

Lesson Fourteen — The Book of Hebrews, Part I

Day One — The Foundation

Day Two — The World to Come

Day Three — The Rest

Day Four — Melchizedek

Day Five — The Hope of Our Salvation

Last week we studied passages about works and rewards in order to better understand the role of works in the life of a believer. The big picture of the Bible should really be coming together for you by now. I hope you are excited at the possibilities this holds for you! I know I am.

This week and next we are going to take a very brief glance at the Book of Hebrews.¹ The reason why we will spend two weeks looking at this book is because it lays out the Bible's overall picture in a very succinct, yet brief format. So we will spend some time looking into it. Please pray for your week's study.

Day One — The Foundation

In order to understand the Bible as a whole, a person must begin where God began — with the foundation which has been laid at the beginning. Then, in understanding this foundational material, one will be able to build upon the foundation correctly. This arrangement of material can be clearly seen in the Book of Hebrews. And accordingly, in order for a person to understand this great book, he must begin in chapter one, understand what the author is talking about as he lays the foundation, and begin to build a proper understanding based upon that which was laid as the foundation. This is the way one can correctly understand the Book of Hebrews, otherwise it may be next to impossible. (The whole Bible is laid out the same way.)

The best way to begin our study this week is to read the entire first chapter. Why don't you do that now, seeing what you can glean on your own.

Having only read this chapter one time through, it may not have made much sense to you. (I struggled with it for some time.) If so, with study it will progressively become clearer. This chapter contains seven Old Testament passages, each having to do with a particular facet of the kingdom. And the author didn't just put these passages at this place in the epistle randomly. He had very specific purposes for choosing these passages. It then becomes important to understand his intentions.

¹ A 16 week study on the Book of Hebrews is available as a possible follow-up study to this one. Contact kseeker1@aol.com for information on the workbook and video tapes.

That each of these seven passages has something to do with the coming kingdom of Jesus Christ can easily be seen if you were to look up the original context of each of the seven passages and study them in their original setting. But for our purposes today (due to time constraints), we will only glimpse parts of Hebrews chapter one. As we work our way through this chapter, remember in the NASB capital letters show that the words are quoted from the Old Testament. Study through this first section of chapter one.

Hebrews 1

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

List all that you learn about the Son in these opening verses, while not forgetting what you have previously learned about the implications of Sonship. (Sonship implies rulership [II Sam. 7:12-14]. You may want to go back and read the indented parenthetical paragraph at the top of p. 155 for a quick synopsis of this idea concerning sonship. This is crucial. In fact, the author quotes from II Samuel chapter seven in the next verse. We'll get to it in a minute.) Make your list now of the things you learn about the Son from the above passage.

According to this passage, of what is Jesus heir?

Also, He has *inherited* a name better than whom?

With that in mind, continuing reading —

**5 For to which of the angels did He ever say,
“THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE”?
And again,
“I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME”?
6 And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says,
“AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM.”**

The first quote is from Psalm 2; the next quote is from II Samuel 7; the third is from Psalm 97.

Keep vv. 5 and 6 in context with the opening verses of the book. What emphasis do you think the author is trying to get across, as he lays the foundation for the book?

Did you notice the beginning phrase in v. 6? What is this speaking about?

These next two quotes are from Psalms 104 and 45 respectively.

**7 And of the angels He says,
“WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE.”**

The quote in v. 7 comes from Psalm 104 wherein the Psalmist praises God for His creative and restorative powers. The quote he uses reveals that angels are God’s ministers (or messengers), showing that they do His bidding. The entire Psalm gives some of the detail of what God has done to and for the earth and those that dwell on the earth. The Psalm portrays the *panorama of time* extending from the restoration of the earth to the time when sinners will be consumed from the earth and the wicked will be no more.

**8 But of the Son He says,
“THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER,
AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.
9 “THOU HAST LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS;
THEREFORE GOD, THY GOD, HATH ANOINTED THEE WITH THE OIL OF
GLADNESS ABOVE THY COMPANIONS.”**

Then in this quote from in vv. 8, 9 (taken from Ps. 45), the Psalmist reveals that the Father refers to the Son as “God.” This quote is obviously referring to the Son’s kingly reign. Putting these two verses together, what comparison is being made between the angels and the Son?

The author of Hebrews seems caught up with the idea of the *panorama of time* when he refers to it again in this quote from Psalm 102. In this quote, he deals very specifically with the period of time extending from the beginning of Genesis chapter one — all the way to the Messianic Era and beyond — to the endless ages of eternity. Read it.

**10 And,
“THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING DIDST LAY THE FOUNDATION
OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS;
11 THEY WILL PERISH, BUT THOU REMAINEST;
AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD AS A GARMENT,
12 AND AS A MANTLE THOU WILT ROLL THEM UP;
AS A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED.
BUT THOU ART THE SAME,
AND THY YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END.”**

The last quote is from Psalm 110 and is fully Messianic in scope.

**13 But to which of the angels has He ever said,
“SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES
A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET”?**

Compare v. 13 with the end of v. 3. What comparison do you see?

When will God make Jesus' enemies a footstool for His feet?

Who are His enemies and where are they now?

What time frame is the author speaking of, as evident from these passages?

And finally we come to the last verse in chapter one. The author speaks of “ministering spirits” (angels who are in heaven serving God, who do His bidding [not the angels who are Christ's enemies]), and who have been sent out for a specific purpose.

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

What do these angels do? To whom do they offer this service?

It should now be plain to see what the topic is that the author of Hebrews is dealing with. From all that you have seen so far in chapter one, what is the topic he is dealing with?

Verse 14 confirms beyond a doubt that the author is dealing with the kingdom in the coming age, because he is dealing with the salvation that has to do with the inheritance. Too bad for a chapter break here, because the next verse begins with the words “For this reason...” We'll pick it up tomorrow, but we'll need to remember where we left off today because chapters one and two are inseparably linked together.

Day Two — The World to Come

Did you notice in yesterday's study of chapter one that the author of Hebrews continually drew comparisons between Jesus and the angels? If we do not realize what he is saying in these comparisons, then the comparisons would hardly make any sense, because Jesus *is* better than the angels, isn't He? And He has a better name than any and all of the angels, doesn't He? Of course He does! Then why does the author make such comparison? And why is it stated that He is the *heir of all things*? Being Creator God, doesn't He *own all things* already? These are questions which need to be answered if one is to understand what the Book of Hebrews is all about.

The statement in 1:2 that Jesus is *heir of all things* (things related to the earth as it is the earth which is Christ's inheritance [Ps. 2:8]) implies that He *does not* own all things yet (the things related to the earth).

But the day is fast approaching when He will receive His inheritance! All of these statements must be kept in the context of chapters one and two. So let's see if we can understand these things more clearly.

Since chapter two begins with the phrase *For this reason*, the author must be getting ready to connect what he is about to say with what he has just said. Before you continue, go back over yesterday's homework quickly reviewing what we learned, then read what follows in chapter two. (Again, too bad for a chapter break here.) Do that now.

Hebrews 2

1 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

“We *must pay much closer attention* to what we have heard.” Let's grasp this! (The answers to the following questions are all found in chapter one.)

First, what have we heard?

From Whom have we heard?

To what must we pay *much closer* attention?

And now from chapter two, if we don't pay much closer attention, what will happen?

Now the author brings the Children of Israel into the picture as an example of what could happen if we drift away from the things we have heard. Study what he says.

Hebrews 2

1 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? 4 God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

Make a connection between 2:3 and 1:14. What connection do you make?

Now you have to think this through. The author refers to the covenant made on Mt. Sinai through the mediation of angels and through Moses(*cf.* Gal. 3:19). The Children of Israel promised God that they would obey every word which He spoke to them through Moses (Ex. 24:7). How is the author using the Children of Israel as an example? What is he saying?

According to the implication of 2:2, 3, what happens if we do not pay *much closer* attention to the things that we have heard from God as He spoke through the prophets and in His Son (the things reiterated within the quotes of the OT passages in the first chapter)?

And just in case the reader misses the point of where all this is leading, the author spells it out clearly in v. 5.

5 For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking.

In the author's own words, what does he say he is writing about?

Basing the answer to the next question from what you have previously learned concerning the present rulership over the earth, how does the author describe *the world to come*?

That the author is speaking about the coming age is confirmed in the next Old Testament quote. He quotes David expressing awe of God's divine plan.

**6 But one has testified somewhere, saying,
“WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU REMEMBEREST HIM?
OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM?
7 THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS;
THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR,
AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS;
8 THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.”**

Go to the Appendix and spend a few minutes studying through Psalm 8 (pg. 295). What is David speaking about?

Connect what David is speaking about in this Psalm with the words God said prior to creating man in Genesis 1:27, 27. How do they compare?

But there seems to be a problem. We know that due to man's fall, all things have not yet been subjected to man (as it was to be so). And the author of Hebrews obviously recognizes this fact. As you continue to read, underline the phrase “But now...”

8 ... For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. 9 But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

Comparing Psalm 8 with Hebrews 2:8, it is easy to see that v. 8 is speaking of created man (not the Man, Jesus). It is not until v. 9 that the author speaks of the Man, Jesus. List all the things it says about Jesus.

Remember the comparisons the author made earlier between Jesus and the angels. Now see what he says about Jesus in v. 9. Why and how was Jesus *made for a little while lower than the angels*? What do you think?

Let's put it all together. Jesus is the creator of the heavens and the earth. Angels were created to rule over the earth. In seeking to usurp the authority and power of God, Satan led one-third of the angels over this domain in a rebellion against God. The fallen angels, though, remain the present rulers over the earth. Man, having been created to rule over the earth in Satan's stead, was tested for worthiness. But Satan brought about the fall of man through deceiving the woman, which disqualified them from the position they were created to fill. Through Jesus' blood, He reconciled all these things to God, things on the earth and in the heavens (Col. 1:16, 20). But at the present time we do not see everything reconciled (Heb. 2:8). The fallen angels still rule from the heavens over the earth. But the day is coming when the world will no longer be subjected to the fallen angels, which is exactly what the Book of Hebrews is dealing with — the world to come (2:5).

With all of this in mind, go back and reread Hebrews 2:5-9. See if it doesn't make more sense now.

The author of Hebrews is showing us that there is coming a time when all of this will take place. God spoke about these things through the prophets and in His Son (Heb. 1:1, 2). And we need to *pay much closer attention* to the things that we have heard, so that we *do not drift away* (as the Children of Israel did) from this *so great salvation* (the salvation to be inherited) and incur a stricter judgment than did the Children of Israel (falling short of their inheritance).

Presently, Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, waiting until the Father makes His enemies a footstool for His feet — until the Father binds the fallen angels in the bottomless pit for a thousand years. His throne is the heavens and the earth is His footstool [Isa.66:1]). Praise the Lord for all He has done! For all He will yet do!

So what do you think about all these things?

Day Three — The Rest

With all that we have learned from the first two chapters of the Book of Hebrews, we have much, much more to learn. Throughout the book, the author of Hebrews gives five very serious warnings that we all need to heed today, in light of the coming age. These five major warnings are precipitated by the foundational truth laid out in chapter one.

We've seen the first major warning in the first part of chapter two, where we are warned not to drift away from the things we have heard, the things that God wants us to know and understand about the coming kingdom. The second warning is what we will see today. This warning is found in the third and fourth chapters, and has to do with our *striving to enter the rest*. Remember, the inheritance for the Children of Israel had to do with their rest in the promised land (Deut. 3:18-20; 4:21, 38; 6:23; 12:9; 25:19; Josh. 1:13; 11:23). And the author focuses on the picture of the Children of Israel and their loss of the rest through their lack of faith and obedience. (This isn't the only place we have seen where the Children of Israel are given as examples for us. Obviously, God is trying to get our attention concerning these things.)

Spend your study time today carefully studying chapters three and four. I have printed them here for you to make study notes in the margins and between the lines. Use as much time as you can in critically reading and studying these passages. These two chapters are full of interest for us. (I am not going to ask many questions on these chapters, because I want you to critically think through them yourself. You should be able to see what you need to see in them. Then we will cover some of these passages in the lecture.)

Hebrews 3

1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; 2 He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. 3 For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. 4 For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. 5 Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; 6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house — whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says,

“TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, 8 DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS

WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL

IN THE WILDERNESS,

9 WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED ME BY TESTING ME,

AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS.

10 THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID,

‘THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART,

AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS’;

11 AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, ‘THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.’“

12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, 15 while it is said,

“TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS,

AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME.”

16 For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

Hebrews 4

1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. 3 For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said,

“AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,”

although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day:

“AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS”;

5 and again in this passage,

“THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.”

6 Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, 7 He again fixes a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before,

“TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.”

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 9 So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. 10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

11 Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. 14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The first warning has to do with not drifting away from what we have heard in the prophets and in the Lord. What is this second warning in the Book of Hebrews all about? Write out how you would explain it to someone else.

See you tomorrow.

Day Four — Melchizedek

So far this week we have seen that the author of Hebrews has warned us to *pay much closer attention to what we have heard* from God through the prophets and through the Lord, speaking specifically of the inheritance in the coming kingdom, referring to this inheritance as *so great salvation* (2:3). We have also seen that he warns us about striving to enter the rest, using the Children of Israel as an example for us. He shows us that they missed the rest due to *unbelief and disobedience*. On the one hand, he has told us *not to drift away* from coming into an understanding of these things, thereby neglecting the *so great salvation*; on the other hand, he has told us *to strive to enter, lest we come short of entering*. In a positive approach the two warnings are: 1) pay much closer attention, and 2) strive to enter the rest. In a negative approach the two are: 1) don't drift away, and 2) don't fall short. Both the negative and positive aspects are given.

The third of the five major warnings given in the Book of Hebrews is found in chapter six, which we will consider today. But first we must understand some things about a man from Abraham's day — the man, Melchizedek.

Melchizedek was a king/priest of God Most High during Abraham's day. Notice — a *king/priest*. He is a type of Christ pointing to the time when Jesus will come into His kingdom as the King/Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. It is interesting to note that this man is only mentioned in two places in the Bible prior to his being mentioned in Hebrews. Yet the author of Hebrews says that he has "*much to say about him*" (5:11). What could it be that is so important? Let's look at it.

The first place in Scripture where Melchizedek is mentioned is in Genesis chapter fourteen. This is also the first time war is mentioned in the Bible. Several kings from various city-states in Canaan entered into a war, during which time Abraham's nephew, Lot, had been taken captive. Upon Abraham's victorious return from rescuing Lot, the king of Salem — Melchizedek, a king/priest of God Most High — greets him, serves him bread and wine and reveals more of God's plan to him (Gen. 14:5ff).

The second place Melchizedek is mentioned in Scripture is in Psalm 110. The entire Psalm is Messianic in scope and is printed in its entirety below for your study. (In fact, this Psalm was quoted in Hebrews chapter one. Do you remember?)

Psalm 110

1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." 2 The LORD will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of Your enemies." 3 Your people will volunteer freely

in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew. 4 The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

5 The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. 6 He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country. 7 He will drink from the brook by the wayside; Therefore He will lift up His head.

Make a list of the things in Psalm 110 that make it obviously Messianic.

It is necessary to understand that Jesus is presently ministering as High Priest after the order of Aaron, effecting a cleansing from sin for God’s redeemed people (just as the high priests in Israel did in OT days). But when Jesus comes in glory (after the last war between kings of the earth), He will come as King/Priest after the order of Melchizedek. Read what he says.

Hebrews 5

8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. 9 And having been made perfect <5048>, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal <166> salvation, 10 being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

11 Concerning him [Melchizedek] we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

Verse 8 gives Christ as an example of a Son who obeyed. What does it say of His obedience?

The word *perfect* <5048> (v. 9) means “brought to the goal.” Because He was made perfect, what did He become?

Now you surely are asking yourself the question, “What salvation (v.9) would the author of Hebrews be referring to?” I hope you are! You should be! So what salvation is the author referring to here? And what makes you think so?

The author uses Melchizedek as a type of Christ saying, “Concerning him [Melchizedek] we have much to say.” How can he say that? If the Scriptures only mention Melchizedek two times previous to this, how can the author of Hebrews say that he has *much to say about him*?

He has much to say about Melchizedek *because of Who it is that Melchizedek represents*. We can learn much from Melchizedek related to Christ's coming role as King/Priest. Melchizedek represents Christ in the coming age. And in this respect, there is *much to say about him*.

Now go back and read Hebrews 5:8-14. According to the passage, why had these things become hard to explain?

Explain in detail the condition of the believers at the time of this writing. (See 5:11-14.)

Is the author of Hebrews addressing this epistle to *believers*? From this text, how do you know?

According to the text, describe the differences between the immature believer and the mature believer. What would be some characteristics of both?

Now we come to what some people believe to be one of the most confusing and/or controversial passages in all of Scripture — Hebrews 6:4-6. It becomes seemingly confusing and controversial when people take this passage out of the context of the chapter (and the book) and try to make it say something it is not saying. This passage has *nothing* to do with eternal salvation! In fact, this passage consists of the third major warning in the Book of Hebrews, which is written to believers. But trying to see these verses as referring to our free gift does nothing but make it become controversial and confusing! It needn't be so. And it wouldn't be so if one keeps this passage within the context of the chapter and the book. That this is not speaking of one's eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ is evident not only in the preceding text as well as the immediate text, it is also evident in the text that follows. Here again, it is too bad for a chapter break, because chapter six is inseparably linked to chapter five. As you study through this, keep it in context!

Hebrews 6

1 Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do, if God permits. 4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

List the six elementary teachings about Christ mentioned in vv. 1, 2.

These six elementary teachings about Christ are really in the way of a parenthetical thought lying between the middle of v. 1 and v. 3. Look at this thought without the mid-section:

“...let us go on to maturity... and this we will do, if God permits.”

With that idea, vv. 4-6 explain why God may not allow some to go on to maturity. From vv. 4-6, what can you deduce as to why God may or may not allow one to go on to maturity? (Come on! You have learned enough that you can figure this out on your own! Don't forget what this book is about.)

We really do serve a *merciful* God, don't we?

Think about these things throughout your day. See you tomorrow.

Day Five — The Hope of Our Salvation

Today we will complete Hebrews chapter six. Next week we will glimpse the last half of Hebrews chapter ten and most of chapter eleven, thereby touching on the fourth and fifth major warnings in the Book of Hebrews.

Before we tackle the last half of chapter six, briefly review your homework from yesterday. You will need a firm grasp on it in order to continue. Do that now.

We will pick up our reading in Hebrews chapter six. Verses 4-6 has just revealed why God may not allow some Christians to go on to maturity. Essentially, it is because in learning the truths about Melchizedek (and Who it is that he represents), along with some attendant information on the judgment seat and the coming kingdom (that which makes up *the meat of the Word of God*), a person is held *much more* accountable than one who does not come into a knowledge and understanding of all that information.

(Now you may wonder, “Then why am I studying all of this if I am only going to be held much more accountable?” Fear not! If you do not know and understand all of the potential you have in laying your life down, then you will never reach the fulness of that which God desires for you and the blessings which He has in store for you! And in missing out on these things, you would be very sad! [That is an understatement!] You simply have to make your

mind up that you will do anything (ANYTHING!) and everything so as to please God. It will be so worth it in the end!)

The author of Hebrews continues to give the reason why some will be allowed to come into this understanding and some will not. He goes on to say —

Hebrews 6

7 For ground that drinks the rain which often falls upon it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; 8 but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned.

The author describes ground that drinks in the rain. But there are two different crops and two different outcomes. Describe both crops — the conditions of the crops and the outcome.

Is it the *same ground* that has the possibility of producing different crops? How do you know?

Continuing —

9 But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. 10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. 13 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, “I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU, AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU.” 15 And thus, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. 16 For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute.

Write out what this passage is saying. What does it have to do with?

Continuing —

17 In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, 18 in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. 19 This

hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

What is the anchor of our soul?

Based on the last half of chapter six, what does our hope have to do with?

Apparently, how important is *this hope* to God? What makes you think so?

So, how important should it be to you?