

## Hebrews 9 Chapter 6

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**Review: 5:12-6:3** '... For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. **6** Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. <sup>3</sup> And this we will do if God permits.'

The writer is warning his listeners again. By this time, so long after an Evangelist had brought the Gospel to their city and led many of them to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, they should have been spiritually mature and strong in their faith but they remained spiritual infants... feeding only on the elementary principles of the faith... holding to an immature foundation for their faith. By now they should have been skilled in the 'word of righteousness,' but they were not. By '*word of righteousness*,' he means the understanding that our righteousness, our right standing before God, is only by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and only by God's grace... not by any works of righteousness we might do and not by any works of righteousness within Judaism which were but a shadow of the reality, which had come in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The elementary principles of Christ are what lead us to the understanding of what God has really done for us in Jesus Christ. These Hebrews' problem, their danger which he has been addressing to this point, has been their wrestling with the rituals and symbols of Judaism, of returning to Judaism and its supposed works of righteousness because of fear of persecution.

Some of them were afraid to go on to maturity in Christ, to fully believe and trust Him because they feared leaving the security of the false '*works of righteousness*' of Judaism. Others feared doing so because of persecution. Either way, the result was the same... not going on to salvation... falling away before coming fully to faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Now he will give his most stern warning yet to those Hebrews who are hearing the truth, even believing the truth but then refusing to embrace the truth... rejecting the truth and turning back to Judaism.

These are the ones he is warning as he goes on in chapter 4:

**Verse 4:** For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup> and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, ***since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.***

The writer, the Holy Spirit, is warning the second group to whom this letter is written... those who have understood the truth intellectually and even responded to the Gospel who, on the outside, have made a profession of faith in Christ and even look like real Christians but who are not truly believers. They have heard the truth many times, they know the truth and they even believe the truth. They look and act like Christians, but their faith is not genuine. The writer is telling them wake up! Pay attention! You must genuinely place your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ because you are in danger of falling away, of developing an evil, unbelieving heart... and eventually, when your heart becomes so hardened by unbelief, it will be impossible for you to be renewed, to be saved.

The question here is not whether these people are mature or immature Christians, but whether or not they are real Christians at all.

The contrast is between Hebrews who refuse to completely leave Judaism... to let go of all the rituals and symbols which all pointed to one thing and one thing only... the Messiah... God's chosen and anointed one... Adonai Jeshua Messiah... the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, crucified as the Lamb of God to pay the penalty for all the sin of those chosen by God... raised from the dead by the power of God and soon to return as the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Lion of the tribe of Judah; it is between those who refuse to let go of the

rituals of Judaism and those who recognize that Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Covenant and who move on to the maturity of the children of God who embrace the New Covenant, established by the blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the Cross.

The Old Testament all pointed to Jesus Christ: *'For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.'* (Isaiah 9:6-7a)

They are in danger of having heard and understood the truth and then returning to Judaism and being lost forever.

Jesus spoke of this when He gave the parable of the sower:

'Then He taught them many things by parables, and said to them in His teaching: "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. And it happened, as he sowed, *that* some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it. Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. And some *seed* fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. But other *seed* fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." And He said to them, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. And He said to them, "To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that

'Seeing they may see and not perceive,  
And hearing they may hear and not understand;  
Lest they should turn,  
And *their* sins be forgiven them.'

And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? The sower sows the word. And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or ***persecution arises for the word's sake***, immediately they stumble. Now these are the ones sown among thorns; *they are* the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept *it*, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." Mark 4

What does that last part of **verse 6** mean? ***'... since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.'***

They are those who listened to the elementary principles... learned them... even believed them, but failed to place their full trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and then because of persecution or because of the cares of this World... they go back to the synagogue... they say, 'I'm back! I've decided I do believe Judaism is the truth after all. I was wrong about Christianity and Jesus... it's not really true... and so, they bring shame on Jesus Christ and the message of the Gospel before all who see and hear them... as if recrucifying Him in front of all.

We see this happening all around us today... over and over... you'll read about someone who tells how they left their Evangelical upbringing... how they left their 'fundamentalist' Christian Church. They became 'enlightened' and became an Anglican or Episcopalian or United Methodist or Catholic or joined an 'Emergent Church.' It is the ***Great Falling Away*** that Paul warned would happen just before the Rapture and Tribulation... those who fall away are just like these Hebrews falling away and then being in the position of being impossible to be renewed... this being the proof that they were never really believers in the first place... never really born again.

Churches are filled with people who think they are Christians, who think they are good enough to go to Heaven, who think they do all the right things, who refuse to believe what God's Word says about salvation being only by God's grace and only through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus spoke of just these people when He said, ' "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. <sup>22</sup> Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' <sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Matt 7:21

**Verse 7:** '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; <sup>8</sup> but if it bears thorns and briars, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned.

The writer is reiterating what Jesus Christ had said in the parable of the sower.

They are like ground that is sown with good seed, watered and tended but eventually proves itself to be worthless by only bringing forth thorns and briars... no real fruit.

This is what John the Baptist was talking about also in Matt. 3:7 'But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Therefore ***bear fruits worthy of repentance***, <sup>9</sup> and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. <sup>10</sup> And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup> I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

**Verse 9:** 'But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, **things that accompany salvation**, though we speak in this manner.'

He is saying, 'We expect to see in your lives the things that ***accompany salvation***... the things that exemplify true salvation... the fruit that grows in a life that is ***evidence of having been born again***, evidence of the Holy Spirit's having taken up residence in a heart: 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.' Gal 5:22

These things will eventually ***prove a person's salvation***... not ***cause*** their salvation... they only ***prove*** it.

There is nothing we can do to cause our salvation... no good work... no doing or not doing something... but there are things which will show the genuineness of our salvation.

The first and foremost, the most obvious proof of salvation is that we love each other... when we love other believers. Not supposedly loving our city or our neighborhood or the beggar at the offramp... but ***loving each other***... willingly being part of each other's lives... willingly being patient and kind with other Christians who are annoying and obnoxious or unwashed and unintelligent... that is the real proof of the Holy Spirit living within a believer. It's easy to supposedly love strangers... people you'll never have to be bothered with again... any fake Christian can do that... that's what the Social Gospel is all about.

This is the reason God commands us to be faithful in gathering together... to be part of each other's lives... to pay attention to the needs of brothers and sisters in the Lord... that our lives are to be open and vulnerable before each other... being accountable to each other. That's what James means when he writes, 'Confess your faults or sins or needs to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed. (and help one another)

**Verse 10:** 'For God *is* not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have ***ministered to the saints***, and do minister.

Ministering to each other... other Christians... it's not talking about loving and serving our city... it's about loving and serving our Church family. This is not about loving and serving our neighbor next door, it's about loving and serving our neighbor in the next chair.

Jesus asked, 'Do you love Me? Then feed My sheep.' Not the goats next door... feed My sheep! That is the first and foremost proof of a born again child of God, that we sacrificially love and care for each other.

**Verse 11:** And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

**This is how we can have full assurance** that our hope of salvation is founded in reality... that the promises are ours and that we will eventually hold them in our hands... **that we love other Christians.**

John wrote, '**We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.**' 1 John 3:14

This is how we can know within ourselves about ourselves that we are truly born again... do I love God's family?

**Verse 13:** For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, <sup>14</sup> saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." <sup>15</sup> And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

God spoke to Abraham and Abraham believed what God said so he patiently waited for what God had promised. Abraham did not obtain the fulfillment of God's promise **because** he patiently waited for it... he patiently waited for it **because** he knew it was already 'as good as' in his hand, that God was faithful and able to do what He had promised.

**Verse 16:** For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation *is* for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath...'

God spoke and God will not lie.

**Verse 18:** 'that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*.

... who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*.

*Here he is referencing both the tribulations of this life and the persecution which would surely come to every Christian at the time of this writing.*

*What is the place of refuge to which the child of God can flee, the place to be consoled and by whom?*

*David wrote, 'He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*

<sup>2</sup> I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress;

My God, in Him I will trust.... Because you have made the LORD, *who is* my refuge,

*Even* the Most High, your dwelling place,

<sup>10</sup> No evil shall befall you,

Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

<sup>11</sup> For He shall give His angels charge over you,

To keep you in all your ways.

<sup>12</sup> In *their* hands they shall bear you up,' Psalm 91

And... 'You *are* my hiding place;

You shall preserve me from trouble;

You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.' Psalm 32

Jesus said, <sup>37</sup> "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! Matt 23:37

God Himself is our place of refuge, our hiding place... His desire is that we imagine ourselves huddling down, drawing into Him... into that secret place of the Most High... our hiding place... like we studied regarding the

Armor of God... encased in the Armor of God, drawing into God... standing still and firm while the storm rages, standing firm until the attack ends.

Then, within that place is where we have 'strong consolation' as He comforts, encourages and strengthens us by His Holy Spirit. It is in that place with Him... in Him... that we can remember the things He has said, where we can choose to believe the things He has said... just like Abraham did... and it is there where we can lay hold of the hope that He has set before us.... and by 'hope' He means... the full assurance that what God has promised, He will do. Our full salvation, our full redemption, it is ours. It will not, it cannot ever be taken away from us. We are children of God and one day soon, we will fully realize and experience our full salvation.

The next phase of our full redemption will occur at the Rapture. Paul calls that event '**Our blessed hope.**' That is the hope that is set before us... the moment when we will be changed, when our mortal bodies will instantaneously be transformed into eternal glorified bodies like that of the Lord Jesus Christ... the moment we will see Him face to face.

'... **looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ...**' Titus 2:13

'Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, **and we shall be changed**. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.' 1 Cor 15:51

Beloved, **now we are children of God**; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, **we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**<sup>3</sup> And everyone **who has this hope** in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1 John 3:2

**Verse 19: This hope we have as an anchor of the soul**, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,<sup>20</sup> where the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

**Our hope and assurance that God is faithful**, that what He has said is absolutely true and sure to happen... that is what allows us to continue on. The writer of Hebrews is telling his Hebrew readers, that is what would allow them to bear up under the persecution to which they were subject.

If Abraham had not believed God's promises, he would not have been able to patiently wait for their fulfillment. If these Hebrews refused to believe God's promises, they would be unable to bear up under persecution and they would return to the false security of Judaism.

**Our hope is our anchor** which gives us the desire to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling** with which we've been called. Eph. 4:1 Our hope is our anchor to a determination to **walk worthy of the Lord**. Col 1:10 Our blessed hope is our anchor to **trust in the Lord with all our hearts** and to not lean on our own understanding... to acknowledge Him in all our ways, trusting Him to direct our paths. Prov. 3:5 Our hope is our anchor which allows us to **commit our way unto the Lord**, to trust in Him, knowing that He will bring it to pass... to be willing to **delight ourselves in the Lord**, knowing that He will not only give us the desires of our hearts, but that He will actually put into our hearts the desires that correspond to His will. Psalm 37:4

**Our hope anchors us to God Himself**... to His very throne because we are seated now with Christ at the Father's right hand. We can now enter the Holy of Holies because we now wear the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have put on Christ as a covering. Rom 13:14, Gal 3:27 There is no more veil separating us from God. The Lord Jesus Christ removed the separation. Now we are in Him; we are in the very presence of the Father always. Jesus Christ entered for us and then took us with Himself... we are in Him and He is in us... we are one with Him.

**He is our blessed hope. His soon return is our blessed hope. All that awaits us in eternity is our blessed hope.**

**"And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You. Psalm 39:7"**