

The first three verses of Chapter Five conclude the statement about the second point. The rest of the chapter introduces the important theme of the appointment of Christ as High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. He met all requirements necessary to become High Priest. Two things distinguished Him from Aaron: (1) His sinlessness; (2) His appointment after the order of Melchizedek. Christ's earthly ministry was marked by His devotion and obedience to God. He is the Cause of salvation since He completed the requirements for becoming the perfect Saviour; and because of this, God designated Him High Priest.

The mention of the change of order from Aaron to Melchizedek brought to mind the spiritually undeveloped state of Hebrew Christians and became the occasion for rebuking them because of their inability to appreciate this phase of Christ's ministry in their behalf. Chapters Six and Seven continue to enlarge upon this issue.

B. *Exhortation to go on to perfection.* 6:1-3.

### *Text*

6:1-3

1 Wherefore leaving the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on unto perfection; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit.

### *Paraphrase*

1 Wherefore, since ye ought by this time to have been capable of strong food, dismissing the discourse concerning the principles of the Christian doctrine, as contained in the ancient revelations, let us proceed to the deep meaning of these revelations, and of the figures and prophecies in the law, which is the perfection of Christian knowledge, not explaining a second time the fundamental principles of repentance from works which merit death; and of faith in God;

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, as emblematical of that purity of mind which the worshippers of God ought to possess; and of the laying on of hands on the sacrifices, as an acknowledgment

that the offerer deserved death for his sins; and of the resurrection of the dead; and of the eternal judgment, so called because its sentences will never be reversed,

3 And this more perfect instruction I will give you, if God permit, by preserving you from apostatizing till ye have an opportunity to read and consider this letter.

*Wherefore leaving doctrine of the first principles*

The initial steps are the simple things:

- a. Isaiah 35:8: Observe what Isaiah said: "Wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err."
- b. These first principles are named in verses one and two. They are not "left," but serve as the foundation.
  - a. Not left in the sense that they are forsaken.
  - b. Paul, in I Cor. 12 and 13, discusses the gifts of the Spirit and says, faith, hope and love are greater.

*let us press on*

Paul set the example, saying, "I press toward the mark." Phil. 3:14.

The Christian that isn't growing is going back toward the world.

*to perfection*

Perfection is of God:

Psa, 18:32: "The God that girdeth me with strength and maketh my way perfect."

Psa. 138:8: "Jehovah will perfect that which concerneth me.

Thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, endureth forever."

God is the standard:

Matt. 5:48: "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

The part of God's Word in perfection — our guide is perfect.

- a. James 1:25: "But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing."
- b. II Tim. 3:16-17: "Every scripture inspired of God, is also profitable for teaching — ."  
Our Saviour was perfect. See 4:15 and 5:9.

*not laying again a foundation*

In building a house we do not leave the foundation, yet to be always at work building it would be ridiculous.

- a. The structure ought to rise above the foundation.
- b. One foundation for a building is sufficient.

God speaks of us as His building.

I Cor. 3:9: "Ye are God's building."

Eph. 2:22: "In whom ye also are builded together — ."

Col. 2:7: . . . "rooted and builded up in Him."

*of repentance*

Some people are always in some scrape. They are always in need of forgiveness and repentance.

- a. Repentance means that we do not continue in evil, occasionally regretting it.
- b. John's listeners needed to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.

We are not to live in constant need of repentance, but to avoid evil.

*from dead works*

The past of an individual is to be buried at baptism and ought never to need repenting of again.

What is "dead works"?

- a. The vain effort to relieve a troubled conscience by legal obedience.
- b. It is not service, but religious performances.
- c. Newell has a unique idea here:
  1. He says that Gentiles were commanded to repent of sins. Acts 8:22. They were never commanded to repent of dead works.
  2. Milligan, however, feels that this is using the word in too limited a sense.
- d. Works of the law were dead works, but surely "dead works" refers to all services of Satan.

*and of faith towards God*

The initial faith that caused one to act for God must not be considered sufficient.

- a. Genuine faith produces righteousness.

- b. Few men disbelieve in a higher Power, but this is not sufficient. The Jew had a faith in God, What he needed was a faith that included Jesus Christ.

*of the teaching of baptisms*

Why "baptisms" in the plural?

- a. Chrysostom: Because they who returned to first principles abrogated their first baptism.
- b. Calvin: "Baptisms" didn't have reference to many baptisms but solemn rites or the stated days of baptizing.
- c. John Owen, translator of Calvin's commentary: "Some of these folk had been baptized by John, some were afterwards baptized only in the name of Christ (Acts 19:5); others were baptized in the name of the trinity."
- d. This may allude to the Levitical law, says Clarke, for they had immersions, sprinklings, washings.
- e. Some say the two baptisms that John preached, baptism in the Holy Spirit and in fire. Matt. 3:11.
- f. Newell says, "Plural because unto the Jews God had prescribed."
  1. John the Baptist's baptism.
  2. Christian baptism.
- g. Milligan says, (1) a baptism in water in which all penitent believers who confess Christ are introduced into his body; (2) a baptism in the Holy Spirit administered by Christ himself to all who are really begotten by the Spirit and born of the water; and (3) a baptism in fire by means of which the wicked will all be finally overwhelmed in sufferings.  
The point to gain is that it is an initiatory step, and one is not to sit on the edge of the baptistry.

*and of laying on of hands*

The "laying on of hands" on the baptized was an apostolic practice by which miraculous gift of tongues, etc., was bestowed.

- a. The evidence from scripture:
  1. See Acts 8:14b, 15: "Peter and John, who, when they were came down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit." v. 17: "Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit."

2. Acts 19:6: Paul laid on his hands, and they spoke with tongues.
- b. Two groups were able to impart gifts:
1. The apostles, Acts 19:6: "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them and they spoke with tongues and prophesied." II Tim. 1:6: " — gift in thee through the laying on of my hands."
  2. The presbytery, I Tim. 4:14: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."  
The laying on of hands was also connected with bodily healings. Acts 5:12: "By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people." Cf. Acts 9:41 and 28:8.  
It was also done to set aside men for special tasks:
- a. The seven in Jerusalem set aside for the care of Grecian widows. Acts 6:6.
  - b. Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:3.  
A warning as in order; laying on of hands was not to be done hastily. I Tim. 5:22.

*and of resurrection of the dead*

Does he mean "raised to walk in newness" from the dead, a spiritual condition, or does he mean a physical death?

- a. Resurrection is a tenet of faith, a phase of the gospel.
1. Peter used the resurrection story to persuade the Jews of sin against God.
2. After this doctrine is believed, we are to press on to matters of life.

An Easter and Christmas religion is too apparent in our day, and no doubt was in theirs.

- a. Many people go to church on Easter and sometimes on Christmas and never again during the year.
- b. The resurrection is one of the primary things, for it is a part of the gospel. I Cor. 15:1-5.

It was the judgment to come, included in Paul's sermon, that terrified Felix. See Acts 24:25.

- a. A fear or a confidence is not sufficient.
- b. We are to build a wonderful Christian life on the foundation of our belief.

- c. The fact that we are to be raised should be an inducement to repent and to live righteously.  
Resurrection and judgment are connected with our Lord's resurrection, Acts 17:31 and Acts 24:25.

*and of eternal judgment*

An impelling motive is fear, a first principle.

- a. A person who progresses in the Christian life has less fear in proportion to how much love is increased.  
b. The reason some never repent is that they have never heard this doctrine of judgment.

The apostles were not afraid to preach this doctrine.

- a. Paul used fear of judgment with Felix, Acts 24:25.  
b. Peter used fear to move the people on Pentecost.  
c. Jesus taught it.

Observe that six things have been named in the life that begin in relationship to Christ.

- a. Repentance from dead works.  
b. Faith toward God.  
c. Baptisms.  
d. Laying on of hands.  
e. Resurrection from the dead.  
f. Eternal judgment.

*Building*

Temperance

Meekness

Faith

Goodness

Gentleness

Longsuffering

Peace

Joy

Love

Faith

Baptism

Resurrection

Repentance Laying on Hands

Judgment

*Foundation*

*and this will we do*

"And this will we do" refers to 6:1.

- a. What will we do?

1. Leave the first principles. 6:1.
2. Press on to perfection. 6:1.  
Paul uses the word "we", perhaps to speak generally and personally.

*if God permit*

This is a warning to the backslider.

- a. Work now without delay, for there will not always be the opportunity for making progress.
- b. Perhaps the Apostate has rejected God as in Noah's evil day when God will not always strive. Gen. 6:3.
- c. Remember Jacob could not change his promise although Esau begged. Heb. 12:17.

There are other views on this expression.

- a. Milligan: "This we will do with the help of God."
- b. Newell: "We beg you, guard your heart against that awful thought, that there are those truly seeking to get back to God whom He will not receive."

Let us remember that there is an unpardonable sin.

- a. The verses, Matt. 12:31-33: All sin be forgiven but against the Holy Spirit. Heb. 6:4: It is impossible to renew them who have turned back into sin.
- b. Jesus did not say all would be forgiven if men desired it, but that one sin could not be forgiven.

### *Study Questions*

866. What does verse one say to leave?
867. Does it mean to forsake them?
868. Do we actually leave them or build upon them?
869. What are "first principles"? Do they refer to "rudiments" in 5:12, or the "foundation" referred to in 6:1?
870. Define "pressing on".
871. Is a half-hearted attempt pressing on?
872. What did Paul say about pressing on in Phil. 3:14?
873. What is our standard of perfection?
874. Can we use God and Christ both as a standard?
875. How do we know Christ to be a perfect standard? Cf. 4:15; 5:9.
876. What part does the scripture have in perfection? See II Tim. 3:16-17.

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

877. Do we need any other guidebook according to this?
878. How many foundations are made when one is building a house?
879. How many should we have to build upon in our lives?
880. If a person spent a lifetime building a foundation on his house, would we consider him wise?
881. What verses speak of us as a building?
882. Does this verse condemn repentance?
883. What kind of person is in constant need of repentance?
884. What could be listed as "dead works"? Does "dead works" pertain to the law, since they were mentioned in Hebrews?
885. Should we have to continually repent of sins that have been buried in baptism?
886. Do we need to try to repent of some dead and buried sin?
887. If we truly repent of a sin, do we ever need to repent of it again?
888. Are we to repent of faith toward God, or does "faith" refer back to "Let us press on to perfection"?
889. How can we ever get to the place where we are not laying a foundation of faith?
890. What can you build upon if you are to press beyond the foundation of faith?
891. Does I Cor. 13:13 have a bearing on the subject?
892. Is a life prompted by love greater than one prompted by faith? Explain.
893. Why does he say "faith toward God"?
894. Is baptism in verse 2 singular or plural?
895. Why is baptism in the plural here? Did the Hebrews have two?
896. What baptism could be referred to? What have men suggested?
897. Is the Christian baptized more than once?
898. Were the early Christians who were first followers of John baptized the second time?
899. If baptism is an initial act of obedience, what should be expected to follow?
900. What does the laying on of hands refer to?
901. Who did the laying on of the hands?
902. Could all Christians impart special powers? Cf. Acts 8:15-17.



## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

903. Could "the presbytery" refer to apostles who were considered elders?
  904. What accompanied the laying on of hands?
  905. Was it always to impart miraculous gifts? Cf. Acts 6:6; 13:3.
  906. Was this to be done with great care? Cf. I Tim. 5:22.
  907. What "resurrection of the dead" is referred to, ours or Christ's?
  908. Is the doctrine of the Christ's resurrection something to build upon?
  909. Is our resurrection from the watery grave to be built upon?
  910. Does the observance of Easter and the indifference until a year later indicate a spiritual illness like the Hebrews had?
  911. How often did the apostles refer to the resurrection? With what subjects is it connected? Cf. Acts 24:15; 17:31.
  912. What special way did Peter use the doctrine of Christ's resurrection on the day of Pentecost?
  913. Do you suppose that some assume we will inherit eternal life regardless of failure to grow just because it is so freely promised?
  914. How can eternal judgment be a foundation?
  915. Is fear a very strong impelling motive?
  916. Does fear decrease as love increases?
  917. Should we preach the doctrine of eternal judgment?
  918. What will we do according to verse one?
  919. Why does he use the "we"? Has Paul failed to see the need of learning first principles?
  920. Is he saying we will do this, or is there some doubt about the ability to accomplish it?
  921. Is it the same expression as in James 4:15?
  922. Is it a warning lest they fall into a state of apostasy so severe as to keep them from finding God's help?
  923. Name a day when God's Spirit would not strive.
- C. *The awful consequences of falling away.* 6:4-8.

### *Text*

6:4-8

4 For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit,

5 and tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. 7 For the land which hath drunk the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them for whose sake it is also tilled, receiveth blessings from God: 8 but if it beareth thorns and thistles, it is rejected and nigh unto a curse; whose end is to be burned.

### *Paraphrase*

4 For it is impossible for us to restore a second time, by repentance, those who have been once enlightened by believing the Gospel; and have tasted of the heavenly gift of freedom from the yoke of the law of Moses, and from the grievous superstitions of heathenism, which is bestowed on Jews and Gentiles under the Gospel; and have been made partakers of the gifts of the Holy Ghost at their baptism;

5 And have perceived the excellence of the Word of God, the doctrines and promises of the Gospel; and have seen the efficacy of the powers of the Gospel dispensation in reforming sinners;

6 And yet have renounced the Gospel, in the imagination that Jesus was justly punished with death as an imposter, crucifying a second time in their own mind, and making a public example of the Son of God, by inwardly approving of, and consenting to His punishment.

7 In giving up such wilful sinners as incorrigible, we act as men do in cultivating their fields. For the land which drinketh in the rain which often falleth upon it, and produceth fruits fit for the use of them by whom it is cultivated, continueth to be cultivated, and receiveth a blessing from God:

8 But that which, being duly cultivated and watered, produceth only thorns and briars, is reprobated by the husbandman as not worthy of culture, and soon will fall under the curse, and in the end will be burnt up with drought.

### *Comment*

*For as touching those who were once enlightened*

Obviously, full Christians are up for discussion.

a. Clarke's commentary: "I do not consider them as having any

reference to any person professing Christianity. They are not applicable to backsliders of any kind."

- b. Enlightenment refers to those who have known.
- c. This expression is the mark of a true Christian.
- 1. 10:32: Paul points out that the Hebrew brethren were once enlightened and endured affliction.
- 2. Eph. 5:8 "Now are ye light in the Lord."
- 3. Col. 1:12: Saints in the light.
- 4. I Thess. 5:5: Sons of light.
- 5. I Peter 2:9: Into His marvelous light.
- 6. I John 2:10: "He that loveth his brother abideth in light." If "once enlightened" does not refer to Christian people, how many repetitions of enlightenment does it take to make one a Christian?  
Notice the word "impossible" appears in this expression in the King James version.
- a. In the American Standard it appears in verse 6.
- b. In the Greek it is in vs. 4: "For impossible (it is) those once for all enlightened —"

*and tasted of the heavenly gift*

God's word should always be sweet to us, but to some it is not.

- a. Milligan: "The word 'tasted' means to experience, partake."
- b. Newell: "— makes a difference in tasting and drinking." (p. 187)
  - 1. A person can "taste" and be lost, he says.
  - 2. The drinkers are truly saved.
    - a) The drinker commits himself to what he drinks and is therefore saved.
    - b) He says thousands taste of the heavenly gift, eternal life, who never drink that water.
    - c) The context shows that he is desperate for a point of view. What is meant, "the heavenly gift"?
- a. See the scriptures that offer suggestions.
  - 1. John 6:51: Christ, the Living Bread that came down from heaven.
  - 2. I Peter 2:3: "... if ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."
  - 3. Psalm 104:34: Meditation of Him shall be sweet.
- b. Others say it refers to the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38.
- c. Others say it refers to the new life.

1. John 6:33: "The bread of God is He who cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world."
2. John 4:1-14: To the woman at the well.
3. John 3:36.
4. I John 5:12: "— He who hath the Son hath life."
  - a. Salvation in Christ is most likely meant, for in this section he names the word of God, Holy Spirit; so salvation remains.
  - b. Christ is a gift; grace is a gift.
  - c. The gift of salvation and Christ were experienced by these Hebrews.

*and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit*

We are made partakers when we confess Jesus as Lord.

I Cor. 12:3: "No man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit." John 14:17: "Even the Spirit of Truth whom the world can not receive; for it beholdeth Him not." John 7:39: "But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive, for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

We are made partakers when we are baptized. Acts 2:38: Gift of the Holy Spirit: Gal. 4:6: "Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Newell says this is not the same as "sealed unto the day of redemption". Eph. 4:30.

Eph. 4:30: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit in whom ye are sealed."

Eph. 1:13-14: "Ye were sealed."

He says we can be a partner but never sealed, and uses Judas as an illustration.

Who but a Christian has been a partaker of the Holy Spirit?

*and tasted the good word of God*

Taste is a wonderful ability and is appreciated the most spiritually, for the Word of God is sweet. Ps. 19:10: "Thy word is sweeter than honey." 119:103: "— words sweeter than honey to my soul."

John speaks of the Word, Rev. 10:10: "It was in my mouth sweet as honey."

*and the powers of the age to come*

By faith we see in spirit the blessed immortality that is hid from our physical senses.

- a. Milligan says this is the highest stage of Christian experience.
  1. Enlightened.
  2. Tasted of the heavenly gift.
  3. Made to partake of the influences of the Holy Spirit.
  4. Experience of the excellence of God's Word.
  5. Participation in the full powers of the new dispensation.
- b. The pull of eternity, longing for heaven, is an experience that the redeemed feel.
- c. Clarke suggests two opinions:
  1. It perhaps refers to all the miracles that Jesus did.
  2. The communications and foretastes of eternal blessedness and joys of the world to come.
- d. It must refer to the experience of divine things to the end that you feel a powerful longing for heaven. Phil. 1:23: "But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for it is very far better, yet to abide in the flesh is far more needful for your sake."

*and then fell away*

Here we have a warning that much experience may be lost.

- a. Let no man blame God after experiencing all this.
- b. When we go astray, we are rushing headlong into ruin of our own accord.
- c. Overconfidence may cause one to fall. I Cor. 10:12.  
What is the meaning of "fall away"?
  - a. This is not a participation in some sin in which a person has been tempted.
    1. It is a renouncing of the grace of God.
    2. It is a forsaking of the Word of God, extinguishing the light.
    3. It is a relinquishing of a participation of the Holy Spirit.
    4. It is an abandonment of desire for the advocate.
  - b. When a person comes to the place where he can be shown a passage of scripture and says, "I don't care," then he has fallen.

Jesus taught that men could fall away. John 15:6: "If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered;

and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.”

“having fallen away” is a translation of this, as seen by the Word.

- a. The Greek word is *parapesontas*.
  1. It is an aorist participle of *parapipto*.
  2. The word is *parapipto* — “fall away”.
- a) The word is compounded from *para* meaning “alongside”, and *piptein*, “to fall”.
  3. Thayer: “Hence to deviate from the right path, to turn aside, to wander. In scripture to fall away from the true faith, from Christianity.”
  4. This is the only place in the New Testament that this word appears.
- b. A second Greek word for “falling away” is *aphistemi*.
  1. It means to separate from, either by one’s will (voluntarily) or by the will of another.
  2. Observe the use of the word. Newell, p. 192.
- a) Four times in Luke: Luke 2:37: “Anna departed not from the temple.” 4:13: “And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him for a season.” 8:13: Those on the rocky ground “ — in time of temptation fall away.” 13:27: “Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.” Observe here the will of another.
- c. Other uses: Acts 19:9: Paul — “departed from them (the Jews) and separated the disciples.” I Tim. 4:1: “And in later times some shall fall away from the faith.” I Tim. 6:5: “From such withdraw thyself.” II Tim. 2:19: “Let every one that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness.”
- d. A very specific use is in Heb. 3:12.
  1. The Greek is *apostenai*.
    - a) From this word we get the word “apostasy”.
    - b) Apostasy, Webster: “Abandonment of what one has voluntarily professed; total desertion of principles or faith.”
  2. The noun is *apostasia*. It appears twice: Acts 21:21: Here Paul is accused of abandoning Moses. II Thess. 2:3: Here is a general apostasy from God to the antichrist. What is the extent of “falling away”?
    - a. What it is not.
      1. It is not a falling into sin.

2. The sinner can return and be forgiven, if he has only sinned.
    - a) I John 2:1: "If any man sin, we have an advocate."
    - b. It is a falling away from God, from Christ, from salvation; a renouncing of the truth.
      1. The "once" of v. 4 shows these acts to have been done in the past.
      2. These referred to here have turned back to the sin they once loved.
      3. These have turned away from the light and have come to hate it.
      4. See Heb. 10:26-31.
        - Life of repentance
        - Life of unwilling sin
          1. Enlightened.
          2. Tasted of the heavenly gift.
          3. Made partakers of the Holy Spirit.
          4. Tasted the good Word of God.
          5. Tasted the powers of the age to come.
- I John 2:1 — Advocate — GOD  
for one who willingly sins, it is impossible to renew him again unto repentance. There is no more sacrifice for high-handed sin.

*it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance*

Observe that the word "impossible" appears in verse 4 in the Greek and in the King James version.

What is meant by "renew"?

- a. It may be rendered, "restore".
- b. Josephus used the word, and applies it to the restoration or renovation of the temple.
 

Does God cut them off, or is it that the sinner is too hardened to be restored?

  - a. There are arguments for both answers.
    1. Old Testament scripture:
      - a) Those that say God gives man up: Gen. 6:3: "My spirit will not strive with man forever." Num. 15:30-31: "— soul that doeth aught with a high hand — shall be cut off." Pro. 1:26: "— I also will laugh in the day of your calamity." Pro. 1:28: "They will call upon me, but I will not answer." Josh. 24:19: "He will not forgive your . . . sins."

- b) Those that say God will forgive; Num. 30:5: "Lord will forgive." Hosea 4:16: Israel had behaved like a backsliding heifer, but God promises He will feed them as sheep."
- 2) New Testament passages:
- a) That God will give man up; Rom. 1:24: "Wherefore God gave them up." Rom. 1:28: "Even as they refused . . . God . . . God gave them up," II Thess. 2:11-12: "God sendeth them a working of error."
- b) Those that say God will forgive: John 3:16: "whosoever." John 6:37: "I will in no wise cast out." II Tim. 2:25: "If peradventure God may give them repentance."
- b. Obviously the negative verses qualify the positive. God's grace can be extended only so far.
1. The reason why it is impossible is found in the word "rejected" of verse 8.  
They have crucified Christ, put Him to an open shame, and God is unwilling for them to repent.
  2. Of course, there is the possibility that such people will not want to repent.

*seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh*

When a person turns back to sin, it appears that he professes that Christ deserved to be crucified as an imposter.

- a. They put a living Christ out of their life, and He is dead to them.
- b. Notice that they who make sin their choice are the ones here discussed.

What actually takes place?

- a. Their manner of life cuts off prayer and repentance.
- b. They cut off His table for the table of demons.
- c. Christian fellowship is replaced by that of the world.
- d. Growth in grace is substituted by a sinking into sin.  
The atheist or infidel cannot do this; only the Christian can "crucify the Son of God afresh".

*and put Him to an open shame.*

The person who goes back to the world brings shame upon Christ.

- a. Christianity becomes a joke to the world when it is given up by a Christian.
- b. It makes Christianity appear powerless.



- c. Christianity appears as hypocrisy to the unbelieving when the believer denounces it.  
If Christianity does not save one from sinning, the critic says, "I told you so".

*For the land which hath drunk the rain that cometh oft upon it*

Soil is used here to illustrate the Christian, of which much is expected.

- a. The Christian drinks, tastes the good Word of God. But it does not always last.  
b. The Christian should be like the good soil in Jesus' parable. Luke 8:4-8.  
The Christian receives so much from God that it is inexcusable for him to do less than to produce fruit.

*and bringeth forth herbs meet for them for whose sake it is also tilled, receiveth blessing from God*

God's seed should strike root at once in our lives. "Herbs" is symbolic of the fruit desired in the life of the Christian.

- a. Good seed and good soil, with refreshment from God, should produce a good harvest.  
b. Let us consider how great an advantage the Christian has over the world.  
Only good fruit may have the blessing of God.

*But if it beareth thorns and thistles*

Christian growth is the point of this parable, and thorns and thistles are the opponents of growth.

- a. Herbs are the things that accompany salvation in vs. 9.  
b. Thorns and thistles result when God is not allowed to be the husbandman.  
The seed of the Gospel is sometimes destroyed by indifference and corrupt affections.

*it is rejected*

God cannot accept thorns and thistles, so rejection is needful.

- a. The greater the expectation, the greater the disappointment in failure.  
b. Thorns and thistles give no encouragement of harvest, so they must be rejected.  
We must examine our lives to see if God will reject us.

*and nigh unto a curse; whose end is to be burned*

The rejected may look forward only to destruction.

- a. Unless repentance takes place, the lake of fire will be their end.
- b. Burning or blessing is our choice to make.

The only alternative for a good husbandman is destruction of the evil.

### *Study Questions*

924. What is meant by, "for as touching"?
925. What kind of persons are referred to in Paul's discussion here?
926. Who is referred to by persons "once enlightened"?
927. Could it be persons who heard and saw the light, but did not embrace it?
928. What other part of the verse seems to indicate that Christian people are referred to?
929. Does not Heb. 10:32 make it specific that Christians are up for discussion?
930. Compare Eph. 5:8; Col. 1:12; I Thess. 5:5; I Pet. 2:9; I John 2:10 to see whether enlightenment is a mark of a Christian.
931. If "enlightened" is not referring to a Christian, how many times must one be illumined before he can become one?
932. In the King James Bible where does the word "impossible" appear? In the American Standard? In the original language?
933. What does "impossible" mean? Is it a final state?
934. What does the word "tasted" mean?
935. Is there a difference between "tasters" and "drinkers"?
936. Is it possible to "taste", but not be a "drinker" of eternal life?
937. Why do some try to make such close distinction here?
938. Observe that some commentators think that "tasters" can be lost but not "drinkers".
939. What possible explanations have been given for the expression, "heavenly gift"?
940. Why could it refer to water or bread of life as in John 6:51 and John 4:1-14?
941. What is the evidence in this verse that would rule the Holy Spirit and Word of God out as being the "tasted" gift?

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

942. Define the word "partakers". Is it the same as "tasting"? When are we made "partakers"?
943. Compare I Cor. 12:3 and Acts 2:38 and Gal. 4:6 to find when we experience the Holy Spirit.
944. Is "partaking" the same as being "sealed"? Eph. 4:30; Eph. 1:13-14.
945. Who but a Christian could be a "partaker" of the Holy Spirit?
946. Why do some try to teach that "partaking" and "sealing" are not the same?
947. Is it fair to speak of Judas as being a "partaker", but not being a "sealed" one to illustrate the Christian state referred to here?
948. Is the word, "taste", here the same word of verse 4?
949. Do people consider God's words good tasting without accepting them?
950. Compare some attitudes found in Ps. 19:10; 119:103; Rev. 10:10.
951. Do the words "good Word of God" imply that some of it is not good?
952. Does the expression "powers of the age to come" refer to the very highest experience yet named in verses 4 and 5? Observe that four things are experienced ahead of this.
953. What could "powers of the age to come" refer to?
954. Could it be the experience of heavenly blessings of joy while we are yet on earth?
955. Why do you think it might be an experience similar to that faced by Paul in Phil. 1:23-24?
956. Is there any significance in the fact that he does not specifically say "fallen from the faith"?
957. Can a person lose all the former things named, at least for a time, according to verse 6?
958. What is this "falling away"? Is it a falling into some specific sin?
959. What is falling away? What is Thayer's definition?
960. Does the context suggest that it is serious?
961. Is this a common word in the New Testament?
962. What is a second Greek word for "falling away"?
963. Does *aphistemi* refer to a separate state that is voluntary, or one forced?

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

964. Compare Luke 13:27 for falling away by the will of another.
965. Compare the Word with Jesus' statement in regard to soil in Luke 8:13.
966. Is the word *aphistemi* always used to indicate "fall away"? Cf. Acts 19:9; I Tim. 6:5; II Tim. 2:19.
967. Compare the word as Paul used it in reference to falling from the faith in I Tim. 4:1.
968. Which Greek word is used in Heb. 3:12?
969. Which one of the Greek words is the root word for our word "apostasy"?
970. Notice that in II Thess. 2:3 an apostasy from God to the antichrist is pointed out.
971. Notice that in Acts 21:21 Paul is accused of "falling" from Moses.
972. Describe "fallen away" in relationship to each of the five experiences previously named.
973. A most important question here: is this falling away a permanent condition?
974. If it is not permanent, then what does the word "impossible" mean in vs. 4 of the King James version or vs. 6 in the American Standard?
975. If "fall away" means to deviate from the right path, to turn away, etc., can we justly infer that once they were in the Way?
976. Can you infer that "falling away" is to fall out of the "Way"?
977. If the word appears only this one time, can we be sure of its meaning when we can't judge its meaning by other texts?
978. Is there another word for "falling away"?
979. Is this the same condition as in Heb. 10:26-31? Why do you think so?
980. Could you say that the fallen one is no longer enlightened, but is in the dark?
981. Of what is such a one tasting in the fallen state?
982. Of what is he partaker?
983. Is he still tasting the Word of God?
984. Is he able to feel power?
985. Is he powerless, like a motor without electricity?
986. Does not God say we have an Advocate in I John 2:1 if we sin?

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

987. What kind of sin is the kind that makes a permanent barrier between God and Man?
988. Are there two kinds of sin involved in the ability to repent, and the inability to be restored?
989. Define the word "renew" in this expression, "renew again unto repentance".
990. Have the translators in the American Standard version made an error by placing the word "impossible" here, obviously teaching that some cannot be restored?
991. Do you feel that you have the right to conclude that some have fallen away, and therefore refuse any effort to restore them?
992. Where is the impossibility to be placed, in the heart of man, or in the attitude of God?
993. Cite some New Testament verses where God gives men up. Rom. 1:24-26; II Thess. 2:11-12.
994. Does God give men up? Note "rejected" in v. 8.
995. Cite instances in the Old Testament where He gave men up. Gen. 6:3; Prov. 1:28; Joshua 24:19.
996. Does He always give them up?
997. Observe that Num. 15:30-31 may be the clue as to why God cuts some off and does not others.
998. In this sixth verse, is the fault with man, that he is in such a state that he cannot be appealed to for repentance?
999. Is it in the mind of God? What does Paul think of God's mind in the matter? Cf. v. 10.
1000. What have such persons done to Christ in v. 6?
1001. Can the infidel or atheist crucify Christ afresh?
1002. Isn't the Christian the only one who can crucify Him afresh?
1003. Does this mean that they put a living Christ out of their life and make Him as one dead?
1004. Does it indicate that such ones consider Christ to be deserving of crucifixion as an impostor?
1005. What actually takes place in the life of such people who crucify Christ afresh and put Him to an open shame?
1006. Do they cut off Bible study, prayer, communion, fellowship, etc.?
1007. Could we say that growth in grace is substituted by sinking into sin?

1008. What is meant by the expression, "put Him to open shame"?
1009. If Christianity does not save the Christian from sinning, does it make Christ seem powerless and impotent?
1010. What illustration does the author use in verses 7 and 8?
1011. Could the land here be likened to Christ's parable in Luke 8?
1012. Should seed take permanent lodging and bring forth fruit?
1013. What does the "rain" compare to in our lives?
1014. Should showers of blessing not help us to be steadfast?
1015. What does Rom. 2:4 say concerning God's goodness? Cf. Exodus 34:6; Ps. 33:5.
1016. In this verse, what replaces "herbs"?
1017. Who does the rejecting?
1018. If we are "thistles", can we expect God to accept us?
1019. We are burned or blessed — is this Paul's teaching?
1020. Does the "burning" indicate finality in this impossible renewal state?
1021. Is "burning" a familiar expression in the New Testament? Cf. Matt. 3:11-12; II Peter 3:8-13.

D. *Encouragement.* 6:9-20.

1. *The apostle's hope for them.* 6:9-12.

### *Text*

6:9-12

9 But, beloved we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak: 10 for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which ye showed toward His name, in that ye ministered unto the saints, and still do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence unto the fulness of hope even to the end: 12 that ye be not sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

### *Paraphrase*

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better fruits than those of apostasy will be produced by you, even such a firm adherence to the Gospel as is connected with salvation, though we thus speak to put you on your guard.

10 For God, who hath promised to assist His sincere servants in time of temptation, is not unrighteous to forget, either His Own promise of the laborious and dangerous work by which ye showed your love to Him, when ye assisted and comforted the persecuted disciples of Christ in Judea, and do still assist them.

11 Yet I earnestly desire every one of you to show the same diligence as formerly in assisting and comforting your brethren, in order that my hope concerning your perseverance in the faith of the Gospel may continue to the end of your lives.

12 This I desire, that ye may not be sluggards, but imitators of the believing Gentiles in their good works, who through faith in Christ, and patience under persecution, are, as Abraham's spiritual seed, now inheriting the promises in the gospel church.

### *Comment*

*But beloved we are persuaded better things of you*

This is a word of encouragement to a people for whom Paul had affection. The better things would be the "herbs", rather than the "thorns and thistles".

The word "persuaded" indicates hopefulness on the part of the author.

- a. Vincent: It is a past hesitation overcome.
- b. Westcott: The form implies that the writer had felt misgivings and had overcome them.

The word "beloved" is one frequently applied to saints. See Rom. 1:7; 11:28; I John 3:2; 4:1; III John 1, 2, 5, 11.

*and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak*

What are the things that accompanied the saved as seen in the Word of God?

- a. Pentecostal brethren: fairer things. Acts 2:42.
- b. Stephen: forgiveness. Acts 7:58-60. No retaliation.
- c. Ethiopian eunuch: Rejoicing. Acts 8:39.
- d. Paul: Straightway proclaimed Jesus. Acts 9:36-39.
- e. Dorcas: Benevolent spirit. Acts 9:36-37.
- f. Bereans: Examining hearts. Acts 17:11.

Though he has warned against backsliding and apostasy, he is hopeful that Christian fruit will be produced by them.

*for God is not unrighteous to forget your work*

God's character is at stake in relationship to memory.

- a. A person who forgets leaves himself open for accusations.
- b. He may be accused of intentional forgetting or carelessness if he forgets.

An honest person is obligated to remember to keep his promise.

- a. These people had worked, and God is under obligation to honor faithful work.
- b. We see the brethren, (5:12) had been neglectful of Bible study but they were to be commended for their work.

*and the love which ye showed toward His name in that ye ministered unto the saints and still do minister*

We serve God by serving our fellow man.

- a. Ministering to saints is showing love to God.
- b. Jesus emphasized this. Matt. 25:40.
- c. John approaches the subject. I John 4:20.  
These people seem to have been strong on the "social gospel".
- a. It seems strange that neglected Bible reading would accompany this virtue.
- b. A national love, nurtured by persecution, may account for it in some measure.
- c. The Jew has always looked out for the Jew.

*And we desire that each one may show the same diligence*

Desire for each individual to be faithful is expressed.

- a. God is interested in each individual. Matt. 10:30: "Hairs of your head are numbered." Heb. 4:13: "There is no creature that is not manifest in His sight."
- b. As individuals, we must stand before God, and not rest on the virtue of a group.  
The Hebrews were benevolent in spirit, but each one was to be praised for this.

*unto the fulness of hope*

It may also be translated, "to the full assurance of hope". "Fullness of hope" refers to future glory intensified. Hope is an emotion, longing, fervent expectation.

*even to the end:*

Stedfastness is an exhortation oft repeated. Rev. 2:10: "Be thou faithful unto death." Matt. 10:22 and Col. 1:22-23. "The end" refers to their pilgrimage on earth.



*that ye be not sluggish,*

Some Christians lack fervor, and show sluggishness when fervency is needed.

- a. James 5:16: "Fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
- b. Rom. 12:11: "Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."  
A sluggard condition is awful in the sight of God.
- a. It is conceited. Prov. 26:16: "The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit."
- b. It is sleepy, Prov. 6:9: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?"
- c. It stands condemned. Rev. 3:16: "—so because thou art lukewarm."

*but imitators* (from Greek *mimic*, translated "followed")

This is a characteristic of people, for most people imitate.

Observe passages on "imitator". I Cor. 11:1: "Be ye imitators of me even as I also am of Christ." I Cor. 4:16: "I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me." I Thess. 1:6: "And ye become imitators of us, and of the Lord." 2:14: "For ye brethren become imitators of the churches." We are also to imitate God, as mentioned in Eph. 5:1: "Be ye therefore imitators of God as beloved children."

*who through faith and patience inherit the promises*

Stedfastness is a characteristic of a strong faith. The backslider will not inherit the blessing, and should not be imitated. This passage does not sound as though salvation is a gift without works.

### *Study Questions*

1022. Is the apostle hopeful for the Hebrews? (v. 9)
1023. Does the text suggest any affection?
1024. What would the expression "better things" refer to, "thorns" or "herbs"?
1025. What things accompany salvation?
1026. Name the conversions in Acts and point out things that could be considered "fruit" or "better things".
1027. Are the "better things" a return to repentance, or general good works? Is the conjunction "and" significant in v. 9?

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

1028. How is God's character involved in verse 10?
  1029. What charges may be brought against a forgetter?
  1030. Is God duty-bound to honor good works? Always?  
Cf. Matt.
  1031. What is the work of the Hebrews which is deserving of honor?
  1032. How is service to our fellow man an evidence of love for God?
  1033. Is this always true?
  1034. Is service to our fellow man service to God?
  1035. What did Jesus say? Matt. 25:40.
  1036. What did Jesus say? I John 4:20.
  1037. What does Heb. 5:12 give as a clue to their trouble?
  1038. How may we account for the fact that they were strong on the "social gospel"?
  1039. What is Paul's desire for individuals in verse 11?
  1040. Is he saying that, as a group, they could be commended for works, but, individually, they could not?
  1041. What is meant by "fulness of hope"?
  1042. How long is it to be maintained?
  1043. Does this verse teach that there is no hope for people who lack diligence?
  1044. Describe a sluggish spiritual condition.
  1045. Compare James 5:16 and Romans 12:11 with regard to sluggishness.
  1046. Could sluggishness and the lukewarmness of Rev. 3:16 be the same?
  1047. What is meant by the exhortation to "be imitators"?
  1048. Whose examples are we to follow?
  1049. Could this be an allusion to the persons of Chapter Eleven?
  1050. Why is he not urging us to imitate God as in Eph. 5.1?
  1051. How do we know that he is not doing this?
  1052. What two companionate virtues are linked with the receiving of promise?
  1053. Is it possible to see the "faith alone" doctrine in this verse?
2. *The example of Abraham. 6:13-20.*

*Text*

6:13-20

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, since He could swear by none greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15 And thus, having patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men swear by the greater: and in every dispute of theirs the oath is final for confirmation. 17 Wherein God, being minded to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of His counsel, interposed with an oath; 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us: 19 which we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and stedfast and entering into that which is within the veil; 20 whither as a Forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

*Paraphrase*

13 I say the believing Gentiles, who without doubt are heirs of the promises equally with the Jews: For when God made the promises to Abraham, after he had offered up Isaac, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,

14 Saying, Surely I will greatly bless thee, by counting thy faith for righteousness; and I will greatly multiply thee, by giving thee a numerous spiritual seed, whose faith I will in like manner count to them for righteousness.

15 And so, having for many years, patiently waited, Abraham, in the supernatural birth of Isaac, obtained the beginning of the accomplishment of the promise concerning his numerous seed.

16 For men verily swear by greater persons than themselves, whose vengeance they imprecate if they swear falsely: and so an oath for the confirmation of any doubtful matter, is held by them a proper method of ending all contradiction.

17 Therefore, in accommodation to the sentiments of men, God willing more fully to show to all, in every age and nation, who are the heirs of promise, the immutability of His purpose to count their faith for righteousness, and to bestow on them the inheritance of the heavenly country, confirmed the declaration of His purpose with an oath:

18 That by two immutable things, the promise and the oath of God, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation under the convictions of sin and the terrors of punishment, who have fled away from the curse of the law, like the manslayer from the avenger, to lay hold on the hope of pardon set before us in the promise confirmed by God's oath ;

19 Which hope we have as an anchor to which our soul is fastened in this stormy sea of life, both strong and steadfast, because fixed into the place within the veil; that is, into heaven, whither we shall be drawn, by this anchor, as ships are drawn to the place where their anchors are fixed ;

20 Into which place a Forerunner hath entered on our account, to fix our hope of pardon and eternal life as an anchor, even Jesus, Who, being made an High-priest for ever like Melchizedek, can procure pardon for us as a Priest, and save us eternally through His power as a king.

### *Comment*

*For when God made promise to Abraham*

The occasions of the promise, Gen. 12:1; his call, Gen. 15, Gen. 22:15-18. The content, 12:1-3.

He was to be blessed in seven ways:

- a. Abraham would be personally blessed.
- b. He would have numerous descendants.
- c. Through him the Messiah would come.
- d. His spiritual followers would be great. Rom. 4:11, 16.
- e. His name would be great.
- f. God would curse them that cursed him.
- g. He would be a blessing to the whole world.

Observe that "promise" is singular, but has several features, Gen. 12:1-3. Abraham is a good example of faith and perseverance.

*since He could swear by none greater He swore by Himself*

The occasion — Gen. 22:16-17: "By myself I have sworn, saith Jehovah, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son —" The swearing is to make binding the promise.

*saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee*

This is a Hebraism (Hebrew idiom) of intensity. This is expressed in Gen. 22:17.

*having patiently endured*

What trials did we have?

- a. Called to a strange land, living in tents, digging wells.
- b. Lot was a source of worry.
- c. Called to give his son. Gen. 22:15-18.
- d. Sorrow for Sodom and Gomorrah.

It covered about 100 years, from the departure from Haran to being gathered with his people. See Gen. 11:31; 12:4. Terah was 205, Abraham 75 when he departed out of Haran. We must patiently endure. Heb. 12:1: "Let us run the race with patience." 10:36: "For ye have need of patience, that having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise." Preachers must exercise it. I Tim. 6:11: "O man of God, flee these things and follow."

*he obtained the promise*

Milligan: "The promise confirmed by the oath." Gen. 22:15-18.

He lived long enough to see most of the promises fulfilled.

- a. The promise had several features, and Abraham saw them fulfilled in Christ.  
Milligan, page 258, says that Abraham was received by God into His rest.

*For men swear by the greater, and in every dispute of theirs the oath is final for confirmation*

In a promise, the assertion of an intention is made. In an oath, the person's character is publicly and solemnly put behind the assertion. In a promise, we look at words; in an oath, we look at who and what the promiser is.

*Wherein God being minded to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise.*

- a. God desired to show in a greater way his plan for his people.
- a. Since man everywhere acknowledges the value of an oath, God condescended to give an oath.

- b. This was to show to the family of Abraham God's plan to carry out His promise.

Primarily this was assurance intended to console and to encourage.

*the immutability of His counsel*

"Immutable" means to be unchangeable, invariable. Both Jew and Gentile are included in God's plan, Acts 2:39. God's good tidings are expressed as counsel.

- a. Men need advice, counsel and guidance, and God is able to give it.
- b. Man's changeable opinions are not to be compared with God's unchanging counsel.

*interposed with an oath*

"Interposed" is also translated "mediated." This is to make His promise double sure.

God calls attention to His divine being and pledges to fulfill His promises.

*that by two immutable things*

What are the "two things"?

- a. Calvin says the two things are, (1) what He says; and (2) what He swears is immutable.
- b. Some suggest the two things are:
1. The promise.
  2. The oath.
- c. Others say two oaths are referred to.
1. The promise — the oath made to Abraham respecting a Son, the Messiah.
  2. The second refers to Christ's priesthood, recorded in Ps. 110:4: "Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.
- d. It seems the two immutable things appear in verse 17:
1. The promise.
  2. The oath.

God's words are dependable words. Num. 23:19; Ps. 12:1-7.

*in which it is impossible for God to lie*

The character of God would be altered if He lied.

- a. God would cease to be God if He were untruthful.

- b. If He could not carry out His promise, He would not be all-wise.

God is absolute; hence there is the impossibility of Him being anything less than true.

*we may have a strong encouragement*

This may also be translated, "strong consolation." This is the influence of the two immutable things. With so much encouragement, why should we fail to find refuge?

*who have fled for refuge*

An allusion to the cities of refuge is made here. See Ex. 21:13; Num. 35; Deut. 19; Josh. 20. Three cities on each side of the Jordan afforded an opportunity of safety, or refuge, to evil men. The Christian has refuge in Jesus Christ.

*to lay hold of the hope set before us*

This we must do if we expect to attain. I Tim. 6:12: "Lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." I Tim. 6:19: "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed." This shows man's responsibility.

*which we have as an anchor of the soul*

An anchor gives stability.

- a. A sea captain said once to young man, "Wherever you go, go to church. I find that it costs a little to anchor my ship, but that keeps it from drifting out onto the waves where it will be lost."
- b. Observe that "fled" is past tense in v. 18b. This is present tense.

Our hope seems to be the "anchor".

- a. Hope is an emotion of the heart. It is very important, for men will work, suffer, as long as there is hope.
- b. Without hope, man grasps at straws and founders in futility.

*a hope*

What is included?

- a. Resurrection.
- b. Mansions in the sky.

- c. Second coming of Christ, I Thess. 4:13-18; II Peter 3:12-18.  
Our hope rests in the Person of Christ.

*both sure and stedfast*

Until a soul enters into God, it finds nothing stable.

- a. A ship is worth little if its anchor is not adequate.
- b. Because of the nature of God and the accomplishments of Christ, we may rest in confidence.  
As long as the anchor holds, the Christian rides the waves in spite of troubled waters.

*and entering into that which is within the veil*

Are we to enter? Who is referred to in this verse?

- a. If this is so of us, he is teaching that the Christian by faith now should enter into the spiritual reward hidden behind the veil.
- b. Forgiveness is within the veil, so in a sense the Christians enter within the veil as they enter into forgiveness.  
Is he not saying Jesus entered, this verse going with the next?
- a. No one claims inspiration for the insertion of verse numerals.
  1. In 1551 Sir Robert Stephens was the first to divide any part of the Bible into verses.
  2. This was done in a Greek New Testament about 300 years after the division into chapters by Cardinal Hugo.
- b. The expression can well go with verse 19.  
Milligan raises the question, "Is it the hope, or is it the anchor that enters within the veil?"
  - a. Let the expression go with verse 19 and his problem is solved.
  - b. The author surely is not mixing the figures of "anchor" and "veil".

*whither as a forerunner*

A forerunner is a common experience of men.

- a. Pioneer travelers had their scouts.
- b. Armies had their forerunners.
- c. Children of Israel had theirs.
- d. Jesus had John the Baptist.
- e. We have Jesus.  
The word is also translated "precursor."
- a. "Precursor" means "runner, harbinger, omen".



- b. It is used in the Septuagint to designate the first ripe grapes and figs. Num. 13:20; Isaiah 28:4.  
 Vincent has the idea that Christ goes nowhere but where his people can go also.

*Jesus entered for us*

He entered ahead of us and for us.

Murray: "There was a veil that separated man from God. Jesus came from within to live without the veil and rend it and open a way for us. We may enter in and dwell therein the power of the Holy Ghost."

*having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*

The priesthood of Aaron was temporary, but Christ's priesthood is after an eternal one. A priest of Christ's ability eliminates any need for one on earth.

Who was Melchizedek?

- a. He was a man. Heb. 7:4
- b. He was a person of whom little is known.
  1. He is named eight times in Hebrews.
  2. He is named twice in the Old Testament. Gen. 14; Ps. 110.

*Study Questions*

1054. In verses 13-20, what great example has Paul given?
1055. What seven features appear in the promise in Gen. 12:1-3?
1056. The word "promise" is singular, but can you name various times that God promised?
1057. What clue is given in this verse as to what event in Abraham's life may be involved here?
1058. What is the swearing? When did God swear to Abraham?
1059. Does this verse refer to Gen. 12 or Gen. 22:16?
1060. Why did God swear by Himself?
1061. What singular act did Abraham do to cause God to swear? Cf. 22:16-17.
1062. What is the significance of the double expressions in vs. 14?
1063. What did Abraham patiently endure? Name some instances.
1064. How many years did he endure?
1065. Compare Paul's exhortation to us in Heb. 12:1 with 10:36.

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

1066. What did Abraham obtain — all of the seven promises in Gen. 12?
1067. If not, if Abraham did not see all of them fulfilled, how can it be said that he obtained?
1068. What is the significance of verse 16?
1069. What is the difference between a promise and an oath?
1070. For confirmation, which do we consider the most important?
1071. What is the difference between man's oath and God's oath?
1072. Define "God being minded".
1073. What was He minded to do?
1074. Is this what is meant by "more abundantly"?
1075. Who was this evidence for, Abraham or his descendants?
1076. Define the word "immutable".
1077. In what way could the promises and oath be considered counsel?
1078. Define "interposed with an oath".
1079. Explain what the oath does for a promise.
1080. What are the two immutable things of verse 18?
1081. Could it refer to two oaths, or to a promise and an oath?
1082. If God lied, what would it do to His character?
1083. If God could not carry out a promise, what would it do to His being?
1084. How can a swearing to Abraham be an encouragement to us of the 20th century?
1085. Describe the allusion to Old Testament cities of refuge.
1086. What is our refuge? Where is it stated?
1087. What are we to do with our hope?
1088. Whose responsibility is it?
1089. What figure of speech is referred to in v. 19?
1090. What is the purpose of an anchor?
1091. What is our "anchor"?
1092. How does our "anchor" serve to link us with the future?
1093. What happens when men give up hope?
1094. Can you tell the difference between faith and hope?
1095. In Whom is our hope?
1096. What things make up our hope?
1097. Is our hope a "what", or a "whom" here?
1098. What words describe our hope?
1099. Is this a description of Christ?

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

1100. Is it our hope that is described as sure and steadfast, or is Christ described as sure and steadfast?
1101. Who is referred to as entering into the veil?
1102. If Christ is referred to, why is it not expressed in past tense, — as being done at His ascension?
1103. Now look again at “lay hold” — are we to lay hold on hope, or on Christ?
1104. Is it “hope” or “anchor” that enters the veil?
1105. If the Christian is entering, what does he enter into?
1106. Is it the veil that he enters, or is it something contained within?
1107. Is verse 20 an enlargement on verse 19, that Christ entered the veil, or that we should be encouraged to enter since Christ entered ahead of us?
1108. What is the purpose of a forerunner?
1109. What is meant, “He entered for us”?
1110. If He did it for us, do we have to enter?
1111. What is the purpose of the entering?
1112. Why did He have to do it this way?

### *Multiple Choice Over Chapter Six*

1. All of us should show diligence to the full assurance of hope:
  1. Until we are saved by faith.
  2. Unto the end.
  3. For we know we can't be lost.
2. The person whose seed was to be multiplied in generations to come, according to a promise was:
  1. Omri of Israel.
  2. Jonah of Ninevah.
  3. Abraham of Ur.
3. Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto:
  1. A Christlike spirit.
  2. A likeness of Paul.
  3. Perfection.
4. The writer was persuaded of better things and the things:
  1. That characterize a converted Jew.
  2. That would prove that they listened to the preacher.
  3. That accompany salvation.

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

5. God's oath was made firm when He swore:
  1. By His only begotten Son.
  2. By Abraham.
  3. By Himself.
6. Those who were once enlightened and tasted the heavenly gifts Paul says were made partakers:
  1. Of the Holy Spirit.
  2. Of Paul's suffering.
  3. Of the vengeance of pagan rulers.
7. The Christian has a forerunner:
  1. He is John the Baptist because everyone knows that he prepared the way for Christ.
  2. Melchizedek, because he entered into Canaan, a type of Heaven.
  3. Christ, because the scripture says so.
8. This chapter speaks of some men:
  1. That put Christ to an open shame.
  2. Will help Him as a High Priest.
  3. That are to be excused for ignorance.
9. In this chapter a group is mentioned:
  1. That very likely would repent.
  2. That needed to be taught repentance.
  3. That it is impossible to renew them unto repentance.
10. The heirs of the promise of God have been shown:
  1. The immutability of His counsel.
  2. That He will readily change His mind.
  3. That it is easy to be a Christian.
11. The Christian has:
  1. An anchor of the soul.
  2. A chart of the dark valley.
  3. A blueprint for his life.
12. The author says God cannot lie, as seen by:
  1. The fact that it is wrong.
  2. Two immutable things.
  3. The fact that Jesus is the truth.
13. A commendable thing is stated about the people to whom this book was written.
  1. They defended the church.
  2. They refused all Judaistic practices.
  3. They ministered unto the saints.

## HELPS FROM HEBREWS

14. The person who falls away is likened:
  1. To the soil that grows thistles.
  2. To a tumbling weed that is not anchored.
  3. To a mountain climber who slips on a treacherous trail.
15. We are told to press on to perfection, which is beyond:
  1. A foundation of repentance from dead works.
  2. The Mosaic law.
  3. The Sermon on the Mount.
16. Abraham obtained the promise:
  1. Having helped God to answer prayer.
  2. Having patiently endured.
  3. Since it was easily answered.
17. The "teachings of baptisms" is also translated:
  1. Baptism of the Holy Spirit.
  2. Immersion three times.
  3. Washings.
18. This chapter speaks of those who were once enlightened:
  1. Falling away.
  2. Being blinded by too much light.
  3. Always remaining in the light.
19. Speaking of encouragement, he says we may have:
  1. Everyone's encouragement.
  2. Self-encouragement.
  3. Strong encouragement.
20. One allusion to the Old Testament worship in the temple is:
  1. The veil.
  2. The court of Gentiles.
  3. The ark of the covenant.

## SUMMARY OF CHAPTER SIX

Chapter Six is a continuation of the rebuke introduced in Chapter Five for failure to reach maturity in the Christian life. It begins with a strong exhortation to make progress, and points out the tragic consequences of apostasy. No new motive for repentance can be found for those who turn away from Christ to put themselves again in that group which crucified the Lord.

In spite of their sluggishness, the author hoped that those to whom he was writing would respond to his message about the completeness of Christianity as expressed in a life of faithful devotion to Christ. The example of Abraham is cited for their encouragement. They also are reminded that the sure, steadfast

hope rests on Jesus, who is High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

III. *Seven proofs of the superiority of Christ's priesthood.*  
7:1-10:39.

A. *He is a Priest after a higher order than Aaron.* 7:1-19.

1. *As seen in Melchizedek as a type.* 7:1-3.

### *Text*

7:1-3

1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham divided a tenth part of all (being first, by interpretation, King of righteousness, and then also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; 3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God), abideth a priest continually.

### *Paraphrase*

1 Now, that ye may know the nature of Melchizedek's priesthood, to which God likened the priesthood of his Son, I observe, that this Melchizedek, king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he returned from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom Abraham imparted even a tenth of all the spoils, (v. 4.), being first, according to the interpretation of his name, King of righteousness, a most righteous king, and next also, King of Salem, which by interpretation, is King of peace, king of a peaceable and virtuous people;

3 Was without father without mother as a priest, so that he was not a priest by descent; and without genealogy in the scripture, consequently there is no evidence of his being related to Abraham in any respect. Moreover, having neither beginning of days nor end of life as a priest, but being made a type of the Son of God, he remained a priest all his life.

### *For this Melchizedek*

No doubt it was a rare thing to find one like Melchizedek living in the midst of idolatry, superstitions, yet being true.