

Welcome to: - Bible House of Grace.



God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Hebrews 6.

(2013).

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

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Hebrews 6.

INTRODUCTION: this letter is written to Hebrews who had been enlightened, endured sufferings, been publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, stood alongside others who were persecuted, had compassion on those in prison and joyfully accepted others plundering their property (probably the Romans) knowing they had an eternal possession (Heb. 10:31-36).

It appears they had a faith in Christ, but were still bound by the Levitical priesthood and the Jewish religious system and because of this the author brilliantly uses Moses Tabernacle, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place and Old Testament Scriptures to prove Jesus is the only High Priest anyone needs and that it is by faith in Christ and God's grace not religious works that God's people are counted righteous. The blessing of this letter is not limited to the Hebrews since everyone who is seeking God or who is a brother or sister of Christ will be overwhelming awed as they read this well-crafted and awe-inspiring letter as it beautifully progresses through the chapters proving Jesus is the Christ (probably written about A.D. 68).

Topics.

- Let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity.
- It is impossible to restore to repentance those who have been enlightened.
- Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.
- We have a sure and steadfast anchor of the heart.
- The inner place behind the veil.
- Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf into heaven.
- Jesus is a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

The Previous Chapter: in the previous chapter the author spent the entire chapter brilliantly proving from Old Testament Scripture that Jesus was appointed by God to be a High Priest forever after the order Melchizedek to act on behalf of men and woman in relationship to God. He showed that no-one today needs a human priest and should anyone take the role of priest before God they are an imposter and should not be given any honour or credit. He spoke of Jesus praying with tears to God to save him from death, of the basic principles of the oracles of God and of feeding on milk and solid food.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

Let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity

Hebrews 6:1-3 ----- ¹Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ²and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³And this we will do if God permits.

The word therefore links us immediately back to the previous chapter in which the author told the Hebrews that they should be teachers of the Gospel, but instead needed someone to teach them: -

- The basic principles of the oracles of God because they were dull of hearing and infants in Christ who could only be fed with milk and not solid food (Heb. 5:11-14).

These Hebrews not only had the Old Testament Scriptures for over four-thousand years which echoed, foreshadowed and through the prophets foretold of the coming Messiah the Christ, but had also been taught the fundamental doctrines pertaining to the beginning of Christian life and those doctrines that save a sinner to eternal salvation and everlasting glory.

They had been taught that set of doctrines which make up the foundation of the Christian faith this is why the author said in the previous chapter, "By this time they should have been teachers" (Heb. 5:12).

Maturity and Perfection (in KJV): means the complete ideal it carries the idea of making one complete, mature or perfect, but being complete, mature and perfect in this context does not mean being without sin, but rather refers to the following two things: -

1. To having complete faith in Christ and total trust in God's grace to save us to eternal life and to having such strong faith in the Lord that it will endure even when tested in times of troubles, hardships and sorrow.
2. To behaviour (i.e., being a good testimony to God and the Lord Jesus Christ), in the Old Testament it is written: -

- Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation (Gen. 6:9) (Gen. 7:1).
- Job was blameless, upright, feared God and turned away from evil (Job 1:1).

God Himself confirms Job's righteousness, by saying: -

- There is none like Job a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?

And even after Job had been tested and suffered greatly the LORD said: -

- Job even continues to hold fast his integrity even though I the LORD have almost destroyed him without reason (Job 1:8) (Job 2:3).

Being perfect, mature and complete in regards to behaviour carries the same idea as the words blameless and righteousness do in these verses. Being righteous and blameless does not mean that Noah or Job were without sin before God it simply means that they were decent men, who only did-good to others and not harm. No human could accuse them of any wrongdoing. Being complete, mature perfect, righteous or blamelessness as used in this context is about being blameless before mankind. It's about helping the less fortunate and doing what is right before God and not about being without sin.

Today we don't refer to people as being complete, mature, perfect, righteous or blameless, but would simply say, they were a very good person, meaning they were kind, decent and treated others with respect, fairness, kindness and justice. No brother or sister in Christ should ever be content to rest as babes and infants in Christ acting only in human ways (1 Cor. 3:1-4), but passionately desire to grow in the fruits of the Spirit until their hearts are overflowing with them and their outward behaviour clearly evidences it.

There has only ever been one man who walked on earth without sin before
God and his name was not Noah or Job, but the
Lord Jesus Christ.

The author is speaking to the Hebrews who had been taught for over four-thousand years to believe in God, as the God of Israel, believing in God was not their problem. The stumbling block to their faith was not God, but believing that their Messiah the Christ had arrived and that he is the sole source of salvation and that there is no-need to retain the Levitical priesthood. The entire focus of this letter is to prove to the Hebrews that Jesus is the Christ apart from religious works.

The author is about to shift the focus from the elementary (basic and fundamental) teachings of Christ to Abraham since he clearly understands that all Hebrews not only esteemed Abraham as a great man of God but also believed in God's promise that his seed would inherit the world. So in these verses he is basically saying: -

- Let's leave the elementary teachings and go onto God's promise to Abraham (which he does in verses 13-17) and come back to these foundational things at a later time if God permits (meaning if he has the time).

The call to Higher Knowledge.

Throughout history some religious teachers have thought the words, "Let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity" mean that the author was calling the Hebrews to leave the fundamental teachings of Christ and go onto higher knowledge, in a certain sense they are right, but, this raises an enormous question, "What knowledge can be more advanced than the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ that leads to salvation and the resurrection of the dead to eternal life and everlasting glory? How can there be any higher or more perfect knowledge than this? The answer of course is that there is no higher knowledge than the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Gospel is the only knowledge that has the power to save a sinner to eternal life there is no other Gospel or teaching that has such majestic glory and such power.

But those who believed that the author was calling his audience to higher knowledge were not totally wrong providing they were thinking of the higher knowledge not as being better knowledge, but being the best knowledge suited to the audience. If a minister has a church full of brothers and sisters who are still living as babes and infants in Christ and acting in merely human ways (1 Cor. 3:1-4) the focus of his teaching (as Paul's was) would need to be on the fruits of the Spirit and such like topics, whereas if his church is full of brothers and sisters whose lifestyles are a good reflection of Christ he can focus on other subjects.

Likewise the author of this letter is writing to Hebrews who have been taught the fundamental elements of Christ, but still seem to be in doubt, so he is about to take them onto the following two topics that they had been taught for over four-thousand years: -

1. Abraham and God's promise that his seed would inherit the world.
2. To the priest and king that was prophesied to come after the order of Melchizedek which at the end of this chapter the author brilliantly ties both of these into the New Testament Gospel message to prove Jesus is who he claimed to be.

Thus the higher knowledge in this context is that knowledge that best suits the audience (or the individual) find eternal salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. Added to these the author in the following chapters brilliantly shows his doubtful and confused Hebrew readers that the Tabernacle of Moses, the Holy Place the Most Holy Place the High Priest, the Levitical Priesthood and the blood sacrifices for sin were all imperfect types shadows and patterns of better things to come and how they were to give place to a far more perfect system.

He uses these which they clearly understood to prove to them that Christ is the true Tabernacle of God, the true High Priest and the true sacrificial Lamb without blemish who gave himself as an offering once for all.

Thus the words: -

- Leaving the elementary things behind.

In the context of this chapter refer to the author in the following chapters masterfully showing his Hebrew readers how the old relates to the new because they regarded the ordinances of the Tabernacle and the whole service of the Levitical priesthood as of divine appointment, and of perpetual obligation so of course the author uses what they understood to prove that Christ is the sole source of salvation totally apart from all forms of religious works and human priests.

Repentance from Dead Works.

The phrase, "Repentance from dead works" (v1) does not refer to the evangelical Gospel message of repentance that calls a sinner to eternal salvation in Christ, for the following two reasons: -

1. The Gospel of Christ commands that everyone repent. Repentance is essential in laying the foundation of Christian faith because repentance changes the will. The rebellious will becomes a will that desires to serve the Lord. Only repentance before God can change the heart in such a manner. Repentance is the foundation of the work of God in the heart because by repentance the heart turns to God to find mercy, surrenders to Christ as redeemer and Saviour and with a heartfelt passion desires to forsake sin and live to honour both God and the Lord Jesus Christ and
2. The Lord Jesus Christ himself said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 4:17) and told us to go into all the world and proclaim this message of repentance over and over again.

Rather the dead works the author has in focus refer to religious works believers do and trust in to be saved, because these works are as vain to save as though they were dead, thus the reason they are called dead works. This is one of the greatest problems Paul had within the churches he had established, certain Jews believed Jesus was their Messiah and the Christ but did not believe the message of grace and therefore by their established influence and authority and their knowledge of the Scriptures and skill in oratory and speech making were leading brothers and sisters (especially new converts) in Christ back under the law to be saved.

Likewise this letter is directed to the Hebrews who for over four-thousand years held fast to Moses Laws of purification to earn righteousness by strictly adhering to religious rites. The dead works in this context refer to the keeping of these religious rites, customs and traditions to be saved to eternal life. When formalists are converted to Christ one of their greatest dangers is to return back under the law and trust in religious works to earn righteousness.

The Old Testament Levitical law required the Hebrew to continually offer for a sin offering slain animals over which they confessed their iniquities for the forgiveness of sin and freedom from guilt. Whereas now, under the Gospel of Christ no Hebrew (or Gentile) needs to signify repentance in this way; since Christ unlike the animal sacrifices died once for all, no-one has to continually ask for forgiveness to be saved and accepted by God since all who are in Christ are loved by God and saved to eternal life.

NOTE.

This is not about repenting and feeling sorrow over offenses we many have done while in Christ that is another topic altogether. Here the focus is repentance that leads to eternal life in Christ it is that repentance that: -

- Delivers a sinner from the domain of darkness and transfers them into the kingdom of God's beloved Son" (Col. 1:13).

Once a sinner is transferred into this Kingdom they do not need to continually repent to get back into it, unless they have consciously and deliberately turned away from the faith and against Christ.

The idea is that the Hebrews were not to make it necessary to continually lay down again and again the very cornerstones, and the foundations of the gospel because these were already laid rather they were to rest in their faith and trust in God's grace and go on to build upon the foundation. If the foundation is laid right it does not need to be continually laid again and again should any builder do so those watching on would consider him foolish in the extreme.

The illustrative idea that the author is presenting to the Hebrews is that no building is completed if the labours linger at the foundation likewise Christian maturity cannot be attained by lingering at its earliest stages, but rather by moving forward and building upon them.

Faith Toward God.

All Christians know that no-one can be saved without faith but here the author states faith in God yet Paul told the elders of the church that: -

- Both Jews and Greeks are saved by repentance toward God and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21).

Added to this the Gospel and many other Scriptures clearly teach that it is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that saves to eternal life whereas here faith in God is referred to, but there is no essential difference since it is faith in God in regard to God being the source of all life and to his plan of salvation that He purposed in his eternal mind before the world began which of course includes faith in his Son.

Thus without God's pre-ordained plan no-one could be saved, but without Christ God's plan is left bankrupt, so it is naturally assumed by biblical writers that their readers will know that to believe in God also embraces the idea of believing in Christ since one cannot be separated from the other in regards to eternal salvation.

No-one can believe in the true God who does not believe in His Son (John 5:23) (John 17:3). This is a foundational and fundamental principle, without this faith it is not only impossible to please God, but also impossible for anyone to be saved.

It is Impossible to Restore to Repentance those who have been Enlightened.

Hebrews 6:4-6 ----- ⁴For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶if they then fall away, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt (Put him to an open shame in KJV).

This set of verses have caused much confusion amongst many religious groups, so before we begin it greatly helps to put the verses into the context of who the author is speaking to. Those who have been enlightened refers to Hebrews who for over four-thousand years had tasted the goodness of God and seen his miraculous wonders, now in this new dispensation they have been enlightened to the Lord Jesus Christ (God's heavenly gift) (v4) and their promised Messiah.

They have shared in the Holy Spirit (in prayer, praise, worship and miracles and the fellowship of other brothers and sisters in Christ), experienced the 'Good News' of the Gospel and have an understanding of the age to come (referring to the millennial age of Christ when he returns as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth).

It should be firstly noted that these verses do not refer to: -

- Sinners, who humble themselves before God, plead guilty and cry for mercy and forgiveness no matter what gross sins their conscience may accuse them of.
- Mere professors or teachers of Christ who have never been convicted or influenced by the Gospel since they have nothing to fall away from, but an empty name and a religion of deception.
- Brothers and sisters in Christ who are in a partial state of decline or backsliding.
- Christians who fall through the strength of temptations or the power of some worldly or fleshly lust.

The falling away the author is referring to in these verses is to an open and avowed renouncing of Christ, from enmity of heart against him of which many of the Jews did even to plot his murder and have him killed and this after they had received the knowledge of the truth, and tasted some of its comforts (i.e., seen the wonders and miracles of Christ). It is of these types of religious people the author is saying that it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance.

Not because the blood of Christ is not sufficient to obtain pardon for this sin; but this sin, in its very nature, is opposite to repentance and everything that leads to it. Anyone who fears that there is no mercy for them, because of a troubled conscience and a mistaken understanding of these passages should clearly understand that the nature of the sin in focus here is a total and a willing renouncing of Christ and his cause and joining with his enemies to act against him.

The Practical Lesson: that can be learned from this is; do not to spend time with those who have been enlightened, but have consciously and deliberately turned against Christ it is far better to go on to new converts or take the faithful onto maturity because it is impossible to restore those who like many of the Hebrews after having tasted of the love and grace of God in Christ and the promised hope of eternal life deliberately turn against the Lord and thereby set their heart diamond hard against the only one who has the power to save to eternal life.

God is Not Unjust to Overlook the Love you Showed for His Sake.

Hebrews 6:7-8 ----- ⁷For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. ⁸But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.

The author now very beautifully likens the nation of Israel to a garden that is capable of producing useful crops or worthless crops as showers of fresh rain fall upon its soil. Remember the author is writing to all Hebrews not just to those who have turned against Christ (there were many that accepted the Gospel and were faithful and devoted servants).

The useful crop: refers to those who embrace the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and manifest the fruits of the Spirit i.e., compassion, kindness, mercy, grace, love and forgiveness etc., toward others especially their brothers and sisters in Christ.

The worthless crop: refers to those who deny Christ and act from the flesh (self, ego, pride and greed etc.), which naturally manifests in contention, strife, jealousy, quarrels divisions and such like things.

The illustration: the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has fallen on all Israel as showers of rain fall on the soil of a garden. Just as each plant in the garden needs to be cultivated to produce good crops for its owner so too does the word of God need to be cultivated in lives of those whose hearts it has been planted. If it sprouts from the heart to produce good fruit over the land of Israel and for Christ who it flows from all Israel will receive a blessing, but if it produces worthless fruit (thorns and thistles) they will be destroyed (burned).

This principle of course is not limited to Israel only, but embraces every individual believer and the world as a whole.

God is Not Unjust to Overlook Your Work and Love.

Hebrews 6:9-10 ----- ⁹Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. ¹⁰For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do.

The better things that belong to salvation is in contrast to the Hebrews producing worthless fruit and being burned up (v8). Here the author is saying that he is confident there are better things in store for the Hebrews he is writing to than this.

NOTICE: he addresses them as beloved these Hebrews did not have wicked hearts quite the contrast since we are not only told that God will not overlook the work they did in love for God but also that they did-good to their brothers and sisters in the faith so it is clear they were faithful to God under the Old Covenant. This is why the author comforts them by saying that God will take their love and faithfulness under the Old Covenant and the kindness and caring they showed to their fellow Hebrews into account when they forsake the Levitical Law and the Old Covenant and stop trusting in religious works to be counted as righteous by God and embrace by faith the New Covenant and the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in God's grace.

Here is the Beauty and the Glory of the God of the Christian Faith.

When it comes to reward the heavenly Father of the Christian faith is not bound to doctrine, but rather judges according to the motivations and intent of the heart. Since one of the greatest sorrows of forsaking false Christian teaching that a person has believed to be true (especially if they have been born into it) is the feeling of extreme loss, it is that sense that all that they have done unto the Lord under that teaching (howbeit much of it wrong) is wasted, all the tears, the prayers, the worship, the suffering, the sorrow and the good they believed they were doing for the Lord counts for nothing.

But here is the glory and the comfort this is not the case in regards to reward because God sees the goodness of the heart and the faith toward him (despite the errors in teaching) and will not only take all the tears, the prayers, the worship, the suffering, the sorrow into account, but also all the good that has been done in faith. This is the glory and splendour of God, the heavenly Father sees the motives and intents of the heart and perceives that much error of teaching is embraced in innocence and naivety. This principal of course changes once a person has been enlightened to the error of their belief and instead of turning from it continues in it.

Be Imitators of those who through Faith Inherit the Promises.

Hebrews 6:11-12 ----- ¹¹And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹²so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

When salvation to eternal life is spoken of as the hope of the faithful in Christ, it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future. The hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and he cannot lie.

The apostle Paul wrote: -

- In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began (Titus 1:2).

The only thing that can cause the promised hope to fail is if the one enlightened to the hope turns away in unbelief. This is because it is not by works that anyone will receive the promises but by belief in Christ it is faith alone that makes salvation certain while unbelief destroys everything. The author and those with him desire that the Hebrews and by extension every brother and sister in Christ would have this full assurance of the promised and guaranteed hope firmly fixed in their hearts until the Lord returns.

Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise

Hebrews 6:13-17 ----- ¹³For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, ¹⁴saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." ¹⁵And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. ¹⁶For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. ¹⁷So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath,

The author now continues to prove that Christ is who he claimed to be by brilliantly using the Hebrews own Scriptures regarding Abraham and Melchizedek which they would clearly understand. When humans make a vow or promise they swear by someone they consider better or worth more than themselves, but since God is the Head of the universe and he is the eternal perfect God there is no greater above Him therefore He can only swear by Himself.

The Promise.

God made to Abraham was that he would have a son and that his seed would inherit the world, the promise he received was the birth of the promised son Isaac who Sarah his wife (through a miraculous conception) gave birth to (Abraham was

ninety-nine while Sarah was eighty-nine). From Isaac came Jacob and from Jacob came the twelve tribes of Israel and from Israel came the promised seed of Abraham the Lord Jesus Christ who at this present time is establishing a Kingdom of kings and priest to rule and reign with him when he returns as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

For further information see titles: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

We have a Sure and Steadfast Anchor of the Heart.

Hebrews 6:18-20 ----- ¹⁸so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. ¹⁹We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain (veil in KJV), ²⁰where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

The phrase, "two unchangeable things" (v18) refer to the fact there is no-one higher than God to swear by and that God cannot lie. This is the sure anchor of our hearts and our faith.

The Hope we have as an Anchor of the Heart.

This world is as a sea with the church in it and so every believer is as a ship; the port that is bound unto is eternity and everlasting glory. Christ is the pilot, and hope is the anchor. An anchor is cast on the bottom out of sight and when the ship is in calm or in danger of a rock or near the shore it is of no service without a cable. When cast aright it keeps the ship steady: so hope is cast on Christ; who is often called hope itself because he is the ground and foundation of it and who is at present unseen to bodily eyes.

The anchor of hope without the cable of faith is of little service; but being cast aright on Christ, keeps the heart and mind steady and immovable.

In some things there is a difference between hope and an anchor; an anchor is not of so much use in tempests as in a calm, but hope is; the cable may be cut or broke, and so the anchor is useless, but so it cannot be with faith and hope. When the ship is at anchor it does not move forward, but it is not so with the heart and mind when hope is in exercise. The anchor of hope is not cast on anything below, but above and here it is called the anchor of the heart to distinguish it from any other and to show the peculiar benefit of it to the heart.

The heart is the ship: the world the sea: the bliss beyond the world, the distant coastline is eternal glory. The heart resting on faith is the anchor which prevents the vessel being tossed to and fro. The encouraging comfort and support through the promise and oath of God is the cable of faith connecting the ship and anchor.

Hope accomplishes for the heart the same thing which the anchor does for a ship. It makes it fast and secure. An anchor preserves a ship when the waves beat and the wind blows and as long as the anchor holds the ship is safe and the mariner apprehends no danger so it is with heart of the Christian. In the tempests and trials of life their mind is calm as long as their hope of eternal life and everlasting glory in Christ is firm.

Fled for Refuge.

The word refuge in the following verse, "We who have fled for refuge" (v18) refers to New Testament believers trusting in the promise to God to be accounted righteous and saved to eternal life because of their faith in Christ and God's grace in contrast to trusting in the Levitical law of the Old Testament and Moses laws of purification to be saved. There were two difficult points for the Hebrews to comprehend, the first was that Christ was the promised seed of Abraham and the priest to come after the order of Melchizedek, and the second was to fully grasp the reality that Christ's priesthood involves the entire obliteration of Moses laws of purifications, ceremonial rites and the Levitical priesthood and the closing down and ending of the Old Covenant.

The Inner Place behind the Veil.

The place "Behind the veil" (v19) refers to the Most Holy Place which was the special dwelling place of God's presence in the Temple that was symbolic of heaven itself. The idea here is that Christ the High Priest of every brother and sister in the Lord has entered into heaven and is seated on the throne at the right hand of God. The authors' comparison of comparing hope to an anchor is brilliant because in the same way that an anchor is unseen when cast into the bottom of the sea and yet secures the whole ship, so hope also enters into the unseen secret places of heaven and secures the heart. It is not the temporal hope of future riches, worldly honours, or pleasures in this life that acts as an anchor to the heart, but the promised hope of an immortal body, eternal life and everlasting glory.

As the anchor does not stay in the waters, but enters the ground hidden beneath the waters and fastens itself into solid ground, so hope the anchor of the heart and mind is not satisfied with merely coming to the visible earthly and worldly goods, but by faith penetrates behind the veil into the Holy of Holies where it lays hold on God Himself, and His spiritual riches and hold fast to them. Hope entering within heaven makes us ready to be in the eternal things promised to us, even while we are yet still below, and have not yet received them hope that makes those who are earthly become heavenly. In the same ways as those who in fear of shipwreck cling to the cable of an anchor not seeing where it is fastened, but knowing that it is fastened in solid ground, the heart clings to the cable of faith confident it is secured behind the veil which hides the future glory.

Christ has entered behind the veil appearing in righteousness seated on the mercy seat and throne of grace surrounded by all the glories of heaven to act as High Priest in the presence of God for his people all of which hope receives strength from. The phrase, "Behind the veil" (v19) is expressive of the hiddenness and invisibility at present of God's heavenly glory. The hope of believers takes them behind the veil where there is heavenly blessing and eternal safety and security in contrast to others whose hope fixes upon the visible and temporal things of this world.

The Great Privilege of Everyone in Christ.

The veil was before the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle, which was a type and shadow of heaven which means that the hope reaches into heaven. It is a heavenly hope the world is the fore-court and heaven the Holy of Holies Christ the High Priest going before us so as to enable us after Him to enter through him behind the veil and into the very presence of God. Here is the great privilege of those in Christ, though the majestic glory of faith God has crowned and clothed every brother and sister of Christ in the royal robes of righteousness and dressed by faith in these spiritual and holy garments they have the freedom to enter into the holiest of all. No-one in Christ needs a human priest to intercede for them since all clothed in Christ's righteousness can go behind the veil and before the throne of God and into His Presence.

Jesus has gone as a Forerunner on our Behalf into Heaven.

Here is the wonder, splendour and glory of God's Promised and guaranteed hope.

Paul in his letter to the Corinthians wrote: -

- Christ has been raised from the dead, the *firstfruits* of those who have fallen asleep, for as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead, as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive, but each in his own order: Christ the *firstfruits* then at his coming those who belong to Christ (1 Cor. 15:20-23).

The author of Hebrews is stating the same thing with the words: -

- Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (v20).

Jesus while ministering on earth raised certain men and woman from the dead, but they did not enter heaven, but lived on to eventually die again whereas Jesus was raised to eternal life never to die again. This clearly shows that no-one has entered heaven as yet, since if any had it would mean that the apostle Paul was making a false statement when he wrote, "Jesus was the firstfruits to be raised from the dead" (1 Cor. 15:20-23).

Jesus the first to be raised from the dead and to enter heaven has become our eternal and perfect High Priest while we who have the firstfruits of the Spirit and all creation with us groans inwardly waiting eagerly for our bodies to receive eternal glory (Rom. 8:23). Everyone who has died in faith (Old and New Testament) will be raised to eternal glory when the Lord Jesus Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth. This breathtaking and awe-inspiring glory is the hope and anchor of the heart and the mind of those who believe.

Should any reader be surprised to find that no other than Christ has entered heaven see the titles: -

- Death (What happens when we die).
- Heaven.

Both titles are in, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Jesus is a High Priest after the Order of Melchizedek.

Here is another stunning wonder for those who love the hidden glories of Scripture and discovering the many different ways in which Christ is interwoven not only in the language, echoes and prophecies of much of Old Testament Scripture, but also in the lives of Old Testament characters. To understand the words, "Jesus has become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (v20) we obviously have to know who Melchizedek was.

Melchizedek: means king of righteousness and king of peace he was the priest and king of Salem (meaning peace) who blessed Abraham. In (Heb. 7:1-4) we are told that there is no record of any genealogy of him and that he had neither father nor mother nor beginning of days or an end of life. This does not mean that Melchizedek was eternal, but that since there was no genealogy of his birth, his mother or father or even his death it is as though humanly speaking he had no beginning and no end (especially to a Jewish mind since they were very particular about keeping records of their families genealogies because the inheritance of land). Other than these few facts Melchizedek remains a mystery since there is very little else written of him.

A major reason the author of Hebrews links Christ to Melchizedek is because the Hebrews highly honoured Melchizedek because of his good relationship to Abraham and because of the resemblances of Melchizedek and the Lord Jesus. Melchizedek was both a priest and a king. None of the kings of the Jews were priests; nor were any of the priests ever elevated to the office of king.

But in Melchizedek these offices were united. Added to this likeness was the fact that Melchizedek was not numbered with the Levitical priesthood and was a priest and king over a city called Salem meaning peace. Thus the reasons the author of Hebrews in this chapter uses Melchizedek to support his claim and declaration to the Hebrews that Jesus is our eternal High Priest.

A Priest Forever.

Under the Old Covenant and Levitical law it was not possible that anyone could go to God alone, all the faithful had to go to God through the priest that God had ordained. Everyone came to God through the priest and was welcomed by him and received pardon and forgiveness from him, but now in this New Testament era we have Jesus the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world to be a priest for ever.

Therefore as long as the sun and moon endure Christ will continue to be God's royal and ordained Priest to every successive generation. Since Jesus never dies there can be no succession of priests or vicars in Christ's church nor does any brother or sister in Christ need one to act in the Lord's place and should any man make himself a priest in Christ's stead he is a self-appointed imposter.

It is not the principle of receiving favour and acceptance of God through a priest that has changed, but who the priest is. Today we have a priest who is eternal, perfect compassionate and full of mercy seated at the right hand of God.

God in, his pure and perfect Holiness could not allow those tainted by the corruptness of sin to come into His presence alone (it is certain His light would destroy us the moment we stepped into it), so He not only grants grace and righteousness to everyone who comes to him through faith in Christ the eternal High Priest but also welcomes them with open arms.

If we value acceptance with God and salvation to eternal life we must trust by faith in God's great high priest the Lord Jesus Christ, since he is the only priest who can forgive sins, save to eternal life and take us into his heavenly Father's glory.

End.