

AN OVERVIEW OF THE EXTENT AND DIVERSITY OF METHODS UTILISED BY THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS WHEN USING THE OLD TESTAMENT

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Abstract

After a brief survey of methods of using the OT in general in the NT, the focus of this study moves particularly to methods that were applied in using Scripture by the *Auctor ad Hebraeos*. The unknown author made use of a diverse range of techniques when interacting with and presenting his OT material. This includes a catena of explicit quotations, expansions on existing quotations from the tradition, a hymnic reworking of quotations, his own added commentary (midrash) on quotations, paraphrases, references and allusions. Although a large number of passages were selected by this unknown author from the early Jewish (Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo) and early Christian (Paul) traditions, it is also clear that some of these found their way into his document due to the author's own contribution. There is good reason to believe that the quotations formed the backbone, or original structure for the author's argumentation in the book of Hebrews. They are clearly being presented in two sets of 7 pairs each. The first set consists almost exclusively of hymnic texts, whereas the second set alternates consistently between a quotation pair from the Torah and a Prophet, with a quotation pair from the Torah and a Psalm.

1. Introduction

The hermeneutics of early Christianity has remained a field of research that has fascinated scholars down the centuries. Especially the christological readings (cf. Steyn 1997) of the same corpus of literature that was used by early Judaism, its reception history (cf. Steyn 2004a; also 2000; 2002; 2003; 2004b) and the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of these quotations from initially exclusively Jewish Scriptures, have provided numerous studies and interesting results during previous investigations. Scholarship has tended to focus particularly, though not exclusively, on the mere presence of explicit

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quotations when engaging in research in this area. Studies in this direction tend to pay particular attention to the function, or reinterpretation, of such quotations within its current NT context. There are other areas, though, that also need much more investigation, such as determining the possible *Vorlagen* that were used by a particular NT author (the versions underlying those quotations; cf. Steyn 2004c; also 2000; 2002; 2003; 2004), as well as the author's hermeneutical methods and techniques in using his Scriptures.¹

It is the purpose of this brief study to focus on the latter in order to determine the extent, or range, and the variety of methods that were utilised by a single NT author when dealing with his Scriptures. This might hopefully assist in a clearer understanding of at least the author's educational and theological background. The unknown author of Hebrews and his paraenesis is chosen for this purpose. This book uses the OT perhaps the most extensively of all the NT books and contains the most quotations from the OT in any of the NT documents (cf. also Guthrie 2003). Furthermore, knowledge about the author is scarce and can only be reconstructed from clues provided in the author's use of the Greek language, the structure and theology of his work and, of course, his hermeneutics.

It is not necessary to identify all the possible different hermeneutical methods and techniques that were in use during NT times. These have been well described in existing literature (for instance by Earle Ellis 1979; 1991), Dietrich-Alex Koch (1986), and others). With reference to some of my own work over the last 20 years in this regard, one could refer to the existence of Jewish exegetical methods (such as the seven rules of Hillel, midrash and/or peshet, cf. Mahne 2008), typology (Steyn 2009), allegory, literal expositions, the use of explicit quotations (Steyn 1995; 2006) that are clearly defined by introductory formulae (see Laughton 2006), conflation and combinations of texts (Steyn 2001), references, allusions (Steyn 2007) and intertextual echoes (Steyn 1996; 1990), paraphrases (Steyn 2002), broader motifs (Steyn 1989), *mimesis* (Steyn 1996), genealogies (Steyn 1989) and historical lists, liturgical (Steyn 2006) and confessional formulas, and even the influence of terminology from the Septuagint on the text of the NT author (cf. Steyn 2009; 1988).

¹ A valuable contribution has been made in this regard with the extensive recent publication edited by Beale & Carson (2007).

2. The basic structure

If it is assumed that the quotations form the backbone of Hebrews and if the book is stripped from everything else so that only these quotations remain, then an interesting pattern unfolds.² There are 34 quotations in Hebrews that can be identified, almost all of which are introduced with a clearly defined introductory formula. Some of these quotations appear more than once (Pss 2:7; 95:5-7; 110:4 and Jer 31:33-34) so that it actually leaves us with 26 different quoted texts—including the paraphrase of Gen 14:17-20 in Heb 7:1-3. The quoted texts seem to appear in *combinations* consisting of a pair of two quoted texts around a particular theme or motif³—plus the combination of Ps 2:7 and Ps 110:4 (both repetitive quotations). Within the author's preference for ring compositions, the intention might have been to form an *inclusio* with the quotation from Ps 2:7 (cf. Steyn 2003) within the first section. Its combination with Ps 110:4 links then the first christological section (Jesus as King) with the second section (Jesus as High Priest).⁴

Quotations	Theme
Ps 2:7+2 Sam 7:14/1 Chr 17:13	<i>Relationship</i> : Father - Son
Deut 32:43+Ps 104:4	<i>Relationship</i> : Son - angels
Ps 45:7+Ps 102:26-28	<i>Eternal Kingship vs transitory</i> heaven & earth
Ps 110:1+Ps 8:5-7 + commentary	<i>Submission of all</i> : to the Son, to humanity
Ps 22(21):23+Isa 8:17,18+ commentary	<i>Relationship</i> : Jesus/believers (brothers, children)
Ps 95:7-11+commentary+Gen 2:2	<i>Rest</i> : Canaan then, "Today" now
Ps 2:7 + Ps 110:4 + commentary	<i>Christ's appointment</i> : King and Priest

² D. Moody Smith (1972, 59) made a similar observation: "Probably the key to Hebrews does not lie outside the book itself, but is to be found in an analysis of the author's use of the Scriptures in the context of his total work" Also G.H. Guthrie (1994, 45) states that "[t]he author of Hebrews especially uses methods of interpretation and argumentation found in the Rabbis. His use of the Old Testament has been one of the most neglected topics in discussions on the structure of the book".

³ G. Van den Brink (1993, 211) also observed this: "(het) valt ons op dat de schrijver meerdere keren twee of meer teksplaatsen aanhaalt om zijn uitspraak te bewijzen". He argues that the technique of using a combination of passages was probably developed on the basis of the principle of Deut 19:15 which points to the confirmation of an issue by two or three witnesses.

⁴ The classic division consists of three sections: Heb 1:1 – 4:13; 4:14 – 10:31; 10:32 – 12:13 / 13:25.

Gen 22:17 [Gen 14:17-20] ⁵ +Ps 110:4	<i>Promise</i> : Abraham and Melchizedek
Exod 25:40+Jer 31:31-34	<i>Covenant</i> : Tabernacle vs New covenant
Exod 24:8+Ps 40:7-9	<i>Sacrifices</i> : Blood then, Body now
Deut 32:35,36+[Isa 26+Hab 2:3-4]	<i>Judgment</i> : Punishment vs Righteousness
Gen 21:12 + Prov 3:11	<i>Testing faith</i> : Abraham, now children
[Deut 9:19 + Ps 18(17)] +Hag 2:6.21	<i>Shaking the earth</i> then, future also heaven
Deut 31:6 / Gen 28:15+Ps 118:6	<i>Festival tradition</i> : God's presence, support

Apart from the resemblance to the *pescharim* where combinations of texts were presented under a particular theme, also the issue of authority might have played a role here. As two witnesses testify to a case, the quoted texts in pairs would certainly provide authoritative support to each of the 14 topics as addressed by the author. Those quoted texts from the *first set* are almost exclusively from the Psalms, with the exception of the following: 2 Sam 7:14; Deut 32:43; Isa 8:17-18 and Gen 2:2. However, except for the latter, these quotations also belong to a hymnic tradition so that all those from the first section seem to have been taken from a hymnic context, pointing to possible liturgical undertones.

The quoted texts from the *latter set* follow a pattern of combinations where the quotation pairs are alternated: Torah+Psalm; Torah+Prophet; Torah+Psalm; Torah+Prophet; Torah+Prov; Torah+Prophet; Torah+Psalm. The book ends with a quotation from Ps 118—a well-known liturgical text used during the Jewish feasts. It is not impossible, but highly unlikely that the author used an existing “testimony book” for these quotations. More likely are the liturgical connections that were made by Simon Kistemaker⁶ and Markus Barth.⁷ Known existing liturgies from Jewish groups that have withdrawn from society, such as the Sabbath liturgy (Angel Liturgy,⁸ or Sabbath Sacrifices) with its thirteen Sabbaths,⁹ discovered amongst the Dead

⁵ Gen 14:17-20 should rather be taken as a paraphrase than seen as an explicit quotation. See Steyn (2002).

⁶ “Believers in the first century had access to the Scriptures when they attended the worship services. There they memorized passages from the OT, especially those from the Psalter, Proverbs, and Prophets” (Kistemaker 1984, 373).

⁷ Cf. M. Barth (1962, 73) who proposes the possibility of “...a liturgy, an order of worship, or a collection of hymns used before (or still in) the author’s time”. He believes that this might be standing behind the collection of texts presented in Hebrews 1-3. This is interesting but difficult to prove and remains speculative.

⁸ For a possible implied correction of an askewed Christology, cf. Steyn (2003, 1107-1128).

⁹ See also Steyn (2009).

Sea Scrolls, come here to mind. The similarities between these pairs of quoted texts with their connected themes, and the themes found in the Sabbath, might point in the direction of a similar group¹⁰ that could have shared a similar *theology* (such as their view on angels, the temple, Sabbath, covenant, etc), as well as similar *hermeneutics* and techniques of re-interpretation of Scripture (such as *pesharim*, etc).

3. Techniques and methods in using the OT by the author of Hebrews

A number of the hermeneutical methods employed by the author of Hebrews will now be explored. This is not an exhaustive list, but a representative one. Ten such techniques and methods are presented with examples. These include a catena of quotations, expansions on existing quotations from the early tradition, commentaries (*midrashim*), hymnic reworkings, paraphrases, references, allusions, a compendium of OT history, the use of OT motifs and the exemplar of Melchizedek.

3.1 *A catena of explicit quotations: Heb 1:5-13*

Heb 1:5-14 follows a comprehensive exposition of reasons why the Son is different to the angels and those reasons are substantiated by seven explicit quotations from the Scriptures, that are presented as direct speech by God himself. Five of these are from the Psalms, one from 2 Samuel and one from the Song of Moses (Deut 32 / Ode 2). The last quotation in the catena connects with the next quotation from Psalm 8 in Hebrews 2. Structurally it looks as follows:

Ps 2:7 2 Sam 7:14 / 1 Chr 17:13	Unique Father-Son relationship
Deut 32:43 / Ode 2:43 Ps 104(103):4	Inferior position of the angels
Ps 45(44):7 Ps 102(101):26-28	Eternal reign of the Son: “ <i>God</i> ”
Ps 110(109):1 Ps 8:5-7	Exaltation of the Son to the right hand

¹⁰ Such as the *Therapeutae* of whom Philo wrote in *De vita contemplativa*.

The argument itself runs as follows:

God called him his Son, and himself his Father	Heb 1:5a	Ps 2:7
God called himself his Father and him his Son	Heb 1:5b	2 Sam 7:14
When God brought this firstborn into the world, he said that all the angels must worship him	Heb 1:6	Deut 32:43 / Ode 2
God said that he makes his angels storm winds and his servants flames of fire	Heb 1:7	Ps 104:4
However, he said of the Son that his throne—"O God"—stands forever. Because he is just and stands for justice, God anointed him as king.	Heb 1:8-9	Ps 45:6-7
God acknowledges that this "Lord" made heaven and earth, eventually to pass away but he is eternal with "no end to his years"	Heb 1:10-12	Ps 102:25-27
God did not say of any angel that he should sit at God's right hand and that he will submit his enemies to him.	Heb 1:13	Ps 110:1

Seven underlying (mainly christological) "titles" are used in the quotations. The list coincides with that in Justin. However, only six of these titles are applied to Christ. The remaining one, "angel", is not applied to Christ. Using the same list as above, but applied to these underlying titles, the following surfaces:

<i>Quotation</i>	<i>Qualities in Hebr</i>	<i>Christological title</i>
Ps 2:7	Son - Father generates	υἱός
2 Sam 7:14	Father - Son	
Deut 32 / Ode 2	Angels must worship	ἄγγελος
Ps 104:4	Angels = winds, flames	
Ps 45:6-7	Eternal throne	βασιλεύς
Ps 45:6-7	Justice/righteousness	ἱερεύς
Ps 102:25-27	Creator: heaven, earth	λόγος
Ps 102:25-27	Eternal existence	
Ps 110:1	Exaltation & rule, submission of enemies	θεός κύριος

It is clear that the unknown author of Hebrews employs the seven quotations in Heb 1 to support his argument that the Son of God is different than the other "sons of God", i.e. the angels. Each of the quotations highlights an aspect or quality of the Son's status—closely connected with

the “titles” that are ascribed to him. There is evidence that Pss 2, 45 and 104 (also 2 Sam 7:14) were already quoted in early Judaism as attested by the Dead Sea Scrolls—however, from a different section. The same quotations from Ps 2 and Ps 110 were also in use prior to Hebrews in the Pauline and Lukan literature, as well as another section from Ps 104 (and Ode 2). As there are no clear traces of a so-called “testimony book”, it can be assumed that our author knew these passages via the tradition. He skillfully re-studied them and re-used them, probably adding Ps 102 from his own repertoire.¹¹

How do we explain such combinations of texts?

Certain combinations of texts existed prior to Hebrews, e.g. Ps 110:1+Ps 8:7 (1 Cor 15). These occur again in Hebrews and in 1 Clem 36:4-5. (What does this mean when it is kept in mind that both Clement¹² and Paul wrote to the Corinthians—and when this matter is compared with the theory of Apollos as a possible writer of Hebrews?) Similar is the proximity of Psalm 118 and Proverbs 3 in Hebrews and 1 Clem 56:3-4. Were these combinations known under a *Stichwort* or a particular theme in the Palestinian-Hellenistic tradition? (Bonservin 1943; O. Michel 1960; see also Grässer 1964, 207). Is there any evidence of pre-existing combinations with other quotations? Formerly posed theses include the existence of an early Christian “testimony book” (Harris 1916; 1920) or the liturgy of the early church (Barth 1962, 53-78). Hengel (1980, 9), for instance, found an underlying christological template that corresponds with the early christological hymns. It remains, however, a controversial issue, as we are aware of the existence of such florilegia, but those that are of an early Christian nature post-date the NT. Early combinations probably rather point to the beginning of such lists in the oral tradition.

3.2 Expansions on existing quotations from the tradition: The example of Ps 8:5-7 in Heb 2:5b-8

There are no *explicit quotations* from Ps 8:5-7 to be found in the early Jewish literature. However, *allusions* to Ps 8:5 and 8:7 occur in 1QS 3:17-18 and 11:20 (cf. McLean 1992, 67). Turning to early Christianity, it is clear

¹¹ Very interesting is the similarity with “Seven Psalms to God ascribed to the Chief Princes” in the Angel Liturgy. Cf. P. Alexander (2006, 28).

¹² 1 Clement (ca. 95 C.E.) quotes from Romans, 1 Corinthians and Hebrews.

that Ps 8 was known and used by the early Christians.¹³ It was known to the early Christian tradition and a possible conflation is suggested in Mark 12:36 between Ps 8:7 and Ps 110(109):1 (cf. Luz 1968, 344-5; Breytenbach 1997, 212-3). It is also quoted by Paul in 1 Cor 15:27 and by the author of 1 Eph 1:22 (Ps 8:7), as well as in Matt 21:16 (Ps 8:3). In the case of 1 Corinthians and Ephesians, Silva reckons that the quotation is not exact, “but what discrepancies there are have no implications, either for the transmission of the OG (i.e. Old Greek, *GJS*) text or for our understanding of Paul’s hermeneutics. The difference may simply be the result of adjusting the syntax to the context, such as changing the verb from second person to third”—and he then lists this quotation from Ps 8:7 in 1 Cor 15:27 (Silva 2001:280). It is specifically quoted in an *eschatological* manner so Koch (1992, 164) with a Christological application or interpretation in both instances (cf. Schröger 1968, 82; also Hawthorne 1993, 12). Both are also preceded and combined with Ps 110(109):1, and both are followed by a short exegetical commentary. After the failure of the first Adam, all things are subjected to the second Adam “who triumphs through obedience, and fulfils the destiny of race” (Van den Brink 1993, 212). Schaper and Cox (Cox 2001, 296) are sceptical about such a possible eschatological interpretation. Schaper says that the word ἄνθρωπος “was used in Num. 24.7, 17 to refer to a messianic saviour figure. Of course, that ἄνθρωπος was so used in the Pentateuch does not mean that it was employed in that same sense in 8.5...”

The quotation from Ps 8 in Hebrews serves then as an example of how the author builds on an existing early Christian tradition in the sense that (a) the passage is used again by the author, (b) is again linked with Ps 110(109):1, and (c) is again briefly commented upon. Koch pointed out that it is less likely that both Paul and the author of Hebrews independently found the quotation from Ps 8:7. (The same also applies to Hab 2:4). Neither can literary dependency on Paul by Hebrews be proved (so also Kistemaker 1961, 29), nor pre-Pauline Christian usage of both quotations, according to Koch.¹⁴ It was usually assumed in the past that Ps 8:7 had already acquired a traditional christological interpretation. However, Koch (1992, 244-5) quite rightly argues that one should rather assume that Ps 8:7 (and Hab 2:4) found

¹³ A papyrus-fragment was found (Papyrus Wien Nr. 180) containing Ps 8:2 as a writing exercise of a pupil, probably from the Christian era. It indicates how the Psalter took over the same function as Homer had in the past for such exercises (Siegert 2001, 97).

¹⁴ Against C.H. Dodd who reckoned that Paul and the author of Hebrews followed a common tradition (*According to the Scriptures* [New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1953], 33). Also S. Kistemaker, *Psalm Citations*, 29.

an established place *through Paul* in the Christian tradition, and that the author of Hebrews took this up and reworked it independently. This is supported by the fact that Hebrews quotes every time a larger section than Paul.

Ps 8 is a song which probably was compiled from two tradition elements, the first is found in verses 2-3, the second in verses 4-9 (Kaiser 1994, 207; Beyerlin 1976). This would mean that the quotation from Ps 8:3 in Matt 21:16 comes from the first element whilst the other NT writers (Paul and the authors of Ephesians and Hebrews) refer to, or quoted from, the second tradition element of Psalm 8. The author of Hebrews quotes almost the whole of the second element, i.e. verses 5-7. Schematically, the situation could be presented as follows:

Ps 8:3	Ps 8:5	Ps 8:6	Ps 8:7
			+ Ps 110(109):1 = 1 Cor 15:27
			[+ Ps 110(109):1] = Mark 12:36
			+ Ps 110(109):1 (allusion) = Eph 1:22
Mt 21:16			
	Heb 2:6	Heb 2:7	Heb 2:8

There is a possibility that it was Paul who established the place of Ps 8 in the early Christian tradition. The author of Hebrews got it somehow from this early Christian tradition. The readings of the quotation from Ps 8:7b in 1 Cor 15:27 and Eph 1:22 correspond with each other. Both have the same reading and no textual variations amongst the witnesses are to be found in either of these readings. They have the same differences in comparison with that of the LXX. Both only quote Ps 8:7b, starting and ending at the same place. Hebrews, however, shows three major differences: (i) He starts the quotation much earlier (Ps 8:5), but also ends with the quotation at the same place. This longer version is probably an indication that he independently reworked Ps 8:7 from the early Christian (Pauline?) tradition from which he received it (Koch 1992, 245). (ii) The reading of the section from Ps 8:7b in Heb 2:8 corresponds closely with the reading of the LXX (ὑπέταξας; ὑποκάτω + gen. pl.), against the readings of 1 Cor 15:27 and Eph 1:22 (ὑπέταξεν; ὑπό + acc. pl.). It should be noted, however, that although there might have been pre-Pauline text readings with ὑπό, it is more likely that Paul changed it as it "...fügt sich glatt in den paulinischen Sprachgebrauch ein" (Koch 1992, 140) and that the choice of ὑπέταξεν instead of ὑπέταξας

could similarly be explained on stylistic grounds.¹⁵ (iii) It lacks the section from Ps 8:7a LXX, which is also present in the Hebrew (Ps 8:6a MT). The latter, though, should be considered carefully in the light of the text critical evidence.

The author of Hebrews thus reworked and interpreted the quotation that he found from his tradition in order to fit within its newly given context. He (i) starts earlier with the quotation, (ii) omits a phrase from the known LXX readings and (iii) presents a short commentary (Heb 2:9ff). The author masterly interpreted the quotation both anthropologically (according to its LXX context), as well as christologically (according to its early christian context) (Karrer 2002, 169).

3.3 Commentaries on the quotations: The example from Ps 8:5-7 in Heb 2:5-9

There was great excitement amongst scholars when a little papyrus fragment of Hebrews (P^Vindob. G 42417) was discovered not long ago amongst the papyri of Vienna's National Library. It contains the text of Heb 2:9-11 (*recto*) and Heb 3:3-6 (*verso*). It was initially thought that the fragment dated from the 1st cent. C.E., particularly because of the elegant handwriting. Scholars agree in general, however, that it should rather be dated in the 6th or 7th century due to the forming of letters such as the Greek E and the M.¹⁶ The *recto* part is of importance here as it contains the text of the commentary to Ps 8 in Heb 2:9ff.

The style of using Scripture here in Heb 2:5-9 reminds of that in the Dead Sea Scrolls, especially passages such as 1QpHab 12:6-10 and CD 4:13ff (Gärtner 1954, 12; Braun 1966, 245). It is structured as follows: introductory formula + quotation + a fairly extensive commentary, which contains words and phrases from the quoted text that are being explained within the commentary.

The author of Hebrew's commentary on Ps 8 follows the reversed sequence of the last phrases in the text of the quotation. He first comments

¹⁵ "...eine Abänderung der direkten Anredeform des Psalmtextes (war) erforderlich, da Paulus die Zitate jeweils ohne Einleitungswendung anführt und sie so übergangslos in seine eigene Darstellung einbezieht" (Koch 1992, 111).

¹⁶ For the text, cf. <http://www.onb.ac.at/sammlungen/papyrus/aktuell/news1.htm>. For the reconstruction and publication see Papatomas (2000, 18-24). See also <http://www.mcjonline.com/news/00/20000112a.htm>. The later date was confirmed during a meeting with Prof. Dr. Barbara Aland of the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung, Münster, during March 2003.

on the last line (v. 8), then, moving backwards in the thought pattern of the quotation, comments in v. 9 on the previous lines, i.e. those mentioned in v. 7:

Quotation

A	v.7 βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους δόξη καὶ τιμῆ ἐστεφάνωσας	}
B	v.8a πάντα ὑπέταξας	
Commentary		
B	v.8b ὑποτάξαι . . . τὰ πάντα . . . τὰ πάντα ὑποτεταγμένα	}
A	v.9 βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους δόξη καὶ τιμῆ ἐστεφανωμένον	

The thought patterns in the exposition of the commentary stand thus in a chiasmic relationship with those of the quotation itself. (A similar situation can be seen also in the commentary of Ps 95:7-11 in Heb 3-4). The text of the commentary is a reflection, a reversed image as if in a mirror, of the text of the quotation itself.

It is important that this is one of the places in Hebrews where the author presents an exegesis of the passage that he quotes—such as the exegesis on the “son of man” from Ps 8:5 which is presented in Heb 2:5-9. Gräßer (1992, 155-65) discussed this case before. It is only in 2:9 where the link is made that it is actually Jesus who is meant by the ἄνθρωπος of the quotation. Heb 2:14b is, in turn, an exegesis of Heb 2:9b.10b (cf. Gräßer 1992, 192).

3.4 Hymnic reworkings: The example of Isa 26:20 + Hab 2:3b-4 in Heb 10:37-38

The quotation in Heb 10:37-38 actually consists of a conflation between two quoted texts (Isa 26:20 + Hab 2:3b-4) and is neither in exact agreement with the Hebrew readings, nor with the Greek readings of Hab 2:3b-4. The reading in Hebrews is, nonetheless, closer to the LXX reading than to that of the MT. This leaves the question about how these differences in the text of Heb 10:37-38 should be explained. Is this the result of another *Textvorlage* that was followed by the author? Were these changes available to him via a liturgical tradition or some kind of “promise list” in an oral tradition? Or, were these changes due to the hand of this early Christian writer himself?

The quoted phrases from Deut 32:35, 36 in Heb 10:30 actually belong to the *Ode of Moses* (Ode 2 LXX-A)—as was the case in Heb 1:6 with the quotation that is ascribed to Deut 32:43. What is striking now in Heb 10:37-38, a few verses further from 10:30, is that the first line of the conflated

second quotation (a phrase from Isa 26:20) also belongs to an Ode, namely the *Ode of Isaiah* (Ode 5 LXX-A). These cases recall the hymnic nature in Heb 7:1-3 of the paraphrase from Gen 14:17-20 with parallels in Philo and Josephus. It also recalls the possible hymnic nature of the passages in their midrashic sections on Jer 31(38) in Heb 10:16-17 and that on Ps 40(39) in Heb 10:8-9. These occurrences from the Odes of Moses and Isaiah in Heb 10, are certainly striking against the backdrop of those other cases where such hymnic tendencies were noticed. Furthermore, the fact that Ode 4 (LXX-A) is an *Ode of Habakkuk* (Hab 3, though), surely raises suspicion about the hymnic nature and possible liturgical origins of several passages that are utilised by the author of Hebrews, particularly here in Heb 10, i.e. those from Jer 31(38); Ps 40(39); Deut 32; Isa 26 (and Hab 2?). It highlights at least the hymnic nature of the texts utilised here in Heb 10, and calls for caution in our approach to the latter part of the second quotation, i.e. that from Hab 2:3b-4.

If we accept that $\mu\omicron\nu$ should be omitted in its first occurrence in Heb 10:38, based on text critical evidence (especially the reading of ρ^{13}),¹⁷ then again a similar pattern unfolds in the presentation of the quotation as can be found in Heb 8:8-10. A parallelistic structure is created by (i) the transposition of line d between lines a and b, (ii) changing the aorist subjunctive to a future indicative—resulting in the omission of $\mu\eta$ in line a and the diphthong $-\epsilon\iota$ instead of the long $-\eta$, and (iii) by replacing $\delta\tau\iota$ with the definite article $\acute{\omicron}$ at the beginning of the Habakkuk quotation. Both lines in Hebrews (a and d) now have an astonishing 12-syllable structure and striking assonance:

$\acute{\omicron}$...-ος ... ἦξ- ...-ει
 $\acute{\omicron}$...-ος ... ἔκ ...-αι

This rearrangement, plus the addition of the Isaianic phrase just before it, creates a hymnic format in which the quotation is presented.

Hab 2:3b-4 LXX	Heb 10:37-38
διότι ἔτι ὄρασις εἰς καιρὸν καὶ ἀνατελεῖ εἰς πέρας καὶ οὐκ εἰς κενόν, ἐὰν ὑστερήσῃ, ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν, a. <u>ὅτι</u> ἐρχόμενος ἦξει καὶ οὐ <u>μὴ</u> χρονίσει.	ἔτι γὰρ μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον, a. <u>ὁ</u> ἐρχόμενος ἦξει καὶ οὐ <u>χρονίσει</u> .

¹⁷ In Heb 10:38 $\mu\omicron\nu$ omitted is by ρ^{13} D² H^c I Ψ 1881 \mathfrak{H} b t z vg^{mss} bo. It is retained, though, but transposed after $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ πίστεως by D^{*} pc μ sy.

<p>b. εὐδοκίαν ὑποστεύεται, c. οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ, d. ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται.</p>	<p>d. ὁ δὲ δίκαιος <u>μου</u> ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται, b. <u>καὶ</u> εὐδοκίαν ὑποστεύεται, c. οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ.</p>
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3.5 Paraphrases: The example from Gen 14:17-20 in Heb 7:1-4

The account of Melchizedek's blessing (Gen 14:18-20) "was probably an independent tradition inserted into an ancient heroic saga about Abraham" (Attridge 1989, 187).¹⁸ An interesting thesis in this regard was proposed by Astour who reckoned that Genesis 14 was dependent on an old *Vorlage* of the Kedorlaomer texts (Spartoli texts) from the second century, which represents an older text from the sixth or seventh century B.C.E. The writer of Gen 14 belongs then to the deuteronomic school of the sixth century.¹⁹

The author of Hebrews' exposition in Heb 7 on Melchizedek—which is in fact then an interpretation of, or midrash on, Ps 110:4—seems to follow the reading of Gen 14:17-20 when a number of phrases are quoted from that passage. These phrases belong to a group of quotations in the NT that show a close resemblance to the OT (Archer and Chirichigno 1983, xxxii), even though the phrases are not quoted verbatim in the same order. There are also some striking differences in reading and in interpretation. Especially interesting is the sequence in which the phrases are quoted. The middle set of phrases (Section B, Gen 14:18) is quoted first, then follows the first set (Section A, Gen 14:17), and then the last set (Section C, Gen 14:19-20). It can be illustrated as follows:

¹⁸ Cf. Westermann (1981, 222), "Die Mehrzahl sieht V.18-20 als eine nachträgliche Einfügung an". "Die Heldenerzählung bildet dann den Grundstock der Tradition, in sie wurde die Melchisedek-Szene eingefügt".

¹⁹ Cf. Westermann (*Ibid.*) "Viele nehmen an, daß dem Einschub eine eigene Tradition zugrunde liegt".

	Gen 14:17-20	Heb 7:1-2
<i>Section B</i> Gen 14:18	Μελχισέδεκ βασιλεὺς Σαλήμ ἱερεὺς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου	1 Μελχισέδεκ, βασιλεὺς Σαλήμ, ἱερεὺς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου
<i>Section A</i> Gen 14:17	συνάντησιν αὐτῷ ἀναστρέψαι ἀπὸ τῆς κοπῆς τῶν βασιλέων	ὁ συναντήσας Ἀβραάμ ὑποστρέφοντι ἀπὸ τῆς κοπῆς τῶν βασιλέων
<i>Section C</i> Gen 14:19-20	καὶ ἠλόγησεν τὸν Ἀβράμ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ δεκάτην ἀπὸ πάντων.	καὶ εὐλόγησας αὐτόν ²⁰ 2 ὅκαι δεκάτην ἀπὸ πάντων ἐμέρισεν Ἀβραάμ. ²¹

The reading of *Section B* corresponds with the readings of the MT and LXX. It starts in Gen 14:18 with the person, Μελχισέδεκ βασιλεὺς Σαλήμ—the latter term which is to be identified with Jerusalem.²² He skips ἐξήνεγκεν ἄρτους καὶ οἶνον, ἦν δέ and carries on with ἱερεὺς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου—and hence not indicated in the table above. The two most important elements for the argument about, and interpretation regarding Melchizedek, are listed first: he is both *king* and *priest*. This combination of functions is important when linking Melchizedek to Jesus. Kings were known to take on priestly functions as well. The opposite also happened, but was scarce. It was found particularly in the Maccabean period with Jonathan (1 Macc 9:30 and 10:20) and with Simon (1 Macc 14:41: ἡγούμενος καὶ ἀρχιερεὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα).²³

Then follows *Section A*, taken from Gen 14:17, starting with the participle form ὁ συναντήσας (for εἰς συνάντησιν of the LXX). There is an important difference in interpretation here. The author of Hebrews applies it to *Melchizedek* and not to the *king of Sodom* as in Gen 14:17 (Strobel 1975, 147). (It would seem that both met with Abraham according to the context of Gen 14:17-24). The LXX personal pronoun αὐτῷ is exchanged for the proper noun Ἀβραάμ and the LXX prepositional phrase μετὰ τὸ ἀναστρέψαι for the participle ὑποστρέφοντι—which also differs with the MT. Then, leaving LXX αὐτόν, continuing with ἀπὸ τῆς κοπῆς (*harax*

²⁰ + καὶ Ἀβραάμ εὐλογηθεὶς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ: D* E* 330 440 823 d e. “This may have been inserted to clear up any confusion in the text about who gave and who received the blessing. This was a subject of some dispute in Jewish circles, possibly exacerbated by Christian appropriation of Melchizedek” (Cadwallader 1992, 266). This addition to the text is not reflected in NA27.

²¹ Om. Ἀβραάμ: D E d e (Cadwallader 1992, 266). Not listed in NA27.

²² Cf. Ps 76:3; *GenApocr* 22:13 (Paul 1993, 181-188).

²³ Traces may also be found in *Test XII* (cf. *Test L*. 5:1-7; 8:1-19; 17:1-11; 18:1-14; *TestJud* 24:1-6). Apocalyptic expected the renewal of the priesthood and a future priestly monarchy, the overcoming of sin and the opening of Paradise (Michel 1964, 568).

legomenon), leaving LXX τοῦ Χοδολλογομορ καί, and including τῶν βασιλέων.

Section C picks up where *Section A* ended (Gen 14:19). It again changes the finite verb of the LXX (ἠϋλόγησεν) for a participle (εὐλογήσας) and does the reverse of *Section A*, by now replacing the LXX proper noun τὸν Ἀβράμ for the personal pronoun αὐτόν. It jumps over the rest of the passage, replaces αὐτῷ with the relative pronoun ᾧ and ends with καὶ δεκάτην ἀπὸ πάντων. The LXX verb ἔδωκεν is replaced with the phrase ἐμέρισεν Ἀβραάμ here, but found again later in Heb 7:4.²⁴

Apart from the fact that the Gen 14 passage is presented as a paraphrase (“free quotation”), we note some definite changes between Heb 7:1-2 and the LXX as possible *Vorlage*:

- The structure in which the phrases are quoted follows a pattern of B-A-C. Within the free quotation, the phrases are not presented at random or loosely, but the phrases of the different sections still remain together. Did he find Gen 14:18 somewhere else (e.g. in Philo?) and then went back to his Genesis-text, adding that section in his quotation before Gen 14:17?
- Συναντήσας is applied to Melchizedek in Hebrews and not to the king of Sodom as in the LXX (and MT).
- The Hebrews passage uses the spelling, Ἀβραάμ, which is the spelling throughout the writings of the NT and the Apostolic Fathers, whereas the LXX passage uses the spelling Ἀβραάμ, (correct transliteration of the Hebrew)²⁵ which in turn is not found in the NT and the Apostolic Fathers (Kistemaker 1961, 39).
- He uses in Heb 7:2 the rendering “*divided*” (ἐμέρισεν), instead of the LXX form “*gave*” (ἔδωκεν). In 7:4, though, he gives the reading which had been expected in 7:2 (Kistemaker 1961, 74).
- The μετὰ τὸ ἀναστρέψαι of the LXX became ὑποστρέφοντι in Heb 7:1.
- The noun (συνάντησιν) and the LXX verbs (ἀναστρέψαι and ἠϋλόγησεν) have all been changed to participle forms (συναντήσας, ὑποστρέφοντι, εὐλογήσας).²⁶

²⁴ Some witnesses interchanged the two words, and read ἔδωκεν Ἀβραάμ: A D Ψ 69 255 442 462 1245 1611 sy^h (Cadwallader 1992, 267). Not listed in NA27.

²⁵ Ἀβράμ features between Gen 11-17 and Ἀβραάμ between Gen 17-50. (Cf. Hatch & Redpath, s.v. 1975).

²⁶ So also Weiss, “Kennzeichnend ist vor allem, daß die Verba finita der Vorlage von Gen 14 vom Autor in Partizipien (συναντήσας, εὐλογήσας) umgesetzt werden” (1991, 374, 380).

3.6 References: The example from Deut 17:6 in Heb 10:28

A closer look at the identified “quotations” from Deuteronomy in Hebrews, as listed by scholars before, reveal that there are actually only three explicit quotations (Heb 1:6 being excluded and attributed to 4QDeut or Ode 2). At least six of the instances usually identified to be quotations, should rather be counted as allusions and references.²⁷ Four of these instances overlap, or come from close proximity, from passages already referred to in Romans. (The issues of Hebrews’ possible familiarity with the books of Paul and the connection between Paul’s letter to the Romans (Rome) and Hebrews’ addressees (also possibly Rome) are not being discussed here).

One case that can be identified as a reference, rather than as an explicit quotation, is that from Deut 17:6 in Heb 10:28. There is no introductory formula or intention of an explicit quotation here.²⁸ This is a conscious reference by the author of Hebrews to the theme or issue in the “law of Moses” (νόμον Μωυσέως). Ellingworth calls this an “abbreviated quotation” (Ellingworth 2000, 537). There are two other similar passages from which the reference might have originated (i.e. Deut 19:15 and Num 35:20), but Deut 17:6 is closest in wording to Hebrews (Ellingworth 2000, 537). Compare the following readings:

Deut 17:6 LXX	Heb 10:28
ἐπὶ δυσὶν μάρτυσιν ἢ ἐπὶ τρισὶν μάρτυσιν ἀποθάνεται ὁ ἀποθνήσκων	ἐπὶ δυσὶν ἢ τρισὶν μάρτυσιν ἀποθνήσκει

3.7 Allusions: The example from Num 12:7 in Heb 3:5 (Philo Leg. 3,33, 72, 81; 1 Clem 17:5; 43:1 and Just Dial. 56:1)

The issue regarding Moses being called faithful with all his house, was a repetitive theme in Philo and in early Christianity. It is presented rather as allusions, than as an intended carefully quoted explicit citation. It is thus not really possible to compare the readings in order to see which of these correspond closer with each other. It is, nonetheless, clear that most of the basic elements in Num 12:7 are to be found back in the passages below.

²⁷ An *allusion* is understood here to be an implicit and not a conscious reference, whereas a *reference* is taken as an explicit and conscious reference to the passage referred to.

²⁸ Also Archer & Chirichigno (1983) do not list this as a quotation.

Num 12:7 Οὐχ οὕτως ὁ (a) θεράπων μου (b) Μωϋσῆς· (c) ἐν ὄλῳ τῶ οἴκῳ μου (d) πιστός ἐστιν·	<i>Leg.</i> 3,33 (b) Μωσεί δὲ ἔστις (d) πιστός (c) ἐν ὄλῳ τῶ οἴκῳ,	<i>Leg.</i> 3,72 (b) Μωϋσῆς λέγεται (d) πιστός (c) ἐν παντί τῶ οἴκῳ γεγενῆσθαι	<i>Leg.</i> 3,81 (b) Μωϋσῆς ἄρχει μαρτυρούμενος, ὅτι ἐστὶ (d) πιστός (c) ὄλῳ τῶ οἴκῳ
Heb 3:5 (b) Μωϋσῆς μὲν (d) πιστός (c) ἐν ὄλῳ τῶ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ ὡς (a) θεράπων	1 Clem 17:5 (b) Μωϋσῆς (d) πιστός (c) ἐν ὄλῳ τῶ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ ἐκλήθη	1 Clem 43:1 Ὅπου καὶ ὁ μακάριος (d) πιστός (a) θεράπων (c) ἐν ὄλῳ τῶ οἴκῳ (b) Μωϋσῆς	<i>Just Dial.</i> 56:1 (b) Μωϋσῆς οὖν, ὁ μακάριος καὶ (d) πιστός (a) θεράπων θεοῦ

It is not the intention of this paper to present here an extensive discussion, but note the order of the elements above as marked (a), (b), (c) and (d) in the tables. All three occurrences in Philo follow the order b-d-c. Hebrews follows the same order b-d-c [-a] and so does *1 Clem.* 17 (although *1 Clem.* 43 has d-a-c-b). Justin has b-d-a, which is similar to Hebrews, except for omitting element c. There seems thus to be a closer order amongst Philo, Hebrews and 1 Clement than with that of the LXX. Note, on the other hand, the fact that the early Christian literature included the term θεράπων from Num 12:7, a term that does not appear in Philo. Furthermore, Codex Alexandrinus inserts ὡς between οὕτως and ὁ θεράπων in Num 12:7—which, in turn, brings the reading the closest to that of Heb 3:5.

3.8 Compendium of OT history: The example of Heb 11

Instead of simply presenting a clinical exposition in Heb 11 about what faith is, the author of Hebrews rather uses a list of OT examples to illustrate the point. He describes its persevering qualities and its continuing actions without perceiving immediate results. Each of the exemplary faith characters is introduced with πίστει. The matters for which these characters are remembered are thus directly connected with the fact that they believed. What they have done or achieved is thus the direct result of their faith according to Hebrews.

Heb 11:4-7 = In three great leaps the author deals with the periods of *Abel, Enoch and Noah*. The tenor of the three examples is a dedicated life to God. Sincerity, devoutness and obedience as desired by God, distinguish these persons from their contemporaries. The author includes his own theological commentary between the references to Enoch and Noah: “And without faith, it is impossible to please God” (11:6).

Heb 11:8-16 = In Heb 11:8-12 the story of the patriarch *Abraham* and his wife Sarah is presented. The author gives his own theological commentary on this in 11:13-16. These examples present blind faith, because “he did not know where he was going” (11:8) and they died “without receiving the things promised” (11:13).

Heb 11:17-22 = In Heb 11:17-21 the *patriarchs* (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) are listed with Joseph (11:22). The tenor here is that God’s promises for the future have to be trusted.

Heb 11:23-31 = Here follows the *period of Moses’* parents, himself, the Israelites and their exodus from Egypt up to their investigation of the promised land. Very interesting is the inclusion here of the name Rahab, the prostitute, who helped the spies and whose life is finally saved during the entry of the Israelites. The tenor of this phase in the history of Israel is that the faith heroes had another view on life. Moses’ parents “were not afraid” (11:23). Moses himself “regarded disgrace” and “persevered because he saw him who is invisible” (11:26-27). The Israelites moved through the Red Sea as if over dry land and Rahab received the spies in a friendly manner.

Heb 11:32-38 = The author now refers in broad lines to the periods of the *Judges* (Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephtah), the *kings* (David and Samuel/Solomon) and the *prophets* (without anyone here being singled out by name). In even broader lines he now moves on in history without listing any names, but only events. If the readers knew the history of the Jewish people, then they would have had a good idea what he was referring to. The scene moves smoothly further to the recent history when he refers to “others” and their martyrdom, jeers and flogging (11:35-38). The golden thread of believers who persevered in their faith thus runs through history. They are presented by the author as examples who continued to trust God’s promises, despite the fact that they had not received what was promised to them during their lifetimes.

3.9 Utilising OT Motifs

3.9.1 The Moses Motif

Deuteronomy creates the expectation of the coming of a prophet like Moses²⁹ (Deut 18:15ff.)—who is described as the greatest of Israel’s prophets according to Deut 34:10. Philo even calls him more than once a “god”.³⁰ The viewpoint of the prophetic role ascribed to Moses was well-known in the first century C.E.³¹ Without explicitly referring to these expectations though, Jesus is for the author of Hebrews even greater than Moses (Heb 3:3)! The attention being paid to the role of Moses by the author of Hebrews is in line with Hellenistic Judaism which gave a central place to Moses.³² “In the Hellenistic Jewish tradition, Moses is the supreme exemplar of perfection because of his unique access to the unmediated presence of God, a feature that would explain Hebrews’s sustained comparison of Moses and Jesus” (cf. Heb. 3:1-6; 8:3-5; 12:18-29; 13:20—Lane 1997 electronic edition).

Although the LXX does not use the term of Moses, both Philo³³ and Paul (Gal 3:19) describe Moses’ role as mediator (μεσίτης). This becomes particularly clear from Deut 9-10. “Moses acted on behalf of Israel to obtain the covenant and to maintain that covenant relationship through intercession for the people when they broke faith with God” (Porter and Evans, electronic edition). However, for the author of Hebrews, Jesus is also the better mediator (Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:21).

3.9.2 Sinai and the Law-Giving Motif

The *Book of Jubilees*, written by a Jew in Palestine during the second century B.C.E., is an important source for the character of Moses. Russell stated that “It is a form of midrash on Genesis and Exod 1-12 and is written in the form of a revelation given to Moses on Mount Sinai during the forty days he spent there” (Russell 1987, 96). This serves as evidence that the particular event of Moses on Mount Sinai played an important role in the religious heritage of the Jews.

²⁹ Moses is seen as a prophet in Deut 18:15; 34:10; Hos 12:13; Sir 46:1; Wis 11:1.

³⁰ E.g. *Vit. Mos.* 1.158.

³¹ Cf. 4 Ezra 14:3–6; 2 Bar 59:4–11; 84:2–5.

³² Compare *The Exodus* of Ezekiel the Tragedian (preserved by Eusebius *Praep. Ev.* 9.29) and Philo (*Vit. Mos.* 2.66-186; *Rer.Div.Her.* 182; *Praem. Poen.* 53, 56).

³³ Cf. *Vit. Mos.* 3,19.

The event during which Moses receives the law at Mount Sinai is also described in vivid detail in Deut 4:11-12. It describes how the people were gathered at the foot of the mountain whilst it “was blazing up to the very heavens, shrouded in dark clouds”. Then the Lord spoke to them out of the fire. They just heard the words and his voice but did not see him. The author of Hebrews tells his readers in Heb 12:18-19 that they “have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them”. Without having to quote explicitly from any appropriate passage in this regard, the author uses the imagery that described the event at Sinai when Moses received the law. He re-interprets the imagery in terms of his readers and in the light of Jesus as the better mediator (Heb 12:24).

Still based on the imagery of Deut 4, the author of Hebrews describes the very nature of God to be *a consuming fire* (Καὶ γὰρ³⁴ ὁ θεὸς³⁵ ἡμῶν³⁶ πῦρ καταναλίσκων, Heb 12:29).³⁷ He does this by using a familiar phrase from Deut 4:24 and 9:3.³⁸ (Deut 9:4 was already quoted in Rom 10:6a.) Both the lack of an introductory formula as well as the brief text that coincides here with similar phrases in Deuteronomy, point in the direction of a reference or an allusion, rather than a quotation.

Deuteronomy mentions that Moses received at Sinai the “*tablets of the covenant*” (πλάκας διαθήκης, Deut 9:9). The author of Hebrews reminds his readers how these “*tablets of the covenant*” (πλάκες τῆς διαθήκης, Heb 9:4) found their place alongside some other objects in the ark of the covenant.

Moses states his fear for the anger of God and the reason for that in Deut 9:19. The author of Hebrews briefly quotes from this in Heb 12:21. There is a clear introductory formula (Καί, οὕτω φοβερὸν ἦν τὸ φανταζόμενον, Μωϋσῆς εἶπεν) that marks the phrase that follows as an intended explicit quotation from the mouth of Moses. The τὸ φανταζόμενον in the parenthesis is the only occurrence in Christian literature. The actual quotation that follows after this introductory formula (ἔκφοβος εἰμι καὶ ἔντρομος) agrees with neither the reading of the LXX nor with that of the MT and there are no

³⁴ The ὅτι of Deut 4:24 and Deut 9:3 is replaced with καὶ γὰρ in Heb 12:29.

³⁵ Heb 12:29 omits κύριος which appears before ὁ θεός in both Deut 4:24 and Deut 9:3.

³⁶ Whereas both Deut 4:24 and Deut 9:3 read the *second person* personal pronoun as a genitive *singular* (σου), Heb 12:29 reads it as a *first person* personal pronoun genitive *plural* (ἡμῶν).

³⁷ Some scholars suggested that the original text of Hebrews ended here.

³⁸ Looking at the readings from a text critical point of view, there are no alternative readings for either Heb 12:29, or for those of Deut 4:24 and Deut 9:3 (LXX).

alternative readings to be found amongst the textual witnesses for either the text of Heb 12:21 or for that of Deut 9:19 (LXX). The only difference between Heb 12:21 and Deut 9:19 is an addition of καὶ ἔντρομος by the author of Hebrews—probably with the rhetorical function of describing the fear in more vivid terms. “Trembling” seems to have a particular function in Hebrews and seems to be closely connected to the presence of God. The word occurs only three times in the NT: here in Heb 12:21 and then in Acts 7:32 and 16:29.

3.10 *The example of Melchizedek*

Although the author of Hebrews does not explicitly use the term τύπος, he presents Melchizedek as a type of Christ. He refers several times to Jesus as “a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek” (Heb 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17). Melchizedek is used as an *example* to interpret the combined kingship and priesthood in an almost typological manner in terms of Christ.

It is clear that the author of Hebrews used some version of Gen 14:17-20 for the opening lines in Heb 7. After these had been paraphrased, he selected certain elements in the Melchizedek story and interpreted them. Two particular elements stand out: he is a *righteous* king and a king of *peace*. The interpretation of Melchizedek being a righteous king stems from the etymology of his name. The connection of him being king of peace came from him being king of Salem, where Salem means “peace”. What follows in Heb 7:3 regarding Melchizedek—being fatherless, motherless and without genealogy—suggest that the author of Hebrews did not know, or at least did not accept, the tradition as represented in 2 Enoch (so also Flusser 1988, 190). After having listed elements from known Melchizedek traditions, the author of Hebrews now points out that Melchizedek resembles (ἁφωμοιωμένος) the Son of God. In Heb 7:15 Jesus is the image (τήν ὁμοιότητα) of Melchizedek. His whole argument regarding Melchizedek is drawn to the conclusion in Heb 8:1: “We have such a high priest who went and sat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven...”³⁹ This completes his exemplary interpretation.

³⁹ “The sitting on the right hand of the Lord was understood as the sitting in judgment...” (Flusser 1988, 190).

4. Conclusion

The book of Hebrews represents a broad and diverse range of hermeneutical methods, which points to a well-educated scholar who knew and studied his Scriptures. He utilised different hermeneutical methods, planned his work, expanded on existing quotations, combined others and presented them in hymnic format. He paraphrased some OT passages, compiled a history list which he interpreted theologically and utilised motifs from the OT narratives. Some further observations that surfaced during our survey are the following:

- (a) The exegetical methods seem to be close to those used in the Jewish traditions. The *midrashic* sections of the document and the use of messianic texts mirror a profile that is closer to that of Qumran.
- (b) The absence of allegory is striking and it differs also from Philo in this sense—although both were using the same texts for their Torah quotations.
- (c) Most of the themes discussed in Hebrews are linked to “promise texts”. Heb 11 should be read alongside this tendency.
- (d) Not only the two sets of seven explicit quotations, but also the midrashic sections and the history list of Heb 11 are all well planned and well structured. The catena of Hebrews 1 with its seven quotations seems to be closer to a mystical tradition.
- (e) The conflated quotations show tendencies of parallelism, symmetry and hymnic inclinations. Is this perhaps pointing to liturgical traditions? What role did knowledge of the Jewish festivals play here?

The unknown author of Hebrews is a skilled exegete who creatively used and interpreted his Scriptures. The book presents itself not as a discourse with random and *ad hoc* phrases and quotations from memory, but rather as a well planned, well structured and well thought through exposition, which is based on a thorough knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures.

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