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A relevance-theoretical and intertextual study of the wilderness motif in Hebrews, especially in Heb 12:1-17

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A RELEVANCE-THEORETICAL AND INTERTEXTUAL STUDY OF THE WILDERNESS MOTIF IN HEBREWS, ESPECIALLY IN HEB 12:1–17

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Abstract

This study examines the wilderness motif in Hebrews, particularly in Heb 12:1–17, from a relevance-theoretical perspective. Scholars have acknowledged frequent reference to wilderness traditions and texts in Hebrews, but none has so far demonstrated the extent of their influence on Hebrews' thought: this is our goal. Having reviewed the history and development of intertextuality, and acknowledged its usefulness for biblical studies, I show how difficult the identification or interpretation of intertextual references would have been for audiences – highlighting the need to supplement intertextual methodology with a comprehensive theory of human communication: Relevance Theory. Using it as a control on Hays' intertextual method, I examine all potential references to OT wilderness texts and traditions in Hebrews, to ascertain how the audience might process and grasp Hebrews' argument. In its depiction of the tabernacle, sacrifices and priesthood, Hebrews uses the Pentateuchal wilderness narrative extensively, but also new exodus texts from Isaiah, Jeremiah and Haggai. Such a combination of intertexts suggests that Hebrews reflects a tradition that developed in later OT and Second Temple texts where Zion came to be seen as the goal of the exodus and conquest and this, in turn, explains both why Jesus is not only wilderness leader but also Davidic king and also why the audience, whose situation is analogous to Israel in the wilderness, nevertheless arrives not at Canaan but Zion. In conclusion, I commend the benefits of using Relevance Theory in OT-in-the-NT studies and discuss the impact of Hebrews' wilderness motif on our understanding of the book as a whole.

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
AJS	*American Journal of Semiotics*
AJT	*American Journal of Theology*
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*
AUSS	*Andrews University Seminary Studies*
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BBRS	Bulletin for Biblical Research Supplement
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature,* 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
Bib	*Biblica*
BibInt	*Biblical Interpretation*
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BR	*Biblical Research*
BSac	*Bibliotheca sacra*
BT	*The Bible Translator*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BTS	Biblical Tools and Studies
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CBR	*Currents in Biblical Research*
CBW	*Conversations with the Biblical World*
CSL	Cambridge Studies in Linguistics
CTJ	*Calvin Theological Journal*

CTM	*Concordia Theological Monthly*
CTQ	*Concordia Theological Quarterly*
DLNT	*Dictionary of the Later New Testament and its Developments.* Edited by Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids. Downers Grove: IVP, 1997.
EDNT	*Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament.* Edited by Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider. ET. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990–1993.
EGGNT	Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament
EvQ	*Evangelical Quarterly*
ExpTim	*Expository Times*
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
ForFasc	*Forum Fascicles*
GELS	Muraoka, Takamitsu. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*. Leuven: Peeters, 2009.
GR	*Greece & Rome*
HBT	*Horizons in Biblical Theology*
HeyJ	*Heythrop Journal*
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
IBS	*Irish Biblical Studies*
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDS	*In die Skriflig*
Int	*Interpretation*
ISBL	Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature
ITQ	*Irish Theological Quarterly*
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplement
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JGRChJ	*Journal of Greco-Roman Judaism and Christianity*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JQR	*The Jewish Quarterly Review*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*

JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
L&N	Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains.* 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989
LHBOTS	The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LL	*Language and Literature*
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LQ	*Lutheran Quarterly*
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon.* 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
MLN	*Modern Language Notes*
NA^{28}	Novum Testamentum Graece. Edited by Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger. 28th rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012
NAC	New American Commentary
Neot	*Neotestamentica*
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDNTT	*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology.* Edited by Colin Brown. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975–1978
NIVAC	NIV Application Commentary
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NT	New Testament
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTM	New Testament Monographs
NTS	*New Testament Studies*

NTSI	New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
OT	Old Testament
OTS	Old Testament Studies
PiNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary Series
PRSt	*Perspectives in Religious Studies*
RaeL	*Revista Electrónica de Lingüística Aplicada*
RCT	*Revista catalana de teología*
RevExp	*Review and Expositor*
RHR	*Revue de l'histoire des religions*
RN	*Research Notebooks*
RTR	*Reformed Theological Review*
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLSPS	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SELL	Studies in English Language and Linguistics
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
SHBC	Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary
SJOT	*Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra Pagina
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StudBT	*Studia Biblica et Theologica*
SWJT	*Southwestern Journal of Theology*
TAPhS	*Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976

TJ	*Trinity Journal*
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
UBS	United Bible Societies
UCLWPL	*UCL Working Papers in Linguistics*
VE	*Vox Evangelica*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplement
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WJT	*Westminster Theological Journal*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*

Chapter 1: Introduction

The following dissertation investigates the wilderness motif in Hebrews, most notably in Heb 12:1–17. A number of considerations are involved in the choice of topic and method. First, the influence of the OT on Hebrews can hardly be underestimated. As Luke Timothy Johnson remarks:

> Through its multiple citations from the Greek text of scripture, its mode of introducing those citations that treat scripture as a living and spoken word, and its intricate interpretations of scripture in light of a contemporary experience, Hebrews constructs a world for its hearers that is entirely and profoundly scriptural.[1]

Accordingly, scholarly literature on Hebrews' use of the OT is vast and still growing. Previous studies have concentrated on the Greek *Vorlage* of Hebrews' citations,[2] the author's exegetical and hermeneutical techniques,[3] and the book's depiction of OT characters.[4] Increasingly, scholarship has focussed on how individual OT books

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[1] Luke Timothy Johnson, "The Scriptural World of Hebrews," *Int* 57 (2003): 247.

[2] Alan H. Cadwallader, "The Correction of the Text of Hebrews towards the LXX," *NovT* 34 (1992): 257–92; Radu Gheorghita, *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews: An Investigation of Its Influence with Special Consideration to the Use of Hab 2:3–4 in Heb 10:37–38*, WUNT 2/160 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); George Howard, "Hebrews and the Old Testament Quotations," *NovT* 10 (1968): 208–16; J.C. McCullough, "The Old Testament Quotations in Hebrews," *NTS* 26 (1980): 363–79; Kenneth J. Thomas, "Old Testament Citations in Hebrews," *NTS* 11 (1965): 303–25; Gert J. Steyn, *A Quest for the Assumed LXX Vorlage of the Explicit Quotations in Hebrews* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011).

[3] G.B. Caird, "The Exegetical Method of the Epistle to the Hebrews," *CJT* 5 (1959): 44–51; R.T. France, "The Writer of Hebrews as a Biblical Expositor," *TynBul* 47 (1996): 245–76; Friedrich Schröger, *Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes als Schriftausleger* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1968); Graham Hughes, *Hebrews and Hermeneutics: The Epistle to the Hebrews as a New Testament Example of Biblical Interpretation*, SNTSMS 36 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[4] Mary Rose D'Angelo, *Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews*, SBLDS 42 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979); Pamela Michelle Eisenbaum, *The Jewish Heroes of Christian History: Hebrews 11 in Literary Context*, SBLDS 156 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997).

function in Hebrews' argument.[5] We will have occasion to engage with it, for Hebrews' use of scripture is of key importance for Heb 12:1–17.

Heb 12:1–17 in recent scholarship

Second, several factors indicate the prominence that Heb 12:1–17 has in the discourse, in preparation for the book's rhetorical climax in 12:18–29, and commend it for close study.[6] Heb 12:1–2 is the culmination to the discussion of the cloud of witnesses in Heb 11. Then, in 12:3–17, multiple imperatives underline for readers how much they should pay attention to Hebrews' argument, inviting them, in turn, to: consider Jesus (12:3); endure (12:7a); strengthen limbs (12:12); make straight paths (12:13); and strive for holiness (12:14).[7]

Yet, in spite of this prominence, there are only two full-length monographs devoted to Heb 12:1–17. The first is N. Clayton Croy's *Endurance in Suffering*.[8] Croy's study seeks to develop our understanding of Heb 12:1–13 in two main ways. First, he draws

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[5] Susan Docherty, "Genesis in Hebrews," in *Genesis in the New Testament*, ed. Maarten J.J. Menken and Steve Moyise, LNTS 466 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012), 130–46; Gert J. Steyn, "Deuteronomy in Hebrews," in *Deuteronomy in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J.J. Menken, LNTS 358 (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 152–68; J.C. McCullough, "Isaiah in Hebrews," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Maarten J.J. Menken and Steve Moyise, NTSI (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 159–74; David M. Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation in Hebrews: A Study in Narrative Re-Presentation*, WUNT 2/238 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); Scott Ronald Moore, "A Conviction of Texts Not Seen: Perceiving Exodus as the Generative Text of Hebrews" (unpublished PhD diss., University of Denver, 2017); Robert Gibson Rayburn II, *Yesterday, Today and Forever: The Narrative World of Ps 94 [Ps 95] as a Hermeneutical Key to Hebrews* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2019).

[6] Cynthia Long Westfall, *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews: The Relationship between Form and Meaning* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 278. A number of scholars finish the unit at 12:13 (e.g. Albert Vanhoye, *Structure and Message of the Epistle to the Hebrews* [Rome: Pontificio Istituto biblico, 1989], 104; William Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, WBC 47A–B [Dallas: Word, 1991], 404–05). However, Westfall discerns that, although the tense changes from the aorist to the present in v.14, Hebrews continues to use the second person plural imperative, the notion of pursuit is consonant with the journeying language of vv.12–13 and the concepts of peace and holiness in vv.10–11 are repeated in v.14 (*Discourse Analysis,* 266–67).

[7] Ibid., 264.

[8] N. Clayton Croy, *Endurance in Suffering: Hebrews 12:1–13 in Its Rhetorical, Religious, and Philosophical Context*, SNTSMS 98 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

parallels between Heb 12:1–2, 12–13 and Graeco-Roman athletic discourse and examines Jesus' death against the agon motif. Second, Croy analyses Graeco-Roman and Jewish perspectives on suffering and παιδεία, concluding that the Graeco-Roman non-punitive notion of discipline provides a matrix against which we should understand Hebrews' discussion of παιδεία. We are indebted to Croy for paying due attention to the Graeco-Roman milieu of the first readers.

Nevertheless, Hebrews' explicit use of scripture in Heb 12:1–13 – particularly Prov 3:11–12, but also Deut 8 and Isa 35:3 – suggests that cognisance of a Graeco-Roman backdrop is not enough. More generally, Croy neglects to show adequately how Hebrews' argument in 12:1–13 is prepared by the preceding discourse.

The second monograph on Heb 12:1–17 is Philip Davis Jr.'s *The Place of Paideia in Hebrews' Moral Thought*.[9] Closely related to Croy's, his study is concerned with moral development in Hebrews' thought. After demonstrating Hebrews' extensive concern for the audience's moral development, Davis Jr. turns to examine corporal punishment in the Graeco-Roman world and the nature of discipline in Prov 3:11–12. He demonstrates that the question, typically asked by scholars, whether discipline is punitive or non-punitive (educative) is the wrong one: all discipline, including physical beatings, was understood to be educative in the ancient world. In the same way, Prov 3:11–12 is not punitive; rather, its emphasis is that, without discipline, children would go astray, so discipline, whilst painful, is essential for moral development. Therefore, Davis Jr. suggests that attempts to discern an additional reference to Deut 8 in Hebrews are unnecessary. He then turns to Heb 12:1–17, finding within these verses a similar emphasis on moral living found elsewhere in the book. Like Croy, Davis Jr. understands Hebrews to use athletic imagery,[10] as well as Proverbs and Isaiah, in exhorting the audience to right living.

Davis Jr.'s work advances our awareness of how Hebrews and the audience might have understood discipline. However, to claim, as he does, that the audience would

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[9] Philip A. Davis Jr., *The Place of Paideia in Hebrews' Moral Thought*, WUNT 2/475 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018).
[10] Ibid., 180–85, 190–91.

not pick up any reference to Deut 8 requires justification, with some account of how humans understand utterances. Whilst Davis Jr. gives this no consideration, I will employ a method that does and that has regard for the developing argument of the whole book in which to account for Hebrews' use of the OT in 12:1–17 in particular.

Hebrews' use of the wilderness motif and texts in recent scholarship

Third, within Heb 12:1–17, a wilderness motif drawn from scripture plays a crucial role. Both the passage, Hebrews' OT references generally and especially its wilderness motif have been variously addressed by scholars. Five contributions, in particular, justify, in various ways, our own study here.

Ernst Käsemann

Ernst Käsemann's *The Wandering People of God* was the first full-length study to acknowledge that Hebrews contains within it a sustained journeying motif.[11] Käsemann's analysis highlights five constituent elements of the motif: the relationship between the audience and the Israelite wilderness generation (3:7–4:13);[12] the use of movement verbs, including προσέρχομαι, ἐξέρχομαι and τρέχω;[13] the new and living way that Christ opens for his followers (10:19–20); the reference to going outside the camp (13:13); and the depiction of the cloud of witnesses seeking the city to come. The travellers' journey is not, however, undertaken alone but in solidarity with Christ the Son.[14]

Although scholarship has been unconvinced by Käsemann's emphasis on the Gnostic redeemer myth as a substructure of Hebrews' Christology,[15] his work laid an otherwise strong foundation on which the present study may be safely built. In common with the majority of scholarship, Käsemann sees in the passage Graeco-Roman athletic

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[11] Ernst Käsemann, *The Wandering People of God: An Investigation of the Letter to the Hebrews*, trans. Roy A. Harrisville and Irving L. Sandberg (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1984).
[12] Ibid., 17–22.
[13] Ibid., 23.
[14] Ibid., 122.
[15] Ibid., 87.

imagery,[16] but supplies no comprehensive account of how significantly the wilderness motif impacts Heb 12:1–17: the present study will address this lacuna.

David M. Allen

The wilderness motif is inseparable from Deuteronomy. For David M. Allen, "Hebrews…does not just use Deuteronomy; it becomes a new Deuteronomy."[17] Deuteronomy is significant, not merely for the number of Hebrews' citations of and allusions to it, but because Hebrews re-presents Deuteronomy's narrative, re-using some of its specific texts and themes and sharing its homiletical character. Like Deuteronomy, Hebrews assumes the successive roles of Moses and Joshua in leading Israel, situates its readers on the threshold of the Promised Land and employs a "then/now" rhetoric.[18]

Allen's study amply demonstrates how significantly a specific OT book can impact Hebrews. Nonetheless, it has three limitations. First, its scope is restricted to the paraenetic sections of Hebrews, with no attempt to demonstrate how this Deuteronomic emphasis relates to the book's doctrinal sections: our own study will, therefore, extend to Hebrews' theological concerns. Second, Allen fails to consider the importance, for the paraenetic sections themselves, of other intertexts, namely, the Psalms, Numbers and Exodus: I will have occasion to explore their influence on Hebrews in depth. Third, Allen may overstate the Deuteronomic influence on Hebrews, discerning this in texts where its presence remains unclear: for instance, he argues that covenant, in Hebrews, has a Deuteronomic emphasis,[19] whereas Hebrews explicitly draws upon Exod 24 and Jer 38LXX, not Deuteronomy. Our account of the wilderness motif in Hebrews will, therefore, confirm some of Allen's observations and challenge others.

Jesse B. Coyne

The wilderness motif itself is operative throughout Hebrews. Situating Hebrews' imagery in its Jewish context and examining wilderness imagery in the OT and Second

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[16] Ibid., 23.
[17] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 225.
[18] Ibid., 198.
[19] Ibid., 122–26.

Temple Judaism, Coyne finds there an exodus-wilderness-conquest pattern which, he argues, is the same for Hebrews.[20] To show how a wilderness motif underlies Hebrews, Coyne then draws on Richard Hays' notion of metalepsis, concluding how Hebrews situates God's people in the wilderness in a way analogous to the Israelites on the brink of entering the Promised Land.[21] This wilderness motif influences how we should understand Hebrews' eschatology since "[o]ne cannot be in the desert and not in the desert at the same time."[22] Entrance into the heavenly rest is not currently experienced by the people of God but is something to come in the future.[23] Furthermore, Jesus' dual roles as pioneer and priest are explained by this wilderness motif: Jesus is the pioneer like Joshua, leading his people towards their rest, but is also high priest over the wilderness tabernacle.[24]

The importance of Coyne's work, and its fruitfulness as a dialogue-partner for our own study, lie both in its identification of a full-orbed wilderness motif in Hebrews (building on Käsemann) and in its acknowledgement that wilderness imagery is pervasive in the OT and Second Temple writings. Nevertheless, the breadth of Coyne's study precludes the detailed examination of specific passages and he admits, in his conclusion, that "[t]he goal of this work has not been to prove every allusion or echo to the wilderness generation but to demonstrate the underlying current that can be found throughout the letter."[25] My study differs from Coyne's, as I seek to use RT to determine the plausibility that Hebrews references OT intertexts. Coyne's conclusion that the narrative of Hebrews is indebted to Deuteronomy and Numbers[26] also requires modification. On occasion, Hebrews uses Exodus in combination with Deuteronomy (1:6; 12:18–21), and Hebrews makes use of the exodus event as a precursor to its depiction of the audience in the wilderness (2:10–16), a connection not noted by Coyne. Hebrews also draws on new exodus motifs, suggesting that

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[20] Jesse B. Coyne, "The Wandering People of God and the Metaphorical World of Wilderness in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (unpublished PhD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015).
[21] Ibid., 364.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid., 365.
[24] Ibid., 366.
[25] Ibid., 363.
[26] Ibid.

Hebrews' narrative is not concerned with the Pentateuch alone. The use of these texts suggests that Coyne's acknowledgement of the analogy between Hebrews' audience and Israel needs some nuance. Despite clear similarities between the two groups, Hebrews' use of new exodus texts demonstrates that there are differences. Both similarities and differences between the two groups will emerge more clearly from our detailed account of the wilderness motif in Hebrews.

Bong Chur Shin

Wilderness traditions in general, and the wilderness motif in Hebrews, also correlate with new exodus motifs. In seeking to offer scholarship a satisfying account of these motifs, Shin examines new exodus imagery in biblical and extra-biblical literature, then turns to the themes of deliverance, pilgrimage, new covenant, priesthood, kingship and the Holy Spirit as they appear in the OT, in other NT books and Hebrews.[27] Shin concludes that Christ is the priestly king who redeems his people out of exile by his sacrifice, which combines elements of the Passover with the Day of Atonement. Further, he contends that God's people are on a new exodus pilgrimage, being empowered by the Holy Spirit as they journey towards the new creation, and this journey is parallel to the Israelites' exodus out of Egypt and, later, the experience of those in exile in Babylon.[28]

There is a methodological deficiency to Shin's work, whose conclusions tend to be drawn, not from Hebrews, but from other biblical texts. For instance, Shin assumes that Hebrews conflates the Day of Atonement ritual with that of the Passover to describe Jesus' sacrifice:[29] but this is based on Shin's understanding of Ezek 45, which influences how he reads Hebrews and is not justified from the book itself.[30] Not only does Hebrews' failure to cite or allude to Ezek 45 mitigate against such an understanding, but it is clear from Hebrews' language that these two rituals were distinct: Passover describes Jesus' liberating of the people of God from bondage

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[27] Bong Chur Shin, *New Exodus in Hebrews* (London: Apostolos, 2016; Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2019). The pagination is identical in both editions.
[28] Ibid., 282–85.
[29] Ibid., 282.
[30] Ibid., 83.

(2:14–15), whereas the Day of Atonement ritual depicts Jesus' atoning work. To clarify the wilderness or new exodus motifs in Hebrews, more work needs to be done.

Scott R. Moore

As for the influence on Hebrews of the exodus event or of Exodus as a book, Scott R. Moore proposes that Exod 19–40 serves as the "primary generative text of Hebrews,"[31] with the Prophets and Writings functioning exegetically in relation to Exodus. On closer examination, Moore is concerned not just with how Hebrews uses Exodus specifically but the Pentateuch more widely – as, for example, when depicting the sacrificial system. This wider framework relativises Moore's contention that Exod 19–40 undergirds Hebrews' narrative, which stresses how the audience has come not to Sinai but Zion, or how the heavenly tabernacle and the sacrifices and access to God offered by Jesus, under the new covenant, are superior to those in the old covenant. Hebrews' reading of Jer 38LXX alone is indicative of how prophetic texts, far from being secondary to Hebrews' use of Exodus, in fact control Hebrews' reading of the Pentateuch and how Hebrews wishes the audience to understand their situation in the present. In our examination of Hebrews' use of the wilderness motif, I will clarify why, in addition to the Pentateuch, Hebrews uses new exodus texts.

Thesis Structure

In order to give an account of Heb 12:1–17 and its wilderness motif that builds on the scholarship just outlined, while addressing its gaps or deficiencies, our dissertation – like much other work on Hebrews' use of the OT – will employ Richard Hays' intertextual method,[32] in awareness of other hermeneutical approaches. However,

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[31] Moore, "Conviction of Texts." King L. She examines the use of Exodus in Hebrews but not comprehensively, only analysing Heb 8:5 and 9:22–23 (*The Use of Exodus in Hebrews*, StBibLit 142 [New York: Peter Lang, 2011]). Michael Kibbe also devotes one chapter of his study to Hebrews' use of Exodus and Deuteronomy, but his main focus is on the use of Exodus and Deuteronomy in Heb 12:18–29 (*Godly Fear or Ungodly Failure? Hebrews 12 and the Sinai Theophanies*, BZNW 216 [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016], 112–37).

[32] George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 919–96; Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation,* 17; Gheorghita, *Septuagint in Hebrews,* 25–30.

uniquely (as far as I am aware), it will also combine this with Relevance Theory, in order to apply a rigorous method to the identification of potential intertexts.

In correlation with, and in context of, studies on the use of the OT in the NT, chapter 2 will consider how intertextuality may reasonably be applied to biblical texts, in tandem with Relevance Theory as conceptualised by Sperber and Wilson. We will see both how Relevance Theory supplies additional justification for Hays' intertextual method, and how it provides a methodological control on the nature and number of intertextual references to be envisaged. The chapter will conclude by outlining the procedure to be employed specifically in examining Hebrews' use of the wilderness motif.

Chapters 3–6 will demonstrate how Heb 1–10 prepares the audience for seeing itself as a new wilderness generation. Chapter 3 will analyse relevant texts in Heb 1–2 that create connections between the audience and the wilderness generation. Chapter 4 will then examine Heb 3:1–4:11, where the most obvious parallels between the readers and the wilderness generation are drawn. Chapters 5 and 6 will bring into the discussion Hebrews' understanding of the priesthood, tabernacle and sacrifices in Heb 5–10.

The central passage for our study – Heb 12:1–17 – will be the focus of chapters 7 and 8. Following an examination of how Heb 11 sets the context for Heb 12, a relevance-theoretical account of Heb 12:1–17 will be provided, with reference to the OT intertexts employed by Hebrews.

Chapter 9 discusses remaining wilderness texts from Heb 12:18–13:25, seeking to understand how they relate to wilderness texts and their interpretations advanced earlier in the book and, as such, how they may further impinge on the audience's thought as they hear the book of Hebrews read and re-read.

Our final chapter will summarise the results of our study and evaluate, in particular, how Relevance Theory has contributed to our analysis of Hebrews.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter, I will set out a method for applying Relevance Theory to the intertextual use of the wilderness motif in Hebrews. Scholarship lacks an agreed or precise method for studying the use of the OT in the NT, while controversy also continues to surround whether and how the term "intertextuality" may be applied in biblical studies. In order to justify the method adopted here, I will first analyse the origins of intertextuality, as theorised by Julia Kristeva, and then consider in what form it might be employed in biblical studies. Subsequently, I will demonstrate how Relevance Theory coheres with an intertextual methodology, providing a control within which intertextual references can be discovered and interpreted.

The origins of intertextuality

While the term "intertextuality" was first coined by the French-Bulgarian literary critic Julia Kristeva,[33] the theory behind intertextuality was indebted to the work of Mikhail Bakhtin and, specifically, his conception of dialogism.[34] Kristeva interprets Bakhtin's "literary word" as "an *intersection of textual surfaces* rather than a *point* (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character), and the contemporary or earlier cultural context."[35] Therefore, the text is not an autonomous entity, but, rather, always exists in relation to other texts, regardless of the direction of influence.[36] She concludes that "any text is constructed

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[33] Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez, trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 64–91. This essay appeared in chapter four of Julia Kristeva, *Σημειωτική: Recherches Pour Une Sémanalyse* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1969), 82–112, and was also published as Julia Kristeva, "Bakhtine, Le Mot, Le Dialogue et Le Roman," *Critique* 23 (1967): 438–65.

[34] Kristeva writes, "Bakhtinian dialogism identifies writing as both subjectivity and communication, or better, as intertextuality" ("Word," 68).

[35] Ibid., 65 (emphasis in original).

[36] Timothy K. Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality: Surplus of Meaning and Controlling the Means of Production," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Danna Nolan Fewell (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 29–30. Russell Meek notes that "text" here can refer to unwritten oral traditions behind the text as well as the written word itself ("Intertextuality, Inner-Biblical Exegesis, and Inner-Biblical Allusion: The Ethics of a Methodology," *Bib* 95 [2014]: 283).

as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another."[37] For Kristeva, it follows that there can never be just one correct interpretation of any text.[38] Further, in Kristeva's understanding of dialogism, the author no longer dictates connections between texts; rather, it is the texts themselves that are constantly involved in intertextual interactions. As Friedman explains, "Texts 'blend and clash,' not people. Supplanting the 'he' or 'she' of a preceding author, the 'it' of a text engages in intertextual play."[39] In sum, Kristeva's notion of intertextuality has at least two characteristics: first, it is not concerned with how precursor texts relate to later texts and, second, a text's author does not determine the intertextual relationship between their text and another text.

Intertextuality and biblical studies

In seeking to understand how NT authors use OT texts, biblical scholars often cite Kristeva, but – in so doing – have been criticised for adapting intertextuality to their own purposes and misrepresenting her theory in the process. Meek contends that biblical scholars cannot employ an intertextual methodology for three reasons. First, the notion of authorial intent inherent in biblical studies is incompatible with intertextuality's emphasis on the interplay between the text and the reader. Second, intertextuality is synchronic, being unconcerned with the direction of influence, whereas the discipline of biblical interpretation is diachronic, emphasising the influence of earlier texts on later ones. Third, unlike its employment in biblical studies, a genuinely intertextual method would not construct a set of criteria to identify the potential intertextual relations between texts.[40] Nonetheless, the most significant criticism is that most intertextual studies conducted by biblical scholars abandon the ideology associated with intertextuality and simply construct a methodology from it.[41]

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[37] Kristeva, "Word," 66.
[38] Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality," 29–30.
[39] Susan Stanford Friedman, "Weavings: Intertextuality and the (Re)Birth of the Author," in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, ed. Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 149.
[40] Meek, "Intertextuality," 281–84.
[41] For instance, William Scott Green criticises Richard Hays for employing "intertextuality more as a technique than as an ideology" ("Doing the Text's Work For It: Richard Hays on Paul's Use of Scripture," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSNTSup 83 [Sheffield: Sheffield

Kristeva herself laments that intertextuality is now understood – not only in biblical studies but also more generally in the scholarly guild – "in the banal sense of 'study of sources,'" to the extent that she prefers to use the term "transposition."[42]

Whatever the force of these objections, there are also problems with Kristeva's theory itself. If one agrees with Kristeva that the meaning of a text is not limited to what the original author intended, then Kristeva's protest that scholars have changed her definition of intertextuality cannot be sustained since, as her theory dictates, she cannot have a monopoly on the definition of the term.[43] In fact, Clayton and Rothstein note that, for Kristeva to develop her theory of intertextuality, she had to subtly re-envision Bakhtin's notion of dialogism. Hence, Bakhtin's "literary word" is re-defined as texts which may contain an endless number of intertextual possibilities, a definition which is contrary to Bakhtin's assertion that each utterance occurs within a specific historical context.[44] As Carr concludes, "[I]t would be profoundly ironic to cite the original intention of Kristeva against someone's appropriation of the term 'intertextuality.'"[45]

More importantly for our purposes, Kristeva's conception of intertextuality cannot be applied to the analysis of texts since intertextuality, as defined by Kristeva, entails that there are no limits to the possible intertextual references within texts.[46] For Kristeva,

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Academic Press, 1993], 58–63), as does David I. Yoon, "The Ideological Inception of Intertextuality and Its Dissonance in Current Biblical Studies," *CBR* 12 (2013): 72.

[42] Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 60. See also Ellen Van Wolde, "Trendy Intertextuality?" in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel*, ed. Sipke Draisma (Kampen: Kok, 1989), 43–49.

[43] Richard L. Schultz, "Intertextuality, Canon, and 'Undecidability': Understanding Isaiah's 'New Heavens and New Earth' (Isaiah 65:17–25)," *BBR* 20 (2010): 26.

[44] Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein, "Figures in the Corpus: Theories of Influence and Intertextuality," in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, ed. Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 19. See Kristeva, "Word," 65–66.

[45] David M. Carr, "The Many Uses of Intertextuality in Biblical Studies: Actual and Potential," in *International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament Congress Volume: Helsinki 2010*, ed. Martti Nissinen, VTSup 148 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 515.

[46] Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality," 28; Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 111; María Jesús Martínez Alfaro, "Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept," *Atlantis* 18 (1996): 277; Stefan Alkier, "Intertextuality and the Semiotics

every text exists in constant interaction with other texts, regardless of when they were composed, with the result that there are "no ostensible lines – either of influence or of boundary – to delimit a text in relation to other texts."[47] Consequently, the "academic utility"[48] of Kristeva's notion of intertextuality is questionable – conceived as it originally was, not as a methodology, but, rather, as an ideology.[49]

Because of the difficulties with using intertextuality in practice, biblical scholars have typically employed historical-critical methods as one way to set limits on boundless intertextual possibilities.[50] In particular, they distance themselves from Kristeva's conception of intertextuality by identifying what Kristeva regards as unnecessary, namely, reference to precursor texts within a given text.[51] Whilst this focussing "may undermine the general concept of intertextuality in whose name we are working,"[52] Kristeva herself was not immune from this inconsistency. Her study of Lautréamont *Poésies II* depends so much on source texts from Pascal, Vauvenargues, Rochefoucauld and Ducasse that she had to determine which edition of these source texts were used because of the differences between various editions of the same text.[53] In fact, not all proponents of intertextuality consider it necessary to abandon historical inquiry. Roland Barthes, for instance, remarks, "This methodological principle [intertextuality] does not necessarily oblige us to reject the results of the canonical sciences of the work (history, sociology, etc.)."[54]

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of Biblical Texts," in *Reading the Bible Intertextually*, ed. Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leroy A. Huizenga (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009), 7.

[47] Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality," 28.

[48] To use the words of Alkier, "Intertextuality," 7.

[49] For instance, Steve Moyise, "Intertextuality and Historical Approaches to the Use of Scripture in the New Testament," in *Reading the Bible Intertextually*, ed. Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leroy A. Huizenga (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009), 23.

[50] Moyise, "Historical Approaches," 32.

[51] Kenneth D. Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts: Telling the History of God's People Intertextually*, JSNTSup 282 (Sheffield: T&T Clark, 2005), 51.

[52] Culler, *Pursuit*, 111.

[53] Julia Kristeva, *La révolution du langage poétique: l'avant-garde à la fin du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1974), 343. This is noted by Kynes, *My Psalm*, 22.

[54] Roland Barthes, "Theory of the Text," in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. R. Young (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1981), 43.

Further complexities relating to the development of intertextuality within literary criticism also help explain some criticism of how biblical scholars have re-appropriated intertextuality. Although the specific term "intertextuality" can be traced back to Kristeva, as a concept, it finds its basis in the very origins of the written word.[55] Moreover, while intertextuality is often viewed as the property of poststructuralist scholars, it is not limited to them. As Pfister acknowledges, "[I]ntertextuality, although the concept has been coined under the auspices of postmodernism, is a phenomenon that is not restricted to postmodernist writing at all."[56] For example, T.E. Morgan points to the work of T.S. Eliot who views the relationship between texts in a similar way to Kristeva but does not advance her postmodern ideology.[57] Indeed, structuralist scholars,[58] in reaction to Kristeva, have restricted their understanding of intertextuality: intertextual references must be dictated by authorial intention and be capable of identification by the text's readers. Consequently, the author maintains ownership of the text, and the reader, rather than being overwhelmed with an unlimited amount of intertextual possibilities, can determine what the author desires to communicate through indicators embedded in the text.[59] Taking into consideration how intertextuality developed, it is more accurate to speak of "intertextualities" in the plural as opposed to one singular theory of intertextuality.[60] Accordingly, it is entirely appropriate for a biblical scholar like Richard Hays, who employs Hollander's non-

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[55] J. Still and M. Worton note early instances of what we would call "intertextuality" in the works of Plato and Aristotle ("Introduction," in *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices* [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990], 2–3).

[56] Manfred Pfister, "How Postmodern Is Intertextuality?" in *Intertextuality*, ed. Heinrich F. Plett (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991), 209–10. *Contra* Thomas R. Hatina, "Intertextuality and Historical Criticism in New Testament Studies: Is There a Relationship?" *BibInt* 7 (1999): 28–43.

[57] T.E. Morgan, "Is There an Intertext in This Text? Literary and Interdisciplinary Approaches to Intertextuality," *AJS* 3 (1985): 4. For more on the background to, and development of, intertextuality, see Gail O'Day, "Intertextuality," in *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, ed. John H. Hayes (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 546–48.

[58] For a list of structuralist works on intertextuality, see Pfister, "Postmodern," 209–10.

[59] Ibid., 210.

[60] Following Heinrich F. Plett, "Intertextualities," in *Intertextuality*, ed. Heinrich F. Plett (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991), 3–29.

poststructuralist notion of intertextuality, to question why his intertextual study requires him to adopt a postmodern ideology.[61]

Intertextual method adopted

Given these differing understandings of intertextuality, and rather than jettison the term itself, biblical scholars should instead state clearly what their precise method is. As Moyise concludes in his discussion of intertextuality in biblical studies, "Greater clarity would be achieved if scholars made clear what type of intertextuality they were using…or specified the particular theorist on which they depend (e.g. Kristeva, Barthes, Derrida, Eco, Riffaterre)."[62]

This study's approach to intertextuality most resembles that of Hays in *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul.*[63] Hays notes Kristeva's influence on the development of intertextuality,[64] but diverges from her understanding by defining "intertextuality" as "the imbedding of fragments of an earlier text within a later one."[65] Hays chooses instead to incorporate insights from the rhetorical critic John Hollander.[66] Hollander's work, *The Figure of Echo,* sought to identify allusions to, and echoes of, earlier poets in later works and then analyse how those echoes create new meanings. Important to Hollander was the concept of metalepsis, which "entails the recovery of the transumed material."[67] That is, interpreting texts not only involves an understanding of the text itself but also the wider context of the text being referenced.[68]

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[61] Richard B. Hays, "On the Rebound: A Response to Critiques of Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSNTSup 83 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 80.
[62] Steve Moyise, "Intertextuality and Biblical Studies: A Review," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 23 (2002): 429.
[63] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).
[64] Ibid., 15.
[65] Ibid., 14.
[66] John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).
[67] Ibid., 115.
[68] Jeannine K. Brown, "Metalepsis," in *Exploring Intertextuality: Diverse Strategies for New Testament Interpretation of Texts*, ed. B.J. Oropeza and Steve Moyise (Eugene: Cascade, 2016), 31.

In order to elucidate the function of scriptural echoes, and under the influence of Hollander's approach, Hays focusses on intertextual metalepsis. Hays writes, "Allusive echo functions to suggest to the reader that text B should be understood in light of a broad interplay with text A, encompassing aspects of A beyond those explicitly echoed…Metalepsis…places the reader within a field of whispered or unstated correspondences."[69] To determine the presence of allusive echoes, Hays applies seven criteria:

(1) *Availability.* Was the proposed source of the echo available to the author and/or original readers?...
(2) *Volume.* The volume of an echo is determined primarily by the degree of explicit repetition of words or syntactical patterns, but other factors may also be relevant: how distinctive or prominent is the precursor text within Scripture, and how much rhetorical stress does the echo receive in Paul's discourse?...
(3) *Recurrence.* How often does Paul elsewhere cite or allude to the same scriptural passage?...
(4) *Thematic Coherence.* How well does the alleged echo fit into the line of argument Paul is developing? Is its meaning effect consonant with other quotations in the same letter or elsewhere in the Pauline corpus? Do the images and ideas of the proposed precursor text illuminate Paul's argument?...
(5) *Historical Plausibility.* Could Paul have intended the alleged meaning effect? Could his readers have understood it?...
(6) *History of Interpretation.* Have other readers, both critical and pre-critical, heard the same echoes?...
(7) *Satisfaction.* With or without clear confirmation from the other criteria listed here, does the proposed reading make sense? Does it illuminate the surrounding discourse? Does it produce for the reader a satisfying account of the effect of the intertextual relation?[70]

Since Hays' approach deals with the effects that occur when an OT text is used in a new context, it commends itself for use in this study. Hebrews uses relevant OT

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[69] Hays, *Echoes*, 20.
[70] Ibid., 29–32.

wilderness texts and traditions as an essential element of its rhetorical argument to explain how the situation of the audience corresponds to the story of Israel in the wilderness.

How can we control the number of interpretive possibilities?

For all the advantages of Hays' model, it has one major shortcoming: its inability to limit the potentially boundless possibilities for a text's interpretation. In other words, if we merely conceive of a text in relation to numerous other texts, how may a reader ever come to any conclusion about its interpretation? Yet, in practice, any reader does weigh up possibilities and reach a conclusion; the question is: how?[71] To answer this, a more comprehensive explanation for human communication is required and this – I suggest – is provided by Relevance Theory (henceforth referred to as RT).

Relevance Theory

RT, as developed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson,[72] is a model for conceptualising how human beings interact with one another. In contrast to the semiotic model favoured by most intertextual theorists, RT observes that communication does not only consist of coding and decoding, but also the inferring of information derived from the context in which an utterance takes place.[73] Unlike the semiotic model, content to map the thoughts of the author onto the hearer, RT considers how a hearer's cognitive environment is modified by the speaker's guiding role in the communication process.

Two principles of relevance

Fundamental to RT is the insight that relevance drives all communication. Specifically, according to Sperber and Wilson, "the expectations of relevance raised by an utterance are precise and predictable enough to guide the hearer towards the speaker's meaning." [74] Undergirding this claim are the two principles of relevance, with the first principle laying the foundation for the second:

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[71] Peter S. Perry, "Relevance Theory and Intertextuality," in *Exploring Intertextuality: Diverse Strategies for New Testament Interpretation of Texts*, ed. B.J. Oropeza and Steve Moyise (Eugene: Cascade, 2016), 208–09.
[72] Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).
[73] Tomoko Matsui, *Bridging and Relevance* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000), 25.
[74] Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, "Relevance Theory," In *Blackwell's Handbook of Pragmatics,* ed. L. Horn and G. Ward (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 607.

First, or cognitive principle of relevance

Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximisation of relevance.

Second, or communicative principle of relevance

Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance.[75]

The cognitive principle of relevance is based on Sperber and Wilson's assumption that human beings listen for relevant information contained in the utterances of any speaker.[76] An utterance is perceived as relevant when it combines with background information that the audience already possesses to yield conclusions that are important to them: for instance, by improving their knowledge or correcting wrong assumptions about something previously known.[77] The second principle is concerned with communication from the speaker's perspective. Ostensive communication makes "manifest an intention to make something manifest."[78] That is, ostensive communication involves the communicator making obvious their desire to communicate something that they deem relevant. For communication to be optimally relevant, it must be "relevant enough…to be worth the addressee's effort to process it" and, also, "the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences."[79]

Sources of context

These twin principles of relevance imply a communicative context which the author and hearer must share for any utterance to be comprehensible, and this is called a "mutual cognitive environment."[80] Nevertheless, for a context to be accessed by the

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[75] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 260.
[76] Ibid., 261–62.
[77] Sperber and Wilson, "Relevance Theory," 608.
[78] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 49.
[79] Ibid., 270.
[80] Gene L. Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," in *The Linguist as Pedagogue: Trends in the Teaching and Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell, NTM 11 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009), 227–28; Stephen Pattemore, *The People of God in the*

hearer, it must be manifest to them. For Sperber and Wilson, "[a] fact is manifest to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true."[81] Thus, audiences access whatever contexts are either manifest to them or are capable of being accessed by them.

For RT, three kinds of context allow an utterance to be comprehended:

> (1) the physical environment of communicator and addressee
> (2) the discourse in which [the communicator's] utterance is embedded
> (3) the encyclopaedic knowledge shared by the communicator and addressee[82]

In the case of literary texts, the physical environment is unavailable to subsequent readers as a context: the environment of time or place for the original author and readers is inaccessible.[83] The discourse for the embedded utterance is the text itself. Finally, shared encyclopaedic knowledge could encompass, but is not limited to, theological presuppositions and mutual cultural, societal and historical contexts.[84] As a result, context is not a static entity, but is variable: as the discourse progresses, the audience continue to gain encyclopaedic knowledge, leading to new assumptions being formed, or existing assumptions being challenged.[85]

Cognitive effects and processing effort

According to RT, an audience faced with multiple contexts from which to choose will opt for the one that provides the greatest number of cognitive effects for the smallest amount of processing effort. Any new utterance may stimulate three kinds of cognitive effects, according to Clark; those which:

Apocalypse: Discourse, Structure, and Exegesis, SNTSMS 128 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 15.
[81] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 39.
[82] Green, "Biblical Interpretation," 227.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Margaret G. Sim, *A Relevant Way to Read: A New Approach to Exegesis and Communication* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2016), 19.
[85] Green, "Biblical Interpretation," 227–28.

(1) [strengthen] an existing assumption

(2) [contradict] and [lead] to the elimination of an existing assumption

(3) [result in] contextual implication, where new information follows from the combination of new and existing assumptions but would not follow from either alone[86]

The more cognitive effects that a stimulus has, the more relevant it will be to the hearer.

Processing effort denotes the effort that a hearer must exert in grasping a speaker's utterance. This includes deciding which inferences the speaker intended to express, identifying an appropriate context for understanding, and determining which cognitive effects have taken place in the context.[87] The less processing effort that is expended when attempting to uncover the intended cognitive effects of an utterance, the greater the perceived relevance for the hearer.[88] It takes less processing effort to locate a readily accessible context than a more obscure one: thus within the discourse where an utterance is embedded, the immediately preceding argument is more accessible than something from earlier on in the discourse. Similarly, within encyclopaedic memory, familiar concepts are more easily retrievable than unfamiliar ones. Whenever no cognitive effects may be accessed immediately, a reader expends extra effort in determining how the information being communicated is relevant; when optimal relevance is obtained, processing effort can cease. However, if the processing effort is so difficult that no cognitive effects can be determined, then a reader may give up searching for relevance and communication fails.[89]

Explicatures and implicatures

Since language is underdetermined – that is, "humans do not say everything they 'mean' but only what is 'relevant'"[90] – to ascertain what a speaker means, a hearer

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[86] Billy Clark, *Relevance Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 102.
[87] Matsui, *Bridging and Relevance*, 27–28.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Green, "Biblical Interpretation," 231–32.
[90] Sim, *Relevant*, 12.

must identify the assumptions, whether explicit or implicit, that underlie utterances. The key to the interpretation of utterances is the identification of these assumptions.[91]

In RT, an "explicitly communicated assumption" is described as an explicature.[92] Explicatures are not determined solely from decoding the words within a statement, but also include information that can be pragmatically inferred.[93] Identification of an explicature entails the processes of reference assignment, disambiguation and enrichment.[94] Jobes uses the following example to demonstrate how explicatures may be derived from a statement:

> She doesn't play here anymore.

First, one must assign a referent for "she": is "she" a child, a tennis player, or a musician? Second, the verb "play" must be disambiguated as "play" could refer to a number of potential actions: a child's activity, a sport, or even a musical performance. Third, the location "here" must be enriched from some relevant physical context in order to determine whether we are in a playground, a tennis court or a concert hall. Finally, what "anymore" refers to must be enriched from prior knowledge.[95] To identify the explicatures contained within this statement, all these questions must be answered from the context in which communication occurs.

Implicit assumptions are defined as implicatures.[96] Implicatures may vary in strength, from strong implicatures, which the author encourages the hearer to supply, to weak implicatures, which hearers themselves must supply.[97] The weaker the implicature deduced by the hearer, the less certain we can be that the author intended such an implicature.[98] Nevertheless, the relative strength of any implicature does not

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[91] Green, "Biblical Interpretation," 234.
[92] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 182.
[93] Robyn Carston, "Explicatures and Semantics," *UCLWPL* 12 (2000): 4, 12.
[94] Green, "Biblical Interpretation," 233.
[95] Karen H. Jobes, "Relevance Theory and the Translation of Scripture," *JETS* 50 (2007): 785.
[96] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 182.
[97] Ibid., 199.
[98] Ibid., 199–200.

necessarily correlate with its perceived degree of relevance. Sperber and Wilson note that, in some instances – in poetry, for example – a speaker can achieve a large degree of relevance "through a wide array of weak implicatures."[99]

To illustrate the variety of explicatures and implicatures that may be drawn from any utterance, consider this short dialogue proposed by Clark.[100]

> Ken: Are you worried the price of petrol might go up in the budget?
> Bev: I don't have a car.

We may take two explicatures from Bev's statement: Bev believes that she does not own a car, and Bev does not own a car. The most obvious, or ostensive, implicatures are that, as a consequence of not owning a car, Bev does not buy petrol and, also, that the increasing price of petrol does not concern her. These would be classified as strong implicatures. Nonetheless, further implicatures may be deduced from Bev's statement, although the evidence for them is less strong. For instance, the implicatures that Clark discerns include: "Bev does not think she needs to worry about car owners," "Bev disapproves of people who own cars" and "Bev cares about the environment."[101] Although it is less clear that Bev intended to communicate these assumptions, such implicatures may follow from her statement if the context for communication suggests them. These would be described as weaker implicatures.[102]

RT and written texts

Since RT was initially conceived in relation to spoken communication between humans who are jointly present, some theorists doubt its application to written texts, as they constitute a different medium of communication. Keith Green, for instance, proposes that ostensive communication must take place in a physical environment shared by the communicator and hearer.[103] However, shared assumptions do not come

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[99] Ibid., 222.
[100] Clark, *Relevance Theory*, 212.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Keith Green, "Butterflies, Wheels and the Search for Literary Relevance," *LL* 6 (1997): 137.

solely from the physical environment within which discourse takes place but also may come from "assumptions held in memory."[104] In fact, whether we interpret a text or a spoken utterance, identical psychological processes are involved.[105] Texts are formulated on the presupposition that the author intends to communicate to their readers. As a result, the notion of ostensive-inferential communication explicated by the two principles of relevance, the relationship between cognitive effects and processing effort, and the implicatures and explicatures which result from an utterance also apply to texts.[106] Indeed, Howard White shows how helpfully RT may be applied to written texts since they enable the interpreter, more than unrecorded conversation would, to determine more precisely the factors that influence an author's attempt at relevance.[107]

Given the above, Hebrews presents an interesting case, since it is both written and intended for reading aloud to its audience,[108] regardless of whether one characterises it as a sermon[109] or not.[110] Use of RT in this study thus involves consideration of how context is formed in the mind of hearers and suggests that the most accessible context

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[104] Adrian Pilkington, Barbara MacMahon, and Billy Clark, "Looking for an Argument: A Response to Green," *LL* 6 (1997): 140.
[105] Ibid., 141–42.
[106] Deirdre Wilson, "Relevance and the Interpretation of Literary Works," *UCLWPL* 23 (2011): 70. See also Anne Furlong, "Relevance Theory and Literary Interpretation" (unpublished PhD diss., University College London, 1995).
[107] Howard D. White, "Relevance Theory and Citations," *Journal of Pragmatics* 43 (2011): 3346.
[108] Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 36 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 84–85.
[109] Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 9–11; Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 13–14; Hans-Friedrich Weiss, *Der Brief Die Hebräer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 40; Alan C. Mitchell, *Hebrews*, SP 13 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2007), 14–15. Gabriella Gelardini argues that Hebrews is an ancient synagogue homily patterned for Tisha be-Av, but this cannot be proved (*"Verhärtet eure Herzen nicht": Der Hebräer, eine Synagogenhomilie zu Tischa be-Aw* [Leiden: Brill, 2007]; Gelardini, "Hebrews, an Ancient Synagogue Homily for Tisha be-Av: Its Function, Its Basis, Its Theological Interpretation," in *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods – New Insights*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini, BIS 75 [Leiden: Brill, 2005], 107–30).
[110] Carl Mosser, "No Lasting City: Rome, Jerusalem and the Place of Hebrews in the History of Earliest 'Christianity'" (unpublished PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2004), 239.

of a text, as we have seen, is the discourse which immediately precedes it. Earlier text segments may also be called to mind, and later texts in the discourse may be influential, being the key to accessing the cognitive environment of an earlier passage and maximising relevance. Additionally, since written documents were usually re-read, later passages can often supply information which informs how an earlier passage may be interpreted.[111]

RT and intertextuality

Having established the usefulness of RT for elucidating communication through a written text intended for reading aloud, it remains to show how RT complements an intertextual investigation of the use of the OT in Hebrews. I will outline the connections between RT and intertextuality more generally, before demonstrating how RT supplements the intertextual method employed in this study. Since Stephen Pattemore's study, *The People of God in the Apocalypse,* demonstrates, in a manner just as applicable to Hebrews, how intertextuality and RT may be correlated,[112] I will summarise his conclusions here.

RT's emphasis on the cognitive environment of the reader can be closely associated with intertextuality in general. In the same way that intertextuality does not only describe how a text relates to previous texts, but also depicts how texts interact in a "discursive space of a culture,"[113] so too RT underscores how communication is comprehended within a cognitive environment shared by the author and audience, as opposed to meaning merely residing in the text alone.[114] Nevertheless, RT differs from intertextuality by acknowledging that not every possible context may be accessible to a person at any given time, but will be determined through cognitive effects and processing effort. This limits the number of potential contexts within which interpretation can take place.[115]

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[111] Pattemore, *People of God*, 53–54.
[112] Ibid., 36–43. An abbreviated discussion occurs in Stephen Pattemore, "Relevance Theory, Intertextuality and the Book of Revelation," in *Current Trends in Scripture Translation*, ed. P. Noss (Reading: UBS, 2002), 43–60.
[113] Culler, *Pursuit*, 103.
[114] Pattemore, *People of God*, 36–37.
[115] Ibid. A discussion of how RT limits the interpretive possibilities will follow.

More specifically, RT's understanding of how utterances are interpreted within a cognitive environment confirms Richard Hays' presupposition that context is essential for discerning how NT authors use the OT.[116] He writes, "Paul's citations of Scripture often function not as proofs but as tropes: they generate new meanings by linking the earlier text (Scripture) to the later (Paul's discourse) in such a way as to produce unexpected correspondences, correspondences that suggest more than they assert."[117] Such a statement is reminiscent of RT's emphasis on how implicatures formed within mutual cognitive environments enhance our understanding of utterances.[118]

In fact, the concept of implicatures, as developed by RT, and intertextual echoes correlate in several respects. Both RT and intertextuality note that the significance of an OT reference is not based only on its strength. From an intertextual standpoint, Moyise comments, "It is not just the loudest instruments in the orchestra that give a piece its particular character. Sometimes, subtle allusions or echoes, especially if they are frequent and pervasive, can be more influential than explicit quotations."[119] This is consistent with RT's insight that the degree of relevance attached to a statement is not attributable to the strength of the implicature, and, in particular, the observation that "poetic effects" may result from a number of weak implicatures.[120]

RT's characterisation of strong and weak implicatures also mirrors the spectrum of intertextual allusion that Hays constructs, which ranges from direct quotation to weak allusion, or echo,[121] with both theories admitting that weak implicatures or echoes may result, not from the author's intention, but from the reader's cognitive response. Hays

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[116] Ibid., 37; Hays, *Echoes*, 24.
[117] Hays, *Echoes,* 24.
[118] Pattemore, *People of God*, 37–38.
[119] Steve Moyise, "Intertextuality and the Study of the Old Testament in the New Testament," in *The Old Testament in the New Testament: Essays in Honour of J.L. North*, ed. Steve Moyise, JSNTSup 189 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 17.
[120] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 222. For a comprehensive treatment of this issue, see Adrian Pilkington, *Poetic Effects: A Relevance Theory Perspective* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000).
[121] Pattemore, *People of God*, 38; Hays, *Echoes*, 23; Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 199–200.

acknowledges that the further away we move from direct citation to weak echo, the greater effort a reader must expend, to the extent that, in some instances, it is difficult to determine whether the echo is embedded in the text or is imagined by the reader.[122] Similarly, Sperber and Wilson state that there is no clear distinction between assumptions set forth by the speaker and those assumptions that the hearer has derived from the utterance themselves: "The fiction that there is a clear-cut distinction between wholly determinate, specifically intended inferences and indeterminate, wholly unintended inferences cannot be maintained."[123]

RT and Hays' intertextual criteria

Pattemore sees a direct correspondence between Hays' criteria for discerning intertextual echoes and RT's notions of cognitive effects and processing effort. The first five (availability; volume; recurrence; thematic coherence; historical plausibility) connect with processing effort, whereas the last two (history of interpretation; satisfaction) relate to cognitive effects.[124] In particular, volume (shared linguistic or conceptual terms) minimises processing effort and enables a particular intertext to be more easily accessed. A text that recurs in a discourse, or coheres with key themes in the text, may evoke some poetic effects for the audience to infer. An OT text that has been identified by a previous interpreter demonstrates that cognitive effects have been garnered from the utterance, suggesting that a prior audience may have been able to identify that intertext. However, RT also modifies some of Hays' criteria: a text must not only be available to the audience, but also must be capable of being accessed by them,[125] whilst, according to RT, satisfaction is only achieved once the optimal relevance of an utterance has been determined**.**

Mutual cognitive environments and a range of intertexts

RT's emphasis on mutual cognitive environments also addresses criticisms that Hays' criteria unduly restrict the range of potential intertexts. Thus, Evans notes that Hays

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[122] Hays, *Echoes*, 23.
[123] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 199–200.
[124] Pattemore, *People of God*, 38.
[125] Steve Smith, "The use of criteria: A proposal from relevance theory," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria,* ed. David M. Allen and Steve Smith, LNTS 579 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2019), 148.

fails to take into account extra-biblical Jewish interpretation which could play a part in a NT author's use of the OT.[126] Alternatively, Foster criticises Hays' criteria on the basis that they reduce the surrounding milieu of the NT authors to a solely Jewish one, as opposed to the variegated environment in which they would have lived.[127] In doing so, Hays entrenches "scholarly research by forcing it to account for ideas within the [NT] writings solely through the lens of the Scriptural writings of Judaism."[128] As I bring RT to bear when interpreting a text and identifying its potential intertexts, I will, therefore, assume the potential impact, on the author and audience's mutual cognitive environment, of both extra-biblical Jewish interpretation and Graeco-Roman material.

RT as a control on the intertextual possibilities

Whilst taking into account all possible contexts within which interpretation can take place, RT also limits the number of potential intertexts by assuming that an audience will only detect those which form part of its cognitive environment. However, characterisation of this is intertwined with assumptions made about the author and addressees of Hebrews.

The evidence of Hebrews suggests that the author behind the text was very familiar with the Greek OT, Jewish customs and midrashic exegesis,[129] and these texts and traditions existed in their encyclopaedic memory. Given the difficulties in determining the identity of the author of Hebrews,[130] this thesis will avoid the use of gendered pronouns for the author. Instead, since we can only access the author's intentions

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[126] Craig A. Evans, "Listening for Echoes of Interpreted Scripture," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSNTSup 83 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 49–50.

[127] Paul Foster, "Echoes without Resonance: Critiquing Certain Aspects of Recent Scholarly Trends in the Study of the Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament," *JSNT* 38 (2015): 109.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Iutisone Salevao, *Legitimation in the Letter to the Hebrews: The Construction and Maintenance of a Symbolic Universe*, JSNTSup 219 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 102.

[130] The presence of the masculine participle διηγούμενον in 11:32 may imply a male author. Some scholars, however, propose that Hebrews was written by Priscilla (Adolf von Harnack, "The Authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews," *Lutheran Church Review* 19 [1900]: 448–71; Ruth Hoppin, *Priscilla's Letter: Finding the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews* [California: Lost Coast Press, 2009]).

through the text of Hebrews, I will use Hebrews to refer to the author as conveyed by the text of Hebrews and use the abbreviation Heb to denote a specific passage in the book (for example, Heb 1:6).

How much of the OT and extra-biblical Jewish interpretation can we assume the audience knew? This question is made more difficult since arguments for a Jewish or Gentile audience remain inconclusive.

Arguments for a Jewish audience typically centre around the multitude of OT references in the letter.[131] Further, the title "to the Hebrews," though a later addition, may imply a Jewish audience.[132] Finally, the presence of Jewish settlements in Italy, as well as the existence of at least eleven synagogues in Rome, may favour a Jewish readership.[133]

Conversely, arguments for a Gentile audience centre around the following issues. Heb 6:1–2 may favour a Gentile readership since repentance from dead works was unnecessary for a Jew who accepted that Jesus was the Christ. Pagan converts to Christianity, however, had to abandon their false gods in order to serve the living God.[134] Moreover, Hebrews' use of the OT does not necessarily entail a Jewish audience. Assuming a Roman provenance for Hebrews (as will be argued below), it is plausible that the book is written to Gentiles. Paul's letter to the Romans, dated to the

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[131] Nicholas J. Moore, *Repetition in Hebrews: Plurality and Singularity in the Letter to the Hebrews, Its Ancient Context, and the Early Church*, WUNT 2/388 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 34; F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 9; Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 18–19; Barnabas Lindars, *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 17.

[132] Moore, *Repetition in Hebrews*, 34; David A. deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle "to the Hebrews"* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 2–3.

[133] Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Jewish Christians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Hebrews, James and Jude* (Nottingham: IVP, 2007), 25; Moore, *Repetition in Hebrews*, 34.

[134] Jason A. Whitlark, *Resisting Empire: Rethinking the Purpose of the Letter to "the Hebrews,"* LNTS 484 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 13; Kenneth L. Schenck, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Hebrews: The Settings of the Sacrifice*, SNTSMS 143 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 42.

mid-50s and permeated with OT references, presumes a mostly Gentile audience.[135] In fact, Roman Christianity had a rich grounding in the OT since it was most likely established by Jews who lived in Rome around 30–40 C.E.[136]

On balance, Hebrews' "consistent avoidance both of distinctively 'Jewish' and also of distinctively 'gentile' language suggests a mixed group of addressees. This would fit the situation in Rome, where Christianity was originally Jewish, but where the leadership soon became predominantly Gentile."[137] A group of first-century Christians living in the Diaspora would likely have been ethnically mixed.[138] Indeed, Timothy, mentioned in Heb 13:23, had a Greek father and a Jewish-Christian mother.[139] Furthermore, the presence of synagogues in Rome is not determinative of a solely Jewish audience, because, before the partitioning of Christianity and Judaism, it is likely that both Jewish and Gentile Christians attended the synagogues.[140] Consequently, both groups would have been influential in the development of theology among the Roman Christians in the first century C.E.[141] Therefore, this thesis will assume that both Jewish and Gentile adherents to Christianity found the argument of Hebrews potentially persuasive. Whether Jew or Gentile, the audience were presumably well-versed in the OT and Jewish customs, perhaps even frequenting the synagogues.

The Septuagint canon and extra-biblical Jewish interpretation

As a result, the Septuagint canon and extra-biblical Jewish traditions and texts related to and based on this canon limits the number of intertexts which Hebrews could reference within a text. The OT canon has primacy here since we can determine with

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[135] Bruce N. Fisk, "Synagogue Influence and Scriptural Knowledge among the Christians of Rome," in *As It Is Written: Studying Paul's Use of Scripture*, ed. Christopher D. Stanley and Stanley E. Porter, SBLSymS 50 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 166.
[136] Whitlark, *Resisting Empire*, 15.
[137] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 26.
[138] Koester, *Hebrews*, 47–48.
[139] Ibid., 48.
[140] Peter Lampe, *Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries: From Paul to Valentinus*, ed. Marshall D. Johnson; trans. Michael Steinhauser (London: Continuum, 2003), 69.
[141] Ibid., 76.

more certainty what texts the audience would have been acquainted with, whereas the extra-biblical traditions the audience would have known are more difficult to determine. Nevertheless, where there are significant resonances with extra-biblical Jewish traditions or texts, we may assume that the audience was aware of them since, if Hebrews is communicating with a view to optimal relevance, it is unlikely it would appeal to texts or traditions with which they were unfamiliar.

Graeco-Roman environment

The primacy of the OT canon, and related secondary traditions, notwithstanding, the wider Graeco-Roman environment and culture also contributed towards the audience's encyclopaedic memory, assuming – as I will do for the following reasons – that the audience lived in Rome in the last quarter of the first century C.E. First, the mention of greetings from those from Italy (13:24) implies that these greetings are sent back to the congregation in Rome. Second, the reference to Timothy in the preceding verse (13:23) suggests a Roman provenance as Timothy had accompanied Paul to Rome and, as a result, would have been familiar to the Christian community who lived there. Finally, a Roman location for Hebrews is likely given Hebrews' influence on 1 Clement, which was written from Rome.[142]

Dating Hebrews is difficult to determine, but I will assume that it was written between 70–96 C.E. 1 Clement's use of Hebrews suggests that the book was in circulation no later than 96 C.E. The absence of any reference to the temple in Hebrews is decisive neither for a pre-70 nor a post-70 C.E. date. Likewise, the use of present tense verbs to describe cultic sacrifices (7:7; 9:6–7, 9, 13; 13:10) does not establish a pre-70 C.E. date, since a number of authors writing after the temple's destruction also use the present tense in their description of priestly activities (1 Clement 40:1–5; 41:2; Josephus, *A.J.* 3.9–10). As verbal aspect theory acknowledges, the use of the present tense form in Greek does not imply that the action occurred in present time.[143] A post-

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[142] Salevao, *Legitimation*, 118–20. For a defence of a Jerusalem provenance, see Mosser, "No Lasting City." Robert Jewett argues that Hebrews was written to the Lycus Valley (*Letter to Pilgrims: A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* [New York: Pilgrim Press, 1981]), 5–10.

[143] Stanley E. Porter, "The Date of the Composition of Hebrews and Use of the Present Tense-Form," in *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in*

70 C.E. date for Hebrews makes sense of the assertion in 2:3 that the audience is comprised of second-generation Christians and 5:12's assumption that the audience had been believers for some time. Furthermore, the references to the past persecution of the community (Heb 10:32–34; 12:4) suggests a date following Nero's persecution of the Christians in Rome in 64 C.E.[144]

In light of these factors, I assume that the community was living in Rome at some point following the destruction of the Jerusalem temple by Vespasian and Titus in 70 C.E. They have lived through Vespasian's march of triumph, his building of the Temple of Peace, the construction of the Arch of Titus, and the fire and plague that had devastated Rome.[145] More so, Graeco-Roman texts and traditions extant prior to and during this period presumably comprise part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory. Again, how accessible these texts would be to the audience is debatable. Therefore, the likelihood that such traditions are being referenced will be determined with regard to the amount of processing effort required to garner discernible cognitive effects.

The audience's personal experience

RT acknowledges that an audience does not only draw on intertexts but also on their own personal experiences when interpreting utterances. It is clear from Hebrews that

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Honour of Michael D. Goulder, ed. Stanley E. Porter, Paul Joyce, and David E. Orton, BIS 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 295–314.

[144] Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, "Portraying the Temple in Stone and Text: The Arch of Titus and the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods – New Insights*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini, BIS 75 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 134. Heb 10:32–34 could refer to Claudius' expulsion of Jews from Rome in 49 C.E. (William Manson, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: An Historical and Theological Reconsideration* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951], 159–61; F.F. Bruce, "'To the Hebrews': A Document of Roman Christianity," *ANRW* 25 [1987]: 3519). However, the cumulative evidence presented above favours a post-70 C.E. date.

[145] The following studies assume a Flavian Roman providence for Hebrews: Harry O. Maier, "Jesus, the Great High Priest: A Political Reading of Hebrews' Christology in the Ruins," in *Jesus – Gestalt und Gestaltungen: Rezeptionen des Galiläers in Wissenschaft, Kirche und Gesellschaft*, ed. Petra von Gemünden, David G. Horrell, and Max Küchler (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 285–98; Whitlark, *Resisting Empire*, 8–12; Jorg Rupke, "Starting Sacrifice in the beyond: Flavian Innovations in the Concept of Priesthood and Their Repercussions in the Treatise 'To the Hebrews,'" *RHR* 1 (2012): 5–30; Aitken, "Portraying the Temple."

the audience has experienced salvation in some form: they have been enlightened, have tasted the heavenly gift, have become partakers of the Holy Spirit and have experienced the powers of the age to come (6:4–6). Simultaneously, the community was facing three dangers. First, they faced the temptation to drift away from what they had heard (2:1), to become "dull of hearing" (5:11), and to "grow weary" or "lose heart" (12:3). Second, they risk "having an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God" (3:12), "crucifying again the Son of God and holding him up to contempt" (6:6), and "wilfully persisting in sin…spurning the Son of God, profaning the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified, and outraging the Spirit of grace" (10:29). Third, they were experiencing external pressure: persecution (10:32–34; 12:4), torture and imprisonment (10:33–34), and abuse (13:13).[146] These experiences must also be taken into account when determining whether an OT intertext is being referenced.

Given that, from the perspective of RT, context is dynamic, the most relevant context for interpreting utterances will be determined with regard to cognitive effects and processing effort,[147] and this has the advantage of minimising subjectivity in interpretation. Where there are a number of potential texts which Hebrews could potentially be drawing on, RT establishes how readers will choose an optimally relevant interpretation, requiring the least processing effort.[148] This guards us against viewing references to scripture that may not be intended by Hebrews or that are imperceptible to the reader. On some occasions, relevance is reached by appealing, not to an intertext, but to the audience's Christian experience (for example, in 6:4–6). In other instances, the text may need more processing to achieve the intended cognitive effects and, on these occasions, Hebrews may be drawing on an intertext. The relationship between cognitive effects and processing effort, therefore, guards us to some extent from the risk of intertextual "parallelomania."[149] This is not achieved by constructing a set of criteria, but by seeking to understand how the audience "might

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[146] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 78–80.
[147] Pattemore, *People of God*, 60.
[148] Steve Moyise, *Paul and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 123.
[149] See Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1962): 1–13.

optimize the relevance of the text itself,"[150] assuming that the OT and other texts compose part of their mutual cognitive environment and that Hebrews communicates "with a view to optimizing relevance."[151]

RT as a facilitator for wider interpretive options

Nonetheless, we must concede that the inferential process of communication articulated in RT, whilst limiting the possible number of interpretations, does not necessarily involve coming to one single conclusion about the meaning of the text.[152] Although, in one sense, RT conceptualises the input of an author, its theory of communication also acknowledges that, whilst we tend to understand each other, there are nonetheless instances when we misinterpret, or partially misinterpret, an utterance.[153] Because different readers bring different experiences and expectations to a text, they will differ in how they interpret intertextual references. Therefore, a given reader may be familiar with the intertext, unaware of the intertext all together, or think of an unrelated text and draw conclusions from it.[154] This hinges upon the cognitive environment of the audience, with the consequence that texts not envisaged by Hebrews may be brought together by the reader.[155] This is particularly relevant for contemporary readers of scripture, for whom later theological interpretations or traditions of reading and understanding scripture form part of their cognitive environment.[156] RT accounts for the reality that the culture we live in will influence our understanding of a specific text.[157]

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[150] Pattemore, *People of God*, 41.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Pattemore cautions that "we should note that RT does not guarantee the recovery of the author's intended meaning" (ibid., 28). See also Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance,* 8.
[153] Clark, *Relevance Theory*, 28; Sim, *Relevant*, 2.
[154] Perry, "Relevance Theory," 220. See also Maria Jodlowiec, "Relevance Theory and Degrees of Understanding," in *Relevance Round Table I*, ed. Ewa Mioduszewska and Agnieszka Piskorska (Warsaw: Warsaw University Press, 2008), 23–42.
[155] Perry, "Relevance Theory," 221.
[156] Gene L. Green, "Relevance Theory and Theological Interpretation: Thoughts on Metarepresentation," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 4 (2010): 89.
[157] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 238.

To conclude, RT simultaneously limits and liberates the intertextual possibilities arising from a text.[158] Whereas RT limits the number of potential interpretations arising from a text, thus limiting subjectivity in interpretation, it makes no naïve assumption that Hebrews' intentions can be accessed perfectly. Instead, RT provides a theory which gives us an understanding of why humans come to interpretations not intended by Hebrews or identify references to scripture that Hebrews had not intended.

Metarepresentation

Much discussion regarding the use of the OT in the NT centres around the definition of terms like citation, allusion and echo. Various factors make agreed definitions difficult. Although it is common to define citations in terms of the number of words shared with an alleged intertext,[159] it is theoretically possible to cite one word.[160] As a further factor, this definition of citation does not take into account how our understanding of citations as corresponding exactly to the precursor text is a relatively modern one.[161] Some definitions of allusions also encompass in their scope the notion of citation,[162] and, as Ellis acknowledges, "The gradation from quotation to allusion is so imperceptible that it is almost impossible to draw any certain line."[163] As for the common distinction between an allusion and echo in terms of the author's

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[158] Perry, "Relevance Theory," 221.

[159] For examples of this, see Christopher Beetham, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians,* BIS 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 16–17; Stanley E. Porter, "Further Comments on the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," in *The Intertextuality of the Epistles: Explorations of Theory and Practice*, ed. Thomas L. Brodie, Dennis R. MacDonald, and Stanley E. Porter (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006), 107–08.

[160] Brian J. Abasciano, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.1–9: An Intertextual and Theological Exegesis*, LNTS 301 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 16.

[161] Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature,* SNTSMS 74 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 346–48; Sim, *Relevant*, 3, 30.

[162] Abasciano, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 16.

[163] E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), 11.

intentionality,[164] this is problematic since we cannot access the author's intentions.[165] Even when such terms are defined carefully, there remains the risk of them being used inconsistently. For instance, Hays initially defines more obvious scriptural references as allusions and more subtle references as echoes.[166] Yet, when he describes Paul's interaction with Leviticus and Deuteronomy in Romans 9–10 as an "echo…so loud that only the dullest or most ignorant reader could miss it,"[167] Hays' use of "echo" here appears synonymous with his definition of allusion.

Whatever these difficulties over definitions, from an RT perspective, it is irrelevant whether to label that which an author wishes to communicate a quotation, allusion or echo: what matters is that the author desires to communicate something relevant to an audience.[168] RT begins with utterances which are re-presentations, for an audience, of a speaker or writer's thought.[169] Where OT-in-the-NT theorists talk of a citation, allusion or echo of OT texts, RT speaks of a metarepresentation (or a re-presentation of a [prior] re-presentation).[170] A metarepresentation resembles a prior re-presentation "to the extent that they share logical and contextual implications [implicatures]. The more implications they have in common, the more they resemble each other."[171] Such metarepresentations can achieve relevance in two ways. First, they inform the audience of what the OT text says. Second, they inform the audience that Hebrews has

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[164] Sylvia C. Keesmaat, *Paul and His Story: (Re)Interpreting the Exodus Tradition* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 49; Alec J. Lucas, "Assessing Stanley E. Porter's Objections to Richard B. Hays's Notion of Metalepsis," *CBQ* 76 (2014): 110; Abasciano, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 17; Michael B. Thompson, *Clothed with Christ: The Example and Teaching of Jesus in Romans 12.1–15.13* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 30; Hollander, *Figure*, 64.
[165] This is acknowledged by Richard B. Hays, "'Who Has Believed Our Message?' Paul's Reading of Isaiah," in *New Testament Writers and the Old Testament: An Introduction*, ed. John M. Court (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 48.
[166] Hays, *Echoes*, 29.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Pattemore, *People of God*, 41.
[169] Margaret G. Sim, "Is Relevance Theory Relevant for Biblical Studies?" in *New Testament Philology: Essays in Honor of David Alan Black*, ed. Melton Bennett Wilstead (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2018), 128.
[170] Deirdre Wilson, "Metarepresentation in Linguistic Communication," *UCLWPL* 11 (1999): 127.
[171] Ibid., 142.

in mind what the OT text says and that Hebrews' interpretation of the OT text is relevant.[172]

A metarepresentation bearing a close resemblance to a source (a citation), introduced by the formula λέγω in Hebrews, is something that requires minimal processing for an audience to identify it. Close resemblance, however, does not necessarily entail literal resemblance: Hebrews may change the metarepresentation to communicate something different from the original in line with its communicative intent, as was common in the ancient world.[173] The change can contribute to cognitive effects and so to the relevance of that utterance.[174]

A metarepresentation with a looser resemblance to any source (what OT-in-the-NT theorists term an allusion or echo), and lacking any introductory formula, requires more processing effort but may still be identifiable, for the audience, as an implicature that arises from the discourse. Linguistic resemblance to an OT text may lead the audience to infer that they are to draw further implicatures from the utterance. However, Hebrews may unconsciously metarepresent an OT text that the audience may identify and draw implicatures from that were not foreseen by Hebrews.

Alternatively, Hebrews may choose to metarepresent an OT character or event without employing a precise OT text and the implicatures that arise from this metarepresentation depend on the audience's encyclopaedic memory of that person or event. Well-informed audience members may call to mind the entire OT narrative of the person or event in view, whereas less-informed members may simply draw implicatures from what Hebrews explicitly communicates about the OT person or event.

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[172] Nelson R. Morales, *Poor and Rich in James: A Relevance Theory Approach to James's Use of the Old Testament*, BBRS 20 (Pennsylvania: Eisenbrauns, 2018), 61.
[173] Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 346–48. This is especially significant if, as Juliana Casey assumes, Hebrews cites from a text, suggesting that any changes were done with a rhetorical purpose in mind (*Hebrews* [Delaware: Glazier, 1980], 20).
[174] Morales, *Poor and Rich*, 60.

A benefit of the language of metarepresentation is that it implicitly acknowledges, as most OT-in-the-NT theorists also do,[175] that there is not a hierarchy of importance between a citation, allusion or echo but avoids the difficulty of defining terms and employing them consistently. What is important, from the audience's standpoint, is that Hebrews is communicating with a view to optimal relevance regardless of how they would define Hebrews' use of an OT text, person or event.

RT and the audience's identity

Not only does RT help address problems regarding the use of the OT in the NT: it also aids in the characterisation of the audience. As RT theorists Sperber and Wilson express it, "changes in the individual's beliefs" are one potential cognitive effect of any utterance.[176] Through discourse, Hebrews intends to influence the audience's beliefs about their circumstances and, as a consequence, change how they conduct themselves in the present. Additionally, for the linguists R.B. Le Page and Andrée Tabouret-Keller, every speech act is an "act of identity." Therefore, the words Hebrews uses in communicating with the audience also construct a specific worldview and "invite others to share it."[177] Accordingly, I will argue that Hebrews' invocation of the wilderness motif generally, and specific texts particularly, is intended to change how the audience understands their situation and, consequently, modify their identity in specific ways.[178] By taking into account the rhetorical effect of Hebrews' use of the OT on its readers, this approach also forestalls Stanley's criticism that studies on the use of the OT in the NT tend to ignore the rhetorical effect of the OT text on the audience.[179]

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[175] For instance, Moyise, "Old Testament in the New," 17.
[176] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 265.
[177] R.B. Le Page and Andrée Tabouret-Keller, *Acts of Identity: Creole-Based Approaches to Language and Ethnicity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 247. This is not dissimilar to Johnson's contention that Hebrews creates a world for its readers through its use of scripture ("Scriptural World," 237–50).
[178] These observations are from Benjamin J. Lappenga, *Paul's Language of Ζῆλος: Monosemy and the Rhetoric of Identity of Practice*, BIS 137 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 64–66.
[179] Christopher D. Stanley, "The Rhetoric of Quotations: An Essay on Method," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSNTSup 148 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 44–58.

Conclusion

Our survey of RT demonstrates, first, that it has a close relationship to intertextuality, and, second, that it supplements intertextuality by providing a control on the intertextual possibilities that could be inferred by a hearer, by avoiding terminological difficulties typically associated with OT-in-the-NT studies and by incorporating the rhetorical effect a text has on its hearer. Nevertheless, as with any theory, we must acknowledge the limits of this investigative approach. In order to employ RT, we must possess as much information as we can about the original readers' cognitive environment. Therefore, as Pattemore notes, the most serious limitation is that we do not have a comprehensive knowledge of the cognitive environment of the audience. Yet, such a limitation is not distinctive to RT.[180] Indeed, the ambiguity surrounding Hebrews' background would affect interpretation, regardless of the methodology employed. The RT notion of mutual cognitive environments does have the benefit of limiting the potential contexts within which interpretation takes place, even if the interpreter cannot access every specific detail regarding the original readers' milieu.[181]

Procedure

This chapter has attempted to establish ways in which RT might contribute to the understanding of intertexts in biblical texts more generally, and Hebrews in particular. Nevertheless, it is not a method to be used in isolation but must be employed alongside other methods like textual-criticism,[182] historical-critical analysis and rhetorical criticism.[183] As a result, RT will supplement the procedure of this study, but, in providing a comprehensive analysis of the use of wilderness traditions in Hebrews, wider issues relating to how the NT uses the OT must be taken into account. This study will undertake the following procedures:

(1) *Identification of alternative cognitive environments.* In line with the acknowledgement that the audience's cognitive environment is not limited to their knowledge of the OT, but also consists of personal experience and the

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[180] Pattemore, *People of God*, 215.
[181] Pattemore, "Relevance," 44.
[182] I presume that the NA[28] text is the same text available to Hebrews' audience. Where doubts arise about the authenticity of the text which would affect interpretation, text-critical analysis will be employed to ascertain what was most likely said.
[183] Pattemore, "Relevance," 46.

wider milieu that they live in, I will identify alternative cognitive environments that may be evoked by the imagery.

(2) *Identification of possible OT metarepresentations evoked.* I will also identify possible OT metarepresentations evoked in the text. In the case of explicit metarepresentations, this is more easily done; however, on occasions, the source of the metarepresentation is difficult to ascertain (as, for instance, in Heb 1:6). Since metarepresentations in Hebrews generally follow the LXX against the Masoretic Text where the two diverge,[184] I will compare OT metarepresentations against the LXX.[185] Caution must be taken, nonetheless, as it is unclear what form of the Greek OT text would have been accessible to Hebrews.[186] Hebrews may use a different Greek text to the one we possess, but it is equally possible that Hebrews adapts its metarepresentations to signal something of relevance to the audience.

(3) *Evaluation of the accessibility of cognitive environments.* I will weigh up how accessible the various cognitive environments are, and which ones yield the most cognitive effects for the least amount of processing effort.[187]

(4) *Interpretation of the OT metarepresentation within the prioritised context.* I will come to a conclusion regarding the interpretation of the OT metarepresentation within Hebrews. This will be achieved by identifying the explicatures of the text through decoding, disambiguation, reference assignment and enrichment, and noting the most relevant implicatures which arise from Hebrews' use of the OT metarepresentation. Again, decisions about likely implicatures are dictated by which of them yield the best cognitive effects for the minimum processing effort.[188]

With these methodological procedures in place, we turn to the text of Hebrews.

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[184] *Contra* Howard, "Old Testament Quotations," 215.
[185] In accordance with this assumption, I will use the LXX numeration, even where it differs from the MT.
[186] Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 42.
[187] Pattemore, *People of God*, 49–50.
[188] Ibid., 50.

Chapter 3: Heb 1–2

Introduction

The following chapters will explore Hebrews' use of OT wilderness texts prior to Heb 12 to discern what already comprises the audience's cognitive environment as they hear Heb 12 being read. Johnson remarks, in a similar vein: "If our question is how Hebrews imagines a certain kind of world, then we must allow our imaginations to be engaged, not by this or that part of the text, but by the composition as a whole."[189] Since the audience's cognitive environment is constructed progressively, as Hebrews unfolds, I will discuss the text of Hebrews in a linear fashion from start to finish to understand how Hebrews modifies the audience's cognitive environment so that they see themselves in a position similar to Israel in the wilderness.

Heb 1:5–14

In 1:1–4, Hebrews introduces the significance of the Son through whom God speaks in these last days[190] and who has provided purification for sins – possibly metarepresenting language associated with the Day of Atonement (Exod 30:10LXX)[191] – before listing a catena of multiple scriptural metarepresentations that contrast Jesus with angels: he, not angels, is addressed by God as Son (1:5); he is the object of angels' worship and, therefore, superior to them (1:6); angels are winds and flames of fire, transient and impermanent beings, but the Son will reign forever (1:7–12); the Son sits at the right hand of God, whereas the angels are servants (1:13–14).

The catena in 1:5–14 anticipates the conclusion of the book in 12:18–29: the destination of the audience's (wilderness) journey. Jipp notes four connections between the passages. First, both contrast the eternal reign of Jesus with the transience of creation. Heb 1:10–12 underscores that, whilst Jesus rules forever on the throne, and his kingdom will have no end, creation will perish and will be rolled up like a

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[189] Johnson, "Scriptural World," 238.

[190] Steyn suggests that ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν (1:2) is reminiscent of Deut 31:29 (*Quest*, 70). However, this phrase is common (Josh 24:27; Jer 23:20LXX; Ezek 38:16; Dan 2:28; Hos 3:5; Mic 4:1; 4Q174; 2 Pt 3:3), making it unlikely the audience would discern an explicit metarepresentation of Deut 31:29.

[191] R.B. Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering in* Hebrews, SNTSMS 172 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 41.

garment. Likewise, in 12:18–29, Hebrews asserts that God will shake the created realm and the heavenly realm with the result that creation will be destroyed. Second, the description of the audience as having approached Mt Zion is also mirrored in the catena, which, as will be noted below, describes Jesus' role as the Davidic king seated on the throne in Zion. Third, in Heb 1:5–14, the angels celebrate and worship the Son, so also, in 12:22, the angels join in a festal celebration in the presence of Jesus. Fourth, those in Zion are described as the assembly of the firstborn, linking them with Jesus, the firstborn Son.[192] Hebrews, therefore, begins by bringing the audience's attention to Zion by describing the Son's entrance into Zion (1:5–14) and ends with the audience arriving at their destination: Mt Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22–24).

Heb 1:6, in particular, stands out in the catena for four reasons. First, it is the only metarepresentation that is preceded by an explanatory statement.[193] Second, nowhere else in Hebrews do the words ὅταν and εἰσάγω occur together. Third, only here in the entire epistle is πρωτότοκος used as a designation for Christ, rather than the more common υἱός.[194] Fourth, this is the only instance in Hebrews where Jesus is described as one who is worshipped.[195] These considerations set Heb 1:6 apart from the other verses in the catena as invoking cognitive effects for the audience: it supplies new information, and the uniqueness of the imagery requires more processing effort on their behalf since nothing prior in the discourse can be accessed to aid them in their understanding of this verse.

Explicatures in v.6

In v.6, God brings Jesus, the firstborn, into the οἰκουμένη where angels worship him, but it is unclear whether the οἰκουμένη is earthly or heavenly, and determining its location will influence which implicatures the audience can draw from this utterance. Attridge asserts that, since οἰκουμένη typically refers to an inhabited land in the LXX,

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[192] Joshua W. Jipp, "The Son's Entrance into the Heavenly World: The Soteriological Necessity of the Scriptural Catena in Hebrews 1.5–14," *NTS* 56 (2010): 566–68.
[193] David M. Allen, "Who, What, and Why? The Worship of the Firstborn in Hebrews 1:6: Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado," in *Mark, Manuscripts, and Monotheism*, ed. Chris Keith and Dieter T. Roth, LNTS 528 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 167.
[194] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 117.
[195] Allen, "Worship," 167.

as opposed to the wilderness, it must refer to earth, leading to the inference that Jesus enters the οἰκουμένη at his incarnation.[196] Stolz draws a differing conclusion from the LXX's usage of οἰκουμένη, considering Jesus' Parousia to be in view.[197] To this, Stolz adds that the construction ὅταν with the aorist is often future-referring, "firstborn" implies inheritance (in this case, of the inhabited world) and that, since Jesus' enemies are not yet trampled under his feet (1:13; 2:8), the angelic worship occurs at the Parousia, in a manner akin to Phil 2:6–11.

However, seven observations suggest the audience would infer a heavenly location that Jesus enters at his exaltation:

(1) Hebrews usually refers to earth with κόσμος (4:3; 9:26; 10:5; 11:7, 38),[198] so if Hebrews wanted to make manifest that the incarnation or Parousia was in view, it could have used κόσμος.

(2) The "coming world" in 2:5 may imply a Parousia event, but 1:6 lacks the modifier "coming" suggesting that Jesus' entry into the οἰκουμένη is not a future event, but occurred at his exaltation.

(3) Οἰκουμένη is also used of the unshakeable realm, in contrast to the shakeable (Ps 92:1–2LXX), which in Hebrews has a heavenly referent (12:26–28).

(4) As Stolz concedes, ὅταν plus the aorist subjunctive is not always future-referring: 1 Tim 5:11 is ambiguous, while neither Rev 9:5 nor 1 Cor 15:27 have future events in view.[199] More significantly, in 1:3–4, the aorist ἐκάθισεν refers to Jesus' enthronement at his exaltation, enabling the audience to infer that the aorist intimates a past action – a reference to his exaltation – in 1:6.

(5) "Firstborn" implies that Jesus is the first to obtain this inheritance and will be followed into it by his siblings, the implication being that Jesus enters the

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[196] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 56. Other scholars who contend for an incarnation reference here include: Victor (Sung-Yul) Rhee, "Christology in Hebrews 1:5–14: The Three Stages of Christ's Existence," *JETS* 59 (2016): 717–29; C. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux: II, Commentaire* (Paris: Gabalda, 1953), 17; James Moffatt, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, ICC 40 (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1924), 10–11.

[197] Lukas Stolz, "Das einführen des erstegeboren in die οἰκουμένη (Hebr 1,6a)," *Bib* 95 (2014): 405–23. Also Otto Michel, *Der Brief an Die Hebräer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), 113; Käsemann, *Wandering People*, 101.

[198] Koester, *Hebrews*, 193.

[199] Stolz, "Einführen," 414n47.

inheritance prior to believers. Likewise, early Christians use "firstborn" about Jesus' resurrection (Col 1:18; Rev 1:5); if Hebrews follows that stream of thought, then a reference to the exaltation may be inferred.[200]

(6) The renewal of the cosmos is understood to be entirely future here (1:10–12), suggesting Jesus' entry is a past event.

(7) The OT metarepresentations are spoken at the point of Jesus' enthronement (2 Sam 7; Ps 110; Ps 45), Heb 1:5 especially implies that Jesus was named "Son" at his exaltation.[201]

Cumulatively, the evidence points to an exaltation reading.[202]

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

The designation "firstborn" evokes multiple possible cognitive environments against which the audience could process the material in their identification of implicatures. Scholars have offered three potential cognitive environments: Adam, the Davidic Messiah and Israel.

Adam

Marcus suggests that the designation of Jesus as "firstborn" implies an Adamic Christology, proposing that traditions informing the account of the angelic worship of

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[200] The position that πάλιν modifies εἰσάγω in 1:6, put forth by Herbert Braun (*An die Hebräer*, HNT 14 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1984], 36), can also be discounted since πάλιν in 1:5 is the most relevant context for understanding its function in 1:6, indicating it links scriptural metarepresentations. Πάλιν also links metarepresentations in 2:13, 4:5 and 10:30.

[201] Jean Massonnet observes that a Parousia interpretation does not fit the context (*L'Épître aux Hébreux* [Paris: Cerf, 2016], 69).

[202] Most scholars favour this position: G.W. Buchanan, *To the Hebrews*, AB 36 (New York: Doubleday, 1972), 17; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 58; Erich Grässer, *An Die Hebräer – 1. Teilband, Hebr 1–6* (Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1990), 78–79; William Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, WBC 47A–B (Dallas: Word, 1991), 27–28; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 162–64; Victor Pfitzner, *Hebrews* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 54; Wilfried Eisele, *Ein unerschütterliches Reich: Die mittleplatonische Umformung des Parusiegedankens im Hebräerbrief,* BZNW 116 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 49–65; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 117–18; Koester, *Hebrews*, 192–93; Angela Rascher, *Schriftauslegung und Christologie im Hebräerbrief,* BZNW 153 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 91; James W. Thompson, *Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 54; Gareth Lee Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 104; Hans Windisch, *Der Hebräerbrief* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1913), 17.

Adam in The Life of Adam and Eve (LAE) may explain Hebrews' logic here.[203] In LAE 13, Adam is brought into the realm where God and the angels dwell. God then commands the angels to worship Adam because he is the image of God. This corresponds with Heb 1:6, where the Son, who is the full expression of God's glory, or image (Heb 1:3), is also brought into the heavenly realm where God commands the angels to worship him. Indeed, Marcus goes as far to propose that the divine command that the angels worship God's firstborn is "an allusion that is difficult to understand without a tradition such as that found in *L.A.E.* 13 informing it."[204]

Given Hebrews' emphasis on the angels' status in relation to humanity, and the metarepresentation of Ps 8 in Heb 2:6–8, the tradition reflected in LAE may comprise part of mutual cognitive environment of Hebrews and the audience. However, Hebrews contains no explicit reference to Adam, nor does it note the devil's response to the worship of the Son.[205] Furthermore, given the catena's emphasis thus far on the Davidic sonship of Jesus (1:5), it is likely that the reference to "firstborn" would call to the audience's mind the Davidic Messiah before it would evoke a reference to Adam.[206]

Messiah

More promisingly, "firstborn" could evoke the implicature that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah, with several commentators suggesting that the term metarepresents Ps 88:28LXX.[207] This is likely to be a strong implicature since it continues the emphasis on kingship and reign in 1:5.[208] Such a referent may lead the audience to conclude that

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[203] Joel Marcus, "Son of Man as Son of Adam, Part 1," *RB* 110 (2003): 38–61; David M. Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, NovTSup 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 134.
[204] Marcus, "Son of Man," 54.
[205] Moffitt notes that Hebrews and LAE differ on these points (*Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 134).
[206] Marie E. Isaacs questions whether Hebrews would have had access to LAE (*Sacred Space: An Approach to the Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, JSNTSup 73 [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992], 168). However, Marcus argues that a common tradition may inform both Hebrews and LAE, not that Hebrews was dependent on LAE.
[207] Brian Small, *The Characterization of Jesus in the Book of Hebrews*, BIS 128 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 181; Koester, *Hebrews*, 192; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 26.
[208] Small, *Characterization*, 182.

this οἰκουμένη is in Zion. The OT texts in the catena, which are concerned with the Davidic king enthroned in Zion, reinforce this. The anointed in Ps 2:6 (1:5) declares that God has established them as king on Zion. 2 Sam 7, whilst not explicitly mentioning Zion, identifies the city of David as the place to which the ark of YHWH is brought.[209] Furthermore, Heb 12:23, in recursive reading, reinforces this implicature since it locates the angels in Zion.

Israel

Nevertheless, a further implicature may be inferred given the combination of the term "firstborn" with the language of "bringing" and οἰκουμένη, yielding the cognitive effect that Jesus is the true Israel. Before "firstborn" came to be applied to the Messiah, it is most commonly attributed to the people of Israel in the OT (Exod 4:22; Jer 38:9LXX). Additionally, in the LXX, the verb "to bring" (εἰσάγω) frequently refers to God's leading Israel into Canaan (Exod 3:8; 6:8; 23:20; 33:3).[210] Andriessen notes that both Hebrews and Deuteronomy share the phrase ὅταν εἰσαγάγῃ. These parallels are suggestive since this phrase only occurs here in Hebrews and in Deuteronomy. Furthermore, Exodus 16:35 uses the phrase γῆν οἰκουμένην of Canaan in the context of Israel's wilderness journey.[211]

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[209] Kibbe, *Godly Fear*, 141–42. Interestingly, Salem, where Melchizedek is from, is associated with Zion in Ps 76:3MT, whilst Josephus, *A.J.* 1.180 and 1QapGen 22.13 connect Melchizedek and Salem with Jerusalem.

[210] Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 48.

[211] P.C.B. Andriessen, "La Teneur Judéo-Chrétienne de He I 6 et II 14b–III 2," *NovT* 18 (1976): 300; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 27; Philip A.F. Church, *Hebrews and the Temple: Attitudes to the Temple in Second Temple Judaism and in Hebrews*, NovTSup 171 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 294. Albert Vanhoye doubts that οἰκουμένη is a reference to Canaan since it is used as a substantive here, whilst, in Exodus, it is an adjective ("L'οἰκουμένη dans l'épître aux Hébreux," *Bib* 45 [1964]: 250).

Deut 6:10; 11:29	**Heb 1:6**[212]
καὶ ἔσται ὅταν εἰσαγάγῃ σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου εἰς τὴν γῆν	ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ τὸν πρωτότοκον εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην

If this background is deduced from Hebrews' language, then, as Ellingworth suggests, the implicature is, "In the past, God brought his own people out of the desert into the inhabited land of Canaan. Now he has brought Christ out of death into the glory of the heavenly assembly."[213] For Allen, this allusion is indicative of a Deuteronomic background to the imagery and, although Deuteronomy lacks the term "firstborn," he suggests that the use of "son" throughout Deuteronomy parallels Hebrews' use of "firstborn."[214] However, the terms "firstborn" and "inhabited world" also occur in the book of Exodus, suggesting that the terminology encapsulates, not merely the Deuteronomic narrative, but the entire Pentateuchal wilderness story, since Hebrews reads the Pentateuch synchronically, not with separate books, chapters and verses in mind.

OT metarepresentation: evaluation & interpretation

This implicature may be reinforced by the metarepresentation that follows the introductory gloss; however, the precise identity of this metarepresentation is unclear.

Ps 96:7LXX

Moyter proposes that the audience would infer a reference to Ps 96:7LXX.[215] Ps 96:7LXX coheres with the metarepresentation of Ps 2 in the previous verse: both psalms are addressed to David, frequently use the term γῆ and describe the establishment of David's kingdom. If so, in this verse, "[t]he author is…moving within the orbit of the Psalms' Davidic and Zion theology, and finding within it tokens

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[212] In the tables that follow, exact parallels will be underlined, cognates will be italicised, and additions to the metarepresentation will be in bold. The exceptions to this are the metarepresentations of Ps 94:7–11LXX in 3:7–4:11, Jer 38:31–34LXX in 8:8–12 and Prov 3:11 in 12:5–6, which diverge minimally from the source text, yet have differences that come with cognitive effects. In these instances, the differences that come with significant cognitive effects will be highlighted in the table.

[213] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 118.

[214] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 57.

[215] Steve Motyer, "The Psalm Quotations of Hebrews 1: A Hermeneutic-Free Zone?" *TynBul* 50 (1999): 16. As does Rascher, *Schriftauslegung*, 90–91.

of a staggering association of kingdoms which *makes no historical sense* until the greater David comes who truly is 'the heir of all things'."[216]

Ps 96:7LXX	**Heb 1:6**
προσκυνήσατε <u>αὐτῷ πάντες</u> οἱ <u>ἄγγελοι</u> αὐτοῦ	**καὶ** *προσκυνησάτωσαν* <u>αὐτῷ πάντες</u> <u>ἄγγελοι</u> θεοῦ

From Hebrews' standpoint, however, this is an unlikely source for the metarepresentation. The required adaptations to Ps 96:7LXX – the addition of καί;[217] the change from προσκυνήσατε to προσκυνησάτωσαν; the omission of οἱ – do not appear to be driven by an identifiable rhetorical or theological motive, and such changes are unlikely to elicit significant cognitive effects for the audience in their search for relevance.

Deut 32:43

These problems lead many scholars to favour, as the primary source, Deut 32:43.[218] Yet, this option is not unproblematic since Deut 32:43 has υἱοὶ θεοῦ, not ἄγγελοι θεοῦ.[219] The discovery of 4QDeut^{q}, however, may provide a solution. In 4QDeut^{q} 32:43b, the text calls כל אלהים to worship him. The term אלהים is typically translated in the LXX as ἄγγελοι θεοῦ, not υἱοὶ θεοῦ. Cockerill concludes that the original reading of Deut 32:43b is more likely ἄγγελοι θεοῦ than υἱοὶ θεοῦ. Cockerill overstates his case, but LXX manuscripts do witness to two traditions: one that reads υἱοὶ θεοῦ,

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[216] Motyer, "Psalm Quotations," 19 (italics in original).

[217] Lukas Stolz suggests καί functions as an adverb (*Der Höhepunkt des Hebräerbriefs: Hebräer 12,18–29 und seine Bedeutung für die Struktur und die Theologie des Hebräerbriefs,* WUNT 2/463 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018], 136). However, as we will see, Hebrews' language is much closer to Deuteronomy.

[218] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 51; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 15–17; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 118–19; Gareth Lee Cockerill, "Hebrews 1:6: Source and Significance," *BBR* 9 (1999): 53.

[219] The solution that Hebrews conflated Deut 32:43LXX with Ps 96:7LXX (Jared Compton, *Psalm 110 and the Logic of Hebrews,* LNTS 537 [London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015], 36) is unlikely since it requires more processing effort from the audience with negligible cognitive effects in return. As R. Timothy McLay remarks, "Why should we presume the combination of two separate texts when we require only one?" (*The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 110).

and another that reads ἄγγελοι θεοῦ.[220] Odes 2:43b, which is almost identical to the Greek of Heb 1:6, appears to witness to the latter tradition, and Kibbe asserts this to be the source of the metarepresentation.[221] How accessible the Odes would be to the audience is difficult to determine,[222] since it does not appear in written form until the fourth or fifth century C.E., but the LXX manuscripts evidence that the audience may have been aware of a text of Deut 32:43 which contained ἄγγελοι θεοῦ. These observations point to a Deuteronomic source for the metarepresentation.

Deut 32:43	**Odes 2:43b**	**Heb 1:6**
καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες υἱοὶ θεοῦ	καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι θεοῦ	καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ

Is identifying the precise referent of the metarepresentation necessary for optimal relevance to be obtained? Without recognising the exact source, the audience can infer that it is God's word and that Jesus is superior to the angels since they worship him.[223] From the common belief, presumably part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory, that, in prayer, the people of God share in the angelic liturgy, the audience may draw the implicature that they are to worship Jesus, as the angels do, and that Jesus is, therefore, not simply another angel.[224] However, identifying the specific text under discussion through further processing effort may yield more implicatures and cognitive effects. The fact that Hebrews metarepresents the Song of Moses frequently, and that this text held liturgical significance in the temple, give us reason to assume that the Song of Moses comprises part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory.[225]

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[220] See Steyn, *Quest*, 64.
[221] Kibbe, *Godly Fear*, 121. See also Gert J. Steyn, "A Quest for the Vorlage of the 'Song of Moses' (Deut 32) Quotations in Hebrews," *Neot* 34 (2000): 268.
[222] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 51–52; Gheorghita, *Septuagint in Hebrews*, 42.
[223] Steyn posits the implicature that the audience are not to worship angels (*Quest*, 71–72), but Hebrews does not make this manifest to the audience.
[224] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 51.
[225] Steyn, *Quest*, 72; Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 39–43.

A further potential implicature, identified by Cockerill, is that, since Deut 32 describes God's judgement, Jesus will trample his enemies under his feet.[226] More astute audience members may be aware of the wider context of Deut 32, but their accessing of this context is not necessary to obtain relevance and, indeed, Hebrews does not make such assumptions manifest to the audience. Whilst it connects with later topics in the discourse – for instance, God's judgement on the unfaithful (Deut 32:35–36 in Heb 10:30) – the catena is chiefly concerned with the Son's superiority to angels, and part of that superiority involves being the angel's object of worship. The notion of God's judgement in Hebrews does not become part of the audience's cognitive environment until 2:1–4, referring to those who reject the message from the Son. Thus, it is unlikely to be an implicature at this point.

The audience may draw the implicature that Jesus is God since Deut 32:43 exhorts the angels to worship God for he has saved his people.[227] Caution must be taken here, as Allen remarks: "Hebrews does not (explicitly, at least) say why the Son is to be worshipped…[T]he divine call unto angelic worship is not…justified or given a formal basis. Jesus is worshipped *as firstborn Son,* but that is all one can really draw from 1:6."[228] However, if the doxology in 13:21 is directed towards Jesus, as Johnson suggests,[229] the audience may infer, on recursive reading, the implicature that Jesus is to be given the glory that God deserves. Hebrews simply could apply language characteristic of God to Jesus,[230] or could have discerned from Deut 32:43 that "him" in v.43a was worthy of worship but distinct from the God who speaks in Deut 32:39.[231]

If the audience could identify the metarepresentation here, this would only strengthen the implicature that Jesus' journey into the heavenly realm is akin to the exodus and wilderness journey. As Allen acknowledges, the explanatory statement preceding the metarepresentation is a "Deuteronomic gloss to a Deuteronomic quotation, one that

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[226] Cockerill, "Hebrews 1:6," 61–62; Guthrie, "Hebrews," 933.
[227] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 108.
[228] Allen, "Worship," 173 (italics in original).
[229] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 356.
[230] Hughes, *Hebrews*, 60.
[231] Richard Bauckham, "Monotheism and Christology in Hebrews 1," in *Early Christian and Jewish Monotheism*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E.S. North, JSNTSup 263 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 179n28.

appeals to the core Deuteronomic pre-entry posture"[232] – although since "firstborn" and "inhabited world" both come from Exodus, it would be more accurate to explicate the gloss in terms of *both* Exodus and Deuteronomic language. The audience is aware that scripture says the firstborn will enter the Promised Land in Exod 16; therefore, the heavenly realm that Jesus enters is the Promised Land, where angels worship him. Nevertheless, how would the audience, hearing this at the start of Hebrews, make such a connection in a catena which stresses Davidic kingship instead?

The emphasis on wilderness imagery and Davidic kingship do not need to be mutually exclusive. Buchanan notes an illuminating parallel in Isa 62:4. Those in exile are promised: "You will no longer be called 'abandoned,' and your land will not be called 'wilderness'; for you shall be called 'my will,' and your land, 'world' (οἰκουμένη)." In Isa 62, οἰκουμένη is a reference to Zion, where the Jews would return after captivity in a new exodus. At this time, God would place a king on the throne of Zion.[233] Furthermore, Cortez remarks, "[T]he Davidic king is designated God's 'son' and 'firstborn' (2 Sam 7:14; Pss 2:6–7; 89:27) embodying Israel, the covenant people, which is also called 'son' and 'firstborn' (Exod 4:22–23; cf. Jer 3:19; 31:9). In this way God legitimizes the Davidic king as Israel's proxy."[234] Therefore, one may understand Jesus' entry into the inhabited world with reference to both his Davidic kingship in Zion and the Pentateuchal wilderness account. This is made more plausible when one notes that OT texts and traditions held Zion to be the goal of the exodus and conquest, and I will examine how these traditions relate to Hebrews' argument as a whole later. Heb 4:8–10 will reinforce that the Promised Land is Zion, not Canaan. Indeed, if the audience could discern that οἰκουμένη refers to Canaan as well as Zion in the OT, it may eliminate the assumption that Canaan is the goal of the audience's journey.

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[232] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 55. See also Gheorghita, *Septuagint in Hebrews*, 42.
[233] Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 18.
[234] Felix H. Cortez, "'The Anchor of the Soul That Enters within the Veil': The Ascension of the 'Son' in the Letter to the Hebrews," (unpublished PhD diss., Andrews University, 2008), 63–64.

Heb 2:1–4

The catena leads Hebrews to draw a contrast between the messengers who mediated in the wilderness. Because Jesus is superior to the angels who mediated the law at Sinai (Jub. 1:27; Acts 7:38; Gal 3:19),[235] the audience can draw the implicature that, if those in the wilderness who disobeyed the law given at Sinai were punished, the judgement on those who disobey the message given by the superior mediator will be greater. Likewise, the language of signs and wonders that the audience has heard metarepresents the exodus event, where God demonstrated his signs and wonders as he delivered his people (Exod 7:3, 9; 11:9, 10; Deut 4:34; 6:22; 26:8; 34:11; Neh 9:11; Ps 134:9). The audience, thus, can deduce the implicature that the signs and wonders they have experienced are analogous to the experience of the wilderness generation.[236]

Heb 2:5

Jesus' entry into the οἰκουμένη anticipates the audience's entry into τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν (2:5), but the precise relationship between the "inhabited world" that Jesus enters and the "coming world" of 2:5 is unclear. Attridge argues that they are not equivalent, the former referring to the earthly world, and the latter referring to the heavenly realm.[237] Moffitt, in response, infers that the shared themes between 2:1–4 and 1:5–14 (angels and salvation), the occurrence of μέλλω in both 1:14 and 2:5, and the implied inferiority of the angels in 2:5 and 1:5–14, suggest that "the οἰκουμένη of 1:6 and 2:5 are one and the same."[238] Therefore, the audience's understanding of οἰκουμένη in 2:5 would be informed by its use in 1:6. However, Moffitt's observation that the salvation to come links with the world to come suggests that τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν is a future occurrence: God's people have not yet inherited their salvation. Therefore, whilst the οἰκουμένη in 2:5 is related to that in 1:6, the addition of the qualifying participle μέλλουσαν draws a subtle distinction between the two, yielding the cognitive effect of new knowledge for the audience. The context supports

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[235] Allen suggests that Hebrews metarepresents Deut 33:2 here (*Deuteronomy and Exhortation,* 105–06), but Deut 33:2 does not explicitly describe the angels as mediating the law at Sinai.
[236] Ibid., 121.
[237] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 56.
[238] David M. Moffitt, "Unveiling Jesus' Flesh: A Fresh Assessment of the Relationship Between the Veil and Jesus' Flesh in Hebrews 10:20," *PRSt* 37 (2010): 74–75.

this. Heb 2:5–9 outlines that humans do not presently have dominion over the world. Jesus currently inhabits the οἰκουμένη, but God's people do not. From a human perspective, this οἰκουμένη is still to come.[239] Already then there is an implicit distinction between the Son and the sons – the former presently possesses his inheritance, but the latter are still awaiting it. If the audience understood that οἰκουμένη refers to the inhabited world, in contrast to the wilderness, they could draw the further implicature that they are in the wilderness as they wait for τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν.

Heb 2:10–18

In 2:10–18, Hebrews develops how Jesus recaptures the glory originally intended for man as outlined in Ps 8:5–7 (2:5–9). Jesus was perfected through sufferings so that God's sons may be led to glory. He does this by acting in solidarity with them, taking on blood and flesh, and suffering to release them from the fear of death and the devil. This contributes towards a key aim of Hebrews' discourse: for Jesus to act as a faithful and merciful high priest, his full humanity was essential.

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Various backgrounds have been proposed for the imagery employed here. I will go on to argue that an exodus motif best explains the imagery of this passage. First, however, by evaluating two other potential cognitive environments (the Hellenistic divine hero and YHWH as divine warrior) with respect to the RT notions of cognitive effects and processing effort, I will show how these alternative backgrounds may be discounted.[240]

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[239] John P. Meier, "Symmetry and Theology in the Old Testament Citations of Heb 1,5–14," *Bib* 66 (1985): 507.

[240] The above survey only deals with the most prominent interpretations of 2:10–18. James Swetnam sees a reference to the Aqedah here (*Jesus and Isaac: A Study of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Light of the Aqedah* [Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981], 176–77). However, Swetnam overestimates the relevance of Isaac in Hebrews, who only appears in Heb 11. Alternatively, Bryan Whitfield suggests that Hebrews draws on Joshua traditions and that Joshua the high priest in Zech 3 is relevant for understanding this passage's sacrificial imagery (*Joshua Traditions and the Argument of Hebrews 3 and 4*, BZNW 194 [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013], 287–302). Yet, Hebrews' high-priestly Christology is not derived from Zechariah but from Ps 110 and the sacrificial imagery of 2:14–15 is not explicitly connected to Jesus' high priesthood.

Hercules the Hellenistic Divine Hero

Many scholars infer the implicature from 2:10, 14–15 that Jesus is victorious over the devil like the Hellenistic divine hero Hercules.[241] There are some similarities between Hebrews' depiction of Jesus and Hellenistic descriptions of Hercules. The term ἀρχηγός, applied to Jesus in 2:10, is used of Hercules on inscriptions and coins[242] as well as by Graeco-Roman writers.[243] Hercules was perfected and elevated to divine status in a similar manner to Jesus (2:10). Furthermore, Jesus' defeat of the devil and his liberation of those enslaved to the fear of death (2:14–15) mirrors Hercules' battle with Death and his defeat of the Lord of Demons to deliver the deceased Alcestis (Euripides, *Alc.* 1136–42; Apollodorus 1.9.15; cf. *Il.* 5.394–400). As Jesus leads God's people into glory, so Hercules also leads captives out of death and into glory.[244] Whitlark notes further connections between Jesus and Hercules in succeeding sections of Hebrews: both are trained in virtue (Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.21–34; cf. Heb 5:8) and endure reviling (Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 8.36; 9.8; 47.4; 66.23; cf. Heb 12:3).[245]

Nevertheless, whilst divine hero traditions may have comprised part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory,[246] several crucial differences distinguish Hebrews' Jesus

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[241] W.L. Knox, "The 'Divine Hero' Christology in the New Testament," *HTR* 41 (1948): 234–47; Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, "The Hero in the Epistle to the Hebrews: Jesus as an Ascetic Model," in *Early Christian Voices in Texts, Traditions, and Symbols: Essays in Honor of François Bovon*, ed. David Warren, Ann Graham Brock, and David W. Pao, BIS 66 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 185; David Aune, "Heracles and Christ: Heracles Imagery in the Christology of Early Christianity," in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, ed. David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 3–19; Hugh Montefiore, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (London: A&C Black, 1964), 61; Knut Backhaus, *Der Hebräerbrief* (Regensburg: Pustet, 2009), 123.

[242] George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews," in *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation*, ed. Clinton Arnold (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 19.

[243] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 88n104; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 56–57. Cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 33.47; Heraclitus, *All.* 34.8.

[244] Whitlark, *Resisting Empire*, 147.

[245] Ibid., 147–50.

[246] Whilst Euripides, *Alc.* is dated to the fifth century B.C.E., the account of Hercules in Apollodorus was written in the first century C.E. (Kevin B. McCruden, *Solidarity Perfected: Beneficient Christology in the Epistle to the Hebrews* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008], 52).

from the Hellenistic Hercules. Jesus stands in solidarity with his followers, whereas Hercules does not (2:10–12). Both Jesus and Hercules were perfected, but Jesus' perfection and his training in virtue are linked with his high priestly role. Jesus was already God, while Hercules was deified because of his accomplishments.[247] Indeed, nowhere does Hebrews suggest that Jesus was accepted into glory based on his achievements, in contrast to Hercules.[248] Finally, the manner of victory is different for both: Christ dies to redeem his people, whereas Hercules does no such thing.[249]

Although Herculean imagery may explain some concepts in Heb 2:10, 14, it does so at the expense of isolating the imagery in these verses from its surrounding context.[250] The discourse immediately preceding v.10 contains a metarepresentation and exposition of Ps 8:5–7LXX, while in vv.12–13, Hebrews metarepresents Ps 21:23LXX and Isa 8:17–18. The frequency of OT metarepresentations in the surrounding context, Hebrews' mention of Jesus' high-priestly role in vv.17–18 and the absence of a sustained divine hero motif throughout the discourse demonstrate that Hebrews does not make a Graeco-Roman cognitive environment manifest to the audience. Therefore, whilst a combination of Graeco-Roman with OT imagery remains possible,[251] the divergences between Hebrews and the accounts of Hercules make it unlikely that the audience would connect Jesus with Hercules here.[252] Indeed, if the audience discerned a Herculean tradition here, this assumption is not developed as the discourse progressed.

YHWH as divine warrior

Lane posits the implicature that Jesus in vv.14–15 is YHWH the divine warrior, who brings victory for his people over their enemies. In particular, Lane discerns the

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[247] Jeremy Miselbrook, "A Portrait of Christ the Hero in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (unpublished PhD diss., Loyola University, 2012), 258–60.
[248] R.J. McKelvey, *Pioneer and Priest: Jesus Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2013), 184.
[249] McCruden, *Solidarity*, 53.
[250] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 138n60.
[251] Josephus, for instance, views Moses as a hero similar to Hercules (*B.J.* 3.399–404).
[252] Whitlark considers the devil to be a reference to the Roman emperor as part of an anti-imperial polemic in Hebrews (*Resisting Empire*, 152–59). However, there is little indication in the context that suggests the audience would process the reference to the devil in this way.

influence of texts like Isa 42:13, which depicts YHWH as a champion who triumphs over his enemies, and apocalyptic texts like T. Zeb. 9:8, where God liberates the prisoners of Beliar.[253] However, it would require significant effort for hearers to process such an implicature when YHWH does not triumph over his enemies through death.

The exodus

A growing number of scholars discern exodus imagery in these verses,[254] but its influence is more significant than has been noticed. Indeed, despite his contention that Hercules shapes Hebrews' characterisation of Jesus, Whitlark concedes that the exodus influences the portrayal of Jesus here and in succeeding chapters of the book.[255] We can identify numerous terms and motifs in this passage that also underlie exodus imagery throughout the OT: ἀρχηγός, leading (ἄγω), sonship (υἱός), glory (δόξα), slavery (δουλεία) and fear (φόβος).

Certain scholars are nonetheless swift to deny the influence of exodus imagery on this part of Hebrews. Attridge, for instance, insists that "the Exodus story clearly is not the dominant plot that controls the imagery and language of the pericope."[256] I will argue to the contrary that, while no specific text in Exodus underlies these verses, the hearers would draw the implicature that the exodus event is the cognitive environment which best explains Hebrews' argument.

Christ the wilderness ἀρχηγός (2:10). Not only have scholars sought a possible background for ἀρχηγός in Herculean traditions (as discussed earlier). Its prominence in the OT has also been noticed. Bell suggests that the background of the term in Heb 2:10 "does not have a direct link to the Old Testament tradition or to Apocalyptic or

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[253] Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 62–63.
[254] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 138n63; Craig R. Koester, "Hebrews, Rhetoric, and the Future of Humanity," in *Reading the Epistle to the Hebrews: A Resource for Students*, ed. Eric F. Mason and Kevin B. McCruden, SBLRBS (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 110; Richard Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology in the New Testament*, WUNT 2/328 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 89; Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 198; Massonnet, *Hébreux*, 89.
[255] Whitlark, *Resisting Empire*, 143.
[256] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 93n161.

Qumran." He notes the use of ἀρχηγός in the LXX, but concludes that "such texts give a very partial tradition historical background to the idea in Hebrews."[257] Yet this overlooks the frequency with which the term is used for the leaders of the wilderness generation. This term is used indirectly of Moses in Num 14:4 when the Israelites request another ἀρχηγός to bring them back to Egypt.[258] As a matter of fact, in the LXX of Numbers, all the occurrences of ἀρχηγός, except for 24:17, designate leaders of the wilderness generation.

The combination of ἀρχηγός with ἄγω ("to lead") and υἱός ("son") in v.10 makes it even more likely that the audience would infer this implicature. God's leading of his people in the OT is frequently associated with the exodus (Exod 3:8, 17; 6:6–7; 7:4–5). De la Potterie observes how the verb ἄγω, along with its compounds ἐξάγω and εἰσάγω, are typically used to refer to the exodus in the Greek NT.[259] Likewise, sonship in the OT is typically connected to Israel as son of God.[260] Indeed, Deut 32, Isa 63 and Jer 38LXX combine the image of God leading his people with the depiction of Israel as God's son.[261]

Finally, the mention of "glory," which the audience are led into – looking back to the heavenly οἰκουμένη that Jesus was led into (1:6)[262] – evokes exodus imagery. Given

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[257] Richard H. Bell, *Deliver Us from Evil: Interpreting the Redemption from the Power of Satan in New Testament Theology*, WUNT 2/216 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 295.
[258] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 138n63.
[259] I. de la Potterie, "Le Chrétien conduit par l'esprit dans son cheminement eschatologique," in *The Law of the Spirit in Rom 7 and 8*, ed. L. De Lorenzi (Rome: St Paul's Abbey, 1976), 221.
[260] Exod 4:22; Deut 14:1; 32:6, 7, 20, 43; Hos 2:2LXX; 11:2; Isa 1:2, 4; 43:5–7; 45:11; Jer 38:9, 20LXX; Sir 36:4; Wis 9:7; 12:6, 21; 14:3; 16:10, 26; 18:4, 13; 19:6; Pss. Sol. 13:9; 17:27; 18:4; Jub. 1.24, 25; Sib. Or. 3.702; T. Mos. 10.3. See Sylvia C. Keesmaat, "Exodus and the Intertextual Transformation of Tradition in Romans 8:14–30," *JSNT* 54 (1994): 38.
[261] De la Potterie, "Le Chrétien conduit," 225–26.
[262] As Ardel Caneday comments, "Christ's exaltation when God leads the Firstborn into the habitable world (1:6) seems purposefully anticipatory of God's leading many sons into glory (2:10), on whose behalf the pioneer of their salvation was made perfect through suffering" ("The Eschatological World Already Subjected to the Son: The Οἰκουμένη of Hebrews 1:6 and the Son's Enthronement," in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in Its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al., LNTS 387 [London: T&T Clark, 2008], 36).

that the heavenly οἰκουμένη in 1:6 refers to the Promised Land (as argued earlier), the glory into which the audience is being brought is also connected with the Promised Land. This is even more prominent when one takes into account the strong connection in Israel's history between the restoration of glory and entry into the Promised Land. Israel is portrayed as having lost their glory (Jer 2:11), but they will regain this glory on the day of God's salvation (Isa 61:3). In 4 Ezra 2:11, glory is linked with Israel's inheritance.[263] Likewise, Bar 5:1–9 describes a new exodus where God leads (εἰσάγει) Israel into glory.[264]

An implicature deduced from this collocation of motifs would be: Jesus, as ἀρχηγός, leads the sons and daughters of God to glory as Moses led the children of God (Exod 4:21) towards the Promised Land.[265] Müller comments, "The credo theme of 'led out of Egypt'… is here transposed into christological-titular usage and denotes the exalted Jesus as the eschatological *leader* of the new people of God on its exodus into the doxa of the resurrection."[266] As the ἀρχηγοί in Numbers do not only represent the entire people, but their entry into the land anticipates the entry of those whom they represent, similarly, in Heb 2:10, the implicature is that Jesus, the wilderness leader who has entered glory, represents and stands in solidarity with the children he will lead into glory. This implicature will be reinforced by the extensive focus on the wilderness generation in 3:7–4:11.

Christ the one who sanctifies his people in the exodus (2:11)? The solidarity between the Son and the sons is underscored in v.11, where Jesus is described as "the sanctifier" and the audience is described as "those who are sanctified." Mitchell suggests the audience would draw the implicature that Jesus sanctifies his people as high priest, in anticipation of 2:17–18.[267] Nevertheless, one must guard against "narrowing the meaning of this verb too much in a sacerdotal direction and…making explicit Christ's

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[263] Sylvia C. Keesmaat, *Paul and His Story: (Re)Interpreting the Exodus Tradition,* JSNTSup 181 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 84–85.
[264] Ibid., 65.
[265] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 138n63.
[266] P.G. Müller, "ἀρχηγόν," in *EDNT* 1:163–64. See also G.W. Grogan, "Christ and His People: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Hebrews 2:5–18," *VE* 6 (1969): 60 and Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 172.
[267] Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 73.

priestly function before the writer does (2:17f)."[268] RT bears this out: if Hebrews has not yet explicitly referenced Christ's high priesthood, the audience may not draw such an inference. There is also a covenantal nuance to the term ἁγιάζω. In the OT, when ὁ ἁγιάζων refers to God, it has the sense of setting apart Israel from the other nations to worship him in the context of the exodus (Lev 22:31–33; Ezek 20:12). An implicature deduced may be: Christ sanctifies his people whom he has delivered from the domain of Satan and death in a way analogous to YHWH who sanctifies his people whom he has delivered from Egypt.[269]

Nonetheless, whilst sanctification is often ascribed to God in the OT,[270] it is also a priestly activity.[271] A potential implicature that Christ is priest should not be ruled out too quickly. In fact, as the discourse plays out, it is evident that cultic and covenant imagery are linked: Jesus inaugurates the new covenant, setting apart his people to worship God, by sacrificing himself and maintains the new covenant by his high priestly intercession. Since context is dynamic, the implicature that Jesus is high priest will be confirmed by the discussion in 2:17–18, correcting any assumptions previously held.

Christ who shows solidarity with his new exodus people (2:12–13). Hebrews continues by metarepresenting Ps 21:23LXX and Isa 8:17–18. The use of Ps 21LXX is easily understood here in a context that describes Christ's sufferings and subsequent exaltation. Hebrews' employment of Isa 8 is more difficult to understand. Ellingworth suggests that it is unclear why Hebrews chose this passage as the broader context is concerned with Gentiles' disobedience to the law and their necromancy.[272] Hebrews may have discerned a dialogue between the divine persons here since the speaker in Isa 8:11 is identified as κύριος and speaks to θεός, implying that Jesus speaks to

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[268] David Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection: An Examination of the Concept of Perfection in the "Epistle to the Hebrews,"* SNTSMS 47 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 59.
[269] As suggested by deSilva, *Perseverance*, 115.
[270] Exod 31:13; Lev 20:8; 21:15; Ezek 20:12; 37:28; 2 Macc 1:26.
[271] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 88n107. See Exod 28:4; 29:33; 30:30; 40:13; Lev 8:12; 1 Sam 16:5.
[272] Paul Ellingworth, "The Old Testament in Hebrews: Exegesis, Method and Hermeneutics" (unpublished PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 1977), 87.

God.[273] How likely the audience would discern this dialogue is unclear; for the audience, optimal relevance is obtained by noting that Hebrews thinks Jesus speaks the words of Isa 8:17–18.

Further processing of the metarepresentation of Isa 8:17–18, however, yields an additional implicature. The children in Isa 8 are the remnant of faithful Israel who anticipate God's deliverance of them from exile in Babylon. Audience members aware of this may understand themselves to be the remnant who have been delivered from captivity in Babylon. This implicature, though not necessary to obtain optimal relevance, does come with an additional cognitive effect for the audience's understanding of their situation: they are in a new exodus, as confirmed by the implicatures present in vv.14–16.[274]

Christ the Passover sacrifice (2:14–15). Heb 2:14–15 develops the ideas of 2:10–13: the Redeemer partakes of the same blood and flesh as those whom he redeems. The phrase τὰ παιδία from Isa 8:18 is taken up as Hebrews underscores that the Redeemer of God's people shares the same nature as those whom he redeemed. He did this to destroy the devil and to free those in lifelong bondage to the fear of death.

The depiction of Christ's defeat of the devil and his delivering of those enslaved to fear in these verses occurs only here in Hebrews, requiring the audience to exert more processing effort to deliver discernible cognitive effects. Without detecting an exodus motif here, audience members may simply identify the explicature that Jesus defeated the devil through death. Yet, further processing, informed by the audience's encyclopaedic memory of existing Jewish traditions, may lead to the implicature that

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[273] Ibid., 88. J. Ross Wagner, "Faithfulness and Fear, Stumbling and Salvation: Receptions of LXX Isaiah 8:11–18 in the New Testament," in *The Word Leaps the Gap: Essays on Scripture and Theology in Honor of Richard B. Hays*, ed. J. Ross Wagner, C. Kavin Rowe, and A. Katherine Grieb (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 103; Richard B. Hays, "Discussion in the Pauline Soteriology Group" (paper presented at SBL Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 2007).

[274] Wagner draws parallels between Jesus' identification with his people and Moses' suffering of mistreatment with the people of God in Heb 11:24–26 ("Faithfulness," 102n88). Whilst this interpretation is not immediately relevant, since Moses is not explicitly mentioned until 3:1–6, it does demonstrate that, on recursive reading, the audience may draw a further implicature connecting Jesus with Moses.

the devil is like Pharaoh, who held God's people captive, and that Jesus is like Moses, who conducted the Passover sacrifice.

The language of redemption from slavery and bondage evokes strong resonances with exodus imagery and the Passover in particular. Sylvia Keesmaat writes, "[T]he pattern of redemption from slavery and bondage to become sons of God is found in the exodus event and called upon as the paradigm for the new exodus event in much of Jewish literature."[275] Every time "bondage" (δουλεία) occurs in the LXX of Exodus and Deuteronomy, it refers to the slavery of the Israelites in Egypt (Exod 6:6; 13:3, 14; 20:2; Deut 5:6; 6:12; 7:8; 8:14; 13:6, 11).[276] Later texts that reflect on the exodus event also use δουλεία (Lev 26:45; Judg 6:8; 1 Kgs 9:9; Neh 9:17; Jer 41:13; Mic 6:4). Indeed, almost half of the occurrences of δουλεία in the LXX refer to God leading his people out of bondage in Egypt.[277] The connection between δουλεία and the exodus event in the OT suggests that, in combination with Hebrews' earlier language of ἀρχηγός, sonship, leading and glory (2:10), the audience would deduce the implicature that Jesus' death secures redemption in a manner akin to the Israelites' liberation from bondage in Egypt.

This implicature is strengthened by extant traditions that associated the devil with the Passover specifically, and with slavery in Egypt more generally.

Moffitt notes that the book of Jubilees equates the destroyer of the firstborn in Exodus 12:23 with a malevolent angelic being who holds the power of death and accuses God's people from the heavenly court. In particular, Jub. 49:2 states that "all the

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[275] Keesmaat, *Paul and His Story*, 170.
[276] David M. Moffitt, "Wilderness Identity and Pentateuchal Narrative: Distinguishing between Jesus' Inauguration and Maintenance of the New Covenant in Hebrews," in *Muted Voices of the New Testament: Readings in the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews*, ed. Katherine M. Hockey, Madison N. Pierce, and Francis Watson, LNTS 565 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 214.
[277] Martin Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions,* trans. B.W. Anderson (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 47–52. P.G. Müller also notes similar language in Josephus, *A.J.* 3.83: "Moses liberated the Israelites from the bonds of servitude" (*Christos Archegos: Der Religionsgeschichtliche und Theologische Hintergrund einer Neutestamentlichen Christusprädikation* [Bern: Peter Lang, 1973], 290n26).

powers of Mastema were sent to kill all of the firstborn of the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh to the firstborn of the captive maidservant who was at the millstone and to the cattle." Mastema elsewhere in Jub. 48 is described as an evil spiritual force which underlies Pharaoh and the Egyptians' desire to oppose Moses and the Israelites. Consequently, when Mastema is bound by good angels, Pharaoh sets free the people of God, but when Mastema is released, Pharaoh changes his mind and goes after the people. Therefore, some Second Temple Jews did not only conceive of the first Passover as liberation from Pharaoh but also factor in the influence of Mastema on Pharaoh. Other texts in Jubilees also look forward to the future in which sin is dealt with and where Satan or the evil one destroys no more (Jub. 23:29; cf. 50:5).[278]

Similarly, Ezekiel the Tragedian writing in 2 B.C.E. calls the destroyer of Exod 12:23 "the fearsome (or deadly) angel" (159) and "the angel of death" (187), suggesting that Ezekiel shared the view that the one who destroyed the firstborn was not God but an angel.[279]

Philo diverges from the accounts of Jubilees and Ezekiel the Tragedian and allegorises the exodus story, comparing Pharaoh with the devil and Egypt with the world of our spiritual captivity, from which we can be delivered only by God the Saviour (*Her.* 60.271; cf. *Leg*. 3.236, 243; *Sacr.* 48.69; *Det.* 95; *Somn*. 2.211).[280]

John 8 contains concepts comparable to Hebrews: deliverance from death and redemption from slavery to sin and the devil. Passover typology, in combination with the Feast of Tabernacles, comes to the fore in this chapter. In John 8:34, the Jewish people are described as slaves (δοῦλος), and Jesus makes clear that his mission is to

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[278] Moffitt, "Wilderness Identity," 213–14.
[279] Howard Jacobson, *The Exagogue of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 209. This view was not held unanimously in all areas of Judaism. Wisdom of Solomon identifies the destroying angel with Wisdom (Wis 9:1–2), who is portrayed positively as one who not only destroys the Egyptian firstborn but also leads God's people out of Egypt (10:15–20). However, in light of Heb 11:28, it appears that Hebrews distances the destroying angel from God himself, thus standing in line with the tradition expressed in Jubilees and Ezekiel the Tragedian, among others.
[280] Andriessen, "La Teneur Judéo-Chrétienne," 306.

set them free from bondage, whereas the Jews who oppose Jesus are children bound by the devil.[281] In fulfilling the exodus and the Passover, Jesus has already claimed that those who practise sin are slaves to sin, who need to be redeemed by the Son. Elsewhere in John's Gospel (12:31; 14:30; 16:11), those who are slaves to sin are also enslaved to the devil. As a result, it appears that the devil corresponds to Pharaoh in John's Passover typology.[282]

On the basis that such an understanding was extant when Hebrews was being composed, it may have comprised part of the audience's cognitive environment – irrespective of Hebrews' dependence on any of these sources.

The only explicit reference to Passover in Hebrews occurs much later in the discourse, where Hebrews notes that "Moses' kept the Passover…so that the destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them" (11:28). Might the audience, therefore, be unable in 2:14–15 to make the connection? Yet, it is instructive that some commentators on 11:28 acknowledge a link back to 2:14–15,[283] suggesting that it may reinforce this implicature in 2:14–15. The terms "destroy" (καταργέω, 2:14) and "the destroyer" (ὀλοθρεύω, 11:28), though different lexically, are similar conceptually. Furthermore, given that, in the context of Heb 11:1–12:3, Moses' faith anticipates the greater faith of Christ, there is evidence that Hebrews and the audience were aware of the Passover sacrifice and its connection to Jesus' offering of himself. On recursive reading, or on multiple readings of Hebrews, the audience may see a connection between Jesus' sacrifice and the Passover.

Thus, from these verses, the audience can discern that they were once under the power of him who holds the power of death – the devil – and they were held in slavery by their fear of death. This confirms the implicature that Jesus is a new Moses who

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[281] Jesper Tang Nielsen, "The Lamb of God: The Cognitive Structure of a Johannine Metaphor," in *Imagery in the Gospel of John: Terms, Forms, Themes, and Theology of Johannine Figurative Language*, ed. Jörg Frey, Jan G. Van der Watt, and Ruben Zimmermann, WUNT 2/200 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 251.
[282] P.M. Hoskins, "Freedom from Slavery to Sin and the Devil: John 8:31–47 and the Passover Theme of the Gospel of John," *TJ* 31 (2010): 56.
[283] E.g. Hughes, *Hebrews*, 500.

defeats the devil and delivers his people from captivity, anticipating the discourse of 3:1–6. It also adds the implicature that Jesus' death is a Passover sacrifice. As Moffitt discerns, "[I]n Heb 2:14–15 Jesus' death functions as a Passover-like event that liberates humanity from the enslaving power of death and the great destroyer who wields that power – the Devil. Jesus' death initiates, that is, an exodus-like event wherein God's people are finally and fully freed from the dominion of the Devil."[284]

Christ who leads the offspring of Abraham in their new exodus (2:16). Exodus imagery is carried into v.16 through the reference to "taking hold of the seed of Abraham," which metarepresents Isa 41:8–9.[285] Whilst the reference to σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ may lead less-informed audience members to simply infer that, as Abraham's descendants, they are part of God's family, exerting extra processing would lead to new cognitive effects: God takes them by the hand as they exit captivity in a new exodus. The re-use of ἐπιλαμβάνομαι in 8:9, which describes God taking the Israelites by hand out of Egypt, confirms retrospectively the implicature that a new exodus is in view in 2:16. The reference to angels would naturally harken back to the earlier reference to the angels who mediate the law in the wilderness on Sinai (2:2). In the context of Isa 40–55, there are a number of connections to the new exodus: a highway in the wilderness (40:3–5), which the Lord will lead them through (42:14–16; 43:14–21); explicit reference to exodus from Babylon (48:20–21); entry into the Promised Land (49:8–12).[286] Yet again, because the use of ἐπιλαμβάνομαι evokes the exodus event (reinforced by recursive reading), the audience would not need to access Isa 40–55 for relevance to be obtained.

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[284] David M. Moffitt, "Modelled on Moses: Jesus' Death, Passover, and the Defeat of the Devil in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Mosebilder: Gedanken zur Rezeption einer literarischen Figur im Frühjudentum, frühen Christentum und der römisch-hellenistischen Literatur*, ed. V. Niederhofer, E. Eynikel, and M. Sommer, WUNT 2/390 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 293.
[285] Backhaus, *Hebräerbrief*, 130; Windisch, *Hebräerbrief*, 26. Massonnet suggests that Hebrews conflates Isa 41:8 with Jer 38LXX (*Hébreux*, 92).
[286] Bernard W. Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), 181–82.

Isa 41:8–9	**Heb 2:16**
σὺ δέ Ισραηλ παῖς μου Ιακωβ ὃν ἐξελεξάμην *σπέρμα* Αβρααμ ὃν ἠγάπησα οὗ *ἀντελαβόμην* ἀπ᾽ ἄκρων τῆς γῆς	οὐ γὰρ δήπου ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται ἀλλὰ *σπέρματος* Ἀβραὰμ *ἐπιλαμβάνεται*

Christ and Moses the high priest (2:17–18)? What are the limits of an exodus referent in this passage? Andriessen suggests the implicature that Hebrews' depiction of Jesus as high priest in vv.17–18 is indebted to its understanding of Moses.[287] Although Moses has a sacerdotal role in Hebrews, he is never explicitly called a high priest. Likewise, ἱλάσκομαι, though used about Moses occasionally (Exod 30:16; 32:30; Lev 8:15), is employed most often concerning the Levitical priests, and the high priest in particular. Therefore, it is more likely that Hebrews is signalling in advance something that will be discussed in more detail later in the work: Jesus is high priest. Given that Moses is depicted as a priest in Jewish tradition,[288] it is conceivable that some of the audience could draw the implicature that Jesus is like Moses here; however, this assumption would be eliminated as the discourse goes on to discuss Jesus' high priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek. Like a new Moses, he brings liberation from slavery and fear of death; like the Levitical high priests, he atones for the sins of the people. The later discourse implies Jesus' high priesthood and his exodus liberation are connected on the basis of Hebrews' interest in the Pentateuch since Jesus is high priest over the heavenly tabernacle, metarepresenting wilderness language.

Jesus and Moses' ascent into glory. Those who acknowledge a reference to the exodus in these verses tend to point to the succeeding argument of Hebrews to support their point. In 3:1–6, Hebrews compares Jesus and Moses, before discussing the Israelite wilderness generation led by Caleb and Joshua (3:7–4:11).[289] Few scholars note the

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[287] Andriessen, "La Teneur Judéo-Chrétienne," 309–10.
[288] John Lierman, *The New Testament Moses: Christian Perceptions of Moses and Israel in the Setting of Jewish Religion,* WUNT 2/173 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 65–70.
[289] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 138; Koester, "Future of Humanity," 110.

importance of the preceding context for justifying such a view. As noted earlier, 2:1–4 draws on traditions linking angels with the giving of the law on Sinai.

Furthermore, the use of Ps 8, which immediately precedes 2:10–18, is also significant. Heb 2:5–9 suggests that human beings have lost the glory that was once theirs and that Christ will restore this glory as the ideal representative of humanity. Moffitt discerns a connection here with a tradition recorded in b. Shabb. 88b–89a, a text in the Babylonian Talmud. In b. Shabb. 88b–89a, Moses ascends into heaven to receive the law, prompting the ministering angels to complain using the words of Ps 8:5: "What is man, that you are mindful of him, And the son of man that you visitest him?" In response, God commands Moses to hold onto the Throne of Glory and respond to the angels. The angels' hostility decreases, and they come to love Moses, sharing with him their secrets. Even the Angel of Death confides his secret to Moses, leading Moses to intercede for the people, preventing the Angel of Death from destroying those who rebelled in the wilderness.

Moffitt outlines the parallels as follows. First, both Hebrews and b. Shabb. identify the angels as "ministering spirits." Second, the ministering spirits in b. Shabb. are sent to aid the Israelites at Sinai as God gives them the law, just as the ministering spirits of Heb 1:14 help the people of God and mediate the law at Sinai (Heb 2:1–4). Third, both Jesus in Hebrews and Moses in the Talmud are glorified. Fourth, both passages cite Ps 8:5 and follow it with a reference to the devil, the Angel of Death. Fifth, in both Hebrews and the Talmud, the ascension of Jesus and Moses, respectively, happens as the angelic being's power over death is relinquished. Finally, both texts contrast humans, who are made of flesh and blood, with the spiritual nature of the angels (Heb 1:7, 14; 2:14, 16; b. Shabb. 88b–89a). From these cumulative parallels, Moffitt deduces that it is not a coincidence that, after explaining Jesus' fulfilment of the mandate of Ps 8 and his defeat of the devil, Hebrews goes on to draw comparisons between Jesus and Moses (3:1–6).[290]

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[290] Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 152–55.

Moffitt rightly notes that it is not the Talmud itself that provides a context against which one may understand Hebrews' argument here, but, rather, traditions regarding Moses' ascent that circulated "prior to and independently of both Hebrews and *Talmud Babli.*"[291] In fact, texts from Ezekiel the Dramatist and Marqah the Samaritan indicate that the tradition of Moses' ascent exists before the first century C.E.[292] Second Temple texts connect the glory that Adam forfeited through disobedience with the glory that was bestowed on Moses.[293] In *Memar Marqah,* the angels draw near to magnify Moses, the glorious one, in the same way they honoured Adam, and Moses is crowned with a great light as Adam was. LAB draws on Ps 8 and links Adam with Moses. Since Adam failed to fulfil the mandate of Ps 8, Israel has been chosen to bring the psalm's promise to fruition. Moses' authority is confirmed through his heavenly ascent at Sinai. In conclusion, contemporary traditions understood Ps 8 to not only refer to Adam but also to Moses and Israel.[294]

Whilst we should not assume too much concerning what the audience knew of these traditions, the prominence of Moses and the high esteem in which Judaism held him, as well as the frequency of traditions that correlate Moses with Ps 8, make it plausible that some audience members could infer that Jesus takes up the mantle of Moses as one who gains the glory lost by Adam.[295] In any case, this is strengthened and make explicit by Hebrews' reference to Moses and the wilderness generation in 3:1–4:11. Hebrews appears to be well-versed in these traditions, as the similarities between its argument and that of its predecessors and successors demonstrate. This evidence merely adds to the contextual justification, as already argued above, for seeing a metarepresentation of the exodus story in these verses as part of a cognitive environment on which the audience would have drawn.

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[291] Ibid., 155.
[292] Mark Stephen Kinzer, "'All Things Under His Feet': Psalm 8 in the New Testament and in Other Jewish Literature of Late Antiquity" (unpublished PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1995), 169.
[293] Ibid., 185.
[294] Ibid., 206–07.
[295] Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection,* 155–56.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an analysis of Heb 1–2, demonstrating how Hebrews depicts Jesus as the new wilderness leader who enters the promised inheritance and leads his siblings there also. Through numerous implicatures, Hebrews sets in motion the narrative of the book: Jesus, like Moses, redeems his people from slavery to death and the devil and leads them to the glory he has already entered.

Chapter 4: Heb 3–4

Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of Heb 3–4: the most ostensive reference to the wilderness generation in Hebrews. First, I will examine the relationship between Jesus and Moses in 3:1–6. Second, I will consider Hebrews' metarepresentation of Ps 94:7–11LXX with reference to the nature of the rest that the audience is to enter and the audience's relationship to the Israelite wilderness generation.

Heb 3:1–6

In its first direct address to the audience, Hebrews exhorts them to consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of their confession, before metarepresenting the OT character Moses. In particular, Hebrews compares Jesus, who was appointed by God as high priest (an inference that will be confirmed by 5:1–4), with Moses, based on their faithfulness regarding God's house. Therefore, the audience would not infer the implicature, deduced by some scholars, that Moses was not faithful enough.[296] Instead, Hebrews' ostensive language in these verses gives Moses a positive role, in line with Moses' high esteem in Judaism.[297] Whilst Moses is worthy of glory (Exod 34:29–35), Jesus is worthy of greater glory (3:3) because he brings the people of God to glory (2:10). Moses was faithful in God's house as a servant (like the angels –1:14), whereas Jesus is faithful as Son (1:5; 2:10). Moses, as a servant, had a significant role, testifying to the things that were to be spoken later; presumably, the things that were spoken through the Son (1:1–2; 2:2–3). This discussion reinforces, and makes ostensive, the Jesus-Moses typology implicit in 2:10–18.

OT metarepresentation: identification & evaluation (3:2, 5)

The language of vv.2, 5 – "Moses is faithful in his house" – resembles Num 12:7; however, some scholars suggest that Hebrews metarepresents 1 Chr 17:14.[298] 1 Chr 17:14 recounts Nathan's prophecy to David that God will make one of his descendants

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[296] Spicq, *Hébreux*, 2:62–63; Ronald Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, ALGHJ 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 457.

[297] See, for example, Sir 44:23–45:5 and *Memar Marqah* 4.10.

[298] Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 76; D'Angelo, *Moses*, 69. John W. Kleinig suggests that Hebrews reads Num 12:7 in light of 1 Sam 2:35, 12:6 and 1 Chr 17:12 (*Hebrews* [Saint Louis: Concordia, 2017], 160). Alternatively, Guthrie thinks that 2 Sam 7 is important for Hebrews ("Hebrews," 952).

faithful in his house (the temple) and place him on the throne. Whilst the Davidic kingship of Jesus is part of the mutual cognitive environment of Hebrews and the audience (1:5), the implicature that Hebrews is metarepresenting Num 12:7LXX requires less processing effort from the audience. The language here is closer in similarity to Num 12:7 than 1 Chr 17:14[299] and Hebrews refers to Moses, not Solomon. Such a metarepresentation is made more manifest in 3:5, which repeats the statement of v.2, but with the addition of ὅλῳ before "his house," and describes Moses as θεράπων, using the same language as Num 12:7.

Num 12:7	**1 Chr 17:14**	**Heb 3:2, 5**
οὐχ οὕτως ὁ θεράπων μου Μωυσῆς ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ μου πιστός ἐστιν	καὶ *πιστώσω* αὐτὸν ἐν οἴκῳ μου καὶ ἐν βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ ἕως αἰῶνος καὶ ὁ θρόνος αὐτοῦ ἔσται ἀνωρθωμένος ἕως αἰῶνος	**2** *πιστὸν* ὄντα τῷ ποιήσαντι αὐτὸν ὡς καὶ Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ. **5** καὶ Μωϋσῆς μὲν πιστὸς ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ ὡς θεράπων εἰς μαρτύριον τῶν λαληθησομένων

The referent of "God's house" (v.2) is initially unclear. "House" can refer to heaven, the created world, the sanctuary (whether the temple or tabernacle), or God's people.[300] Given the reference to Moses, it is unlikely that heaven or the created cosmos is a referent that is accessible to the audience in this context. Kleinig suggests that "house" refers to the tabernacle since the language of "building" (κατασκευάζω) is used of the tabernacle later in the discourse (9:2, 6).[301] If any or all of these references comprise part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory, they may initially draw the implicature in v.2 that Moses was faithful over God's tabernacle. However, if so, this will be modified when Hebrews ostensively specifies the referent of God's house in v.6: the people of God who hold their confidence to the end. Furthermore, the referent of "house" in Num 12:7 is the people of God in the wilderness, so house as signifying tabernacle is a weak implicature that would be eliminated by v.6.

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[299] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 163n27.
[300] D'Angelo, *Moses*, 96.
[301] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 157; Windisch, *Hebräerbrief*, 31.

From Hebrews' metarepresentation of Num 12:7 in 3:2, 5, the audience may draw one or more further implicatures: Moses was faithful in the wilderness amid opposition from Aaron and Miriam. Jesus is faithful over God's house in the wilderness. Jesus is Son over that same wilderness people. Whereas Jewish tradition used Num 12:7 to support Moses' superiority to angels, Hebrews uses this metarepresentation to reinforce Jesus' superiority to Moses.[302] Therefore, whilst the audience would know from their encyclopaedic memory that Moses was greater than angels as Jesus is, Jesus is still greater than Moses. The metarepresentation anticipates the discussion of the events at Kadesh-Barnea in 3:7–4:11.[303] Already then at this early stage in the argument, Hebrews sets a wilderness context for readers, a pattern which will be reinforced by the succeeding exposition, and implicitly establishes a correlation between the two leaders of the wilderness generations: Moses and Jesus.

Heb 3:7–19

With the use of δίο, Hebrews signals to the audience that the discussion in Heb 3:7ff follows on from the argument in 3:1–6. Nevertheless, some scholars struggle to understand the connections between the two passages.[304] Ellingworth, for instance, suggests that 3:7 "does not follow smoothly on 3:6," and concludes that the point of contact between the sections involves faith and faithlessness.[305] However, a connection can be made: already in 3:1–6, Hebrews has compared Moses with Jesus, who both stand in relation to God's house, albeit Moses is a servant while Jesus is a Son. 3:7–4:11 then goes on to discuss two generations in the house of God: the Israelites in the wilderness and the audience. "[Hebrews presents] Jesus as the new and better Moses, thus establishing the connection between the original Exodus community and the new Exodus community at 'the end of the ages' (9:26)."[306] This connection with 3:1–6 implies that there is an *a fortiori* argument in 3:7–4:11. If Jesus

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[302] Pfitzner, *Hebrews*, 72.
[303] Gheorghita, *Septuagint in Hebrews*, 80–81.
[304] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis,* 116.
[305] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 213.
[306] Peter E. Enns, "Creation and Re-Creation: Psalm 95 and Its Interpretation in Hebrews 3:1–4:13," *WTJ* 55 (1993): 269–70. See also Isaacs, *Sacred Space,* 78–79.

is Son over the house of God while Moses is a servant, the consequence of rebellion to him must be greater.

Metarepresentation of Ps 94:7–11LXX (3:7–11)

Ps 94: 7–11LXX	**Heb 3:7–11**
σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν ὡς ἐν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ πειρασμοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ οὗ ἐπείρασαν οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν *ἐδοκίμασαν* καὶ εἶδοσαν τὰ ἔργα μου τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη προσώχθισα τῇ γενεᾷ *ἐκείνῃ* καὶ εἶπα ἀεὶ πλανῶνται τῇ καρδίᾳ καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν τὰς ὁδούς μου ὡς ὤμοσα ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ μου εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου	σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε, μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν ὡς ἐν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ πειρασμοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, οὗ ἐπείρασαν οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν *ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ* καὶ εἶδον τὰ ἔργα μου τεσσεράκοντα ἔτη· **διὸ** προσώχθισα τῇ γενεᾷ *ταύτῃ* καὶ εἶπον· ἀεὶ πλανῶνται τῇ καρδίᾳ, αὐτοὶ δὲ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν τὰς ὁδούς μου· ὡς ὤμοσα ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ μου· εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου.

Hebrews ostensively metarepresents Ps 94:7–11LXX as the present speech of the Holy Spirit in support of 3:6's exhortation to hold fast with boldness and faith. By virtue of this action, Hebrews demonstrates to the audience that its argument is authoritative,[307] since the words appealed to are not merely human, but divine. The selection of Ps 94:7–11LXX shows the audience that it is a metarepresentation that has both maximal relevance for Hebrews and optimal relevance for the audience now.[308] Since the psalm was used widely in liturgical life, especially at the Festival of Tabernacles,[309] it presumably comprises part of their encyclopaedic memory. However, Hebrews uses it in a new context so that it is not simply associated with a specific liturgical or worship event but is relevant today.

[307] White, "Relevance Theory and Citations," 3345.
[308] Ibid.
[309] Guthrie, "Hebrews," 953; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 85.

Explicatures and implicatures

Several elements in the metarepresentation are initially left underdetermined by Hebrews, requiring the audience to supply referents to terms, or to enrich items from the context. For both Hebrews and the audience, "today" is the present time of opportunity, the day to respond to God's voice, not a twenty-four-hour period. The audience can infer that "his" voice is God's voice.[310] The references to "rebellion" and "testing in the wilderness" recall the events that took place at Kadesh-Barnea (Num 14),[311] which the succeeding exposition will reinforce. Likewise, the referent of "your fathers" and "this generation" is the wilderness generation at Kadesh-Barnea. Cockerill understands "my works" to be specifically God's works of anger;[312] however, it is unlikely the audience would deduce this since the psalm goes on to describe God's wrath ostensively. More likely, the works are God's signs and wonders (Num 14:11).[313] Lastly, "rest" refers to Canaan.

The audience may also deduce several implicatures from the metarepresentation. The most obvious implicature is that the audience's situation is comparable to that of Israel in the wilderness. Since the psalm was used liturgically, the audience may understand that they are to heed God's voice as they journey towards the heavenly Jerusalem. This will be reinforced as the discourse progresses, so identifying this as a relevant context is not necessary. If the audience was aware that the wider context of the psalm involves worshipping YHWH, they would infer the implicature that, through gathering together in worship, they will not fall into the same pattern of disobedience.

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[310] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 179.

[311] The psalm originally refers to the events that took place at Meribah and Massah (Exod 17:7). The LXX translates the place names "Meribah" and "Massah" as "the provocation" and "the testing," so that it corresponds to the events in Num 14 (Kibbe, *Godly Fear*, 115). *Contra* Weiss, who thinks that Exod 17, in addition to Num 14, is one of the most important texts in the background of this pericope (*Hebräer*, 260).

[312] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 181.

[313] Some scholars speculate the forty years indicates that forty years have passed since the death of Christ (Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews Vol. I*, trans. Thomas L. Kingsbury [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1870], 119–20; B.F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek Text with Notes and Essays*, 3rd ed. [London: MacMillan and Co., 1906], 81; F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990], 99). Hebrews, however, does not make such an interpretation manifest.

Nevertheless, this too is outlined ostensively in the discourse that follows, so accessing the wider context of the citation is unnecessary. As the audience has seen the works of God (2:3–4), they may draw the implicature that their fathers' fate awaits them, too, if they disobey. This will be confirmed ostensively multiple times. Hearing implies obeying – the opposite of having an unbelieving heart. As Cockerill notes, there is a sense in which the audience has already heard (2:2–4), the implicature being that hearing properly involves obedience.[314] They can hear God's voice, just as Israel did in the wilderness.[315]

Would the audience understand that the wilderness generation was testing God, or being tested by God? Holmes suggests the latter since "testing" does not have a direct object.[316] The implicature would thus be that the wilderness period was a time of testing, and it was the disposition of the wilderness generation that angered God.[317] The Israelites were tested in the wilderness and fell short because their hearts were hardened. This squares with Hebrews' emphasis on the hardness of heart displayed by the wilderness generation in the following exposition. Indeed, both implicatures are not mutually exclusive. Assuming the audience was aware of the wilderness account, they may acknowledge that the wilderness period was a time of testing (as described in texts such as Deut 8:5; 32:5–6; Wis 11:9–10), but also that the wilderness generation tested God (Exod 17:7). Nevertheless, the presence of καί immediately following the phrase indicates that the audience would more easily infer that Israel tested God since καί implies something unexpected: they tested God, *even though* they saw his works.[318]

Cognitive effects of metarepresentation change

Additionally, Hebrews modifies the metarepresentation to generate certain cognitive effects for the readers. In particular, Hebrews makes three interpretive moves: first, Hebrews changes the verb ἐδοκιμασάν to the prepositional phrase ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ;

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[314] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 175.
[315] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 179.
[316] Christopher T. Holmes, *The Function of Sublime Rhetoric in Hebrews: A Study in Hebrews 12:18–29*, WUNT 2/465 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 167.
[317] Ibid., 167n21.
[318] Dana M. Harris, *Hebrews,* EGGNT (Nashville: B&H Publishers, 2019), 79.

second, Hebrews adds δίο, a particle which is not found in any variant manuscripts of the psalm; third, Hebrews replaces ἐκείνῃ with ταύτῃ.

First, ἐδοκιμασάν becomes ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ. Enns considers this to emphasise that, not only did they test the works of God, but they did so with scrutiny.[319] In doing so, Hebrews stresses to the audience the disobedience of the wilderness generation. Audience members familiar with the wilderness story may draw the implicature that this testing involved "demanding proof of his providential presence with them."[320] However, if the audience drew the implicature that God is testing them, as some may have done, then the implicature drawn is that God tests them in scrutiny to see if their faith was genuine.[321]

Second, Hebrews' addition of δίο subtly changes the thrust of Ps 94LXX,[322] indicating that the forty years signifies the length of time that Israel saw God's works in the wilderness, not the duration of God's anger. What cognitive effects this would evoke for the audience is debatable. For Enns, this change suggests that the audience is not to view their wilderness journey as the result of God's anger; instead, it is a time in which they have experienced the blessing of God.[323] However, as the metarepresentation at this point focusses not on the audience but on the original wilderness generation, the addition of the particle more likely serves to stress that the disobedience of the wilderness generation, lasting 40 years, provoked God's anger,[324] rather than the wilderness wanderings themselves being the result of God's anger.

Third, Hebrews replaces ἐκείνῃ with ταύτῃ. Wray proposes that the rhetorical effect on the readers is to bring them "into the text even before the author begins to make

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[319] Enns, "Creation," 275.
[320] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 181.
[321] Harris acknowledges the phrase has the sense of testing for genuineness (*Hebrews*, 79).
[322] The addition of δίο is presumably a work of Hebrews since no extant Greek text of Ps 94LXX has this particle and v.17 indicates Hebrews was aware of the psalm's original wording. For more on the underlying Greek text of Ps 94LXX, see Steyn, *Quest*, 170–96.
[323] Enns, "Creation," 273–74.
[324] Isaacs, *Sacred Space*, 79–80.

explicit connections between historical example and present community."[325] While the change of the pronoun should not be pressed too far, the audience may initially hear this as a direct reference to themselves, before realising that the referent of "this generation" is still the Israelites.[326] Alternatively, the audience could draw the implicature that, if they do not obey, then what is true of those Israelites will be true of them.

Exposition of Ps 94LXX and metarepresentation of Num 14 (3:12–19)

In vv.12–14, Hebrews applies Ps 94LXX directly to the audience and draws in new information not contained within the psalm, meaning that the audience must process the language further in return for more cognitive effects. The audience would draw the implicature that Num 14 is relevant for understanding Hebrews' exposition. The specific terms πονηρά and ἀπιστίας are drawn from Num 14:11, 27–35, leading to the implicature that a hard heart is an evil, unbelieving heart that goes astray. The exhortation to not fall away from the living God resembles the warning of Caleb and Joshua in Num 14:9.[327] Further, the description of sin as being deceitful (3:13) parallels Num 14:19, 34. The way the audience is to take care is to encourage one another, so the deceitfulness of sin does not harden them. A related implicature is: if you do not stay in the community, you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. In contrast to those ten spies in the wilderness generation who discouraged the people from faithful obedience (Num 14:36), the audience is to do the opposite, encouraging each other to obey.[328] By not signalling explicitly to the audience that Num 14 is being metarepresented, Hebrews seems to assume that this scripture is known in their cognitive environment.

A number of further implicatures result from Hebrews' exposition in vv.12–14. Relationship with the living God is maintained as we share in Christ. We share in

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[325] Judith Hoch Wray, *Rest as a Theological Metaphor in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel of Truth: Early Christian Homiletics of Rest*, SBLDS 166 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 66.
[326] Attridge deems ταύτῃ "a minor variation" (*Hebrews*, 115).
[327] Otfried Hofius, *Katapausis: Die Vorstellung vom endzeitlichen Ruheort im Hebräerbrief*, WUNT 11 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1970), 131; Backhaus, *Hebräerbrief*, 152–53.
[328] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 186.

Christ as we share in a heavenly calling (3:1). Just as Christ participated in their humanity (2:14), so they share in him. "They therefore need to 'hold on to' (κατέχω, 3:14) what is already theirs, so that they do not lose what they now have and what they have yet to receive as members of God's house."[329] Κατάσχωμεν links back to 3:6, leading to the implicature that those who are God's house are also partakers in Christ. If they do not hold their original conviction firmly to the end, they are not partakers of Christ.

Hebrews reinforces the metarepresentation in 3:7–11 by repeating Ps 94:7LXX in 3:15, adducing support for the previous statement regarding holding their confidence to the end. The implicature, therefore, is not just that the Israelites had a hard heart, but that their original confidence was not maintained.

Hebrews follows with a series of rhetorical questions in which it "makes manifest an assumption the point of which is to prompt the retrieval of an assumption that the speaker regards as relevant to the hearer."[330] Even though Hebrews has not explicitly identified those who rebelled in the wilderness, the questions in vv.16–17 imply that the audience can furnish a referent for the underdetermined terms in the metarepresentation of Ps 94LXX. The use of οὐ (v.16) and οὐχί (v.17) suggests that Hebrews expects a positive answer to the questions "was it not those who left Egypt under Moses [who rebelled]" and "was it not with those who did sin, whose bodies fell in the wilderness [with whom he was grieved]"? We can assume, thus, that the audience was familiar with the Pentateuchal narrative.

From 3:16–17, the audience continues to discern the implicature that Num 14 is relevant for Hebrews' exposition of Ps 94LXX. Hebrews' emphasis that "all" heard and rebelled (v.16) resembles Num 14:2, 10; these verses assert that everyone in Israel was disobedient.[331] The reference to bodies falling in the wilderness metarepresents

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[329] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 191.
[330] Sergio Maruenda Bataller, *Reformulations and Relevance Theory Pragmatics: The Case of T.V. News Interviews*, SELL (Lengua Inglesa: Universitat de València, 2002), 39.
[331] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 136.

Num 14:29. The correlation of hearing and rebelling reinforces yet again that hearing for the audience involves obedience and not rebellion.[332]

The reference to God's anger lasting forty years (v.17) shows that Hebrews' knew the original meaning of the psalm – but how would the readers process this statement? The audience knows from 3:7–11 that the wilderness generation provoked God despite having seen his works for forty years; now, in similar language, they hear that God was angry with that generation for forty years. Some scholars speculate that Hebrews conceived of two periods: one where the Israelites responded to God's works in disobedience, and another period where the forty years were the result of God's wrath.[333] However, there is little evidence such a tradition exists.[334] Furthermore, access to such a tradition is unnecessary to achieve relevance since both understandings of the forty years are consistent with the biblical account. Hebrews' addition of δίο in Ps 94LXX is consistent with Num 14:11, which underscores how the wilderness generation despised God even after witnessing his works in the wilderness. Yet, the account in Numbers is also consonant with Heb 3:17, as the forty years in the wilderness are described as the forty years of God's displeasure (Num 14:34), while Deut 1:45 implies that God is still angry with them at Kadesh. In any case, the audience would still process the language in a similar way: disobedience results in the anger of God, whether it happens at the beginning or at the end of the wilderness period.[335]

V.18 loosely metarepresents the language of Ps 94LXX in Hebrews' final rhetorical question, underscoring that the disobedience of the wilderness generation prevented them from entering God's rest, to be understood as Canaan here. The inference that Hebrews draws from this in v.19 is that the wilderness generation did not enter rest

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[332] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 119.
[333] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 115, 120; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 88–89.
[334] Susan Docherty, *The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews: A Case Study in Early Jewish Bible Interpretation*, WUNT 2/260 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 187.
[335] Mathias Rissi underscores that Hebrews wanted to emphasise that, during the 40 years in the wilderness, Israel simultaneously saw God's works and experienced God's wrath (*Die Theologie des Hebräerbriefs: ihre verankerung in der situation des verfassers und seiner leser,* WUNT 41 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987], 17).

because of their unbelief. Also, such language reinforces the implicature that disobedience is evidence of unbelief.

Heb 4:1–11

OT metarepresentations: further interpretation

A promised rest is still to be entered (4:1–3)

From the prior discussion of the wilderness generation's disobedience and failure to enter rest, Hebrews infers that the promise of entering "his rest" – God's rest – still stands. This ostensively produces the cognitive effect of eliminating an existing assumption: that Canaan is the rest. If rest remains open, then the implicature drawn by the audience is that rest cannot be Canaan. The promise of Heb 4:1, 6, though implicit in Ps 94LXX, is explicit in Num 14:21, 23, 29–31.[336] Thus it is the promise in Num 14 which disambiguates the content of promise in Heb 4:1 as being that of entry into God's rest. The audience draws the implicature that they will fail to reach rest if they are characterised by unbelief (3:12–14).

The failure of the Israelites is to serve as a motivation for the audience's perseverance since their situations are analogous. As the Israelites had "good news" preached to them, presumably the word of Joshua and Caleb that there is a land flowing with milk and honey (Num 14:7–9), so also the audience has had good news preached to them (2:1–4). What is good news from the audience's perspective? Whilst some scholars have interpreted εὐαγγελίζω to refer to the redemption the audience has experienced through Jesus,[337] it is more likely that the audience would process "good news" in relation to the promise that a rest remains for the people of God, especially in light of the wordplay between εὐαγγελίζω and ἐπαγγελία.[338] 4:6 will reinforce this understanding of εὐαγγελίζω, contrasting the Israelites who formerly had good news preached to them and did not enter rest with those who remain to enter.

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[336] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 124–27.

[337] Koester, *Hebrews*, 277; George H. Guthrie, *Hebrews*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 151; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 157.

[338] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 202n26.

Though good news is preached to both the Israelites and the audience, it did not benefit the Israelites since "they were not united by faith with those who listened" (v.2).[339] The referent of "those who heard" is ambiguous: it could refer to Joshua or Caleb, or to present believers.[340] Attridge[341] and Allen[342] both follow the second interpretation, drawing support from 11:40. However, this is without immediate relevance for 4:2, since it is a context that the audience cannot yet access. More likely, those who listened are Joshua and Caleb. Here, a subtle contrast is drawn between the audience and the Israelites, with Hebrews implying that the audience has heard the good news and is united by faith to Christ (3:14). The audience is presently united with Christ, implying that the message they heard will benefit them because they have faith (in contrast to the faithless Israelites). Likewise, the audience could infer the implicature that if they do not share in Christ by faith, the good news that they have heard is useless to them.

V.3 continues the contrast between the wilderness generation and the audience with the statement that: "the ones who believe are in the process of entering the rest." The Israelites have already been described as those who were unfaithful, and, consequently, did not enter rest. Believers, however, are in the process of moving towards the rest. Hebrews' characterisation of the audience is much more positive. Hebrews omits those of the wilderness generation who were faithful and entered Canaan, consistently casting the wilderness generation in a negative light.

Rest in Ps 94LXX is to be understood against Gen 2:2 (4:4–5)

In v.4, Hebrews again metarepresents Ps 94LXX as God's words and draws an inference from the statement: "they shall not enter my rest," even though God's works

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[339] There is a text-critical issue in this verse. Συγκεκρασμένους is supported by the earliest witnesses and is the more difficult reading, accounting for the variant reading συγκεκρασμένος, hence the translation "they were not united" above. See Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament,* 4th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 665.

[340] Alternatively, James Swetnam suggests the phrase refers to the first generation of Christians ("The meaning of τοῖς ἀκούσασιν at Hebrews 4,2," *Bib* 93 [2012]: 601–08). Such an understanding requires significant processing effort for little cognitive effects.

[341] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 126. Attridge is followed by Massonnet, *Hébreux*, 117.

[342] David L. Allen, *Hebrews*, NAC (Nashville: B&H Publishers, 2010), 275.

were finished from the foundation of the world. Here, the implicature is that God's rest was open since the foundation of the world, following his work of creation. As Ellingworth deduces, "[R]est existed before as well as after the time of the exodus."[343]

In support of this assertion, Hebrews draws from Gen 2:2, although the precise scripture reference is not identified because the fact it is spoken by the Holy Spirit is most relevant.[344] Gen 2:2 connects to Ps 94LXX through the exegetical process *gezera shawa*: they are linked by the words "rest," "works," and "today," and both texts are concerned with creation.[345] The connections between the two passages then imply that the audience is to interpret the language of Ps 94LXX by the language of Gen 2:2. As a consequence, "rest" promised in Ps 94LXX is not to be defined as the land of Canaan, but as God's rest at the end of creation.

Hebrews, however, does not elaborate on the nature of this rest: it is left underdetermined, never precisely defined and is no longer ostensively mentioned after 4:11. This leads Wray to conclude that rest is "an undeveloped and unsustained theological metaphor."[346] Therefore, the meaning of rest must be inferred from Hebrews' argument and from whatever background meaning the audience could reasonably supply from their encyclopaedic memory. What conclusions could the audience, therefore, draw regarding Hebrews' discussion of rest?

A state. Attridge suggests the implicature that rest is a state "which God himself entered at the completion of the week of creation."[347] However, if the audience were to understand rest as a state they experience in the present, it would be more relevant

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[343] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 247.
[344] Gelardini supposes that Hebrews metarepresents Exod 31:17 (*"Verhärtet eure Herzen nicht,"* 145–46). Yet, the striking similarities between Gen 2:2 and Heb 4:4, as well as the reference to the seventh day at the end of creation, suggest that less processing effort is expended in determining a metarepresentation of Gen 2:2 than Exod 31:17.
[345] Enns, "Creation," 278.
[346] Wray, *Rest*, 91. This is because Wray considers it to be unrelated to the Christology of the epistle. The relationship of Heb 3:7–4:11 to Hebrews' Christology will be discussed in our analysis of Heb 4:10.
[347] Harold W. Attridge, "'Let Us Strive to Enter That Rest': The Logic of Hebrews 4:1–11," *HTR* 73 (1980): 284.

for Hebrews to define rest as their rest, rather than God's rest.[348] Furthermore, if rest is a state, the works that the audience are to rest from are their dead works (4:11). Yet, in the context, these works are equated with the work of God at creation; thus, the audience would view the works in a positive sense. Rather, the audience is not to cease doing good works in the present but may do so once they enter God's rest. The most conclusive evidence against this assumption, however, is that the contrast between the rest that is to be entered and Canaan suggests that the audience would likely draw the implicature that rest has a local sense.[349]

The heavenly realm. The local connotation of rest suggests the audience would understand the referent of rest to be the heavenly realm. It is where Christ has entered (4:10), evoking for the audience associations with the οἰκουμένη (1:6) and glory (2:10) into which Jesus is leading the people of God. Whilst it is true that Hebrews never again explicitly refers to rest, as the audience continues to read the book they may view the promise of rest to be equivalent to the promise of a city to come (11:15–16), which is ostensively named as Zion in 12:22. In Ps 131:13–14LXX and Isa 66:1, Zion is denoted as God's resting place (κατάπαυσις). Jewish apocalypticism also manifests prominently how entry into God's rest is equivalent to entry into the heavenly homeland (4 Ezra 7:36–38; 8:52; 2 Bar. 73:1; 1 En. 39:4–5; 45:3; T. Dan 5:12; Rev 7:15).[350] If these texts, or traditions associated with these texts more broadly, comprised the mutual cognitive environment of Hebrews and the audience, then "rest" would be conceived as the heavenly Zion. Accordingly, Wray is incorrect to claim that "no texts in Heb suggest that the author made a connection between REST or even God's REST and the heavenly city."[351]

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[348] Philip A.F. Church, "'Here We Have No Lasting City' (Heb 13:14): The Promised Land in the Letter to the Hebrews," in *The Gospel and the Land of Promise: Christian Approaches to the Land of the Bible*, ed. Philip A.F. Church et al. (Eugene: Pickwick, 2011), 54.
[349] Jon C. Laansma, *"I Will Give You Rest": The Rest Motif in the New Testament with Special Reference to Mt 11 and Heb 3–4*, WUNT 2/98 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 282; Hofius, *Katapausis,* 51–53.
[350] Jody Barnard, *The Mysticism of Hebrews: Exploring the Role of Jewish Apocalyptic Mysticism*, WUNT 2/331 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 181–82.
[351] Wray, *Rest*, 93.

The correlation between God's rest in Gen 2:2 and Zion is also supported by the connection made between Zion and Eden in the OT and Second Temple literature. The OT describes both Eden and Jerusalem as being the source of life-giving waters (Gen 2:10; Isa 36:8–9), and depicts Jerusalem as being like Eden (Isa 11:6–9; 51:3; Ezek 28; 40–48). This is also reflected in pseudepigraphical literature. Eden is either depicted in proximity to Zion, or as actually including Zion. Adam was said to have been created from the dust of Mt Zion (LAE), lived on Zion (Tg. Ps.-J. 3), and was buried there (Apoc. Mos. 40:6; *Vita* 45:2). Adam also has a house of prayer (Apoc. Mos. 5:3; *Vita* 30:2) and an altar (Apoc. Mos. 33:4) at Zion. In 1 En. 26:1–2, Enoch goes to the middle of the earth where Jerusalem is, yet it also has a stream flowing from it in a manner reminiscent of Eden. T. Dan 5:12–13 connects Eden with the new Jerusalem.[352] The extensive traditions associating Zion with Eden presumably form part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory, allowing them to draw the implicature that entry into God's rest is also entry into Zion.

The heavenly temple. Church defines the rest more specifically as the heavenly temple.[353] Whilst there is a sustained correlation between rest and the temple in Ancient Near Eastern literature, the emphasis in Hebrews is less on heaven as a temple-dwelling and more explicitly on the *city* that is to come (11:16; 12:22; 13:14). Similarly, Rowland points out that the eschatological restoration of Zion was conceived in terms of a new Jerusalem but sometimes with no new temple.[354] For instance, Isa 51:3–8 looks forward to "a new Eden where God's presence extends through the earth."[355] Therefore, whilst we can equate the rest with Zion, as Kibbe suggests, "it is not *quite* accurate to equate the rest into which we enter with the heavenly Holy of Holies…Rather, it is the eschatological realm in which boundaries

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[352] See Lois K. Fuller Dow, *Images of Zion: Biblical Antecedents for the New Jerusalem,* NTM 26 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010), 112–14.
[353] Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 323. Likewise, Hofius argues that Hebrews is referring to the holy of holies in the heavenly temple (*Katapausis,* 53–54).
[354] C.C. Rowland, "The Second Temple: Focus of Ideological Struggle?" in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel*, ed. W. Horbury, JSNTSup 48 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 186. See Rev 21:22; Ezek 40:2, 48:35; Jer 3:17–18; Isa 4:5–6; 66:2, 12–14, 20–23; 1 En. 89.50, 73.
[355] Gary Yates, "Isaiah's Promise of the Restoration of Zion and Its Canonical Development," *LBTS Faculty Publications and Presentations* 231 (2009): 23.

between sanctuary and cosmos no longer apply."[356] More decisively, the absence of temple language and the extensive discussion of the tabernacle suggests that, for Hebrews, the temple is not relevant for the audience (as will be discussed later). Therefore, it is in Zion that the audience will experience rest.

Ps 94LXX affects how one reads the Pentateuchal wilderness accounts (4:6–8)

From the assumption that Ps 94LXX was written by David (as the LXX subscription states) long after the exodus events and wilderness wanderings and appeals to "Today" as the time to heed God's voice, Hebrews infers that rest cannot be a reference to a past event but remains open in the present. This has the cognitive effect of contradicting an existing assumption since the OT narrative states that God gave rest to David from his enemies and that the earthly temple was associated with rest (2 Sam 7:1, 11; 1 Kgs 5:4; 8:56). The resulting implicature is that the succeeding generations of the people of God have not yet entered God's rest.

This is reinforced in 4:8, which states that, if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken later about another day. The implicature is that Joshua did not give the Israelites rest, and again would have the cognitive effect of contradicting and then eliminating an existing assumption since the biblical narrative asserts to the contrary that Joshua did bring rest to Israel (Deut 3:20; 5:33; 12:10; 25:19; Josh 1: 12, 15). Hebrews can make such an assertion because it has already modified the audience's cognitive environment so that they associate the rest that is to be entered, not with Canaan, but with God's rest in Zion. Yet, for Hebrews, this finds its basis in the statements of the Spirit spoken in scripture.

A Joshua-Jesus typology (4:8)?

Is it possible that the audience would initially disambiguate the reference to Ἰησοῦς as Jesus, before understanding it to refer to Joshua, as some scholars claim?[357] If so,

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[356] Kibbe, *Godly Fear,* 181n163 (italics in original).

[357] Whitfield, *Joshua Traditions*, 248; Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology*, 96; Thomas Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2015), 143; Jean Héring, *L'Épître aux Hébreux* (Switzerland: Delachaux & Niéstlé, 1954); Attridge, *Hebrews*, 130 (although Attridge concedes that a Joshua-Jesus typology "is not exploited here").

the implicature would be: "While Joshua, the 'Jesus' of the Old Testament, was unable to bring the Israelites fully into the realization of the promises made by God, the Jesus of the New Testament did accomplish this."[358]

It is unlikely that the audience would infer a reference to Jesus initially but then realise Hebrews is referring to Joshua.[359] The context of 4:8 ostensively situates the audience in the wilderness period: thus a reference to Joshua, the leader of the Israelite generation, is the most relevant referent for Ἰησοῦς and requires the least processing effort. This observation, combined with the lack of Christological references in the immediate context, makes it only minimally likely that the audience would find a Christological reference relevant for understanding 4:8. Hebrews does not ostensively connect Joshua and Jesus based on their name.[360] Isaacs, whilst denying an explicit Joshua typology, concedes that it is possible that there was an "unconscious one."[361] Hence, it could be a weak implicature deduced by some audience members as opposed to an ostensive comparison between the two. In fact, as I will suggest in 4:10, there is an implicit contrast between Jesus and Joshua: Joshua did not lead the Israelites into their rest, but Jesus has entered his rest, giving the readers incentive to make every effort to go where he has gone ahead of them.

A σαββατισμός remains for the people of God (4:9)

In 4:9, Hebrews describes this rest not as a κατάπαυσις, but as a σαββατισμός: how would the audience understand these terms to relate to each other? BDAG simply treats σαββατισμός as a synonym of κατάπαυσις.[362] Since both κατάπαυσις and σαββατισμός are said to remain (4:6, 9), σαββατισμός is to be understood in relation to God's rest; however, for v.9 to be relevant, it cannot be a synonym since a synonym would not come with any additional cognitive effects. Because σαββατισμός is such a rare word, not found in the LXX or elsewhere in the NT, the audience must exert more

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[358] Donald A. Hagner, *Encountering the Book of Hebrews: An Exposition* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 74.
[359] Rightly Zev Farber, *Images of Joshua in the Bible and Their Reception*, BZAW 457 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 279.
[360] Ibid., 283.
[361] Isaacs, *Sacred Space*, 82.
[362] BDAG, s.v. "σαββατισμός."

processing effort to understand the term.[363] The related term σαββατίζειν, which occurs throughout the LXX, refers to the Sabbath,[364] suggesting that the audience would understand σαββατισμός to connect to the Sabbath, yet, since it remains, it takes on an eschatological connotation (Isa 58:13–14; 66:23; Jer 17:19–27). The implicature that arises is that rest is not just a place, but a place of celebration,[365] in anticipation of the festal gathering that occurs at Zion (Heb 12:22–24). As Lane surmises, "[V]v.9–10 anticipate the festival of the priestly people of God in the heavenly sanctuary, celebrating in the presence of God the eternal Sabbath with unceasing praise and adoration."[366]

The one who entered his rest: Christ or the audience (4:10)?

In 4:10, Hebrews does not furnish a referent to ὁ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν αὐτοῦ: would the audience understand it to refer to themselves, or would they discern a reference to Christ?[367] The absence of any ostensive Christological reference in 4:10 is the usual reason why scholars dispute that Christ's entry into rest is meant. For instance, Ellingworth remarks, "[I]t is difficult to understand why, if the author had wished to speak of Christ's entry into God's place of rest, he should not have done so plainly."[368]

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[363] Philip Goodwin, *Translating the English Bible: From Relevance to Deconstruction* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2013), 85.

[364] Hughes, *Hebrews*, 160–161n67. From this connection, Erhard H. Gallos concludes that Hebrews is exhorting the audience to observe the earthly Sabbath ("Katapausis and Sabbatismos in Hebrews 4" [unpublished PhD diss., Andrews University, 2011], 237). However, it is unclear how the earthly Sabbath can be a future promise. Further, it undermines the correspondence between the audience and Israel, whose disobedience prevented them from entering the Promised Land.

[365] Laansma, *I Will Give You Rest*, 283; Hofius, *Katapausis*, 102–15.

[366] Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 102. *Contra* Wray, *Rest*, 82.

[367] Daniel Lanzinger suggests that Hebrews exploits the ambiguity of 4:10 so that the audience discern that Jesus' entry into rest correlates with their own entry ("'A Sabbath Rest for the People of God' [Heb 4.9]: Hebrews and Philo on the Seventh Day of Creation," *NTS* 64 [2018]: 99). Likewise, Kleinig suggests there is a double sense here (*Hebrews*, 206). However, in 4:11, Hebrews ostensively tells the audience to enter so they would not need to process v.10 as a double-entendre.

[368] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 257; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 211.

Against Wray's contention that 3:7–4:11 is simply a sermon illustration with no reference to Christ,[369] Moore argues that 4:10 is Christological in focus,[370] and many of his insights cohere with RT.

First, the participle is in the singular, whereas Hebrews uses the plural verb for the audience's entry (vv.9, 11), suggesting they would infer a reference to a singular person, rather than understanding it to be a reference to themselves.

Second, Hebrews' use of the aorist elsewhere in Heb 4 refers to past events: God "rested" from his works of creation (v.4) and Joshua did not "give rest" to the Israelites (v.8), implying that the audience would not perceive the aorist to be gnomic but an entry that occurred in the past. If Hebrews wanted to make manifest that the audience is in view, using the present tense would have been more appropriate, as in 4:3, 9. The choice of the aorist participle in v.10 allows the audience to view the entry into rest as a completed, not a progressive, action.

Finally, the presence of γάρ in v.10 leads the audience to expect the reason or cause for v.9,[371] but, on the traditional rendering, v.10 does not do this: it simply explains the σαββατισμός further. Hebrews' argument runs like this: Joshua did not give the Israelites rest (v.8); rest therefore remains open in the present (v.9); how this is so is explained as "*because* someone has entered rest and rested from his works" (v.10). In fact, if 4:10 refers to the audience, it would not garner any additional cognitive effects since 4:11 ostensively exhorts them to enter the rest. The audience likely would infer that Jesus has entered the rest as a precursor to the audience.[372]

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[369] Wray, *Rest*, 94.
[370] Nicholas J. Moore, "Jesus as 'The One Who Entered His Rest': The Christological Reading of Hebrews 4.10," *JSNT* 36 (2014): 383–400; Bryan J. Whitfield, "The Three Joshuas of Hebrews 3 and 4," *PRSt* 37 (2010): 26; Dominique Angers, *L'"Aujourd'hui" en Luc-Actes, chez Paul et en Hébreux: Itinéraires et associations d'un motif deutéronomique,* BZNW 215 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2018), 425; Massonnet, *Hébreux*, 123.
[371] Sim notes that γάρ "supports statements or arguments that have gone before" (*Relevant*, 88).
[372] Moore, "Christological Reading," 389–91.

Out of 4:10's implicit reference to Christ, 4:11 draws a motivation for the audience's striving. Because Jesus has entered his rest, the audience is to make every effort to enter after him, following his example of obedience and not following the example of the disobedient wilderness generation. Therefore, the audience has hope that the rest can be entered.

Rest: a present or future reality?

Would the audience infer from Hebrews' cumulative discussion of rest that it is a present reality, a proleptic experience that will be consummated in the future, or a solely future reality? I will address the arguments for each of these considerations in turn.

Present

Very few scholars maintain that Hebrews is referring to a solely present experience of rest. The argument of those that do hinges on the present tense verb εἰσερχόμεθα (4:3). For Westcott, the present tense of εἰσερχόμεθα reflects "the expression of a present fact."[373] Likewise, Lane concludes, "Consequently, the bold assertion…'for we do enter that rest,' implies more than proleptic enjoyment of what God has promised. The present tense of the verb is to be regarded as a true present and not simply viewed as future in reference. God's promise is predicated upon reality, and believers are already to enjoy the rest referred to in the quotation of Ps 95:11."[374] This assumption, however, is unconvincing given that the Greek present tense encodes aspect and not time; the present tense, in this case, need not simply refer to a present experience. More significantly, a solely present expression of rest fails to account for the emphasis given to the future prospect of the rest that remains (4:6, 9) and is still to be entered (4:11); both Westcott and Lane, although contending for a present experience of the rest, still concede a future dimension to the rest.

Proleptic Present

Faced with the difficulty of squaring the present tense of εἰσέρχομαι with the verses which stress a future orientation to the rest, most scholars understand the rest to be a

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[373] Westcott, *Hebrews*, 95.
[374] Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 99.

realised eschatological reality that can be experienced in part now but is only entered into fully in the future.[375] However, scholars dispute what the present dimension to rest is. Lincoln suggests that the audience's faith "makes real in the present that which is future, unseen, or heavenly. This is why those who have believed can be said to enter the rest already."[376] Alternatively, Schenck proposes that to enter God's rest in the present is associated with the present sanctification of believers that Christ has already accomplished (9:14; 10:14).[377]

Could any of these implicatures be reasonably derived from the context evoked thus far by the discourse? This is doubtful: it is unlikely the audience would deduce the implicature that, by having faith, they have entered rest since Heb 11:39–40 goes on to imply that rest is not currently possessed by the faithful of old. Indeed, recursive reading suggests that rest is part of a matrix of terms to describe the heavenly city, the city without foundations, which lies in the future. Nor can the topics of sanctification broached in 9:14 or 10:14, which come later, be inferred from Hebrews' language here, since these notions are absent from the discussion of rest. Even on recursive reading, it is unlikely that the audience would infer the implicature that their sanctification constitutes present rest. The two are never equated in Hebrews. Indeed, the distance between Heb 3:7–4:11 and Heb 9:14, 10:14 is sufficient to make relevant connections between them unlikely.

Future

Might the audience infer, instead, that rest is a solely future prospect? Some scholars suggest this,[378] and I contend, from Hebrews' argument so far, that they are correct.

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[375] This position is held by David A. deSilva, "Entering God's Rest: Eschatology and the Socio-Rhetorical Strategy of Hebrews," *TJ* 21NS (2000): 30; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 126.

[376] Andrew T. Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology in the New Testament," in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation*, ed. D.A. Carson (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1999), 211; Allen, *Hebrews*, 275.

[377] Schenck, *Cosmology and Eschatology*, 62.

[378] Koester, *Hebrews*, 270; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 246; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 205; Richard B. Gaffin Jr., "A Sabbath Rest Still Awaits the People of God," in *Pressing Toward the Mark: Essays Commemorating Fifty Years of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*, ed. C.G. Dennison and R.C. Gamble (Philadelphia: The Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1986), 33–51.

Laansma, in particular, lists seven observations that, cumulatively, give credence to the view that rest is a future reality:[379]

(1) As noted above, the present tense of εἰσέρχομαι does not necessitate a present action but could be future-referring. Verbs of motion, even when in the present tense, often have a future frame of reference to them if required by the context (Matt 17:11; John 14:3; 1 Cor 16:5).[380] Even if a continuous present were meant, as most scholars think, Moore is right to point out that "the continuous reading of εἰσερχόμεθα stops short of saying that believers enter rest in the present."[381] The present, therefore, likely has progressive force, implying the audience's ongoing perseverance as they journey towards their future rest.

(2) Whilst 4:3a uses the present tense, it is hortatory in its purpose, serving to exhort the audience to perseverance as opposed to making a statement of theological fact.

(3) The metarepresentation of Ps 94LXX and the appeal to the wilderness generation implies that there was a "corporate entrance" into the rest, suggesting too that the audience, like their ancestors, is to press onward "*as a group* toward the ultimate goal of entering God's *κατάπαυσις*."[382]

(4) The description of the rest as a promise that remains (4:1) implies that it is a future hope.

(5) The exhortation that the audience "make every effort to enter" (4:11) suggests that the entering does not occur in the present but the future.

(6) If the readers experience rest in the present, they must understand the "works" of 4:10 to refer to "dead works" or "self-justifying works," yet that is not an obvious inference to make from Hebrews' language.[383] Hebrews' emphasis is

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[379] Laansma, *I Will Give You Rest*, 305–10.

[380] Jon C. Laansma, *The Letter to the Hebrews: A Commentary for Preaching, Teaching, and Bible Study* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 106n4; Stanley D. Toussaint, "The Eschatology of the Warning Passages in the Book of Hebrews," *Grace Theological Journal* 3 (1982): 71.

[381] Nicholas J. Moore, "'In' or 'Near'? Heavenly Access and Christian Identity in Hebrews," in *Muted Voices of the New Testament: Readings in the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews*, ed. Katherine M. Hockey, Madison N. Pierce, and Francis Watson, LNTS 587 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 189.

[382] Also noted by deSilva, *Perseverance*, 154.

[383] Wray, *Rest*, 79.

on believers moving away from dead works to do good works, suggesting the audience would understand "works" to be good works.

(7) Hebrews' argument is oriented towards the end times (3:14). In fact, the structural correspondences between Heb 4:3–11 and 10:32–39, where the latter exhorts the audience to persevere in endurance that they may receive the future promise, would seem to imply that 3:7–4:11 is also to be understood with a future frame of reference, at least on repeated readings of the epistle.[384]

These observations suggest the audience would infer a future connotation to the rest.

Despite these points, Laansma takes 6:4–6 and 12:22–24 to be conclusive that Hebrews discerns a present dimension to the heavenly rest: "It does seem strange that elsewhere in the epistle he would think in such vivid terms of a present participation in the heavenly world, but think of entrance into the same place *qua κατάπαυσις* as only an eschatological-future event."[385] Yet Laansma's disclaimer is problematic: not having occurred yet, these passages provide no relevant background here against which to understand the rest; and even on recursive reading, they do not support a present dimension to "rest."

The thrust of Hebrews' warning is that one could conceivably experience heavenly realities such as enlightenment, salvation, and participation in the Holy Spirit and yet fall away, with the implication that they will not enter the heavenly rest in the future. In actuality, the experience of spiritual gifts in the present (6:4–6) does not guarantee entry into the final rest (6:7–8).

Furthermore, Hebrews does not present the audience as already participating in worship on Mt Zion, but as having approached it: they are on the verge but have not entered. As deSilva observes, "Strategically, the author of Hebrews consistently places the hearers at the threshold of entering their great reward (see also 10:19–23, 35–39), assuring them of its present *reality*…but not of its present availability."[386] In

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[384] Drawing from the observation of George H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 136.
[385] Laansma, *I Will Give You Rest*, 310. Similarly, Schreiner argues against an exclusively future rest on the basis of 12:22 (*Hebrews*, 137n190).
[386] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 156.

fact, Hebrews' use of προσέρχομαι, not εἰσέρχομαι, signals that, while the audience draws near to God, they themselves have not entered behind the curtain into the inner sanctuary (6:19–20; 9:12, 24–25).[387]

The audience's relationship to the wilderness generation

This raises the question: how exactly does the audience understand their situation to correspond to Israel's at this point in the discourse? Although Spicq argues that Hebrews' use of Ps 94LXX "presupposes *an exact correspondence* between the successive generations of the people of God,"[388] there is evidence for a continuity sufficient to make the analogy work, but also for a discontinuity in the detail of the two situations.[389]

Continuity

From the discourse, the audience can discern the following similarities between themselves and the Israelites. The Israelites are their fathers (3:9), and they both are the seed of Abraham (2:16). Both the Israelites and the audience of Hebrews are members of the household of God (3:6). Both have heard good news (4:2).[390] The rest that awaits them is the same: Zion. They are "in a *geographically* analogous situation – on the threshold of the Promised Land."[391]

Discontinuity

As the discourse progresses, however, their differences become more marked. Jesus is their mediator, one who is superior to Moses. The readers are partakers with Christ (3:14), not with Joshua and Caleb. The audience is not under the old covenant, but the

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[387] Moore, "Heavenly Access." *Contra* Scott D. Mackie, "'Let us draw near...but not too near: a critique of the attempted distinction between 'drawing near' and 'entering' in Hebrews' entry exhortations," in *Listen, Understand, Obey: Essays on Hebrews in Honor of Gareth Lee Cockerill*, ed. Caleb T. Friedeman (Eugene: Pickwick, 2017), 17–36.

[388] Spicq, *Hébreux*, 2:71 (italics added).

[389] Peter E. Enns, "The Interpretation of Psalm 95 in Hebrews 3:1–4:13," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSNTSup 148 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 355.

[390] James W. Thompson, "Insider Ethics for Outsiders: Ethics for Aliens in Hebrews," *ResQ* 53 (2011): 211–12.

[391] Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology*, 61 (emphasis original).

new: the Lord will put his laws into their minds and hearts (8:8–12). The trajectory that the audience is on is not to Sinai or Canaan, but to the eschatological city of Zion. McKelvey observes that Hebrews refers not so much to "the general peripatetic character of Israel in its formative period but the eschatological pilgrimage to Zion."[392] They are not encamped at Kadesh-Barnea, nor are they placed "earlier in the story to a point before Israel disobeyed,"[393] but they are at the threshold of Mt Zion (12:22–24).

Waiting or wandering in the wilderness?

Would the audience draw the implicature that they are to wait or wander in the wilderness? Käsemann, as the title of his book asserts, emphasises that the audience is journeying through the wilderness.[394] In support of Käsemann's thesis, there are a number of movement verbs in the immediate context and the rest of Hebrews: the present tense εἰσερχόμεθα (4:3), as noted above, denotes a progressive entering; the repeated exhortations to draw near (4:16; 7:25; 10:1, 22; 11:6) imply motion towards the heavenly tabernacle or the presence of God; the audience is being led to glory (2:10); they are to advance (6:1), press on and stir up one another to good works (10:24–25); the cloud of witnesses in Heb 11 is described as moving towards the heavenly homeland; the audience is to strive towards the Promised Land (12:1), strengthen their weak hands and knees on the highway of holiness towards Zion (12:12–13), pursue peace and holiness (12:14); they are to go outside the camp (13:13). Furthermore, the tabernacle, which governs how the audience is to relate to God in the present, suggests that the audience is not static since it is a moveable tent that accompanied the Israelites as they journeyed through the wilderness.

Against Käsemann, Hofius contends that Hebrews emphasises the audience's waiting, stressing a Jewish apocalyptic background to Hebrews' thought.[395] He argues that the point of comparison between Israel and the audience is the threat of apostasy, not the

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[392] R.J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 151.
[393] Against Moffitt, "Wilderness Identity," 169n30.
[394] Käsemann, *Wandering People*.
[395] Hofius, *Katapausis*, 149–50. Similarly, in light of 9:28, Moffitt understands the audience to be waiting for the return of their Ἰησοῦς ("Wilderness Identity," 169n29).

years of wandering in the wilderness, as they wait for Jesus' return. Hebrews' statement that they have approached Mt Zion (12:22) supports this – the perfect tense can imply a state of being.[396] The audience is described as those who wait for the return of Jesus (9:28) and as those who wait for the Day to draw near (10:25). Grässer, in response, concedes that the notion of waiting is prevalent in 3:7–4:11, but, in support of Käsemann, supplies a number of reasons why we should conceive of the people of God as a wandering people. If Jesus is the forerunner (6:20), who opened up the way into the heavenly realm (10:19-22), the audience is to move towards the goal. Even the notion of the faithful seeking a heavenly homeland does not imply that they passively long for heaven, but that they actively strive towards it (11:16).[397]

On balance, Rissi comments, "Whether one wants to speak of the 'wandering' or 'waiting' people makes no big difference."[398] In light of the strength of both of these arguments, the audience would likely infer that they are both waiting and wandering.[399] As they wait for the Day to draw near (10:25) and for Jesus to return (9:28), they migrate towards the heavenly homeland. They are to press forward and not to "shrink back" (10:39). Oropeza also notes how "παρα-prefixed words frequently indicate movement away from God (3:8, 15–16; cf. 2:1; 6:6; 12:12; 13:9)."[400] Placing them on the precipice of entry gives Hebrews the immediacy necessary to exhort them to press forward and not to shrink back. So, both waiting and wandering are part of Hebrews' paraenetic intent. The waiting at the precipice reinforces the immediacy of the warning lest they fall short of the rest now, whereas wandering emphasises that the goal is still to be obtained and that the audience is not to be stagnant as they wait for the Day to draw near.

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[396] See Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: A&C Black, 1994), 21–22.
[397] Erich Grässer, "Das wandernde Gottesvolk zum Basismotiv des Hebräerbriefes," *ZNW* 77 (1986): 177–78.
[398] Rissi, *Theologie*, 17.
[399] Laansma, *I Will Give You Rest,* 310–14; Rissi, *Theologie*, 17.
[400] B.J. Oropeza, *Churches under Siege of Persecution and Assimilation: The General Epistles and Revelation* (Eugene: Cascade, 2012), 28–29.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an analysis of 3:1–4:11. In these verses, Hebrews compares Jesus with Moses and draws an analogy between the audience and the wilderness generation. Both Jesus and Moses are faithful over God's house; but Moses is a servant, whereas Jesus is a Son. The comparison between these wilderness leaders leads to discussion of the wilderness generation and the audience. Like the wilderness generation, the audience is to enter into (future) rest, but this rest is in Zion, not Canaan. Jesus, however, has already entered into this rest ahead of the audience.

Chapter 5: Heb 5–7

Introduction

This chapter evaluates Heb 5–7 and, in particular, how Hebrews metarepresents Pentateuchal texts in relation to Jesus' high priesthood. At the same time, I will demonstrate the benefit of using RT as a control on intertextual possibilities as I examine whether Hebrews intends to metarepresent wilderness texts in its exhortation to the audience (5:11–6:8).

Heb 5:1–5

Metarepresentation of Pentateuchal priesthood

After describing Jesus as a sympathetic high priest, whose throne – the ark of the covenant on which the mercy seat sat in the holy of holies[401] – the audience can draw near to for help (4:14–16), Hebrews discusses why Jesus' priesthood is relevant, expanding on what was introduced in 2:17–18. Hebrews does this by describing the practices of high priests, leading the audience to deduce the implicature that what is true of high priests is true of Jesus. As high priest, he offers gifts and sacrifices for sins – metarepresenting a tradition recorded in Lev 4:1–5:13; 6:24–30; 8:14–17; 16:3–22 – and deals gently with the ignorant and wayward, the referent of which the audience may identify as those who commit unintentional sins (Lev 4:20; 5:21–22; Num 15:22–31; Deut 17:12),[402] since he himself has experienced weakness. Likewise, the high priest offers sacrifices for his own sins and then for the sins of the people. Some scholars assume the Day of Atonement is metarepresented here;[403] however, the language is so general that such a specific referent is unlikely to be inferred.[404] Like Aaron and his descendants, Christ does not appoint himself as high priest but is appointed by God, metarepresenting a tradition recorded in Exod 28:1, Num 3:10 and Num 18:1.

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[401] Isaacs, *Sacred Space,* 90; Barnard, *Mysticism,* 145; Benjamin J. Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult in Hebrews*, BZNW 222 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 100.
[402] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 158; E.V. McKnight and C.L. Church, *Hebrews–James*, SHBC (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2004), 118.
[403] Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 94; Moffatt, *Hebrews*, 63.
[404] Ellingworth, *Hebrews,* 227.

Hebrews' language leads to the implicature that Jesus' high priesthood is comparable to the high priests detailed in the Pentateuch,[405] unlike priests in recent history who did bestow the honour of priesthood on themselves. In the second century B.C.E., Jason and Menelaus became priests by bribing the king. Similarly, Antigonus gave a large sum of money to the Parthians during the Hasmonean Period (first century B.C.E.) so that he would be installed as high priest. This was a reality until the temple's destruction in 70 C.E.,[406] meaning that events like these presumably comprise part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory. Thus, as Dyer notes, a further implicature could be that Jesus is not self-serving like priests in recent memory.[407] On balance, however, Hebrews' concern is principally with the Pentateuchal account of priesthood and sacrifices (as will be demonstrated in our analysis of Heb 8–10), meaning that it is a weaker implicature. Most relevant from Hebrews' perspective is that Jesus is like Aaron and his priestly descendants, who were appointed by God (5:5).

Heb 5:11–14

After discussing how Jesus' sufferings qualified him to become high priest (5:5–10), Hebrews shifts topic to rebuke the audience for being dull of hearing.[408] This sudden shift has a pronounced rhetorical effect, compelling the audience to listen intently. Use

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[405] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 120; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 94; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 117; R.T. France, "Hebrews," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Hebrews–Revelation*, ed. T. Longman and D. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 75; Koester, *Hebrews*, 287; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 235; Bryan R. Dyer, "'One Does Not Presume to Take This Honor': The Development of the High Priestly Appointment and Its Significance for Hebrews 5:4," *CBW* 33 (2013): 140–41; W. Horbury, "The Aaronic Priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *JSNT* 19 (1983): 55; Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 186; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 186; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 271; Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 93; Windisch, *Hebräerbrief*, 42; Backhaus, *Hebräerbrief*, 195.

[406] Dyer, "High Priestly Appointment," 140–41; Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 94–95; France, "Hebrews," 75.

[407] Dyer, "High Priestly Appointment," 140–41.

[408] Most commentators agree that 5:11–6:20 is a digression (Michel, *Hebräer*, 231; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 297; Guthrie, *Structure of Hebrews*, 110; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 209–10). However, Ron Guzmán and Michael W. Martin have recently suggested that only 5:11–14 functions as *digresso*, while 6:1–20 is deliberative exhortation ("Is Hebrews 5:11–6:20 Really a Digression?" *NovT* 57 [2015]: 295–310). Others argue that it is not a digression (Fred B. Craddock, "Hebrews," in *The New Interpreter's Bible: Volume XII*, ed. Leander E. Keck [Nashville: Abingdon, 1998], 66; Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 144).

of the second person plural, involving them directly,[409] allows Hebrews to make "the previous challenges even more explicitly personal and relevant to the readers."[410] Although Hebrews has much to say about Jesus' priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, it is hard to explain because of their dullness of hearing. Whilst, by this stage, they should be teachers, they need to be re-taught the ABCs, or the basic elements, of the oracles of God – they need milk, not solid food. They are still children, unskilled in the word of righteousness – moral teachings, perhaps derived from Israel's scriptures.[411] They need to be trained so that they develop the maturity sufficient to discern what is good from evil. The resulting implicature is that they are immature.

Cognitive environments

General: Graeco-Roman philosophy

Hebrews' argument draws on teaching familiar in Graeco-Roman philosophy and Hellenistic Judaism, concepts that undoubtedly comprise part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory. In contemporary philosophical discussion, the imagery of "milk and solid food" served to distinguish between basic and advanced teachings. Philo, for instance, suggests that milk is the food of babies and suited for the time of childhood, but grown men should partake of solid food that leads to wisdom, temperance and virtue (*Agr.* 9). Epictetus also uses the analogy in order that his audience can comprehend the words of philosophers (*Diatr.* 2.16.39; 3.24.9). Similarly, Paul distinguishes between milk and meat to underscore the Corinthians' spiritual immaturity (1 Cor 3:2).[412] Furthermore, as Koester notes, a common goal of instruction in Graeco-Roman education was, as Heb 5:14b puts it, training to discern

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[409] Attridge suggests that this is a use of rhetoric and not a true condition of the audience (*Hebrews,* 158).

[410] Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 177. Guthrie notes it makes "a rhetorical impact" (*Structure of Hebrews,* 146).

[411] Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 202; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 138. The assumption that it refers to Christ being our righteousness finds no foundation in Hebrews' argument here. *Contra* Westcott, *Hebrews*, 138; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 191.

[412] Craig Allen Hill cautions against drawing a parallel between Heb 5:11–14 and 1 Cor 3 since Paul uses βρῶμα, not τροφή ("The Use of Perfection Language in Hebrews 5:14 and 6:1 and the Contextual Interpretation of 5:11–6:3," *JETS* 57 [2014]: 733). However, both texts, although using different language, most likely are drawing on the same trope.

good from evil (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 1.6.30–31).[413] So also every Sabbath, Jews were said to go to schools where righteousness and the "duties to God and men are discerned and rightly performed" (Philo, *Mos.* 2.216).[414] Given the rather general language, listeners are not being required to make extra cognitive effort by identifying any particular philosophy at work here: Hebrews' point is that they do not yet grasp advanced biblical teachings like those in 5:1–10.[415]

Many scholars assume the additional implicature that the audience is to be trained like athletes.[416] However, Hebrews does not make any such assumption manifest to the hearers. Hebrews specifies that it is the faculties – the organs of perception – that are to be trained, suggesting that γυμνάζω in this context refers, not to athletic exercise specifically, but to general training, as also in Plato, *Leg.* 1.626; *Gorg.* 514e; Strabo, *Geogr.* 14.2.19; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 1.26.3.

Additional: Israel in the wilderness

Would further processing of the phrase καλοῦ τε καὶ κακοῦ cause the audience to infer a metarepresentation of Num 14:32 or Deut 1:39? If so, a further implicature would be: they are to be like those Israelites in the wilderness who were trained to distinguish good from evil. Ellingworth supposes that it is "difficult to understand vv. 13f. without reference to Nu. 14:23, in a passage certainly used by Hebrews..., and the parallel Dt. 1:39,"[417] while Shaw, too, points out the similarity between these texts (see comparative table below).[418] Whilst one should not place too much weight on the audience discerning a specific metarepresentation of Num 14:23 or Deut 1:39 here,

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[413] Koester, *Hebrews*, 302.
[414] Ibid.
[415] For H.P. Owen, Hebrews conceives of the Christian life in three stages: beginner, progresser and perfect ("The 'Stages of Ascent' in Hebrews v.11–vi.3," *NTS* 3 [1956–57], 243–53). Attridge is right that Owen's argument "misapprehends the function of the complex metaphor" (*Hebrews,* 162). Indeed, Owen himself admits that Hebrews omits stage one and combines stages two and three, suggesting that such a three-stage development is not ostensive in Hebrews' argument.
[416] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 157; France, "Hebrews," 80; Thompson, *Hebrews*, 121.
[417] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 305.
[418] David A. Shaw, "Converted Imaginations? The Reception of Richard Hays's Intertextual Method," *CBR* 11 (2013): 237. However, Shaw also concedes that the ability to discern between good and evil is also prominent in Graeco-Roman sources.

since Hebrews uses different language, Num 14 does comprise part of the audience's cognitive environment as they interpret Hebrews' utterance here. Additionally, Hebrews' use of the phrase "dull of hearing" (5:11) may lead to the implicature that they are like the wilderness generation, who also failed to listen properly (3:7–11), without discerning a specific OT metarepresentation.[419] Furthermore, as will be detailed in 12:5–11, which shares the term γυμνάζω, the wilderness was seen as a training ground for God's people, suggesting that the collocation of training to discern good and evil is something that they are to endure in their wilderness period. The implicature that a wilderness background is relevant to 5:11–14 is thus made more plausible by its more ostensive role, later, in the background to 12:5–11 – even if the prevalence of discernment of good and evil as a motif in Jewish and Graeco-Roman texts generally invites caution.[420]

Deut 1:39	**Num 14:23**	**Heb 5:14**
καὶ πᾶν παιδίον νέον ὅστις οὐκ οἶδεν σήμερον *ἀγαθὸν* ἢ *κακόν* οὗτοι εἰσελεύσονται ἐκεῖ καὶ τούτοις δώσω αὐτήν καὶ αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν αὐτήν	ἦ μὴν οὐκ ὄψονται τὴν γῆν ἣν ὤμοσα τοῖς πατράσιν αὐτῶν ἀλλ' ἢ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῶν ἅ ἐστιν μετ' ἐμοῦ ὧδε ὅσοι οὐκ οἴδασιν *ἀγαθὸν* οὐδὲ *κακόν* πᾶς νεώτερος ἄπειρος τούτοις δώσω τὴν γῆν πάντες δὲ οἱ παροξύναντές με οὐκ ὄψονται αὐτήν	τελείων δέ ἐστιν ἡ στερεὰ τροφή, τῶν διὰ τὴν ἕξιν τὰ αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα ἐχόντων πρὸς διάκρισιν *καλοῦ* τε καὶ *κακοῦ*

Heb 6:4–6

Having exhorted the audience, in 6:1–3, to move on from the elementary teachings about Christ and to press on towards maturity, 6:4–8 depicts the consequences that

[419] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 255.
[420] Laansma, *Hebrews*, 139. Morna D. Hooker suggests that Isa 7:15 may be the background ("Christ, the 'End' of the Cult," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008], 194n15).

result if one does not persevere. These verses describe one who has fully participated in the believing community and the benefits associated with it, yet has fallen away. Of great interest to scholars has been whether this person is a genuine believer or not.[421] Our discussion has another focus: whether the audience would process the imagery here with respect to the OT wilderness generation.

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

There is disagreement as to whether the wilderness generation lies behind the language of 6:4–6. Some scholars discern a full-orbed reference to the wilderness generation in 6:4–6.[422] Mathewson, for instance, concludes, "The author's primary 'intertextual' quarry is the narrative accounts from Exodus and Numbers 13–14, overlaid with the lists from Nehemiah 9 and Psalms which recount what God did on behalf of his people."[423] On the other hand, many scholars are sceptical regarding such a background to the imagery here. Cockerill, for example, designates the metarepresentations proposed by Mathewson as "very tenuous."[424] In light of such divergent opinions concerning this text's interpretation, a more comprehensive methodology, such as RT provides, may gainfully be brought to the investigation.

Mindful of the pitfalls of the scholarly discussion – with parallelomania at one extreme and scepticism on the other – in what follows, RT will be used to evaluate the OT metarepresentations that have been proposed as underlying Heb 6:4–8. I will conclude that the most relevant contexts for readers are inner-textual: prior warnings and readers' Christian experience.[425] If prior context from Hebrews' own argument

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[421] See the summary in B.J. Oropeza, "The Warning Passages in Hebrews: Revised Theologies and New Methods of Interpretation," *CBR* 10 (2011): 81–100.

[422] Dave Mathewson, "Reading Hebrews 6:4–6 in Light of the Old Testament," *WTJ* 61 (1999): 209–25; Martin Emmrich, "Hebrews 6:4–6 – Again! (A Pneumatological Inquiry)," *WTJ* 65 (2003): 83–95; Randall C. Gleason, "The Old Testament Background of the Warning in Hebrews 6:4–8," *BSac* 155 (1998): 62–91; Coyne, "Wandering," 236–48; Allen, *Hebrews*, 381; Noel Weeks, "Admonition and Error in Hebrews," *WTJ* 39 (1976): 72–80.

[423] Mathewson, "Old Testament," 222.

[424] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 272n21.

[425] Coyne argues that, since the previous warning passages (2:1–4; 3:7–4:11) rely on OT wilderness texts, the same must be true here ("Wandering," 237–38). However, Cockerill dismisses such an argument as "*a fortiori*" since the reference to the

provides sufficient explanation, there is no need to seek justification in OT metarepresentations.

"Illumination" by the pillar of fire in the wilderness (6:4)?

Some scholars deduce the implicature that the term φωτισθέντας (6:4) metarepresents the pillar of light that illuminated the Israelites' path through the wilderness.[426] Support is garnered for this from the use of cognates of φωτίζω in later reflections of the event, recounted in Neh 9:12, 19 and Ps 104:39LXX.[427]

Neh 9:12	**Neh 9:19**	**Ps 104:39LXX**	**Heb 6:4**
τοῦ *φωτίσαι* αὐτοὺς	*φωτίζειν* αὐτοῖς	πῦρ τοῦ *φωτίσαι* αὐτοῖς	τοὺς ἅπαξ *φωτισθέντας*

Nevertheless, there is little indication that the audience could identify such an implicature. The LXX's use of φωτίζω is not limited to the fiery pillar in the wilderness but also refers more generally to illumination, whether literally denoting a lamp or light source, or in the metaphorical sense of receiving instruction.[428] Further, there is no imagery relating to the pillar of fire in the immediate context to make it manifest to the audience. In fact, ἅπαξ, which precedes the participle, would lead the audience to understand the experience of enlightenment as a one-off event, not an ongoing one analogous to the forty years that the Israelites were led by the fiery pillar.[429] Given the degree of processing effort required of the audience to make such a link, its relevance is low.[430]

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wilderness generation in the preceding warning passages is much more explicit (*Hebrews,* 273n22).

[426] Mathewson, "Old Testament," 215–16; Martin Emmrich, *Pneumatological Concepts in the Epistle to the Hebrews: Amtscharisma, Prophet, & Guide of the Eschatological Exodus* (Maryland: University Press of America, 2013), 57.

[427] Mathewson, "Old Testament," 216; Emmrich, *Pneumatological Concepts*, 57.

[428] *GELS,* s.v. "φωτίζω."

[429] Oropeza, *Churches under Siege*, 34.

[430] David A. deSilva suggests rightly that the linkage between "being enlightened" and the pillar of fire is forced ("Hebrews 6:4–8: A Socio-Rhetorical Investigation [Part 1]," *TynBul* 50 [1999]: 44n24). Schreiner, too, argues the parallel "seems too attenuated to be convincing" (*Hebrews,* 183).

Of much more relevance to the immediate context is the salvation which the audience has experienced. Enlightenment is "a common image for the reception of a salvific message."[431] Heb 10:32 uses the same term in just such a way. Only later will Heb 10:32 make its contribution to the audience's cognitive environment; nevertheless, its conceptual parallels with the present passage suggest that "enlightenment" connotes salvation here. In fact, this meaning could have already comprised part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory since the OT links "enlightenment" (φωτίζω) with "tasting" (γεύω) spiritual realities (Ps 33:6, 9),[432] and Eph 1:18 demonstrates that such an understanding was extant in early Christian communities. Indeed, while taking the verb to refer to the fiery pillar, Mathewson still has to concede, "The author's reference to 'enlightenment' here probably corresponds to 10:26: 'we have received knowledge of the truth' (cf. v.32)."[433] All of these considerations support the contention that the audience would understand the term against the backdrop of their salvation experience, a context much easier to access than that of the pillar of fire in the wilderness, and requiring minimal processing effort.

Tasting the heavenly gift of manna (6:4)?

Scholars who argue for a wilderness motif in these verses understand the referent of the heavenly gift (τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς ἐπουρανίου) to be the manna in the wilderness, since there are frequent references in the OT to manna being given from heaven (Exod 16:4, 15; Ps 77:24LXX; Ps 104:40LXX; Neh 9:15).[434]

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[431] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 169–70. Some scholars consider "enlightenment" to be a reference to baptism (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 162; Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 108). However, enlightenment and baptism did not come to be associated until the mid-second century C.E. (Syriac Peshitta and Justin Martyr), meaning the audience would not be able to access such a tradition (Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 141).

[432] Scott D. Mackie, "Early Christian Eschatological Experience in the Warnings and Exhortations of the Epistle to the Hebrews," *TynBul* 63 (2012): 98n11.

[433] Mathewson, "Old Testament," 215.

[434] Ibid., 217; Emmrich, "Hebrews 6:4–6," 84–85.

Exod 16:4	**Exod 16:15**	**Ps 77: 24LXX**	**Ps 104: 40LXX**	**Neh 9:15**	**Heb 6:4**
ἄρτους ἐκ *τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*	ὁ ἄρτος ὃν ἔδωκεν κύριος ὑμῖν φαγεῖν	ἄρτον *οὐρανοῦ* ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς	ἄρτον *οὐρανοῦ* ἐνέπλησεν αὐτούς	ἄρτον ἐξ *οὐρανοῦ* ἔδωκας αὐτοῖς	γευσαμένους τε τῆς δωρεᾶς *τῆς ἐπουρανίου*

Yet, as Mathewson must admit, Hebrews' terminology differs considerably from that of the OT metarepresentations which he sees underlying the text[435] – making it doubtful that the audience could process the phrase in connection with manna in the wilderness. Hebrews does not use ἄρτος or μάννα in its description of the heavenly gift, even though later in the homily there is an ostensive reference to μάννα (9:4), indicating that such vocabulary is at Hebrews' disposal. Moreover, the last instance of γεύομαι denoted Jesus' experience of death in all its fullness (Heb 2:9),[436] indicating that the use of the same term here does not have to entail the audience's literal tasting of the heavenly gift,[437] but, rather, their experience of it. Again, extensive processing effort is needed to ascertain any discernible cognitive effects, suggesting the audience would not draw the implicature that manna in the wilderness is metarepresented here. As Schreiner notes, the connection between the heavenly gift and the manna is not "terribly clear or illuminating."[438] Their personal experience of salvation is a more relevant context. While the exact referent of the heavenly gift may be difficult to ascertain, it is likely related to their sharing in a heavenly calling (3:1).

Sharing in the Holy Spirit like the wilderness leaders (6:4)?

The reference to sharing in the Holy Spirit (6:4) leads some scholars to infer a variety of metarepresentations: Num 11:16–30; Joshua and Caleb in Numbers; Neh 9:20; Isa 63:11; Hag 2:5. Mathewson discerns a metarepresentation of Num 11, where the

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[435] Mathewson, "Old Testament," 216.
[436] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 184.
[437] Against Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 293, the reference to tasting does not imply participation in the Eucharist (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 162).
[438] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 183.

seventy elders of Israel receive the Spirit so they can prophesy to the Israelites in the wilderness.[439] Nevertheless, the experience of the Spirit was a temporal one, whereas Hebrews' use of "partakers" suggests a fuller experience of the Spirit than that of the elders in Num 11.[440] Alternatively, Coyne considers that Hebrews metarepresents the depictions of Caleb and Joshua in the Kadesh-Barnea narrative. Caleb is said to have "a different spirit" (πνεῦμα ἕτερον, Num 14:24), while Joshua has "the Spirit in himself" (πνεῦμα ἐν ἑαυτῷ, Num 27:18).[441] However, Numbers' description of Caleb as one with a different spirit refers, not to the Holy Spirit, but rather to a different attitude (cf. Num 16:22; 27:16; Judg 15:19; 1 Kgs 20:5).[442] Additionally, Joshua and Caleb are faithful and enter the Promised Land, whereas those described here share in the Holy Spirit and still fall away. Neh 9:20 describes the Spirit's influence on the nation's leaders, not the Spirit's indwelling presence.[443] Similarly, the prophetic oracles in Isa 63:11 and Hag 2:5 do not denote the Spirit's dwelling within the people but the Spirit's presence in their midst. Whilst some prophetic texts do link the giving of the Spirit with new exodus motifs,[444] there is little indication that these passages are metarepresented here. Hebrews' general language makes any metarepresentation unlikely since extensive processing effort – for negligible cognitive effects – would be needed.

A more accessible context, requiring significantly less processing effort, is the audience's own experience of partaking of the Holy Spirit (2:4). Where μέτοχος is used elsewhere in Hebrews, the audience's contemporary experience is in view: believers partake in a heavenly calling (3:1) and in Christ, assuming they persevere to the end (3:14). If anything, their partaking of the Holy Spirit distinguishes them from the Israelites, who had the Holy Spirit in their midst but not within them.

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[439] Mathewson, "Old Testament," 217; Emmrich, *Pneumatological Concepts*, 58.
[440] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 272n21.
[441] Coyne, "Wandering," 241–43.
[442] James M. Hamilton, *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2006), 29n17.
[443] Ibid., 34.
[444] Rodrigo J. Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel: New Exodus and New Creation Motifs in Galatians*, WUNT 2/282 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 17–107.

Experiencing the good word of God (6:5)

Hebrews describes the word the audience have experienced as καλὸν…θεοῦ ῥῆμα: the good word of God.[445] Some consider this phrase simply to be a reference to the word of the Lord spoken in 2:1–4.[446] Listeners might process that, but, as the exact phrase καλὸν… θεοῦ ῥῆμα has not been used in Hebrews, grasping it seems to require extra processing effort. Some scholars draw the implicature that Hebrews is metarepresenting the covenant word that God makes with his people, twice described as the good word in Josh 21:45 and 23:15.[447] God's good word in the OT is typically associated with covenant blessings, or, more specifically, with covenant blessings experienced whilst living in God's Promised Land in contrast to covenant curses which lead to the unfaithful being removed from the land (cf. 1 Kgs 8:56b; Deut 30; 2 Sam 7:28).[448] Schreiner disputes this, considering the metarepresentation not to be "terribly illuminating or even closely matched in wording."[449] Yet, the use of the term "good word" may evoke the motif of God's good word contained in the OT, especially given the metarepresentation of the Deuteronomic blessings and curses in 6:7–8, the promise of rest in the Promised Land and the relationship with Israel in the wilderness (3:7–4:11). Therefore, the implicature deduced is that the good word is the covenant blessings experienced by the apostate, revoked when they are unfaithful.

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[445] Some scholars translate the phrase as "the goodness of the word of God" (Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 219; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 163; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 270–71). However, as Matthew McAffee acknowledges, the Greek does not describe the goodness of the word but refers to what they experience as the good word of God ("Covenant and the Warnings of Hebrews: The Blessing and the Curse," *JETS* 57 [2014]: 538).

[446] Jonathan Griffiths argues that the phrase refers to "God's cosmological and creative word which is experienced fully only in enjoying access to heaven, the pinnacle of the created cosmos" (*Hebrews and Divine Speech*, LNTS 507 [London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014], 103–04). However, the context is clear that this word is experienced in the present.

[447] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 244.

[448] McAffee, "Covenant and the Warnings of Hebrews," 541. Matthew McAffee, "The Good Word: Its Non-Covenant and Covenant Significance in the Old Testament," *JSOT* 39 (2015): 377–404.

[449] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 186.

Josh 21:49	**Josh 23:15**	**Heb 6:5a**
πάντων *τῶν ῥημάτων τῶν καλῶν*	πάντα *τὰ ῥήματα τὰ καλά*	*καλὸν* γευσαμένους *θεοῦ ῥῆμα*

Tasting the powers of the age to come in the wilderness (6:5)?

A link to the exodus generation is also alleged by Mathewson in the phrase "tasting the powers of the age to come," since they also saw God's powers in the wilderness (Exod 7:3; Deut 11:3; Num 14:11, 22; Ps 78:4, 11, 32, 43; 105:27; 106:21–22).[450]

Conceptually, however, the imagery is more likely to refer back to 2:4–5, which uses the same term "power" to refer to the audience's present experience. Further, the "coming age" (μέλλοντος αἰῶνος) is reminiscent of τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν (2:5). In the context of 2:1–4, the language of signs and wonders metarepresents the experience of the Israelites in the wilderness more ostensively than the terminology here. It is best to conclude that the audience is more likely to infer its understanding of Hebrews' language inner-textually, by recalling the earlier warning passage, than by searching for a relevant OT intertext.

Falling in the wilderness (6:6)?

A link back to the argument of 3:7–4:11, regarding the wilderness generation, occurs in 6:6, where Hebrews describes the person under consideration with the participle παραπεσόντας, after discussing the apostate as crucifying the Son of God.[451] Although a NT *hapax legomenon,* παραπίπτω is not totally foreign to Hebrews' argument: similar to ἀφίστημι (3:12), it is a stronger compound of the verb πίπτω used, in 3:7–

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[450] Mathewson, "Old Testament," 220.

[451] Leopold Sabourin thinks Num 25:4 underlies παραδειγματίζοντας ("'Crucifying Afresh for One's Repentance' [Heb 6:4–6]," *BTB* 6 [1976]: 267–68). However, the term's frequency in the LXX or elsewhere (Jer 13:22; Ezek 28:17; Dan 2:5; 3 Macc 7:14; Plutarch, *Curios.* 10) suggests that the audience would perceive a serious crime in re-crucifying the Son of God and holding him up to contempt without needing to infer anything as specific as Num 25:4 (noted by David W. Chapman, *Ancient Jewish and Christian Perceptions of Crucifixion,* WUNT 2/244 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008], 252n108).

4:11, to denote the fall of the Israelites in the wilderness.[452] Through it the audience would connect themselves to the wilderness generation, with the implicature that to fall away is to be like the disobedient wilderness generation, only worse – since the compound verb παραπίπτω must describe an experience worse than physical death (πίπτω, 3:17), namely, apostasy: for the new wilderness generation to apostatise would bring greater punishment.[453] These implicatures work inner-textually, requiring no alleged OT intertext to be inferred.

Heb 6:7–8

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Agricultural metaphor

In vv.7–8, Hebrews employs agricultural language,[454] contrasting the one who perseveres with the apostate. Those who do not fall away are like the land that is irrigated and produces a fruitful crop, receiving blessing from God. The apostate, in contrast, is compared to a land that bears thorns and thistles; consequently, it is worthless and cursed, and will be burned.

This language leads some scholars to assume that Hebrews is metarepresenting common agricultural imagery, with Héring and Bruce going as far to dismiss it as a sermon illustration with no argumentative purpose.[455] Agricultural imagery is likely to comprise part of the audience's cognitive environment since vegetation metaphors

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[452] Paul Ellingworth and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Letter to the Hebrews* (New York: UBS, 1983), 116.

[453] C. Adrian Thomas, *A Case for Mixed-Audience with Reference to the Warning Passages in the Book of Hebrews* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 152–53. Matthew David Larsen and Michael J. Svigel, reading this passage alongside the Didache's two-way catechetical pattern, argue that παραπίπτω refers, not to absolute apostasy, but to wandering from the path ("The First Century Two Ways Catechesis and Hebrews 6:1–6," in *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper and Clayton N. Jefford [Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015], 491–92). This does not account for the severity of the warning, nor the similar arguments in the succeeding warning passages (10:26–31; 12:15–17). Others who argue against apostasy include Gleason, "Hebrews 6:4–8," 79 and Allen, *Hebrews*, 381.

[454] Thompson, *Hebrews*; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 230; Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 221.

[455] Héring, *Hébreux*, 61; A.B. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The First Apology for Christianity: An Exegetical Study*, 2nd ed (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1908), 214.

were common in both Jewish and Graeco-Roman sources.[456] However, would the audience process the language simply as an agricultural metaphor? Allen notices how it is uncharacteristic of Hebrews to use an illustration that has no argumentative purpose: [457] this observation coheres with RT's supposition that an author desires to communicate something of relevance. Moreover, this is the only employment of an agricultural metaphor in Hebrews and the vocabulary used is not characteristic of Hebrews.[458] Finally, since it was agricultural practice to burn the land for renewal, not punishment,[459] the audience must process this unexpected use of the imagery in return for any discernible cognitive effects.

OT metarepresentations

In light of these observations, various OT metarepresentations have been postulated to account for the agricultural imagery: Gen 3:17; Isa 5:1–7; the Deuteronomic blessings and curses. These will be analysed in turn.

Gen 3:17. Scholars who infer a metarepresentation of Gen 3:17 note the correspondence between the curse and the thorns and thistles that grow on the land in both texts.[460] However, the divergences between the two texts are significant enough to rule out the implicature that Gen 3:17 is being metarepresented here. Hebrews does not borrow the precise language from the Genesis account, meaning such a context is harder for the audience to access. In fact, in Genesis, the land produces thorns and

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[456] Isa 5:1–7; 28:23–29; Ezek 19:10–14; Matt 3:10; 7:16; Pliny, *Nat.* 21.1; Philo, *Agr.* 9–18; Plato, *Resp.* 492A.
[457] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 127.
[458] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 326.
[459] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 127.
[460] Williamson, *Philo*, 234; C. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux. I, Introduction* (Paris: Gabalda, 1952), 332; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 223; A.T. Hanson, "Hebrews," in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars*, ed. D.A. Carson and H.G.M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 292; Susan Docherty, "Genesis in Hebrews," in *Genesis in the New Testament*, ed. Maarten J.J. Menken and Steve Moyise, LNTS 466 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012), 130–46; Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 110; France, "Hebrews," 84; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 143.

thistles when it is cursed, whereas, in Hebrews, the land is cursed because it yields thorns and thistles.[461]

Isa 5:1–7. Verbrugge argues that Isa 5:1–7 is metarepresented here.[462] Nevertheless, the language is not similar enough to Hebrews to enable such an implicature to be inferred. Isaiah's account refers primarily to vines and grapes and only mentions thorns, not thistles. Furthermore, like Gen 3:17, the thorns are a direct result of God's judgement, not a reason for divine punishment.

Deuteronomic blessings and curses. The language used by Hebrews might instead lead the audience to infer a metarepresentation of the Deuteronomic blessings and curses here.[463] Heb 6:7 resembles Deut 11:11–14, where the land drinks rain from heaven and produces an abundant harvest for Israel. Similarly, Heb 6:8 is reminiscent of Deut 11:17, which describes how YHWH's anger at idolatry will cause the rain to cease so that the land yields no crops and the disobedient Israelites ultimately perish (cf. Deut 29:23 also, where the land is burned). Most importantly, the language of blessing and cursing is fundamental to both the comparison of Heb 6:7–8 and Deut 11:26; 30:1.[464] Already in the discourse, Hebrews has drawn on Ps 94:7–11LXX, which reflects on the Deuteronomic account: both use the word "today" and warn against disobedience, so it is part of the audience's cognitive environment.[465] The cognitive effect of a Deuteronomic metarepresentation, here, would be to add knowledge: those who disobey like Israel will face covenant curses.

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[461] Thomas Kem Oberholtzer, "The Thorn-Infested Ground in Hebrews 6:4–12," *BSac* 145 (1988): 325.
[462] Verlyn D. Verbrugge, "Towards a New Interpretation of Hebrews 6:4–6," *CTJ* 15 (1980): 61–73.
[463] Craddock, "Hebrews," 78; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 173n90.
[464] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 130–31.
[465] Brent Nongbri, "A Touch of Condemnation in a Word of Exhortation: Apocalyptic Language and Graeco-Roman Rhetoric in Hebrews 6:4–12," *NovT* 45 (2003): 271n23; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 232. David M. Allen suggests that Hebrews' exposition of Ps 94:7–11LXX is influenced by Deuteronomy ("More than Just Numbers: Deuteronomic Influence in Hebrews 3:7–4:11," *TynBul* 58 [2007]: 129–49). Nevertheless, it is more likely that Ps 94LXX itself is Deuteronomic in nature, rather than Hebrews consciously drawing on Deuteronomy.

Cockerill, nevertheless, is sceptical of the connection between Heb 6:7–8 and Deuteronomy since the land burned in Deuteronomy is the Promised Land, whereas, in Hebrews, the land refers to the apostates who incur judgement.[466] But this objection does not invalidate our point about its relevance here. In the OT, there is a strong connection between the cursing of the land and the curses on the one who defects from the covenant. Furthermore, the blessing and cursing imagery of Deuteronomy was adapted by later apocalyptic authors, who considered the curses to fall on the disobedient, not on the Promised Land (Dan 9:11; Mal 2:2).[467] It appears that Hebrews is part of a tradition that sees the blessing and cursing imagery, and the reference to the land, of Deuteronomy in eschatological terms.[468] From this further implicatures may be deduced: apostasy is idolatry, and idolatry is akin to acting unfaithfully, like Israel in the wilderness.

Relationship between the audience and the wilderness generation in 6:4–8

In the above, I have shown it to be unlikely that Hebrews uses OT wilderness intertexts in vv.4–6: the Deuteronomic metarepresentation in vv.7–8 may influence the audience's grasp of vv.4–6, but no specific intertexts are involved in vv.4–6. Nonetheless, concluding remarks are in order concerning the inferred relevance of OT background generally.

Whilst in 6:4–8, unlike the previous warning passages, there is little hint of an *a fortiori* argument, Hebrews' argument continues to presuppose that the new covenant is greater than the old. Accordingly, several implicit comparisons arise between those described in Heb 3:7–4:11 and the people of God mentioned in 6:4–8, but mostly by inner-textual logic rather than by taking the participles of 6:4–6 to refer to the wilderness generation. Indeed, the links between the previous warning passages and Heb 6:4–8 heighten the consequences of apostasy for new covenant believers. Like the wilderness generation, they are on the verge of the Promised Land and have knowledge of the good word of God. Unlike the wilderness generation, they have

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[466] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 279n53. *Contra* Gleason, who sees a connection between the "land" that is burned and the curses on the Promised Land in Deut 28–29 ("Hebrews 6:4–8," 87).
[467] Nongbri, "Touch of Condemnation," 272.
[468] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 231.

experienced the fullness of the Spirit and the powers of the age to come. Therefore, to apostatise under the new covenant is much worse: those who do so will not only be denied entry into the Promised Land but will experience the covenant curses personally.

Heb 6:19–20

Hebrews goes on to assure the audience that better things – things pertaining to salvation – are true of them, before employing the experience of Abraham to illustrate the certainty of God's promises.[469] Although the audience is in exile, fleeing to God for refuge, they have assurance and hope. In 6:19–20, this hope is described as an anchor that enters behind the curtain into the holy of holies where Jesus has gone as a forerunner,[470] having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

The phrase τὸ ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος metarepresents the language used of the curtain that separated the holy of holies in the tabernacle from the holy place (Exod 26:33; Lev 16:2, 12). The resulting implicature is that Jesus enters the heavenly tabernacle in a similar manner to the Pentateuchal priests.

The specific event in view in these verses has been debated. Most scholars infer a reference to the Day of Atonement.[471] However, since 10:19–20 has the inauguration

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[469] Hebrews' assertion that God cannot lie may metarepresent Num 23:19 (Coyne, "Wandering," 252). However, this is a common tradition which recurs throughout the OT and later Jewish interpretation, including 1 Sam 15:29; *Num. Rab.* 22:20; Tanch. Num. blq 13 (David R. Worley, "God's Faithfulness to Promise: The Hortatory Use of Commissive Language in Hebrews," *ACU Brown Library Monograph Series* 1 [2019]: 109–10), suggesting that a general tradition, not a specific text, is metarepresented here.

[470] Whether anchor or hope penetrates beyond the curtain is a matter for debate. Backhaus concludes that the anchor enters, but it is also grammatically possible that hope enters since the anchor represents the hope (*Hebräerbrief*, 251).

[471] Westcott, *Hebrews*, 163; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 155; Michel, *Hebräer*, 253–54; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 116; Otfried Hofius, *Der Vorhang vor dem Thron Gottes: Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Hebräer 6,19 f. und 10,19 f.*, WUNT 14 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1972), 87–89; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 236; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 184–85; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 154; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 347; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 251n98.

of the sanctuary in view, Davidson argues that the same event is relevant here.[472] Nevertheless, 10:19–20 is not yet a relevant context against which to understand Hebrews' argument here. Furthermore, Jesus is described as high priest in 6:20, suggesting his entry behind the curtain correlates with the high priest's entry on the Day of Atonement. Hebrews' point here, however, is that Jesus has entered behind the curtain into the heavenly tabernacle, with no further description of what takes place during this entry, implying that the audience would not need to process the precise event in view. Thus, when this entry occurs is not relevant.

Some scholars also infer the implicature that, as πρόδρομος, Jesus is an athlete running a race.[473] However, whilst Hebrews mixes several metaphors that are difficult to understand, the absence of any athletic nuance in the context means that no such context is manifest to the audience. Instead, the audience would process the term in the sense of "a precursor, that is to say, one who goes on ahead in order to show the way or to pioneer on behalf of someone else."[474] As forerunner, Jesus "went on ahead of us in there for our benefit,"[475] an implicature that coheres with Heb 1:6, 2:10 and 4:10, but adds new knowledge by discussing the heavenly tabernacle, where Jesus acts as high priest (5:1–4).

Given its similarity to ἀρχηγός (2:10), would the audience draw the implicature from πρόδρομος that Jesus is a wilderness leader? Worley translates πρόδρομος as "scout" to echo the wilderness experience.[476] Similarly, Ounsworth connects Jesus' entry behind the veil with the Joshua typology he perceives in the epistle.[477] However, Hebrews' depiction here rests on its understanding of Jesus as high priest, not as

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[472] Richard M. Davidson, "Christ's Entry 'Within the Veil' in Hebrews 6:19–20: The Old Testament Background," *AUSS* 39 (2001): 179.
[473] Allen, *Hebrews*, 328; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 291; Koester, *Hebrews*, 330.
[474] L&N, s.v. "πρόδρομος." Otto Bauernfeind also notes, "The athletic race hardly calls for consideration" ("τρέχω, δρόμος, πρόδρομος," *TDNT* 8:235n3).
[475] L&N, s.v. "πρόδρομος."
[476] David R. Worley, "Fleeing to Two Immutable Things, God's Oath-Taking and Oath-Witnessing: The Use of Litigant Oath in Hebrews 6:12–20," *ResQ* 36 (1994): 230–31. Coyne suggests that Hebrews is influenced by Num 13:20 ("Wandering," 252–53). However, it is unlikely the audience would discern a metarepresentation of Num 13:20 here as it refers to the time before grapes come to fruition.
[477] Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology*, 131–72.

Joshua. Hebrews' dependence on the Pentateuch may influence the connection between Jesus' high priesthood and his leading of the new wilderness generation.

Assuming a close relation between πρόδρομος and ἀρχηγός, would the audience associate rest and glory with the heavenly tabernacle? Calaway suggests they "collapse into divine singularity."[478] It is clear that rest and the tabernacle are related. Jesus enters both the rest and the heavenly tabernacle. Rest was used of the place where the ark of the covenant resides (Ps 132:8, 13–14). Furthermore, the Day of Atonement, which centred on the tabernacle, was regarded as a Sabbath rest (Lev 16:31), although using different terminology to Hebrews. The description of the tabernacle has parallels with Gen 1:1–2:3,[479] and Second Temple literature also connects Eden with the cult and sanctuary (4Q500 1; 4Q265 7.2.11–17; 4Q421 11–12; Jub. 1:15–17). Yet, with different terms come different cognitive effects. Rest will be equated with Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem. More so, the audience "draw near" (προσέρχομαι) to this tabernacle, whilst they are in the process of entering (εἰσέρχομαι) their rest. It is possible that the audience would understand their drawing near to the tabernacle to be their present experience of relating to God, whereas their participation in the Sabbath rest of God is a future experience. Nevertheless, Hebrews does not extrapolate on the relationship between the Sabbath and the sanctuary; most relevant is that both are in the heavenly realm. Indeed, the audience would perhaps not even exert the processing effort required to understand the relationship between the two.

Heb 7:1–28

In Heb 7, Hebrews focusses specifically on Christ's priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek in contrast to Levitical priests. Since Heb 7's primary concern is Christ's Melchizedekian priesthood, there is less emphasis on the Pentateuchal

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[478] Jared C. Calaway, *The Sabbath and the Sanctuary: Access to God in the Letter of the Hebrews and Its Priestly Context*, WUNT 2/349 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 206.

[479] Gordon J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," in *"I Studied Inscriptions before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11,* ed. R.S. Hess and D.T. Tsumura (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 403.

wilderness narrative: wherever it surfaces, demonstrating Christ's superior priesthood remains the chief intention.

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Metarepresentation of Num 18:21 or contemporary practice (7:5)?

First, Hebrews' discussion of tithes metarepresents Num 18:21 in which the Levites were instructed by the Lord to gather Israel's tithes and then give a tithe of what they collected to Aaronic priests.[480] However, Hebrews diverges from Num 18 by underscoring that it is the Levitical priests who collect the tithes, not the Levites more generally. Some scholars consider that Hebrews is unaware of the distinction between priests and Levites.[481] However, this is unlikely given Hebrews' extensive knowledge of the OT. The audience may deduce the implicature that the contemporary practice of giving tithes directly to priests is metarepresented here (Jdt 11:13; Jub. 13:25–27; Philo, *Virt.* 95; Josephus, *Vita*, 80; Josephus, *A.J.* 20.181, 206–207).[482] Cockerill is unconvinced, noting that priests "collected tithes from all other Israelites either directly or through other Levites…There is no need to explain this usage by reference to contemporary practices according to which the priests collected tithes directly."[483] We must be cautious not to set OT and contemporary practice against one another since both have a place in the audience's encyclopaedic memory.[484] Regardless of the precise event in view, Hebrews wants the audience to infer that this has scriptural warrant: the law commands them to take tithes from the people.[485] But Hebrews' intention in this is to highlight the superiority of Melchizedek, who was paid tithes through Levi, still in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedek met him (vv.9–10).

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[480] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 178–79; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 211–12; Marie E. Isaacs, *Reading Hebrews and James: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Georgia: Smyth & Helwys, 2002), 93; Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 140; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 252; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 163.

[481] Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 140.

[482] Koester, *Hebrews*, 344; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 163; Isaacs, *Reading Hebrews and James*, 93; Massonnet, *Hébreux*, 195.

[483] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 308n55.

[484] Horbury, "Aaronic Priesthood," 52.

[485] Barry C. Joslin notes that "νόμος clearly refers to a specific Pentateuchal command in v.5" (*Hebrews, Christ, and the Law: The Theology of the Mosaic Law in Hebrews 7:1–10:18* [Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2008], 139n26).

Metarepresentation of Deut 33:7 or general Pentateuchal reference (7:14)?

Hebrews seems to metarepresent the Pentateuchal account in the assertion that Moses never discussed the priesthood in association with Judah. While some scholars see here a metarepresentation of Moses' blessing of Judah in Deut 33:7,[486] where no reference to priesthood having a lineage in Judah is found, the vagueness of the reference suggests instead that Hebrews' point is a general one: nothing written in the Torah associates the priesthood with the line of Judah. If Moses did not say anything about priests, then the audience would draw the implicature that there is no basis for a Judahite priesthood that Jesus could have descended from.

Metarepresentation of Num 24:17 or general reference (7:14–15)?

The use of the verbs ἀνατέλλω and ἀνίστημι, which bracket the reference to Moses, in vv.14–15 may metarepresent Num 24:17,[487] leading to the implicature that Jesus is the man that Balaam anticipated would arise from Judah. Whilst Hebrews has drawn on Numbers in its exposition of the wilderness generation, in Numbers, the star comes out of Jacob and Israel, not Judah specifically. The terms are also used to refer to the sun rising and are not distinctive to Num 24:17. Once again, the audience is unlikely to pick up something so specific.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed Heb 5–7, with specific reference to Jesus' priesthood and the audience's response to it. Hebrews is concerned chiefly with the Pentateuchal depiction of priesthood, not with the self-serving priests in recent memory (5:1–5). As high priest, Jesus enters behind the curtain into the heavenly tabernacle (6:19–20); the tithes that priests collected metarepresents Num 18; the absence of any reference to a Judahite priesthood is based on Hebrews' reading of the Torah. More importantly, I have shown how the methodology of RT brings criteria of plausibility and probability to bear on discussion of interpretive and intertextual possibilities. For the audience to

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[486] Robert P. Gordon, *Hebrews*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), 103; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 377.

[487] Philip A.F. Church, "'The True Tent Which the Lord Has Pitched': Balaam's Oracles in Second Temple Judaism and in Hebrews," in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in Its Ancient Contexts*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al., LNTS 387 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 155; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 320; France, "Hebrews," 97.

infer from the imagery of 6:4–6 the OT wilderness metarepresentations alleged by scholars is unlikely; yet the fate of the wilderness generation would still offer an analogy, with heightened consequences of apostasy for their own case.

Chapter 6: Heb 8–10

Introduction

This chapter discusses Heb 8–10 with specific reference to Jesus' high priestly activity in the tabernacle and his inauguration of the new covenant. In doing so, we will see how Hebrews uses not only Pentateuchal texts in depicting the tabernacle and sacrifices but also new exodus texts in discussing the new covenant.

Heb 8:1–5

Hebrews communicates ostensively to the audience, through the use of κεφάλαιον (8:1), the main purpose of this writing: we have a high priest, namely Jesus, who ministers in the holy places – the holy of holies – and in the true tent that the Lord, not man, established.[488] The resulting implicature is not that the earthly sanctuary is false,[489] but that the earthly tent – being man-made, in contrast to the "true" heavenly tent (8:2), pitched by the Lord – is not "true," possibly because only in the heavenly tabernacle was salvation achieved (9:24).[490]

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Num 24:6 (8:2)

Would further processing of the phrase ἔπηξεν ὁ κύριος yield the implicature that Hebrews is metarepresenting Num 24:6, which discusses the tents which the Lord

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[488] I take τῶν ἁγίων as referring to the holy of holies and τῆς σκηνῆς to the entire sanctuary. Some scholars consider these terms to be equivalent (Aelred Cody, *Heavenly Sanctuary and Liturgy in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Achievement of Salvation in the Epistle's Perspective* [St. Meinrad: Grail Publications, 1960], 165–66; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 452). However, Hebrews typically uses the plural of ἅγιος for the earthly holy of holies, reserving σκηνή for the whole tabernacle, and the correspondence between the earthly and heavenly tabernacles in Hebrews suggests that Hebrews infers that the heavenly tabernacle has two rooms. Ultimately, what is relevant for the audience is not that the heavenly tabernacle has two rooms but that it contrasts with the earthly tabernacle (Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice*, 105–06).

[489] Correctly noted by Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice*, 103.

[490] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 356. Some scholars understand "true" as a synonym for "eternal" (Lane, *Hebrews 9–13,* 205; Koester, *Hebrews* 374; Bruce, *Hebrews,* 182). However, Hebrews frequently uses αἰώνιος ("eternal") elsewhere (5:9; 6:2; 9:12, 14, 15; 13:20), but not of the tabernacle, whilst the description of a tent "pitched by the Lord" implies it is not eternal (Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 400–01; Jamieson, *Heavenly Offering*, 53).

pitched (σκηναί ἃς ἔπηξεν κύριος) in the wilderness? Opinions vary. Gordon suggests that it is a "purely verbal parallel,"[491] and Montefiore dismisses it as a passing reference.[492] On the other hand, Paul Ellingworth deems it "an *unquestioned allusion*,"[493] while Gheorghita suggests that this metarepresentation is significant, being evidence that Hebrews read the Greek OT, which differs from the Hebrew in its rendering of Num 24:6.[494]

Kleinig, nonetheless, is cautious in discerning an intertext here since Balaam's oracles describe many tents (σκηναί), not one, and because "Lord" lacks the definite article due to Balaam's polytheism.[495] However, later interpretations of Num 24 in the Targums understand the sanctuary in eschatological terms (Tg. Ps-J. Num 24:6; Tg. Neof. Num 24:6).[496] Tg. Neof. Num 24:6 writes, "Like the heavens which God has spread out, as the house of his Shekinah…so shall Israel live and endure forever beautiful."[497] More relevantly, Second Temple texts evidence a messianic understanding of the man who rises out of Jacob in Num 24:7, 17 (Zech 6:12; Pss. Sol. 17:21, 24; 1 En. 1.2–3; 4Q175; 1QM; Damascus Document 7:18–21; Philo, *Mos.* 1.264–300).[498] Therefore, Hebrews may have been influenced by later interpretations of the passage. Indeed, the frequency of references to Balaam's oracles in Second Temple literature may suggest that these interpretations comprise part of the encyclopaedic memory on which the audience could draw when interpreting this utterance.

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[491] Gordon, *Hebrews*, 109.
[492] Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 137.
[493] Paul Ellingworth, "New Testament Text and Old Testament Context in Heb. 12.3," in *Studia Biblica 1978: III. Papers on Paul and Other New Testament Authors*, ed. E.A. Livingstone, JSNTSup 3 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980), 92.
[494] Gheorghita, *Septuagint in Hebrews*, 82. Other scholars who see a metarepresentation of Num 24:6 include: David A. deSilva, "The Invention and Argumentative Function of Priestly Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *BBR* 16 (2006): 305; G.K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2004), 298; Church, "True Tent," 145–57; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 180n4; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 133; Windisch, *Hebräerbrief*, 66; Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 161.
[495] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 379.
[496] Jordi Cervera i Valls, "Ancient Targumic Tradition in Hebrews 8:2," *RCT* 35.2 (2010): 509–23.
[497] Beale, *Temple*, 124–25.
[498] Church, "True Tent," 150–54.

Although relevance is obtained without having to discern any metarepresentation of Num 24:6, further processing yields additional cognitive effects through implicature. The heavenly tent is "the eschatological counterpart of the archetypal Eden sanctuary and of the wilderness sanctuary that Balaam observed when he delivered his oracle."[499] Rest in Hebrews has already been defined in relationship to Eden; the heavenly tabernacle, therefore, may be the counterpart to this. Yet the two are distinct. The audience draws near to the heavenly tabernacle as they anticipate their entry into rest.

Priests in the tabernacle or the temple (8:3–4)?

Vv.3–4 draw an analogy between the earthly high priests who offer gifts and sacrifices and Jesus. Hebrews infers that, if Jesus is high priest, then he too must offer a sacrifice. That the sacrifice offered is himself is clear to the audience from the preceding discourse (7:27). The relevance of this is explicated in v.4: if he were on earth, he would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. The implicature deduced is that Jesus' priesthood is a heavenly one, and his sacrifice is presented in the heavenly tabernacle.[500]

Hebrews compares Jesus with serving priests; however, is current service in the temple or service in the tabernacle meant? For Church, it is the former, given Hebrews' use of the contrary-to-fact conditional clause with the imperfect tense-form. Hebrews' argument in v.4 is to be construed thus: Christ is now enthroned at the right hand of God as high priest, with the implication that the high priests who are offering sacrifices are doing so in the temple in the present.[501] However, the phrase "for every high priest

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[499] Ibid., 157.

[500] Georg Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes: Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Studie*, WUNT 2/212 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 249; Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection,* 220–21; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice*, 107–08. The language here points against the understanding held by some that Jesus was high priest on earth (e.g. Cody, *Heavenly Sanctuary,* 107, 177; Cockerill, *Hebrews,* 241–42). For an overview of differing opinions on Jesus' high priesthood, see R.B. Jamieson, "When and Where Did Jesus Offer Himself? A Taxonomy of Recent Scholarship on Hebrews," *CBR* 15 (2017): 338–68.

[501] Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 272.

is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices" (8:3) recalls the same phrase in Heb 5:1. As noted earlier, 5:1–4 is concerned, not with contemporary priests, but with the OT priesthood. In light of this intra-textual link, the audience would likely draw the implicature that Hebrews is comparing Jesus with past priests serving in the tabernacle, not priests presently serving in the temple. When one adds the fact that Greek tense forms grammaticalise aspect not time, then the audience might process the contrary-to-fact conditional not as a fact that is happening in present time, but as a general statement that has no "temporal relation to the referential world."[502] Indeed, 8:7 also uses the contrary-to-fact conditional construction to contrast the old covenant, as outlined in the Pentateuch, under Moses, and the new covenant under Jesus. Alternatively, the present tense could be iterative, contrasting with the completeness of Christ's sacrifice conveyed by the aorist.[503] Regardless of how the audience would process this, the present tense does not require present priests to be meant.

Exod 25:40 (8:5)

In 8:5, Hebrews discusses the tabernacle of Moses as a copy and shadow of heavenly things. Here, 8:5 metarepresents Exod 25:40, substantially reflecting the LXX text but differing from it in two respects: πάντα is added, and the aorist δειχθέντα replaces the perfect participle δεδειγμένον. Since πάντα is found in some LXX manuscripts, it may reflect the Greek text that Hebrews possesses. However, no extant LXX witnesses show δεδειγμένον modified to δειχθέντα, which may be a stylistic alteration.[504]

Exod 25:40	**Heb 8:5**
ὅρα ποιήσεις κατὰ τὸν τύπον τὸν *δεδειγμένον* σοι ἐν τῷ ὄρει	ὅρα **γάρ φησίν,** ποιήσεις **πάντα** κατὰ τὸν τύπον τὸν *δειχθέντα* σοι ἐν τῷ ὄρει

[502] Porter, *Idioms*, 261. Church concedes this (*Hebrews and the Temple*, 272n15).
[503] Allen, *Hebrews*, 442.
[504] Guthrie, "Hebrews," 969; Susan Docherty, "Composite Citations and Conflation of Scriptural Narratives in Hebrews," in *Composite Citations in Antiquity: Volume 2: New Testament Uses*, ed. Sean A. Adams and Seth M. Ehorn, LNTS 593 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018), 197. Some scholars think the use of the aorist reflects that the earthly tabernacle, whilst necessary in the past, is no longer needed, or that the heavenly tabernacle no longer serves as a model for the earthly tabernacle (Thomas, "Old Testament Citations," 309; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 220). It is unlikely that the specific tense-form of the verb could lead to these inferences.

An implicature some scholars deduce is that Hebrews was influenced by Philo's use of Exod 25:40, which also has the addition of πάντα.[505] Philonic influence is also argued based on Hebrews' use of ὑπόδειγμα. Burtness writes, "[T]here is no doubt but that he [Hebrews] is using words which are *frequently used by Philo*."[506] However, inferring such an implicature would require detailed knowledge of Philo, whose use of πάντα in metarepresenting Exod 25:40 is inconsistent.[507] For instance, Philo includes πάντα when metarepresenting Exod 25:40 in *Leg.* 3.102, but it is absent from the metarepresentation in *QE* 2.82. Furthermore, the term ὑπόδειγμα is not characteristic of Philo, occurring in his works only four times (*Conf.* 64; *Her.* 256; *Somn* 2.3; *Post.* 122). Rather, the audience's understanding of ὑπόδειγμα is more likely informed by Hebrews' own use of the term to refer to an example (4:11). Finally, Hebrews' understanding of Exod 25:40 differs from Philo: unlike Philo, there is no allegory of the various tabernacle furnishings. On balance, the language does not make Philo's influence manifest to the audience.

Less processing effort is required for the audience to discern that the addition of πάντα evokes the broader context of Exodus 25–31, since Exod 25:40 refers only to the golden chandelier.[508] As a result, the metarepresentation serves to include the entirety of the tabernacle and its worship: the ark of the covenant (25:10–16), the mercy seat and the furnishings of the tabernacle (25:17–27:19), and the ministers of the tabernacle and their priestly duties (28:1–30:38). Since Hebrews does not explain what is meant by "all," the audience must supply this from their encyclopaedic memory of the events of Exod 25–31. This reality asks a lot of the memory of the audience, yet such a notion would not have required a great deal of knowledge for the audience to understand the thrust of Hebrews' argument: the "all" in combination with the preceding argument would have incorporated all the audience needed to know.

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[505] Thomas, "Old Testament Citations," 309.
[506] J.H. Burtness, "Plato, Philo and the Author of Hebrews," *LQ* 10 (1958): 58.
[507] Koester, *Hebrews*, 378.
[508] Schröger, *Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes*, 160.

From Hebrews' metarepresentation, the audience would deduce the implicature that the entirety of the earthly tabernacle is based on the heavenly one. Löhr is mistaken to claim that the function of the metarepresentation is simply to demonstrate the inferiority of the old covenant rather than intending a comparison between the earthly and the heavenly tents.[509] Rather, if the earthly tent is a copy and shadow, the heavenly tabernacle and its ministry are superior. This is not to denigrate the earthly tabernacle but merely to show its derivative nature as a copy and shadow of the heavenly one.

Excursus: Tabernacle versus temple

Hebrews' use of tabernacle (σκηνή), as opposed to temple, is often seen as significant. Steve Motyer remarks, "It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the avoidance of the word temple (*naos*) is deliberate in Hebrews."[510] But what implicatures would result from Hebrews' usage of tabernacle language?

The Jerusalem temple is meant?

Church considers that Hebrews is chiefly concerned with comparing the heavenly and Jerusalem temples. Therefore, for Church, Heb 8:3–5 not only compares Jesus' high priesthood with the present priests ministering in the temple (noted above) but also describes the Jerusalem temple, not the wilderness tabernacle, as the copy and shadow of heavenly things.[511] Hebrews' choice of the metarepresentation of Exod 25:40 is attributed to there being no OT text which emphasised the divine origin of the temple.[512] Ultimately, the reference to the tabernacle does not have prime significance for Church.

Tent as an implicit critique of the Roman empire?

Alternatively, Jason Whitlark suggests that the tabernacle is a covert reference to the temple.[513] The Flavians understood the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E. as

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[509] Hermut Löhr, ">Umriss< und >Schatten<: Bemerkungen zur zitierung von Ex 25,40 in Hebr 8," *ZNW* 84 (1993): 222.
[510] Steve Motyer, "The Temple in Hebrews: Is It There?" in *Heaven on Earth: The Temple in Biblical Theology*, ed. T.D. Alexander and Simon Gathercole (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2004), 177.
[511] Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 272.
[512] Ibid., 405.
[513] Whitlark, *Resisting Empire*, 185.

evidence that the worship of Jews and Christians had been brought to an end. Hebrews, however, indicates to the audience that this is not the case, using figured language to do so. By showing how the tabernacle – itself a temporary measure – is now fulfilled in the Son of God, Hebrews can demonstrate implicitly that the Flavian destruction of the temple did not nullify God's purpose.[514] Through this demonstration, the audience could then draw the implicature that what Hebrews had stated about the tabernacle was even more true of the Jerusalem temple.[515] Hebrews then is able, in Whitlark's words, to "counter the claims of Flavian triumph without having to address them directly."[516] In RT terms, Hebrews wants to alter the audience's cognitive environment without making this intention obvious.[517] Consequently, covert communication requires the audience to take more time in processing this utterance and become more involved in the communication process in order to understand Hebrews' intentions.[518]

Numerous contrary observations count in favour of seeing the tabernacle as the referent of these verses.

First, ostensively, Hebrews discusses the wilderness tabernacle, not an established temple. The verb that qualifies σκηνή in Hebrews (πήγνυμι) typically denotes pitching a tent and, in particular, the tabernacle (Exod 33:7; 38:26; Josh 18:1; Philo, *Leg.* 2.54),[519] suggesting that Hebrews wishes to make manifest to the audience that the tabernacle is in view. Furthermore, Exod 25:40 clearly has the tabernacle as its referent, suggesting the audience would not process a reference to temple here. Although Church takes it as decisive for Hebrews, in choosing this metarepresentation, that no OT text communicates the divine origin of the temple, he must concede that 1 Chr 28:11–19 emphasises how the temple plan ultimately came from the hand of the Lord (χειρὸς κυρίου), even if, instrumentally, David passed the

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[514] Ibid.
[515] Ibid.
[516] Ibid., 184.
[517] Keiko Tanaka, *Advertising Language: A Pragmatic Approach to Advertisements in Britain and Japan* (London: Routledge, 1994), 41.
[518] Ramiro Durán Martínez, "Covert Communication in the Promotion of Alcohol and Tobacco in Spanish Press Advertisements," *RaeL* 4 (2005): 87.
[519] BDAG, s.v. "πήγνυμι."

building plans onto Solomon.[520] Ps 78:68–69 acknowledges that it was YHWH, not Solomon, who would build his sanctuary on Zion. Likewise, the audience's expectations for relevance would likely be satisfied by seeing ostensive reference to Exod 25:40 as a reference to the tabernacle. If a reference to the temple is intended, Hebrews would require of the audience considerable cognitive effort for negligible effect, moving from language best understood as referring to the wilderness tabernacle, to an outline of practices in the present temple, then back to tabernacle language. Given the acknowledged care with which Hebrews constructs its argument, it seems safe to assume, on the contrary, that tabernacle language communicates to the audience the relevance for them of the tabernacle, not the temple.

Second, the cognitive environment constructed by the discourse so far reinforces that the tabernacle, not the temple, is the referent of σκηνή here. In the above discussion of 6:19–20, I noted that "behind the curtain" refers to the holy of holies in the wilderness tabernacle (Exod 26:33; Lev 16:2, 12, 15). Without providing further justification, Church concludes, "Here, it is a periphrasis for the heavenly temple as the holy of holies."[521] However, in the absence of any indication in the context that the temple is meant, we may conclude that the audience would process ostensive reference to the tabernacle straightforwardly as tabernacle-related.

Likewise, the succeeding discourse underscores the continuing relevance of the tabernacle for the audience. In Heb 9:1–5, as Church himself must acknowledge, the significant detail with which the tabernacle furnishings are described means that the earthly tabernacle is in view.[522] As Johnsson remarks, "[T]he author here sets out a quick description of the earthly sanctuary, basing his remarks on the portable tent of

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[520] Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 405n170. L.D. Hurst discerns a metarepresentation of Ezek 40–48 here, where Ezekiel, like Moses, sees the pattern of a new sanctuary on the mountain (*The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought*, SNTSMS 65 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990], 16–17). However, Hebrews ostensively draws from Exod 25:40, making an additional metarepresentation of Ezekiel require significant processing effort for few cognitive effects.
[521] Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 390.
[522] Ibid., 413.

the wanderings rather than on the Jerusalem temple."[523] Hebrews then goes on to discuss the Day of Atonement and red heifer rituals as well as the inauguration of the tabernacle and covenant, using Pentateuchal language to do so (9:6–28). Therefore, on recursive reading, the audience would understand the tabernacle to be the primary referent.

Third, the parallels drawn between the audience and the wilderness generation throughout Hebrews underscore the relevance of the tabernacle over the temple.[524] This is most ostensive in 3:7–4:11, where Hebrews draws an analogy between the audience and Israel at Kadesh-Barnea. However, this relationship is also implicit in Hebrews' discussion of discipline, which draws from Deut 8 as well as Prov 3:11 (12:5–11), and in 13:13, where παρεμβολή metarepresents the wilderness camp.[525] If the audience drew the implicature that they are in a situation analogous to the Israelite wilderness generation, they would process σκηνή as tabernacle. Whilst the Jerusalem temple and its cult would have been operational within recent experience,[526] thus comprising part of their encyclopaedic memory, Hebrews' language ostensively depicts the OT tabernacle.

Would extra processing from the audience lead them to understand Hebrews' reference to the tabernacle as code for the temple? Whilst σκηνή can be used to explicitly refer to the temple (for instance, in Rev 15:5, where it occurs with ναός), it is never used polemically as a code for the temple. This does not prove that Hebrews could not use the term polemically, but it does mean that σκηνή as code for temple cannot compose part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory, on which they might draw to unlock the allegedly covert communication. Josephus provides a subtle polemic against the destruction of the second temple by stating that Jerusalem only fell at the hands of the Flavians because the Judaean God desired to rid the temple of

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[523] William G. Johnsson, "Defilement and Purgation in the Book of Hebrews" (unpublished PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1973), 275–76.
[524] Isaacs, *Reading Hebrews and James*, 105.
[525] Peter Walker, "Jerusalem in Hebrews 13:9–14 and the Dating of the Epistle," *TynBul* 45 (1994): 44.
[526] Marie E. Isaacs, "Priesthood and the Epistle to the Hebrews," *HeyJ* 38 (1997): 53.

its polluting by tyrants (*B.J.* 1.9–10).[527] More so, several works that post-date the destruction of the second temple conceal their references to its destruction by discussing Solomon's temple in its place.[528] There were, therefore, alternative and more ostensive ways of discussing the destruction of the second temple without using tabernacle language to do so in a covert manner.

Furthermore, the audience needs much less processing effort to grasp Hebrews' wider pentateuchally-rooted discourse (noted above) to detect any alleged anti-Roman polemic. The extensive use of the Pentateuch, as well as the situation of the audience in a wilderness context, suggests that understanding σκηνή as tabernacle would satisfy the audience's expectations of relevance without them needing to process the term as a coded reference to temple or as an anti-imperial polemic.

Tent as the tabernacle

The weaknesses of Church's or Whitlark's arguments for reading "temple," and strong counter-evidence that the audience would infer "tabernacle," therefore accord with Hebrews' extensive interest in the Pentateuchal account of the priesthood, sacrifices and tabernacle. Indeed, Hebrews has already created a cognitive environment which places the audience in the wilderness, and it is this environment which facilitates the most relevant context for readers to understand Hebrews' utterances about the tabernacle.[529] Having established that Hebrews' audience would straightforwardly infer the tabernacle from its use of tabernacle language, we may now ask what implicatures they would infer from this?

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[527] Steven Neil Mason, "Figured Speech and Irony in T. Flavius Josephus," in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome*, ed. Jonathan Edmondson, Steven Neil Mason, and James Rives (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 256–57.

[528] 4 Ezra; 2 Bar.; Apoc. Ab. 25–27; LAB 12:4, 9; 19:7; 26:12; 25–27; Lad. Jac. (see Church, *Hebrews and the Temple,* 265–66).

[529] The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice also conceive of a heavenly tabernacle. See Calaway, *Sabbath and the Sanctuary,* 120–38.

In accordance with the book's movement motif, the tabernacle provides a conceptual framework against which the audience is to understand their relationship with God.[530] If the audience is construed as a wilderness generation on its way towards the Promised Land, or, as Johnsson remarks, "a *cultic community on the move*,"[531] then Hebrews' employment of tabernacle imagery makes perfect sense. On their journey through the wilderness towards their promised inheritance, they can draw near in the present to the tabernacle over which their high priest resides as they anticipate accessing God directly in Zion. Rhetorically, temple imagery – relating to a geographically fixed entity – is irrelevant to their journey. In the same way that the earthly tabernacle was a portable tent that symbolised God's presence with the people as they journeyed through the wilderness, the audience may draw the implicature that the heavenly tent symbolises God's presence with the community, as it dwells in and travels through an eschatological wilderness. Furthermore, another potential implicature drawn from Hebrews' tabernacle imagery is that the audience's situation is temporary – they are in the wilderness, but their wilderness journey will eventually terminate in their entrance into the promised rest.

A further implicature is that the audience does not need an earthly temple to access God – and thus that they do not need to find security in an earthly temple. Dwelling in the wilderness metaphorically, and perhaps displaced from the temple literally, the audience cannot enter a physical temple, but they can conceive of drawing near to the tabernacle in the present, where Jesus mediates the presence of God to them. Nanos may be right about the power of this message in the communicative context when he suggests: "It seems to me that the Levitical priestly service is no longer available to the author and addressees… they are unable to avail themselves of its sacrificial services for sins, and therefore they are experiencing insecurity."[532]

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[530] The fullest treatment of this can be found in Thomas Keene, "Heaven Is a Tent: The Tabernacle as an Eschatological Metaphor in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (unpublished PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2010).
[531] William G. Johnsson, "The Pilgrimage Motif in the Book of Hebrews," *JBL* 97 (1978): 249.
[532] Mark D. Nanos, "New or Renewed Covenantalism? A Response to Richard Hays," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 185.

Σκηνή as Jerusalem

From Hebrews' use of σκηνή, a further implicature may be deduced: Jerusalem itself is the tent.[533] The possibility that the audience could retrieve this from their encyclopaedic memory is suggested by texts such as Rev 21:1–22:5, where the new heavens and earth are likened to a tent (σκηνή); Sir 24:1–11, where wisdom ministers in the holy tent (ἐν σκηνῇ ἁγίᾳ) and is established in Zion; and Isa 33:20LXX, which describes Jerusalem as an eternal, immovable tent (σκηνή).

Admittedly, such an implicature would not arise until 12:22–24, where further reflection may lead the audience to understand σκηνή as Jerusalem, the heavenly Zion, and where the cognitive effects are similar to understanding it as a reference to the tabernacle: they draw near as they await entrance into Zion. The audience could also draw this implicature on re-reading Hebrews. Given that Jesus enters Zion in 4:10, and also enters the tent in 6:19–20, the audience may infer that the tent is Zion or is in Zion. However, if Hebrews models Zion on Sinai (as will be argued in 12:22–24), the audience could infer that, if Sinai has a tabernacle, so does Zion. Whatever the specific referent of σκηνή, what remains clear is the analogy between the audience and the wilderness generation: as they journey through the wilderness, the audience draw near to the tent, whether signifying the tabernacle or the tent of Zion. To discern a referent to Jerusalem in 8:2–5, however, requires a large amount of processing effort, with few cognitive effects in return. This, when taken together with the extensive use of the tabernacle cult in chs 8–10, suggests that the tabernacle is the most optimally relevant referent for σκηνή.

Heb 8:6–13

Hebrews follows the discussion of the superior heavenly tabernacle and the ministry associated with it by discussing the superiority of the new covenant over the old, established as it is on better promises. Hebrews has already mentioned Jesus being the guarantor of a better covenant (7:22) and now outlines the nature of this covenant and why this new covenant is necessary. Vv.7–8 give two reasons for the new covenant:

[533] I am indebted to David Moffitt for this observation.

first, there was something wrong with the first covenant and, second, God found fault with the people under the old covenant.[534]

Metarepresentation of Jer 38:31–34LXX (8:8–12)

In support of this assertion, Hebrews metarepresents Jer 38:31–34LXX. There are several significant changes to this metarepresentation, resulting in some cognitive effects. First, Hebrews uses the verb λέγω (8:8, 11) as opposed to φημί – consistent with its use elsewhere.[535] Second, Hebrews employs συντελέσω (8:8), rather than διαθήσομαι. This could be attributed to stylistic concerns,[536] but also garners the further implicature that this covenant will be kept, not broken.[537] Third, in 8:9, Hebrews replaces διεθέμην with ἐποίησα, leading Attridge to think this means "God's actions in establishing the two covenants are of a different order, and the new will be 'made' in a more profound and effective way."[538] Whilst it is unlikely the audience would discern something so specific, the change in the terminology could cause the audience to distinguish the making of the new covenant from the old. Fourth, the omission of δώσω is likely for stylistic reasons and, fifth, ἐπιγράψω is more vivid than γράψω (8:10),[539] underscoring the permanence of God's writing on their hearts.[540]

Jer 38:31–34LXX	**Heb 8:8–12**
ἰδοὺ ἡμέραι ἔρχονται *φησὶν* κύριος καὶ *διαθήσομαι τῷ οἴκῳ Ισραηλ* καὶ *τῷ οἴκῳ Ιουδα* διαθήκην καινήν οὐ κατὰ τὴν διαθήκην ἣν *διεθέμην* τοῖς πατράσιν αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπιλαβομένου	ἰδοὺ ἡμέραι ἔρχονται, *λέγει* κύριος, καὶ *συντελέσω ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰσραὴλ* καὶ *ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰούδα* διαθήκην καινήν, οὐ κατὰ τὴν διαθήκην, ἣν *ἐποίησα* τοῖς πατράσιν αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπιλαβομένου

[534] Text critical issues make it difficult to determine whether God found fault with the covenant (implied by the reading αὐτοῖς, found in P^{46} $\aleph^{2}$ B D^{2} 0278 1739 Maj) or the people (supported by αὐτούς in $\aleph^{*}$ A D^{*} I P Ψ 33 it cop). Whilst the former fits the context, the more difficult reading is to be preferred, with λέγω introducing the metarepresentation of Jer 38:31–34. Nevertheless, regardless of the original reading, Hebrews views both the people and the covenant to be at fault (Schreiner, *Hebrews,* 249).
[535] Steyn, however, suggests that it is a variant (*Quest*, 263).
[536] Guthrie, "Hebrews," 972.
[537] Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 168.
[538] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 227.
[539] Ibid., 228.
[540] Massonnet, *Hébreux*, 215.

μου τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν ἐξαγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου ὅτι αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἐνέμειναν ἐν τῇ διαθήκῃ μου *καὶ ἐγὼ* ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν *φησὶν* κύριος ὅτι αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη ἣν διαθήσομαι τῷ οἴκῳ Ισραηλ μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκείνας *φησὶν* κύριος διδοὺς **δώσω** νόμους μου εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν *γράψω* αὐτούς καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς εἰς θεόν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονταί μοι εἰς λαόν καὶ οὐ μὴ διδάξωσιν ἕκαστος τὸν πολίτην αὐτοῦ καὶ ἕκαστος τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ λέγων γνῶθι τὸν κύριον ὅτι πάντες εἰδήσουσίν με ἀπὸ μικροῦ **αὐτῶν καὶ** ἕως μεγάλου αὐτῶν ὅτι ἵλεως ἔσομαι ταῖς ἀδικίαις αὐτῶν καὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν οὐ μὴ μνησθῶ ἔτι	μου τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν ἐξαγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου, ὅτι αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἐνέμειναν ἐν τῇ διαθήκῃ μου, *κἀγὼ* ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν, *λέγει* κύριος· ὅτι αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη, ἣν διαθήσομαι τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰσραὴλ μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκείνας, *λέγει* κύριος· διδοὺς νόμους μου εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν *ἐπιγράψω* αὐτούς, καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς εἰς θεόν, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονταί μοι εἰς λαόν· καὶ οὐ μὴ διδάξωσιν ἕκαστος τὸν πολίτην αὐτοῦ καὶ ἕκαστος τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ λέγων· γνῶθι τὸν κύριον, ὅτι πάντες εἰδήσουσίν με ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου αὐτῶν, ὅτι ἵλεως ἔσομαι ταῖς ἀδικίαις αὐτῶν, καὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν οὐ μὴ μνησθῶ ἔτι.

Interpretation

In the metarepresentation of Jer 38LXX, Hebrews draws an analogy between the audience, living in the last days (1:2), and the new covenant community of Jer 38LXX, rather than the original wilderness generation. The metarepresentation draws an ostensive contrast between those under the new covenant and those whom Moses led out of Egypt. The covenant that God is making with the audience is not like the covenant he made with the original wilderness generation that he brought out of Egypt (the verb ἐπιλαμβάνομαι looking back to the use of the same term in 2:16). Rather than being written on tablets of stone, this covenant enables the audience to have the laws of God written on their hearts. Thus, the audience is viewed in relation to the wilderness generation, but is also distinct from it: having a better mediator, the covenant in which they share is greater. Again, this is based on the assumption already established, as early as 3:1–6, that Jesus is greater than Moses. Jesus, as leader of the new covenant exiles, is the greater mediator who not only inaugurates the new covenant but will lead this generation to their final destination.

The following implicatures may be deduced: first, the audience is on a new exodus journey towards Zion, an implicature that will be reinforced by the metarepresentation

of Isa 35:3 in 12:12 and by Hebrews' ostensive declaration that the audience has approached Zion (12:22). This is significant given that the wider context of the citation is concerned with new exodus motifs and, especially, arrival at Zion. However, Hebrews does not exploit this aspect of the text but focusses specifically on the new covenant. Second, since "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" is reminiscent of 2 Sam 7:14 ("I will be his father, and he shall be my son") metarepresented in 1:5,[541] they may draw the implicature that the covenant God makes with Jesus is the same covenant God makes with his people, the brothers of Jesus. Third, they can have hope that God will bring them back to their homeland.[542] Fourth, their exodus is greater than Israel's exodus from Egypt.[543]

Hebrews draws the inference from Jer 38LXX that the old covenant is passing away (v.13). How the audience would process this statement is difficult to determine. Some scholars understand the term to mean "obsolete," with the implication that the first covenant is nullified.[544] However, it is more likely that Hebrews simply infers from Jer 38LXX's reference to a new covenant that there must be an old one.[545] Indeed, Jer 38LXX has been understood to represent a reiteration of the Sinai covenant, the main difference being that the covenant is now internalised: God's laws are written, not on tablets of stone, but on the people's hearts and minds, leading to obedience. Since Hebrews attributes the fault of the first covenant to the transgressions of the people under that covenant (8:7–8; 9:15), it follows that a new covenant that will never be broken was always going to be necessary. Furthermore, the fact that the new covenant sacrificial system and priesthood is analogous to the systems under the old covenant suggests the importance of the old covenant for Hebrews' understanding of the Christ event. For Hebrews, the new covenant people do not replace the old: the wilderness generation are their fathers (3:9), the audience is the seed of Abraham (2:16), and the audience share in the same promises as OT believers (11:39–40). Thus, Johnson also reads Hebrews' audience in parallel to those at Qumran who saw themselves as living

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[541] Steyn, *Quest*, 36.
[542] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 225.
[543] Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 137.
[544] Scott D. Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, WUNT 2/223 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 59; Koester, *Hebrews,* 355.
[545] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 228–29.

under a covenant different from that of Sinai yet that implied no superseding of it or any abandonment of Jewish identity.[546] If the mutual cognitive environment of Hebrews and the audience was similar, it is doubtful that they would have understood the new covenant as somehow superseding Judaism.

Heb 9:1–28

OT metarepresentations: identification & interpretation

The earthly tabernacle (9:1–5)

From the discussion of the new covenant, Hebrews draws the conclusion (signaled by οὖν) regarding the first covenant that is also applicable to the new covenant: as the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness, so the implicature derived from this is that the new covenant also has regulations for worship and a place of holiness.

Hebrews' metarepresentation of the OT tabernacle mostly aligns with the Pentateuchal account: the tent is divided by a curtain (Exod 26:31–37) into two compartments: the holy place and the holy of holies. The holy place contains the lampstand (Exod 25: 31–40; Lev 24:1–4) and a table with the bread of the presence (Exod 25:23–30). In the holy of holies, Hebrews places the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold (Exod 25:10–22), the golden urn with the manna (Exod 16:33), Aaron's staff that budded (Num 17:1–10), the tablets of the covenant (Exod 25:16), the cherubim of glory (Exod 25:18–22) and the mercy seat (Exod 25:17).

Hebrews' placement of the golden altar of incense in the holy of holies contradicts the assumption, presumably held by the audience, that it is placed in front of the veil in the holy place (Exod 30:6). What implicatures would the audience derive from this modification?

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[546] Johnson, *Hebrews,* 213–14; Alan C. Mitchell, "'A Sacrifice of Praise:' Does Hebrews Promote Supersessionism?" in *Reading the Epistle to the Hebrews: A Resource for Students*, ed. Eric F. Mason and Kevin B. McCruden, SBLRBS (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 260–61.

(1) Some speculate that Hebrews made a mistake.[547] Yet Hebrews' familiarity with the OT and Jewish traditions makes this unlikely.[548]

(2) The audience may understand Hebrews to be referring to a censer,[549] more specifically, the censer in Num 16.[550] Whilst the word θυμιατήριον does not appear in Numbers, the similar term θυμίαμα is used frequently of incense (Num 16:7, 17, 18; 17:5, 11, 12) and Josephus uses θυμιατήριον in recounting Korah's revolt (*A.J.* 4.32).[551] Nevertheless, the incense censers in Num are made of bronze, not gold. Whilst θυμιατήριον in some contexts can mean "censer,"[552] since Heb 9 draws on the Exodus tabernacle accounts, it is most likely that the audience would process the term in relation to the incense-altar.

(3) Hebrews understood the altar of incense to be located in the inner sanctuary, on the basis of the ambiguity of the preposition ἀπέναντι used in Exod 30:6, 40:26 and Lev 16:18 or because of traditions that placed the incense-altar in the holy of holies (2 Bar. 6:7; 1 Kgs 6:20MT; 2 Macc 2:4–8).[553] However, these texts themselves are ambiguous and do not prove a decisive tradition that placed the altar in the holy of holies.[554] Indeed, Philip Hughes comments that the "proper position of so important an article as the altar of incense was hardly a subject of doubt or dispute."[555] The proper position likely would have comprised the audience's cognitive environment (8:5).

(4) The audience may associate the incense altar with the divine presence in the holy of holies.[556] Stanley goes further, understanding the participle ἔχουσα to

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[547] Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 145; Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2:55.
[548] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 260.
[549] Hughes cites Theophylact, Anselm, Aquinas, Luther, Grotius, Bengel and Alford as holding to this position (*Hebrews,* 311).
[550] Coyne, "Wandering," 268–70.
[551] John Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews*, SNTSMS 75 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 161–62.
[552] 2 Chr 26:19; Ezek 8:11; Herodotus, *Hist.* 4.162; Thucydides 6.46; Diodorus 13.3; Josephus, *A.J.* 4.2.4; 8.3.8; Aelian, *Var. hist.* 12.5.
[553] Gheorghita, *Septuagint in Hebrews*, 181; Craddock, "Hebrews," 104; Windisch, *Hebräerbrief*, 71.
[554] Daniel Stokl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century*, WUNT 2/163 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 189n212.
[555] Hughes, *Hebrews*, 310.
[556] Steven K. Stanley, "A New Covenant Hermeneutic: The Use of Scripture in Hebrews 8–10" (unpublished PhD diss., University of Sheffield, 1994), 117; Hughes,

refer, not to the location of the altar, but to the association of the altar with holy of holies. He writes, "[Hebrews] does not actually say that the altar is 'in' the holy of holies, but that the holy of holies 'has' the altar."[557] However, this requires significant processing effort, especially since Hebrews' language implies that the holy of holies also "has" the ark of the covenant, which was positioned in the holy of holies. More likely, the audience would connect the incense altar with the holy of holies based on their knowledge of the OT, which mentions the altar of incense in close connection with the holy of holies (Exod 30:6; 40:5).[558] This implicature is reinforced by the succeeding discourse, which describes the Day of Atonement ritual.

In the end, Hebrews ostensively puts an end to further processing effort by declaring it to be unwarranted: "Of these things, we cannot speak in detail."[559] Whilst Hebrews has no control over whether the audience will process these details further, Hebrews deems details of the tabernacle not to be of optimal relevance for them.

Jesus and the priests on the Day of Atonement (9:6–12)

In 9:6–12, Jesus enters into the holy of holies in the tabernacle as the Levitical high priest does. Cortez suggests the Day of Atonement is a parable of transition, not a typology, signalling a move from the old covenant to the new, from many sacrifices to one, and from continuous entrance to one entrance.[560] This is because Hebrews does not draw exclusively from Lev 16 in its metarepresentation of Jesus' sacrifice, but also the red heifer ritual (Num 19), the inauguration of the covenant (Exod 24) and priestly ordination (Lev 8). However, it is more likely the audience would infer that the

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Hebrews, 312; Harold S. Camacho, "The Altar of Incense in Hebrews 9:3–4," *AUSS* 24 (1986): 10–12; Massonnet, *Hébreux*, 227; Backhaus, *Hebräerbrief*, 306.

[557] Stanley, "New Covenant Hermeneutic," 118; Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 145; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 249. Bruce, however, thinks this argument is "special pleading" (*Hebrews*, 201).

[558] Camacho, "Altar of Incense," 8; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 202.

[559] Cody, *Heavenly Sanctuary*, 146–47. William G. Johnsson, "Defilement and Purgation in the Book of Hebrews" (unpublished PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1973), 275–78

[560] Felix H. Cortez, "From the Holy to the Most Holy Place: The Period of Hebrews 9:6–10 and the Day of Atonement as a Metaphor of Transition," *JBL* 125 (2006): 528.

analogy between Jesus and the high priest in Lev 16 is one part of a larger typology involving the whole tabernacle cult.[561] From 8:5, the audience already knows that the heavenly tabernacle corresponds to the earthly tabernacle. It follows that they would deduce that Jesus' entry into the holy of holies corresponds to the entry of the high priest on the Day of Atonement.

The red heifer ritual (9:13–14)

Hebrews' language in 9:13–14 includes elements not characteristic of the Day of Atonement (the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of the red heifer), leading to the implicature that Hebrews metarepresents the red heifer ritual here.[562] Jesus is compared with the unblemished red heifer that was sacrificed and burned outside the tent of meeting and whose ashes purified those who were defiled (Num 19:1–20). From this, Hebrews and the audience can infer that Christ's sacrifice purifies his people and cleanses their consciences. As the wilderness generation, journeying towards the Promised Land, like those in Num 19,[563] Jesus' purification lets them enter into the community of God's people encamped around the tabernacle. Indeed, from their knowledge of Num 19, the audience may deduce the implicature that, without purification that comes from the red heifer ritual, those who are impure are to be cut off from the community lest they defile the Lord's tabernacle (Num 19:13), anticipating Hebrews' assertion that the heavenly tabernacle needed cleansing (9:23–24). Similarly, rejecting this sacrifice would lead to expulsion from the community.

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation (9:15–18)

Vv.15–18 outline why Jesus' death was necessary to set people free from the sins under the old covenant and to establish the new covenant; however, whether the

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[561] Moore, *Repetition in Hebrews*, 185.

[562] Horbury notes that, although the red heifer ritual is not connected with the Day of Atonement in the OT, the two rituals were conflated in Josephus, *A.J.* 4.79 and Philo, *Spec.* 1.268 ("Aaronic Priesthood," 51).

[563] Joel Richard Humann, "The Ceremony of the Red Heifer: Its Purpose and Function in Narrative Context" (unpublished PhD diss., Durham University, 2011), 177.

audience would process διαθήκη in vv.16–17 as "covenant"[564] or "testament"[565] is disputed.

Covenant. Five observations may point to the implicature that the broken Sinai covenant is metarepresented here:[566]

(1) In 7:20–9:15, διαθήκη is consistently used to refer to covenant. Furthermore, the context discusses the transgressions under the first covenant (v.15) and immediately moves on to discuss Moses' inauguration of the Sinai covenant (vv.19–22).

(2) Hebrews does not use language here that is specifically legal: φέρω frequently has a cultic sense; διατίθεμαι refers to the making of the new covenant (8:10; 10:16); βέβαιος is applied to the promises of God and the confidence the audience is to have. Nor does Hebrews' argument accord with Hellenistic practice: wills became valid when they were written down, not when the testator died, and the inheritance was typically received before the testator died.

(3) Γάρ signals to the audience that v.16 gives another reason why Jesus' death was necessary for him to be the mediator of a new covenant, namely, because the first covenant had been broken. A testamental reading, however, construes Hebrews' argument to be concerned with why death was necessary to receive the eternal inheritance.

(4) Hebrews has already painted Jesus as the heir of all things (1:2), suggesting the audience would infer that the Father is the testator. However, as the Father

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[564] Cockerill, *Hebrews,* 405–06; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13,* 242; John J. Hughes, "Hebrews IX 15ff. and Galatians III 15 ff. A Study in Covenant Practice and Procedure" *NovT* 21 (1979): 27–96.

[565] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 256; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 221–23; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 151; John Calvin, *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second Epistles of St Peter*, trans. William B. Johnston (Saint Andrew Press: Edinburgh, 1963), 123–24; Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2:103; Sebastian Fuhrmann, *Vergeben und Vergessen: Christologie und Neuer Bund im Hebräerbrief* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2007), 209–14; Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 188; Windisch, *Hebräerbrief*, 75–76; Backhaus, *Hebräerbrief*, 330.

[566] Scott W. Hahn, "Covenant, Cult and the Curse-of-Death: Διαθήκη in Heb 9:15–22," in *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods – New Insights*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini, BIS 75 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 65–88; Harris, *Hebrews,* 232–34; Jamieson, *Heavenly Offering,* 117–18.

does not die, a testamental interpretation must conclude that the Son assumes the role of testator and dies to bring the will into effect.[567] However, this also misunderstands Hebrews' argument: Christ does not die to leave his brothers an inheritance, but to enter into his inheritance.

(5) On a testamental understanding, νεκροῖς (v.17) must mean "with reference to dead people,"[568] but this is an awkward rendering.

Therefore, v.16 could imply that, since the Sinai covenant was broken, Jesus needed to die. V.17 then metarepresents the animals (νεκροῖς) sacrificed under the old covenant and Israel under Moses (ὁ διαθέμενος). Christ's sacrifice was necessary to consummate the old covenant and inaugurate the new.

Testament. Nevertheless, support for the possibility that the audience might also draw the implicature that a testament in view comes from the following observations. Although wills were drawn up during the testator's lifetime, they did not come into effect until the testator died. The fact that the death of the testator had to be established before the testament was enacted implies that it was the testator's death that allows his heirs to receive their inheritance.[569] As Scott Murray writes, "A διαθήκη without a death is incomplete."[570] With this background, a reference to "corpses" (νεκροῖς) makes sense. Furthermore, whilst Hebrews does not use language here that is specifically legal, the terms φέρω, ἰσχυω and βέβαιος do occur in legal contexts.[571] Therefore, the everyday connotations of διαθήκη in their Graeco-Roman environment may very well have led the audience to interpret it as having testamentary application.

In light of both Hebrews' emphasis on the OT and the audience's Graeco-Roman environment, διαθήκη in v.15 could very well be the object of a wordplay, whereby the audience could deduce that Hebrews moves from discussing a covenant to describing a testament. In the end, whether the audience understands διαθήκη in vv.16–17 as signifying a covenant, a testament, or even a reference to both, Hebrews'

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[567] Attridge, *Hebrews,* 254; Ellingworth, *Hebrews,* 95; Koester, *Hebrews,* 418.
[568] Bruce, *Hebrews,* 212n102.
[569] Kleinig, *Hebrews,* 456.
[570] Scott R. Murray, "The Concept of διαθήκη in the Letter to the Hebrews," *CTQ* 66 (2002): 59.
[571] This is conceded by Hahn, "Covenant," 66–67.

emphasis is clear: in the inauguration of both the old and new covenants, death was involved (9:18).

Moses and the inauguration of the covenant (9:19–22)

Heb 9:19–22 metarepresents the covenant inauguration ceremony in Exod 24: "when Moses had proclaimed every command of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves,[572] together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people." Hebrews also ostensively metarepresents Exod 24:8 as the words of Moses, with a few modifications. The term ἰδού in Exod 24:8 is substituted with τοῦτο, a change possibly influenced by early Christian tradition (cf. 1 Cor 11:25; Mk 14:24).[573] Hebrews uses ἐνετείλατο rather than διέθετο, possibly for stylistic reasons,[574] or to reserve διατίθεμαι for the establishment of the new covenant (8:10).[575] The word ἐνετείλατο also coheres with Hebrews' emphasis on perfection.[576] Finally, ὁ θεός, placed at the end of the sentence, is the subject rather than κύριος, meaning the audience can infer that God the Father is the referent, not Jesus.[577]

Exod 24:8	**Heb 9:20**
ἰδοὺ <u>τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης ἧς</u> *διέθετο* **κύριος** <u>πρὸς ὑμᾶς</u> περὶ πάντων τῶν λόγων τούτων	*τοῦτο* <u>τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης ἧς</u> *ἐνετείλατο* <u>πρὸς ὑμᾶς</u> **ὁ θεός**

[572] Some manuscripts include a reference to bulls and goats (X* A C read τῶν μόσχων καὶ τῶν τράγων, 33 Maj read τῶν μόσχων καὶ τράγων, whereas D reads τῶν τράγων καὶ τῶν μόσχων). However, this is likely scribal assimilation to Heb 9:12, which mentions both animals. See Philip Wesley Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary: Commentary on the Variant Readings of the Ancient New Testament Manuscripts and How They Relate to the Major English Translations* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2008), 707.

[573] Backhaus suggests this is due to the influence of the Lord's Supper (*Hebräerbrief*, 332). However, whilst Hebrews may be influenced by the *Vorlage* of Exod 24:8 used in Lord's Supper traditions, the Lord's Supper ritual is not metarepresented here.

[574] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 408; Guthrie, "Hebrews," 274.

[575] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 257.

[576] Cockerill, *Hebrews,* 408n31.

[577] Hebrews also omits περὶ πάντων τῶν λόγων τούτων, presumably because the phrase is not relevant to its purpose. Steyn, however, attributes a citation from memory here (*Quest*, 279).

Hebrews' metarepresentation of the event diverges from the Sinai narrative: the water, scarlet wool and hyssop (v.19) are not part of the inauguration ceremony, but the cleansing rites of Lev 14:4 and Num 19:16, leading to the implicature that cleansing was necessary. Likewise, the assertion that Moses sprinkled the tent (v.21) is also absent from Exod 24. Some scholars suggest an additional metarepresentation of Num 7:1.[578] However, Num 7:1 lacks a reference to sprinkling. Similarly, Exod 40:9–10 and Lev 8:10, 15 have been posited as potential metarepresentations,[579] yet both texts lack a reference to blood. It is more likely that the audience would draw on contemporary traditions which linked the inauguration of the covenant with the tabernacle. Josephus acknowledges that, during the inauguration of the tabernacle, Moses applied "the blood of bulls and rams" to the tent and its vessels (*A.J.* 3.206). Likewise, in *A.J.* 3.197, Josephus writes that "[Moses] sanctified both the tabernacle and the priests, accomplishing in such a way their purification…He anointed both the priests themselves and all the tabernacle, thus purifying all."[580] This demonstrates that the inauguration of the covenant and the tabernacle were linked in the first century C.E. and comprised part of the audience's cognitive environment.

The audience may deduce the implicature that Hebrews is conflating both tabernacle and covenant inauguration. Whilst some scholars think that "[i]n Hebrews the maintenance of the covenant is *subsumed* in its inauguration,"[581] Moffitt notes that, in the logic of Hebrews, Jesus' death inaugurates the covenant, but his sacrificial offering in the heavenly tabernacle and priestly intercession maintains the covenant. In doing so, Hebrews reflects the wider Pentateuchal wilderness narrative: it begins with the exodus, then describes the inauguration of the covenant, and, subsequently, the establishment of the tabernacle, priesthood and sacrificial system.[582] The reference to forgiveness of sins and the new covenant looks back to Jer 38:31–34LXX (8:8–12).

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[578] Susan Haber, "From Priestly Torah to Christ Cultus: The Re-vision of Covenant and Cult in Hebrews," *JSNT* 28 (2005): 109; Coyne, "Wandering," 272; D'Angelo, *Moses,* 244.
[579] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 258; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 481; Koester, *Hebrews*, 420; Backhaus, *Hebräerbrief*, 331.
[580] Hurst, *Hebrews*, 39.
[581] Ibid.
[582] Moffitt, "Wilderness Identity," 158.

Since the covenant is modelled on the inauguration of the old covenant, this could reinforce the implicature that the new covenant is a reiteration of the old covenant.

Day of Atonement (9:23–28)

Heb 9:23–28 again metarepresents the Day of Atonement ritual, including a reference to the purification of the tabernacle.[583] Hebrews deduces from the fact that the earthly tabernacle was purified with sacrifices that Christ purifies the heavenly tabernacle with his sacrifice.[584] Whilst some dispute that heaven can be cleansed,[585] there is evidence in biblical and early Jewish texts that heaven can be defiled by sin (Job 15:15; 4Q400 1 i.14; Book of the Watchers), traditions that may comprise part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory. Furthermore, since the earthly tabernacle is modelled on the heavenly one, it is a natural inference that, if the earthly tabernacle needed cleansing, then so did the heavenly tabernacle.[586] Attridge draws the further inference that it is the people that are to be cleansed;[587] discussion of the people's cleansing has already occurred in the discourse (9:14) and will be discussed in 10:2. Therefore, it is more relevant to mention the tabernacle's cleansing – as it has the added cognitive effect of new knowledge.

There is disagreement amongst scholars as to whether heaven contains a literal tent[588] or not;[589] what could the audience reasonably infer from Hebrews' argument? Whilst Schenck contends that it is a metaphor,[590] Hebrews' acknowledgement that the earthly tabernacle models the heavenly tabernacle suggests the audience would draw the

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[583] Hurst argues that the Day of Atonement is not envisaged here (*Hebrews,* 39).
[584] Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice*, 232; Koester, *Hebrews*, 421; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 248; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 271.
[585] Hughes, *Hebrews*, 379; Schenck, *Cosmology and Eschatology*, 168, 181; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 283.
[586] Jamieson, "Hebrews 9.23," 581–82.
[587] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 261–62. See also Bruce, *Hebrews*, 228.
[588] E.g. Moffatt, Hebrews, 106; Windisch, *Hebräerbrief*, 113; Hofius, *Vorhang,* 49; Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection,* 223.
[589] Cody, *Heavenly Sanctuary*, 18; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 166.
[590] Kenneth L. Schenck, "An Archaeology of Hebrews' Tabernacle Imagery," in *Hebrews in Contexts*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini and Harold W. Attridge, AJEC 91 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 238–58.

implicature that heaven contains a sanctuary.[591] Furthermore, if Hebrews was influenced by Jewish apocalyptic texts that conceived of multiple heavens with a tabernacle or temple in the highest heaven, and these texts composed part of the mutual cognitive environment of Hebrews and the audience, that heaven contains a sanctuary would be a likely inference.[592] Nevertheless, since Hebrews never ostensively says that heaven contains a tabernacle, it is unclear whether the audience would even exert the amount of processing effort required to deduce such an implicature.

Heb 10:1–18

In 10:1–18, Hebrews continues to metarepresent the old covenant sacrificial system in relation to Jesus. Hebrews focusses on the Mosaic law as a shadow of the good things to come, in the same way that the earthly tabernacle is a shadow of the heavenly tabernacle (8:5). As a result, it cannot perfect those who draw near to worship, as evidenced by the repetitive offering of sacrifices, for the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins.[593] Jesus, however, came into the world to do the will of God as metarepresented in Ps 39:6–8LXX, and the sacrifice that he offered in the heavenly tabernacle sanctified the hearers and perfected them once for all. More sacrifices are unnecessary.

Metarepresentation of Jer 38LXX (10:16–17)

In 10:16–17, Hebrews metarepresents Jer 38LXX again, but as the speech of the Holy Spirit and with significant modifications: "to them" replaces "house of Israel" since the audience know the referent of "them" from 8:8–12; καρδίας and διάνοιαν are reversed; and Hebrews replaces ταῖς ἀδικίαις αὐτῶν with τῶν ἀνομιῶν αὐτῶν, placing the reference to lawless deeds after the mention of their sins (τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν). Pierce considers that the language of lawlessness reflects a conflation with Exod

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[591] See David M. Moffitt, "Serving in the Tabernacle in Heaven: Sacred Space, Jesus's High-Priestly Sacrifice, and Hebrews' Analogical Theology," in *Hebrews in Contexts*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini and Harold W. Attridge, AJEC 91 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 259–82.

[592] Ibid., 271.

[593] Justin Harrison Duff discerns a metarepresentation of Isa 1:11 here, leading to the implicature that Hebrews rejects Levitical rites done hypocritically in contrast to Jesus' obedient high priestly sacrifice ("The Blood of Goats and Calves...and Bulls? An Allusion to Isaiah 1:11 LXX in Hebrews 10:4," *JBL* 137 [2018]: 782).

34:7.[594] Given that the audience has already heard the reference to Jer 38LXX, the expanded version would lead them to process the utterance further, leaving this as a possible cognitive effect. Thus, a further implicature drawn by Whitlark and Martin is that lawlessness involves idolatry.[595] Given that covenant inauguration is based on events at Sinai (9:19–22), Hebrews may conflate exodus events with Jer 38LXX. Whether the audience could detect something as precise is, nonetheless, difficult to determine, especially since ἀνομία recurs throughout the OT, not just in Exod 34:7.[596]

Heb 10:19–22

Hebrews' assertion that "where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin," leads to the inference that the audience can enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus. For Leithart, 10:19–22 uses the language of priestly ordination to describe believers.[597] He suggests that the combination of sprinkling blood and water metarepresents the ordination rites (Exod 29:4, 21; Lev 8:6, 30). However, elsewhere in Hebrews, sprinkling occurs in both the red heifer ritual (9:13) and in Moses' inauguration (9:19) to refer to the purification of God's people more generally, not priests. Therefore, Hebrews' language here does not make manifest to the audience that they are to view themselves as priests. As Attridge comments, "[O]ur author seems more concerned with the general metaphor of interior purification (9:23) than with pressing the cultic imagery."[598] Nevertheless, it is conceivable that this language when combined with the language of drawing near (προσέρχομαι), frequently used of OT priests, could lead the audience to the implicature that they are like priests.

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[594] Madison N. Pierce, "Intra-Divine Discourse and the New Covenant in Hebrews: Subtext(s) in Hebrews 8–10" (paper presented at SBL Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, November 2016).

[595] Michael W. Martin and Jason A. Whitlark, *Inventing Hebrews: Design and Purpose in Ancient Rhetoric*, SNTSMS 171 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 270.

[596] Jamieson suggests that the edits to the metarepresentation are influenced by the metarepresentation of Ps 39LXX (*Heavenly Offering,* 81).

[597] Peter J. Leithart, "Womb of the World: Baptism and the Priesthood of the New Covenant in Hebrews 10:19–22," *JSNT* 78 (2000): 49–65.

[598] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 288.

Heb 10:26–31

Heb 10:26–31 follows the exhortation of 10:19–25 to stir up each other to love and good deeds. The wilful sin explored in 10:26, however, provides a contrast to the acts of stirring up and encouraging one another, implying that to sin wilfully is to move backwards, not press forward.[599] The γάρ in v.26 implies that this section serves as motivation for the audience to draw near, hold fast, and to consider how to stir one another up, since the neglect of such practices increases the risk of committing the sin for which there remains no sacrifice outlined here.

Metarepresentation of Num 15:22–31 (10:26)

Many scholars suggest Hebrews' concept of deliberate sin metarepresents Num 15:22–31,[600] which distinguishes those who unintentionally commit sin and those who sin with a high hand (ἐν χειρὶ ὑπερηφανίας). For the latter, there remains no sacrifice for sins; they will be cut off from the people. Cockerill, however, suggests that, since the distinction made between intentional and unintentional sins was a common one for both Jews and non-Jews, Hebrews is not intentionally metarepresenting Num 15:22–31. First, Hebrews does not use terminology from Num 15, specifically the phrase "with a high hand." Second, there were other sins apart from those done with a high hand for which atonement could not be made. Instead, Cockerill concludes that "it is clear that the distinction made by Hebrews must be understood within the context of the pastor's argument rather than as an unadapted derivation from another source."[601]

Whilst Hebrews does not explicitly refer to sin with a high hand, there are three indications that the audience would draw the implicature that ἑκουσίως metarepresents the high-handed sin of Num 15. First, although Hebrews does not use the phrase ἐν χειρὶ ὑπερηφανίας, ἑκουσίως is the antonym of ἀκουσίως, used to refer to unwilful sin that can be atoned for (Num 15:24), which appears to be metarepresented in the

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[599] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 244.

[600] Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Jewish Christians*, 288; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 419; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13,* 292; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 292; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 344; Schreiner, *Hebrews*; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 261; Isaacs, *Reading Hebrews and James*, 125; France, "Hebrews," 139; Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 513.

[601] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 483–84.

discussion of 10:1–18.[602] Although Hebrews explicitly uses the term "sins of ignorance" (ἀγνόημα) to describe these sins, the shift to the use of "wilful" in 10:26 provides an implicit contrast with the sin outlined in 10:1–18, implying that those sins were unwilful. Furthermore, there were intentional sins that could be atoned for (2 Sam 11–12), suggesting that those intentional sins are not meant here in Hebrews.

Second, the points of contact between 10:26–31 and 6:4–8[603] suggest that 10:26–31 should be understood in light of 6:4–8, which metarepresents the Deuteronomic covenant curses. If the audience draws the implicature in 6:7–8 that they are on the verge of the Promised Land, then the intentional sin is also committed at the threshold of entry into the Promised Land.

Third, the context in which Hebrews describes the wilful sin is permeated with metarepresentations of OT wilderness texts. In 10:28, Hebrews metarepresents Deut 17:2–7, comparing the judgement of those under the law of Moses with those under the new covenant, whilst in 10:30–31, Hebrews metarepresents Deut 32:35–36. These serve to reinforce the implicature that the audience is in a situation similar to the wilderness generation.

Interpretation

What does sinning wilfully entail? For Gallos, the metarepresentation of the wilful sin of Num 15 creates the implicature that the audience are to maintain their weekly Sabbath-gathering because the wood-gatherer who defames the Sabbath illustrates such deliberate sin.[604] Whilst one aspect of the failure to stir one another up to love and good deeds is to neglect the community gathering,[605] Gallos' argument

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[602] Lane suggests that the language in Heb 10:26 is "designed to recall 10:18" (*Hebrews 9–13*, 293).

[603] Lane notes that the concept of falling away (6:6) is parallel to sinning intentionally (10:26); crucifying the Son of God and exposing him to open shame (6:6) is the same as trampling upon the Son of God, defiling the blood of the covenant and insulting the Spirit of grace (10:29); both underscore that the apostate has experienced in its fullness the blessings of the new covenant; both emphasise the impossibility of repentance; in both, apostates face fiery judgment (ibid., 296).

[604] Gallos, "Katapausis," 271.

[605] As Allen rightly notes (*Hebrews*, 522).

nevertheless misconstrues the significance of the wood-gatherer's deeds, which is illustrative of the *kind* of intentional sin committed, rather than defining the *nature* of the intentional sin. For the Israelites, to gather wood on the Sabbath was to reject the lordship of YHWH and the covenant that he made with them and to go back (metaphorically speaking) to slavery in Egypt, where they gathered straw to make bricks under the rule of Pharaoh (Exod 5:7).[606] In the narrative of Numbers, the wood-gathering episode is symbolic of the disobedience of the wilderness generation in Num 14.[607] The description of sin with a high hand is significant because the punishment for this sin is decreed while Israel was in the wilderness, suggesting that one needs to understand this reference against the background of the rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea.[608] To sin intentionally is to turn back to Egypt and reject Jesus, the new wilderness leader, like those at Kadesh-Barnea who symbolically raised their fist in defiance of God, preventing them from going forward to their promised inheritance. [609] In doing so, they reject the covenant conditions made between them and God (8:8–12; 10:14–16), they are cut off from the covenant community and barred from entry into the Promised Land.[610] Nevertheless, the wider context of Num 15 need not be accessed for relevance to be obtained since Hebrews goes on to ostensively outline the nature of the wilful sin.

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation (10:26b–27)

General reference

For those who sin wilfully after receiving knowledge of the truth, there remains only a fiery judgement. The notion of God consuming his enemies with fire is a relatively common one in the OT, both in the Pentateuch (Num 11:1–2; 16:34; Lev 10:1–2; Deut 32:21–22, 45) and in the prophetic writings (Ezek 23:25; 38:19; Zeph 1:18; 3:8), as

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[606] Jonathan Burnside, "'What Shall We Do with the Sabbath-Gatherer?' A Narrative Approach to a 'Hard Case' in Biblical Law (Numbers 15:32–36)," *VT* 60 (2010): 60–61; Tzvi Novick, "Law and Loss: Response to Catastrophe in Numbers 15," *HTR* 101 (2008): 3–4.
[607] Novick, "Law and Loss," 14.
[608] Ibid.
[609] Ibid., 5.
[610] McAffee, "Covenant and the Warnings of Hebrews," 546–47.

well as in Jewish apocalyptic literature (2 Bar. 48:39–40). Uninformed audience members, therefore, may simply infer a general reference to God's judgement.

Num 16:35

Craddock and Coyne infer a metarepresentation of Num 16:35 here: the fiery punishment of Korah's rebellious followers.[611] Given the wilderness context already established, and especially the metarepresentation of Num 15's intentional sin, the audience could draw the implicature that the fate of those who sin intentionally is analogous to Korah's followers, who were consumed by fire because they had shown contempt for God. Nevertheless, given the similarity between Hebrews' language and Isa 26:11, and the fact that the emphasis is on future, if imminent, judgement,[612] not judgement in the present, the reference to Korah is a weak implicature, unintended by Hebrews, that could possibly be inferred from Hebrews' language here.

Isa 26:11

Hebrews' metarepresentation more closely resembles Isa 26:11, a text known to Hebrews as evidenced by the use of Isa 26:20 later in 10:39. Therefore, the implicature is that the judgement faced by intentional sinners is an eschatological, apocalyptic one, which supports Hebrews' statement that the judgement lies in the future. For those who sin intentionally, entry into rest no longer remains (ἀπολείπω – see 4:6, 9), only a fiery judgement. Ultimately, the audience, regardless of what intertext they discerned, would draw similar implicatures: God executes fiery judgement on his enemies, and it is the committing of intentional sin that makes them an enemy of God.

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[611] Craddock, "Hebrews," 123. Coyne, "Wandering," 279–80.

[612] DeSilva notes that the imminence of God's judgement is heightened by Hebrews' use of μέλλω rather than the future tense ἔδεται, making it more fearful for the audience (*Perseverance*, 346). Ellingworth thinks the present infinitive "is the virtual equivalent of a future tense" (*Hebrews*, 535). However, Hebrews' change of the verb potentially evokes the cognitive effect that judgement is imminent, not far off in the future.

Isa 26:11	Num 16:35	Heb 10:26b–27
κύριε ὑψηλός σου ὁ βραχίων καὶ οὐκ ᾔδεισαν γνόντες δὲ αἰσχυνθήσονται ζῆλος λήμψεται λαὸν ἀπαίδευτον καὶ νῦν *πῦρ* τοὺς ὑπεναντίους ἔδεται	καὶ *πῦρ* ἐξῆλθεν παρὰ κυρίου καὶ κατέφαγεν τοὺς πεντήκοντα καὶ διακοσίους ἄνδρας τοὺς προσφέροντας τὸ θυμίαμα	οὐκέτι περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἀπολείπεται θυσία, φοβερὰ δέ τις ἐκδοχὴ κρίσεως καὶ *πυρὸς* ζῆλος ἐσθίειν μέλλοντος τοὺς ὑπεναντίους

Metarepresentation of Deut 17:2–7 (10:28–29)

In vv.28–29, Hebrews' language changes from the inclusive "we" to the direct address "you," signalling that this information is directly relevant to the audience and that Hebrews is inviting them to draw their own inferences from the language here. This encourages the audience to process more fully what it means to sin wilfully, as well as the consequences for such sin.

Hebrews' language enables the audience to infer what sinning wilfully involves. Whilst, under the law of Moses, blasphemy (Lev 24:14–16), murder (Lev 24:17) and idolatry (Deut 17:2–7) all merited the death penalty, Hebrews metarepresents the latter, since it is the only one that required the testimony of two or three witnesses. Thus, the audience can draw the implicature that the wilful sin involves idolatry.[613] Furthermore, they may infer that, if setting aside the Mosaic law warranted death, the punishment under the new covenant must be even more severe, since it is a superior covenant with a better mediator.

Idolatry is likened to trampling the Son of God under their feet. Rather than submit to the Son of God, as the one to whom God the Father has promised that he will make his enemies a footstool, and who will have everything subjected to him in the world to come (chs 1–2), the apostate tries to reverse this by subjecting the Son of God to

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[613] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 528; Jason A. Whitlark, "The Warning against Idolatry: An Intertextual Examination of Septuagintal Warnings in Hebrews," *JSNT* 34 (2012): 382–401. Interestingly, some rabbis associated the highhanded sin of Num 15 with idolatry (Gary A. Anderson, "Intentional and Unintentional Sin in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, ed. David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman, and Avi Hurvitz [Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1995], 53).

their authority. As Koester notes, such rhetoric is "designed to make listeners shrink from the idea of such an affront."[614] Furthermore, they reject the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified. This looks back to Heb 9:18–22, which outlines Jesus' inauguration of the covenant in comparison to Exod 24. In rejecting the new covenant sacrifice, the apostate rejects sanctification, leading to their expulsion from the covenant community. Finally, idolatry outrages the Spirit of grace.

What would the audience infer is the "greater punishment" for those who commit apostasy, since Hebrews does not elaborate on the nature of this punishment? Gleason argues that the lesser-to-greater argument implies, not that those under the new covenant would experience spiritual death, but rather that it is "a physical punishment greater in degree or force than that previously experienced by the OT examples."[615] Instead, Gleason argues that it refers to the suffering inflicted on the people during the Jewish war.[616] In response, Scott Mackie has demonstrated as unlikely that the audience would draw the implicature that this punishment is physical. The context is concerned with the audience's entry into the heavenly realm (10:19–25). When addressing the audience's physical afflictions, Hebrews cares about their perseverance in faith rather than their physical safety, and counsels them to endure suffering, not flee it. Thus, the force of the *a fortiori* argument is that, if death was the punishment afflicted under the old covenant, then what awaits the apostate under the new covenant is much worse: damnation.[617]

Metarepresentation of Deut 32:35–36 (10:30)

In v.30, Hebrews reiterates the consequences of intentional sin by metarepresenting Deut 32:35–36 as the direct speech of God. Like the Israelites on the cusp of entry into their inheritance, they are to understand the fearful consequences of intentional sin. Attridge argues that Hebrews uses Deut 32 out of context since κρίνω refers to the

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[614] Koester, *Hebrews*, 457.
[615] Randall C. Gleason, "The Eschatology of the Warning in Hebrews 10:26–31," *TynBul* 53 (2002): 117. Similarly, Thomas Kem Oberholtzer argues that the punishment is a "temporal discipline for violating the Mosaic covenant" ("The Danger of Willful Sin in Hebrews 10:26–39," *BSac* 145 [1988]: 413). However, Hebrews' conception of discipline is couched in positive language.
[616] Gleason, "Eschatology," 117.
[617] Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 130–31.

vindication of God's people from their enemies.[618] Nevertheless, the Song of Moses does warn Israel against unfaithfulness, and threatens the covenant people with God's judgement. Furthermore, although the judgement on apostates is inevitable, through that judgement, God will vindicate those in the covenant community who have stayed faithful.[619] Indeed, the judgement in v.27 leads to the implicature that members of the covenant community who sin wilfully are enemies of God.

Hebrews concludes the pericope by referring to the fearful quality of God's judgement (v.31). Those who consider that apostasy is not in view here argue that notions of falling into God's hands are usually positive (2 Sam 24:14; 1 Chr 21:13; Sir 2:18).[620] However, the discourse of Hebrews is the primary cognitive environment against which the audience would understand this phrase. In the context, falling into the hands of the living God is a fearful thing to be avoided, not embraced. This fits references to falling found elsewhere in Hebrews (4:11; 6:4–6), which are also negative in connotation.[621] Ironically, by falling away from the living God through apostasy (3:12), the apostate ends up falling into the hands of God on the Day of Judgement.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed the wilderness references in Heb 8–10. Jesus is the high priest over the heavenly tabernacle to which the audience draw near on their wilderness journey; he inaugurates the covenant as Moses did; his sacrifices are analogous to that in the wilderness on the Day of Atonement and in the red heifer ritual. In response, the audience is not to act like those in the wilderness, who sinned with a high hand. If they do, the fiery judgement of God will fall on them.

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[618] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 296.

[619] John Proctor understands Hebrews' use of Deut 32 to refer to vindication rather than judgement ("Judgement or Vindication? Deuteronomy 32 in Hebrews 10:30," *TynBul* 55 [2004]: 65–80). For more on Hebrews' use of Deut 32:35–36, see Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 61–62.

[620] James Swetnam understands the phrase "to fall into the hands of God" to be positive ("Hebrews 10, 30–31: A Suggestion," *Bib* 75 [1994]: 388–95).

[621] Kleinig suggests a metarepresentation of Deut 32:39–40, in which God states "there is no one who can save [them] from out of my hand" (*Hebrews*, 517). Since Hebrews' language is so general, the audience would probably not infer such a precise reference; however, both consider falling into the hand of God to be a negative reality.

Chapter 7: Heb 11:1–12:2

Introduction

This chapter examines how the audience would process Heb 11:1–12:2 in light of the cognitive environment already constructed in the discourse. I begin by analysing how Heb describes Israel's history with an emphasis on the wilderness wanderings; then I examine the assumption that Heb 12:1–2 depicts an athletic metaphor in its characterisation of the audience and Jesus. The emphasis, in this study, is on Heb 12:1–17. In this chapter, however, Heb 12:1–2 is analysed in continuity with Heb 11, since Heb 12:1–2 brings the argument of ch 11 to its climax, with Heb 11 thus providing the most relevant context for understanding Heb 12:1–2. In the following chapter, therefore, I will then discuss Heb 12:3–17 in light of the preceding analysis of Heb 12:1–2.

Heb 11:1–40

Following a description of the audience's experience of sufferings in 10:32–39, Hebrews provides a list of heroes from Israel's history who exercised faith amid hardship and suffering to encourage the audience to persevere. Those listed in the encomium of faith have the following in common: they have endured suffering, they have faith, and their faith involves looking forward to the future heavenly inheritance. In doing so, Heb 11 not only underscores the faith displayed in Israel's history but also implies that the people of God, up to this day, have not yet entered into the promised rest.

Cognitive environment: Israel's history as a re-written wilderness wandering

Many scholars observe that Heb 11's emphasis on the wandering people of God is closely connected to the argument of Heb 3:7–4:11, albeit with a different emphasis: instead of focussing on the unfaithful wilderness generation, Hebrews underscores those of the audience's ancestry who were faithful.[622] Johnsson, for instance, comments, "It is obvious that ideas implied and inchoate in 3:6b–4:11 reach explicit expression in chap. 11. We note specifically the motifs of wandering, sighting the goal

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[622] Käsemann, *Wandering People*, 17–66; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 154; Wray, *Rest*, 54, 76–77.

but not attaining it, and disavowal of a worldly goal."[623] Likewise, Carl Mosser notes, "Every time the author repeats the word πίστει a contrast is drawn with the ἀπιστία of the wilderness generation."[624] Therefore, on reading Heb 11, the audience would draw the implicature that to have faith is to not be like the wilderness generation. Nevertheless, it was not until the work of Matthew Thiessen that the precise connections between the two passages were fully articulated.[625] Against Pamela Eisenbaum's argument that Heb 11's purpose is to de-nationalise the figures in Israel's history,[626] Thiessen makes the case that Heb 11 implies "that the long history of Israel, up to the present day, belongs to the period of the exodus/wilderness wanderings. The marginalization portrayed in the author's presentation of these Jewish heroes is not meant to sunder the relationship between them and national Israel, rather it is meant to demonstrate that marginalization is and has always been a sign that one belongs to God's people."[627]

Abraham

After beginning with metarepresentations of the faithfulness of Abel, Enoch and Noah, Hebrews considers Abraham. In doing so, Hebrews underscores Abraham's status as a resident alien[628] even when he possessed Canaan, the land of promise. Consequently, the audience would draw the implicature that, although Abraham lived in the land, he was not a citizen of the land.[629] Furthermore, the description of Canaan as a foreign land (ἀλλότριος), and the reference to Abraham and his descendants dwelling in tents (σκηνή), a symbol of transience and impermanence,[630] leads to the

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[623] Johnsson, "Pilgrimage Motif," 241.
[624] Carl Mosser, "Rahab Outside the Camp," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 393.
[625] Thiessen, "End of the Exodus," 353–69.
[626] Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*, 192.
[627] Thiessen, "End of the Exodus," 362. Thiessen describes this as an extended exodus period, but it is more appropriately designated a wilderness period since the emphasis is on movement towards the Promised Land as opposed to an exit from Egypt (as he rightly designates it in his succeeding article: "Hebrews 12.5–13, the Wilderness Period, and Israel's Discipline," *NTS* 55 [2009]: 366–79).
[628] Koester, *Hebrews*, 485.
[629] Ibid., 495–96.
[630] Ibid., 485.

implicature that Canaan was not the final place of rest nor the true dwelling place of God's people. Instead, Hebrews ostensively states that the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God (11:10), is the city to which Abraham was journeying. Given that Zion is also described as a city with foundations (Ps 87:1–2; cf. Isa 28:16), the audience could draw the implicature that this city is Zion.

The identity of οὗτοι πάντες (11:13–16)

In vv.13–16, Hebrews shifts from describing the faith of individuals using the term πίστει, to using the phrase κατὰ πίστιν, setting the verses apart from the other examples of faith. Hebrews notes how none of these ever received what was promised, merely seeing it from afar as foreigners and strangers (ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοί) on the earth. Again, Hebrews' language reinforces the implicature that earth is not the final dwelling place of God's people. Hebrews re-presents the thoughts of the patriarchs to the audience, implying that they viewed themselves to be strangers and exiles on the earth, although no scripture reference explicitly states that Abraham and the patriarchs saw themselves as such.

Determining the referent that the audience would assign to οὗτοι πάντες is difficult. There are three options: (1) all of those who preceded v.13; (2) the patriarchs mentioned in vv.8–12; (3) all the faithful in ch 11. The first option is doubtful since Enoch does not die (v.5).[631] Attridge is likely correct that the phrase refers to the three patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob).[632] The phrase ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς most likely has for its primary referent the land of Canaan, as the use of the same term in v.9 suggests.[633] The resulting implicature is that "even though at various times, Israelites were in the land of Canaan, they still did not obtain the promise that God had given them."[634] Hebrews asserts that this is the case since Canaan was never the true homeland for the people of God; rather, it is the heavenly city (v.14).

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[631] Swetnam, *Jesus and Isaac*, 91.
[632] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 329.
[633] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 346; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 178.
[634] Thiessen, "End of the Exodus," 363n41.

Yet, is it possible that the audience could reasonably infer that the phrase refers to all of those heroes in the list? Dunning suggests that "the patriarchs function as representatives of a much broader vision of lineage – one that allows for the application of the sojourning motif (and also the promise of the eschatological city introduced in Heb 11:10) beyond these three figures to the audience who will claim this sacred history as their own."[635] Given that Hebrews does not specify the referent of οὗτοι πάντες, the audience could possibly infer that the same is true for them, especially since they know from the prior discourse that they have not yet entered their rest.

Ultimately, regardless of whether the audience would infer that this phrase includes them at this point in the discourse, later verses make it ostensive that the audience also has not yet received what is promised (Heb 11:39–40). Though initially a reference to Abraham and his descendants in v.13, it is then applied to all the succeeding generations of God's people, including the audience, who are also the seed of Abraham (2:16). The implicature is that the audience also is to understand their identity as strangers and exiles on the earth.

Isaac, Jacob and Joseph

Hebrews follows the metarepresentation of Abraham's life with a brief metarepresentation of Isaac and Jacob (vv. 20–21), who both demonstrate the same future-oriented faith that Abraham had. The reference to Jacob bowing over his staff metarepresents the events of Gen 47:29–31, where he instructs Joseph to bury him, not in Egypt, but with his ancestors in Canaan. Jacob bowing over his staff may lead

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[635] Benjamin Dunning, "The Intersection of Alien Status and Cultic Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods – New Insights*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini, BIS 75 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 184; Victor (Sung-Yul) Rhee considers this to be a chiasm since the verse parallels the introduction and conclusion of Heb 11 ("Chiasm and the Concept of Faith in Hebrews 11," *BSac* 155 [1998]: 330–31). Whilst discerning a chiasm requires extensive processing effort from the audience, Rhee's observation that Hebrews alternates present and aorist tenses would elicit cognitive effects in the audience.

the audience to draw the implicature that he "lived his life as a stranger and a sojourner,"[636] the staff being "a symbol of wandering."[637]

The metarepresentation of Joseph's burial instructions to his brothers also demonstrates his faith in God's promise. The request to move his bones from Egypt to Canaan, in anticipation of the exodus event, leads to the implicature that Joseph had faith in the fulfilment of God's promise to his people that they would enter the Promised Land.[638]

Moses and the Israelites

In vv.23–29, Hebrews metarepresents exodus events from Moses' birth to the wilderness generation's redemption from Egypt. Hebrews begins by focussing on Moses' parents, metarepresenting language from Exod 2:2, 11: ἀστεῖον; Μωϋσῆς μέγας γενόμενος.

Hebrews moves on to metarepresent events in Moses' adulthood. The audience could draw the implicature that Moses' murder of the Egyptian demonstrated he was a Hebrew, and by implication, denied that he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter.[639] D'Angelo notes that, after Heb 11:23, a variant (D*) fills the gap in Moses' history with a condensation of the LXX of Moses' slaying of the Egyptian: "By faith, when he had grown up, Moses slew the Egyptian looking upon the humiliation of his brothers."[640] Hebrews, however, does not make this event manifest to the audience.

Rather than enjoying the comforts of Egypt, Moses is described as sharing the reproach of Christ as he looked to the reward. Whether the audience would assign Christ or Israel as the referent of τοῦ Χριστοῦ is difficult to determine. Given there

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[636] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 365.
[637] Käsemann, *Wandering People*, 44.
[638] Thiessen, "End of the Exodus," 364.
[639] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 371.
[640] D'Angelo, *Moses*, 43.

has been no mention of Christ in Heb 11 so far,[641] most see a reference to Israel.[642] However, later in 13:13, the audience is exhorted to bear the reproach of Christ so, on later reflection, the audience may understand Moses' suffering to be like Christ's.[643] Although many commentators assume the referent of μισθαποδοσίαν is God, the feminine noun implies that the audience would infer a reference to the unseen heavenly realm. This would cohere with the definition of faith given in 11:1 and the depiction of Abraham as one who looked forward to the heavenly place (11:8, 13).[644]

Hebrews continues Heb 11's wandering motif by noting Moses' flight from Egypt. It is difficult to determine whether the audience would draw the implicature that Hebrews metarepresents Moses' first escape from Egypt when he fled to Midian (Exod 2:14–15),[645] or the exodus event itself (Exod 12:31–33; 14:5–14).[646] The former is unlikely since it contradicts the biblical account, which states that Moses did flee in fear. The latter interpretation is deemed troublesome because it occurs after Moses institutes the Passover, described in v.28. However, Hebrews has already demonstrated a lack of precision in chronology in 11:8–19, meaning the audience could still process a reference to the exodus story. Hebrews' language resembles Exod

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[641] Nathan MacDonald, "By Faith Moses," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 375.

[642] J. Eichler and C. Brown, "Possessions, Treasure, Mammon, Wealth, Money," in *NIDNTT,* 2:835; Christopher A. Richardson, *Pioneer and Perfecter of Faith: Jesus' Faith as the Climax of Israel's History in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, WUNT 2/338 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 205–07.

[643] Koester, *Hebrews*, 502.

[644] Richardson, *Pioneer and Perfecter*, 210.

[645] John M.G. Barclay, "Manipulating Moses: Exodus 2.10–15 in Egyptian Judaism and the New Testament," in *Text as Pretext: Essays in Honour of Robert Davidson*, ed. Robert P. Carroll, JSOTSup 138 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 28–46; Dennis T. Olson, "Violence for the Sake of Social Justice? Narrative, Ethics and Indeterminacy in Moses' Slaying of the Egyptian (Exodus 2.11–15)," in *The Meanings We Choose: Hermeneutical Ethics, Indeterminacy and the Conflict of Interpretations*, ed. Charles H. Cosgrove, JSOTSup 411 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 138–48; Allen, *Hebrews*, 559–60.

[646] Simon Kistemaker, "Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Thessalonians, the Pastorals and Hebrews*, ed. William Hendriksen and Simon Kistemaker (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 340; D'Angelo, *Moses*, 54–56; Radu Gheorghita, "περὶ τῆς ἐξὸδου...ἐμνμόνευσεν, 'he spoke about the exodus': Echoes of Exodus in Hebrews," in *Reverberations of the Exodus in Scripture*, ed. R. Michael Fox (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 165–66.

14–15. Exod 15:8 describes Pharaoh as "filled with anger" (θυμός); whilst the Israelites, in their fear, blame Moses for leading them out of Egypt (14:10). In spite of this, Moses continues to have faith that God will save them from the Egyptians, urging them to stand firm (ἵστημι, Exod 14:13), a term that has conceptual parallels with καρτερέω (Heb 11:27).[647] Ultimately, regardless of the particular event inferred, Hebrews' main point is clear: like his forefathers, Moses "wandered the earth without a homeland, when he left Egypt behind (11:27a; cf. 11:13)."[648] A further implicature that could be deduced is identified by Koester: leaving Egypt means facing suffering in the wilderness (Exod 16:3; Num 11:5; 14:4).[649] Ultimately, Moses exhibits his faith in the face of hardship, also evidenced in his conducting of the Passover.[650]

In vv.29–30, the emphasis moves from Moses to the Israelites passing through the Red Sea out of Egypt. This metarepresentation proves problematic to interpreters as the Israelites are not portrayed in the biblical account as having faith. Some understand Moses to be the representative head of Israel;[651] however, v.29 points against the audience deducing this implicature since it states that all the Israelites exercised faith.[652] Likewise, the understanding that faithful Israelites are to be distinguished from the unfaithful[653] is not made manifest to the audience. More likely, as Wenkel notes, the audience is to infer that the Israelites began in faith, but later turned to unbelief.[654] Exod 14:31 notes, "And the people feared the Lord, and they believed [ἐπίστευσαν] in God and in his servant Moses." Nevertheless, they eventually grew weary and were characterised by unbelief.

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[647] Richardson, *Pioneer and Perfecter*, 209.
[648] Koester, *Hebrews*, 509.
[649] Ibid.
[650] Ounsworth claims that "there is ambivalence with respect to the faithfulness of Moses, compared with all who have come before" (*Joshua Typology*, 118). However, even though Jesus is greater, Hebrews consistently holds a high view of Moses.
[651] Kistemaker, "Hebrews," 343; Michael R. Cosby, *The Rhetorical Composition and Function of Hebrews 11: In Light of Example Lists in Antiquity* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1988), 47; Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology*, 120.
[652] David H. Wenkel, "Two Contrasting Portraits of the Exodus Generation in Hebrews: How Redemptive History Explains the Text," *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 33 (2015): 153.
[653] Isaacs, *Reading Hebrews and James*, 136.
[654] Wenkel, "Contrasting Portraits," 158–59.

The absence of Joshua

Following the metarepresentation of exodus events, Hebrews' passes over the account of the wilderness generation led into Canaan by Joshua, concluding by metarepresenting Rahab's interaction with the spies in Josh 2:1–10.

Would the audience notice Hebrews' omission of Joshua? Scholars like Attridge, Ellingworth, Koester and Pfitzner do not mention Joshua's absence as being significant. Other scholars deduce from Hebrews' careful rhetoric that the omission of Joshua is deliberate. Eisenbaum, for instance, remarks that the absence of Joshua is "especially glaring."[655]

Five considerations suggest that the audience would notice Joshua's absence:

(1) Joshua plays a much more significant role in Israel's history than the minor judges metarepresented in Heb 11:32.

(2) Rahab's inclusion would call to the reader's mind Joshua, thereby calling attention to his absence.

(3) V.30 metarepresents events that are virtually inexplicable without Joshua.[656] The Pentateuchal narrative of the wilderness generation and Joshua's role already comprises part of the audience's cognitive environment (Heb 3:7–4:11), yet Hebrews does not give space to him in the account of Israel's faithful, presumably because of the belief that Joshua did not lead Israel into rest.

(4) Earlier in the discourse, Joshua is underscored as one of the few faithful among the wilderness generation (4:1–2). The audience would not draw the implicature that Joshua was unfaithful,[657] so Hebrews' omission of Joshua from the list of the faithful requires more processing effort.

(5) All spheres of Judaism held Joshua in high regard; therefore, the audience must process further to understand Joshua's omission from Heb 11.[658] He is an

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[655] Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*, 172.

[656] These observations are indebted to Farber, *Images of Joshua*, 280.

[657] Joshua is not omitted because he could not be employed as an example of faith (against Johnson, *Hebrews*, 291, 303; Thiessen, "End of the Exodus," 365).

[658] For a more detailed account of attitudes towards Joshua in Judaism and early Christianity, see Farber, *Images of Joshua*.

exemplar in other Jewish example lists (Sir 46:1–6; 1 Macc 2:55).[659] Ben Sira portrays Joshua as a mighty warrior, prophet and saviour, who takes vengeance on God's enemies and gives Israel the land as an inheritance. 4 Ezra praises Joshua for being a prophet-like figure who intercedes on behalf of his people, like Abraham, Moses, Samuel and David. Philo describes Joshua as Moses' "most excellent pupil and the imitator of his amiable and excellent disposition" (*Virt.* 1.66–69) and notes that Joshua, which means "salvation of the Lord," deserves this "most excellent of names" because he was such an excellent person (*Mut.* 21.121–122).[660] LAB 24 compares Joshua to an eagle and a lion's cub and praises him for being a leader like Moses.

Multiple reasons, therefore, suggest that the audience would see the omission of Joshua here as significant. The resulting implicature is that Joshua was omitted because he did not lead God's people into their rest, leaving it open for another ἀρχηγός to do so (12:2).

The omission of the possession of the Promised Land of Canaan

Hebrews also omits any reference of entrance into the Promised Land, even though it was a significant event in Israel's history.[661] This omission would elicit significant cognitive effects through implicature, especially because Canaan has already been mentioned several times in the discourse (4:8; 11:9). The resulting implicature is that Canaan is not the true goal of God's people. Thiessen considers that Hebrews bypasses these issues because it is difficult to explain how its emphasis on Israel never possessing the Promised Land coheres with the biblical accounts which either assume that these heroes lived in the land or that they lived subsequent to the possession of the land.[662] However, the audience can infer from Rahab that the conquest of Canaan took place. Hebrews' point is – in line with the exposition of the account of Abraham

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[659] Whitfield, *Joshua Traditions*, 255.

[660] Louis H. Feldman suggests that "Philo downgrades the role of Joshua" ("Philo's Interpretation of Joshua," *JSP* 12 [2001]: 167). Philo may devote more attention to Moses, but, as the examples cited above demonstrate, he does not denigrate Joshua in any way.

[661] In the same way, in 9:5b, Hebrews is selective in expositing the tabernacle furnishings, "omitting those elements that are not to the point" (Lane, *Hebrews 9–13,* 221).

[662] Thiessen, "End of the Exodus," 365.

(vv.9–12) and the earlier comment in 4:8 – that even in Canaan, God's people did not possess the promised rest.

The remainder of God's people in the wilderness (11:32–39)

In v.32, Hebrews moves from anaphora to asyndeton, giving a list of heroes.[663] The effect of dispensing with conjunctions, as in vv.13–16, is to create prominence.[664] Cosby notes, "The rhetorical function of Heb 11:32 is to begin to bring an already lengthy list to a conclusion and yet give the impression that the author could go on piling up ever more examples of similar content."[665] Hebrews' account of the history post-conquest implies that there was no rest for the people. As Koester observes, "The rapid listing of examples of conflict, heroism, and suffering shows that there was no rest after entry into the land."[666] Neither is there any recounting of the temple building or the rest that God gave David from his enemies: even after the entry into Canaan, they endure conflict and suffering. As a result, Hebrews' language reinforces that the land of Canaan itself was not the final resting place for God's people. By doing so, Hebrews implies that the rest of Israel's history, post-entry into the Promised Land, was still wandering in the wilderness.[667]

In fact, Hebrews' description of those who lived post-conquest uses wilderness language: they wandered "in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" (v.38). Several suggestions have been made with respect to the identity of these wanderers. Steyn draws parallels between Heb 11:37b–38 and 1 Macc 2:29–31, 36, where many Jews are said to flee to the wilderness to hide from the Antiochene persecution.[668] Alternatively, it may metarepresent 2 Macc 10:6, which recounts the times when the Maccabeans lived in mountains and caves.[669] Alternatively, it could be a reference to Elijah, who escaped to the wilderness after Jezebel threatened to kill

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[663] Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology*, 110.
[664] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 259.
[665] Cosby, *Rhetorical Composition*, 59.
[666] Koester, *Hebrews*, 517n421.
[667] Hughes suggests that Hebrews abbreviated to avoid length (*Hebrews*, 505).
[668] Gert J. Steyn, "The Maccabean Literature and Hebrews: Some Intertextual Observations," *Journal for Semitics* 24 (2015): 284.
[669] Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 260.

him (1 Kgs 19:1–4). Elijah is also described as standing on a mountain (1 Kgs 19:11), as well as at the entrance to a cave (1 Kgs 19:13). Instead, it could be an allusion more generally to the people of Israel, who are often described as hiding from their enemies: in Judg 6:2, they fled to the dens that are in the mountains and to caves to escape from the Midianites; in 1 Sam 13:6, they concealed themselves from the Philistines in caves, holes, rocks, tombs and cisterns. David is also described as running to the wilderness (1 Sam 22:14) and to a cave to evade Saul (1 Sam 22:1; 24:3).[670]

Whichever possible referent for those in v.38 be deemed most likely – and with all of them requiring much processing effort for little cognitive gain – Hebrews' point is clear: those who lived even after the possession of the Promised Land, which was not the true rest, remained in the wilderness. Ounsworth and Thiessen suggest that the rhetorical effect of Hebrews' exposition is to freeze time, placing the entire history of Israel in the period of the wilderness wanderings.[671] Nevertheless, just because Hebrews in vv.32–40 does not cover every event in precise chronological order does not mean that it freezes time:[672] instead, Hebrews metarepresents Israel's history in line with 4:8's earlier statement that Israel never possessed rest, modifying the audience's cognitive environment. Consequently, none of those listed "received what was promised" (11:39). That which was promised relates to the promised rest (4:1), into which Israel did not enter (4:8), also characterised in Hebrews as the promised eternal inheritance (9:15). Metaphorically, then, the rest of Israel is wandering in the wilderness. Furthermore, given the metarepresentation of Jer 38LXX (8:8–12; 10:16–18), the audience may draw the implicature that they are on a wilderness journey towards Zion. As Ounsworth acknowledges, "The audience is the last of the wilderness generation and the first to attain to the promise, bringing with them all the rest who, *whether geographically they were in the Promised Land or not,* remained wanderers and sojourners upon the earth."[673]

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[670] Ibid.
[671] Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology*, 129; Thiessen, "End of the Exodus," 365.
[672] Hebrews mentions Isaac and Jacob (11:9) before the birth of Isaac (11:12), and Moses' second exit from Egypt before his conducting of the Passover (11:26–28).
[673] Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology*, 129. Coyne thinks that the wilderness wanderings are repeated in the present, but nothing in Hebrews' argument makes manifest such an implicature ("Wandering," 318).

Heb 12:1–2

Heb 12:1–2 comes at the climax of Hebrews' retelling of the history of faithful Israelites, and there are four indications that Heb 12:1–2 brings the preceding discourse to its climactic point:

(1) The emphatic conjunction τοιγαροῦν ("for that very reason then"), in contrast to less emphatic conjunctions like οὖν or διό, suggests that, at this point, the previous argument of 10:19–11:40 has reached its high point, while "the distinctiveness of τοιγαροῦν would surely function to gain the hearers' undivided attention."[674]

(2) The mention of Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith (12:2), is significant: absent from Heb 11, his reappearance here is indicative of "preeminent status among the cloud of witnesses."[675]

(3) A number of motifs in 10:19–11:40 are also summarily repeated in Heb 12:1–2: faith; endurance (10:36); witnessing (11:2, 4, 5, 39); and the emphasis on the visionary character of the patriarchs and Moses (11:10, 13, 26–27), which connects with the exhortation to the audience to look to Jesus.[676]

(4) Heb 12:1–2 encapsulates, in brief, a number of significant doctrines in the book: Jesus' death and exaltation, leading to his session at the right hand of God (1:4, 13; 8:1; 10:12) and Jesus' faith (2:13, 17; 3:1–6; 4:15; 5:7–8; 10:5–7),[677] while the title ἀρχηγός is repeated from 2:10 and τελειωτής mirrors τελειόω in 2:10.[678]

By all of these markers, the audience would process how a highpoint in the discourse has now been reached.

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[674] Richardson, *Pioneer and Perfecter*, 134.
[675] Ibid.
[676] Scott D. Mackie, "Visually Oriented Rhetoric and Visionary Experience in Hebrews 12:1–4," *CBQ* 79 (2017): 495.
[677] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 279; Richardson, *Pioneer and Perfecter*, 134–36.
[678] Ellingworth remarks that "the allusion to 2:10…is inescapable" (*Hebrews*, 640).

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Pan-Hellenic games

Most scholars understand Heb 12:1 to transition from a discussion of the history of Israel's faithful to an athletic metaphor, appealing specifically to the audience's knowledge of the Pan-Hellenic foot-race. On this interpretation, the audience would understand the cloud of witnesses to be spectators in a stadium who, having completed their own race, look down on the audience as they now compete in turn.[679] The weight would be interpreted as a reference to excess bodyweight,[680] which would impede the runner's forward progress, or to clothing, since runners typically ran naked in the Pan-Hellenic games. The audience is to run an endurance race, roughly equivalent to a modern-day marathon, with their eyes on Jesus, who has already completed the race.[681]

This proposed cognitive environment has, in its favour, that it reflects a common stream in Jewish and Graeco-Roman literature which applied athletic metaphors to moral exhortation.[682] Philo frequently uses athletic imagery to describe the pursuit of wisdom or virtue (*Agr.* 112, 119; *Praem.* 5; *Migr.* 133). 2 Macc 13:14 and 4 Macc 17:10–14 characterise military expeditions and the struggles of Jewish martyrs in terms of an athletic contest that one is required to endure. In the NT, athletic metaphors are employed to depict, or encourage, perseverance to the end by running in pursuit of the prize (1 Cor 9:24–27; Phil 2:16; 3:11), or by fighting the fight of faith (1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:6–8). Epictetus exhorts those who desired to become Stoics to wrestle with struggles so that they become "an Olympic victor" (*Diatr.* 1.24.1–2) and "the invincible athlete" (ὁ ἀνίκητος ἀθλητής, *Diatr.* 1.18.21). Similarly, the Cynic's life is depicted as an athletic contest involving hardships and training from Zeus (*Diatr.* 3.22.52, 56). Dio Chrysostom describes Diogenes of Sinope as one who competes in a contest with hardships (*Or.* 8.11–13).[683] In sum, to interpret Heb 12:1 with *running*

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[679] Koester, *Hebrews*, 522.
[680] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 335; Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 63.
[681] Estella B. Horning, "Chiasmus, Creedal Structure, and Christology in Hebrews 12:1–2," *BR* 32 (1978): 37–38.
[682] See the list in Attridge, *Hebrews*, 354n312.
[683] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 362.

a race in the stadium as its cognitive environment is simply to align Hebrews with certain acknowledged conventions of moral exhortation of the time.[684]

Nevertheless, such a cognitive environment does not fit with the immediate context of the verse which recasts Israel's history as an extended wilderness period, one that has included hardship, strife and suffering. Since a racing metaphor lacks these emphases, it is unlikely to be the sole or even primary metaphor here. Johnson seems to notice this tension when he writes, "The image of the race is drawn from the Greek culture of competitive games. But because of this marvelous intertwining of textual allusion, the hearers know that this race is one of pilgrimage begun by Abraham as he looked for a lasting city (11:13–16), a pilgrimage that will lead them to 'Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem' (12:22)."[685]

It remains to be considered whether the audience might still deduce an additional implicature, if this cohered with the preceding argument. I explore this possibility in what follows.

Wilderness wanderings

The close relationship between the wilderness wanderers of Heb 11 and the audience in 12:1 may lead the audience to infer that they are not only to run the race but to continue their wilderness journey towards their rest. Sims and Campbell have provided the most sustained critique of the traditional interpretation, arguing for a reference to pilgrimage in this verse rather than a race.[686] In establishing a reference

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[684] For a detailed analysis of athletic metaphors in moral exhortation, see Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 37–58.

[685] Johnson, "Scriptural World," 241. Christian Rose, although seeing the Graeco-Roman athletic sphere operative here, understands the wandering people of God theme to be relevant here (*Die Wolke der Zeugen: Eine exegetisch-traditionsgeschichtliche untersuchung zu Hebräer 10,32–12,3*, WUNT 60 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994], 337).

[686] Colin Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," *IBS* 27 (2008): 54–88; Sims, "'You Have Come to Mount Zion': Pilgrimage to the Presence of God in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (unpublished PhD diss., Queen's University Belfast, 2008), 181–225; W. Gordon Campbell, "The Pilgrim Leader and the Pilgrims: Wayfaring Solidarity between Christ and His Followers in Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Writing*

to the wilderness generation, I will incorporate and add to their insights. In particular, with specific reference to the translation of τρέχωμεν τὸν…ἀγῶνα and surrounding vocabulary in the verse, and on the basis that Heb does not ostensively evoke a race metaphor, I will suggest an alternative cognitive environment – the audience's ongoing journey through the wilderness – as one that produces the desired cognitive effects for minimal processing effort.

The meaning of τρέχωμεν τὸν…ἀγῶνα. An examination of the audience's lexical entry – the meanings associated with these terms in their encyclopaedic memory – for τρέχω and ἀγών demonstrates that the audience may not process the phrase τρέχωμεν τὸν…ἀγῶνα as specifically as "let us run the race."

The audience's lexical entry for τρέχω is wider than run. Τρέχω is not only used for running but also effort and forward progress. BDAG offers translations including: "*exert oneself to the limits of one's powers in an attempt to go forward,*" "*strive to advance*" or "proceed quickly and without restraint."[687] The word frequently does not have an athletic metaphor as its point of reference. It can also refer to a prophetic courier (Isa 52:7; Jer 23:21LXX), and were this the nuance reflected in Gal 2:2, Paul's "run" (τρέχω) there would not be a race either, but, rather, "a strenuous activity related to toil."[688] Likewise, 2 Thess 3:1 links τρέχω to the missionary spread of the gospel, with no athletic nuance to it.[689] In Gal 5:7, the same verb refers to the Galatian believers' spiritual life and progress in it.[690] The compound verb ἀποτρέχω is commonly used in the LXX to refer to departing on a journey (Gen 12:19; 24:51; Exod 3:21; 10:24; Lev 25:41; Num 22:13; 24:14; Josh 23:14). Furthermore, Westfall acknowledges that, in Hebrews, τρέχωμεν connects with previous hortatory

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at the Borders, ed. R. Burnet, D. Luciani, and G. Van Oyen, CBET 85 (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 163–84.

[687] BDAG, s.v. "τρέχω" (italics in original).

[688] B.J. Oropeza, "Running in Vain, but Not as an Athlete (Galatians 2:2): The Impact of Habakkuk 2:2–4 on Paul's Apostolic Commission," in *Jesus and Paul: Global Perspectives in Honor of James D.G. Dunn for His 70th Birthday*, ed. B.J. Oropeza, C.K. Robertson, and Douglas C. Mohrmann (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 140.

[689] Ibid., 147.

[690] Brian J. Abasciano, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10–18: An Intertextual and Theological Exegesis*, LNTS 317 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 192n156.

subjunctives (4:1, 11; 6:1; 10:24–25), which "are all not only formally parallel, *but also semantically parallel* to the metaphor" in 12:1.[691] These previous subjunctives all have the nuance of pressing on, with no athletic connotation, suggesting the same could be true here. All of this demonstrates that τρέχω here can be legitimately understood to refer to "striving" or "pressing onwards."[692]

Just as the semantic range of τρέχω is much broader than "run," so the lexical range of ἀγών is much broader than "race" and this is conceded by some scholars who contend for a race metaphor here.[693] The term "originally referred to a place of assembly, then to a 'place of contest' or 'stadium,' then 'contest' itself and finally any kind of 'conflict.'"[694] The term has an athletic nuance in 4 Macc 17, where those who struggle are termed "athletes," and in Wis 4:2, which describes a victor winning a reward in the contest.[695] In Esth 4:17LXX, the term is translated as "peril" or "struggle," whilst the term is used in Isa 7:13 to denote a "life-or-death struggle."[696] In some Graeco-Roman literature, it is used without an athletic nuance. Herodotus (9.60) uses the term in a military context to describe Greece's fight for freedom against the Persians as "the greatest struggle set before us." Plato (*Phaedr.* 247b) also uses the term to describe the "ultimate hardship and contest set before the soul."[697] In the NT, ἀγών normally refers to a "struggle," "conflict" or "fight" (Phil 1:30; Col 2:1; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7). One may conclude with Sims that, "[T]he semantic domain of ἀγών was considered sufficiently broad to encompass a term with no immediate connection to the athletic arena or the competitive field."[698]

The compound phrase τρέχωμεν τὸν…ἀγῶνα does not always contain the nuance of "run the race" but can also be used, as Lane admits, "metaphorically for the endurance

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[691] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 279 (emphasis added).
[692] So Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 63.
[693] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 399; Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 63; Koester, *Hebrews*, 523. J.D. Robb was the first to contest the traditional understanding of Heb 12:1 ("Hebrews xii.I," *ExpTim* 79 [1967]: 254).
[694] E. Stauffer, "ἀγών," *TDNT* 1:135.
[695] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 65.
[696] *GELS,* s.v. "ἀγών."
[697] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 66.
[698] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 65–66.

of peril by both prose writers and poets."[699] Whilst Lane acknowledges this, thus far, none in scholarship has considered these texts. Indeed, the following Graeco-Roman texts are often cited to demonstrate that τρέχωμεν τὸν…ἀγῶνα refers to running a race, even though most refer to a struggle in the face of death.[700] Dionysius of Halicarnassus uses the phrase ἀγῶνα τρέχει to mean "run a risk,"[701] in the context of someone who may lose their life (*Ant. rom.* 7.48.3). In Euripides, *Alc.* 489, the phrase ἀγῶνα…δράμοιμ' refers to Hercules' undergoing a trial in the face of death against the four-horse chariot of Thracian Diomedes.[702] In Euripides, *Iph. aul.* 1455, the phrase ἀγῶνας…δραμεῖν describes the trials that the father of Iphigenia has to undergo. In Herodotus 8.102, ἀγῶνας δραμέονται means to "run for his life," [703] or "fight for his life."[704] Similarly, in Euripides, *Orest.* 878, the phrase ἀγῶνα… δραμούμενον refers to Orestes, who was "tried for his life." These sources do not use the phrase in a context which has an athletic footrace in mind.[705] In fact, Bauernfeind acknowledges that, where ἀγών is the object of τρέχω, "*this combination is not usually athletic in the strict sense* but [refers] to a situation in which the ability of the runner is needed but the quickness of the feet does not decide and τρέχω does not have to be taken [literally]."[706] Equally appropriately, by using the phrase τρέχωμεν τὸν…ἀγῶνα, Hebrews could be exhorting the audience to "strive on in the conflict" or "press on in

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[699] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 399.
[700] For more on the translation of τρέχωμεν τὸν...ἀγῶνα in Graeco-Roman literature, see Zoe Hollinger, "Rethinking the Translation of τρέχωμεν τὸν...ἀγῶνα in Heb 12.1 in Light of Ancient Graeco-Roman Literature," *BT* 70 (2019): 94–111.
[701] LSJ, s.v. "τρέχω."
[702] H.M. Roisman and C.A.E. Luschnig, *Euripides' Electra: A Commentary* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), 228.
[703] LSJ, s.v. "τρέχω."
[704] A.D. Godley, *Herodotus: With an English Translation*, vol. 4 (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1969), 103.
[705] Against Croy, who cites these examples to suggest that ἀγών can refer to a running event (*Endurance in Suffering*, 63n72). The phrase δραμὼν ἀγῶν is used in Euripides, *El.* 883–84, 954 to refer to running a contest. Likewise, ἀγών δρόμου does refer to a foot-race in Appian 2.8.55 and Pausanias 3.12.2; 3.13.7; 5.1.4. Further, Philo, *Leg.* 3.48, whilst not using the same phrase as Heb 12:1, equates a race (δρόμον) with a contest (ἀγώνισμα).
[706] Bauernfeind, "τρέχω, δρόμος, πρόδρομος," 226–35. Yet in his discussion of πρόδρομος, Bauernfeind suggests that he considers a race metaphor to be operative in Heb 12.1: "Jesus ran as believers now run, but by His running, which has reached its goal, that of those who obey Him…is alone made possible."

the face of the conflict or hardship/danger set before us," without intending the audience to envisage themselves in an athletic arena.[707]

By itself, the fact that τρέχειν ἀγῶνα can mean "striving on in the face of conflict" is not conclusive for denying that Hebrews intends its audience to visualise themselves in a struggle. Likewise, just because τρέχω in some contexts can mean "run" and ἀγών can, in some instances, refer to an athletic contest (as is the case in Euripides, *El.*, for example), does not mean that the audience would immediately deduce that they are to "run the race." As the lexical meaning alone cannot determine the phrase's meaning,[708] we must situate the phrase in its literary context. Given that Heb 11 has underscored the strife, conflict and danger faced by the cloud of witnesses, the additional nuance of striving on in the face of conflict is not only lexically possible but also contextually satisfying. This context, together with the absence in Heb of any extended race metaphor, means that the audience would very likely process the phrase without hearing an athletic nuance but, in accordance with their lexical entry, think instead of moving forward in a struggle.

Considering, from an RT standpoint, cognitive effects or processing effort by the audience, and given the concepts that surround ἀγών here, it is unlikely that it would evoke solely a race. Sims astutely notes, in a manner reminiscent of RT, "By overemphasising (and over analysing) certain aspects of the 'race' the surrounding text is invested with meaning it cannot bear, the text collapses under the strain and the resulting 'interpretation' or exegesis becomes strained."[709]

The cloud of witnesses. First, it is questionable that the audience would draw the implicature that the witnesses are spectators watching them in a stadium. Μάρτυς

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[707] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 68. Three texts that post-date Hebrews (Eunapius, *Vit. Phil.* 479; Libanius, *Dec.* 40.2.44; Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 8.2), though not accessible to the audience, also use the phrase to refer to trials in the face of death with no athletic referent.

[708] See the chapter "Word-Study Fallacies" in D.A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996), 27–64 and the observations of James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), among others.

[709] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 69.

("witness") does not mean spectator and, if Hebrews had wanted to make manifest to the audience that spectators are in view, the technical term for spectator (θεατής) was available.[710] Croy, who contends for a race metaphor, must admit, "Μάρτυς may not be the most appropriate word for 'spectator at an athletic event,' but it is serviceable in such a context, particularly when a second nuance is desired."[711] To support this claim, Croy draws from a number of Graeco-Roman texts to demonstrate that μάρτυς and θεατής can be used interchangeably (Aristides 52.435; Dio Chrysostom 3.11; Plutarch, *Mor.* 679b).[712] Yet, both terms occur in all of these cited examples, whereas θεατής is absent from Hebrews. In fact, most scholars acknowledge that μάρτυς does not mean "spectator," leaving aside any notion of "spectating" when they expound what is entailed in witnessing for the faithful of Heb 11. For instance, Westcott writes, "These champions of old time occupy the place of spectators but they are more than spectators. They are spectators who interpret to us the meaning of our struggle, and who bear testimony to the certainty of our success if we strive lawfully."[713] Therefore, it is unlikely that the audience would draw the implicature that the witnesses "cannot finish the race without the present generation."[714]

More appropriately, our understanding of the function of the witnesses should be informed by the use of μαρτυρέω in Heb 11, since this is the most immediate context against which one would understand the related noun μάρτυς. Trites correctly remarks, "[T]he context rules out the thought of spectators in an amphitheatre who watch the contemporary Christian race, and instead speaks of God's testimony to the heroes of faith in the pages of the Old Testament."[715] The witnesses of Heb 11, in Käsemann's words, are those "whose activity is decisively and continually described as a

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[710] Ibid., 72; S.M. Baugh, "The Cloud of Witnesses in Hebrews 11," *WTJ* 68 (2006): 120. In contrast, Philo uses the term θεατής when describing the spectators who watched Israel's participation in the ἱερόν ἀγῶνα (*Praem.,* 4–6).
[711] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 61.
[712] Ibid., 60–61.
[713] Westcott, *Hebrews*, 391.
[714] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 315. Likewise, Calvin's suggestion that Hebrews uses "witnesses" instead of "runners" to avoid the implication that the faithful of old are competitors who risk taking the prize from the audience (*Hebrews*, 188), requires significant processing effort to garner any discernible cognitive effects.
[715] Allison A. Trites, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, SNTSMS 31 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 220–21.

wandering toward the city of God."[716] Like the audience, they too have undergone their own journey towards the city that has no foundations and have faced the trials and struggles that such a journey involves, yet they are standing at the precipice of their entry into the Promised Land, waiting to enter God's rest, which they cannot receive without the audience (11:39–40). If we understand the witnesses to be those who have exemplified endurance in the wilderness and provide an example for the audience as they undertake their own struggle in the wilderness, we can account for the active sense of witness.[717] The implicature deduced is that the cloud of witnesses struggled on their wilderness journey towards Zion.

The weight. In light of the race metaphor presumed here, scholars typically understand the referent of "weight" to be clothing,[718] the implicature being that clothing restricts forward movement; however, this is problematic when one considers the cognitive environments that the audience would draw on when interpreting this utterance.

First, given the negative attitude towards nudity in Judaism, the audience of Hebrews, familiar with the synagogue and its customs, would not understand clothing to be the primary referent of "weight." In the OT, male nudity in the sanctuary was considered abhorrent to God. Thus, priests who entered the tent of meeting were to wear linen garments to cover their nakedness, lest they incurred punishment and died (Exod 20:26; 28:42–43). Given Hebrews' repeated exhortations to draw near to God (4:16; 10:22), the audience would not infer a metaphor requiring nudity since they know from their cognitive environment that they could not approach God naked.[719] As Satlow's study of nakedness in Judaism concludes, "Jewish sources from antiquity construct male nakedness in a more or less consistent manner. Male nakedness is an

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[716] Käsemann, *Wandering People*, 23.
[717] Ounsworth, whilst contending for a race metaphor, notes that the witnesses are not "mere spectators, but were the Israelites of old who have been brought, along with the audience to whom they are united, to this, their final destination" (*Joshua Typology*, 114).
[718] Buchanan suggests that it could be a reference to weights that the runner would have carried (*Hebrews*, 207), but there is no evidence that runners carried weights in athletic events.
[719] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 82–83.

offense to the sacred."[720] Indeed, the audience knows from the prior discourse that Hebrews evidences a negative attitude towards nudity; in 4:13, γυμνός ("nakedness") is used to refer to being exposed or vulnerable. The audience, therefore, would not draw the implicature that removing weight involves running unclothed.

Second, Hebrews' likely Roman provenance also makes doubtful that nakedness in athletics is a cognitive environment the audience would draw upon when interpreting this utterance. Whilst Greeks perceived nudity to represent that which was heroic and sacred,[721] Roman attitudes to the nudity that accompanied Greek athletics were negative. Nudity in athletics was equated with effeminacy, homosexuality and pederasty, excess, immorality and laziness. [722] As Cicero notes, citing the Roman epic poet Ennius, "To strip in public is the beginning of evil-doing."[723] Furthermore, although nudity slowly became acceptable within Roman athletics, it only became so in the latter half of the first century. As Crowther concludes, "Although the Romans probably competed naked in athletics in Greece, there is no definite evidence that they did so in Rome, at least on a permanent basis, until the first century A.D. It is only in 60 A.D. at the Neronia that we note conclusively that athletes were naked at an athletic competition in Rome, when Tacitus believed that national morality had been overthrown by imported licentiousness."[724]

Besides, to understand clothing as a weight that impedes forward progress is to misunderstand why Greek athletes competed naked. The reason that nudity was so commonplace in Greek athletics was because of its close association with the hero-cult, not primarily because clothing constricted them as they competed. In Greek

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[720] Michael L. Satlow, "Jewish Constructions of Nakedness in Late Antiquity," *JBL* 116 (1997): 453.
[721] John Mouratidis, "The Origin of Nudity in Greek Athletics," *Journal of Sport History* 12 (1985): 221.
[722] Kathryn Mammel, "Ancient Critics of Roman Spectacle and Sport," in *A Companion to Sport and Spectacle in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. Paul Christesen and Donald G. Kyle (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2003), 607–08.
[723] Cicero, *Tusc.* 4.33.70, cited in ibid.
[724] Nigel B. Crowther, "Nudity and Morality: Athletes in Italy," *The Classical Journal* 76 (1980–81): 121.

tradition, Hercules was renowned for being both a nude hero and a nude warrior-athlete, so athletes performed naked to emulate him.[725]

As a consequence of these factors, nakedness in Greek athletics would not be a cognitive environment readily accessed by the audience to understand the referent of ὄγκος.

Alternatively, Croy argues that the weight refers to excess bodyweight, appealing to a number of Graeco-Roman sources in support of this understanding.[726] Yet none of these accounts is truly comparable with Hebrews. Appian (4.7) describes the gluttonous Gauls as having bodies given up to "bulk and heaviness" (ὄγκον καὶ βάρος), meaning they were not fit for running or labour. Diodorus Siculus (4.20.1) characterises the Ligurians as "compact in size" (τοῖς ὄγκοις…συωεσταλμένοι) and vigorous, owing to constant exercise. In both of these examples, ὄγκος is qualified with language that makes manifest that bodyweight is meant and in a context that uses overt athletic imagery.

Ultimately, since Hebrews does not develop the weight metaphor further,[727] understanding weight as clothing or excess bodyweight involves more processing effort than is necessary to understand Hebrews' argument. Hebrews does not specify the referent of the weight: it refers to every impediment, with the implication that it cannot be a reference to one specific item. As a result, it cannot sustain the notion of "clothing" or "excess bodyweight." Seesemann is correct to comment, "It is hardly possible to define more closely what kind of burden the author has in mind. By using the [adjective] πάντα he himself abandons any such attempt."[728]

Given Hebrews' reference to journeying in faith, the audience would draw the implicature that weight prevents them from journeying towards Zion. As Luke Timothy Johnson writes:

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[725] Mouratidis, "Origin of Nudity," 231–32.
[726] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 63.
[727] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 355.
[728] Heinrich Seesemann, "ὄγκος," *TDNT* 5:41.

> The weight is once more metaphorical, standing for moral qualities that might impede their growth in faith. What could count as such an impediment? If we are to take seriously the entire preceding argument, we would have to list all the possessions that could tempt them to avoid the sort of suffering that following the path of Jesus involves, including property, safety and honor.[729]

Consequently, it could refer to anything that prevents the audience's forward progress in their wilderness journey.

Sin. The difficulty of understanding sin in relation to a race metaphor leads most scholars to either allegorise sin as a reference to clothing,[730] or to understand it as discouragement that would prevent a runner from completing the race.[731]

However, it is doubtful the audience would process ἁμαρτίαν in a figurative way. Sin, and the related notions of unbelief (ἀπιστία) and disobedience (ἀπείθεια), recur throughout the book and nowhere else take on a metaphorical meaning. It is likely the audience would understand sin as a terrible threat to the people of God specifically, or all humanity generally, if Hebrews does not make manifest to the audience that it is to be taken figuratively instead. Sin is, for Hebrews, not simply immoral deeds practised by humanity but is a problem that has affected everyone's conscience. The only solution in Hebrews, therefore, is for humanity to have their conscience purified by Christ, implying that, ultimately, "all humanity starts from a place of defilement, exclusion from God's presence, and subjection to God's judgment."[732] With this understanding of sin already composing part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory,

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[729] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 316. Isaacs is correct to suggest that "the 'weight' to be shed includes 'everything' (*panta*) that would impede the Christian's pilgrimage" (*Reading Hebrews and James*, 139).
[730] Koester, *Hebrews*, 522.
[731] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 409.
[732] Jason A. Whitlark, *Enabling Fidelity to God: Perseverance in Hebrews in Light of the Reciprocity Systems of the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2008), 164. For more on the nature of sin in Hebrews, see Matthew C. Easter, *Faith and the Faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 46–48.

to argue that sin, here, would evoke the notion of discouragement, or a reference to clothing, in the minds of the audience is very doubtful. As some scholars concede, sin is a threat in the passage,[733] but find it difficult to explain in light of the race metaphor as it lacks the notions of threat and danger.[734] Sin is described as εὐπερίστατος – it holds tightly, or controls tightly,[735] and entangles the audience, with the result that they cannot move forward, a notion that coheres instead with the struggle and conflict that is present in the context of Heb 10:32–12:4.[736]

In a wilderness context, by contrast, it is clear that sin is threatening, as it will prevent the audience from entering the promised rest. In 3:12–13, the audience was warned that they should take heed lest their sinful, unbelieving heart should cause them to fall away from the living God, and it is this sin which has the potential to prevent them from entering the rest. The same idea seems to be present here. The sin is a danger and a temptation to divert them from their wilderness journey towards the promised

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[733] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 355.

[734] Attributing sin to clothing could only be construed in a threatening sense if one appeals to the story of Orsippos, who tripped, fell and died when his loincloth came loose and fell (*Ilia* 23.683). Yet, this story, composed in the eighth century B.C.E, probably did not comprise part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory and, in any case, there are a number of differing accounts of this story (Mouratidis, "Origin of Nudity," 215–16). Indeed, Thomas F. Scanlon admits that the potential that the runner's loincloth could fall down "merely suggests that the most risk-free of contests has its downfalls" (*Eros and Greek Athletics* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2002], 309).

[735] So Allen, *Hebrews*, 573. Günther Zuntz considers εὐπερίσπαστον ("easily distracting"), the variant found in P^{46} and 1739, to be original (*The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition upon the Corpus Paulinum* [London: Oxford Press, 1953], 28). Regardless of the original reading, the sense is still the same: sin diverts the audience from their goal.

[736] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 79–80. Some scholars (e.g. Ellingworth, *Hebrews,* 638; Hughes, *Hebrews,* 520) suggest that καί functions epexegetically, with the result that "sin" becomes the referent of the weight.

inheritance.[737] In order to proceed on their journey, they must do everything in their power to stop sin from entangling them.[738]

Let us strive. Furthermore, the first person plural subjunctive implies that the audience is not comprised of individuals running towards the finish line, but, rather, is a group that advance corporately. This coheres with Hebrews' emphasis thus far in the exhortation on corporate entry, achieving the goal and entering the rest together. A race metaphor, however, lacks any corporate element, implying that there will be one winner. If the audience understands themselves to be on a wilderness journey towards Zion, the idea of pressing forward together as a group makes sense. There are no winners and losers but only those who, together, enter, or fail to enter, the rest.

Endurance. Scholars note the endurance aspect of the ἀγών, suggesting that Hebrews characterises the race as a long marathon. Attridge's comment is indicative of scholarship in general: "That they should run 'with endurance'…suggests that the race is more marathon than short sprint."[739] However, in the first century, marathons did not exist – "[t]he Olympic multiple stade race probably did not exceed three miles."[740] To explain such a discrepancy, McKelvey suggests that the audience is exhorted to run around the stadium multiple times,[741] but this is not an obvious inference from the language presented here. This sort of race did exist in the first century, involving

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[737] See also the remarks by Józef Kudasiewicz, "Circumstans Peccatum (Hbr 12,1)," *Collectanea Theologica* 46 (1976): 133–35. Johnson notes that sin refers to "the spirit of rebellion that the author in 3:13 associated with *hamartia* ('sin'), or the way in which *hamartia* can offer a temporary advantage that draws one away from the oppressed people, as in the case of Moses (11:25)" [*Hebrews*, 316–17].

[738] Some scholars (e.g. Käsemann, *Wandering People*, 45–48; Spicq, *Hébreux*, 2:385) understand that the sin here is a reference to apostasy. However, apostasy is to be avoided, not removed (Croy, *Endurance in Suffering,* 173), suggesting the audience would not process sin as apostasy here.

[739] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 355.

[740] John A. Lucas, "A History of the Marathon Race 490 BC to 1975," *Journal of Sports History* 3 (1976): 121. Koester acknowledges that "[t]he marathon was not a standard race in antiquity," but claims endurance was necessary for shorter races, citing Virgil, *Aeneid* 5.327–33; Philo, *Deus* 13; *Prelim. Studies* 164 (*Hebrews*, 523). However, Virgil, *Aeneid* does not have an explicit reference to endurance and is a relatively inaccessible context against which to understand Heb 12:1. Further, both works by Philo do not have a race in view, but a contest.

[741] McKelvey, *Pioneer and Priest*, 133.

somewhere between twenty and twenty-four laps of the stadium, but even then the longest the race would have been was 7.5 to 9 kilometres.[742] Consequently, a marathon reference would not compose part of the encyclopaedic memory from which the readers would draw when interpreting the imagery.[743]

If, as in 3:7–4:11 and ch 11, however, Hebrews has placed the audience in a metaphorical wilderness period, the need for endurance is self-evident. Israel loses sight of the goal and grows weary with the consequence that they fail to reach the Promised Land. Conversely, the audience is to press on to enter the rest that Israel failed to obtain.

Furthermore, the previous use of "endurance" in 10:32, 36 has the nuance of a difficult struggle or conflict, a nuance that a race metaphor does not contain.[744] Assuming that Hebrews employs ὑπομονή consistently, it would appear that the situation the audience is to endure also involves hardship.[745] Easter correctly notes the hostile or deadly opposition that the audience is facing but suggests that "the race we are presently running is a race in the face of death." [746] Yet, a race metaphor does not imply struggling against hardship, danger or death.[747] If Hebrews situates the audience in the wilderness, however, the notion of a struggle or hardship is easily intelligible. In the wilderness, they face persecutions, opponents, the temptation to go back (metaphorically) to Egypt, or discouragement from those in the community who disobey.

A concession in light of attitudes towards Graeco-Roman athletics

We must, however, admit that the association between the term ἀγών and the stadium might cause some hearers to infer an athletic element. Robb goes too far when he supposes that, if Hebrews was written by a Jew, a metaphor from pagan athletics

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[742] Stephen G. Miller, *Ancient Greek Athletics* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2004), 32.
[743] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 77–78.
[744] Campbell, "Pilgrim Leader," 179.
[745] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 77–78.
[746] Easter, *Faith*, 153. See also Müller, *Christos Archegos*, 303–04.
[747] Rightly noted by Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 77–78.

would not be employed at all.[748] Many Jews were indeed opposed to the gymnasia. In 2 Macc 4:11–12, 14, the high priest Jason introduced Greek practices in opposition to the law, including the founding of a gymnasium. As a consequence, priests neglected their duties to participate in sports in clear defiance of the law. Similarly, 1 Macc 1:14–15 recounts the building of the gymnasium in Jerusalem, patterned after "the gentile style." This had the consequence that the Jews "removed the marks of circumcision and repudiated the holy covenant; they intermarried with Gentiles and sold themselves to evil."[749] Josephus also criticises the Roman spectacles introduced by Herod because it caused some Jews to neglect their own religious ceremonies and promoted idolatry (*A.J.* 15.264–291).[750] However, other groups within Judaism were more sympathetic towards Greek games. As noted above, in 2 Macc 4:11–12, 14, Jason, and the priests he influenced, were in favour of athletics, whilst Josephus' account implies that some Jews in Rome attended athletic contests. In Alexandria, many citizens took a keen interest in athletic competitions.[751] Philo, in particular, spectated at the games and shows detailed awareness of the different events held in the stadium.[752]

Likewise, Roman citizens had a mixed attitude toward athletics. Some non-Jewish Romans viewed Greek athletics in a positive light: Nero, for instance, showed a keen interest in the Greek games and claims to have won many crowns, whilst a number of statues and mosaics are dedicated to showcasing Greek athletes.[753] Again, the opposition to Greek athletics by some citizens implies others were involved in it. Some citizens protested against Nero's introduction of a Greek-influenced athletic festival: "The youths were degenerating under the influence of foreign tastes, passing their time in athletics, in idling or low intrigue. What remained for them but to strip themselves

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[748] Robb, "Hebrews xii.I," 254.
[749] Satlow, "Jewish Constructions," 449–50.
[750] Mammel, "Ancient Critics," 609–10.
[751] Mackie, "Hebrews 12:1–4," 488.
[752] Michael Poliakoff, *Combat Sports in the Ancient World: Competition, Violence, and Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 146–47.
[753] Bradley Arnold, *Christ as the Telos of Life: Moral Philosophy, Athletic Imagery, and the Aim of Philippians,* WUNT 2/371 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 98–99.

naked, put on the caestus and practise such battles instead of the arms of legitimate warfare?"[754]

These varying attitudes towards athletics suggest prudence in claiming to know for sure how individual audience members might have processed the term ἀγών, and the gymnasia comprised part of the audience's encyclopaedic memory. Given these associations, and whatever audience members might think of Graeco-Roman athletics, some could perceive an athletic component to their journey.

Israel's wilderness wanderings as an athletic ἀγών?

Furthermore, it is possible that some audience members could draw the implicature that their journey has both a wilderness and an athletic component. Hebrews' argument parallels Philo, *Prelim. Studies* 163–177.[755] Philo recounts the arrival of the Israelites from Egypt to Marah under Moses, who murmured against Moses. Some men, like those Israelites, lose heart and drop their hands in weakness (χεῖρες ὑπ' ἀσθενείας – see Heb 12:12), desiring to go back to Egypt. But others, with much endurance (ὑπομένη) and great vigour, pass through the contest of life (τόν ἀγῶνα τοῦ βίου) in the wilderness. Philo then quotes Deut 8:2: "Remember every way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you and discerning what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments, or not" (see Heb 12:5–11).[756] Whilst this does not suggest Hebrews' dependence on Philo, the conceptual parallels do demonstrate that such an understanding of the wilderness generation was present in the first century C.E.

An audience member may have drawn the additional implicature that their struggle in the wilderness is like a martial arts contest, or a free-style fighting contest, a metaphor that would be consonant with the idea of struggle and hardship and cohere with the

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[754] E. Norman Gardiner, *Athletics in the Ancient World* (New York: Dover, 2002), 118.

[755] Thiessen, "Hebrews 12.5–13," 371–73.

[756] Victor C. Pfitzner observes that "the picture is probably that of the boxer," rather than the runner (*Paul and the Agon Motif* [Leiden: Brill, 1967], 42).

athletic meaning that ἀγών can sustain.[757] A further implicature, on this reading, is that the weight and sin are to be cast off like a threatening opponent so that the audience may continue in their struggle towards the heavenly realm. This would also have the benefit of cohering with the contention that Hebrews is metarepresenting the accounts of the Maccabean martyrs at this point of the discourse.[758]

Allowing for these possible cognitive moves by the audience, it remains the case that Hebrews makes little of any athletic metaphor. Philo and Maccabees, by contrast, develop it. Philo describes the wilderness generation as "athletes." Likewise, the Maccabean account explicates that they contend (ἀγωνίζομαι, 17:13; see Heb 12:1c, 4) as "athletes" (ἀθλητής, 17:15, 16); Eleazar is the "first contestant" (προαγωνίζομαι), unlike Jesus the ἀρχηγός, a term with no athletic connotations; humans are "spectators" (θεωρέω, 17:14), not witnesses; those who are victorious in the contest are "crowned" in victory (στεφανόω, 17:15). 4 Macc uses athletic imagery ostensively, in contrast to the language of Heb 12:1, which is not explicitly athletic.[759]

If we admit both that Hebrews constructs a wilderness, and that ἀγών carries athletic connotations, then the audience might draw a number of potential implicatures. Some may understand their journey to have an athletic component, whether a race or a wrestling match. Others, guided by the wilderness context that governs Hebrews' whole argument and by connections with 3:7-4:11, may understand the verse as an

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[757] Sims, "Rethinking Hebrews 12:1," 86–87. Héring similarly suggests that Heb 12:1 depicts a combat sport (*Hébreux*, 113–14). This interpretation could support John Muddiman's claim that τετραχηλισμένα in 4:13 refers to a wrestling chokehold ("Wrestling with Hebrews: a note on τετραχηλισμένα at Hebrews 4:13," in *Understanding, Studying and Reading: New Testament Essays in Honour of John Ashton*, ed. Christopher Rowland and Crispin H.T. Fletcher-Louis, JSNTSup 153 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998], 165–73). However, Heb 4:13 is sufficiently distant from Heb 12:1 as to have little relevance for understanding the passage. Furthermore, later texts use the term with the meaning "laid bare" and that may be the sense in Heb 4:13. Hesychicus uses the term with πεφανερωμένα ("make manifest") and, in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 5.29.5, the phrase μισθοῦ τραχηλιζειν means "reveal" (BDAG, s.v. "τραχηλίζω").

[758] Numerous scholars suggest the influence of Maccabees on Hebrews, including Weiss, *Hebräer*, 632; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 337; Horning, "Chiasmus," 44–45; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 363; Easter, *Faith*, 135–36, 139–45.

[759] *Contra* Miselbrook, "Christ the Hero," 198–99.

implicit reference to the audience's struggle on their wilderness journey – something reinforced by Hebrews' characterisation of Jesus in the next verse. Still others, like Philo in *Prelim. Studies,* may both see their wilderness journey as characterised by an athletic contest, acknowledging at one and the same time the OT wilderness account and their own Graeco-Roman environment.

Jesus: the supreme athlete or the superior wilderness leader?

The experience of the audience is closely connected to the experience of Jesus: the cloud of witnesses is seated around the audience as Jesus sits at the right hand of God; the audience sets aside every weight and every clinging sin as Jesus had the joy set before him; as Jesus endured patiently, so the audience is exhorted to endure patiently.[760] As the audience processes Hebrews' argument, they will quickly draw the implicature that Jesus' journey is a model for their own. Their endurance in suffering is to mirror Jesus' endurance of the cross.[761] A further implicature is that, if they endure, they will be where Jesus is. Another implicature that Easter discerns is that the struggle that the audience faces is endurance in the face of death (although they themselves have not yet faced martyrdom, as 12:3–4 indicates).[762]

Because of scholarship's emphasis on Heb 12:1 as depicting a race, many scholars contend that, in 12:2, Jesus is also depicted as the supreme athlete, who completed the race before the audience did.[763] For instance, McKelvey suggests that Jesus, as ἀρχηγός, "participates in the race with others."[764] For Horning, Jesus is "the all-time record setter who perfected the skills of the race" on whom the audience should fix their eyes "all the way to the judge's box."[765] Mora goes so far as to suggest that

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[760] Horning discerns a chiasm in Heb 12:1–2, further connecting the audience's experience with that of Jesus ("Chiasmus," 41).
[761] Ibid.
[762] Easter, *Faith*, 153.
[763] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 356; Thomas G. Long, *Hebrews* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1997), 128–29; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 57; Mackie, "Hebrews 12:1–4," 490. Even Coyne, who argues for a full-orbed reference to the wilderness in Hebrews, infers that Jesus completes the race ahead of his followers ("Wandering," 323).
[764] McKelvey, *Pioneer and Priest*, 174.
[765] Horning, "Chiasmus," 37–38.

ἀρχηγός means "trainer or chief of the games" in this context.[766] In support of an athletic understanding of ἀρχηγός, some scholars appeal to Hebrews' earlier reference to Jesus as πρόδρομος ("forerunner") in 6:20.[767] In line with this athletic metaphor, some scholars appeal to the potential translation of ἀρχηγός as "champion."[768]

Croy, however, is correct to remark that, while "[i]t is tempting to look for foot-race imagery behind the ἀρχ/τελ antithesis, such as 'first and last runner' in a race…there is no historical or philological evidence for this. Although ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτήν does not appear to involve technical, athletic terminology, the pairing of these two words makes a very significant statement about Jesus and faith."[769] Furthermore, as noted in 6:19–20, πρόδρομος does not have an athletic sense. Therefore, interpreting Jesus' designation as ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτήν with reference to an athletic metaphor involves considerable processing for the desired cognitive effect. The appeal to the fact that ἀρχηγός can be translated champion does not add credence to an athletic background since ἀρχηγός has the nuance of champion in military, not athletic, contexts.[770] Indeed, if Hebrews intends the audience to detect an athletic metaphor here, Hebrews is not being ostensive in its communication. The degree of effort required in drawing the implicature that Jesus is the supreme athlete makes this unlikely.[771]

In fact, as with some concepts in the previous verse, scholars must re-contextualise a number of key terms in Heb 12:2 to square it with a race metaphor. For instance, Attridge considers that "joy is rather like the prize or the goal that, like the contest itself, lies in front of the athlete."[772] If so, then, as Croy writes,"[t]he author of Hebrews has adapted the traditional usage by substituting 'joy' (χαρά) for 'prize'

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[766] Gaspar Mora, *La Carta a Los Hebreos Como Escrito Pastoral* (Barcelona: Herder, 1974), 177. Also suggested by Muddiman, "Wrestling," 172n20.
[767] McKelvey, *Pioneer and Priest*, 130–31; Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, "Life on the Frontier: The Transformation of Liminality in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Writing at the Borders*, ed. R. Burnet, D. Luciani, and G. Van Oyen, CBET 85 (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 214; Muddiman, "Wrestling," 172n20.
[768] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 411.
[769] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 68.
[770] Rightly noted by Croy (ibid).
[771] Croy astutely observes, "an explicitly athletic meaning for ἀρχηγός makes its collocation with τελειωτής all the more inexplicable" (ibid., 68n93).
[772] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 357.

(γέρας, ᾶθλον, or ἔπαθλον), perhaps to avoid trivializing the heavenly session that Jesus assumed after enduring the cross. His exaltation is not explicitly styled as a prize, but the author does seem to envision a celestial reward of sorts at the end of Jesus' agon."[773]

Yet again, to understand this verse against an athletic metaphor involves undue processing effort to produce the desired results. The referent of the joy set before Jesus, and the audience, by implication, is the heavenly realm. Whilst, the phrase "set before" can refer to the course marked out for the race, this is not the only meaning the term πρόκειμαι can bear.[774] The word is also used "to denote the concerned effort requiring in attaining a goal,"[775] and, therefore, is not only understood in an athletic sense.[776] More relevant is the use of the phrase in Hebrews, where it refers to the hope set before the audience (6:18), which is the heavenly realm where Jesus has entered. Given that Heb 11 is concerned with those who look forward to the heavenly city, but have not yet obtained it, less processing effort is required to understand the joy to be a reference to the heavenly realm yet to be entered by the audience.

To justify a race background, scholars also often need to argue that Hebrews combines both martyrological and athletic concepts in its understanding of Jesus.[777] For instance, Easter notes (correctly) that Jesus' endurance parallels that of the audience – but concludes from this that Jesus has run the race. He writes, "In looking to Jesus, we see the one who has already completed the race, has received his reward, and is now waiting at the finish line for those who would join him."[778] But this is problematic: if Jesus endured the cross, and that language points back to the endurance of the audience, then a race metaphor cannot be in view since it is a metaphor that

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[773] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 68.
[774] LSJ, s.v. "πρόκειμαι."
[775] Pfitzner, *Hebrews*, 172.
[776] The phrase is used in Herodotus (9.60) to refer to Greece's struggle to remain free from the Persians and in Plato (*Phaedr.* 247b) to speak of the struggle of the soul, as well as in athletic contexts (Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.25.2–3).
[777] Easter, *Faith*, 145.
[778] Ibid., 153.

lacks the notions of peril, suffering and death.[779] A more likely implicature is that Jesus struggled like a wrestler; yet again, Hebrews' failure to spell out any athletic connotation to Jesus's endurance makes this, too, uncertain.

In support of a counter-suggestion – that the audience would draw the implicature that Jesus, the ἀρχηγός, is the superior wilderness leader – are the following factors:

First, the term ἀρχηγός is used frequently in the LXX to refer to the leaders of the wilderness generation (Num 10:4; 13:2, 3; 14:4; 16:2; 25:4), with a quarter of its occurrences appearing in Numbers.[780]

Second, its use here coheres with the context of Heb 11 and, especially, the omission of Joshua from the list of Israel's faithful. Unlike Joshua, Jesus succeeds in enabling the people of God's entry into the promised rest. Whereas in the Numbers account, most of these ἀρχηγοί were unfaithful, both Joshua and Caleb are ἀρχηγοί who desired to enter the Promised Land. Nevertheless, for Hebrews, Joshua failed to bring the audience into the true promised inheritance; he did not give them rest (4:8). As Easter remarks, "The Ἰησους in Numbers, therefore, is an ἀρχηγός but not a τελειωτής. Jesus, however, is the ἀρχηγός of faith who, as the τελειωτής as well as the ἀρχηγός, successfully pioneered the journey into God's rest."[781] Indeed, Jesus is not simply pioneer, but perfecter, taking on a role that Joshua did not – Jesus is also the high priest who, in the past, entered behind the curtain, securing access into the presence of God, and interceding for his people in the present as they journey towards their heavenly rest.

Third, assuming that Heb 2:10 also depicts Jesus, the ἀρχηγός who leads his people into glory, in wilderness terms, it suggests that Hebrews is consistent in its use of the

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[779] Against Bryan R. Dyer, who suggests that Jesus' race involves suffering and death (*Suffering in the Face of Death: The Social Context of the Epistle to the Hebrews,* LNTS 568 [London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017], 101).
[780] Whitfield, "Three Joshuas," 24.
[781] Easter, *Faith*, 149.

term.[782] As David Allen comments, regarding 2:10, "[T]he term [ἀρχηγός] embraces Christ's dual Joshuanic function, both the captain of the NC [new covenant] community and the one who likewise discharges their salvation inheritance."[783] Given the close semantic connections between these passages – and assuming the audience could infer from Heb 2:10 that Jesus is the wilderness leader – the audience could infer a wilderness metaphor here also.

A Joshua-Jesus typology?

As in 4:8, this linking of Joshua and Jesus has been described as a "Joshua typology" by some scholars.[784] Whitfield remarks, "Joshua functions as a model for the new Joshua (Jesus) of Heb 12…The absence of the name of Joshua, which at first appeared to disconfirm the author's interest in the son of Nun, in fact provides additional evidence of the writer's subtle yet significant attention."[785] But the point in Hebrews is not that Joshua is a type of Jesus, but the exact opposite: for Hebrews, Jesus succeeds where Joshua fails: as pioneer and perfecter, Jesus can lead his people into their promised rest. If Hebrews draws a comparison between Jesus and Joshua at this point in the discourse, it is between the ability of Jesus to lead his followers into their rest and Joshua's inability to lead the Israelites into their rest, as is also the case in 4:8–10.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed Heb 11:1–12:2. Consistent with Heb 8:8–12's new exodus and also with 4:8 (Israel were not led into God's rest by Joshua), Heb 11 depicts Israel's wilderness journey towards Zion. This leads to the implicature, for the audience, that their own wilderness journey is ongoing. Even if 12:1-2 be deemed to evoke athletic imagery for some hearers, an RT approach demonstrates how the audience are primarily led to see themselves as wilderness wanderers travelling towards Zion, with Jesus as ἀρχηγός less an athlete and more the new wilderness

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[782] Against Mackie, who considers that Heb 12:1–4 transforms the imagery of Heb 2:10, "firmly relocating it within the athletic sphere and reconfiguring it as a triumph over agonistic adversity" ("Hebrews 12:1–4," 490).
[783] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 172.
[784] Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology,* 100–01.
[785] Whitfield, *Joshua Traditions*, 257.

leader who enters Zion, the one to whom the audience is to look as they continue their struggle towards their promised rest.

Chapter 8: Heb 12:3–17

Introduction

In this chapter, Heb 12:3–17 will be discussed from an RT standpoint, to establish both whether Hebrews, in expounding Prov 3, metarepresents Deut 8 and also, in metarepresenting Isa 35:3, whether or not Hebrews intends the audience to understand the strengthening of their hands and feet in an athletic sense.

Heb 12:3–4

Heb 12:3 continues by exhorting the audience to consider Jesus, who also endured hostility from sinners, to prevent weariness or faintheartedness as they pursue their journey of faith. Indeed, Hebrews gives them some perspective: in their struggle against sin, they have not yet faced death, whereas Jesus' conflict with sinners resulted in his death by crucifixion.

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Deut 20:3

Allen draws the implicature that Hebrews metarepresents Deut 20:3. Both Heb 12:3 and Deut 20:3 share the verb ἐκλύω, and, in Deut 20:4, YHWH goes ahead of Israel to fight for them as Jesus, the forerunner, does to defeat the enemy of God's people (6:20; 2:14–15).[786]

However, inferring such a metarepresentation involves significant processing effort, requiring the audience to access the broader context of Deut 20 as well as its links with the wider discourse of Hebrews. Yet, nothing else in Heb 12:3 makes manifest to the audience that Deut 20 is relevant here. Ἐκλύω is a relatively common term,[787] and Hebrews' use of the term more likely anticipates the metarepresentation of Prov 3:11–12. Allen himself concedes that "[t]he basis for the allusion remains…tenuous."[788]

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[786] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 100–01.
[787] BDAG, s.v. "ἐκλύω."
[788] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 101. Likewise, Steyn suggests that Hebrews reflects Deut 20:3 but notes that the language "is only loosely based on the LXX of Deut 20:3" ("Deuteronomy in Hebrews," 160).

Num 17:2–3

Ellingworth and Buchanan argue for a metarepresentation of Num 17:2–3,[789] where Korah and his followers are punished for their rebellion against Moses, Aaron and God. Ellingworth describes the potential implicature as follows: "Compare, then your situation with that of Christ, who throughout our people's history endured opposition similar to what you endure; notably when 'the sinners', led astray by Korah and his friends, brought about their own destruction."[790]

Nevertheless, discerning such a metarepresentation requires significant processing effort from the audience. The resemblance between the two texts is quite weak: ἁμαρτωλός, whilst common to both texts, frequently occurs in the LXX.[791] This implicature is also dependent on αὐτούς being the original reading, as opposed to ἑαυτόν, so that the text refers to sinners bringing harm on themselves, as Korah and his followers did by opposing Moses. However, since it is difficult to make sense of, most scholars discount αὐτούς as the original reading.[792] Regardless of the original reading – Davis Jr. notes that "the main point does not depend on the variant"[793] – the two texts do not resemble each other enough for the audience to infer a metarepresentation.

Massah and Meribah

Coyne and Allen posit a potential metarepresentation of the events at Massah and Meribah since the LXX describes Meribah as a place of contention (ἀντιλογία).[794] Whilst the reference to Ps 94LXX in Heb 3:7–4:11 increases the plausibility that Meribah is metarepresented here, the term ἀντιλογία occurs throughout the LXX and

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[789] Ellingworth, "New Testament Text," 89–95; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 210.
[790] Ellingworth, "New Testament Text," 94.
[791] Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, "ἁμαρτωλός," *TDNT* 1:320.
[792] F.F. Bruce, "Textual Problems in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Scribes and Scripture: New Testament Essays in Honour of J. Harold Greenlee* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 37; Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 189. Davis Jr., however, suggests that this variant has some merit to it, since it is found in the earliest manuscripts ($P^{13,46}$ $\aleph^{2}$ Ψ^{c} 33 81 1739^{*} lat sy^{p} bo) and since the phrase occurs in Prov 8:36 as well as Num 17:2–3LXX to refer to sinning against God as sinning against one's own soul (*Place of Paideia*, 186–88).
[793] Davis Jr., *Place of Paideia,* 186–88.
[794] Coyne, "Wandering," 325; Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation,* 102.

in Heb 6:16; 7:7 to refer to strife in general, so it is unlikely that audience would process a specific reference to Meribah here.

General reference to struggling

More likely, the audience does not need to access any specific intertext for relevance to be obtained. A reference to struggling against sinners is as easily explained by the audience's personal experience (10:32, 35) and requires the least processing effort from the audience. Any metarepresentation deduced from Hebrews' language would be a weak implicature.

The alleged implicature that the audience is to resist like an athlete or wrestler can also be discounted.[795] The reference to blood refers primarily to Jesus' experience of crucifixion, not to an injury inflicted in a violent sport.[796] Similarly, ἀντικαθίστημι refers to resisting or opposing in a range of contexts, and the meaning of ἀνταγωνίζομαι is not restricted to struggling in an athletic sense but connotes struggling more generally.[797] The latter term may also reinforce that the audience's ἀγών (12:1) is a struggle, not a race.

Heb 12:5–11

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Metarepresentation of Prov 3:11–12

In vv.5–6, Hebrews metarepresents Prov 3:11–12 but adds μου,[798] making the exhortation to the audience more personal and direct. The audience is exhorted not to undervalue the Lord's discipline, nor be weary when reproved by him, since he loves and chastises every son he receives. Given the previous references to their past

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[795] Against Koester, *Hebrews*, 524; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 360; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 41; Davis Jr., *Place of Paideia*, 190.

[796] Mackie suggests that Heb 12:3–4 continues to develop footrace imagery ("Hebrews 12:1–4," 489). He bases this assumption on Graeco-Roman texts that describe competitors tackling each other to win the race. However, it is doubtful that a fall in a race would be so serious as to warrant a comparison to the afflictions of Christ, which ultimately led to his crucifixion.

[797] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 70; Hollinger, "Heb 12.1," 107–08.

[798] Some witnesses omit μου (D* 81 614 630 1241^{s} *pc* b), possibly to align with the LXX.

suffering (10:32–34), the audience may understand discipline to be evidenced in the persecution they are facing.

Prov 3:11–12	**Heb 12:5–6**
υἱέ μὴ ὀλιγώρει παιδείας κυρίου μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος παιδεύει μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται	υἱέ **μου**, μὴ ὀλιγώρει παιδείας κυρίου μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος· ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος παιδεύει, μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται

Graeco-Roman παιδεία

On the basis that Prov 3:11–12 uses παιδεία in a punitive sense, whereas Hebrews' discussion of discipline in vv.7–11 has an educative thrust,[799] many scholars suggest that the non-punitive Graeco-Roman conception of παιδεία influences Hebrews' reading of the proverb.[800] Whilst it is not impossible that the audience might infer an implicature in light of cultural norms concerning discipline, Hebrews does not make any specifically Graeco-Roman nuance of παιδεία manifest at this point. Instead, Hebrews metarepresents an OT text as God's speech to the audience, his sons, making Prov 3 the primary context against which to understand the discourse. In any case, Davis Jr. has cast doubt that the proverb is punitive since nothing in the context of Prov 3–4 accuses the child of wrongdoing. Rather, the proverb is concerned with educative chastening, which is painful, and this coheres with corporal punishment in the ancient world more generally.[801] Therefore, since Hebrews does not direct the audience to an alternative cognitive environment, they may be expected to understand discipline as a difficult and painful experience, not as punishment for sins. If the audience were to go on and infer a further implicature, arising from the Graeco-Roman cognitive environment, this would most likely involve understanding that they must endure discipline as would any son in the ancient world.

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[799] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering,* 196; Charles H. Talbert, *Learning through Suffering: The Educational Value of Suffering in the New Testament and in Its Milieu* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 70–72; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 365; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 383; Dyer, *Suffering*, 103.

[800] Croy, *Endurance in Suffering*, 198. Similarly, Johnson argues that Hebrews' argument is based on a "Greco-Roman cultural assumption" (*Hebrews*, 321).

[801] Davis Jr., *Place of Paideia*, 241.

Israel's wilderness wanderings (Deut 8)

Is it possible that the audience may draw the additional implicature that the wilderness period is relevant for understanding Hebrews' metarepresentation of Prov 3:11–12?[802] Allen notes three points of contact between Deut 8 and Heb 12: God is the one who conducts the παιδεία as Father; discipline results in life (Deut 8:1; Heb 12:7); both understand that discipline is unpleasant in the present but leads to eschatological reward (Deut 8:2–3; Heb 12:6, 11).[803]

Peeler challenges the notion that Deut 8 is relevant for Hebrews since Deut 8 does not contain the vocative υἱέ, making it "less direct and…less familial," and also because, in Deut 8, discipline is a future action of God, not a present experience as envisaged in Prov 3.[804] However, ostensively metarepresenting an utterance from scripture and expounding it with reference to another OT text – as, for instance, in 3:7–4:11 – is a move typical of Hebrews.[805] Employing a citation with a direct address would be more relevant in this instance.[806] Further, the future tense in Deut 8 could function gnomically, without any temporal reference.[807]

A number of considerations suggest that a Deuteronomic metarepresentation is relevant here and would lead to the implicature that the audience's discipline is analogous to Israel's discipline in the wilderness. First, since Hebrews has frequently metarepresented the Deuteronomic narrative (1:6; 2:1–4; 6:7–8; 10:30–31), it is readily accessed by the audience. Second, God's discipline in combination with father/son imagery is distinct to Deut 8:5,[808] making it a plausible cognitive

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[802] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 79–81; Thiessen, "Hebrews 12.5–13," 366–79; Spicq, *Hébreux*, 2:391; Ched Spellman, "The Drama of Discipline: Toward an Intertextual Profile of Paideia in Hebrews 12," *JETS* 59 (2016): 487–506.
[803] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 79–81.
[804] Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 145n9. Likewise, Davis Jr. doubts the relevance of Deut 8 since any reference to the wilderness period in Hebrews is inherently negative (*Place of Paideia,* 196). Nevertheless, as noted in Heb 3–4, the wilderness period was not inherently negative, but a period where the Israelites saw God's good works yet failed with their disobedience.
[805] *Contra* Davis Jr.'s contention that Hebrews would not cite a text and then apply a different, unmentioned text (*Place of Paideia*, 24).
[806] Thiessen, "Hebrews 12.5–13," 374n33.
[807] Davis Jr., *Place of Paideia*, 164n78.
[808] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 79.

environment against which to understand the imagery. Third, there are three intertextual links between Prov 3 and Deut 8. In both, keeping the commandments of God is necessary for life. Both Proverbs and Deuteronomy speak of God as the Father who disciplines his son with love. Both Proverbs and Deuteronomy are concerned with living righteously in order to possess the land. Indeed, Prov 1–9 is Deuteronomic in nature, meaning the audience may automatically associate the two texts.[809] Fourth, a sustained tradition in Second Temple Judaism associates discipline with Israel's experience in the wilderness. In Wis 11.9–10, the discipline of Israel in the wilderness is discussed. Philo, as noted above, not only uses the concept of an ἀγών regarding the wilderness generation but also draws together Prov 3:11–12 and Deut 8 in his discussion of παιδεία. Similarly, Josephus links the wilderness period and Israel's discipline (*A.J.* 1.6; 3.15, 311). Traditions like these presumably comprise part of the audience's cognitive environment on which they can draw when interpreting Hebrews' discussion of discipline. Finally, Father of Spirits is a designation used of God in the wilderness (Num 16:22; 27:16), reinforcing such a wilderness implicature.[810]

The suggestion that Heb 12:11 brings to mind 5:14 supports the contention that a wilderness referent could be inferred here since both are concerned with how the people of God may increase in maturity and training (both passages use γυμνάζω).[811] As noted previously, Heb 5:14 metarepresents the concept of discerning between good and evil influenced by passages like Num 14 and Deut 1, reinforcing a wilderness background to Heb 12:5–11. Furthermore, the use of agricultural imagery in Heb 12:11 looks back to Heb 6:7–8, which draws from the Deuteronomic concept of blessings and curses.[812] Discipline as a concept in Hebrews trains the audience and

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[809] Franz Delitzsch, *Salomonisches Spruchbuch* (Leipzig: Dörfling & Franke, 1873), 29; Stuart Weeks, *Instruction and Imagery in Proverbs 1–9* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 103, 126, 172; Will Kynes, "Wisdom Defined Through Narrative and Intertextual Network: 1 Kings 1–11 and Proverbs," in *Reading Proverbs Intertextually*, ed. Katharine Dell and Will Kynes, LHBOTS 629 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2019), 39.
[810] Hughes, *Hebrews*, 530.
[811] Laansma, *Hebrews*, 308.
[812] Ibid.

makes them suitable for entry into the heavenly realm, in the same way that the wilderness was a formative period for Israel.

Spellman suggests the additional implicature that discipline is both punitive and educative.[813] First, in 12:1, the audience is told to cast off sin, implying for Spellman that the audience may experience discipline as a consequence of sin. Second, a punitive-educative discipline would explain the negative image of the wilderness generation and the positive image of the Son who suffers. Third, this conception of discipline makes sense of Jesus' learning of obedience in Heb 5:7–10. [814]

Nevertheless, Spellman concedes that "these features are not enough to give *paideia* a purely punitive interpretation."[815] Indeed, Hebrews leaves the notion of sin in the abstract, as something to be cast off, whilst the notion of the audience contending against sin (12:3) relates to Jesus' experience at the hands of sinners, suggesting that sin is a reference to those persecuting them. Whilst discipline involves the audience learning to avoid sinful behaviours and sharing in God's holiness, nowhere does Hebrews suggest the audience is being punished for sin. Furthermore, the discipline that the audience is experiencing points to a positive reality – their identity as sons. Like Jesus, their brother, this training need not be understood as discipline for specific sins they struggle with, but rather necessary training that they may grow into maturity, which includes moral living. Davis Jr.'s study is a good corrective to Spellman's interpretation in this regard.[816]

Whereas Kibbe draws the alternative implicature that discipline is punitive for those who do not obey,[817] it is more likely that those who do not experience discipline are not children of God, given Hebrews' emphasis that discipline demonstrates one is a son of God. Without discipline, they will not be fit for entry into the heavenly kingdom; without the discipline that produces the fruit of righteousness and holiness, they will not share in the holiness without which no-one can see the Lord (12:15).

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[813] Spellman, "Drama," 504.
[814] Ibid.
[815] Ibid.
[816] Davis Jr., *Place of Paideia.*
[817] Kibbe, *Godly Fear*, 131n90.

The suffering of the audience, by virtue of its link with Jesus, allows them to infer that they are indeed sons of God. If Jesus the Son, their brother, experienced the discipline of the Lord, then, by implication, the audience are legitimate sons.[818] Whilst Jesus' suffering is never explicitly defined as παιδεία, the connection between him and his brothers allows such an inference to be made from Hebrews' overarching argument. Furthermore, since Jesus' suffering is described as the method by which he was perfected, in an analogous sense, the audience's discipline makes them ready for entry into their heavenly inheritance. Therefore, it takes little cognitive effort to deduce that Christ's suffering, though greater than theirs in degree, has a similar function to their suffering. Nevertheless, there is a difference between the audience's training in discipline and Jesus' discipline – the function of which is that he becomes qualified to act as high priest, not simply that he is perfected for entrance into the heavenly inheritance. Furthermore, such argumentation precludes the audience fearing that their suffering has resulted from God being unfaithful to them, which they may otherwise naturally have inferred from such suffering.[819]

Heb 12:12–13

Hebrews concludes that, for discipline to have its desired effect, the audience members are to strengthen the loose hands and the paralysed knees and make straight paths for their feet.

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Race metaphor

Hebrews' language here is reminiscent of 12:1–3: both exhort the audience to persevere and involve movement towards a goal. Consequently, most commentators

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[818] Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 140–63. McCruden suggests that Christ is never disciplined by God, only perfected, nor is he "trained or qualified by means of his sufferings; he was only tested" (*Solidarity Perfected*, 22). Whilst Hebrews never applies the term "discipline" to Jesus, the notion of training is implied in Jesus' perfection for it is Jesus' perfecting which qualifies him to act as high priest. See also Pamela Michelle Eisenbaum, "The Necessity of Discipline, and the Pursuit of Perfection in Hebrews," in *Asceticism and the New Testament*, ed. L.E. Vaage and V.L. Wimbush (New York: Routledge, 1999), 331–53.

[819] Thiessen, "Hebrews 12.5–13," 374. Similarly, Philo provides an exposition of God's dealings with the wilderness generation in order to avoid any misconception that God dealt evilly with Israel.

understand 12:12–13 in light of the assumption that 12:1 describes a race.[820] For instance, Johnson comments, "[T]he physical imagery of the race or athletic competition…stands for their pilgrimage toward[s] God."[821] From this race metaphor, further implicatures are adduced: those who entered the race lame, or injured themselves during the race,[822] perhaps spraining an ankle, must try to avoid further disability.[823] Lameness can only be healed on a straight path, one free from bumps and rocky surfaces that will not worsen their injury.[824] Failure to persevere will result in disqualification from the race.[825]

I argued above that 12:1 can refer, not only to a race, but to a struggle: this makes it unlikely that the audience would process 12:12–13 simply as an athletic metaphor either and it is, in any case, conceded, by some, that Hebrews makes no athletic metaphor manifest to the audience:[826] Pfitzner observes, "12:12–13 contains no explicit athletic terminology."[827] How unlikely it is that the audience would draw the implicature that they strengthen their hands and feet on the racetrack emerges when we consider how they might process Hebrews' language.

A reference to strengthening hands as well as knees would be irrelevant if Hebrews wanted the audience to infer a race metaphor here since strong hands are not needed to run a race. Koester suggests that hands must be strengthened to grasp the prize at the end of the race.[828] However, this is not a natural inference that would arise from the language here, since it is implied nowhere in the immediate context that there is a prize to be won. While the alternative that strong hands are needed in the boxing arena

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[820] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 387; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 426; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 323; Isaacs, *Reading Hebrews and James*, 142; Koester, *Hebrews*, 540; Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 275; Dyer, *Suffering*, 104.
[821] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 323.
[822] Thompson, *Hebrews*, 256. Alternatively, Muddiman suggests ἐκτρέπω implies that the lameness results from a wrestling injury ("Wrestling," 172).
[823] Koester, *Hebrews*, 531.
[824] Kistemaker, "Hebrews," 382.
[825] France, "Hebrews," 172.
[826] Attridge suggests that the language is "appropriate" to an athletic context, though not, strictly speaking, specific to one since the terminology comes from Isaiah (*Hebrews*, 364).
[827] Pfitzner, *Hebrews*, 178.
[828] Koester, *Hebrews*, 503.

is more plausible,[829] this explanation is not easily inferred from Hebrews' language: the strengthening of hands does not appear to be in response to any perceived conflict faced by the reader. Instead, the reference to weak hands and paralysed knees most likely refers more broadly to a weak individual. As Newsom notes, commenting on the similar phrase in Job 4, "The references to weak hands, stumbling, and knees giving way all bear a metaphorical resonance. These are transparent images of the human capacity for directed action: hands that grasp and manipulate objects, knees that move the body forward. Metonymically, these body parts represent the whole person as an intentional being."[830] Further processing against an athletic background is, therefore, unnecessary.

Furthermore, it is unlikely that the audience would draw the implicature that the straight path is a running track. First, in a race scenario, the track would have already been in existence; the runner does not need to forge a straight path for the race. Second, the language of making straight paths for your feet metarepresents Prov 4:26. This being the most relevant background against which to process the command indicates that the straight path does not denote a running track,[831] but rather is a metaphor for the course of life that one follows.

Nor would reference to lameness evoke the implicature that the lame are athletes limping towards the finish line, whether they began the race lame or incurred injury during the race. While Kistemaker thinks that the lame represents those who began the race lame,[832] this is unlikely when seen in the context of the physiognomically conscious first-century C.E. Graeco-Roman world. Armstrong defines physiognomy as: "the systematic diagnosis of a man's character from his bodily features,"[833] and thus a correlation was drawn between a person's physical features and their character

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[829] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 629.
[830] Carol A. Newsom, *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 101.
[831] Isaacs suggests that τροχιά refers to a racetrack given the connection with τρέχω in 12:1 (*Reading Hebrews and James*, 137). However, as noted above, τρέχω can refer to pressing onwards with no athletic nuance. More decisively, Prov 4:26 does not use τροχιά in an athletic context.
[832] Kistemaker, "Hebrews," 382.
[833] A.M. Armstrong, "The Methods of the Greek Physiognomists," *GR* 5 (1958): 52.

in the Graeco-Roman world. Consequently, disabled people more generally, and the lame in particular, were viewed as "objects of ridicule and derision."[834] As a result of this physiognomic worldview, statues of Greek and Roman athletes display symmetrical, well-proportioned bodies, since "[t]he Olympic ideal was to aspire to be like the gods in physique, intellect and morals." Therefore, depictions of disabled people on vases, tablets and sculptures are scarce.[835] When lame people are associated with the Olympia, it is usually accompanied by them being mocked for their disability.[836] Lame dancers, in particular, were a favourite at the symposia. Robert Garland notes that disabled dancers frequently appear on Corinthian pots. For example, a number of alabaster pots portray a dancer with lame feet being mocked by observers as another dancer pulls his leg away.[837] Similarly, Plutarch notes that typically a lame man was ordered to dance on a greased wineskin for the entertainment of guests at the symposia (*Mor.* 621E). Another popular form of entertainment was to order a lame man to serve wine at the symposium. For instance, some Greek pottery portrays the crippled deity Hephaistos pouring wine at the Olympiad symposium, provoking "unquenchable laughter" from the attendees (*Il.* 1.600). The degrading nature of such an act is underscored by the fact that handsome young men typically served wine at the symposium.[838] This attitude towards the lame and disabled makes the implicature that the lame are athletes in a race improbable.

Alternatively, against those who consider lameness to be a dislocation that is incurred during the race, the fact that the path is a reference to the course of life one follows, not to a racetrack, indicates that the disability is not a consequence of them stumbling in a race. In this instance, the dislocation need not refer to a sport's injury but could be a disability caused by any kind of difficult journey. Given that Hebrews does not

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[834] Mikeal C. Parsons, "His Feet and Ankles Were Made Strong: Signs of Character in the Man Lame from Birth," in *Disability Studies and Biblical Literature*, ed. Candida R. Moss and Jeremy Schipper (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 154.
[835] Richard Rieser, "The Struggle for Disability Equality," in *Education, Equality and Human Rights: Issues of Gender, "Race," Sexuality, Disability and Social Class*, 3rd ed. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 174.
[836] Alison Futrell, *The Roman Games: A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 154.
[837] Robert Garland, *The Eye of the Beholder: Deformity and Disability in the Graeco-Roman World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 84.
[838] Ibid.

specify when the lameness occurs, either understanding of lameness does not cohere with an athletic metaphor.

Israel's journey through the wilderness towards Zion

The most decisive argument against the audience discerning a race metaphor here is Hebrews' metarepresentation of Isa 35:3,[839] which describes the wilderness journey of God's people towards Zion. Although almost every commentator acknowledges this, a race metaphor is still viewed as the verse's primary referent, under the influence of a similar metaphor thought to apply in 12:1.[840] For instance, Craddock assumes that, whilst Hebrews intends to communicate a race metaphor to the audience, in order to do so, Hebrews draws from Israel's scriptures rather than use athletic imagery ostensively.[841] In my view, allusion to a race is an unlikely cognitive environment. By appealing to Isa 35:3, in combination with a reference to Prov 4:26, Hebrews intends the audience to draw the implicature, not merely that they are runners in a race, but that they are on a journey through the wilderness.

Isa 35 has eight points of contact with Heb's argument:

(1) Just as Isa 35 exhorts those in exile who are discouraged, thinking that promised deliverance would not come, so also Heb 12 is addressed to those who are weary and are waiting for Jesus to return and are tempted to not press onwards in their journey towards the Promised Land.

(2) Both audiences of Isaiah and Hebrews face discipline from their enemies: in Isa 35, this is the surrounding nations; in Heb 12, the discipline appears to come from those who have persecuted the audience, although, for Hebrews, this discipline is evidence of God's fatherly care.

(3) Both in Isaiah and in Heb 12, the final destination of the faithful is Zion (Heb 12:22; Isa 35:10).

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[839] The phrase χεῖρες παρειμέναι καὶ γόνατα παραλελυμένα also occurs in Sirach 25:23 to describe the disability brought on by living with an evil wife. The points of contact between Isa 35 and Hebrews suggests that Isa 35:3 is a more relevant intertext than Sirach 25:23.

[840] Massonnet, *Hébreux,* 354.

[841] Craddock, "Hebrews," 153.

(4) Both texts more broadly underscore the people of God being in the wilderness (Isa 35:1; Heb 3:7–4:11; 11:1–12:11).

(5) Both texts encourage the audience to walk on the way and not go astray. Although Hebrews' draws ostensively from Proverbs, not Isaiah, in this regard, straight paths are also something on which the righteous, and not the unclean, walk.

(6) In both, the lame experience healing from their disability (Heb 12:13; Isa 35:6).

(7) In the context, both texts imply that their audience is to pursue holiness. In Isa 35, this is indicated by the fact that the unclean will not walk on the highway of holiness. In Hebrews, the immediate context is concerned with the discipline of the Lord that will lead to holiness and peace.

(8) In the near context of both texts, the goal is that the audiences will see the glory of God (Isa 35:10; Heb 12:14).

From Hebrews' perspective, this intertext seems to be most relevant. The audience may not be able to access the entire context of Isa 35, and indeed accessing the entire context is not necessary for relevance to be obtained. However, Hebrews may have been aware of the wider context, as McCullough suggests.[842]

Hebrews makes some changes to the metarepresentation. The word ἀνορθώσατε ("to straighten"), placed at the end of the verse, replaces ἰσχύσατε, paralleling the straight paths (τροχιὰς ὀρθάς) from the metarepresentation of Prov 4:26. Παρειμένας is used instead of ἀνειμέναι, which may be a rhetorical move on Hebrews' part to match παραλελυμένα. Hebrews also positions the adjective before the noun, while χεῖρας is placed after the participle παρειμένας, perhaps to place emphasis on the action of straightening, and the metarepresentation reads παραλελυμένα γόνατα instead of γόνατα παραλελυμένα, to parallel παρειμένας χεῖρας.

Isa 35:3LXX	**Heb 12:12**
ἰσχύσατε <u>χεῖρες</u> ἀνειμέναι καὶ <u>γόνατα παραλελυμένα</u>	Διὸ τὰς παρειμένας <u>χεῖρας</u> καὶ τὰ <u>παραλελυμένα γόνατα</u> ἀνορθώσατε

[842] J.C. McCullough, "Isaiah in Hebrews," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Maarten J.J. Menken and Steve Moyise, NTSI (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 172.

Assuming the audience could discern this metarepresentation, they would draw the implicature that they are to strengthen their weak hands and feet, not on the racetrack, but on the highway of holiness in the wilderness towards Zion. They, though discouraged and weary, are to have hope: deliverance will come as well as judgement for their enemies.[843]

The audience may also draw the implicature that their wilderness journey is not a simple reiteration of Israel's initial journey from Egypt to Sinai, but rather is an eschatological journey to the heavenly Zion (Heb 1:6, 4:10, 12:22). Given that Isa 35 is concerned with God revealing his glory and healing physical disability, it is unlikely to refer to a historical event but, rather, implies an eschatological event in which all God's people, not just the exiles from Babylon, come to Zion (cf. Isa 41:9; 43:5; 49:12; 60:4).[844] Whilst it is possible that Hebrews recasts the journey out of captivity under the Babylonians towards Jerusalem in heavenly terms, the above observations suggest that Hebrews exploits the eschatological connotation that this journey has here.[845] Therefore, rather than painting the journey of the audience in terms that are unfamiliar to Hebrews, that is, as athletes participating in a race, it is more likely that Hebrews would want the audience to understand the journey that they are on in terms of their wilderness wanderings towards Zion, an understanding that will be reinforced by the climactic statement in 12:22.

More informed audience members may connect the metarepresentation here with Jer 38LXX (8:8–12; 10:16–17). There are a number of connections between Jer 38LXX and Isa 35: both contain reference to the blind and the lame; both mention access to streams of water; in both, there is a highway to Zion, and their mourning is turned to

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[843] Ibid., 172–73.
[844] Claire R. Mathews, *Defending Zion: Edom's Desolation and Jacob's Restoration (Isa 34–35) in Context,* BZAW 236 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995), 138–39.
[845] A number of scholars understand Isa 35 to have an eschatological connotation: W.J. Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21–22 and the Old Testament* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 14; Donald E. Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 89.

joy.[846] Nevertheless, Hebrews does not make this connection manifest to the audience and, in any case, it is not needed to obtain optimal relevance. It may signal Hebrews' awareness of the wider context of these metarepresentations.

A further implicature arising from the imperative is the need for strengthening: but to whom is the exhortation made? Koester suggests, "The emphasis is not so much on making the way smooth for others…as on keeping oneself straight."[847] However, deSilva argues that, since Hebrews does not specify whose drooping hands and weak knees are to be strengthened, the whole community is accountable for each other's strengthening.[848] This fact is obscured by many English translations which add the personal pronoun "your" before the drooping hands and weak knees.[849] A corporate nuance coheres with the immediate context: v.15 underscores the responsibility of all members to ensure that "no one fails to obtain the grace of God." This is also consistent with the wider discourse of Hebrews: there is a corporate responsibility that each audience member has to the whole group (3:13; 4:1, 11; 6:11; 12:1).[850]

The purpose of strengthening is described in v.13 with a metaphor: the healing of lameness. According to RT, metaphors, like this one, indicate that "optimal relevance is not achieved without expending increased processing effort, and in return they yield increased cognitive effects through implicature."[851]

How would the audience process the statement? Whereas scholars often assume that the athletic or medical spheres inform lameness here, it is, in fact, Isa 35 which does so. In Isa 35, the lame are likened to a desert, implying that they "lack certain essential characteristics of life; they are somehow incomplete in an analogous way."[852]

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[846] Frederick Poulsen, *Representing Zion: Judgement and Salvation in the Old Testament* (London: Routledge, 2014), 149–50.
[847] Koester, *Hebrews*, 530.
[848] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 456n26.
[849] NIV; NRSV; ESV. The KJV correctly translates the phrase of v.12 with the definite article "the" and not the personal pronoun "your."
[850] Kistemaker, "Hebrews," 352.
[851] Steve Smith, *The Fate of the Jerusalem Temple in Luke-Acts,* LNTS 553 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 31.
[852] Saul M. Olyan, *Disability in the Hebrew Bible: Interpreting Mental and Physical Differences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 87–88.

Conversely, in the restored Zion, where the glory of God dwells, disability, including lameness, is completely eradicated.[853] The book of Isaiah has already implied that disability symbolises Israel's defects.[854] In the prophets, blindness and deafness to God's will was Israel's chief sin, which resulted in its moral and spiritual paralysis (lameness).[855] Whilst lameness, in Isaiah, is a metaphor for those who do not walk in the way of the Lord, healing from lameness in Isa 35 and subsequent walking on the highway of holiness (as only the righteous do) implies obedience to God's will.[856]

Several observations support the influence of Isa 35's understanding of lameness on Hebrews. Healing for the lame is necessary because lameness risks disqualifying them from being a member of the community through apostasy. Whilst most modern commentators, in line with the athletic metaphor, understand ἐκτρέπω to refer to dislocation of the limb,[857] since lameness already implies dislocation (or another injury), nothing newly relevant is being communicated here, and hearers would instead understand the term to refer to turning aside from the way.[858] Such an understanding fits with the metarepresentation of Prov 4:26, which refers to walking on straight paths and the avoidance of crooked paths,[859] as well as Hebrews' own emphasis, in the warning passages, on keeping to the right path.[860] Rather than walking on the straight paths, symbolising adherence to the will of God, they risk walking on

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[853] Ibid.
[854] Mathews, *Defending Zion*, 153; Judith Z. Abrams, *Judaism and Disability: Portrayals in Ancient Texts from the Tanach through the Bavli* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 1998), 76.
[855] Joseph Blenkinsopp argues that lameness should be understood in a literal sense in Isa 35 (*Isaiah 1–39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19 [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007], 406).
[856] John N. Oswalt comments, "In an apparent allusion to Isa 6, the promise is made that those who did not remain faithful – the blind and the deaf, the spiritually lame and mute – will be delivered from their afflictions and become full participants in the community of faith" (*Isaiah* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003], 393)
[857] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 403; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 365; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 405; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 363; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 388.
[858] Davis Jr., *Place of Paideia*, 220; Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2:327; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 535; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 629n68.
[859] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 611.
[860] Marcus Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Expositor's Greek Testament: Commentary*, vol. 4 (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1903), 368–69. Dods also notes that the use of ἐκτρέπω in medical contexts is extremely rare.

crooked paths, turning away from faith and the community.[861] By walking in the way of the Lord on straight paths, lameness is eradicated, suggesting that lameness has a moral component.[862] As Schreiner remarks, "Those who return from exile travel on "the Holy Way," and "the path" is not for the "unclean."[863]

The implicature that lameness has a moral component is also strengthened by the context, which involves not only endurance but ethical pursuits. Vv. 12–13 are introduced with the inferential conjunction διό, indicating that the strengthening of the weak hands and paralysed legs should be in response to God's discipline so that they share in God's holiness and yield the fruit of righteousness (vv.10–11). In vv.14–15, which map out what paths are straight, Hebrews exhorts the audience to pursue peace and the holiness without which one can see the Lord, which is later contrasted with the character of apostate Esau. This implies that the lameness in v.13 involves an inability to pursue peace and holiness.

In light of these observations, it is unlikely that lameness simply "refers to the general situation of lassitude and spiritual 'flabbiness'" in the audience.[864] Instead, as Owen remarks, it "*is some defect* that is distinguished from external hindrances and from mere fainting or weariness… *which obstructs men in their progress, and makes them be easily turned out of the way.*"[865]

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[861] Edward J. Young writes, "The way of holiness is one that does not lead astray, it leads to its destination" (*The Book of Isaiah. Vol. 2: Chapters 19–39* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970], 434).

[862] Healing is used metaphorically to refer to spiritual and moral restoration from the effects of sin (Isa 6:10; Matt 13:15; John 12:40; Acts 28:27; Jas 5:16; 1 Pet 2:24; Philo, *Spec.* 2.23). See Koester, *Hebrews,* 531; James Keir Howard, *Medicine, Miracle, and Myth in the New Testament* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2010), 91, 105. Whilst these instances do not in and of themselves prove that healing involves restoration from the effects of sin in Hebrews, they do point to a tradition within the early Christian communities of the use of healing as a metaphor that may shed light on the metaphor in Hebrews.

[863] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 387–88. Albert Vanhoye likewise suggests that Hebrews speaks of "what is crippled morally in people" (*The Letter to the Hebrews: A New Commentary*, trans. Leo Arnold [Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2015], 204). So also, Davis Jr. suggests that lameness has a moral component here (*Place of Paideia,* 220).

[864] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 365.

[865] John Owen, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews Vol. 4* (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1811), 334–35 (italics added).

A further implicature that the audience may deduce from the preceding argument is that to be lame is to be dull of hearing (5:11). Dullness of hearing in 5:11–14 is also associated with lack of obedience – like the wilderness generation who had an evil, unbelieving heart that led them to fall away from the living God. Indeed, both disabilities involve a lack of wholeness, and by implication, holiness.

Furthermore, if one understands a cultic nuance to the Way in Isa 35,[866] meaning that the highway is one on which the cultically unclean will not walk, the audience may draw the further implicature that lameness is a defect that prevents entry into the presence of God. Lameness in cultic contexts implies a defect, sin or lack of wholeness, representing a lack of holiness,[867] that excludes priests from participating in cultic worship,[868] approaching the altar of God, or in some contexts, from entry into the temple (2 Sam 5:8LXX).[869] Later, at Qumran, lameness was considered a blemish that led to "exclusion from the community's assembly on account of the presence of the holy angels,"[870] not only for priests but for any member of the congregation (1QSa 2.3–9; 4Q266 8 i.6–9).

Conversely, the healing of lameness could imply that those formally excluded from the cult can now "enter into the presence of the glory of Yahweh."[871] Three additional observations reinforce this: the audience, though not explicitly designated as priests,

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[866] Young, *Isaiah,* 2:453.
[867] J. Neyrey, "The Symbolic Universe of Luke-Acts: 'They Turn the World Upside Down,'" in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, ed. J. Neyrey (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999), 285.
[868] Bo H. Lim, *The "Way of the Lord" in the Book of Isaiah,* LHBOTS 522 (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 153.
[869] There is debate whether this verse prohibits only priests or worshippers – see the discussion in Saul Olyan,"'Anyone Blind or Lame Shall Not Enter the House': On the Interpretation of Second Samuel 5:8b," *CBQ* 60 (1998): 218–27. Pagan priests with disabilities were also banned from pagan temples (Mikeal C. Parsons, *Body and Character in Luke and Acts* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006]; Parsons, "His Feet and Ankles Were Made Strong: Signs of Character in the Man Lame from Birth," in *Disability Studies and Biblical Literature*, ed. Candida R. Moss and Jeremy Schipper [New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011], 151–64).
[870] Olyan, *Disability*, 116.
[871] Lim, *"Way of the Lord,"* 153.

are painted in a priest-like manner;[872] the near context uses cultic language, with its reference to the holiness that is necessary in order to see the Lord;[873] and they are later described as being on the verge of Mt Zion, the city of the living God, where there are innumerable angels in a festal gathering. Thus, the audience would infer that healing from lameness is necessary, not because they risk being put out of a race, but because it is a disability that ultimately hinders them from drawing near to the presence of God. Since they are on a journey to the presence of God, that which would prevent entry into the divine presence must be eradicated. Sims acknowledges, "For AH [the author of Hebrews] the Christian life is a pilgrimage to the presence of God. *The whole Epistle revolves around approach and access to God*. AH understands approaching God in terms of a pilgrimage to His presence in heavenly Jerusalem, the true sanctuary, and for this the mediation of a priest is essential."[874]

Heb 12:14–17

In 12:14–17, Hebrews exhorts the audience to strive for peace with everyone,[875] and for the holiness that is required to see the Lord, a holiness that is only produced through the endurance of discipline. In similar language to 12:12–13, Hebrews also exhorts the audience to make sure that no one in the assembly fails to obtain the grace of God, that no root of bitterness springs up and causes defilement in the assembly since the root of bitterness is the opposite of striving for peace (v.14).

Metarepresentation of Deut 29:17

The phrase μή τις ῥίζα πικρίας ἄνω φύουσα ἐνοχλῇ metarepresents Deut 29:17, a warning given to the Israelites about to enter the Promised Land. The implicature

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[872] Heb 4:16; 7:25; 10:22; 12:22. Kleinig posits that ἐγγίζω in 7:19, used of priests in Exod 19:22; Lev 10:3; 21:23, may also lead the audience to infer a priestly connotation to their drawing near to God (*Hebrews,* 153).

[873] Pfitzner writes, "That holiness is necessary in order to 'see the Lord' (meaning God, rather than Christ, as in 8:2) is a reminder of its cultic setting" (*Hebrews*, 179).

[874] Sims, "'You Have Come to Mount Zion,'" 343 (emphasis added).

[875] The referent of πᾶς is disputed. It could refer to everyone in the congregation (Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 390; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 367; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 450; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 662; R. McL. Wilson, *Hebrews* [Basingstoke: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1987], 226; Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 624). Alternatively, it could refer to everyone in general (Hughes, *Hebrews*, 536; Allen, *Hebrews*, 585). Most likely, the initial referent is the congregation and then, by extension, every person in general.

deduced is that the audience is on the brink of entry into its own Promised Land, with Hebrews exhorting them like Moses did the Israelites. Since this warning describes the apostate who succumbs to idolatry, the audience could infer the implicature that they are being warned against committing idolatry.[876] This root of bitterness may not only cause division and strife in the congregation but also defile the community by leading people astray into apostasy.[877] The warning in Deut 29 occurs "lest the sinner destroys the sinless as well," and this seems to be Hebrews' intention here also.

Deut 29:17	**Heb 12:15**
μή τίς ἐστιν ἐν ὑμῖν ῥίζα ἄνω φύουσα ἐν χολῇ καὶ *πικρίᾳ*	μή τις ῥίζα *πικρίας* ἄνω φύουσα ἐνοχλῇ καὶ δι' αὐτῆς μιανθῶσιν πολλοί

Metarepresentation of Esau

Hebrews also metarepresents the account of Esau selling his birthright in Gen 25:29–34; what is the relevance of this? Jewish tradition held Esau to be the paradigm for an undisciplined person (Philo, *Leg* 3.2; *Prelim. Studies* 61; *QG* 4.165), so, from their encyclopaedic memory, the audience may gather the implicature that Esau represents those in the community who do not undergo discipline. Moreover, Esau demonstrates the consequence of rejecting God's discipline since he sold his birthright for a single meal and did not share in his inheritance.[878] From the previous discussion in 1:6, the audience may draw the implicature that Esau is the opposite of Jesus, the firstborn who received his inheritance, with a further implicature that those who do not endure God's discipline will forfeit their inheritance, whereas those who do endure discipline will receive their inheritance.[879]

Conclusion

In conclusion, then, while readers may think of themselves on a racetrack, wilderness wandering predominates. They are to strengthen their hands and feet in order to

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[876] Steyn, "Deuteronomy in Hebrews," 160. Thomas Kem Oberholtzer, "The Failure to Heed His Speaking in Hebrews 12:25–29," *BSac* 146 (1989): 68; Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 86; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 391; Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 626.
[877] Oberholtzer, "Failure to Heed His Speaking," 68.
[878] Thiessen, "Hebrews 12.5–13," 377.
[879] Ibid.

complete their wilderness pilgrimage to Mt Zion. Thiessen has argued that interpreters should "re-contextualise the athletic imagery…the athletic imagery evokes a specific contest – the contest endured by Israel in the wilderness."[880] Although this could be an implicature drawn by some audience members, Hebrews does not develop this athletic imagery to any great extent in Heb 12:3–17. Rather, Hebrews draws on the wilderness wanderings as a matrix within which the audience can understand their journey into their promised inheritance. Whilst Allen acknowledges that Hebrews never ostensively tells the audience that they are in the wilderness,[881] the narrative world constructed for the readers enables the inference that they are analogous to Israel in the wilderness.[882] However, their wilderness journey is not a simple reiteration of the journey of their fathers; their trajectory is different, leading them to Mt Zion.

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[880] Ibid., 379.
[881] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 195.
[882] Thiessen, "Hebrews 12.5–13," 378.

Chapter 9: Heb 12:18–13:25

Introduction

This chapter examines metarepresentations of the OT wilderness narratives in Heb 12:18–13:25 on the assumption that the audience would have read and re-read Hebrews in its entirety. These passages thus would have a bearing on the audience's understanding of earlier passages, adding to their encyclopaedic memory, informing them of previous discourse, and reinforcing or contradicting earlier statements. I will demonstrate that OT wilderness metarepresentations continue to be relevant to Hebrews' argument.

Heb 12:18–24

Metarepresentation of the Sinai Theophany (12:18–20)

Hebrews gives the reason why (γάρ) the audience is not to be like Esau,[883] metarepresenting the Sinai theophany. However, Hebrews does not tell the readers ostensively that they have not come to Sinai – it is not even identified as a mountain.[884] In light of the giving of the law at Sinai in 2:2–4 and a further allusion in 8:5 (where Sinai is called simply "the mountain"), Hebrews can assume the audience's capacity to draw the implicature that the Sinai theophany is metarepresented here.[885] What is optimally relevant is that coming to Sinai evokes fear and dread; omission of the referent to ψηλαφάω shows that the location itself, Sinai, is of lesser importance. Further, the omission of any reference to the mountain itself in favour of the events associated with the mountain may lead the audience to infer that Hebrews is concerned not only with the mountain but also "the physical features of the events pertaining to the inauguration of the old covenant."[886]

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[883] Oberholtzer, "Failure," 69; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 669; Holmes, *Sublime Rhetoric*, 123.
[884] Whilst the ASV, KJV, NASB, NIV and NRSV read "you have not come to a mountain that can be touched," most manuscripts suggest that ὄρει ("mountain") was not part of the original text (cf. P^{46} א A C 048 33 81 1175 vg syp co. aeth) [Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 441].
[885] As noted by Koester, *Hebrews*, 549.
[886] Comfort, *New Testament Text*, 717.

In metarepresenting the Sinai theophany, Hebrews conflates several descriptors from Exodus and Deuteronomy. The notion of approach (προσέρχομαι) is reminiscent of Deut 4:11,[887] which depicts Israel's arrival at Sinai, although, as Attridge acknowledges, it is also a common term in Hebrews for drawing near to God (4:16; 7:25; 10:1, 22; 11:6),[888] so processing it specifically as Deuteronomic is unnecessary for optimal relevance to be obtained. However, the Pentateuchal accounts, in contrast to Hebrews, nowhere characterise the Sinai event as "touchable" (ψηλαφάω). The existence of the similar term ψηλαφητός in Exod 10:21, describing the plague of darkness upon Pharaoh, has led some scholars to consider this to be a relevant metarepresentation for Hebrews, especially given the reference to darkness later on in the same verse.[889] However, it is unlikely that there are sufficient clues in Hebrews' argument to lead the audience to understand this intertext to be relevant. Darkness is a core motif of the Sinai accounts (Exod 19:16; Deut 4:11; 5:22), so further processing would not be necessary for relevance to be obtained. The relevance of the plague of darkness for Hebrews' purpose here is minimal, and the language here is not specific enough to make that text manifest. Indeed, Hebrews uses the participle, not the adjective here.[890] Instead, Sinai's tangibility is likely derived from Hebrews' understanding of the Pentateuchal account, which forbids the Israelites to touch the mountain.

Hebrews continues to metarepresent conflated OT Sinai accounts, impressing on the hearers the fear and dread associated with approaching Sinai. God speaking out of the fire resembles the language of Deut 4:12, the tempest and the storm of whirlwind metarepresent the theophany of Deut 4:11, the sound of the trumpet is drawn from Exod 19:19 and 20:18.[891] The notion of Israel's inability to bear to listen to the words of God is reminiscent of Deut 5:24–25, whilst the begging of the leaders to have Moses

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[887] Stolz, *Höhepunkt,* 59; Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation,* 88.
[888] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 372.
[889] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 89; Griffiths, *Hebrews and Divine Speech*, 139n41; David H. Wenkel, "Sensory Experience and the Contrast between the Covenants in Hebrews 12," *BSac* 173 (2016): 226; Koester, *Hebrews*, 543; Attridge, *Hebrews,* 372; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13,* 460.
[890] Stolz, *Höhepunkt,* 59.
[891] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 91.

intercede on their behalf resembles Deut 5:27 more than it does Exod 20:18–19.[892] Kibbe interprets this to mean that Israel rebel in asking for a covenant mediator.[893] Holmes argues, on the contrary, that the purpose of the Israelites' desire not to hear God's voice is to highlight their fear rather than their rebellion.[894] This implicature coheres with the Deuteronomy account: "mortal flesh should not be able to hear God's voice and live."[895] The order that is given in v.20 ("If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned") metarepresents Exod 19:12, leading to the implicature that, if a beast is stoned for touching the mountain, the punishment for a human who does so will be much greater.[896] Another likely implicature is that Sinai is a place of danger.[897]

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation (12:21)

In Heb 12:21, Moses is reported as saying, "I tremble with fear." Identifying the OT text or tradition underlying Hebrews' metarepresentation here is problematic, for the Pentateuch nowhere ascribes these exact words to Moses.

Exod 3:6

Hughes and Lane infer a metarepresentation of Exod 3:6, where Moses was afraid to look at God in the burning bush (cf. Acts 7:32).[898] However, it is unlikely the audience would infer such an implicature: Hebrews uses the adjective ἔκφοβος, not the verb εὐλαβέομαι, found in Exod 3:6.[899] More decisively, the encounter at the burning bush does not occur at Sinai, whereas, in Hebrews, Moses' fear is in direct response to the Sinai theophany, meaning the audience need not process a reference to Exod 3:6 for optimal relevance to be obtained.

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[892] Ibid.
[893] Kibbe, *Godly Fear,* 183.
[894] Holmes, *Sublime Rhetoric*, 129–31.
[895] Ibid.
[896] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 373; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 673.
[897] Holmes, *Sublime Rhetoric*, 129–31.
[898] Hughes, *Hebrews*, 543; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 464.
[899] Docherty, "Composite Citations," 202.

B. Shabb. 88b

Spicq and Westcott argue for a metarepresentation of b. Shabb. 88b, which describes Moses' fear of the angels giving the law at Sinai.[900] Yet neither does this text adequately explain the reference to Moses' fear. In b. Shabb., Moses' fear is prompted by the angels, whereas, for Hebrews, Moses was afraid of the theophany. Additionally, b. Shabb.'s late dating makes it doubtful that the audience could access the text in their interpretation of Hebrews' utterance.

Deut 9:19

Given the problems with the above references, many scholars view a metarepresentation of Deut 9:19 to be most relevant here.[901] It is the only place in the Pentateuch where Moses' fear is associated with Sinai. Furthermore, elements of the golden calf incident mirror that of the Sinai theophany; in both, the mountain burns with fire and Moses speaks with the Lord. Whilst the word "trembling" (ἔντρομος) is not associated with the golden calf incident, it does reflect the Sinai narrative: "all the people who were in the camp trembled" (Exod 19:16).[902] However, the addition of "and trembling" is probably intended to underscore more explicitly Moses' fear.[903] Kibbe suggests that, by conflating the golden calf event with Sinai, the audience may infer that, not only did Israel fail in hearing and obeying the word of the Lord as mediated through Moses, but even the covenant mediator failed.[904] However, Hebrews does not make manifest that Israel's idolatry is in view. Instead, Moses' fear is ostensively connected with the Sinai theophany itself: he was afraid at the sight (τὸ φανταζόμενον).[905] In doing so, Hebrews modifies the audience's cognitive environment: Moses is fearful of God's appearance of Sinai, not of his judgement in

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[900] Spicq, *Hébreux*, 2:404–5; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 412.
[901] Holmes, *Sublime Rhetoric*, 131; Steyn, "Deuteronomy in Hebrews," 162; Stolz, *Höhepunkt*, 84.
[902] Docherty, "Composite Citations," 202. Lane also understands Hebrews to expand the notion of fear to Moses as well as Israel (*Hebrews 9–13*, 404). But Hebrews does not make this manifest. More likely, it is a rhetorical technique that demonstrates how terrifying the theophany was (Stolz, *Höhepunkt*, 88).
[903] Holmes, *Sublime Rhetoric*, 132.
[904] Kibbe, *Godly Fear*, 204.
[905] Holmes, *Sublime Rhetoric,* 131.

response to the golden calf incident. This serves to reinforce the fearfulness of the Sinai theophany, not only for the people of Israel but also for the covenant mediator.

Cognitive environment: Zion traditions (12:22–24)

In vv.22–24, Hebrews modifies the audience's cognitive environment by placing them at the foot of Mt Zion. Only here in Hebrews is Zion mentioned ostensively, but, as noted previously, numerous implicatures deduced throughout the book hint that Zion is the audience's ultimate destination: Jesus enters into the heavenly οἰκουμένη, Zion (1:6); the rest that the audience will enter into is equated with Zion (4:1–11); the new covenant that the audience partakes in climaxes in their arrival at Zion (8:8–12); and they are to strengthen their weak hands and knees on the highway of holiness towards Zion (12:12–13). These implicatures have prepared the audience for Hebrews' climactic assertion now that they have come to Mt Zion. Furthermore, Hebrews has already spoken of the city of the living God, first concerning Abraham, who, in his life as a nomad lived in tents, "awaiting the city that has foundations and of which the architect and builder is God" (11:10), then concerning all the patriarchs, who sought after a heavenly country and for whom God prepared a city (11:14–16). 12:22 confirms explicitly the inference that this city is Zion.

Like Israel, the audience draw near (προσέρχομαι) to the mountain; how would the audience process προσέρχομαι? Some scholars understand it to refer specifically to weekly worship,[906] or a mystical experience.[907] However, Hebrews does not make these events manifest to the audience. Allen considers it to be a reference to the audience's relationship with God.[908] Nevertheless, Hebrews' use of προσέρχομαι here is different, with the perfect tense,[909] indicative (not subjunctive) mood and emphasis on the location (not on the manner) of approach.[910] Therefore, the audience would not simply process προσέρχομαι here as a general approach like elsewhere in the letter. As Kibbe observes, "If it is *simply* the case that we have access to God any time,

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[906] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 491.
[907] Barnard, *Mysticism*, 208–11.
[908] Allen, *Hebrews*, 590.
[909] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 372; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 670; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 670; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 646.
[910] Holmes, *Sublime Rhetoric*, 123–25.

anywhere, without qualification, the community's importance is severely undermined. There must be some correlation between communal gatherings and access to God."[911] The fact that Hebrews elaborates on what they have approached suggests that there is something significant about this particular event, in contrast to the other descriptions of the audience's approach to God.

Hebrews' characterisation of Zion gives us an indication as to the significance of the audience's approach here: Zion itself is modelled on Sinai.[912] The people of God are gathered together as an ἐκκλησία (12:23; cf. Deut 4:10; 9:10; 18:16; 31:30). The notion of "firstborn" (πρωτότοκος), attributed to Israel is now used of believers (12:23; cf. Exod 4:22–23; 6:14; 13:2, 13, 15; 22:28; Num 3:12–13, 41–42).[913] Angels present at the Sinai theophany (Heb 2:2–4; Deut 33:2LXX; Jub. 1:27; Acts 7:38; Gal 3:19) are now in a festal gathering[914] at Zion (12:22).[915] Therefore, as Kibbe writes, "Hebrews appears to be doing (rhetorically) what Deuteronomy did: transporting its audience to the mountain of God where a sacrifice that inaugurated a covenant was offered, and encouraging its audience to hear again God's voice and respond in faithful obedience to that covenant so as to receive their promised inheritance."[916]

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[911] Kibbe, *Godly Fear*, 184.

[912] This is acknowledged by a number of scholars: Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation,* 214–16; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 160; W.J. Dumbrell, "The Spirits of Just Men Made Perfect," *EvQ* 48 (1976): 154–59; Kibbe, *Godly Fear*, 185–86; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 546–48; Joseph Lécuyer, "Ecclesia Primitivorum (Hébr. 12,23)," in *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus 1961* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963), 161–68. Attridge calls Zion a "new Sinai" (*Hebrews,* 296).

[913] A number of scholars understand the firstborn to be angels (Käsemann, *Wandering People*, 50; Spicq, *Hébreux*, 2:407). However, Attridge acknowledges that enrolment was only applied to human beings, not angels (*Hebrews,* 375).

[914] Dumbrell notices that πανήγυρις ("festal gathering") is found in connection with Greek Olympiads ("Spirits," 156). However, the same term is used in the LXX for religious festivals (Ezek 46:11; Hos 2:13; 9:5; Amos 5:21). This latter meaning seems more manifest here than an athletic connotation. In fact, Stolz notes that, even when this term is used in conjunction with sports games, it still had a religious connotation (*Höhepunkt,* 126).

[915] Church draws parallels between Hebrews and Qumran literature at this point, which portrays the community worshipping with the angels (*Hebrews and the Temple*, 349). Whilst this context may have comprised part of the audience's cognitive environment, a connection with Sinai may be more relevant to Hebrews' argument, especially given the association of angelic mediation of the law with the mountain of God in 2:2–4.

[916] Kibbe, *Godly Fear*, 185.

Nevertheless, there are some divergences between Sinai and Hebrews' description of Zion. The covenant that is inaugurated is a new covenant, not like the one made with the exodus generation, and it is a covenant that will enable the people of God to reach their destination. On Zion, there emerges a better mediator than Moses: one who is both Davidic king and high priest. It is a mountain that brings the people of God into the presence of God.[917] Although it is the same voice that thundered from Sinai, Zion is the mountain from which God speaks in these last days.

At the same time, however, the audience may draw the implicature that "Sinai is Zion's eschatological opposite."[918] Whilst Sinai represents limited access to God, Zion represents full access to God.[919] Sinai is earthly and temporary, but Zion is heavenly and eternal. Sinai is marked by fear and gloom, whereas Zion is a mountain of life.[920]

What is significant for the audience about the contrast between Sinai and Zion? For Johnson, the material and spiritual realms are being contrasted,[921] but this imposes foreign categories onto Hebrews. Alternatively, most scholars believe that it represents the contrast between the old covenant and the new.[922] Cockerill disagrees, considering Hebrews to be concerned with "belief and unbelief, with apostasy and faithfulness, with judgement and blessing. Sinai depicts the terrible exclusion of the apostate from the presence of God; Zion, the present joy of the faithful in the divine presence."[923] Such an implicature fits with the warning passages throughout Hebrews and with the immediate context: the apostasy of Esau (vv.16–17). However, these two notions are not mutually exclusive: Israel goes on to reject God in the wilderness

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[917] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 402.
[918] Martin and Whitlark, *Inventing Hebrews*, 48–49.
[919] Ibid.
[920] Ibid.
[921] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 329.
[922] Hughes, *Hebrews*, 542; Oberholtzer, "Failure to Heed His Speaking," 70; Ramantswana, "Mount Sinai and Mount Zion," 1–9; Martin and Whitlark, *Inventing Hebrews*, 50; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 461. Gordon's suggestion that they contrast Judaism and Christianity can be discounted (*Hebrews*, 179).
[923] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 643; Gareth Lee Cockerill, "Hebrews 12:18–24: Apocalyptic Typology or Platonic Dualism?" *TynBul* 69 (2018): 225–40. Wenkel argues that the faithful approach Zion, whilst apostates are at Sinai, but still associates Sinai with the Mosaic covenant, and Zion with the new covenant ("Sensory Experience and the Contrast between the Covenants in Hebrews 12," *BSac* 173 [2016]: 233).

through their unbelief, and the church is not to refuse the one who is speaking, yet undergirding this apostasy is the difference between the old covenant and the new: only under the new covenant do believers have the ability to know God and have his laws written on their heart (8:10–11; Jer 38LXX). Similarly, Sinai's inaccessibility relates to the old covenant: under the old covenant, only the high priest could enter his presence and only once a year (9:6–7), whereas, under the new covenant, the audience can draw near to God continually.

Excursus: Zion as the goal of the exodus and conquest: a key aspect of the mutual cognitive environment of Hebrews and its readers

So far, our study has demonstrated how the Pentateuchal wilderness account is mirrored extensively in Hebrews' narrative, but with two key differences: the audience arrive at Zion, not Canaan, and Jesus is not only the wilderness leader better than Joshua but also the Davidic Son enthroned at God's right hand. These distinctive aspects suggest the inadequacy of attempting to explain Hebrews' underlying argument on the basis of single OT books or texts, whether Deuteronomy,[924] Exodus,[925] Numbers[926] or Ps 110.[927] Instead, one should ask how Hebrews' emphasis on the Pentateuch is to be reconciled with the divergences noted above.

There is evidence that Hebrews' argument was influenced both by Zion traditions in the OT and Second Temple literature (especially those which see Zion as the goal of the exodus and conquest) and by the new exodus. I will survey how various OT texts and extra-biblical traditions understood Zion to be the goal of the exodus and conquest, as well as of the new exodus, before examining three elements in Hebrews' argument that fit this picture: combination of Pentateuchal and prophetic texts to depict the audience's pilgrimage; insistence that the audience are at Zion, not Sinai; and presentation of Jesus as king and superior wilderness leader.

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[924] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation.*
[925] Moore, "Convictions of Texts."
[926] Bryan J. Whitfield, "How Numbers Shapes the Argument of Hebrews" (paper presented at the Annual Seminar on the OT in the NT, Hawarden, April 2018).
[927] Buchanan, *Hebrews,* xix; Compton, *Psalm 110*; August Strobel, *Der Brief an die Hebräer,* 4th ed., NTD 9/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 7.

Exod 15:13–17 and its reception in later texts

First, an examination of Exod 15:13–17 and its reception in later texts in the OT and Second Temple literature evidences an understanding that Zion was the sanctuary to which the people of God were being led all along.

Exod 15:13–17. Exod 15:13–17 depicts a song of Moses and the Israelites in celebration of their deliverance from the Egyptians, in which they expect God to lead them to and plant them on his sanctuary and holy mountain. The exact location of this sanctuary is disputed, with Sinai,[928] Gilgal, Shiloh and Zion all being proposed as referents. Nevertheless, the language of God's mountain, dwelling place and sanctuary lead a number of scholars to identify this place as Zion,[929] which is also described throughout the Old Testament as a mountain,[930] dwelling place[931] and a sanctuary[932] that is planted. The difficulty with such an interpretation is that most scholars date this song to the premonarchic period, meaning that Zion cannot be the original referent,[933] unless, like Keil and Delitzsch, one argues that Moses spoke with foresight that Zion would be the sanctuary.[934] Consequently, many scholars understand Sinai to be the original referent of the mountain. Nevertheless, regardless of the original referent of Exod 15:13–17, the ambiguity of the language, as we will see, enabled later interpreters to understand it in reference to Zion.[935]

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[928] Brian D. Russell, *The Song of the Sea: The Date of Composition and Influence of Exodus 15:1–21,* StBibLit 101 (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 95.

[929] Brevard Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1974), 252; Josef Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem: Jahwes Königssitz: Theologie Der Heilgen Stadt im Alten Testament*, SANT 7 (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1963), 209–10; Martin L. Brenner, *The Song of the Sea: Ex 15:1–21*, BZAW 195 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991), 138; Ben C. Ollenburger, *Zion the City of the Great King: A Theological Symbol of the Jerusalem Cult,* JSOTSup 41 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 58.

[930] Ps 42:1–2; cf. Ps 78:54; Isa 2:3.

[931] 2 Sam 15:25; 1 Kgs 8:13; cf. Ps 43:3; 74:2; 76:2.

[932] Ps 20:2; 78:68–69.

[933] William H.C. Propp, *Exodus 1–18*, AB 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 565. However, Martin Noth thinks that it is quite late in its composition (*Exodus: A Commentary* [London: SCM Press, 1962], 123). Brenner posits that it was written as a liturgical hymn for the Second Temple (*Song of the Sea,* 181–86).

[934] C.F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament. Vol. 1: The Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 56.

[935] Propp, *Exodus 1–18*, 567.

Ps 78:54. Ps 78:54 displays affinities with the language of Exod 15:13, 17: "And he brought them to his holy land, to the mountain which his right hand had won."[936] Ps 78 also contains reference to the exodus, the wilderness journey and to arrival at the holy mountain. Initially, the referent of God's sanctuary here is Shiloh. However, the psalm then explains that due to the people's disobedience, YHWH "forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh" and selected Zion-Jerusalem and the Davidic dynasty in its place (vv.68–72). Smith remarks, "The poem of Exodus 15 may be the forerunner to the theology of Psalm 78, which was applied to Jerusalem by the cult supported by the southern monarchy. The psalm implies that Zion assumed the mantle of tradition which Shiloh held previously."[937]

2 Sam 7:10. The first passage subsequent to Exod 15:17 to use the planting metaphor is 2 Sam 7:10. God's promise to David in 2 Sam 7:10 is also reminiscent of Exod 15:17: "I will provide a place for my people Israel, and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed." This time, however, God's sanctuary is to be understood as the future temple, established in Jerusalem.[938]

4Q174. 4Q174 explicitly links the sanctuary of the Lord in Exod 15 with the house of David: the place that the Lord will establish for his people and David's seed who will rule in Zion.[939] This text demonstrates that the author understood Zion and the temple to be the sanctuary mentioned in Exod 15.[940] Moreover, the text does not simply envisage an earthly temple, but an eschatological temple that is to be constructed after God defeats his enemies.

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[936] Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (New York: HarperOne, 1985), 91; Russell, *Song of the Sea*, 120.
[937] Mark Smith, *The Pilgrimage Pattern in Exodus* (London: A&C Black, 1997), 226.
[938] Donald Juel, *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1988), 64–65.
[939] Dow, *Images of Zion*, 135.
[940] Mavis M. Leung, *The Kingship-Cross Interplay in the Gospel of John: Jesus' Death as Corroboration of His Royal Messiahship* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 77. W. Horbury, *Messianism among Jews and Christians: Biblical and Historical Studies* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 199–200.

2 Macc 1:29. 2 Macc 1:29 explicitly draws on Exod 15 in a prayer: "Plant your people in your holy place, as Moses said." Here, too, the sanctuary into which the people will be led is understood as the coming, divinely-prepared temple (to which Moses, understood as speaking prophetically, is referring).[941]

Zion as the fulfilment of the Deuteronomic conquest

There is also a sense in which Zion was viewed as the fulfilment of the conquest as described by Deuteronomy. In Deuteronomy, God frequently speaks of "the place that the Lord your God will choose" and the "place where he will put his name."[942] These same phrases are used of Jerusalem (2 Chron 7:12; 29:6; Ps 132:12–14; Isa 18:7; Neh 1:9; cf. 1 Kgs 5:5; 8:16–17; 9:3) and in some instances the Jerusalem Temple itself is specifically described as the "house" where God has put his name.[943]

Likewise, there is a sense in which David had to conquer Jerusalem and drive out the Jebusites for the conquest of Canaan to be completed. The Jebusites are designated as "the inhabitants of the land," a phrase used in the Pentateuch to refer to those whom God will hand over to Israel (Exod 23:31), and those whom Israel is commanded to drive out (Num 33:52; cf. Exod 34:12, 15; Josh 9:24; Judg 2:2).[944] Bright comments that David's conquest of Jerusalem and presumably all other Canaanite territories in his realm was "the completion of the conquest of Canaan."[945] Similarly, McConville says that David's conquests finally allowed Israel "to enjoy that 'rest' from their enemies which had been entailed in the promised land."[946]

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[941] Horbury, *Messianism*, 197–98; Jonathan A. Goldstein, *II Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* AB (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 179.
[942] Deut 12:5, 12, 14; 14:23; 16:5–7.
[943] Marvin Sweeney, *King Josiah of Judah: The Lost Messiah of Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 150.
[944] Dow, *Images of Zion,* 53–55.
[945] John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 4th ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 201.
[946] Gordon McConville, "Jerusalem in the Old Testament," in *Jerusalem: Past and Present in the Purposes of God*, ed. Peter W.L. Walker (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1994), 22. J. Alan Groves notes, "In the biblical narrative Zion was the final Canaanite holdout in the Promised Land. With its fall, the conquest of Canaan begun by Joshua was completed. Having chosen David to act on his behalf, Yahweh took Zion and completed the conquest" ("Zion Traditions," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament:*

Deuteronomy's doctrine of cult centralisation also finds its fulfilment in the Jerusalem cult tradition.[947] Whilst the site for worship in Deuteronomy is never explicitly identified as Jerusalem, scholars have recognised the requirement for cultic centralisation as a feature of the Jerusalem cult tradition which identifies Zion as the only legitimate worship site.[948] One of the prominent features of Deut 12–31 is the instruction that, after the Israelites arrive in the land, they should worship and celebrate festivals at a certain place in the land that the Lord will choose, where the Lord will cause his name to dwell (Deut 12:5, 12, 14; 14:23; 16:5–7, 11, 16; 26:2). But these passages foreshadow the choice of Jerusalem, since Jerusalem is later called the place God has chosen and where he has put his name (1 Kgs 9:3; 2 Kgs 21:4, 7; 2 Chron 6:6; Ezra 6:12; Neh 1:9).[949]

Davidic leadership as re-presentation of Israelite leadership in the time of the conquest

There is also a sense in which David's rise to leadership in Israel is modelled on Moses' and Joshua's leadership in the conquest and occupation of Canaan. Watty goes as far to claim that 2 Sam 7:8–16's description of David was an intentional re-presentation of Israelite leadership in the time of the conquest. David was called to be God's servant, just as Moses and Joshua were. Like Moses, he rose from pastoral obscurity to leadership of God's people. God was with David as he had been with Moses and Joshua. God defeated David's enemies and found a place for his people Israel, in a similar way to the exodus.[950]

The movement from Sinai to Zion

Another trajectory towards Zion from another place associated with the early phase of the exodus, namely Sinai, previously associated with God's dwelling, is also

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Historical Books, ed. Bill T. Arnold and H.G.M. Williamson [Downers Grove: IVP, 2005], 1020, 1023).

[947] Ollenburger, *Zion*, 61.

[948] Ronald E. Clements, "Deuteronomy and the Jerusalem Cult Tradition," *VT* 15 (1965): 303–05.

[949] Dow, *Images of Zion*, 49–50; Isaacs, *Sacred Space,* 83.

[950] William W. Watty, *The Nathan Narrative in 2 Sam 7:1–17* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2016), 139.

demonstrated in the OT. For instance, 1 Kings 8:10–11's re-use of Exod 40:34–35 demonstrates how motifs associated with Sinai are transferred to Zion. In both texts, the cloud of the Lord envelops the sanctuary so that those who serve, whether Moses or the priests, cannot enter.[951] Likewise, Isa 2:2–4 describes how all people go up to the mountain of the Lord and, at its climax, Zion replaces Sinai as the source of God's instruction. "The law will go out from Zion, the word of YHWH from Jerusalem."[952] Morales comments, "Within the Hebrew Bible itself…it appears that Zion fell heir to the legacy of Mount Sinai, becoming *the* mountain of Israel."[953] So, Zion tradition relocates to Zion YHWH's holy dwelling place at Sinai, while Zion succeeds Sinai to become the source of Torah, the preeminent role of Sinai.[954] There is a sense in which Zion succeeds Sinai; however, unlike Sinai, which was a temporary dwelling for God, having "a transit function in Israel's pilgrimage,"[955] Zion was where God established his permanent dwelling place.[956]

Zion as the goal of the new exodus

Wherever OT texts envisage the people of God leaving Babylon, in a new exodus, Zion is their goal.[957] As part of this new exodus, God promises to remember his covenant made in 2 Sam 7:9–17 and restore the throne of David, which had ended with the Babylonian exile (Isa 9:6–7; 11:1–16; Jer 23:3–8; 33:14–26; Ezek 34:23–24; 37:24–25; Hos 3:4–5). In Isa 4:5, the prophet uses the exodus imagery of cloud, smoke and fire to describe the return of the Lord's presence to Zion. The Lord not only delivers his people, but he does so personally and then remains in their midst, even enthroned on Mt Zion.

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[951] John S. Kselman, "Sinai and Zion in Psalm 93," in *David and Zion: Biblical Studies in Honor of J.J.M. Roberts*, ed. Bernard F. Batto and Kathryn L. Roberts (Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 73.
[952] Ibid., 74.
[953] L. Michael Morales, *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus*, BTS 15 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 18.
[954] Kselman, "Sinai and Zion," 95.
[955] Hulisani Ramantswana, "Mount Sinai and Mount Zion: Discontinuity and Continuity in the Book of Hebrews," *IDS* 47 (2013): 3.
[956] Kselman, "Sinai and Zion," 75. Isa 2:3; Mic 4:2.
[957] Isa 35:10; Jer 50:4–5; Ezek 2:1.

Hebrews' re-use of motifs from these texts and traditions

In a number of key ways, the argument of Hebrews makes fruitful connections with these texts and traditions from the mutual cognitive environment of Hebrews and its readers.

First, this background may explain Hebrews' extensive use of the Pentateuch in the depiction of the audience's situation whilst having them arrive at Zion. If Zion has been seen as the fulfilment of Deuteronomy – the place where God has put his name, and the fulfilment of the conquest – Hebrews could understand Zion to be the true Promised Land to which the people of God are going.

Second, if Zion is the goal of both the exodus and the new exodus, this explains why Hebrews uses not only the Pentateuch but also new exodus passages from the prophets in its depiction of the audience's journey. Hebrews uses Isa 35:3LXX to exhort the audience to strengthen their weak hands and knees as they journey towards Zion, describes the new covenant associated with this journey to Zion with language from Jer 38LXX and will use the language of heaven shaking from Hag 2:6LXX in 12:25–29 to emphasise that the phenomena experienced by the Israelites in the wilderness accompany the new exodus and the new covenant as well.[958]

The audience's journey is akin to that of the original exodus generation, but their trajectory is towards Zion. They are also partakers of a new covenant, one better than the old**.** If Zion was seen as the goal of both the conquest and new exodus, this accounts not only for the audience's journey being patterned after that of their ancestors but also for why it differs, with failure to complete the journey facing greater consequences.

Third, if Hebrews was aware of traditions that associated Zion with the final goal of the exodus, this could also provide a background to Hebrews' assertion that Joshua

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[958] Likewise, in Heb 10:26–31, the intentional sin of Num 15 is combined with a reference to Isa 26:11 which in the wider context describes the Lord's reign in Mt Zion and in Jerusalem.

did not lead Israel into rest in Canaan (4:8). If Zion was the ultimate goal of the exodus, it follows that Canaan, contrary to Deut 3:20; 5:33; 12:10; 25:19 and Josh 1:12, 15; 21:43–45, was not the rest.

Fourth, Zion traditions may also explain why Hebrews depicts Jesus as wilderness leader and Davidic king. As ἀρχηγός, Jesus is like the Pentateuchal wilderness leaders, but with one crucial difference: he brings the people of God into their promised rest. Yet Jesus is also the Davidic king who sits on the throne in Zion (1:5–14). If David's capture of Jerusalem fulfils the conquest of Israel and ultimately brings rest with the establishment of the Temple in Zion, it may be possible that Hebrews saw in Jesus' Davidic Sonship the fulfilment of Joshua's role. In a manner reminiscent of Israel's journey to the Promised Land and heavenly rest, but in a way that Joshua could not achieve, Jesus as Davidic Son has entered the οἰκουμένη in Zion (Heb 1:6).

Fifth, Zion traditions also explain why Zion is patterned after Sinai in Hebrews. As noted above, Hebrews' transfer onto Zion of traditions associated with Sinai reflects a development which occurs in the Hebrew Bible itself, and, therefore, likely forms a significant element of the mutual cognitive environment of the author and audience.

Heb 12:25–29

In light of the contrast between Sinai and Zion, Hebrews draws its final warning: "See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking." This warning would call to the audience's mind 2:1–4 as both contain lesser-to-greater warnings comparing Israel's rejection of a mediator with the greater punishment warranted for those who refuse to listen to the message given through a greater mediator.[959] Whilst a number of scholars consider 12:25–29 to be an independent section,[960] the addition of οὖν signals to the reader that "the new information is pertinent and directly related to what has gone

[959] Vanhoye, *Hebrews*, 214; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 469.
[960] Guthrie, *Structure of Hebrews*, 133; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 683; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 379; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 380.

before."[961] The notion of "refusal" (παραιτέομαι) in v.25 relates to v.19, whilst λαλοῦντα in v.25 connects with λαλοῦντι in the previous verse.[962]

Since Zion is greater than Sinai, the reader is able to infer that the punishment for those who do not listen to "the one who speaks" – the God who spoke at Sinai and is still speaking now from Zion[963] – is greater than the punishment endured by those who refused him who warned them on the earth.[964]

Equally difficult is discerning whether the precise referent of "those who did not escape" is the wilderness generation or those at Sinai. Kibbe understands the phrase to refer only to those at Sinai for four reasons. First, the contrast between heaven and earth begins with the contrast between Sinai and Zion, suggesting that the warning that took place on earth came from Sinai. Second, it seems simplest to infer that "those who did not escape" in 12:25 are the Israelites at Sinai discussed in 12:18–20. Third, the shaking of the earth that anticipates the eschatological shaking of creation metarepresents the earthquake that happened at Sinai. Fourth, Heb 12:18–29 ends with a metarepresentation of Deut 4:24, describing the character of God who speaks at Sinai.[965]

Several observations suggest that the wilderness generation is the referent of this verse.[966] Judgement did happen on Mt Sinai: Moses and the Levites killed three thousand as a result of the sin of the golden calf (Exod 32:28) – but this judgement was Moses' initiative and happened after God relented from the disaster he intended to bring upon the people. Furthermore, Heb 12:19 does not suggest that the Israelites disobeyed in not desiring to hear God's word – their response was one of fear. In fact,

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[961] Sim, *Relevant*, 96.
[962] Gene Smillie, "'The One Who Is Speaking' in Hebrews 12:25," *TynBul* 55 (2004): 278.
[963] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 379.
[964] Moffatt argues that the one who warns from the earth is Moses (*Hebrews*, 220). Hughes, however, notes that the Greek verb translated here as "to warn" is used by Hebrews of the utterances of revelation that come from God (*Hebrews*, 556).
[965] Michael Kibbe, "Requesting and Rejecting: Παραιτέομαι in Heb 12,18–29," *Bib* 96 (2015): 285.
[966] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 379; Koester, *Hebrews*, 546; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 477; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 362–63.

in Hebrews, there is no suggestion that not wanting to hear God's voice results in judgement: the wilderness generation did not fall because they refused God's voice at Sinai, but because of their hard, unbelieving hearts. Likewise, Heb 2:2, which connects with Heb 12:25 and refers to Sinai, suggests it is disobedience to God's law that brings judgement. More decisively, however, the language in Heb 12:25 connects with the metarepresentation of the wilderness generation at Kadesh-Barnea in 3:7–4:11.[967] Those who refused God and did not escape (12:25) are more likely to be those who fell in the wilderness – the disobedient and unbelieving Israelites (3:17–19). In particular, βλέπετε (12:25) looks back to the warning of 3:12 not to be like the Israelites.[968] Therefore, it is likely the audience would understand "those who did not escape" to be the generation in the wilderness.

Metarepresentation of Hag 2:6 (12:26)

This leads Hebrews to compare the future shaking of the heavens and earth, promised in Hag 2:6, with the shaking that took place at Sinai.[969] Whilst the notion of shaking is not part of the LXX Exodus account,[970] it is associated with the Sinai theophany in other OT accounts of the event (Judg 5:4; Ps 68:8; 77:18; 114:7).[971] However, this shaking is only anticipatory of a future shaking that involves both heaven and earth promised in Hag 2:6.

Hebrews modifies the metarepresentation of Hag 2:6 in four ways: first, Hebrews adds the phrase οὐ μόνον; second, τὴν γῆν is placed before τὸν οὐρανόν; third, ἀλλά is inserted before καί; fourth, the phrase "and the sea and the dry land" is omitted because it is not relevant to Hebrews' purpose. Steyn notes the resulting cognitive effect: "These changes assist in the contrast of the past and future shakings and in

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[967] Stolz, *Höhepunkt,* 273–75.
[968] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 379.
[969] Allen entertains the possibility that the shaking of the heavens and the earth is an implicit reference to the destruction of the temple (*Hebrews*, 597). However, seeing a reference to the Jerusalem temple in the phrase "heavens and earth" would require a lot of processing effort from the audience, especially given the discussion of the earthly Sinai and the heavenly Zion that precedes this warning.
[970] In Exod 19:18MT, however, it is the mountain, not the people, that trembles greatly.
[971] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 380.

emphasising the shaking of heaven as well. The result is that the final quake will be far more drastic than the first."[972]

Hag 2:6	**Heb 12:26**
ἔτι ἅπαξ ἐγὼ σείσω τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηράν	ἔτι ἅπαξ ἐγὼ σείσω **οὐ μόνον** τὴν γῆν **ἀλλὰ** καὶ τὸν οὐρανόν

Max Rogland comments that Haggai's phrase "represents a kind of 'boastful' statement meant to inspire confidence in YHWH's hearers."[973] Similarly, the audience members may draw the implicature that God will fill his house with honour at the Messiah's return. Ellingworth suggests that the purpose of the metarepresentation of Hag 2:6 in Heb 12:26–27 reflects that of the epistle as a whole: "to encourage the addressees to hold fast to their faith during the final cataclysm in which God will shake both parts of his creation, but from which his kingdom, in which believers share, will emerge henceforth unshakable."[974]

Although the LXX of Hag 2:5, unlike the MT, lacks reference to the exodus, the audience may draw the implicature that God restores his temple in a new exodus. God promises his people that he will furnish his temple as he did in the exodus (Exod 12:35–36). Hag 2:22 exploits language from Exodus 15: 1, 4: YHWH will put an end to "chariots and their riders…horses and their riders."

Nevertheless, it is the notion of the Sinai theophany that prompts Hebrews' reference to Hag 2, contrasting the experience of the exodus generation with the future events to be experienced by the people of God. In Haggai and the other prophets, the shaking that accompanied the old covenant will also accompany the new exodus and new

[972] Gert J. Steyn, "Quotations from the Minor Prophets in Hebrews," in *Septuagint and Reception: Essays Prepared for the Association for the Study of the Septuagint in South Africa*, ed. Johann Cook (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 136.
[973] Max Rogland, "A 'Cryptic Phrase' in Haggai 2:6," *JBL* 136 (2017): 591.
[974] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 689–90.

covenant as well (Hag 2:6–7; Jer 4:24; Ezek 38:20; Isa 64:2; Ezek 38:20; Mic 7:17).[975] Hebrews' addition of "once again" implies a greater shaking in a new exodus. More so, the discourse of Hebrews anticipates a day when God's enemies will be subjugated to the Son and the people of God will be brought to glory (2:8–10). These elements could be inferred from Hebrews' argument without accessing the wider context of Hag 2.

Deuteronomic metarepresentation (12:29)

Hebrews ends by exhorting the audience to be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, for our God is a consuming fire. The phrase "our God is a consuming fire" is reminiscent of Deut 4:24 and Deut 9:3, but there is disagreement over the precise source of the metarepresentation. Allen prefers Deut 4:24 since "its length and word order are closer to Heb 12:29 than the more expansive 9:3."[976] Coyne, on the other hand, prefers a reference to Deut 9:3, which discusses the destroying of the Anakites.[977] Whilst Hebrews draws on both Deut 4 and 9 in the depiction of the Sinai theophany, Deut 4:24 resembles 12:29 more closely. In Deut 4, Moses warns the people concerning the consequences of idolatry threatening destruction,[978] which may lead to the implicature that idolatry is the opposite of receiving an unshakeable kingdom (cf. Heb 10:26–31). Ultimately, however, the notion of God as a consuming fire is Deuteronomic, and thus the audience's access of a specific intertext is not necessary for relevance to be obtained, especially since both use the phrase in a context of judgement.

Deut 4:24	**Deut 9:3**	**Heb 12:29**
ὅτι κύριος <u>ὁ θεός</u> σου <u>πῦρ καταναλίσκον</u> ἐστίν θεὸς ζηλωτής	ὅτι κύριος <u>ὁ θεός</u> σου οὗτος προπορεύεται πρὸ προσώπου σου <u>πῦρ καταναλίσκον</u>	<u>ὁ θεὸς</u> **ἡμῶν** <u>πῦρ καταναλίσκον</u>

[975] Eugene Merrill, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: An Exegetical Commentary* (Texas: Biblical Studies Press, 2003), 41.
[976] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 67.
[977] Coyne, "Wandering," 342.
[978] Allen, *Hebrews*, 598.

Heb 13:5

OT metarepresentation: identification & evaluation

In Heb 13, Hebrews turns to discuss a number of ethical implications for the audience.[979] In amongst these commands, Hebrews assures the audience that God has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Since no LXX text exactly matches this, the source of this metarepresentation is greatly debated, with options including Deut 31:6, 8;[980] Josh 1:5;[981] or a combination of Gen 28:15 and Deut 31:6.[982]

Given Hebrews' extensive knowledge of Deuteronomy, it may be likely that Deut 31:6, 8 is the metarepresented intertext. Even though Hebrews' metarepresentation uses the first person, rather than the third person in Deut 31:6, it is the closest in wording to Heb 13:5, and it is the only promise given to an assembled community.[983] Hebrews' metarepresentation agrees with the metarepresentation of Deut 31:6 in Philo, *Conf.* 166,[984] suggesting a Greek form of Deut 31:6 that is no longer extant contained the first person plural. The alternative – that Hebrews conflates Deut 31:6, 8 with Gen 28:15 – requires extensive processing effort for no discernible cognitive effects for, as Docherty observes, "[Hebrews'] exhortation to trust in divine providence is not really enhanced if the supporting citation draws on two scriptural locations rather than just one."[985]

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[979] Some scholars suggest that ch 13 is a later addition to Hebrews (Spicq, *Hébreux*, 2:412; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 267–68). However, themes in chs 1–12, including access to God, pursuing spiritual goals and holding onto their confession, are mirrored in ch 13 (Westfall, *Discourse Analysis,* 290–2; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13,* 497). Furthermore, early manuscript evidence implies that Hebrews always contained ch 13 (Bryan R. Dyer, "The Epistolary Closing of Hebrews and Pauline Imitation," in *Paul and Pseudepigraphy*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Gregory P. Fewster, Pauline Studies 8 [Leiden: Brill, 2013], 278).

[980] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 388–89; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 699–700; Steyn, *Quest*, 363–64.

[981] Westcott, *Hebrews*, 434; Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 240–41; Williamson, *Philo*, 570; Bruce, *Hebrews,* 368; Hughes, *Hebrews,* 568.

[982] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 492. Peter Katz, "The Quotations from Deuteronomy in Hebrews," *ZNW* 49 (1958): 523–25.

[983] Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 69–70.

[984] Gert J. Steyn, "The Occurrence of Psalm 118 (117):6 in Hebrews 13:6: Possible Liturgical Origins?" *Neot* 40 (2006): 126, 130.

[985] Docherty, "Composite Citations," 199.

Gen 28:15	Deut 31:6	Deut 31:8	Josh 1:5	Heb 13:5
οὐ μή σε ἐγκαταλίπω	οὐ μή σε *ἀνῇ οὔτε* μή σε *ἐγκαταλίπῃ*	*οὐκ ἀνήσει* σε οὐδὲ μὴ *ἐγκαταλίπῃ* σε	*οὐκ* ἐγκαταλείψω σε οὐδὲ *ὑπερόψομαί* σε	οὐ μή σε *ἀνῶ οὐδ'* οὐ μή σε ἐγκαταλίπω

Nonetheless, from the audience's perspective, is precise identification of the source of the intertext necessary to obtain relevance? They may connect this metarepresentation with OT traditions about Moses and Joshua more generally since this promise is given to Joshua before the entry into Canaan in both Deut 31:6, 8 and Josh 1:5.[986] Given that the cognitive environment constructed by Hebrews has already placed the audience on the brink of entry into the Promised Land, they may draw the implicature that they are like Israel on the edge of their promised inheritance,[987] without them having to access a particular OT intertext. This inheritance, however, as the discourse has demonstrated, is not Canaan but Zion.

Heb 13:10–13

Cognitive environments: identification & evaluation

Lev 16

Hebrews continues to exhort the audience to remember their leaders and imitate their faith, before focussing on cultic imagery in vv.10–11. Hebrews tells the audience that they have an altar from which those who serve the tent (Levitical priests) have no right to eat, suggesting that the foods in v.9 relate to OT food laws.[988] Hebrews then describes the actions of the high priest, who brings the blood of animal sacrifices into the holy places, but burns the bodies outside the camp, leading the audience to draw the implicature that Hebrews is metarepresenting Lev 16.[989] Hebrews draws the

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[986] This possibility is considered by Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation*, 70. See also David M. Allen, "Constructing 'Janus-Faced' Exhortations. The Use of Old Testament Narratives in Heb 13,1–8," *Bib* 89 (2008): 405–06.
[987] Westcott, *Hebrews*, 433.
[988] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 420.
[989] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice,* 154; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 439; Spicq, *Hébreux,* 2:426–27; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 575; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 397; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 712–13;

inference for the audience that Jesus' suffering outside the gate to sanctify the people is analogous to the Day of Atonement sacrifice.

Exod 33:7–11

David Allen has argued that Exod 33:7–11 may also be a significant metarepresentation here.[990] In both Exod 33 and Hebrews, the presence of God is located outside the camp and Moses goes outside the camp so that others will follow.[991] Gelardini also notes that Moses in Exod 33:7–11 is the only leader that goes outside the camp to suffer.[992] Nevertheless, the phrase ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς recurs throughout the Pentateuch to refer to being outside the wilderness camp,[993] suggesting that understanding a reference to a specific metarepresentation here is unnecessary for optimal relevance to be obtained. Furthermore, if more processing effort was exerted by the audience, since 13:11–12 recapitulates the Yom Kippur sacrifice in Lev 16, the call to the audience to go outside the camp is modelled on Jesus' exit in accordance with Lev 16, not Exod 33.

It is likely, then, that Hebrews' intended cognitive effect here is to subvert the audience's expectations. Whereas, in Lev 16, the Day of Atonement sacrifice served to cleanse the camp so that the people of God could remain there, in Hebrews' metarepresentation, Jesus leaves the camp and suffers in the impure realm in order to sanctify his people.[994]

Koester, *Hebrews*, 570; Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 276–77; Jamieson, *Heavenly Offering*, 85.

[990] David M. Allen, "Why Bother Going Outside?: The Use of the Old Testament in Heb 13:10–16," in *The Scriptures of Israel in Jewish and Christian Tradition: Essays in Honour of Maarten J.J. Menken,* ed. Bart Koet, Steve Moyise and Joseph Verheyden, NovTSupp 148 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 239–52.

[991] Ibid., 247.

[992] Gabriella Gelardini, "Charting 'Outside the Camp' with Edward W. Soja: Critical Spatiality and Hebrews 13," in *Hebrews in Contexts*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini and Harold W. Attridge, AJEC 91 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 220.

[993] Exod 29:14; 33:7–8; Lev 4:12, 21; 6:11; 8:17; 9:11; 10:4, 5; 13:46; 14:3; 16:27; 17:3; 24:14, 23; Num 5:3, 4; 12:14, 15; 15:36; 19:3; 31:13, 19; Deut 23:10, 13.

[994] Filtvedt, *Identity of God's People*, 229.

The referent of ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς (v.13)

In response, Hebrews exhorts the audience to follow Jesus outside the camp and to bear the same reproach he endured,[995] the direction of their journey being changed from entering to exiting. Whilst, as Backhaus notes, "[t]his *eisodos* into the sacred space (Heb 10:19) corresponds to the *exodus* from the space of the urban dominant culture (Heb 13:13; cf. 11:8, 27, 29),"[996] the fact that it only occurs here would elicit significant cognitive effects: the audience is not only to enter into their rest but also to exit the camp. Since the notion of exit is not ostensively detailed in the previous discourse, greater processing effort must be exerted by the audience. Nevertheless, the audience would likely understand their exit in a way similar to Abraham, who leaves his homeland in pursuit of a better city (11:8–12).

How would the audience process the exhortation to follow Jesus outside of the camp? Options include: leaving Judaism,[997] exiting this world,[998] going outside of Jerusalem,[999] and leaving behind the sacred world for the secular.[1000] It is dubious that the audience would understand Judaism to be the referent of camp since παρεμβολή is nowhere used of Judaism.[1001] More so, this interpretation incorrectly presupposes that Judaism and Christianity were two separate entities in the first century C.E. Mosser's suggested implicature that the audience is to leave Jerusalem like Rahab left

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[995] Adam W. Day understands Hebrews to be metarepresenting Ps 68 with the use of the phrase "bearing his reproach" ("Bearing the Reproach of Christ: The Background of Psalm 68 [LXX] in Hebrews 13:9–16," *Presbyterion* 44 [2018]: 126–41). However, the same language is used in 10:33 and 11:26, making these contexts more readily accessed by the audience than Ps 68.

[996] Knut Backhaus, "How to Entertain Angels: Ethics in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods – New Insights*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini, BIS 75 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 157.

[997] Lindars, *Theology*, 22; Norman H. Young, "'Bearing His Reproach' (Heb 13.9–14)," *NTS* 48 (2002): 243–61; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 442; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 381–82; Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 545–46; Montefiore, *Hebrews*, 246; Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 364.

[998] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 500–04.

[999] Mosser, "No Lasting City," 272–73.

[1000] Helmut Koester, "'Outside the Camp': Hebrews 13.9–14," *HTR* 55 (1962): 299–315.

[1001] Mosser, "No Lasting City," 57.

Jericho (Josh 6:23–24),[1002] depends on a Jerusalem provenance for Hebrews, but, more significantly, requires extensive processing effort for any tangible cognitive effects. The interpretation that the audience must leave the sacred world depends on a modern conception that juxtaposes the secular with the sacred.[1003]

It is more likely that the audience's understanding of going outside the camp is informed by the use of παρεμβολή in 13:11: the wilderness camp, outside of which sacrificial animals were burned. Therefore, one possible implicature is that the audience is to leave the security of the wilderness camp as they journey towards their promised inheritance. This is reinforced by Hebrews' next statement: here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come, already identified as Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22–24).[1004] The readers are to be like Abraham, who left behind his earthly home to journey towards the city without foundations (11:11–16) and like Moses, who left behind Egypt and the privilege of being the son of Pharaoh's daughter to bear the reproach of Christ in anticipation of the heavenly reward (11:24–27). Rather than withdraw or shrink back from society because of persecution and affliction (10:25, 37–28), the audience is called to continue on their path towards the city that is coming. If they do not follow Jesus outside of the camp, they will forsake their inheritance. At the same time, however, given the cultic context, leaving the wilderness camp must also involve re-envisioning their relationship to old covenant sacrifices. Filtvedt writes, "They are voluntarily to adopt a kind of wilderness existence, which…also renders them strangers to the cultic practices of those who are still occupied somehow with old covenant ways of worshiping God."[1005] Instead of relying on earthly sacrifices, they are to offer a sacrifice of praise to God in heaven. As Isaacs comments, Hebrews does not replace the sacred, but relocates it: "[i]t is no

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[1002] Carl Mosser, "Rahab Outside the Camp," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 397.
[1003] Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 422n711.
[1004] Jason A. Whitlark thinks that this statement is an anti-imperial polemic ("'Here We Do Not Have a City That Remains': A Figured Critique of Roman Imperial Propaganda in Hebrews 13:14," *JBL* 131 [2012]: 143–60). The context, however, suggests that Hebrews is juxtaposing the earth with the heavenly Jerusalem which is permanent without any discernible covert polemical intent.
[1005] Filtvedt, *Identity of God's People*, 246.

longer to be identified with Israel's shrine but with heaven itself – the ultimate goal of the pilgrimage of God's people, past and present."[1006]

Heb 13:20–21

Hebrews concludes with a benediction in 13:20–21 which describes God as a God of peace, who raised Jesus,[1007] the great shepherd of the sheep, from the dead by the blood of the eternal covenant.

Metarepresentation of Isa 63:11 (13:20a)

Many scholars discern a metarepresentation of Isa 63:11 here.[1008] Attridge, however, disputes this on the basis that "the allusion to the description of Moses in Isaiah is faint at best and there has been little comparative argument in the context of this chapter."[1009] Attridge, instead, understands the shepherding imagery to relate to Hebrews' high priestly discourse.[1010]

Whereas Attridge's acknowledgement that "[t]he one whom God exalted from the dead is the one who ever remains as guide of God's flock"[1011] indicates that one can achieve a degree of relevance here without noticing an OT metarepresentation, nevertheless, the fact that Hebrews uses shepherding language only here[1012] invites the audience to process the utterance further, since they cannot access an element in

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[1006] Marie E. Isaacs, "Hebrews 13.9–16 Revisited," *NTS* 43 (1997): 283.

[1007] Attridge argues that this refers to Jesus' exaltation since Hebrews uses ἀνάγω ("to lead up") rather than the more common term ἐγείρω ("to raise"), used of Abraham's hope that Isaac would be resurrected in 11:19 (*Hebrews*, 406). Yet, as Moffitt notes, if Jesus provides a model for his followers in Hebrews, it is doubtful that Hebrews would hint at their future resurrection without understanding Jesus to have been resurrected; Paul uses ἀνάγω to refer to Jesus' resurrection (Rom 10:7), indicating that Hebrews could also use the term likewise; the most likely event referred to in the phrase "the one who led [Jesus] out of the dead" is Jesus' resurrection (*Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 39).

[1008] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 511; Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2:399; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 239; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 754.

[1009] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 406.

[1010] Ibid.

[1011] Ibid.

[1012] Eric F. Mason, *"You Are a Priest Forever": Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews,* STDJ 74 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 9.

the previous discourse to aid them in understanding the imagery. Where, in their cognitive environment, might it come from? The idea of leading has occurred elsewhere in Hebrews,[1013] with respect to the exodus and wilderness generations. This close association may lead the audience to process a reference to Isa 63:11, since it is concerned with the same themes as 2:10 and 3:7–4:11.[1014] The wider context of Isa 63 evokes Israel's disobedience in the wilderness, a theme also prominent in Hebrews,[1015] whilst according to Isa 63:11–14, he was "led forth" not as an isolated individual but as the shepherd of the flock. The entire people are specified as the object of God's leading. Through him, God has begun to lead his flock in order to make a glorious name for himself. The action will be complete when the flock of God is brought to an experience of celebratory rest (Isa 63:14; Heb 2:10; 4:9).[1016] Since these themes are present elsewhere in Hebrews, the audience need not access the wider context of Isa 63 for optimal relevance to be obtained. Given the reality that, thus far in the book, the leading of the people of God has been connected to Moses or the leaders of the wilderness generation more generally, the audience may draw the implicature that Jesus, the great shepherd, is a greater leader than Moses or Joshua, as confirmed by elements in the previous discourse.[1017] Hebrews, however, does not ostensively exploit this nuance.[1018]

Another implicature that the audience may deduce is that Jesus' resurrection implies their own resurrection. The discourse has already underscored how Jesus is their brother (2:11) and, by describing Jesus as the shepherd led out of death, Hebrews implies that the sheep will be led out of death also.[1019]

[1013] As noted by many scholars, including: Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 174; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 716; Peter Rhea Jones, "The Figure of Moses as a Heuristic Device for Understanding the Pastoral Intent of Hebrews," *RevExp* 76 (1979): 102; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 755–56.
[1014] Madison N. Pierce draws parallels between Isa 63 and Hebrews' treatment of the wilderness generation in 3:7–4:11 ("Hebrews 3.7-4.11 and the Spirit's Speech to the Community," in *Muted Voices of the New Testament: Readings in the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews*, ed. Katherine M. Hockey, Madison N. Pierce, and Francis Watson, LNTS 585 [London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017], 179).
[1015] Mason, *"You Are a Priest Forever,"* 9.
[1016] Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 561.
[1017] Weiss, *Hebräer*, 755–56.
[1018] DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 511.
[1019] Easter, *Faith*, 119–20.

Isa 63:11	**Heb 13:20**
καὶ ἐμνήσθη ἡμερῶν αἰωνίων ὁ *ἀναβιβάσας* ἐκ τῆς γῆς <u>τὸν ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων</u> ποῦ ἐστιν ὁ θεὶς ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον	Ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης, ὁ *ἀναγαγὼν* ἐκ νεκρῶν <u>τὸν ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων</u> τὸν μέγαν ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου, τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν

OT metarepresentation: identification & evaluation (13:20b)

Zech 9:11

Would the audience infer a metarepresentation of Zech 9:11 from the phrase ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου, as a number of scholars do?[1020] It is likely since the phrase ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης occurs only in Heb 13:20b and Zech 9:11. This metarepresentation also connects with Isa 63:11, as it contains both exodus and shepherding imagery in its context. Furthermore, like Hebrews, Zech 9:11 looks back to the covenant inauguration ceremony of Exod 24:3–8 and the subsequent failure of the Israelites as a warning against violating the covenant obligations.[1021] Nevertheless, Zech 9:11 lacks the reference to an eternal covenant. Buchanan suggests that Hebrews takes the term "eternal" from Ezek 37:26 to modify the covenant from Zech 9:11.[1022] However, it would require significant processing effort for the audience to make this cognitive leap. More likely, if Hebrews' drew on this intertext, it simply modified Zech 9:11 by describing the covenant as eternal.

General reference

Nevertheless, Hebrews' use of the similar phrase τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης (9:20), combined with the numerous references in the LXX to an eternal covenant, suggest that less-informed audience members could understand this reference without

[1020] Weiss, *Hebräer*, 756–57; deSilva, *Perseverance*, 512; Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Jewish Christians*, 366–67.

[1021] Suk Yee Lee, *An Intertextual Analysis of Zechariah 9–10: The Earlier Restoration Expectations of Second Zechariah,* LHBOTS 509 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 127. Moffitt also notes that Tg. Zech 9:11 connects Zech 9:11's blood of the covenant with the exodus from Egypt ("Wilderness Identity," 215n27).

[1022] Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 239.

accessing an OT intertext.[1023] The use of "eternal covenant" in Jer 39:40LXX might be a relevant intertext given Hebrews' earlier emphasis on Jer 38:31–34LXX. Yet because the phrase repeatedly occurs throughout the LXX, the audience may simply process so ubiquitous a phrase in reference to God's covenant made with his people as being everlasting, as opposed to temporary. The audience may then draw the implicature that the new covenant in Jer 38LXX is also an eternal one, relating to the promises of God given to Abraham (6:13–18), which are also said to be eternal (Gen 17:7; 1 Chr 16:15–18; Ps 104:10; Sir 44:18).

Conclusion

In Heb 12:14–13:25, I have noted further wilderness references which demonstrate both continuity and discontinuity with the Pentateuchal wilderness generation. Like Israel in the wilderness, the audience is to avoid a root of bitterness sprouting up and impacting the community; they are reminded that, on the verge of entry into the Promised Land, God will never leave them nor forsake them; they are to exit the wilderness camp to follow Jesus. However, unlike the Israelites, they come to Zion, not Sinai; they look forward to God shaking the heavens and the earth in a new exodus; Jesus is a new Moses who leads them out of death.

[1023] Gen 9:16; 17:7, 13, 19; Exod 27:21; 31:16; Lev 24:8; Num 18:19; 25:13; 2 Sam 23:5; 1 Chr 16:17; Job 40:28; Ps 104:10; Isa 24:5; 55:3; 61:8; Jer 27:5; 39:40; Ezek 16:60; 37:26.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

Summary

In the context of ongoing study of Hebrews' use of the OT, this study set out to provide a relevance-theoretical account of the wilderness motif in Hebrews, with particular emphasis on Heb 12:1–17. In chapter 1, we considered the state of the question, identifying some gaps in scholarship. Chapter 2 proposed a methodology appropriate for rigorous study of Hebrews' use of the OT. Although it is common to apply an intertextual methodology to such study, we saw how this in itself does not supply sufficient theoretical underpinning for determining why audience members interpret the text the way they do and settle on a particular interpretation; for this, a more comprehensive theory of communication is required. RT fits the requirements, and I proposed combining it with Hays' conception of intertextuality, with a view to demonstrating how, together, they provide a control on the potential intertextual possibilities in a text while avoiding difficulties typically associated with the use of the OT in the NT.

In chapters 3–6, I investigated how Heb 1–10 constructs the audience's cognitive environment so that they come to understand themselves in an analogous situation to the Pentateuchal wilderness generation: they, too, are on a journey to the promised rest (3:7–4:11), drawing near to the tabernacle over which their high priest presides in the present. At the same time, however, their journey is not to be understood as a simple reiteration of the Pentateuchal narrative: the covenant which their high priest inaugurated and maintains, like the new covenant sacrifice, are better, while the rest that they are to enter into is Zion, not Canaan.

In chapter 7, I examined Heb 11:1–12:2, as the immediate context for 12:3–17, which I investigated in chapter 8. A strong scholarly consensus has argued that the audience would process Hebrews' language, in 12:1–2, against the background of Graeco-Roman athletics, appealing to ancient authors who used the athletic paradigm to exhort their audience to persevere. However, the language used by Hebrews is not ostensively athletic, and the context lacks athletic imagery. Whilst τρέχω and ἀγών can be construed in an athletic sense, in ancient texts they frequently denote a struggle in the face of death, with no athletic undercurrents. Therefore, dissenting from the consensus

view, and in line with the predominant imagery in the book, I argued that readers are to understand their struggle in light of their situation in the wilderness. Unlike Philo, who explicitly characterises this experience in athletic terms, Hebrews exhorts the audience not to run the race with endurance, but to continue undergoing their struggle through the wilderness. The reason for such endurance is the fact that Jesus succeeded where Joshua failed: as both ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής, Jesus has journeyed ahead of his people and reached the destination through suffering and death.

Chapter 8 applied our methodology in detail to three intertexts in Heb 12: Prov 3:11LXX, Isa 35:3LXX and Deut 29:18LXX and found that:

- Prov 3:11LXX: through connections between Deut 8 and Prov 3, Hebrews again situates the discipline of the audience in the wilderness where, like Israel, the disciplining of the audience evidences their sonship.
- Isa 35:3LXX: with this Isaianic background, readers would infer not that they are lame athletes, running towards the finish line, but the eschatological new exodus wilderness generation, on their journey towards Mt Zion.
- Deut 29:18LXX: with this metarepresentation, the audience is warned against succumbing to idolatry and leading others astray, with the story of Esau as the paradigmatic example of one who is undisciplined.

In chapter 9, I addressed the culmination of Hebrews' thought, where Zion is ostensively demonstrated to be the destination of their wilderness journey and where, unlike the Israelites, the audience reach not what may be touched (Sinai) but the true goal of the exodus, Mt. Zion. With God's promise never to leave or forsake them, they may leave the security of their wilderness camp and follow Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, whose resurrection anticipates their own.

Implications

Hebrews' use of scripture

Our study has demonstrated both that the Pentateuchal wilderness narrative undergirds Hebrews' thought, and that new exodus texts (Isa 35; Jer 38LXX; Hag 2) also play an important role: to depict the audience's situation, Hebrews combines both. Not only is Jesus high priest and wilderness leader, but he is also the Davidic king who sits on

the throne in Zion. In arriving at the precipice of Zion, the audience (unlike their Israelite forefathers) fulfil the goal that the exodus and conquest looked forward to, as they enter, not Canaan – since that was not the rest – but Zion, the dwelling place of God, surrounded by festal angels.

RT and metalepsis

Whilst, for Richard Hays, the wider context of a metarepresentation is always evoked through metalepsis,[1024] other scholars are less sure.[1025] RT contributes to this debate by offering a rationale for deciding how much context is necessary to understand a metarepresentation. Our study has concluded that, for relevance to be obtained, Hebrews' audience need not access wider context: for instance, when πάντα is added to the metarepresentation of Exod 25:40 in Heb 8:5, this makes manifest to the audience that the entire tabernacle account is being discussed and that they need not access the entirety of Exod 25–31 from memory. Hebrews' use of Isa 35:3 encourages the audience to strengthen their hands and knees on their journey towards Zion. Whilst the wider context of Isa 35 anticipates arrival at Zion, the audience do not need to access this content since Hebrews goes on to situate the audience at Zion (12:22). Or when Hebrews metarepresents Deut 31:6, 8 in 13:5, the audience can draw the implicature that God will never leave them or forsake them at the precipice of the Promised Land because Hebrews has situated them there, without accessing the wider context of Deut 31 which exhorts the Israelites on the verge of Canaan. Whilst the accessibility of wider context may garner some extra cognitive effects that have been discussed, they are not necessary to obtain optimal relevance.

Supersessionism

The charge of supersessionism has been levelled at Hebrews.[1026] Our analysis of the wilderness motif relativises the charge. Whilst the two journeys are different in

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[1024] Hays, *Echoes*, 20, 23, 155.

[1025] Christopher D. Stanley, "'Pearls Before Swine': Did Paul's Audiences Understand His Biblical Quotations?" *NovT* 41 (1999): 124–44; Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture: The Rhetoric of Quotations in the Letters of Paul* (London: T&T Clark, 2004).

[1026] See the essays in the section "The Problem of Hebrews' Supersessionism" in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology,* ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 151–228.

character – with the Israelites going to Canaan and the audience to Zion – there is still continuity: the audience is the seed of Abraham, and the wilderness generation are their fathers. Indeed, nothing in Hebrews' depiction of the faithful in Israel's history hints at them being superseded by the church, for the audience are on the same journey; the cloud of witnesses serve, not only as their example, but as a type of Christ, the pioneer and perfecter of faith: their faith is identical.[1027] Zion is not to be seen as replacing Canaan because, as I noted, in the OT and in Second Temple Jewish interpretation Zion was seen as the true goal of the exodus and conquest when the wilderness wanderings were complete. The new covenant people of God do not replace or supersede those in the OT but are part of the same story, sharing the same goal: arrival at Zion.

Further avenues for research

In light of this study, three potential avenues for fruitful research suggest themselves.

First, we have seen how the Pentateuchal narrative, from Exodus to Deuteronomy, underlies a large part of Hebrews' argument. However, Hebrews also makes a number of appeals to the life of Abraham – a life with a strong wilderness backdrop. So far, no full-length study devoted to Abraham in Hebrews exists: one object for investigation might be traditions that associate Abraham and Melchizedek with Zion (for instance, Josephus *A.J.* 1.179–180; 1QapGen 22.13), especially given the emphasis on Abraham, Melchizedek and Zion in Hebrews.

Second, in studies devoted to the use of OT intertexts, Hays' method has received significant attention but not, as yet, Relevance Theory – although it is gaining traction as a methodology. Our study shows how RT offers a rationale, and rigour, apt for reducing seemingly endless intertextual possibilities to plausible probabilities. It would be interesting to use RT in weighing the intertexts proposed by Hays himself in *Echoes*.

[1027] Markus Bockmuehl, "Abraham's Faith in Hebrews 11," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 382–91.

Third, our study has had cause to mention Zion as the ultimate goal of the exodus, Zion traditions in the OT and Second Temple Literature and also Zion's relationship to Eden. Since Hebrews underscores how the people of God await τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν (Heb 2:5), the relationship between Zion and Eden has potential pertinence and the logic of new creation, or a new creation motif, in Hebrews deserves further investigation.

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