

Confession of the Son of God in Hebrews

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Hebrews is addressed to a community whose waning commitment may lead to a complete abandonment of their Christian identity. In response, the author crafts an imaginative and powerful exhortation that centers on Jesus' identity as the Son of God. The author first dramatizes the Son's exaltation, emphasizing the Father's declaration of Jesus' sonship, the Son's reciprocal confession of the Fatherhood of God, and the Son's conferral of family membership upon the recipients. The recipients are then called upon to participate in this pattern of mutual familial confession in two strategic hortatory passages: 4.14–16 and 10.19–25. These two exhortations to confess Jesus as the Son of God are intended to bring a halt to their wavering commitment and solidify their identity as siblings of the Son.

That the author of Hebrews crafted his 'word of exhortation' to address what he perceived as a real crisis facing a specific community of believers is apparent given both the pervasive paraenetic orientation of the epistle and the severity of the warnings issued (see esp. 6.4–8; 10.26–31). A number of suggestions concerning the source and nature of the crisis have been offered, including persecution, troubled consciences resulting from post-baptismal sin, an absence of cultic observance, a loss of honor, or simply a general waning of commitment.¹ Accompanying a great number of these diagnoses is the proposition that the members of the community were considering a return to Judaism. An even greater number have identified the author's high priest Christology as the focal point of his hortatory response to this imminent crisis, however perceived. While this majority opinion concerning the problem and solution has its obvious merits, appreciation for the author's Son of God Christology and its role in his hortatory strategy have suffered relative neglect. This paper hopes to alleviate this neglect by focusing on an overlooked aspect of the author's sonship Christology: the close relationship of his Son of God Christology and the community's confession of Jesus' sonship.

The starting point of the author's Son of God Christology is his dramatic portrayal of the Father's declaration of Jesus' sonship, an event occurring in the

¹ See R. W. Johnson, *Going Outside the Camp: The Sociological Function of the Levitical Critique in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (JSNTSup 209; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001)

beginning of his rendering of the Son's exaltation in the heavenly sanctuary (1.5). Corresponding to the divine declaration of 1.5 is the enactment of Jesus' reciprocal confession of the fatherhood of God, presented shortly thereafter in 2.12–13. The paraenetic corollary of this sonship Christology also emerges within the Son's confession in 2.12–13. Interwoven within this same confession is an implicit conferral of family membership upon the recipients. Furthermore, numerous instances of the language of belonging and identification appear in the context surrounding this bestowal (2.5–18). This language of belonging and identification, the Son's conferral of family membership, and the pattern of reciprocative familial confessions exchanged between Father and Son in 1.5 and 2.12–13, all directly lead to and inform the two most important hortatory passages in the epistle, 4.14–16 and 10.19–25. In these two passages the heavenly sanctuary is invoked, and the recipients are called upon to participate in the aforementioned drama by means of entry language (4.16; 10.19, 22). In response to the Son's conferral of family membership, the 'siblings' of the Son (2.11, 14, 17) are exhorted to vocalize their commitment to and identification with the Son. This reading assumes the presence of a more general, yet nonetheless critical, threat to the commitment of the recipients. The sacral act of confession and identification commended by the author should bring a halt to their waning commitment, and solidify their resolve to publicly confess and identify with the Son of God and his family (3.1–6; 10.26–31; 12.1–11; 13.13–16).²

A Liturgical Drama in the Heavenly Sanctuary

Recent interpretive attention to Hebrews has occasionally focused on the possibility that significant portions of the author's 'word of exhortation' should be construed as liturgical invocations of a drama occurring in a symbolic universe, namely the heavenly sanctuary. Most notably, John Dunnill and Luke Timothy Johnson have shown the value and necessity of understanding Hebrews as 'a liturgy, a symbolic action in the sacred sphere'.³ Dunnill further suggests this 'symbolic action' requires the development of 'ways of reading suitable for par-

2 H. W. Attridge, 'God in Hebrews: Urging Children to Heavenly Glory', in *The Forgotten God: Perspectives in Biblical Theology: Essays in Honor of Paul J. Achtemeier* (ed. A. A. Das and F. J. Matera; Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox, 2002) 197–209, observes the dialogical nature of the epistle, deeming it 'the most creative theological work of this complex text' (204). However, he fails to develop the hortatory purpose motivating the Father/Son dialogue.

3 J. Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews* (SNTSMS 75; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1992) 261. L. T. Johnson, 'The Scriptural World of Hebrews', *Int* 73.3 (2003) 237–50, notes that 'literary compositions, after all, do not simply report on the world that produces them; they also produce a world' (238). See also C. R. Koester, *Hebrews* (AB 36; New York: Doubleday, 2001) 201.

ticipation in such an action'.⁴ The author's inculcation of a drama in the Heavenly Sanctuary would appear to encourage such participation. This interpretive model is of obvious benefit to understanding chs. 9 and 10, which are characterized by their vivid report of the cultic events occurring in the heavenly sanctuary. It is equally profitable when applied to two passages in the first two chapters of the epistle, specifically 1.5–13 and 2.12–13, where the same heavenly milieu provides the dramatic backdrop to the exaltation of the Son. So also in 4.14–16 and 10.19–25, two passages exhorting the recipients to enter the heavenly sanctuary and participate in the sacral drama through the act of confession.

Perhaps the most distinctive element apparent in the first two chapters is the direct speech placed by the author on the lips of the main actors – the Father and the Son. These direct speeches impart a dramatic atmosphere to the proceedings.⁵ That the first words to issue from the mouths of these actors are mutual confessions of familial relatedness is proof of their import. Furthermore, these mutual confessions utilize a subtle dramatic device aimed at drawing the recipients personally into the drama of the Son's exaltation, as the language switches in 1.5b and 2.13 from direct to indirect address, from second person pronouns to third person pronouns. Participation in the symbolic universe is thereby implicitly extended to the recipients.

The Father's Declaration of Jesus' Sonship

Our proposed liturgical drama begins in 1.5, where the two pre-eminent monarchical sonship texts of the OT, Ps 2.7 and 2 Sam 7.14, are presented as proclamations from the very mouth of God: εἶπέν ... υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε; καὶ πάλιν ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν.⁶ This forthright declaration of Jesus' sonship develops the final theme of the exordium (1.1–4), where Jesus is said to have 'inherited' an unspecified 'more excellent name' (1.4, ὅσῳ διαφορώτερον παρ' αὐτοῦς κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα). The prominent υἱός / πατήρ terminology and familial imagery in 1.5 strongly suggest that the unspecified name of 1.4 is 'Son';⁷ it also

4 Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 122.

5 Cf. the similar introductions to divine address in Ezekiel in the Tragedian 1.95, 115, 131. However, these passages are generally viewed as later editorial insertions. They are omitted from the critical text and translation of H. Jacobson, *The Exagoge of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1983).

6 2 Sam 7.11–14 and Ps 2.1–2 are used as Messianic proof texts in 4QFlorilegium (4Q174).

7 For a dissenting opinion, see G. H. Guthrie, 'Hebrews' Use of the Old Testament: Recent Trends in Research', *Currents in Biblical Research* 1.2 (2003) 271–94. Focusing on the context of the second quotation, 2 Sam 7.14 (especially the preceding verse, 7.13: 'He shall build a house for me for my name [τῷ ὀνόματί μου], and I will establish his throne forever'), Guthrie

ensures that no one will miss the author's central point: the declaration of Jesus' sonship by God the Father is the pre-eminent moment in the exaltation drama.⁸

Furthermore, the presence of the recipients in this drama may be inferred through a transition in address, as the Son is first addressed in the second person in 1.5a, and then in the third person in 1.5b. The principal actor in this scene, God the Father, may be envisioned as turning towards those in attendance – recipients included – and while gesturing towards the Son, he proclaims: 'Jesus is my Son!'

The Son's Confession of the Father and Conferral of Family Membership Upon the Recipients

The dramatic milieu of the Son's heavenly exaltation is revisited in 2.12–13. As with the first portion of the drama (and the entire catena – 1.5–13), the author places Scripture in the mouth of the principal actor, thus imparting ancient authority to the dramatic speech. And, as before, the first words to flow from the principal actor's mouth are an unreserved confession of familial relatedness: in this case, Jesus the Son confesses the Fatherhood of God. The presence of the recipients is also inferred here, as the Son 'brings the name of God to the public'.⁹

First, Ps 22.22 comes to life in the declaration: ἀπαγγεῖλω τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου, ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω (2.12). Notably, the author replaces the more mundane διηγέομαι ('to tell, relate') of the LXX with the vivid verb ἀπαγγέλλω ('announce'), a term consonant with Jesus' earthly ministry.¹⁰ The

contends that the unspecified 'superior name' of Heb 1.4 is 'not to be understood as an allusion to the title "Son", but rather an honor conferred by God on the Messiah as the Davidic heir, at the establishment of his throne, and a designator connoting God's identification with Messiah's building of God's house' (274). While this suggestion resonates well with the Christology of Heb 3.1–6, in the immediate context the author's chief concern is to establish Jesus' divine sonship, as indicated by the conspicuous υἱός/πατήρ terminology in 1.5.

8 Jesus' exaltation is typically described as involving a 'confirmation of his existing position and status, rather than conferral of a new status' (A. H. I. Lee, *From Messiah to Preexistent Son: Jesus' Self-Consciousness and Early Christian Exegesis of Messianic Psalms* [WUNT 2.192; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005] 276).

9 M. Barth, 'The Old Testament in Hebrews: An Essay in Biblical Hermeneutics', in *Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation: Essays in honor of Otto A. Piper* (ed. W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder; New York: Harper, 1962) 53–78, 263–73 (62). As to the actual name of God, which is left unspecified in 2.12–13, the wealth of family terms and imagery in the surrounding context leaves little option other than the name 'Father'.

10 H. W. Attridge, *Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989) 90. In the LXX ἀπαγγέλλω is used frequently in the proclamation of someone's name or identity (Gen 12.18; 29.12; 43.7; Exod 18.6; Judg 13.6; 2 Sam 2.4; 7.11; 1 Kgs 1.20; Neh 7.61; Esth 2.10; Isa 30.7; Wis 6.22). Because Ps 22 repeatedly appears in the passion narratives (e.g. Matt 27.35, 39, 43, 46; Jn 19.24), many have concluded that the same setting is intended here; see, e.g., C. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux* (Études Bibliques; Paris: Gabalda, 1952–3) 2:29, 41–2; S. Kistemaker, *The Psalm*

second text placed on the Son's lips, Isa 8.17–18, combines an expression of trust in God with an affirmation of the recipients' membership in the family of God: ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποιθὸς ἐπ' αὐτῷ, καὶ πάλιν· ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ παιδία ἃ μοι ἔδωκεν ὁ θεός (2.13).¹¹ That the Son's three confessions of the Fatherhood of God in 2.12–13 are perfectly balanced by three matching expressions of his identification with humanity is illustrative of the basic inseparability of doctrine and exhortation in Hebrews.¹²

Corresponding to the flow of events in 1.5, a change in addressees in 2.13 signals once more the implied presence of the recipients in the drama. The second person pronouns of 2.12, representing the Son's address to the Father, are replaced by a third person pronoun in 2.13, indicating the Son has transferred his attention to the ἐκκλησία.¹³ Moreover, the pronouncements of familial relatedness in 2.12–13 are the first thing the 'actor' Jesus says in direct address to the community in the epistle. We may envision Jesus first speaking to the Father, vowing to make known his name to 'his brothers and sisters' (2.12, τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου¹⁴)

Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Amsterdam: van Soest, 1961) 83–4; M. Rissi, *Die Theologie des Hebräerbriefs. Ihre Verankerung in der Situation des Verfassers und seiner Leser* (WUNT 41; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1987) 60; R. 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: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 2003) 63. However, the celebratory activity of hymnic praise (ὕμνῳ) seems out of place in the grim starkness of the passion. And certainly a more explicit portion of the same psalm could have been employed had this been the author's intent. Though the passion is inferred throughout 2.5–18 (especially 2.9–10, 14, 17–18), the greater burden of this passage is to establish the extent of Jesus' identification with humanity.

- 11 See Gheorghita, *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, 64–5, for a discussion of the possible textual sources underlying 2.13.
- 12 B. Lindars, *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* (NTT; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1991) 2, aptly states: 'Hebrews is a work of persuasion from start to finish'. Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice*, 46, remarks: 'The book is conceived and written as a whole, the hortatory passages so fully involved with the theological thought as to seem to create it'.
- 13 P. S. Minear, 'An Early Christian Theopoetic?' *Semeia* 12 (1978) 201–13, traces the genesis of 2.12–13 to a christophany experienced by the author. His 'vision of Jesus standing in the midst of the ecclesia' is characterized by a 'triangular conversation', with Jesus 'speaking to God and the congregation'. This 'poetic vision' is 'designed to induct his listeners into the presence of the risen Lord' (203–5). Minear, however, fails to connect this declaration of the risen Jesus with the corresponding speech of God in 1.5 and the paradigmatic significance of both speeches for the later exhortations to confess the Son (3.1–6; 4.14–16; 10.19–25). See also P. M. Eisenbaum, *The Jewish Heroes of Christian History: Hebrews 11 in Literary Context* (SBLDS 156; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997) 112–13.
- 14 Regarding the use of ἀδελφοίς in the NT, J. H. Elliott ('The Jesus Movement Was Not Egalitarian But Family-Oriented', *BibInt* 11.2 [2003] 173–210), observes: 'Reference to sisters in the faith is implied when brothers in the faith are addressed. This implied inclusion is a consequence of the perception of ancient patriarchal societies that all honorable females were socially "embedded" in, and under the "tutelage" of, honorable males' (177).

and to praise him ‘in the midst of the congregation’. Then, turning to address his siblings, Jesus declares his trust in the Father, and expresses gratitude for the ‘children’ (τὰ παιδιά) entrusted to his care (2.13).

Language of Belonging and Identification

The language of belonging and identification permeates the second chapter of Hebrews. By means of this language, the reality of the Son’s declaration of family relatedness is reinforced. Seven instances of familial terminology occur in 2.10–18: πολλοὺς υἱοὺς (2.10); ἀδελφούς (2.11); τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου (2.12); τὰ παιδιά . . . μοι (2.13); τὰ παιδιά (2.14); ἀδελφοῖς; λαοῦ (2.17). The language and imagery of identification is even more pervasive: ὑπὲρ παντὸς (2.9); τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν (2.10); ὁ τε ἀγιάζων καὶ οἱ ἀγιαζόμενοι ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντες (2.11); ἐκκλησία (2.12); κοινωνέω / μετέχω (2.14); ἐπιλαμβάνομαι (2.16); ὁμοίω (2.17); πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεῖς, δύναται τοῖς πειραζομένοις βοηθῆσαι (2.18).

The generative core of this complex of mutuality and identification can be traced to the initial designation of God as δι’ ὃν τὰ πάντα καὶ δι’ οὗ τὰ πάντα, the source and teleological goal of all humanity,¹⁵ who desires that ‘many children be led to glory’ (2.10, πολλοὺς υἱοὺς εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγόντα).¹⁶ Furthermore, our author considers it ‘fitting’ (πρέπω) that this task should be accomplished in the ‘perfection through sufferings’ (διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι) of the ‘founder of salvation’ (τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας). This motif is resumed in 2.17, where it is said that the Son was ‘obligated’ (ὀφείλω) to fully incorporate himself into humanity, so as to inform his ‘merciful and faithful’ high priesthood (ἵνα ἐλεήμων γένηται καὶ πιστὸς ἀρχιερεὺς) with the requisite sympathy for the human condition.¹⁷ These remarkable appeals to propriety and necessity forestall any objections lodged against the offence of the cross by pointing to the logic behind Christ’s full identification with humanity.¹⁸ Koester also believes the appeal in 2.10 addresses the

15 Both prepositional phrases occur in Philo *Cherubim* 125–7.

16 Cf. Plato’s contention that the origin of all matter is traceable to the demiurge ‘having led order out of disorder’ (*Timaeus* 30A, εἰς τάξιν αὐτὸ ἤγαγεν ἐκ τῆς ἀταξίας). This disorder/order polarity finds its complement in Hebrews’ account of the present state of humanity (2.7), and the arc of the Christ event (2.7–10). The probability of our author having deliberately harnessed this Platonic passage in his program statement (2.10) increases with recognition of its importance to Philo. Cf. *Creation* 8–9, 21–2, 28; *Planting* 3, 5; *Heir* 133–4, 140, 157, 160.

17 Similar appeals to logical propriety appear in 7.26 (πρέπω) and the closely related references to ‘necessity’ (ἀνάγκη) in 7.12, 27; 9.16, 23.

18 Spicq, *Hébreux*, 1:53, notes that arguments appealing to divine propriety are ‘inconnu de la Bible’. J. W. Thompson, ‘The Appropriate, the Necessary, and the Impossible: Faith and Reason in Hebrews’, in *The Early Church in Its Context: Essays in Honor of Everett Ferguson* (ed. A. J. Malherbe, F. W. Norris and J. W. Thompson; NovTSup 90; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 302–17, draws attention to the incongruity of this appeal within the ‘ancient context, where the

central question motivating the epistle, namely ‘whether God will bring people to the glory for which he created them’.¹⁹

Ἀδελφός, the most prominent familial term, occurs three times in the course of the immediate exposition (2.11, 12, 17). This term’s strategic employment elsewhere in the epistle indicates its importance to the author. It appears in both his first and final direct addresses to the recipients (3.1; 13.22), and at the head of his most emotional exhortation and warning (10.19–31). Fictive usage of ἀδελφός can trace its origins to the Jesus tradition,²⁰ and forms the core of Paul’s understanding of the church, as a ‘society of siblings’.²¹ A relative short supply of comparably aged, true siblings in Greco-Roman families would no doubt contribute to the power and attraction this term possessed.²² Finally, all three occurrences of ἀδελφός in the second chapter appear in relation to Jesus, the brother of the community. The depth of this portrayal of Jesus as brother is perhaps unparalleled in the NT, and was quite possibly influenced by Greco-Roman conventions of ideal brotherhood.²³

Also of note is υἱός, applied to the recipients in 2.10 and six times in 12.5–11, where the ‘sons and daughters’ are exhorted to follow the same filial pattern established by Jesus (12.1–2). While both Jesus and the recipients have received an education in humiliation and shame at the hands of their oppressors (12.2–4; 10.32–34), this ill treatment served the greater purpose of God, defining and refining allegiance to God.²⁴

association of God with human suffering would have been abhorrent’ (305). A. C. Mitchell, ‘The Use of *πρέπειν* and Rhetorical Propriety in Hebrews 2:10’, *CBQ* 54 (1992) 681–701 (682–3, 694–7), locates the core of the author’s rhetorical strategy in his emphasis upon the propriety of God’s involvement in Jesus’ representative sufferings and glorification.

19 Koester, *Hebrews*, 291. Minear, ‘An Early Christian Theopoetic?’, 211, finds the promise of imminent glorification reinforced by the resurrected Lord’s presence in the ἐκκλησία in 2.12–13.

20 ‘And looking at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother”’ (Mark 3.34–35).

21 See S. S. Bartchy, ‘Undermining Ancient Patriarchy: The Apostle Paul’s Vision of a Society of Siblings’, *BTB* 29 (Summer 1999) 68–78; Elliott, ‘The Jesus Movement’, 173–210.

22 B. Rawson, “‘The Roman Family’ in Recent Research: State of the Question”, *BibInt* 11.2 (2003) 119–38, remarks: ‘Few of our sources evoke a picture of a household full of brothers and sisters in the way that some more modern sources do. If in Roman families close sibling relationships were more rare, that might, of course, have made them more precious’ (129).

23 See the extended discussion in P. Gray, *Godly Fear: The Epistle to the Hebrews and Greco-Roman Critiques of Superstition* (Academia Biblica 16; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003) 125–38, where Plutarch’s *On Brotherly Love* is profitably compared with Hebrews’ portrayal of Jesus as brother.

24 N. C. Croy, *Endurance in Suffering: Hebrews 12:1–13 in its Rhetorical, Religious, and Philosophical Context* (SNTSMS 98; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998) 220, argues that 12.1–11 depicts a non-punitive view of suffering. The author of Hebrews considers suffering educative, for the παιδεία of 12.1–11 offers an ‘education into sonship’.

Perhaps to an even greater degree than the familial language, the language of identification is inseparably interwoven with the benefits of familial relatedness conferred by the Son upon his siblings.²⁵ He has ‘tasted death on behalf of all’ (2.9, ὑπὲρ παντός) and is the ‘pioneer of their salvation’ (2.10). Because ‘the one sanctifying and those being sanctified share the same heavenly parent’, Jesus is ‘not ashamed to publicly identify them as his siblings’ (2.11, οὐκ ἐπαισχύνεται ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοὺς καλεῖν).²⁶ They are the ἐκκλησία (2.12), presently sharing in the glory of the exaltation drama in the heavenly sanctuary.²⁷ And as they have ‘partaken’ (κοινωνέω) of all that pertains to the human condition, so their brother Jesus has ‘likewise partaken’ (παραπλησίως μετέσχευ) in the human condition, so that in dying, he might ‘destroy the one who has the power of death’ – ὁ διάβολος (2.14) – and ‘release’ (ἀπαλλάσσω) his siblings from their enslaving fear of death (2.15).²⁸ The Son has ‘taken an interest’ (2.16, ἐπιλαμβάνομαι) in the σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ, ‘becoming like them in every respect’ (2.17, κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι). He has become a fully sympathetic high priest, efficaciously expiating (ἰλάσκομαι) the ‘sins of the people’ (2.17, τὰς ἀμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ). Finally, in his sufferings he was tested and is now able to help those who are similarly tested (2.18).²⁹

In the short span of just fourteen verses, 2.5–18, our author intermingles and colors his Son of God Christology with no less than five other Christologies: (1) Adam (2.6–11); (2) ‘pioneer of salvation’ (2.10); (3) *Christus Victor* (2.14–16); (4) Isaianic Sin-bearer (2.9, 17); (5) high priest (2.17–18). Present as well are three of the primary NT interpretations of Christ’s death: (1) a sacrifice for sins; (2) *Christus Victor*; (3) an example. These diverse depictions work together to demonstrate the reality of Jesus’ full identification with humanity, and the efficacy of his identification to convey ‘many siblings to glory’.³⁰ Indeed, these fourteen verses are suffused with proofs and reminders that despite their ignominious earthly

25 G. W. Grogan, ‘The Old Testament Concept of Solidarity in Hebrews’, *TynBul* 49:1 (1998) 159–73, notes: ‘In Hebrews the consequences of solidarity are almost all conceived of as blessing’ (171).

26 The seven appearances of ἀγιάζω in Hebrews constitute 25% of the total NT usage. Cf. Lev 20.8, ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ ἀγιάζων ὑμᾶς.

27 Their implied presence here in the heavenly sanctuary may be equated with presence in the panegyric heavenly Jerusalem in 12.22–24 (cf. 12.22: προσεληλύθατε, ‘you have come’).

28 Cf. Wis 2.23–24: ‘For God created us for immortality . . . but the envy of the devil brought death into the world, and those who are in his possession experience it’.

29 P. Balla, *The Child–Parent Relationship in the New Testament and its Environments* (WUNT 155; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 210, believes 2.18 represents the ‘goal’ of 2.5–18. He thereby mistakenly limits the purpose of the family imagery in 2.5–18 to providing ‘comfort’.

30 See C. R. Koester, ‘Hebrews, Rhetoric, and the Future of Humanity’, *CBQ* 64.1 (2002) 103–23 (123); K. Schenck, *Understanding the Book of Hebrews: The Story Behind the Sermon* (Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox, 2003) 25–6.

circumstances (cf. 10.32–34), and the uncertainty of their eschatological situation (cf. 1.13; 2.8–9), the ‘siblings’ are well along the path towards heavenly δόξα.

The Proper Response of the Community: Sacral and Public Confession of the Son

Ultimately, a single purpose controls the author’s elaborate invocation of the Son’s exaltation in the heavenly sanctuary: to induce the recipients to enter into and participate in the heavenly drama by making a sacral confession commensurate with the Son’s declarations of their familial relationship. The author brings his drama to a climax and stakes his entire presentation on the power inherent within this symbolic act of confession to actualize the recipients’ sense of familial relatedness. This liminal experience should serve to solidify their resolve to confess publicly and identify with the Son of God and his family.

To elicit this response, the author first constructs a semantic structure, a field of meaning (3.1–6, 14), which is then carried forward into a pair of invocations of the heavenly sanctuary (4.14–16; 10.19–25). These latter two passages, recognized by Weiss to be ‘decisive control centers’ in the epistle’s hortatory strategy,³¹ exhort the recipients to participate in the sacred drama through the use of cultic ‘entry’ terminology (4.14; 10.22, προσέρχομαι; 10.19, εἰς τὴν εἴσοδον τῶν ἁγίων). The preparatory section (3.1–6, 14), though lacking entry terminology, is joined to the other two passages by an interlocking web of significations. Maintaining the language of mutual identification and participation (3.1, 14, μέτοχος; 4.14; 10.19, ἔχω; 4.15, δυνάμενον συμπαῆσαι ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν, πεπειρασμένον δὲ κατὰ πάντα καθ’ ὁμοιότητα; 10.19, ἀδελφός; 10.20, ἦν ἐνεκαίνισεν ἡμῖν; 10.24, ἀλλήλων; 10.25, τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἑαυτῶν), these three passages uniformly call for a confident and firm (3.6; 4.16; 10.19, παρρησία; 3.14, βέβαιος) holding fast (3.6, 14; 10.23, κατέχω; 4.14, κρατέω) to the confession (3.1; 4.14; 10.23, ὁμολογία), boast (3.6, καύχημα) and conviction (3.14, ὑπόστασις) of Jesus’ sonship (3.2–6; 4.14–16; 10.21, 23). That the use of the key terms, ὁμολογία, παρρησία, κρατέω and κατέχω, is almost entirely restricted to these three contexts is further indication of the author’s deliberate intent.

The semantic groundwork is first laid in 3.1–6, 14. The key theme of the preceding chapter, familial relatedness, is subsumed within the imagery of the divine

31 H.-F. Weiss, *Der Brief an die Hebräer. Übersetzt und Erklärt* (KEK 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991) 52. G. H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis* (NovTSup 73; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 81, demonstrates that 4.14–16 and 10.19–23 constitutes a structural *inclusio*.

'household' (3.2–6 [six times], οἶκος).³² The author directly addresses the ἀδελφοὶ ἅγιοι for the first time in the epistle, and exhorts them to 'consider' the 'apostle and high priest of our confession, Jesus'. Despite this initial designation of their ὁμολογία in 3.1 as τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα, a sonship Christology predominates, expressed in the Son's faithfulness 'over the household of God' (3.6).³³ This passage, 3.1–6, can be linked to the closely following parallel passage, 3.14: as the partakers (μέτοχος)³⁴ of the 'heavenly calling' (3.1) and of Christ (3.14), the recipients are commended to confidently (3.6) and firmly (3.14) hold fast (3.6, 14, κατέχω) to their boast (3.6) and conviction (3.14).

The language and imagery of 3.1–6, 14 undergirds the author's first hortatory invocation of the heavenly sanctuary drama, in 4.14–16. The recipients are at last invited to participate in the drama, by means of a 'bold approach' (4.16, προσερχόμεθα . . . μετὰ παρρησίας) to the 'throne of grace'. This depiction of dynamic approach contrasts with the static 'hold fast' (4.14, κρατέω) imagery that characterizes their ὁμολογία (4.14).³⁵ And again, as in 3.1–6, high priest and Son of God Christologies intermingle (4.14, Ἐχοντες οὖν ἀρχιερέα μέγαν . . . Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ), though this time the corresponding imagery is evenly divided between these two disparate portrayals. He is successively the sympathetic high priest (4.15) and the merciful and gracious Son ruling from God's throne (4.16).³⁶ Thus this passage reflects both conceptual realms, regnal and cultic.

32 C. L. Westfall, 'Moses and Hebrews 3:1–6: Approach or Avoidance?', in *Christian–Jewish Relations Through the Centuries* (ed. S. E. Porter and B. W. R. Pearson; JSNTSup 192; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000) 175–201 (193), finds a 'semantic chain' linking 3.1–6 to ch. 2: ἅγιοι (3.1) and οἱ ἀγιαζόμενοι (2.11); ἀδελφός (3.1/2.10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17); μέτοχοι (3.1) and μετέχω (2.14). The 'heavenly calling' of 3.1 may be equated with the fulfillment of Ps 8 in Jesus in 2.9–10. Westfall fails to connect the ἐκκλησία in 2.12 with the οἶκος in 3.1–6. Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice*, 32, considers the image of the οἶκος to be the primary 'literal and metaphorical description of the church as the end-time community'. So also Elliott, 'The Jesus Movement', 205: 'The household provided one of the chief models, if not *the* root metaphor, for depicting the communal identity, unity, intimacy, and loyalty of the believer in relation to God, Jesus Christ, and one another'.

33 Attridge, *Hebrews*, 110.

34 The concepts of partaking and sharing recur in the epistle. In addition to these two instances (3.1, 14), μέτοχος denotes the recipients' experience as 'partakers' of the Holy Spirit (6.4) and the παιδεία of God (12.8). The Son has 'partaken' of the human condition (2.14, μετέχω). The recipients 'share flesh and blood' (2.14, κοινωνέω) and as 'partners' (10.33, κοινωνός) with the persecuted church they should share in their sufferings. They will also share in their heavenly Father's holiness (12.10, μεταλαμβάνω) should they submit to his παιδεία.

35 Attridge, *Hebrews*, 21–2.

36 T. Eskola, *Messiah and Throne: Jewish Merkabah Mysticism and Early Christian Discourse* (WUNT 2.142; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 2001) 251–4, equates the throne with the mercy seat and contends that an entirely cultic milieu is envisaged here. However, all three other occurrences of θρόνος (1.8; 8.1; 12.2) appear to be evoking the regnal exaltation, with the latter two verses clearly dependent upon Ps 110.1. This subsumption of the throne into the

In the second invocation of the heavenly sanctuary drama, 10.19–25, a cultic context appears to dominate the symbolic landscape. The recipients are reminded of their conclusive sanctification (10.22, ῥεραντισμένοι τὰς καρδίας ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως πονηρᾶς καὶ λελουσμένοι τὸ σῶμα ὕδατι καθαρῷ), through the self-offering of Jesus the great priest (10.19–21, ἐν τῷ αἵματι Ἰησοῦ, . . . τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ . . . ἱερέυς μέγας), which allows their confident entry into the holiest place in the heavenly sanctuary (10.19, παρρησίαν εἰς τὴν εἴσοδον τῶν ἁγίων; 10.21, ἐνεκαίνισεν ἡμῖν ὁδὸν . . . διὰ τοῦ καταπετάματος; 10.22, προσέρχομαι). The range of this approach terminology has been typically circumscribed to denote ‘approach, but not attainment’.³⁷ However, recognition of the role it plays in the drama demands some manner of experiential presence in the heavenly sanctuary.³⁸ In fact, the exhortation to enter the holy place in 10.19–25 constitutes a climactic conclusion to a lengthy argument begun in 9.6. The impeded access frustrating the efficacy of the Levitical cult (9.6–11; 10.1–4) has been unfavorably contrasted with the efficacious entry of Christ (9.12–14, 24; 10.11–14) and the free access he now provides.³⁹

A high priest Christology might then be presupposed by the pervasive cultic imagery found in 10.19–25. Moreover, the sole explicit designation of Jesus in this passage refers to him as ‘the great priest’ (10.21). However, in this same verse, 10.21, and again in 10.23, the author draws upon the primary semantic context of 3.1–6,

mercy seat underestimates the import of the enthronement of Jesus for the author. See R. Bauckham, ‘The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus’, in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (ed. C. C. Newman, J. R. Davila and G. S. Lewis; SJSJ 63; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 43–69 (64–7). D. A. deSilva, ‘Exchanging Favor for Wrath: Apostasy in Hebrews and Patron–Client Relationships’, *JBL* 115 (1996) 91–116, believes ‘throne’ refers by ‘metonymy to the One seated on the throne’ (100).

³⁷ Those mitigating the language of approach include: J. M. Scholer, *Proleptic Priests: Priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (JSNTSup 49; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1991) 127, 149; M. Isaacs, *Sacred Space: An Approach to the Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (JSNTSup 73; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992) 219; D. A. deSilva, ‘Entering God’s Rest: Eschatology and the Socio-Rhetorical Strategy of Hebrews’, *TJ* 21 (2000) 25–43 (28).

³⁸ C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 42; Leiden: Brill, 2002) xii, calls into question constructions of Second Temple worship that rigidly divide the earthly and heavenly spheres. He proposes two ‘interlocking hypotheses: (1) the theology of ancient Judaism took for granted the belief that in its original, true, redeemed state humanity is divine (and/or angelic), and that (2) this belief was conceptually and experientially inextricable from temple worship in which ordinary space and time, and therefore human ontology, are transcended because the true temple is a model of the universe which offers its entrants a transfer from earth to heaven, from humanity to divinity and from mortality to immortality’.

³⁹ This has already been implied in 2.10; 4.1–11; and especially 6.19–20, where Jesus is referred to as the ‘forerunner’ (πρόδρομος) who has entered the ‘the inner shrine behind the curtain’ ‘for us’ (ὕπερ ἡμῶν).

14, and in so doing implicitly invokes his Son of God Christology. Though in 10.21 Jesus is called ‘the great priest over the household of God’ (ἱερέα μέγαν ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ), the lengthy discussion of the ‘household of God’ in 3.1–6 concludes with the assertion that Jesus’ *sonship* forms the basis for his rule ‘over the household’ (ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον). In 10.23, the ‘faithfulness of the one who has promised’ (πιστὸς ὁ ἐπαγγειλάμενος), namely Jesus, provides both the model and impetus for the recipients’ ‘unwavering confession of hope’ (τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀκλινη). In 3.6, it is Jesus’ faithfulness ‘as a son’ that both proves his superiority over Moses and establishes the surety of the recipients’ ‘firmly held boldness and boast of hope’ (τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ τὸ καύχημα τῆς ἐλπίδος κατάσχωμεν). These verses, 10.21, 23, would then appear to connect the recipients’ confession to sonship Christology. Although πιστὸς ὁ ἐπαγγειλάμενος in 10.23 may refer to God, who has been previously described as a ‘promise maker’ in 6.13–18, and will again be designated as such in 11.11 and 12.26, in this instance the referent is undoubtedly Jesus. The reciprocative contours of 10.23 – the ‘unwavering confession of hope’ responding to the ‘faithfulness of the promise maker’ – vividly encapsulates the intended goal of the whole drama: the confession of Jesus’ sonship in response to his conferral of familial relatedness (2.12–13). The final two verses in this passage, 10.24–25, further extend the familial dimensions of their confession, exhorting the recipients not to neglect their gatherings (μὴ ἐγκαταλείποντες τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἑαυτῶν), which provide vital opportunities to ‘consider’ (κατανοέω) and ‘encourage’ (παρακαλέω) ‘one another’ (ἀλλήλων).⁴⁰

The Content and Nature of the Community’s Confession

The content and nature of the recipients’ ὁμολογία has been the source of much debate. Appeal to the sole unequivocal designation and description of that confession, in 13.15, reveals that ‘his name’ (τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ) is the *content* and a spiritualized cultic sacrifice of praise (ἀναφέρωμεν θυσίαν αἰνέσεως) describes the *nature* of the confession.⁴¹ Although the content of the confession appears to be ὁ θεός, the author’s failure to designate a specific name for God in the previous

40 Throughout this passage, the recipients’ identity as the family of God is reinforced with terminology (10.19, ἀδελφός; 10.20, ἡμῖν; 10.24, ἀλλήλων; 10.25, τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἑαυτῶν) and a string of first person plural subjunctives (10.22, προσερχώμεθα; 10.23, κατέχωμεν; 10.24, κατανοῶμεν).

41 13.15, Δι’ αὐτοῦ οὖν ἀναφέρωμεν θυσίαν αἰνέσεως διὰ παντὸς τῷ θεῷ, τοῦτ’ ἔστιν καρπὸν χειλέων ὁμολογούντων τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ. That this verse provides the essential definition of the activity of confession is recognized by Rissi, *Die Theologie des Hebräerbriefs*, 47. Attridge, ‘God in Hebrews’, 208, however, deems it the ‘response’ of the recipients to the divine promise of 13.5: ‘I will never leave you or forsake you’.

twelve chapters signals the implausibility of this designation.⁴² Nowhere in Hebrews do we encounter anything akin to Paul's pneumatological cry, 'Abba, Father!' (Rom 8.15; Gal 4.6). To commend an imprecise confession of ὁ θεός at this late stage would be strangely inconsistent with the author's christologically focused hortatory strategy. In addition to the sonship emphasis within the 'decisive control centers' (4.14–16; 10.19–25), misconceptions and 'mis-confessions' of the Son of God are diagnosed in the two key warning passages, 6.4–8 and 10.26–31, as the *non plus ultra* of apostasy. Furthermore, this undesignated confession, τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ, seems intentionally to recall the beginning of the exaltation drama (1.5), where the 'superior name' of 1.4 is revealed as 'Son'.⁴³ And while some have argued for the inseparability of the high priest and sonship Christologies in the confession,⁴⁴ as they are often seamlessly coordinated (e.g. 4.14–16), the Son of God Christology is in every way antecedent to the high priestly Christology.⁴⁵

42 Those arguing that God's name is in view include F. Laub, *Bekennntnis und Auslegung: Die parännetische Funktion der Christologie im Hebräerbrief* (BU 15; Regensburg: Pustet, 1980) 43; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 401; E. Grässer, *An Die Hebräer (Hebr 10,19–13,25)* (EKKNT 17/3; Zurich: Benziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1997) 391; Koester, *Hebrews*, 572. Weiss, *Hebräer*, 742, also believes that 13.15 reflects a community confession of God, though one that is 'christologically grounded and mediated'. E. Käsemann, *The Wandering People of God: An Investigation of the Letter to the Hebrews* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984) 169, considers 'Kyrios' Jesus the focus of the confession in 13.15.

43 Arguing for the priority of Jesus' sonship in the confession are W. L. Lane, *Hebrews 1–8* (WBC 47A; Dallas: Word, 1991) 75; Koester, *Hebrews*, 126, 450.

44 Weiss, *Hebräer*, 293, contends that the high priest and Son of God Christologies are identical in the community's confession. Similarly asserting their inseparability in the confession are Laub, *Bekennntnis und Auslegung*, 14–15; W. R. G. Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Christologie des Hebräerbriefes* (WMANT 53; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1981) 206–8. E. Grässer, *An die Hebräer (Hebr 1–6)* (EKKNT 17/1; Zurich: Benziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1990) 251, perhaps over-generalizes in his conclusion that 'Jesus himself' forms the content of the confession. O. Michel, 'ὁμολογέω, ὁμολογία, κτλ', *TDNT* 5:215–16, argues that the 'ὁμολογία of Hb. is a firmly outlined, liturgically set tradition by which the community must abide'. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 289, stands on firmer ground with his assertion that 'the whole interpretive program of Hebrews indicates that our author knows that the content of a confession must be ever reinterpreted in order to be preserved'. The intricacies of his high priest Christology and the recasting of the Son's exaltation into a participatory drama both provide proof of the author's creative and practical adaptations of confessional traditions. J. W. Thompson, 'Hebrews 5:11–14 and Greek Paideia', in his *The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy: The Epistle to the Hebrews* (CBQMS 13; Washington, DC.: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1982) 17–40 (31), thus correctly characterizes 7.1–10.19 as 'an expansion of the confession'.

45 The logic of 5.5–6 seems to indicate that the Father's declaration of Jesus' high priesthood is dependent upon a prior declaration of sonship. This passage may reflect the genesis of Hebrews' high priest Christology, as the author employs *gezerah shavah* to link the divine declaration of sonship in Ps 2.7 with the declaration of priesthood in Ps 110.4. The two psalms share the pronoun σὺ, and a certain measure of assonance attends the first phrase in each

That the act of confession is depicted in 13.15 as a spiritualized cultic sacrifice of praise provides insight into the nature of the two exhortations to enter the heavenly sanctuary (4.14–16; 10.19–25). Though these exhortations to make entry have often been interpreted as advocating prayer,⁴⁶ the activity described in 13.15 is clearly confessional in nature. And while the substantive ὁμολογία, employed in all the previous contexts (3.1; 4.14; 10.23), may denote either the content or the act of confession, the immediate proximity of the verbal form of the term (ὁμολογέω) to the content of the confession (τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ) in 13.15 suggests both senses, act and content, are intended in 4.14 and 10.23.⁴⁷

The author's exhortation to offer unceasingly this confession (13.15, διὰ παντός⁴⁸), when connected with the static terminology (κρατέω, κατέχω) in the sacral confessions of 4.14 and 10.23, provides further insight into the nature of the exhortation. As the recipients have long been convinced of Jesus' divine sonship, a single, first-time confession is not in view. Rather, what is envisaged is an ongoing orientation toward sonship confession.⁴⁹ A general setting, one of communal worship, is therefore preferred over a specific setting, whether eucharistic or baptismal.⁵⁰ The phrase διὰ παντός may also extend the range of this exhortation beyond the sacral milieu, to the public sphere, thus denoting an unwavering stance of public identification with Jesus the Son of God. As the Son confessed the Father in both word and deed,⁵¹ so also the recipients will see their familial relat-

quotation: υἱός μου εἶ σύ and σὺ ἱερεὺς. The most obvious point of contact between the two verses is the conceptualization of a regal conferral of status. See Gheorghita, *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, 54; Eskola, *Messiah and Throne*, 208. Furthermore, that Jesus the high priest is never the object of worship may also point to a hierarchy of Christologies in Hebrews.

46 D. G. Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection: An Examination of the Concept of Perfection in the 'Epistle to the Hebrews'* (SNTSMS 47; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1982) 79; Lane, *Hebrews*, 115; Koester, *Hebrews*, 284, 449. Both Scholer (*Proleptic Priests*, 107–8, 110–12) and Gray (*Godly Fear*, 144) argue that the activity of prayer solely underlies the imagery of 4.14–16, while admitting 'communal worship' may also be present in 10.19–25 (Scholer, *Proleptic Priests*, 128; Gray, *Godly Fear*, 147).

47 Attridge, *Hebrews*, 108.

48 The priestly duties in the first tent are also performed διὰ παντός (9.6).

49 Laub, *Bekennntnis und Auslegung*, 234, believes the exhortation to hold fast to the confession is the 'paraenetic center of gravity for the letter'.

50 Grässer, *Hebräer (Hebr 1–6)*, 251. Though baptismal language and imagery undoubtedly inform 10.22, R. Williamson ('The Eucharist and the Epistle to the Hebrews', *NTS* 21 [1974–75] 300–12) has convincingly demonstrated the improbability of finding eucharistic faith or practice within Hebrews.

51 See 5.7–9. Quite possibly the longest epistolary consideration of the historical Jesus, this passage is characterized by an intertwining of sonship and high priest Christologies. In 5.7, the Son 'offers' (προσφέρω) 'prayers and pleadings' (δεήσεις καὶ ἱκετηρίας) with a 'loud cry and tears'. His status as Son is confirmed by the fact that 'because of his reverence'

edness come to its fullest expression in the hostile public sphere (3.6, 14; 12.5–11), responding to ἀντιλογία with ὁμολογία.⁵²

Further indication of a dual setting for the confession is evident in the key term παρρησία, ‘boldness, confidence’. Characterizing both the confession (3.6) and entry (4.16; 10.19), παρρησία is also commended in a public context (10.35).⁵³ Both subjective and objective elements adhere to this term’s use. It denotes an affective state of confidence as well as the underlying beliefs that provide a lasting basis for the confidence. Certainly both subjective and objective elements attend the author’s presentation of the high priestly achievement of Christ. They are equally apparent in the Son’s conferral of family membership, and the recipients’ expected bold confession. And though both Christological presentations promote confident sacrificial entry and confession, in a public milieu the sonship Christology would be especially effective. The recipients’ sense of belonging in the family of God would undoubtedly provide the surest footing in hostile circumstances requiring bold identification with Jesus the Son of God.⁵⁴

Conclusion

In his dramatic account of the Son’s exaltation, the author of Hebrews establishes a pattern of reciprocative confessions of familial belonging, modeled successively by the Father and the Son. The remedy to the recipients’ waning commitment is provided by their surprising inclusion in the cast of this ‘sacred action’, as they are offered a ‘speaking part’ in the unfolding drama. To the Son’s conferral of membership in the family of God, they are exhorted to offer a

(εὐλάβεια), his pleadings were heard by the ‘One able to save him from death’ (5.7). Sonship Christology is prominent in 5.8, for ‘although being a Son’, Jesus is said to have ‘learned obedience from the things he suffered’.

52 Cf. the exemplary behavior of Moses in 11.24–26. The author focuses on Moses’ rejection of a sonship associated with privilege and sin in favor of costly identification with the ‘people of God’ and the ‘reproach of Christ’.

53 A public context of confident testimony may also be envisioned in 3.6. So Attridge, *Hebrews*, 112; D. A. deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle ‘to the Hebrews’* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2000) 139.

54 Locating the recipients’ παρρησία solely in the high priestly work of Christ are Thompson, ‘Hebrews 5:11–14 and Greek Paideia’, 32–3; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 284; Weiss, *Hebräer*, 252, 298; Lindars, *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*, 10–15, 59, 85, 113; Lane, *Hebrews*, 79, 115–16, 283; A. C. Mitchell, ‘Holding on to Confidence: ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ in Hebrews’, in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World* (ed. J. T. Fitzgerald; NovTSup 82; Leiden: Brill, 1996) 203–26 (217, 220, 223–6). Recognizing the importance of both high priest and Son of God Christologies to the recipients’ παρρησία are deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 336; Koester, *Hebrews*, 253. Though he acknowledges the relationship of familial belonging and παρρησία in his discussion of 3.1–6, Gray neglects it entirely when treating 4.14–16; 10.19–25; and 10.35 (*Godly Fear*, 140–1, 143–8, 154–5).

reciprocal confession of familial mutuality and identification. Perhaps operating at an unconscious level in its appeal to the innate familial instincts of the recipients, this potent exhortation addresses their deepest needs, providing the surest basis for bold interaction with God the Father in the heavenly sanctuary, and enduring, fearless identification with the Son and his family in a hostile world. The preservation of this unique epistle perhaps testifies to its immediate and lasting success at forming and maintaining the family of God.