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HEBREWS CHAPTER 6

In Your Group Read Hebrews chapter six (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As A Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF HEBREWS CHAPTER 6 King James Version

HEB 6:[1] Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, **[2]** Of the doctrine 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. **[4]** For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, **[5]** And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, **[6]** If they shall fall away, 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 earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: **[8]** But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. **[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 labour of love, which ye have shown toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. **[11]** And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: **[12]** That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. **[13]** For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, **[14]** Saying, **Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.** (Gen. 22:17) **[15]** And so,

after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. **[16]** For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. **[17]** Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: **[18]** That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: **[19]** Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; **[20]** Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 6 VERSES 1-3

Hebrews 6:[1] Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, [2] Of the doctrine 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. (King James Version)

6 We must try to become mature and start thinking about more than just the basic things we were taught about Christ. We shouldn't need to keep talking about why we ought to turn from deeds that bring death and why we ought to have faith in God. ² And we shouldn't need to keep teaching about baptisms or about the laying on of hands or about people being raised from death and the future judgment. ³ Let's grow up, if God is willing. **(Contemporary English Version)**

6 So come on, let's leave the preschool finger painting exercises on Christ and get on with the grand work of art. Grow up in Christ. The basic foundational truths are in place: turning your back on “salvation by self-help” and turning in trust toward God; baptismal instructions; laying on of hands; resurrection of the dead; eternal judgment. God helping us, we'll stay true to all that. But there's so much more. Let's get on with it! (verses 1-3) **(The Message)**

[1] So let us leave the first things you need to know about Christ. Let us go on to the teaching that full-grown Christians should understand. We do not need to teach these first truths again. You already know that you must be sorry for your sins and turn from them. You know that you must have faith in God. **[2]** You know about being baptized and about putting hands on people. You know about being raised from the dead and about being punished forever. **[3]** We will go on, if God lets us. **(The New Life Testament)**

[1] Let us leave behind the ABC's of Christ's teaching, and let us rush on to maturity. Let us not again repeat the fundamental teachings: of turning away from dead works, of faith in God, **[2]** of teaching about baptisms, of laying on of hands, of the rising of the dead, and of everlasting judgment – **[3]** and if God permits we will do this. **(God's Word to the Nations New Testament)** **Additional Information: Verses 1-3** The principles of the doctrine of Christ are the same elementary principles that are mentioned in Hebrews

5:12-14. The writer to the Hebrews now admonishes his readers to grow up and get these things under their belt. These elementary principles of the doctrine of Christ are the ABC's of the Christian faith and are also referred to as "the foundation" (v. 1): Repentance, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, eternal judgment. All of these doctrines are mentioned in the book of Acts.

"1 We must try to become mature and start thinking about more than just the basic things we were taught about Christ. We shouldn't need to keep talking about why we ought to turn from deeds that bring death and why we ought to have faith in God. 2 And we shouldn't need to keep teaching about baptisms or about the laying on of hands or about people being raised from death and the future judgment. 3 Let's grow up, if God is willing" (Contemporary English Version).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 6 VERSES 4-6

Hebrews 6: [4] For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, [5] And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, [6] If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. (King James Version)

⁴ Some people cannot be brought back again to a changed life. They were once in God's light, and enjoyed heaven's gift, and shared in the Holy Spirit. ⁵ They found out how good God's word is, and they received the powers of his new world. ⁶ But they fell away from Christ. It is impossible to bring them back to a changed life again, because they are nailing the Son of God to a cross again and are shaming him in front of others. **(New Century Version)**

[4] For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, **[5]** and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, **[6]** if they then commit apostasy, since they crucify the Son of God on their own account and hold him up to contempt. **(Revised Standard Version)**

[4] Some people once had the light. They tasted some of the heavenly gift and shared in the Holy Spirit. **[5]** They tasted how good the word of God is and the powers of the future world, **[6]** but they have fallen away. It is impossible to bring them back to a change of heart. In their lives, they nail the Son of God to the cross again, shaming him publicly. **(The Simple English New Testament).**

Additional Information: Verses 4-6 There are several ways that people look at this passage. (1) This is a true Christian that turned back, never to return to God again. This believer has committed apostasy, that is, renounced and abandoned their former loyalty to Christ. The result being that they will perish. (2) The warning is against a mere profession of faith, the tasting here is not a real partaking of salvation. (3) The warning is given to Christians moving from their position of true faith but they will only be disqualified from further service and reward. **Verse 4** - These are the facts: **(1)** This person was once "**enlightened**". That means he was informed, he had spiritual insight and understanding. In the Greek the writer is using the aorist tense meaning that this person at one time was completely, effectively, wholly, as a fact, really was informed, understood, and had spiritual insight. **(2)** He "**tasted**" the heavenly gift. That means he ate, took in, partook, and shared in this heavenly gift. Again the aorist tense is used, meaning completely, effectively, successfully, actually, as a whole, and really did partake of this heavenly gift. **(3)** This person was made a "**partaker of the Holy Ghost,**" i.e., he shared in the Holy Spirit or had the Holy Spirit. The aorist tense again is used. He completely, effectively, successfully, actually, as a whole, really did have the Holy Ghost. **Verse 5** - (4) He "**tasted**" the "**good Word of God.**" The Greek

word for “Word” of God is RHEMA, in other words, this word is real and personal to this person and he partook of it. Again the aorist tense is used that indicates that this person as a whole, effectively and successfully received the good Word of God. **(5)** This person also partook of the “**powers of the world to come.**” “**Powers**” is from a Greek word that is also translated “**miracles,**” referring to God’s miraculous power. This phrase “powers of the world to come” is in the present tense that indicates that this person continually, over and over again experienced God’s power. **Verse 6 – (5)** This person has now “**fallen away**” from the true faith. The Jerusalem Bible says, “yet in spite of this have fallen away.” This person was not unfamiliar with the Christian faith. The Revised Standard Version states, “**If they then commit apostasy.**” “**Apostasy**” means “**a renunciation or abandonment of a former loyalty**” (American Heritage Dictionary).

Now the writer of Hebrews states that if this mature believer, deliberately rejects the Saviour, there is no way to bring him back. What he has done is the same as nailing again the Son of God to the cross, openly mocking Him and putting Him to an open shame. This suggest a deep hardening of this persons heart even against all efforts to win him back. This is different than the person who has erred from the truth and can still turn from the error of his way (See James 5:19-20).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 6

VERSES 7-8

Hebrews 6: [7] For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: [8] But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. (King James Version)

[7] Some people are like land that gets plenty of rain. The land produces a good crop for those who work it, and it receives God’s blessings. **[8]** Other people are like land that grows thorns and weeds and is worthless. It is in danger of being cursed by God and will be destroyed by fire. **(New Century Version)**

Additional Information: Verses 7-8 Verses seven and eight presents an analogy found in nature that represents the warning just given. The ground (or people) producing good fruit, receive blessings from God. The unproductive ground (people) with bad fruit i.e., no fruit, will be destroyed (burned).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 6

VERSES 9-12

Hebrews 6: [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 labour of love, which ye have shown toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. [11] And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: [12] That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (King James Version)

[9] Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case--things that accompany salvation. **[10]** God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. **[11]** We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. **[12]** We do not want you to become lazy, but to

imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. **(New International Version)**

[9] But you, my dear people, in spite of what we have just said, we are sure you are in a better state and on the way to salvation. **[10]** God would not be so unjust as to forget all you have done, the love that you have for his name or the services you have done, and are still doing, for the saints. **[11]** Our one desire is that every one of you should go on showing the same earnestness to the end, to the perfect fulfillment of our hopes, **[12]** never growing careless, but imitating those who have the faith and the perseverance to inherit the promises. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

Though I say this, beloved, I **[9]** feel sure you will take the better course that means salvation. **[10]** God is not unfair; he will not forget what you have done, nor the love you have shown for his sake in ministering, as you still **[11]** do, to the saints. It is my heart's desire that each of you would prove equally keen upon realizing your full hope to the very **[12]** end, so that, instead of being slack, you may imitate those who inherit the promises by their steadfast faith. **(Moffatt Translation)**

[9] Even though we speak this way, dear friends, we feel confident of better things about you, things that belong to salvation. **[10]** For God is not unjust so as to forget what you did and the love you showed for His name as you have ministered to the saints, and are still ministering. **[11]** It is our desire, however, for each of you to evidence the same earnestness all the way through, to enjoy the full assurance of your hope to the end, **[12]** so you may not become sluggish but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. **(Berkeley Version)**

Additional Information: Verses 9-10 The writer of Hebrews states that even though we are talking like this, we are persuaded better things of you. In other words, you have not apostatized, or renounced the faith. You have in your life the things that accompany salvation (or coexist with salvation). And what is it that coexist with salvation? Good fruit. This fruit is described in verse 10 as being love and ministry toward God and His saints. In the King James Version the word and phrases “**accompany**” (v.9), “**do minister**” (v.10), and “**do shew**” (v.11) are all in the **present tense** which show that works of faith continue to accompany saving faith and salvation.

Verse 11-12 Because the goal of faith (or the end result of our faith) is in the future, the faithful must continue in faith “**unto the end**” (Heb. 3:14; 6:18-19; 11:1). The NIV Study Bible states that this is “**a call for perseverance in faith as an evidence of salvation**” (p. 1865). The Message translates this, “And now I want each of you to extend the same intensity toward a full-bodied hope, and keep at it till the finish. Don’t drag your feet. Be like those who stay the course with committed faith and then get everything promised to them.”

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HEBREWS CHAPTER 6
VERSES 13-15

Hebrews 6: [13] For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, [14] Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. (Gen. 22:17) [15] And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. (King James Version)

¹³For example, there was God's promise to Abraham. Since there was no one greater to swear by, God took an oath in his own name, saying: ¹⁴"I will certainly bless you richly, and I will multiply your descendants into countless millions." ¹⁵Then Abraham waited patiently, and he received what God had promised. **(New Living Translation)**

¹³No one is greater than God. So he made a promise in his own name when he said to Abraham, ¹⁴"I, the Lord, will bless you with many descendants!" ¹⁵Then after Abraham had been very patient, he was given what God had promised. **(Contemporary English Version)**

When God made his promise to Abraham, he backed it to the hilt, putting his own reputation on the line. He said, "I promise that I'll bless you with everything I have – bless and bless and bless!" Abraham stuck it out and got everything that had been promised to him. (verses 13-15) **(The Message)**

[13] When God made the promise to Abraham, he *swore by his own self*, since it was impossible for him to swear by anyone greater: **[14]** *I will shower blessings on you and give you many descendants.* **[15]** Because of that, Abraham persevered and saw the promise fulfilled. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[13] For in making a promise to Abraham God *swore by himself* (since he could swear by none greater), **[14]** *I will indeed bless you and multiply you.* **[15]** Thus it was that by steadfastness Abraham obtained what he had been promised. **(Moffatt Translation)**

[13] For when God made [His] promise to Abraham, He swore by Himself, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, **[14]** Saying, Blessing I certainly will bless you and multiplying I will multiply you. [Gen. 22:16,17.] **[15]** And so it was that he [Abraham], having waited long and endured patiently, realized and obtained [in the birth of Isaac as a pledge of what was to come] what God had promised him. **(Amplified New Testament)**

Additional Information: If the readers were searching for models to "imitate," there was the case of **Abraham** who received an oath from **God**, the **promise** that assured the multiplication of his seed. In due time his patience was rewarded in that he (lit.) "received the promise." Since the reference is to the promise given in Genesis 22:17 after the offering of Isaac... the idea is that **after Abraham had patiently endured** (the test involving Isaac), **he obtained the promise.** (Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc.) 1983, 1985. "**Patently endured**" has the idea of remaining steadfast in the face of undesirable circumstances (Col. 1:11; Heb. 12:1-3; James 5:11).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 6
VERSES 16-20

Hebrews 6: [16] For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. [17] Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: [18] That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: [19] Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; [20] Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (King James Version)

¹⁶When a man takes an oath, he is calling upon someone greater than himself to force him to do what he has promised or to punish him if he later refuses to do it; the oath ends all argument about it. ¹⁷God also bound himself with an oath, so that those he promised to help would be perfectly sure and never need to wonder whether he might change his plans. ¹⁸He has given us both his promise and his oath, two things we can completely count on, for it is impossible for God to tell a lie. Now all those who flee to him to save them can take new courage when they hear such assurances from God; now they can know without doubt that he will give them the salvation he has promised them. ¹⁹This certain hope of being saved is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls, connecting us with God himself behind the sacred curtains of heaven, ²⁰where Christ has gone ahead to plead for us from his position as our High Priest, with the honor and rank of Melchizedek. **(Living Bible)**

[16] For as men swear by a greater than themselves, and as an oath means to them a guarantee that ends any dispute, **[17]** God, in his desire to afford the heirs of the Promise a special proof of the solid character of his purpose, interposed with an **[18]** oath; so that by these two solid facts (the Promise and the Oath), where it is impossible for God to be false, we refugees might have strong encouragement to seize **[19]** the hope set before us, anchoring the soul to it safe and secure, as it enters the inner Presence behind the veil. **[20]** There Jesus entered for us in advance, when he became high priest for ever with the rank of Melchizedek. **(Moffatt Translation)**

[16] Men indeed swear by a greater [than themselves], and with them in all disputes the oath taken for confirmation is final [ending strife]. **[17]** Accordingly God also, in His desire to show more convincingly and beyond doubt to those who were to inherit the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose and plan, intervened (mediated) with an oath. **[18]** This was so that, by two unchangeable things [His promise and His oath] in which it is impossible for God ever to prove false or deceive us, we who have fled [to Him] for refuge might have mighty indwelling strength and strong encouragement to grasp and hold fast the hope appointed for us and set before [us]. **[19]** [Now] we have this [hope] as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul [it cannot slip and it cannot break down under whoever steps out upon it – a hope] that reaches farther and enters into [the very certainty of the Presence] within the veil, [Lev.16:2] **[20]** Where Jesus has entered in for us [in advance], a Forerunner having become a High Priest forever after the order (with the rank) of Melchizedek. [Ps. 110:4.] **(Amplified New Testament)**

[16] People always use the name of someone greater than themselves to make a vow

(promise). The vow proves that what they say is true. Then other people accept what they say. And this ends all arguing. [17] God wanted to prove that his promise was true. God wanted to prove this to those people who would get what he promised. God wanted those people to understand clearly that his purposes (plans) never change. So God said something would happen, and he proved what he said by also making a vow (promise). [18] Those two things cannot change. God cannot lie when he says something and he cannot lie when he makes a vow. So those things give great comfort to us who came to God for safety. Those two things give us comfort and strength to continue in the hope that God gives us. [19] We have this hope. And it is like an anchor. It is strong and sure and keeps our soul safe. That hope enters into the most holy place behind the curtain in the heavenly temple. [20] Jesus has already entered there and opened the way for us. Jesus has become the high priest forever the same as Melchizedek. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: Verses 16-20 In verses 16-20, several of the modern translations and paraphrases (TEV, JB, AMP, LIVING BIBLE, NIVRV) indicate that (as stated previously throughout this letter), if you don't turn back, if you continue in faith, if you be not moved away...the heavenly kingdom that God has promised you will indeed be yours. **Verse 19** "Hope for the fulfillment of God's salvation promises is the 'anchor of the soul' (v.19), keeping the believer secure during times of trouble and turmoil. (The MacArthur Bible Commentary, p.1852) **Verse 19-20** "The Greek *prodromos* ('who went before us') suggests a 'forerunner,' and if the harbor imagery is still in mind it recalls the role of sailors who leave their ship in a smaller craft in order to carry the anchor (v.19) forward to a place where it can be firmly lodged. So too the Lord Jesus, by His entrance into the heavenly sanctuary where He functions as a High Priest forever, has given to a Christian's hope and anchorage from which it cannot be shaken loose. Since, therefore, the readers' hope was sure, they could cling to it tenaciously right to the very end." (The Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 797).

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Hebrews Chapter 6)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Hebrews Chapter 6.**

- 1. Read Hebrews 6:1.** The principles of the doctrine of Christ (the anointed King) are doctrines that are: a. the deeper teaching of Scripture. b. foundational for the Christian. c. never taught.
- 2. Read Hebrews 6:1-2.** The foundational doctrines of God and Christ consist of: a. eternal security. b. repentance. c. spirit, soul & body. d. faith toward God. e. prosperity. f. baptisms. g. laying on of hands. h. the resurrection of the dead. i. positive confession. j. eternal judgment.
- 3. Read Hebrews 6:4-6 and the “Additional Information” on these verses.** Of the three views mentioned (in the additional information) which view do you feel fits the context of this book (Hebrews)? (1) “Apostasy.” This is a true Christian that turned back, never to return to God again.
- 4. Read Hebrews 6:7-8.** Verses 7-8 are an analogy found in nature that represents two kinds of people. The ground or people producing good fruit, receive: a. blessing from God. b. God’s curse. c. none of the above.
- 5. Read Hebrews 6:7-8.** Verses 7-8 are an analogy found in nature that represents two kind of people. The ground or people with bad fruit or no fruit end up being: a. depressed. b. happy. c. burned or destroyed.
- 6. Read Hebrews 6:9-10.** Even though the writer of Hebrews was giving strict warnings to the people addressed in this letter, he also encouraged them that he saw in them the things that accompany and coexist with salvation. Some of the virtues mentioned were: a. tithing. b. church attendance. c. labors of love shown toward God. d. serving other believers.
- 7. Read Hebrews 6:12.** We receive what God has promised through: a. a one time act of faith, that is, temporal faith. b. perseverance in faith, that is, faith and patience.
- 8. Read Hebrews 6:13-15.** Abraham was an example of persevering in faith. After remaining steadfast in the face of many undesirable circumstances he: a. gave up on God. b. obtained God’s promise. c. said, “What will be will be!”

9. **Read Hebrews 6:16-20.** Who are they that have fled for refuge (v.18) and what is the hope set before them? (1) The believer. (2) Heaven itself or the heavenly kingdom.

Instructions for Group Leader: You may want to summarize the chapter (for the group) by reading aloud the following.

Putting the Chapter in Context: Hebrews Chapter 6.

In **verses 1-3** there is an exhortation to go on to spiritual maturity.

In **verses 4-8** the writer to the Hebrews warns of the spiritual danger of “apostasy,” i.e., a renunciation or abandonment of a former loyalty to Christ.

In **verses 9-10** the apostolic writer says that even those he is speaking like this, he is persuaded of better things concerning them (things that co-exist and accompany salvation, i.e., fruit).

In **verses 11-12** he admonishes them to continue in faith and inherit God’s promises.

Verses 13-15 he gives the example of Abraham patiently enduring and obtaining his promise.

Verses 16-20 we see God’s faithfulness to give what He has promised and an admonishment to lay hold upon the hope set before them.

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