

The Fourteen “Let Us . . .” Texts in Hebrews and the reason for each

The grammatical form used in each of these 14 texts is called “hortatory subjunctive.” “Hortatory” (from Latin “hortari” = “to exhort, to incite, to encourage”) refers to an exhortation, a proposal, a request, or an encouragement. “Subjunctive” refers to something imagined, conceived, or possible. “Hortatory subjunctive” therefore describes a verb form in which the speaker encourages or exhorts a group of people (usually including himself) to pursue a proposed idea. The verb form is sometimes mistakenly translated as “we ought to . . .” or “you should . . .” but such translations miss the mark. The point of the hortatory subjunctive is not to issue a command, but rather to encourage and move. It’s more about partnership and mutuality than requirement and demand. It’s the church being instructed on how to be the church together.

“Let us . . .” texts	The reason for this “let us . . .”
4:1 – <i>Therefore</i> , while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.	3:19 – <i>So</i> , we see that they [Israel] were unable to enter because of unbelief.
4:11 – Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.	4:9 – <i>So then</i> , there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,
4:14b – let us hold fast our confession.	4:14a – <i>Since then</i> we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God,
4:16 – Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.	4:15 – <i>For</i> we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin
6:1 – <i>Therefore</i> , leaving the elementary doctrine of Christ, let us go on to maturity,	5:12-14 – <i>For</i> by this time <i>you ought</i> to be teachers . . . You need milk, not solid food . . . solid food is for the mature,
10:22 – let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.	10:19-21 – <i>since</i> we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus . . . and <i>since</i> we have a great priest over the house of God . . .
10:23a – Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering . . .	10:23b – <i>for</i> he who promised is faithful
10:24 – And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,	10:23b – <i>for</i> he who promised is faithful
12:1a – let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely . . .	12:1a – <i>Therefore, since</i> we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
12:1b – . . . and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,	12:1a – <i>Therefore, since</i> we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
12:28a – <i>Therefore</i> let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken . . .	12:26 – <i>but now he has promised</i> , “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.”
12:28b – and <i>thus</i> let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe	12:29 – <i>for</i> our God is a consuming fire.
13:13 – <i>Therefore</i> let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.	13:12 – <i>So</i> Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood
13:15 – Through him <i>then</i> let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.	13:14 – <i>For</i> here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.