**Lesson Six**

[**Hebrews 6**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6&t=NKJV)

To appreciate the context of what is said in [Hebrews 6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6&t=NKJV) we need to start at the end of [Hebrews 4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4&t=NKJV).

**Read** [**Hebrews 4:11-16**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.11-16&t=NKJV)

Remember -- the **warnings and teachings** found in the book of Hebrews are based on the experiences of the Israelites (God's Chosen People). Therefore, when we read in [Hebrews 4:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.11&t=NKJV), “*Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience*,” we must remember Israel's example and how, because of lack of faith, they were not able to enter their rest (the Canaan Land -- flowing with milk and honey). This was to be their reward and great blessing that God wanted to bless them with. And their Canaan rest is a **type or example** of our millennial rest. **The message to us is to learn from their mistake so that we do not fall short of our goal and fail to enter the 1000 year rest that God wants to bless us with.**

In [Hebrews 4:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.12&t=NKJV) we are told that the Word of God (the word of God concerning Israel’s failure) is sharp and living and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart. In other words, it will help us judge our motives and intentions correctly so that at the Judgment Seat of Christ we will not be judged for failing in the same way that Israel failed, and therefore we will not fall short of our goal and fail to enter our Promised Land.

In [Hebrews 4:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.14&t=NKJV) the teaching about our high priest begins and it continues all the way to [Hebrews 10:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.31&t=NKJV). Our High Priest can help us. He has been tempted, as we are, and as the Israelites were. **The temptation is to fail to trust God and fall away in disobedience**. Our High Priest, Jesus Christ can help:

Because He has faithfully walked the path of faith we must walk.

Because He has endured the sufferings that go with walking that path, He has denied His own will and committed Himself to the will of the Father.

And because He has passed through the heavens and is seated at the right hand of the Father in Heaven.

**He is fully qualified to help us to enter the rest and not fail as Israel did.** Therefore let us draw near to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help -- **it is absolutely necessary we have His help as we run our race of faith**.

**Read** [**Hebrews 5:1-10**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.1-10&t=NKJV)**.**

First God wants us to fully comprehend what kind of priest we have. He does this by comparing our new High Priest with the Old Testament priests that we are familiar. Christ is not a priest after the order of Aaron but a Priest after the order of Melchizedek. His priesthood is far superior to the Aaronic priests. He died to fully pay the price for our sins, therefore when we come to Him, He can assure full forgiveness. He has learned from experience what it is truly like to obediently live the life and to persevere to the end. Therefore, this One who has been designated a High Priest, after the order of Melchizedek, is fully qualified to be the source of eternal (age lasting) salvation to all who obey Him. God is telling us that we have an advocate in the heavens whose purpose is to help us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

**Read** [**Hebrews 5:11-14**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.11-14&t=NKJV)**.**

**The writer of Hebrews has much more he wants to tell these believers concerning things that have to do with the Melchizedek Priesthood of Christ.**  But it is going to be difficult to explain it to them because they are really **“tuned in” to the “milk truths,”** *things surrounding Christ's first coming*. And they are **dull of hearing and not “tuned in” to the “meat truths,”** the things surrounding the Second Coming of Christ.

*He will return as a* ***KING-PRIEST*** *after the order of Melchizedek*.

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:1-2**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.1-2&t=NKJV)**.**

The main thrust of these verses is we must press on to maturity. The text, as well as the context, shows us this is a specific aspect of maturity related to the Melchizedek Priesthood of Christ. In other words, we have to press on to gain knowledge and understanding concerning the coming reign of Christ over the earth and our opportunities for participation in this rule of the heavens over the earth. This aspect of maturity is one in which God reveals His ultimate glorious plan.

Therefore, the plan is not to lay again the milk foundations. Milk foundations are good, but we must move on to the meat teachings about the coming age.

Those elementary teachings, foundational doctrines, are:

Repentance from dead works and faith toward God.

Instructions about washings and laying on of hands (*Forgiveness and separation from sins, redemption and identification with Christ*).

Resurrection from the dead and eternal judgment.

So we are not going to lay again these milk foundations, **but we will instead press on to maturity** –

[**Hebrews 6:3**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.3&t=NKJV)**: IF -----------** God permits?

**Why wouldn't He permit?** He says that for some it would be impossible to progress in growth toward being glorified with Christ and becoming a co-heir with Him. God will not allow it!

Who then would be disqualified in this way? --- We will answer that after we discuss the **"elementary teachings,"** spoken of in [Hebrews 6:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.1-2&t=NKJV):

[**Hebrews 6:1-2**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.1-2&t=NKJV)**:**

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of:

1 & 2: **Repentance from dead works** and **faith toward God**.

3 & 4: **Instructions about washings** and **laying on of hands.**

5 & 6: **Resurrection of the dead** and **eternal judgment.**

These are **basic foundational doctrines** which will result in progressive growth toward maturity.

The beginning point concerns: **Repentance and faith**.

The middle part has to do with: **Cleansing and identification**.

The last part centers around the goal of the preceding things:

**Resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment**

These basic foundational doctrines are important not only in the **“milk of the Word”** but also the **“meat of the Word.”**

**1 & 2** are easily understood and familiar to us, as they also were to the Israelites.

Before we are a child of God, all our works will be dead works. We are not capable of works of faith until we are regenerated (born from above). Before we can be saved we must realize that we are in need of salvation which is our initial repentance. Once we are saved **repentance and faith** are part of our growth process.

**5 & 6** also are familiar and easily understood. Christ will return for His church and the dead in Christ will rise first, then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Next on the agenda is the Judgment Seat of Christ where we will be judged for the things done in the body, whether good or bad ---works of faith or works of the flesh. All believers and unbelievers will judged **according to their works**.

**Believers will be judged** at the *Judgment seat of Christ*, following the rapture.

**Unbelievers will be judged 1000 years later** at the *Great White Throne Judgment*, at the end of the Millennial reign of Christ.

**3 & 4** are not so familiar: **washings and laying on of the hands**. These need some explanation to help us understand how they apply to us as believers. In viewing “washings” and “laying on of hands” together there is the thought of cleansing, identification and separation.

“**Washings**”: To understand what is meant by washings we must refer back to rituals performed within the ranks of the Levitical priests who carried out a ministry at the tabernacle on behalf of the people of Israel. The priests underwent a complete (ceremonial) washing, bathing their bodies upon entering the priesthood.

*I remind you that as believers we are priests unto God.*

This total ceremonial washing was something that was done once, never to be repeated.

However, as those Levitical priests subsequently ministered on behalf of the people, there were repeated washings of their hands and feet in the laver just outside the Holy Place. Their hands and feet would repeatedly become soiled in the course of their ministry.

*For Christians the initial total body washing is a type of our* ***initial salvation and cleansing and forgiveness****.*

Whereas the repeated washing of hands and feet is a type of our cleansing from defilement from the world the flesh and the devil. This occurs according to [1 John 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+1.9&t=NKJV): “*If we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive our sins and cleans us from all unrighteousness*.” *This occurs repeatedly for the believer.*

“**Laying on of hands**”: For understanding of the “laying on of hands”, we again have to look to the Old Testament typology. The meaning of “laying on of hands” can be seen in the account of that which the Lord instructed Aaron (high priest) to do with one of 2 goats on the day of Atonement.

[Leviticus 16:5-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+16.5-29&t=NKJV): Aaron was to take a bullock and 2 goats; The bullock and one goat were to be killed and their blood used “to make atonement in the holy place”, for himself, for his household (the priests) and for all the congregation of Israel. After Aaron had finished his work of sprinkling blood upon the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle, he was then to take the live goat and perform a climactic act.

He was to lay both hands upon the head of the goat and confess all the iniquities and transgressions of the children of Israel. Through this act, the Israelite’s iniquities and transgressions which had just been atoned for were placed upon the head of the goat. The goat was then to be taken into the wilderness and released, never to return back into the camp of Israel.

Through Aaron laying his hands on the head of the live goat, there was both identification and a separation. Through transferring the sins of the people, an identification was established. The goat, rather than the people, became identified with those sins. This separation would be further shown through the goat being taken to an uninhabited part of the land and released.

So viewing washings and laying on of hands together we understand that Christians have been separated from the world, identified with Christ in death, burial and resurrection, and Christians are to keep themselves clean through repeated washings at the laver of [1 John 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+1.9&t=NKJV).

Because of Christ’s high priestly ministry (which He performs on the basis of His shed blood on the mercy seat of the heavenly tabernacle) present cleansing is available for a separated, set apart people who are inseparably identified with their Lord.

(*End of explanation of “elementary teachings” of* [*Hebrews 6:1-2*](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.1-2&t=NKJV)*.*)

Now to answer the question raised in [Hebrews 6:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.1-3&t=NKJV): “WE WILL PRESS ON TO MATURITY---**IF GOD WILL PERMIT!!!!!**

Who would God not permit to press onto maturity??? That is the question!!!!

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:4-6**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV)**.**

It says that if one has come to a mature knowledge concerning the things surrounding Christ's Melchizedek Priesthood, *i.e*., the Millennial reign of Christ and what it involves, and then has fallen away (has then turned back to fleshly and worldly pursuits) it is impossible to renew that one to repentance. Even if he wants to repent God won't allow it. And why will God not allow it?

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:6b**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.6b&t=NKJV)**.**

Turning back or falling away after understanding God's glorious plan with unmistakable clarity [mature knowledge, *i.e*., *epignosis,* puts the Son of God to an open shame. [Galatians 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+1.14&t=NKJV) states:

*“Christ gave Himself for our sins to the end that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of God the Father.”*

[Galatians 6:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.14&t=NKJV) states that through the cross "*the world has been crucified to me and I to the world*."

Therefore to understand the will of the Father and to see and understand about the good things of the coming age, these things for which Christ died, and then to turn away from them, that is, to turn one's focus back to the things of this present world under the incumbent ruler Satan, shames Christ. For a Christian to do this would be a great dishonor to Christ. This would be deliberately choosing to turn away from entering into that for which Christ suffered and died. If they [we] turn away from that which was the “*joy set before Him,*” for which He died and suffered shame, this exposes Him to open public shame, and GOD WILL NOT ALLOW IT.

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:7-8**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.7-8&t=NKJV)**.**

This is an illustration of the two ages that we have been discussing:

The present evil age is like the ground that yields thorns and thistles (under a curse).

The age to come is like the ground upon which fall the rains from heaven and the blessing of God and which brings forth fruit to those who till it.

Redeemed man finds himself in a position where he can go either of two directions. He can fix his attention on the land out ahead or he can turn and fix his attention on the land from which he was called. He can focus on Heavenly Canaan (his heavenly calling) and share in its blessings with the Son of God, or he can, so to speak, focus on the things of Egypt (the world) and spend energies on fleshly pursuits. The consequences of setting one’s mind on earthly things is suffering loss. It is the destruction of one's - wood, hay and stubble - type works that end up being burned.

*Redeemed man lives within the sphere of whichever nature is cultivated, nurtured and fed.*

***Insofar as his eternal destiny is concerned it could never make one iota of difference which choice he makes.***

***But insofar as the hope of his calling and the reward of the inheritance is concerned it makes all the difference which choice he makes.***

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:9-10**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.9-10&t=NKJV)**.**

What is he saying? He has given them some hard words of warning. But then the writer says, we are convinced of better things concerning you with regard to the things that accompany this great salvation, which we have been discussing. These Christians may have been dull of hearing concerning the future prophetic things but they were diligent in loving and serving one another (“the saints”).

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:11-12**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.11-12&t=NKJV)**.**

“Full assurance of hope”: Full conviction---certainty---assurance wrought through understanding.

The writer of this letter to these Christians was not satisfied with conditions as they existed, even though these Christians were loving God and serving one another. For He knows that it is a common experience for Christians to compromise, become complacent and lose their zeal for the things of God. They then become insensitive to the voice of God and “shrink back” AND fall away from the faith even as Israel did.

He therefore admonishes them according to [Hebrews 6:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.11&t=NKJV), that just as they are diligent to “serve the saints.” He earnestly desires that they show this same diligence toward realizing the full assurance of hope and attaining to their high calling, and realizing their inheritance (co-heirs with Christ), and they exult in the hope of the Glory of God.

He wants each one of them [us] to realize the full assurance of hope until the end. But what does that mean? He wants them not to get slack or lazy or apathetic, but be full of the Spirit, zealous Christians until the end. In other words, he is encouraging them to set their hope on the final goal so that they can realize the full assurance of that hope until the end, without getting weak in faith or apathetic **regarding the high calling of God**.

[Hebrews 6:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.11&t=NKJV) is an important verse. It could be the thesis of this letter, and the purpose for writing the letter:

THAT THEY ALL MIGHT REALIZE THE FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE UNTIL THE END.

Hope deals with something out in the future. We base our hope on something out in the future. Hope is associated with an inheritance awaiting the saved, that will be realized in the coming age. God is telling them and us that **this hope should be our focus and goal** and he wants us to maintain this focus to the end. Being diligent to serve the saints is great, but **he desires that they have the same diligence to realize their inheritance**.

Now the writer of Hebrews is going to tell us what it is that we are to base our hope on. He is going to tell us that long ago God made a promise concerning the things that would happen in the future. And those future things have to do with God's ultimate intention (before the fall) -- the fulfillment of His original plan. He is going to tell them that it is important to see God's plan, and realize that they have an opportunity to have a part in it.

He knows that knowledge of this awaiting inheritance will motivate them to be faithful and zealous -- firm until the end. [Hebrews 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.12&t=NKJV) shows us that this hope that he wants them (us) to have is the cure for sluggishness and apathy. It is the cure for failing to press on to maturity.

Also in [Hebrews 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.12&t=NKJV) we see that there are some Old Testament believers who can serve as examples for us in order to help us to realize the full assurance of hope until the end. And who is one of those OT believers who is the good example of faith and patience? Abraham. (See [Hebrews 6:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.13-15&t=NKJV))

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:13-15**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.13-15&t=NKJV) **and** [**Genesis 22:16-18**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.16-18&t=NKJV)**.**

How did Abraham obtain the promise?

FAITH: (believing God)--only after he had walked by faith over a long period of time.

PATIENCE: But the realization of the promise awaits a future date: ([Hebrews 11:8-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.8-13&t=NKJV))

How do we obtain the promise and realize our inheritance? FAITH and PATIENCE.

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:16-18**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.16-18&t=NKJV)**.**

God's Word and God's swearing of an oath are based on the character of God.

**Question:** Why did God interpose with an oath?

**Answer:** To show the heirs of the promise (Abraham) and **his descendents (us)**, the unchangeableness of His purpose. Read [Genesis 22:16-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.16-18&t=NKJV) for His purpose.

**Question:** What effect should this word and oath of God about His purpose have on us?

**Answer:**  It should encourage us who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us.

**When** we get a glimpse of His plan,

**When** we see His purpose,

**When** we know God is committed to bringing it to pass and

**When** we realize that God desires to include us in this glorious plan and purpose,

**THEN** we are strongly encouraged in laying hold of the hope set before us. Our refuge is in that hope set before us. That hope of the glory is a wonderful place of fulfillment for us. That hope of glory is our refuge. Our refuge is **not** in this world.

“in this world we have tribulation, but we, like Abraham, are looking for a heavenly city, whose architect and builder is God. Our refuge is in '**The Glory**.'”

**Read** [**Hebrews 6:19-20**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.19-20&t=NKJV)**.**

The **HOPE OF GLORY** is what anchors our soul to the millennial age, which is the age of glory within the veil, on the other side of this age. Christ has already entered within the veil -- crossed over! He is our forerunner, ready for the new age to begin. He is waiting -- He is our High Priest who is fully able to assist us and assure us that we will not be disappointed. He has become High Priest forever, after The Order of Melchizedek.

Therefore let us do everything we can to prepare ourselves to join Him -- to press on toward the goal for the prize of being a co-heir with Christ and sharing in His inheritance.

[**Hebrews 6:11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.11&t=NKJV)**:**

*LET US BE DILIGENT SO AS TO REALIZE THE FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE UNTO THE END*.

The Lord has sworn by Himself and will not change His mind:

*“Thou are a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”* ([Psalm 110](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+110&t=NKJV))