



Hebrews Lesson 6 Chapter 6

The journey from Judaism to Christianity is filled with transitions. Christianity is born from Judaism, and its tenets come directly from its mother religion with all its complex systems that express the holiness and perfection of God. The Jews who had their whole lives been faithful to the old covenant requirements found it close to impossible to transition to this new perspective of holiness based on grace not law. The apostles were first entrusted with understanding the realities of the new covenant and the difficulty of surrendering and adapting to the truth of Christ. They and the other first believers in Christ were responsible to take those truths and preach them “first to the Jew and then to the Gentile (Romans 1:16).” Although many Jews believed and embraced the truth of Christ for salvation, the social and personal difficulties they faced due to this new faith was overwhelming. Many were ostracized from family or business, many lost homes and/or jobs, and many were persecuted and tortured. The cost of committing one’s life to Christ was high and not taken lightly. But even many of the most devoted couldn’t live under the total disruption of their lives and the fear that went with that, so many reverted back to Judaism with its requirements of law keeping in order to be accepted back into society. But as Paul warned the Galatian believers regarding this apostasy, “Behold I, Paul, say to you

that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you (Galatians 5:2).” The writer of Hebrews was facing that same dilemma. As many vacillated in their faith because of persecution, they forgot the benefits of trusting in Christ. The author brought to the forefront the superiority of the new covenant, for he knew he was dealing with many who had become weak and estranged from the faith they had once fully embraced. Therefore, their ability to understand the profound truths of the teaching of the new covenant were greatly hindered. He addressed their inability to understand the deep things of Christ in chapter 5. Even the elementary principles that they had understood, they needed to be taught again due to their fear and lack of commitment to the word of Christ. He knows they need to be challenged to think deeply about the faith but is hesitant because they are like babies that may be too immature to take the challenge. They are walking in a precarious position, but he forges ahead to help them understand the danger they are in. His goal for them is maturing in Christ and His truth, so he continues his serious warning about their spiritual condition in chapter 6, and then in chapter 7 introduces the difficult teaching about Christ’s position as high priest that he had introduced. It is necessary for them to explore the deep things of Christ in order to grow in their faith and commitment to Him.

REVIEW OF CHAPTER 5

“And having been made _____, He became to all those who obey Him the _____ of eternal _____, being designated by God as a _____ according to the order of Melchizedek.” Hebrews 5:9-10

1. *How is Jesus a superior high priest than those of the Levitical priesthood?*

2. *Why would it be important for these believers to understand that?*

3. *What would you see as the difference between the word of God as “milk” or the word of God as “solid food”?*

READ CHAPTER 6

4. *What are the 6 foundational teachings that the writer wants the readers to move on from?*
 - 1)

 - 2)

 - 3)

 - 4)

 - 5)

 - 6)



“When we consider the ‘rudiments’ one by one, it is remarkable how little in the list is distinctive of Christianity, for practically every item could have its place in a fairly orthodox Jewish community... Each of them, indeed, acquires a new significance in a Christian context; but the impression we get is that existing Jewish beliefs and practices were used as a foundation on which to build Christian truth.” (Bruce)

“Part of the problem facing the Hebrews was the superficial similarity between the elementary tenets of Christianity and those of Judaism, which made it possible for Christian Jews to think they could hold on to both.” (Guthrie)

Of course, these Jewish Christians did not want to abandon religion, but they did want to make it less distinctively Christian. Therefore, they went back to this common ground to avoid persecution. Living in this comfortable common ground, one did not stick out so much. A Jew and a Christian together could say, “Let’s repent, let’s have faith, let’s perform ceremonial washings,” and so forth. This was a subtle yet certain denial of Jesus. (Guzik)

5. What four experiences are mentioned that one could “fall away” from in verses 4-5?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

***Theologians have come to various conclusions in regard to Hebrews 6:4-8. Some see it as a statement that salvation is not permanent but can be lost due to apostasy. Others interpret it as apostasy that comes due to never having really embraced the gospel and therefore, falling away. Though our understanding of this passage is crucial, we realize that there is evidence that seems to validate both those conclusions depending on your level of study. But to know that salvation is a gift we cannot earn but only receive by the mercy and grace of God is the necessary initial truth that has to be maintained. Whether you believe your responses to God keep you saved or whether you believe you can’t lose your salvation for any reason, that stance should not be a position of argument but only of discussion for further understanding. Our goal is to continue to learn and grow in God’s word, and to encourage one another in the perseverance of our faith. ***

6. If they “fall away” after these things, what is it impossible to renew them to? Vs. 6



Word study:

repentance-metanoia - to think differently; formed from meta - denotes a change in place or condition and noeo - to perceive with the mind; to think; to comprehend.

7. *Read Matthew 3:7-10. What does John the Baptist say is a sign of true repentance? What would you say the fruit of repentance is?*

8. *How does the writer of Hebrews say the same thing by the example he gives in 6:7-8? How does this parallel with Jesus' parable of the sower in Matthew 13:18-23?*

9. *Why does the writer think better of his readers than to think they are in this state of fallenness? Hebrews 6:9-10*

10. *What does he want them to do? 6:11-12*

11. *How does he describe the Christian's hope, and where does that hope take us? 6:16-20*

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
