promises. ⁷For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. ⁸For finding fault with them, He says, "See, the days are coming," says YHWH, "when I shall make with the house of Yisrael and with the house of Yehudah a new covenant, ⁹not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Mitzrayim, because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them," says YHWH. ¹⁰"For this is the covenant that I shall make with the house of Yisrael after those days, says YHWH, giving My laws in their mind, and I shall write them on their hearts, and I shall be their Elohyim, and they shall be My people. ¹¹And they shall by no means teach each one his neighbor, and each one his brother, saying, 'Know YHWH,' because they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹²For I shall forgive their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawlessnesses I shall no longer remember." ¹³By saying, 'new,' He has made the first old. Now what becomes old and growing aged is near to disappearing.

Chapter eight summarizes all of the previous chapters and expands even further upon them, making some preliminary conclusions which are absolutely necessary for the reader to apprehend in order to gain a proper understanding of the whole book.

The statement is made that Yehoshua is now seated at the right hand of YHWH's throne in heaven, and that he serves in the *"true Mishkan, which YHWH set up, and not man."* This is a reference to the promises of the song that Moshe and the b'nei Yisrael sang at the seashore following the victory over Pharaoh and the crossing of the sea:

"Til Thy people cross over, YHWH, til Thy people cross over that Thou hast gotten. Thou bringest them in and plantest them in the mountain of Thy inheritance, the place which Thou hast made for Thyself to dwell in, the Miqdash YHWH, which Thy hands have established."

It is pointed out by the author that, were Yehoshua on earth, he would not be a koheyn, since here there are still Levitical kohanyim who are to serve in an earthly *"copy and shadow"* of the heavenly Miqdash, according to the Torah. Also in support of this notion, the passage is cited in which YHWH says to Moshe about the building of the first Mishkan in the wilderness, *"See that you make all according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."* It is clear from the text that the reader is to understand that there are two distinct Mishkanoth - dwelling places of YHWH - and that both are valid in their respective spheres of influence. One is the true and original in the heavens, the other a shadow and copy on earth; one is eternal and has existed from the beginning, the other is temporary and will pass away; one is made by YHWH Himself, the other by the hands of men; one can only be served by the Malkitzedeq priesthood of Yehoshua, the Qedoshym and malakym, the other by an Aharonic Koheyn Gadol, the kohanyim and Leviyim; one provides atonement once and for all transgressions by the final sacrifice for sins in Yehoshua's own blood, the other by repeated and ineffective symbolic sacrifices which could never truly atone for mortal sins.

This dualistic idea of both an earthly and a heavenly dwelling place is also extant in other places in scripture, most notably at the ends of both the books of Yeshayahu and Chazon. There, YHWH tells of the destruction of the defiled and desolate earthly copy of Yerushalayim and its ultimate replacement by the perfect and

eternal heavenly original when heaven and earth will be finally joined, with YHWH and His people living there in peace together forever.

The author ends the chapter by asserting that, in the end of days, Yehoshua is the mediator of a new and better covenant for the priesthood, based upon better promises, and he quotes Yirmeyahu 31, saying:

"Because this is the covenant that I shall make with the house of Yisrael after those days, says YHWH, giving My Torah in their minds, and I shall write them on their hearts, and I shall be their Elohyim, and they shall be My people. And shall by no means teach each one his neighbor, and each one his brother, saying, 'Know YHWH,' because they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. Because I shall forgive their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawlessness I shall no longer remember."

It must be noted that, while the two versions of the Mishkan will not coexist forever, the writer of the book of Ivrym does not assume the earthly version should already be gone or is invalid. In fact, the reverse is true. He says that it still exists but is passing away, and he then attests to the fact that the earthly Mishkan is still commanded by Torah to be operated for some time yet by the Levitical priesthood, and that it is in fact contrary to Torah for Yehoshua to even serve there. That the earthly version will pass away is sure and certain, but not until the end of days, according to the text and to prophecy. To misunderstand or ignore these facts will cause a complete misunderstanding of the book, and will put it in conflict with the rest of scripture and the promises of YHWH.

Messiah Yehoshua said that not the smallest letter or mark will pass away from the Torah until heaven and earth pass away at the end of the ages. On *That Day*, and not before it, the requirement for an earthly shadow copy of the true Mishkan with its attendant Ahronic Kehunnah will finally end, according to his word.

Chapter Nine

¹Now the first covenant indeed had regulations of worship and had the earthly Beyth Hamiqdash. ²For a tent was prepared: the first part, in which was the menorah, and the table, and the showbread, which is called the qodesh place. ³And after the second veil, the part of the tent which is called the Qodesh Qodeshym, ⁴to which belonged the golden altar, and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that held the manna, and the rod of Aharon that budded, and the tablets of the covenant, ⁵and above it the keruvym of esteem were overshadowing the place of atonement - about which we do not now speak in detail. ⁶And these having been prepared like this, the priests always went into the first part of the tent, accomplishing the services. ⁷But into the second part the Koheyn Gadol went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for sins of ignorance of the people, ⁸the Ruach Haqodesh signifying this, that the way into the Qodesh Qodeshym was not yet made manifest while the first Mishkan has a standing, ⁹which was a parable for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which are unable to perfect the one serving, as to his conscience, ¹⁰only as to foods and drinks, and different washings, and fleshly regulations imposed until a time of setting matters straight. ¹¹But Messiah, having become a Koheyn Gadol of the coming excellent matters, through the greater and more perfect Mishkan not made with mortal hands, that is, not of this creation, ¹²entered into the Qodesh Qodeshym once for all, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, having obtained everlasting redemption. ¹³For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the defiled, sets apart for the cleansing of the flesh, ¹⁴how much more shall the blood of the Messiah, who through the everlasting Spirit offered himself unblemished to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim? ¹⁵And because of this he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who are called might receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance. ¹⁶For where a covenant is, it is necessary for the death of the covenanted one to be established. ¹⁷For a

covenant over those dead is firm, since it is never valid while the covenanted one is living.¹⁸Therefore not even the first covenant was instituted without blood.¹⁹For when, according to Torah, every command had been spoken by Moshe to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,²⁰saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which Elohyim commanded you."²¹And in the same way he sprinkled with blood both the tent and all the vessels of the service.²²And, according to the Torah, almost all is cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no atonement.²³It was necessary, then, that the copies of the heavenly ones should be cleansed with these, but the heavenly ones themselves with better sacrifices than these.²⁴For Messiah has not entered into a Beyth Hamiqdash made by hands - figures of the true - but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of Elohyim on our behalf;²⁵not that he should offer himself often, as the Koheyn Gadol enters into the Beyth Hamiqdash year by year with blood not his own.²⁶For if so, he would have had to suffer often, since the foundation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the offering of himself.²⁷And as it awaits men to die once, and after this the judgment,²⁸so also the Messiah, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to those waiting for him, unto salvation.

Chapter nine begins with a cursory physical description of the interior of the earthly Mishkan. Then, it tells how the kohanym daily attended the Qodesh place, the outer chamber of the Mishkan, but never the inner one, the Qodesh Qodeshym. It was entered only once per year by the Koheyn Gadol, "...not without blood, which he offered for himself and for sins of ignorance of the people."

There is an inherent problem with translations, in that the languages rarely have exactly cognate words – a word in one language usually doesn't mean exactly the same thing as the word corresponding to it in another. This is even more prevalent between languages separated by centuries and with differing linguistic roots, such as between Hebrew and Greek or English. An excellent

example of this is the word for love, which in Hebrew is 'ahav', but in Greek can be: phileo, agapeo, thelo, or eros, each having a different meaning. Conversely, the word for sin in Greek is amartema, but in Hebrew can be chatah, avon, or pesha. Chatah is a simple misstep or a sin committed in ignorance or weakness. Avon is some kind of wickedness or perversity. Pesha is open and willful rebellion against YHWH. In the Greek and English translations of Ivrym, no distinction between differing instances of the word used for sin is possible, except at times through context alone. The original letter was written by Hebrew people to other Hebrews, and is believed to have been penned in that language. If so, the distinction between the various words for sin in that original version would have been glaringly apparent. The phrase "*the sins of ignorance of the people*" would have been clearly understood as a chatah. Without this clarification, and depending upon context, other instances of the word should probably be understood as pesha. This makes an enormous difference in how the book is understood by those unfamiliar with the Hebrew language.

Let us be clear: all sins committed in willful rebellion which incur the death penalty – peshayim - are treated differently in Torah than are those committed by mistake - chatoth. Peshayim have no simple sacrificial remedy as do chatoth, but fall under the scriptural rule known to scholars as "Lex Talionis" - the Law of Retaliation - an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life - equal value in restitution.

The author says the current prohibition against entering the Qodesh Qodeshym, except once yearly, is a parable or sign signifying that the way into that place for the children of Yisrael is not made manifest while the first Mishkan has a standing. He says that animal sacrifices offered in the earthly Mishkan during this present time can only atone for ceremonial sins or cleanse the flesh from sins of ignorance. But Yehoshua entered into the true heavenly Mishkan, "*made without hands,*" himself being unblemished, and offered his own life's blood once there for sins worthy of the death penalty, thereby affecting the eternal redemption of all who come to YHWH through him.

Chapter Ten

¹For the Torah, having a shadow of excellent matters to come, and not the image itself of the matters, was never able to make perfect those who draw near with the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year. ²Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? Because those who served, once cleansed, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³But in those offerings is a reminder of sins year by year. ⁴For it is impossible for blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ⁵Therefore, coming into the world, he says, "Sacrifice and meal offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for me. ⁶In burnt offerings and offerings for sin You did not delight. ⁷Then I said, 'See, I come - in the roll of the book it has been written concerning me - to do Your desire, O Elohyim.'" ⁸Saying above, "Sacrifice and meal offering, and burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor delighted in," which are offered according to the Torah, ⁹then he said, "See, I come to do Your desire, O Elohyim." He takes away the first to establish the second. ¹⁰By that desire we have been set apart through the offering of the body of Yehoshua Messiah once for all. ¹¹And indeed every priest stands day by day doing service, and repeatedly offering the same sacrifices which are never able to take away sins. ¹²But he, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of Elohyim, ¹³waiting from that time onward until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are being set apart. ¹⁵And the Ruach Haqodesh also witnesses to us, for after having said before, ¹⁶"This is the covenant that I shall make with them after those days, says YHWH, giving My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I shall write them," and, ¹⁷"Their sins and their lawlessnesses I shall remember no more." ¹⁸Now where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer a sacrifice for sin. ¹⁹So, brothers, having boldness to enter into the Beyth Hamiqdash by the blood of Yehoshua, ²⁰by a new and living way which he instituted for us, through the veil, that is, his flesh, ²¹and having a Koheyn Gadol over the House of Elohyim, ²²let us draw near with a true heart in completeness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from a wicked conscience and our bodies washed with clean water. ²³Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without yielding, for He who promised is trustworthy. ²⁴And let us

be concerned for one another in order to stir up love and excellent works,²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging, and so much more as you see That Day coming near.²⁶ For if we sin purposely after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,²⁷ but some fearsome anticipation of judgment, and a fierce fire which is about to consume the opponents.²⁸ Anyone who has disregarded the Torah of Moshe dies without compassion on the witness of two or three witnesses.²⁹ How much worse punishment do you think shall he deserve who has trampled the son of Elohyim underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was set apart as common, and insulted the Spirit of grace?³⁰ For we know Him who has said, "Vengeance is Mine, I shall repay, says YHWH." And again, "YHWH shall judge His people."³¹ It is fearsome to fall into the hands of the living Elohyim.³² But remember the former days, when, after you were enlightened, you endured a great struggle with sufferings.³³ On the one hand you were exposed to reproaches and trials, and on the other hand you became sharers with those who were so treated,³⁴ for you sympathized with me in my chains, and you accepted with joy the seizure of your possessions, knowing that you have a better and a lasting possession for yourselves in the heavens.³⁵ Do not, then, lose your boldness, which has great reward.³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the desire of Elohyim, you receive the promise:³⁷ "For yet a little while - he who is coming shall come and shall not delay."³⁸ "But the righteous shall live by faith, but if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him."³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to destruction, but of faith to the preservation of life.

Chapter ten is by far the most difficult chapter of the book of Ivrym to accept. Accept, not understand – for if read carefully and honestly, with a full knowledge of the precepts of Torah, it is really not difficult to understand at all. However, accepting the chapter whole-cloth exactly as it is written will conflict with most peoples' prior mainstream religious indoctrinations, whether Jewish or Christian, and they will then automatically reject its true meaning and message. Sometimes this rejection is straightforward, and the chapter or even the entire book is disregarded as illegitimate or not

inspired scripture. More often, it is "passage-picked," and objectionable portions are glossed over. Most commonly, readers seem to sort of mentally bypass parts of this and other scriptures that they don't understand, or that they *wish* not to see or understand, or that they disagree with, or that frighten them. In this study, we will not do that, but will face the author's words squarely and deal honestly with them in the light of Torah and all the Word of YHWH.

The chapter begins by repeating that the Torah is a shadow of the excellent things to come, and not the ultimate reality itself. It reasons that, if it were, its sacrifices would perfect each offerer and then cease, no longer being needed. It says that the sacrifices performed in the earthly Heykal according to Torah are simply a *"reminder of our sins from year to year, for it is impossible for blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."*

This is rather an astonishing statement at first glance. The Torah clearly says that the blood of bulls and goats *does* atone for sins. That is, it will atone for a chatat – a sin done in ignorance that does not carry the death penalty as its punishment. The word "sin" here in this passage must surely mean pasha - willful and rebellious sin that does carry a death penalty. And the author is indeed correct, because in all of Torah there is not found a single animal sacrifice listed that will atone for such a mortal sin, and there never was.

Another rather astonishing idea put forth by the author that is used in this and the previous chapter, is that the primary issue in dealing with sin is the "conscience" and not the "cleansing of the flesh." Messiah Yehoshua himself supports this notion in Marqos chapter seven where he says, *"Are you also without understanding? Do you not know that whatever enters a man from outside is unable to defile him, because it does not enter his heart, but his stomach and is eliminated, thus purging all foods?"* Of course, our Jewish Messiah is not telling his Jewish disciples that it is okay to eat scripturally prohibited foods. It most certainly is not. Rather, he is saying that true defilement - sin and rebellion - begin and end in the mind and heart, not in the flesh. The author of Ivrym makes the point that, first and foremost, the heart and mind - the "conscience" - must be

cleansed of rebellion and lawlessness, and the blood of all the bulls and goats in the world can never accomplish that.

The chapter then continues on the subject of sacrifice with a quote from Tehillah 40:

"Sacrifice and meal offerings You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for me. In ascending offerings and those for sin You did not delight. Then I said, 'See I come - in the scroll of the book it has been written concerning me - to do Your desire, O Elohyim.'"

A curious question about this passage and similar ones to it, such as *"I desire mercy, not sacrifice,"* is: if YHWH didn't want sacrifice, then why did He prescribe it in the first place? The answer is, because of mankind's insistence upon continuing in sinful behavior. YHWH does not delight in the death of animals or in rivers of blood. However, as long as men insist upon sinning, there must be a symbol and a constant reminder of the price that will eventually be paid for it. But, He would rather that we would instead simply do His desire in obedience and love. And what is that desire? The completion of this quoted passage from Tehillym is:

"I have delighted to do Your desire, O Elohyim, and Your Torah is within my heart."

The author draws a conclusion from all of this, that the one whose body has been "prepared" and who "does His desire" is Messiah Yehoshua, who will eventually take away the old order of sacrifice and replace it solely with that of his own body, once and for all. And when will this finally occur?

"He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of Elohyim, waiting from that time onward until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet."

According to all of scripture, the end of this waiting will occur at the terminus of the millennial kingdom of 1,000 years, which is at the beginning of the Olam Haba - the World to Come.

The author next gives a short but powerful exhortation. He says that by his one offering, Yehoshua has perfected for all time those who are currently being set-apart. These are the Qedoshym. He says that they should now be bold in willingness to enter the Qodesh Qodeshym by the atoning blood of Messiah, a new and living way through the veil, which is his own flesh that was willingly sacrificed on behalf of all mankind who will be saved. He says that the Qedoshym should now draw near to YHWH with a true heart in completeness of faith, having their hearts sprinkled from a wicked conscience and their bodies washed with living water. He further exhorts them to care of one another in order to stir up love and excellent works, and to not forsake the assembling of themselves together, as some do.

Next comes the portion of this chapter, and possibly of the entire book of Ivrym, that more than any other is rejected, glossed over, explained away or bypassed by most readers. It terrifies them, and for excellent reason:

"For if we sin purposely after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but only some fearsome anticipation of judgment, and a fierce fire which is about to consume the adversaries."

Most of you who are hearing these words right now are already trying in your minds to find a way to explain them away or ignore them. Don't. They mean exactly what they say. Face them and accept them, then decide what must be done about them. This will ultimately determine and define who you are or must become, for better or for worse.

Remember in a previous chapter where He said, *"Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts..."* Soften your heart instead, and hear the words.

Let's parse these verses candidly and see exactly what they are saying. We will begin with definitions of some of its words:

"Sin is the transgression of the law," according to Yochanan. To break the law of YHWH purposely is a pasha, a willful and rebellious transgression. "The Torah is the Truth," according to scripture, and it defines the Word of YHWH, which is embodied in Messiah Yehoshua himself. "Sacrifice for sins" must obviously mean Yehoshua's sacrifice, because his is the only one that is efficacious for sins which carry the death penalty. "Judgment" is that trial which will befall all of those who do not escape it by first belonging to Messiah at his coming.

So, using these purely scriptural definitions, a fair paraphrase of the verse could be:

Any of the Qedoshym who transgress the Torah willfully and rebelliously after receiving Yehoshua as their saving sacrifice for such transgressions, has no further sacrificial options left and will stand in the final judgment at the end of days and risk the punishment due any opponent of YHWH.

There may be other ways to paraphrase these verses fairly but, if they are honestly done, they won't deviate significantly from this one in meaning.

And if what he has already said is not enough, the author of Ivrym next amplifies and secures his point with another qol v'chomer, comparing the transgression against the Torah of Moshe with transgression against Messiah himself:

"Anyone who has disregarded the Torah of Moshe dies without compassion on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he shall deserve who has trampled the son of Elohyim underfoot, counted as common the blood of the covenant by which he was set apart, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"

That is to say that it is bad enough to reject and disdain the Word of YHWH which was written down and delivered to us by His trusted servant, but how much moreso to disregard His own son,

face to face and time after time, who is the embodiment of His Word in the flesh and has given himself that we might live?

Then finally, he punctuates his warning with, *"It is a fearsome thing to fall into the hands of the living Elohyim."*

Most people are of the opinion that the death and resurrection of Messiah somehow lowered the bar for salvation and admission to the Kingdom of YHWH, making it available to everyone - and they are right. Previous to Yehoshua's sacrifice, salvation and admission were *impossible*, as is written, *"There is none righteous, no not one,"* and *"The wages of sin is death."* Remember, prior to Yehoshua's resurrection, whether by animal sacrifice or other means, there was absolutely no adequate remedy for sins worthy of death. But Yehoshua's sacrifice legally and miraculously made salvation possible for all, and it opened the doors to the Kingdom of YHWH to everyone who will agree to His conditions for entering. That does not, however, give a free pass to those who deliberately continue in willful sin, making an open mockery of His grace. With a new life that starts with the acceptance of Yehoshua's sacrifice, and with the aid of the Ruach Haqodesh, one is expected to begin walking in obedience and love according to The Way of YHWH. To be sure, all will still err in ignorance and weakness, but for those who are truly saved, this will not be the norm, and sin will no longer rule in their life.

Quite clearly though, the Qedoshym are a subset of those who are being saved and the standards of living and obedience for them are higher than for everyone else. In other words, for those few special men and women who give their entire lives to following the laws of YHWH and walking in the footsteps of Yehoshua – those known variously as the *"saints,"* and the *"set-apart ones,"* the bar for admission as such has actually been raised. And this is only right, for they are the ones who will sit enthroned with Messiah in his kingdom, and who will judge and rule over the rest of creation with him. For them, willful sin and disobedience are no longer an option or even possible, lest they lose their exalted position and place at Yehoshua's side. They must be righteous and consumed with zeal

for YHWH and His Messiah, constantly striving towards perfection. And again, these special people are they whom the book of Ivrym is especially written to.

The conclusion of chapter ten is a final exhortation to the Qedoshym that they remember their former trials and successes in the faith, and that they remember they are not alone in their struggles. They are told to endure and not lose their boldness, which will be rewarded in time according to YHWH's promise:

"For yet a little while – he who is coming shall come and shall not delay. But the righteous shall live by faith, and if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

As was stated previously, this chapter is not difficult to understand, but for most, it is very hard to accept. If a person does accept it as it is and with all it implies, he or she is then faced with decisions about their own life and potential place in the kingdom of YHWH, and what, if anything, they personally need to do about it. But, whether a person accepts this chapter as it is, or not, it will still define their standing before the Most High and what their relationship is with His son, both now and in the Kingdom to come. The Word of YHWH and His prophecy will stand, and can never be broken.

Chapter Eleven

¹And faith is the substance of what is hoped, the proof of what is not seen. ²For by this the elders obtained witness. ³By faith, we understand that the ages were prepared by the Word of Elohyim, so that what is seen was not made of what is visible. ⁴By faith, Hebel offered to Elohyim a greater sacrifice than Qayin, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, Elohyim witnessing of his gifts. And through it, having died, he still speaks. ⁵By faith, Hanok was translated so as not to see death, and was not found because Elohyim had translated him." For before his translation he obtained witness, that he pleased Elohyim. ⁶But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Elohyim has to believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who earnestly seek Him. ⁷By faith, Noah, having been warned of what was yet unseen, having feared, prepared an ark to save his house, through which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. ⁸By faith, Avraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he was about to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith, he sojourned in the land of promise as a stranger, dwelling in tents with Yitshaq and Ya'akov, the heirs with him of the same promise, ¹⁰for he was looking for the city having foundations, whose builder and maker is Elohyim. ¹¹By faith also, Sarah herself was enabled to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the normal age, because she deemed Him trustworthy who had promised. ¹²And so from one, and him as much as dead, were born as numerous as the stars of the heaven, as countless as the sand which is by the seashore. ¹³In faith all these died, not having received the promises, but seeing them from afar off, welcomed and embraced them, and confessed that they were aliens and strangers on the earth. ¹⁴For those who speak this way make it clear that they seek a fatherland. ¹⁵And yet, if they had indeed kept remembering that place from which they had come out, they would have had the chance to return. ¹⁶But now they long for a better place, that is, a heavenly. Therefore Elohyim is not ashamed to be called their Elohyim, for He has prepared a city for them. ¹⁷By faith, Avraham, when he was tried, offered up Yitshaq, and he who had received the promises offered up his only brought-forth son, ¹⁸of whom it was said, "In Yitshaq your seed shall

be called,"¹⁹reckoning that Elohyim was able to raise, even from the dead, from which he received him back, as a type.²⁰By faith, Yitshaq blessed Ya'akov and Esaw concerning that which was to come.²¹By faith, Ya'akov, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Yoseph, and did reverence on the top of his staff.²²By faith, Yoseph, when he was dying, made mention of the outgoing of the children of Yisra'el, and gave orders concerning his bones.²³By faith, Moshe, having been born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a comely child, and were not afraid of the king's command.²⁴By faith, Moshe, having become great, refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh,²⁵choosing rather to be afflicted with the people of Elohyim than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time,²⁶deeming the reproach of Messiah greater riches than the treasures in Mitzrayim, for he was looking to the reward.²⁷By faith, he left Mitzrayim, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he was steadfast, as seeing Him who is invisible.²⁸By faith, he performed the Passover and the sprinkling of blood lest he who destroyed the first-born should touch them.²⁹By faith, they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, and when the Mitsrym tried it, they were drowned.³⁰By faith, the walls of Yeriho fell, having been surrounded for seven days.³¹By faith, Rahab the whore did not perish with those who did not believe, having received the spies with peace.³²And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to relate of Gid'on and Baraq and Shimshon and Yiphtah, also of David and Shemu'el and the prophets,³³who through faith, overcame kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,³⁴quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became mighty in battle, put foreign armies to flight.³⁵Women received back their dead by resurrection.³⁶And others were tortured, not accepting release, to obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of mockings and floggings and more, of chains and imprisonment.³⁷They were stoned, they were tried, they were sawn in two, they were slain with the sword. They went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being in need, afflicted, mistreated,³⁸of whom the world was not worthy - wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes of the earth.³⁹And having obtained witness through the faith, all these did not receive the promise,

⁴⁰*Elohym having provided what is better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.*

How many times have you heard someone say a particular scripture is "misunderstood?" I will say it - chapter eleven is largely misunderstood by most readers. It is called the "faith chapter," and that is what it is, but faith in exactly what is usually not completely perceived. Or, if it is perceived at all, it is according to someone's preconceived doctrinal desires, and not according to what the text itself actually says.

If chapter ten is a warning of what will befall unrepentant sinners who willfully and deliberately continue in unlawful behavior, chapter eleven is a description of the remedy for that condition at its essence. Faith is that essential remedy, and the entirety of the Word of YHWH is really a call to faith in Him. Faith in Him to do what, exactly? At the end of chapter ten, the author says explicitly that the *righteous* will be rewarded with the promises of Elohym if they faithfully endure in doing His desire, and that His promise is resurrection from the dead and everlasting life. Chapter eleven gives a list of scriptural figures who are to be considered examples of that kind of faithful endurance whom the Qedoshym are to emulate. Indeed, it appears from the text that those figures who are singled out as examples are already members of the Qedoshym themselves.

In each of the examples given, the righteous figure cited is described as doing two things: believing what YHWH says in His Word, then acting upon that faith by doing what He says, regardless of the consequences. The author says that they all continued to believe even in death, none having ever physically seen the promises made to them fulfilled in their own lifetimes, but having faith "from afar off" that they would still be fulfilled at some time in the future. The author claims that, because of this obedient and trusting faith they had, YHWH is not ashamed to be called their Elohym, and that He has prepared a heavenly city for them.

The reason that this chapter is usually misunderstood is because those who usually teach it do not wish to hear or convey its true

message. They will tell you it is saying that all you and they need to do is have faith that Jesus came and died for your sins so that you may continue in that same sin freely, and yet still inherit eternal life. Why do they teach this? Because *they* do not want to stop sinning. *They* do not want to obey the Word of YHWH, nor walk in His Way. But, what *they* teach quite obviously conflicts with the rest of the book of Ivrym, and most especially with the previous chapter which, as has been previously stated, terrifies them.

In example of the falsity of such a teaching, see what the chapter itself says about continuing in sin:

"By faith, Moshe, having become great, refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, choosing rather to be afflicted with the people of Elohyim than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time..."

And what precisely is sin? Again, it is defined clearly in scripture by Yochanan:

"Sin is transgression of the law."

Of course, these false teachers will try to explain that sin has been redefined since the coming of Messiah and that the law has been "done away with." What they are really saying is that there actually is no longer such a thing as sin at all, or else that it is now only what they decide it to be. The rest of the verse illuminates their lie:

"...deeming the reproach of Messiah greater riches than the treasures in Mitzrayim, for he was looking to the reward."

The author is clearly saying that Moshe understood the eventual necessity of the coming of a Messiah and his sacrifice on our behalf in order to fulfill the promises of YHWH, and that he, Moshe, was willing to forego sin and endure great affliction in order to obtain them - even if that meant enduring death and awaiting a future resurrection in order to do so.

That is the message of chapter eleven. Not that we should wave our hands, say the "sinner's prayer," and then go on doing as we've always done and have some faith that we'll be saved anyway. Not that we should hope that somehow the eternal law of YHWH has been abolished and that He has changed, making the noble deeds of all these spiritual giants of our faith ultimately unnecessary. But, rather that we should join with those ancient examples of true faith in turning from our sins, placing our hope in YHWH that His promises are true, and believing that our future with Him is worth it all - that a place in His heavenly city is more desirable than anything a sinful and unlawful life in this world could ever offer.

Chapter Twelve

¹We too, then, having so great a cloud of witnesses all around us, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race set before us, ²looking to the princely leader and perfecter of our faith, Yehoshua, who for the joy that was set before him endured the stake, having despised the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of Elohim. ³For consider him who endured such opposition from sinners against himself, lest you become weary and faint in your lives. ⁴You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. ⁵And you have forgotten the appeal which speaks to you as to sons, "My son, do not despise the discipline of YHWH, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him, ⁶for whom YHWH loves, He disciplines, and flogs every son whom He receives." ⁷If you endure discipline, Elohim is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom a father does not discipline? ⁸But if you are without discipline, of which all have become sharers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹Moreover, we indeed had fathers of our flesh disciplining us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? ¹⁰For they indeed disciplined us for a few days as seemed best to them, but He does it for our profit, so that we might share His sanctity. ¹¹And indeed, no discipline seems pleasant at the time, but grievous, but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. ¹²So, strengthen the hands which hang down and the weak knees, ¹³and make straight paths for your feet, lest the lame be turned aside, but instead, to be healed. ¹⁴Pursue peace with all, and pursue sanctity without which no one shall see the master. ¹⁵See to it that no one falls short of the grace of Elohim, that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, by which many become defiled, ¹⁶lest there be anyone who whores, or a profane one, like Esau, who for a single meal sold his birthright. ¹⁷For you know that afterward, when he wished to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it with tears. ¹⁸For you have not drawn near to a mountain touched and scorched with fire, and to blackness, and darkness and storm, ¹⁹and a sound of a trumpet, and a Voice of Words, so that those who heard it begged that no further Word should be spoken to them, ²⁰for they could not bear what was commanded, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be

stoned or shot through with an arrow." ²¹And so fearsome was the sight that Moshe said, "I exceedingly fear and tremble." ²²But you have drawn near to Mount Tziyon and to the city of the living Elohyim, to the heavenly Yerushalayim, to myriads of malakym, ²³to the entire gathering and assembly of the first-born having been enrolled in heaven, and to Elohyim the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, ²⁴and to Yehoshua the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaks better than the blood of Hebel. ²⁵Take heed not to refuse the One speaking. For if those did not escape who refused the warning on earth, much less we who turn away from Him from heaven, ²⁶whose Voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also the heaven." ²⁷And this, "Yet once more," makes clear the removal of what is shaken - as having been made - so that the unshaken matters might remain. ²⁸Therefore, receiving an unshakeable kingdom, let us hold the grace, through which we serve Elohyim pleasingly with reverence and awe, ²⁹for indeed, our Elohyim is a consuming fire.

Chapter twelve is the beginning of the conclusion of the book of Ivrym. It is an exhortation and encouragement to the Qedoshym that they should hold on tightly to their faith and consider the immense value of their calling by the great King of the heavens and the earth.

It begins with a mention of the "*sin which so easily entangles*," and says that the readers of his letter should lay it aside. From this statement, it can be inferred that not everyone who was considered to be one of the Qedoshym by the author in those days had already done so, and some of them still struggled somewhat with the vestiges of sin. This exhortation to them should give hope to those of us now who also still continue to struggle with sin, that we are not doing so in vain. The author compares this struggle to an endurance race which can still be won or lost, despite an occasional stumble.

He then points to Yehoshua as the greatest example of all, calling him the "prince and perfecter of our faith." He compares the trials of Yehoshua with those of the Qedoshym, noting that they had "*not*

yet resisted unto blood in striving against sin," whereas Yehoshua had already endured the physical agony of the stake, as well as the immense emotional shame associated with it because of the witness of Torah, which says: *"cursed is he who is hanged on a tree."*

Next, the author turns to the subject of fatherly discipline that all true sons receive, for which this particular chapter is best known. He quotes Mishle:

"My son, do not despise the discipline of YHWH, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him, for whom YHWH loves, He disciplines, and flogs every son whom He receives."

The point is made that, if YHWH did not care about His Qedoshym, He would not bother with disciplining them. Who bothers to correct one who is not even his son? The claim is then made that if one is not disciplined, then he must be *"illegitimate."* The reader is expected to understand the implications of that claim:

In Hebrew, an illegitimate child is called a "mamzer." This term is somewhat different than its nearest equivalent in English. Rather than simply meaning someone who is born out of wedlock, it means the child of an adulterous or incestuous relationship, including any of the forbidden relationships written of in the Torah. Of the mamzer, scripture says:

"A mamzer shall not enter into the assembly of YHWH, even to the tenth generation shall none of his enter into the assembly of YHWH."

This means that an illegitimate son or daughter is not to be counted as one of the community of YHWH, is not permitted to marry anyone who does belong to it, and cannot even be allowed into the precincts of the Heykal. Essentially, they are excluded from belonging among the people of Yisrael, completely and indefinitely. The implication to the readers of the letter to the Ivrym should be that one who suffers no discipline at all from YHWH is not to be

considered a son or daughter, and therefore has no reasonable hope of imminent salvation.

The point is further made that, since they respected their natural fathers when they were disciplined by them, they should surely also subject themselves to correction by the "*Father of spirits*" which produces the righteousness that is absolutely necessary to gain everlasting life and a place among the ranks of His Qedoshym.

This is not to say that under the New Covenant a mamzer still has no hope of salvation or exalted place in the kingdom of YHWH. Indeed, by being born anew in the Ruach Haqodesh and finding atonement in the saving blood of Messiah, one starts afresh in the life of the Spirit, as is written:

In those days they shall no longer say, 'The fathers ate sour grapes, and the children's teeth are blunted. 'But each one shall die for his own crookedness – whoever eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be blunted.

One's sins are removed and even the stigma of having been a mamzer is washed away. But, once made a son or daughter and no longer an illegitimate child or a stranger, one must expect the discipline that every father gives to those whom he loves.

In the final paragraphs of chapter twelve, a stark contrast is made and a difference illumined between those figures in scripture who lived before Yehoshua's coming, and those who came after him.

The author says that the Qedoshym who he is writing to are not of those who had "*drawn near to a mountain touched and scorched with fire*" - meaning Mount Sinai, which was exceedingly dreadful to all who beheld it. Instead they have "*drawn near to Mount Tzion and to the city of the living Elohim, to the heavenly Yerushalayim*" - meaning to YHWH Himself through Yehoshua, the mediator of the new covenant which is superior to the old and who serves in the original heavenly Mishkan which endures forever. The message here is that all those who have come to faith since Yehoshua's resurrection have not had to approach their salvation through works

of the Torah, seeing that salvation only distantly "from afar off," but have now been able to approach the throne of YHWH directly, through the facility of Yehoshua's own sacrifice and the grace of the Most High on their behalf. The author counts this as a great advantage, but one that carries with it great responsibility, as well. He warns by the use of yet another qol v'chomer:

"Take heed not to refuse the One speaking. For if those did not escape who refused the warning on earth, much less we who turn away from Him from heaven."

Some people think these verses mean that since our salvation does not depend upon works, it is no longer a requirement to keep the laws of Torah at all. They then use this excuse as a license to freely sin - to wantonly break the commands of Torah. In refutation of this, Yehoshua himself said:

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to make complete. Amein, I say to you, till the heavens and the earth pass away, one yod or one tittle shall by no means pass from the Torah till all be done."

The truth of the matter is, the Torah never could "save" anyone and was never intended to do so. Its purpose is to define sin – wrongdoing - and guide mankind into right-living. It still does. What these verses of Ivrym are saying is that, unlike those men and women who lived before Yehoshua's sacrifice and had not seen or experienced the miracle of his resurrection, mankind now has direct access through him to the throne of heaven with full understanding of the requirements for salvation and righteous living, leaving no excuse for those who choose to deliberately eschew them. Yet, in its final verses he gives place to mercy:

"Therefore, receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us hold to the grace through which we serve Elohyim pleasingly with reverence and awe, for indeed our Elohyim is a consuming fire."

There is grace. While all the earth is about to be shaken and will eventually fall, the grace of YHWH will not. It will stand. YHWH

is indeed a flaming fire that enflames the hearts of His Qedoshym who lovingly serve Him by keeping His commandments and holding to the testimony of His Messiah. And when they occasionally do stumble, His grace upholds them.

Chapter Thirteen

¹Let the brotherly love continue. ²Do not forget to receive strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained malakym. ³Remember the prisoners as if chained with them, and those being mistreated, since you yourselves also are in the body. ⁴Let marriage be respected by all, and the bed be undefiled. But Elohyim shall judge those who whore, and adulterers. ⁵Let your way of life be without the love of money, and be satisfied with what you have. For He Himself has said, "I shall never leave you nor forsake you," ⁶so that we boldly say, "YHWH is my helper, I shall not fear what man shall do to me." ⁷Remember those leading you, who spoke the Word of Elohyim to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. ⁸Yehoshua Messiah is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. ⁹Do not be borne about by various and strange teachings. For it is excellent for the heart to be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. ¹⁰We have an altar from which those now serving the earthly Mishkan have no authority to eat. ¹¹For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the Heykal by the Koheyn Gadol for sin, are burned outside the camp. ¹²And so Yehoshua also suffered outside the gate, to set apart the people with his own blood. ¹³Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach. ¹⁴For we have no lasting city here, but we seek the one coming. ¹⁵Through him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to Elohyim, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name. ¹⁶And do not forget to do excellent works and to share, for with such sacrifices Elohyim is well pleased. ¹⁷Obey those leading you, and be subject to them, for they watch for your lives, as having to give account. Let them do so with joy and not groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. ¹⁸Pray for us, for we trust that we have an excellent conscience, desiring to behave well in every way. ¹⁹But I particularly encourage you to do this, that I might be restored to you the sooner. ²⁰And the Elohyim of peace who brought up our master Yehoshua from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹make you perfect in every excellent work to do His desire, working in you what is pleasing in His sight, through Yehoshua Messiah, to whom be esteem forever and ever. Amen. ²²And I call upon you, brothers, bear with the word of encouragement for I have written to

you in few words. ²³Know that brother Timothy has been released, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly. ²⁴Greet all those leading you, and all the Qedoshym. Those from Italy greet you. ²⁵Grace be with you all. Amen.

Chapter thirteen is a series of instructions and encouragements to the Qedoshym in what, at a cursory glance, appears to simply be a flowery postscript at the end of the letter. These instructions are, however, essential to its message, being the desired outcome the author has sought to provoke from his readers through all that he has previously written. Each of the instructions he gives has its foundation in the Torah, and each encouragement has its foundation in the Besorah - the Glad Tidings of salvation through Yehoshua the Messiah. All of them are based upon the commands to love YHWH and one another which are found in both Torah and Besorah alike.

The author's first instruction is that brotherly love should continue. Love of one's brothers and sisters in faith must come first and foremost in the life of a believer, after love of YHWH Himself and neither one of these can be accomplished without the other. Yochanan explains it this way:

"If someone says, 'I love Elohyim,' and hates his brother, he is a liar. For the one not loving his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love Elohyim who he has not seen? And we have this command from Him, that the one loving Elohyim should love his brother, too."

The second instruction the author gives is that we should also not forget to receive strangers. He alludes to the Torah and Avraham avinu, saying, *"for by doing so, some have unwittingly entertained malakym."* The word for "stranger" in Hebrew is "ger" and is best rendered in English as "sojourner." This particular type of stranger is one who lives among the people of YHWH in harmony, adhering to Torah law and not walking contrary to its ways: A ger does not practice idolatry, nor does he introduce any forbidden things at all into the community he resides in, or intentionally place any stumbling-blocks in the walk of the people of YHWH. Such strangers are to be received into the community of faith by all believers with love and charity. The Torah says:

"Do not oppress a ger, as you yourselves know the heart of a ger, because you were gerym in the land of Mitzrayim."

The next instruction is to *"remember the prisoners as if chained with them."* It could be reasoned that the author is writing about all prisoners, without distinction. To refute such reasoning, the remainder of the verse makes clear that the prisoners specifically being referred to are followers and believers in Yehoshua, as it says, *"...since you yourselves also are in the body."* Yehoshua himself reproved those who would be remiss in caring for their brothers and sisters in chains:

"Go away from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his malakym - for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a ger and you did not take me in, was naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me...Amein, I say to you, insofar as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me."

The author further instructs that the institution of marriage should be respected by all, and warns that Elohyim will judge adulterers. This is a clear reference to the "Ten Words" of Torah, spoken by YHWH at Mount Sinai which were written in stone by the finger of the Most High, saying: *"Thou shalt not commit adultery."*

The author refers to a teaching about love: Yehoshua taught his followers that they should not love silver and the world's material things, saying they should simply be satisfied with what they have. He said:

"For the nations of the world seek all of these, and your Father knows that you need these. But, seek first the kingdom of Elohyim, and all these shall be added to you."

The readers of the letter are next encouraged and exhorted to remember the leaders of their community of believers. They are told to imitate the behavior and faith of those who taught them the Word of Elohyim. Then suddenly, in the midst of this encouragement, the author does a curious thing - he seems to deviate from this subject

in mid-thought, inserting a completely unassociated statement into the text which apparently has nothing to do with the subject of leaders or behavior:

"Yehoshua Messiah is the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

He then returns to His original thought, instructing the reader not to be *"borne about by various and strange teachings"* - meaning those things not taught to them by their community leaders, they who raised them in the Word of Elohyim.

Upon closer inspection, it can be seen that the inserted statement is not unassociated with the context of remembering leaders at all, and has everything to do with it. In Malaky, it is written:

"I am YHWH, I do not change. Therefore, you, sons of Ya'akov, are not utterly destroyed."

In these similar quotations, YHWH and Yehoshua say essentially the same thing: they forever remain the same; they do not change. Indeed, if Yehoshua is the Word of YHWH incarnate - and he is - then both of these statements must be true. If the Word of YHWH or He Himself could change, then so could everything else, including the covenants and the promise of salvation itself, and so the sons of Yisrael could be and probably would be destroyed. Therefore, the readers are exhorted to love and imitate their teachers, holding fast to the Word they have heard from the beginning with confidence that it will never change, and that every covenant will be faithfully fulfilled according to the sure promises of the Word of Elohyim.

In a final encouragement, the author of the letter reminds the Qedoshym again that they now have access to an altar in the true heavenly Mishkan that even the sons of Aharon have no authority to serve in; and that the earthly Yerushalayim will eventually pass away, not being the perfected heavenly and eternal city they should ultimately seek.

It has been said that, after the death and resurrection of Yehoshua, the followers of The Way were all considered heretics by the rabbinical Jewish establishment. They were ostracized from the synagogues and the Heykal, and so were prevented from community worship and even from making their obligatory sacrifices. Some were publically ridiculed and put to shame. Others were flogged and killed for their faith in Messiah. This appears to be reflected in the author's words when he says:

"And so Yehoshua also suffered outside the gate, to set apart the people with His own blood. Let us, then, go to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach."

In light of this, the Qedoshym are encouraged to offer up instead:

"A sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of the lips, giving thanks to His Name. And do not forget to do well and to share, for with such sacrifices Elohim is well pleased."

It can be reasoned that the followers of The Way are in the same predicament down to this day, rejected by both mainstream Judaism and Christianity, not fitting in with either camp, just as they did not fit in with either the Pharisees or the Sadducees in the days of Messiah. Yehoshua himself even prophesied this would be so, saying:

"These words I have spoken to you, so that you do not stumble. They shall put you out of the congregations, for an hour is coming when everyone who kills you shall think he is rendering service to Elohim. And this they shall do to you because they did not know the Father, nor me."

To those who do not truly know the Father or His Messiah, and who because of this reject and mistreat His people, Yehoshua had something to say:

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Master, Master,' shall enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who is doing the desire of my Father in the heavens. Many shall say unto me in that day, 'Master, Master,

have we not prophesied in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and done many mighty works in your name?' And then I shall declare to them, 'I never knew you, depart from me, you who work lawlessness!'"

But to those few who love YHWH and His people, they who obediently and lovingly follow the One whom He sent:

"Do not fear, little flock, because your Father did delight to give you the Kingdom."

And He also says to them:

"Enter in through the narrow gate! Because the gate is wide - and the way is broad - that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter in through it. But the gate is narrow and The Way difficult which leads to life, and there are few who find it."

To those few, both then and now, the author of the book of Ivrym closes his letter with this blessing and wish:

"And the Elohyim of shalom who brought up our master Yehoshua from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every excellent work to do His desire, working in you what is pleasing in His sight, through Yehoshua Messiah, to whom be esteem forever and ever. Amen."

May all of these things be so, and may grace be with you.

Oadyah ben Yisrael

