

2/23/03

## Hebrews 6

Having declared Jesus as our great high priest superior to Aaron and in fulfillment of the Melchizedek order, the author is going to deal with the spiritual condition of these Hebrew-Christians. -This section is the continuation of the digression that began in chapter five and runs to the end of chapter six. Heb. 5:11-6:20

The author Paul has rebuked these Hebrew-Christians for their spiritual degeneracy. Heb. 5:11-14

Remember the second major division dealing with “the work of Christ”. Heb. 4:14-10:18

Now he move on to exhort them to go forwards in the salvation provided for them by Christ.

### 6:1-3 The exhortation towards spiritual maturity.

**6:1-2** The rule is to press forwards spiritually.

- 1) Therefore, this is the conclusion regarding the arrested spiritual state, in view of the fact of your degenerated and infant state. vs. 1a

- 2) Let's put off the rudiments or ABC's, by leaving the discussion of the teaching of Christ. vs. 1b
  - \* They had heard the gospel from those who had received the gospel from the Lord. Heb. 2:3
  - a) They knew and had agreed that Jesus was the Messiah
  - b) They knew they had repented from their sins, trusting the One who purged them from their sins and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Heb. 1:3
  - c) They knew Jesus was the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies.
  - d) They knew Jesus was Yahweh's final revelation to man for salvation.
- 3) Let us go on to perfection. vs. 1c
  - a) The word perfection “teliootes” means mature and adult. Col. 3:14
    - \* Varied form. Heb. 5:14
    - \* The tense is the aorist tense speaking of a once for all action.
  - b) Literally let us be carried to an adult state, as mature believers in the teachings about Christ.
    - \* The proclamation is implying the action of an outside agent, the Holy Spirit.
- 4) The ABC's referred to are given in pairs, six in number.

- a) Not laying again the foundation of: vs. 1d
- 1)) Repentance from dead works.
    - a)) This describes a change of mind of being able to earn salvation by the Law or personal works. Acts 15:10; Rom. 10:1-4; Gal. 3:11-12
    - b)) Christ alone, who became man's representative. Heb. 2:9-10
    - c)) How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb. 9:14; 1Pet. 1:19-21
  - 2)) Faith towards God.
    - a)) This was the principle of Abraham's faith, not the feast, ordinances, sacrifices or any other thing. Rom. 4:6
    - b)) Faith in the gospel message of the only righteousness God except for salvation, faith in Christ, their Great High Priest. Rom. 1:16-17
    - c)) that is, that God was in Christ **reconciling** the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 2Cor. 5:19

- d)) Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb. 10:22
- b) Not laying again the foundation of: Vs. 2a-b
  - \* Some believe 6:2 refers to the Jewish Old Testament, others to the New Testament doctrines, certainly these Hebrew were familiar with these rituals in Judaism but they were equally familiar with their fulfillment in Christ and the topic is Christ apart from Judaism.
- 1)) The doctrine of baptisms.
  - \* This is in the plural, washings.
  - a)) The baptism of John. Lk. 7:29-30
  - b)) The baptism of Jesus, by His disciples. Jn. 4:2
  - c)) The ritual of baptism is after repentance for the believer. Acts 2:38
- 2)) The doctrine of laying on of hands.
  - a)) As in the Old Testament for sin offerings, anointing, commissioning, healing, etc.

- b)) The same in the New Testament. Acts 5:12; 8:17-19; 9:41; 13:3; 28:8; 1Tim. 4:14; 2Tim. 1:6
- c) The doctrine of resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. vs. 2c-d
- 1)) The righteous and the wicked would rise in the last days to be judged, was the general revelation of the Old Testament. Job. 19:25; Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2
- 2)) The New Testament gives the specific revelation between the righteous and wicked under two different judgments.
- a)) Eternal judgment is clear. Matt. 25:41, 46; Jn. 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31; 2Cor. 5:10; Gal. 1:5; 1Tim. 1:17; 2Tim. 4:18; Heb. 13:21; 1Pet. 4:11; 5:11; Jude 25; Rev. 20:10
- b)) How sad it is that many believers are always arguing and trying to persuade others in certain doctrines and never go unto perfection.
- \* These are the very first principles of the doctrine of Christ. the ABC's.

- 1) The author tells them that this is exactly what they are going to do, based on human responsibility, leave the rudimentary principles and go on to maturity.
- \* And this “we” will do.
- 2) The author tells them that it is God who will do it through them, this is the divine side, pressing the believer to maturity.
- \* If God permits.
- 3) What is it that he desires them to press on to as adults?
- a) The High Priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchizedek. Heb. 5:11
- b) And he is going to press them forward and return to the Melchizedek Priesthood type fulfilled in Christ Heb. 7:1
- \* I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him [who is] from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. 1Jn. 2:14
- a. Don't drift from what you have heard, the warning is against disregarding the words of Jesus, so great of salvation, the consequences is eternal loss. Heb. 2:1

- b. Don't disbelieve or depart from the living God, the warning is against unbelief the sufficiency of God for one's salvation, exhort one another to not harden your hearts through the deceitfulness of sin. Heb. 3:12
- c. Don't degenerate in your spiritual growth, the warning is against discrediting the Son of God, and falling away to another system, the consequence being there is no repentance apart from Christ. Heb. 5:12; 6:4-8
- d. Don't despise the Spirit of Grace, the warning is against blaspheme, the consequences are eternal punishment. Heb. 10:29
- e. Don't defy what you have heard, the warning is against disobeying the call of God. Heb. 12:25

### **6:4-8 The warning against falling away spiritually.**

**6:4-5** The proclamation regarding falling away.

- 1) Initial comments.
  - a) Let me say this before I begin vs. 4-6, that I have no delusions of grandeur believing that I am going to fully satisfy everyone of you in the exposition.

- b) There are scholarly and godly men on both sides.
  - c) But I do hope that we will look at the text in its context and allow it to say what it means, without any preconceived ideas that are based on some systematic theology that man has developed and begin to stack scripture to rationalize what we believe it is saying.
  - d) Let us allow the text and its context to give us the biblical theology and then seek to compare it to the full counsel of God in scripture.
  - e) This scripture has probably caused more controversy and anxiety to Christians than any other, along with another in Hebrews. Heb. 10:26-29
- 2) The connecting word "For", connects and depends on verse three, he will take them on to perfection because he does not believe them to be in this fallen away condition yet; for if they were, it would be impossible for him to try and renew them again unto repentance. vs. 4
- \* This is evident as he expresses his confidence in them to go on! vs. 9
- a) The comment is that it is impossible to renew them again to repentance. vs. 6
    - 1)) The word impossible "adunatos" appears ten times in the New

- Testament and it means without strength, powerless, unable.
- 2)) Four of these ten are found in Hebrews. Heb. 6:4, 18; 10:4; 11:6
- a)) Impossible for God to lie. Heb. 6:18
- b)) Not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.
- c)) But without faith it is impossible to please Him. Heb. 11:6
- d)) In every case it means the same, it can not be changed!
- b) Important Observations. Heb. 10:4
- 1)) Now, knowing this we must be careful not to conclude that this is just some hypothetical situation that could never be realized.
- a)) The reason being that the warning then would be useless and meaningless.
- b)) The warning also would be accusing God of using scare tactics that have no real possibility.
- c)) The warning would also declare that the author is exaggerating beyond truth and destroying the inspiration of Scripture.

- 2)) The warning then is not only a warning against such danger but a comfort and exhortation to know they are not beyond reach.
- 6:6** The condemnation regarding falling away. vs. 6
- a) The Greek says “having fallen away”, not if, a participle aorist active. vs. 6a
- b) The word used is “parapipto” is made up of two words and appears only this time in the New Testament.
- 1)) The first word is “para” alongside.
- 2)) The second word is “peptein” to fall.
- 3)) The word means to fall besides a person or thing, to deviate from the right path.
- \* In Hebrew the word “mahal” corresponds to “parapipto” and is used for a treacherous and unfaithful wife, treachery to Yahweh, for Achan and for falling away from the true worship of Yahweh. Nun. 5:12-27; Deut. 32:51; Jos. 7:1; Ezk. 14:13; 15:8
- c) The word does not refer to mere backsliding or mere falling into sin. Jn. 2:1
- d) The word is not the common word for apostasy “apostasia” but a willful,

- deliberate departure from the faith, crucifying up again Christ and declaring he is deserving of the cross being an imposter to open shame.
- e) The word “aostasia” only is found two times, once for abandoning Moses and the other from God to the Antichrist. Acts 21:21; 2Thess. 2:3
- f) The impossibility is to renew them again to repentance. vs. 6b
- g) The reasons is given to us. vs. 6c-d
- a)) Since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God. vs. 6c  
 \* This is the internal witness of their hearts rejecting Jesus as Messiah, an impostor who deserved to die on the cross!
- b)) And put Him to an open shame. vs. 6d  
 \* This is the external witness of their conduct, voicing their ignominy or infamy by rejection in mockery of Jesus as Messiah!  
 \* The sin unto death. 1Jn.5:16
- 4) Their privilege are described. vs. 4-5
- a) They had been once enlightened or illuminated, in reference to Jesus being the Messiah.  
 \* The same word is used later, “But recall the former days in which, after you were **illuminated**, you

- endured a great struggle with sufferings.” Heb. 10:32
- b) They had once tasted of the heavenly gift, which is salvation, they are called brothers and addressed as believers throughout the letter.  
 \* Some say these are Hebrew who only tasted and not assimilated to be saved but the same word is used of Jesus tasting death for all men. Heb. 2:9
- c) They had become partakers of the Holy Spirit, being illuminated as to Jesus being Messiah, convicted of their sins and repented, they became partners, one with the Holy Spirit.
- 1)) The word partakers “”metokos” means partners, participants. Heb. 3:1, 14
- 2)) Gifts were witnessed by them. Heb. 2:4
- d) They had tasted the good word of God and the power of the age to come.
- 1)) The word “hrema” the spoken word of the gospel.
- 2)) The powers of the age to come refer to the operation of the Holy Spirit to reign supreme in Divine power, be it through the gifts or any other way, as it will be in the Millennium Kingdom .

- 5) The word precedes all of these particular participles and therefore governs them.
- a) These Hebrew were once and for all,  
Heb. 9:7, 26, 27, 28; 12:26, 27
- 6) Questions that need to be asked.
- a) Can a person partake in all this and not be saved?
- 1) Jesus says yes! Matt. 7:21-23
- 2) John says, “They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt continued with us.” 1Jn. 2:19
- b) Can a person partake in all this and be born again and fall away?
- 1) Some say no, and they stack the Scriptures of security.
- 2) But if there is no possibility then the warning would be useless, there being no possibility.
- 3) It would be equivalent to saying that there was no possibility of Jesus failing in his testing, if He could not have failed them there was no real testing or victory over Satan and God lied to us.
- c) A look at the Parable of the Sower.  
Matt. 13
- 1) Some fell by the wayside.
- 2) Some fell on stony ground.
- 3) Others fell on thorns and thistles.

- 4) Some fell on good ground.
- d) Were they ever born again #2 and #3?  
God only knows!
- 1) If a woman has a miscarriage, does it mean the child was never conceived or had life? I don't think so!
- 2) I don't think we can exclude the possibility of one to walk away from the faith!
- e) These were Hebrews going back to animal sacrifice and Jewish ritual, if they “having fallen away” as text states and once again depended on those for the basis of their repentance, it would be impossible to renew them to repentance again under the Jewish system!
- \* But if they repented and came back and trusted Jesus, the impossibility to renew them would no longer exist!

**6:7-8** The illustration for falling away.

- \* It is simple and can not be misunderstood.
- 1) Those who abide in Christ are presented first.
- \* For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is

cultivated, receives blessing from God.” vs. 7

- a) The earth and rain represent the Divine side through the gospel, the conviction of the Holy Spirit and conversion to bear fruit.
  - b) The cultivation is the human side of responsibility, which brings about the blessings of God.
    - \* The exhortation to go on to perfection is exactly what this implies!
- 2) Those who do not abide in Christ are presented second.
- \* But if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.
- 1) The bearing of thorns and thistles is not God’s doing but man’s. Is. 5
  - 2) That person is rejected by God and near to being cursed.
    - \* There is a distinction made, some are rejected by God being near to being cursed but are not!
  - 3) That person who is cursed, has reached that impossible line to be renewed to repentance again.
  - 4) The different interpretations.
    - a) The Calvinistic perspective is that these Hebrew Christians were not

born again, they merely tasted short of salvation.

\* But problem is that one has to explain the experiential descriptions of verse four and five that are only ascribed to Christians!

- b)) Some Calvinist will also say that these are born again but the warning is against a fruitless life and losing reward.
    - \* But first the context betrays this interpretation, rewards are not the issue but repentance, and once again, one has to ask how is it that he can be a Christian and crucify to himself the Son of God and put Him to open shame?
  - c)) The Arminians perspective also has problems.
- 3) You should never question your salvation!
- a) You should be assured of your salvation by the fruit in your life! Jn. 15:8
  - b) Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. 2Pet. 1:10
  - c) Grow up to maturity according to your spiritual age.

**6:9-20      The assurance of the believer's salvation.**

\* The author is going to talk to them about things that accompany salvation on a positive note, which will in turn give them full assurance of hope unto the end.

**6:9-10**-*The assurance of salvation through faith and works.*

**6:9**      The confidence of Paul is expressed.

- 1) The word “but” stands in sharp contrast to those who “having fallen away” can not be renewed to repentance.
- 2) He expresses the only tender affection in the entire letter by calling them “beloved”, the only occurrence in the letter.
  - a) Those who have received the love of God by and through His Son as Messiah.
  - b) Those who have a godly love for each other.
- 3) He expresses his confidence in them of better things that accompany salvation, even though he spoke in this manner.
  - a) Better things than those in verse six through eight, even though they had warned them about their drifting and not resting in the finished work of their salvation in Christ.

- b) He was confident in them of better things than those who had fallen away.
- c) The word confident “peitho” means to be persuaded.
  - \* The plural pronoun is used “we”, indicating the author and others that were with him at the time.
- d) The author will enumerate some of “these things that accompany salvation” in the following verses which provide evidence of a Christ-like life that is focused on others, not self, one of maturity and growth.
  - 1) Faith and works. vs. 9-10
  - 2) Faith and patience. vs. 11-12
  - 3) Faith in God’s promises. vs. 13-15
  - 4) Faith in God’s inability to lie. vs. 16-18c
  - 5) Faith in God’s choice of great high Priest. vs. 18d-20

**6:10**      Paul says they should be assured of their salvation based on their faith and works. vs. 10

- 1) He says that God is not unjust to forget their work and labor of love they had shown in the past. vs. 10a
  - a) Their faith in God is evident by their works for God.

- 1)) The word works “ergon” means business, industriousness.
- 2)) The word labour “kopos” means fatigue to the point of exhaustion.
- b) God is not unrighteous to forget their motives behind these works or let them go unnoticed!
  - 1)) They were done in love “agape”.
  - 2)) The Christian life is a life of faith. Heb. 11:6; 10:38
- c) Their works of faith were done in the Name of Jesus.
- 2) He says they not only have ministered to the saints in the past but also are in the present. vs. 10b-c
  - a) The word minister “diakoneo” means to be an attendant, to wait on tables.
  - b) The word is used for the deacons chosen in Acts. Acts 6:2; 1Tim. 3:10
- 3) We must understand that the author is not saying that salvation is earned by works, but that salvation is of faith and manifests works as a result of salvation. Eph. 2:8-9
  - a) Paul uses Abraham as the Father of faith apart from works to merit salvation. Rom. 4:1-5
  - b) James uses Abraham as the Father of faith who gave evidence of salvation by his works. Ja. 2:14-26

- c) Jesus said, “When you do it to the least, you do it unto Me”. Matt. 25:40
- d) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye always steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. 1Cor. 15:58

**6:11-12** The assurance of salvation through faith and patience.

**6:11** The plead of Paul is personal and individual.

- 1) The author says that they should continue this conduct till the end and full assurance. vs. 11
  - a) The process is individual and personal.
  - b) The author desires that everyone of them make evident in their lives in the future what they have made evident in the past and present.
  - c) The word diligence “spoude” means dispatch, make haste, be earnestness, with the idea of speed.
- 2) The product for the individual would be assurance of his or her salvation.
  - a. The phrase full assurance “plerophoria” means entire confidence.

- b. The word is used of a ship in full sail or tree full of fruit
- c. In other words, their eagerness to be used by God's love in works would produce full confidence assurance in their hope of salvation unto the end.

**6:12** Paul says they should be assured of their salvation based on their faith and patience.

- 1) The author says this type of life-style will make them like past spiritual men. vs. 12
  - a) This type of obedience will serve as a preventative measure, so they do not become sluggish or falling back.
  - b) The word sluggish "nothros" is the same word used in chapter five, "dull of hearing". Heb. 5:11  
\* Used of a numbed limb or ill animal.
  - c) They had once keenness of hearing but had fallen into a dulled condition, they were to exercise their faculties and develop them to the full potential.
- 2) This type of obedience will serve as to make them spiritual.
  - a) The word "but" reveal the sharp contrast between being sluggish and being diligent.
  - b) They were to imitate those through faith and patience inherit the promise.

- 1) The word imitate "mimetes" means imitate and follow spiritual examples.
  - 2) Those who are obedient to live their lives through faith and patience.
- 3) Faith and patience will accompany salvation which in turn will manifest faith and works.
    - a) The testing of our faith works patience and patience brings about a complete work that in turn brings about maturity in us. Ja. 1:2-4
    - b) The fruitfulness of Christian virtues. 2Pet. 1:5-11
    - c) The fruitfulness of good works. Tit. 3:8
    - d) Predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son. Rom. 8:29
    - e) Does not the scripture tell us that faith, hope and love are abiding virtues yet the greatest is love agape! 1Cor. 13:13
  - 4) They would inherit the promises.
    - a) The promises that are given to us in Christ Jesus. 2Pet. 1:3-4
    - b) The promises as being children of God. 2Cor. 1:20
    - c) So again we have assurance of our salvation by faith and patience!

**6:13-15** - *The assurance of salvation through faith in the promises of God.*

- 1) Abraham is used as an illustration of all that has been said resulting in the blessing of God's promise.  
\* He is quoting Genesis after Abraham had offered Isaac. Gen. 22:16-18
- 2) Faith and works was evident when Abraham offered Isaac in obedience.
- 3) Faith in God's promise was Abraham's confidence, to bless, provide lineage of Messiah. vs.13-14
- 4) Faith and patience was demonstrated by Abraham for he knew that God was even able to raise Isaac from the dead, but God provided a substitute. vs.15
- 5) So we have assurance of our salvation by faith in God's promises!
  - a) So we have assurance of our salvation by faith and works!
  - b) The Christian life is a life of faith, Heb.11:6; 10:38.

**6:16-18** - *The assurance of salvation through faith in God's ability not to lie.*

**6:16** The manner of man's assurance.

- 1) This is an illustrated from the lesser to the greater. vs. 16
- 2) Most men take an oath based on something greater than themselves to

confirm their truthfulness and honest intent and it seems to settle the doubt.

- 3) Witnesses are asked to take an oath on the Bible in court
- 4) People sometimes will swear on their mother's grave.
- 5) God is not a man... Num. 23:17

**6:17** The manner of God's assurance to man.

- 1) God having no need to take an oath because He is unable to lie, He was more willing and beyond what was necessary to interpose Himself by an oath to demonstrate His unchangeableness, immutability.
- 2) God condescended to hold Himself responsible to bring to pass what He promised as confirmation.

**6:18** The certainty of God's promises.

- 1) The two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie are stated.
  - a) The promise.
  - b) The oath.
- 2) God used these for the purpose that the believer might have great comfort.
- 3) So we have assurance of our salvation by faith and works, faith and patience, faith in God's promises and faith in God's inability to lie.

\* Fourteen times God's promises are made reference to. Heb. 4:1; 6:12, 15, 17; 7:6; 8:6; 9:15; 10:36; 11:9, 13, 17, 33, 39

- 4) The comfort of the believer is not only in that God promised, took an oath and is unable to lie, but that the believer has fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before him.
- a) The word refuge probably struck these Hebrews as they were familiar with the cities of refuge, three were on each side of the Jordan River, in case of an accidental killing they would providing hope to live. Num. 35
  - b) He would have to abide in the city for the duration of the high priest's life, then he would be free to leave.
  - c) Jesus is that high Priest, but will never die, so we must abide forever.

**6:19-20**-*The assurance of salvation through faith in God's choice of Great High Priest.*

**6:19** The confident hope.

- 1) This hope is in the refuge of the High Priesthood of Christ an anchor of the soul.
  - a) An anchor is a metaphor to show why they are drifting, departing and

degenerating, their anchor is not in Christ.

- b) This anchor is in heaven, not earth!
- c) There are only four references to an anchor in Scripture. Acts 27:29-30, 40; Heb. 6:19
  - 1)) It represented the faith and hope of Christians, they are found in the walls of the catacombs in Rome.
  - 2)) It represented the guarantee of being in a fixed position or location, despite the currents and the tide.
- 2) It is both sure and steadfast.
  - a) Sure "sphollo" means not to totter.
  - b) Steadfast "bebian" means sustaining one's step in going.
- 3) Which hope the believer has, Christ having entered into and within the veil.
- 4) And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love. 1Cor. 13:13

**6:20** The identity of this hope.

- 1) He is a forerunner "prodromos" meaning a runner ahead, a scout.
  - a) The word is used of one sent for observations to prepare the way, especially in military matters. Jn. 14:6

- b) Jesus, the trail-blazer and point-man who cleared the way for all to come to God.
- 2) Jesus has passed through the heavens, entered and sat own at the right hand of God. Heb. 1:3, 4:14
- 3) Jesus has been made a high Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.
- 4) Jesus has entered in for us. Heb. 10:19-24
  - \* You can have faith in the first four things and they will be absolutely worthless without the fifth, God's choice of great high Priest, Jesus.
  - a) Faith and works. vs. 9-10
  - b) Faith and patience. vs. 11-12
  - c) Faith in God's promises. vs. 13-15
  - d) Faith in God's inability to lie. vs. 16-18c
  - e) Faith in God's choice of great high Priest. vs. 18d-20
- 5) We have assurance of our salvation by faith in God's choice of High Priest.