

Leviticus & Hebrews: The Necessity of the Cross

Lesson 9: Anchored by the Cross

Key Verse: *We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain~Hebrews 6.19*

Atlantic salmon in Norway have endangered the local wild salmon¹. Escaped farmed Atlantic salmon have bred with local wild salmon changing their genetic structure to become “fat and slow” like the salmon raised for production purposes. The offspring of the union of Atlantic salmon with local Norwegian salmon are described as the “Homer Simpson of salmon”! In other words, the offspring are not lithe nor fit for their native environment. Instead they are easy for predators to consume and unintelligent in relation to their environment. Additionally, the population of naturally occurring and beneficial sea lice has exploded and is now killing the Atlantic salmon in the farms. And so the cycle of solutions to solve new problems leads to another problem requiring another solution that creates another problem requiring another solution goes on and on and on. Jesus, as the **Anchor of Our Soul**, is the final solution for the cyclical consequences sin has created for thousands of years. The sacrificial law was never able to end the reality of sin’s consequences which continuously compounded over generations. Though we still suffer under the compounded consequences of sin, our Savior keeps our salvation secured over sin’s final consequence: death. He eternally secures the **Perseverance of the Saints** all the way into His arms, thus bringing sin’s reign and influence to an absolute end!

Rabbi, Lord, Our Father God, mature me in this lesson. Pour out Your Spirit like rain so that the soil of my heart is cultivated and able to receive blessings from You. Thank You that Your Son’s sacrifice allowed Him to ascend, unhindered, passing through all the tabernacle rooms, landing on the seat to Your right. Thank You that I am anchored in You. You are my refuge. Through this lesson bless me with strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before me: eternal salvation and presence with You through Messiah, Your Son, Jesus. Amen!

Hebrews 5.11-6.20 About this 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 need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

CH 6 Therefore 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, ² and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And this we will do if God permits.

⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. ⁷ For 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. ⁸ But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.

⁹ Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. ¹⁰ For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. ¹¹ And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. ¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, ¹⁴ saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” ¹⁵ And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.

¹⁶ For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. ¹⁷ So 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, ¹⁸ so 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. ¹⁹ We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, ²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

¹ [“What to Know About the Salmon in Your Plate”](#), State of the World from NPR, October 15, 2024

Diamonds: Paul begins this section of his writing with a caustic warning against spiritual laziness. In essence, Paul is pointing out that some of them have become the “Homer Simpson” of cross bred Atlantic and Norwegian salmon! He warns that some were spiritually immature (5.12), open to predation through apostates (6.4-8), literally “sluggish in the ears” (5.11), and unintelligent about the things of God (5.12-6.1).

1. Jesus confronted this same reality in God’s people as documented in Matthew 13.12-16. Read what Jesus says in Matthew 13.12-16, noting the consequences of spiritual immaturity alongside the consequences of those who strive for spiritual maturity (or seek understanding of God through His Word). Use several translations to fully understand Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 13.12-16.

There are six essential truths within the ‘elementary doctrine of Christ’ that propel Christ-followers into maturity (Hebrews 6.1). “New Testament scholarship is in general agreement that the six facets [essential truths] of ‘the elementary doctrine of Christ’ (Hebrews 6.1) listed in verses 1-3 outline the primitive catechism used in Jewish churches to induct converts. Thus, we get an intimate glimpse of the basics, the foundation you would have been taught before being baptized and accepted into a Jewish church two thousand years ago.”

2. You will be teaching this catechism to your sisters in Christ, much as has been done now for thousands of years. While you are expected to understand all of them, choose one to focus on as a teacher would in preparation for teaching. Using the explanation from Dr. Hughes² and the supporting scripture, teach your sisters in Christ about your chosen foundational doctrine of Christ. Find additional scripture to assist in your teaching. *Additional translations that assist in grasping the truth are welcome, as well as reviewing prior lessons deities and doctrines:*

- a. V 1b – “Repentance from dead works”: (Matthew 3.2; Mark 1.4, 15; Luke 3.8; Romans 6.19-21) “turning away from the dead works of the Law and one’s doomed attempts at self-salvation.”

- b. V 1c – “...and of faith toward God”: (Genesis 15.6; Habakkuk 2.4) “Merely turning from dead works would accomplish nothing. Repentance must be joined with faith – a personal relationship of trust in God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

- c. V 2a – “...and of instruction about washings...” (Matthew 3.11; Acts 1.5, 18.25; 1 Corinthians 12.13) “the idea here is that the Hebrew church employed the customary Jewish cleansing rites...to teach the deeper, ultimate significance of Christian baptism... – namely the baptism of the Holy Spirit...”

- d. V 2b – “...the laying on of hands...” (Acts 13.1-3; Romans 6.2-4) “...the Hebrew church employed...the Old Testament customs of laying on of hands...commissioning and empowering for Christian service.”

² Hughes, pgs.156-157

- e. V 2c – “...the resurrection of the dead...” (Job 19.23-27; Daniel 12.1-3; John 11.25) “Both doctrines [resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment] were well known in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament these subjects take on massive significance, with Jesus Christ as their very center. Jesus is the resurrection...”

- f. V 2d – “...and eternal judgment.” (Genesis 18.25; Isaiah 33.22; Daniel 7; 2 Corinthians 5.10) “Both doctrines [resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment] were well known in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament these subjects take on massive significance, with Jesus Christ as their very center...Jesus is the judge...”

Rather than becoming frightened by the idea that one can lose their salvation in Christ (Hebrews 6.4-8), Paul intentionally provides two assurances to his readers. First, in his transition to writing in the third person (“they”/“them”) rather than using the first (“I”/“me”) and second person (“us”/“we”) he assures his readers that he isn’t talking about them specifically in verses 4-8. In fact, in V 9 he states, “..yet in *your* case, beloved, *we* feel sure of better things – things that belong to salvation” (italics added). From this verse onward to the end of chapter 6, Paul exhorts and praises their “God-dependent imitation”³.

Second, Paul’s original writings do NOT suggest that loss of salvation is a hypothetical situation that could become reality. “A number of translations give this impression by using the term, ‘if’. This does not appear in the Greek text, which is best rendered not by the phrase, ‘if they fall away’, but ‘those who have fallen away.’”⁴ Thus, the more correct rendering of Paul’s concern is developed from his knowledge of some who have “fallen away and can no longer be restored.”⁵ Such people would either be apostates whose “hearts were hardened in unbelief, and they fell away from the living God.” (Hebrews 3.12-19, Lesson 5) Or they may be those who, despite enjoying the experiences of Christianity and a Christian lifestyle, had hearts that were never receptive to Christ. Such people, though part of a Christian community, fall away because they never truly believed in Jesus as Messiah (Mark 6.14-28).

- 3. Jesus explains the reality of apostasy and an insincere confession of faith. Read Matthew 7.21-23 and 13.3-9. Explain in your own words the difference between apostasy and an insincere confession of faith:

- 4. A great example of apostasy is found in Herod (Mark 6.14-28), while Judas is a great example of insincerity of faith (Mark 14.17-21; John 6.26-71, 17.12). Read about their faithless journeys. How do they help you better understand apostasy and insincere confessions of faith? Is there anything in Jesus’

³ Hughes, p. 173

⁴ Phillips, p. 187

⁵ Phillips, p. 187

teaching in Matthew (Question 3) that also helps you better understand this truth?

5. Research Peter's journey with Jesus using the selected verses below. How does Peter's life with Jesus assure you of your secured salvation because your confession is in Jesus as your Messiah?
 - a. Matthew: 4.18-20, 8.14-15, 14.22-33, 16.13-23, 17.1-8; 19.23-30, 26.26-56 (Peter is the one who drew his sword), 26.58 with 69-75, and,
 - b. John 21.1-22

Deity: Anchor of Our Soul⁶~ (Hebrews 6.19-20) The Hebrew word for soul is *nephesh*, which refers to a person in their "entirety as a living being" (Genesis 2.7; Exodus 4.19). A narrower view defines it as an "immaterial part of a person". It leaves the body (Genesis 35.18), it is a "life principle that animates the body" (Leviticus 17.11), and is "linked with interior functions of the person, such as intellect, will, and emotion" (Lamentations 3.20).

"In the Greek New Testament the word for soul is, *psychē*. Here it is translated as "soul", "life", and "I". In the Greek New Testament, this term denotes:

1. The whole person (Acts 2.41; Romans 13.1; 2 Corinthians 12.15)
2. The essential being or seat of personal identity, often in relation to God and salvation (Matthew 10.28, 39; Luke 1.46; John 12.25)
3. The inner life of the body (Acts 20.10; Ephesians 6.6)
4. The intellect (Acts 14.2; Philippians 1.27)
5. The will (Matthew 22.37; Ephesians 6.6)
6. The emotions (Matthew 26.38; Mark 14.34)
7. The moral and spiritual life (Hebrews 6.19; 1 Peter 1.22; 3 John 2)

"...our hope in Christ goes before us into heaven, where it is anchored in the unchanging character of God and the oath He has sworn (Hebrews 6.13, 16-20). Our hope goes where we cannot yet go ourselves. It goes into heaven, where Christ is now. There He sets the Anchor of our hope with His own pierced hands, so that our hope of salvation is attached by the finished work of Christ to the secure foundation of the unchangeable character of God."⁷ (See Joshua 21.45; Psalm 33.4; Hebrews 10.23)

Our Anchor of hope is secure because Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf into heaven, 'having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek' (Hebrews 6.20). Jesus came into the world to become our Savior, to blaze a trail through the barrier of sin by His perfect life and atoning death (Hebrews 9.11-12, 13.20-21; Ephesians 2.8-10). He then went up into heaven to reign as our High Priest – not a temporary

⁶ MacArthur & Mayhue, "Soul" pp. 417-418

⁷ Phillips, p.216

priest like the Levites in Israel, but a 'high priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.' ...the point is that Christ will never be replaced in His heavenly mission for us. He will never fail, and never die."⁸ (See Colossians 2.14-15; Romans 6.9, 8.23-25; Ephesians 1.11-14; 1 John 5.4)

"To appreciate what is said here [V 19b, 'a hope that enters into the inner place *behind* the curtain'], we must remember that the curtain was a thickly woven piece of tapestry hung between the inner and outer chambers of the tabernacle. No one could see through the curtain, and the Holy of Holies was inaccessible to all but the high priest, who passed within only once a year. Outside was the Holy Place with the altar of incense, the golden candlestick, and the table of showbread – all devoted to the people's worship. It was between these two compartments of the tabernacle – the Holy Place representing the earthly worshipping life of God's people, and the Holy of Holies representing God's presence – that the curtain hung. Together these two sides of the curtain symbolized living spiritual realities – God's presence in Heaven and the storm-tossed church worshipping below (Hebrews 9)".⁹

But then, an anchor is hurled from the Church. But instead of falling to the depths, it rises through the blue skies and on up through deep heaven where it passes unhindered through the curtain and anchors on the throne of God in the heavenly holy of holies where Jesus is seated 'at the right hand of the Majesty on high' (Hebrews 1.3). Our lives are accessed and anchored in Heaven!"¹⁰ (See Romans 8.31-34; 2 Corinthians 5.1-5; James 1.6)

6. What does Jesus being the Anchor of your soul mean when it is applied to the all-encompassing reality of your soul (see above, the 7 facets of "soul" as used in the Greek New Testament)?

I (Dmel Tatum) *promise* we will follow Paul's rabbit trail with a deep dive into the fascinating life of Melchizedek in Lesson 11 (January 2025). Recall for now that we know he was a unique character in Jewish history, holding the offices of high priest prior to the Law's initiation *and* king over Salem (literally "peace") while Abraham was alive (see Lesson 7). Thus, the ears of the Jewish Christians perked and their backs straightened to listen well to the expounding tie between Melchizedek and Jesus. But for now, you must remain ears perked and backs straightened until Lesson 11!

Doctrine: Perseverance of the Saints¹¹~ (Hebrews 6.10-20) This doctrine is sometimes called "eternal security". The old axiom in Reformed theology about the perseverance of the saints is this: "If you have it – that is, if you have genuine faith and are in a state of saving grace – you will never lose it. If you lose it, you never had it" (1 John 2.19). Those who are truly believers cannot be snatched from God's hand (John 10.27-30; 2 Timothy 2.19).

This doctrine is confirmed by God's promise that what He starts in our souls, He will finish. Writing to the Philippians, Paul says, "He who has begun a good work in you will perfect it to the end" (Philippians 1.6). God not only initiates the Christian life, but gives the Holy Spirit as a promise that He will fulfill what He began, as well as, God's seal of "eternal security" on every believer (2 Corinthians 1.21-22). Our endurance in the faith does not rest on our ability to persevere, but on God's promise to preserve us (Romans 8.36-39; Hebrews 9.15).

We have security because salvation is of the Lord and we are His craftsmanship. He gives the Holy Spirit to every believer as a promise that He will fulfill what He begins. He has likewise sealed every believer by the Holy Spirit. He has marked us with an indelible mark and given His personal down payment that guarantees He will finish the

⁸ Phillips, p. 216

⁹ Hughes, p.180

¹⁰ Hughes, p.180

¹¹ Sproul, p. 207-209 excerpts

transaction.

A final basis for confidence is found in the high-priestly work of Christ, who intercedes for us. Just as Jesus prayed for the restoration of Peter (and not for Judas), so He prays for our restoration when we stumble and fall. We may fall for a season but never fully or finally fall away. Jesus prayed in the upper room, 'While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition (condemnation, hell, damnation), and that the Scripture might be fulfilled' (John 17.12). Only Judas, who was a son of perdition from the beginning, whose profession of faith was spurious (fake, bogus), was lost. Those who are truly believers cannot be snatched from God's hand (John 10.27-30).

Your grip strength is scientifically tied to your longevity.¹² While not the final factor in the span of your life, it is a meaningful marker that points to long living. Your grip strength of scripture and knowledge of God is likewise a meaningful marker of your capacity of faith-filled endurance in Christ.

7. How strong is your grip on scripture and the knowledge of God today? What specific steps are you taking to ensure your grip is getting stronger?

Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer: What verse(s) will you use to spur you to embracing Christ, holding fast, and/or increasing your grip strength? What verse(s) will prevent you from becoming the "Homer Simpson" of Christianity? In addition, what verse(s) cause you to praise God for His eternal grip of you?

Lecture Outline:

Aim: God expects His children to grow up!

- I. Arrested Souls (Hebrews 5.11-6.3) **TR1:** Spiritually maturing believers crave the meaty food of solid doctrine.
 - a. How firm is your grasp on the doctrines or teachings of God's Word?
 - b. How well are you able to explain the elementary doctrines of Christ outlined in **Hebrews 6.1-3?**
- II. Apostate Souls (Hebrews 6.4-8) **TR2:** Spiritually maturing believers produce God-glorifying fruit in increasing measure.
 - a. What evidence do you see that shows you are maturing spiritually?
 - b. What specific steps do you need to take to produce more God-glorifying fruit?
 - c. Are you living as an effective witness to solid doctrine and the truth of Bible? Or are you giving others a reason to cry: 'Hypocrite!'?
- III. Anchored Souls (Hebrews 6.9-20) **TR3:** Spiritually maturing believers anchor their souls in the hope Christ provides.
 - a. In what ways could you begin to or continue to redefine yourself as a diligent, persevering saint?

¹² [Grip Strength: An Indispensable Biomarker for Older Adults](#), National Institute of Health, October 2019

- b. How does God's doubly guaranteed promise to be both your refuge and the anchor of your soul spur you on to grow up in the faith?
- c. Which of the six guardrails in **Hebrew 6** will you use to motivate your diligence?

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