

Our Great High Priest / Maturity vs Deformity

5:1 Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. 3 This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people.

4 No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. 5 So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." 6 And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

7 During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. 8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered 9 and, once made perfect, **he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him** 10 and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

11 We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. 12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for **the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.**

6:1 Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the **foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death (dead works)**, and of faith in God, 2 instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And God permitting, we will do so.

4 It is impossible for those **who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit,** 5 **who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,** 6 if they fall away (*parapipto*), to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

7 Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. 8 But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.

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.

13 When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, 14 saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants." 15 And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

16 Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. 17 Because God wanted to make **the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised,** he confirmed it with an oath. 18 God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to **take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.** 19 **We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.** It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Who was Melchizedek?

1. Shem, son of Noah
2. Pre-incarnate Christ
3. Archangel Michael
4. Buddha??
5. A man who was a king-priest type of Christ
6. Dead Sea scrolls- he will return to save his people

Hebrews Review

Chapter 1: Jesus is greater than the angels who gave the law to Moses, so His salvation is greater than the law. Warning: How can we neglect a salvation greater than the law which was punished by death? (**Drifting**)

Chapter 2: Jesus became flesh so He could deliver us from death! He became human to bring all humanity to His level above all creation.

Chapter 3&4: Just as Moses was a type of Christ, so was his rest a symbol of a greater Sabbath-rest brought by Christ. Warning: Just as Israel did not enter the rest because of unbelief, Christians will miss the rest of Jesus by lack of faith (**Disobedience**).

Chapter 5&6: Jesus is a priest-king after the order of Melchizedek, which is greater than the Aaronic priesthood. This was necessary to bring permanent, eternal forgiveness of sins. Warning: Believers who remain immature can never understand deeper truth and bring Christ shame by their poorly lived lives. (**Deformity**)

Digging Deeper

We must first see who is being discussed in the above verse, and what their true spiritual condition is in order to gain understanding into what the writer is conveying. I will, for the sake of argument, assume we're talking about the salvation of the subject being described. If you believe the above verse addresses believers who are backslidden, then we have a problem because the verse says, "It is impossible to renew them to repentance." **Thus, if you did believe and fell away from the faith (became an apostate), the verse would imply that you've committed an unpardonable sin.** This just doesn't line up with scripture. It also doesn't line up with Armenian teaching of being restored again to the Lord's salvation.

Let's look at it the way some Calvinists have interpreted Hebrews. If we take the passage to mean those who merely profess to be Christians, but have not given their whole lives to Him (ref. Matt. 7:21-23), **then we still have a problem because the act of pretending to be saved becomes the sin that cannot be forgiven ("impossible")**, and we know there is no sin too great that God cannot forgive the sinner. Either way, it puts us in a tough spot by saying "there's no way God can forgive him!" We know that "the Lord's hand is not so short that it cannot save" (Isaiah 59:1) so if we took the position of the above passage referring to salvation, either way we are faced with a contradiction.

So, what's left? In Hebrews 6:4, the writer's subjects are defined for us. We know they've "once been enlightened". That could be translated "once and for all" from the Greek. That sounds pretty definite. They have "tasted of the heavenly gift", which does not mean they just nibbled at it. The term "tasted" holds a different connotation for us in the English than in the Greek. The same writer used the same word earlier in the book when he said Jesus "tasted death for every man" (Heb 2:9). That also is a pretty complete experience. Jesus didn't just nibble on death, He fully died! They also "tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come." 1 Peter 2:3 imputes this tasting to those who obtain salvation. Lastly, they "have been made partakers (partners) of the Holy Spirit". Romans 8:9 makes a pretty convincing argument that anyone who has the Spirit indwelling them is in the body of Christ. **All these references allude to a person who is truly saved, not one who is only religious or pretending to have a relationship with the Lord.**

So, if the passage is addressing saved people, we must find out what is meant by "impossible to renew them again to repentance". Let's look at that word repentance. Notice that it does not say it is impossible to renew them again to salvation. In fact, the Greek word for "fallen away" is *parapipto* which can literally be translated "to stumble or fall along side". It is not *apostasia* from which we get the idea of apostasy or apostate. So, what kind of repentance do we mean, and what are we falling away from?

In verse 9, the writer mentions that he is "convinced of better things of you, and things that accompany salvation." The thing that accompanies salvation is a believer's fruit. By fruit, I mean the evidences that he is a follower of Christ. This is his witness to the world. In fact, in verses 7 and 8, the writer talks about the ground bearing fruit, and it being judged if it is without fruit. A parallel chapter is found in 1 Cor 3:13-16. The person is a believer, for Paul in 1 Cor.3:15 says the man shall be saved, but his opportunity for witness and his ability to impact other people (not to mention the service he could render for Christ) will be forever lost. **The repentance that the writer to Hebrews speaks of is a "repentance from dead works" mentioned in verse one of the same chapter.** I believe the verse applies to more than just Jewish legalism. In Revelation Chapter 2, Jesus warns the church at Ephesus that even though their deeds are good, their work is without love, and as a consequence, they will lose their lamp stand, i.e., their witness (ref. Matt 5:14-16).

The entire chapter of Hebrews 6 is devoted to the Hebrew believers showing their faith through their works. The writer emphasizes the believers' security in their salvation when he makes statements like "the full assurance of hope until the end (vs. 11)"; "The unchangeableness of His purpose (vs. 17)"; and "this hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast(vs. 19)"

Even the Talmud Bears Testimony- He Was Heard!

<http://www.menorah.org/whentlir.html>

We do not believe that the TALMUD is inspired by the RUACH HA KODESH (the Holy Spirit of God), or that it is the Word of God. The Talmud does not claim to be the Word of God, but rather an interpretation and an explanation of the Law of God, the TORAH.

The final edition of the BABYLONIAN TALMUD, which includes the earlier work of the MISHNA, took place around A.D. 500, a stupendous creation over 500 years in the making; and in which all the learned of Israel participated. From that time until the present, pious Jewish people took great pride in mastering the "deep sea" of the Talmud."

Forty years before the Holy Temple was destroyed the following things happened: The lot for the Yom Kippur goat ceased to be supernatural; the red cord of wool that used to change to white [as a symbol of God's forgiveness) now remained red and did not change and the western candle in the candlestick in the sanctuary refused to burn continually while the doors of the Holy Temple would open of themselves. [Tractate Yoma 39:b]

The Talmud takes this clearly as a sign of the departure of the SHECHINA GLORY from the Temple in Jerusalem. Surely there is a great coincidence in that these things happened forty years before the Temple was destroyed. This brings us to about A.D. 30; the time when the Lord Yeshua (Jesus) died on a hill outside of Jerusalem. He called on the people of Israel to believe in His Messiahship, yet the majority refused!

There is another wise saying of the Rabbis in the same Tractate of the Talmud: Why was the first Holy Temple destroyed? Because of three wicked things: idol worship, adultery, and murder. But in the second Temple in which time the Jewish people were occupied studying the Torah and doing good deeds and acts of charity why was it then destroyed? The answer is: It was because of hatred without a cause to teach you, that hate without a cause is equal to these sins and that it is as serious a crime as the three great transgressions of idol worship, adultery, and murder. [Yoma 9].

The Talmud does not answer the question, "Whom did we hate without a cause?" If we hated the Romans, surely there was cause for it, as they were pagans bent on destroying us physically, spiritually, and morally. The Pharisees, we are told in history, were not hated but rather loved by people. Sadducees were not hated; they were a priestly party serving God inside His Temple. But, there was One who indeed applied the words to Himself! We read in the Brit Hadasha, the life of the Lord Yeshua written by His followers.

If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. [John 15.24, 25].

He Was Heard- Michael Card



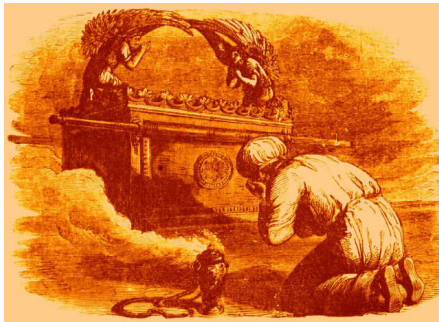
In the days of old
The priest would come
With a lifeless sacrifice,
While the crowd in anxious silence,
Would wait outside.
As he entered in the Temple,
They only hoped he would be heard,
God would give them a tomorrow,
And the priest would stay alive.

Their only chance,
Their only hope,
Would he be heard?
The only way
They might be saved,
Would he be heard?

In the fullness of the promised time,
The final Priest did come
And he offered up a living sacrifice.
Now we his children wait for him
With hope and joyful praise,
For we know that God has heard him,
For we know that he was raised.

He offered
Tearful prayers
And he was heard.
He offered up
His life
And he was heard.

So let us fix our eyes upon
The priest whom God did hear.
For the joy that was before him,
He overcame the fear.
For once and all he paid the cost,
Enduring all the shame,
Taking up the cruel cross,
Ignoring all the pain.



The Scapegoat

Bearing the Burden of Sin



The crowd is waiting outside the Temple in silence. **The sign has already been given, that the high priest has gone into the holy of holies and has, for the only time allowed in the year, spoken the sacred name of God.** At that signal they fell to their faces in respect and also out of fear, since the priest and presumably the Temple would be destroyed if he had said "the name" with impure lips.

Now they are waiting for the high priest to return to the front of the Temple and announce that the sacrifice has been accepted and that full forgiveness has been granted. The sacrifice he is offering is for his sins and for the sins of the people. If he returns, all is well. If he does not return the crowd outside will know that he has been struck down in the Temple and they remain guilty, unclean, hopeless, for he is their only hope.

In the book of Hebrews, the writer presents Jesus, our high priest. He recounts the early form of sacrifice and worship. The high priest offered up blood that was "not his own", a lifeless sacrifice. Jesus, however, offered his own blood. His sacrifice was better because it was a living sacrifice. Christ entered not a man-made edifice, but heaven itself. He appeared in God's presence, for us. His is an eternal priesthood. (The order of Melchizedek.) And Jesus' sacrifice was offered "once for all", not yearly. His was a better sacrifice. He is our perfect high priest, who sacrificed himself, for us. According to the writer of Hebrews, all that is left for us is to wait, as those early Israelites did, expectantly, but without fear for, "he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him." Heb.9:28

Why Hebrews 6 Does Not Disprove Eternal Security

Epologetics.org

The audience is immature Christians

In the verses preceding 4-6, the author asserts that though he wants to move on from elementary instructions about repentance and judgment, those he is writing to have returned to needing milk rather than being able to handle solid food. In other words, he's dealing with people who are rather immature in their Christianity.

They're genuine Christians

"Those who have once been enlightened" (6:4) are Christians. Every other time the word "enlightened" is used, it refers to believers. While the words "have once been" might confuse some into thinking that these people were once believers but are no longer, the Greek is more clear: It means "once and for all", an ongoing experience.

These people "tasted the heavenly gift." Some think this means the people were never really saved, but only had a little taste of the truth, and others think it means they tasted salvation, but then lost it by not following through and eating the whole thing. The translation can be confusing, but in Hebrews 2:9, the author used the same word in saying that Christ "tasted" death for us. Just as Christ truly died, these people truly had the heavenly gift.

This places verses 4-6 in context. The author is **not** speaking hypothetically, he is **not** speaking about unbelievers, and he is **not** speaking about Christians who have lost their salvation.

Speaking about immaturity, not losing salvation

Some translations read 6:6 as, "committed apostasy," and other translations read, "fallen away." This is misleading, because the Greek word used here is **not** *apostasias* (apostasy), but *parapipto*. *Parapipto* comes from the words *pipto* (to fall) and *para* (with, or beside), so Hebrews 6:6 refers to falling alongside Christ rather than falling away from Him.

Immature Christians put Christ to shame before the world

This is why the author says that they crucify Christ all over again for themselves; by professing Christ and yet living sinfully, they are publicly humiliating Christ. They're saying, "Yeah, sin is horrible and Jesus died for us. Let's keep on sinning!"

It's about repentance, not salvation

Hebrews 6:6 says it is impossible to bring these immature Christians back to **repentance**. Repentance is not salvation; it's the turning away from dead works. The reason they cannot be brought back into repentance (at least by men) is that they have already heard the Gospel and believed. They already know about their sin and about Christ. That's why the author says in verses 1-3 that they're not going to go back over the fundamentals again, "for it is impossible...to renew [immature Christians] to repentance."

The Two Fields

Hebrews **6:8** describes the Christians in terms of fields. The field producing thorns is burned up. Some take this to mean that the Christian who lives a sinful life (produces thorns) will lose his salvation and be cast into hell (be burned up). However, as established earlier, the author was speaking genuine Christians in the previous verses, so the fields he's now using as an illustration probably refer to genuine Christians as well. Both fields soak up rain (where the rain may represent all of the things mentioned previously--enlightenment, tasting the heavenly gift, etc). The one bears crops, the other bears thorns. The question is what happens to the field that produces thorns--does it go to hell?

There are two interpretations here, both of which seem possible:

1. The thorny field being "burned up" could be referring specifically to the *thorns* of that field--the sinful works of the Christian-- being burned up, rather than to the field itself. If you burn a field, the field itself survives, but all it has grown is destroyed. Compare this with the teaching of 1 Corinthians 3:12-15:
12 If anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, **13** each builder's work will be plainly seen, for the Day will make it clear, because it will be revealed by fire. And the fire will test what kind of work each has done. **14** If what someone has built survives, he will receive a reward. **15** If someone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss. He himself will be saved, but only as through fire. 1 Corinthians 3:12-15
2. The "burning up" of the thorny field is referring to a sort of discipline. Christ atoned for our sins, so while there is no punishment left for us, God still disciplines us.

Whichever interpretation is correct, it does not seem necessary that the "burning up" of the thorny field is referring to damnation.

Hebrews 6 teaches preservation

Verses 13 and 14 state that God's unconditional promise to Abraham was based on Himself. Verse 16 tells us that when someone swears on someone greater than they, the promise is guaranteed based on the greater person. Verse 17 tells us that in the same way, God wanted to demonstrate His own purpose. Verse 19 tells us that it is *this* that is our hope! It is God's own promise to us and the certainty we have because of who made the promise! Lastly, verse 20 ties this in with Christ as our eternal priest and mediator.

This means that our salvation--the eternal, unchanging promise of God--is not based on us, but on God alone. Because God made the promise, and God is not a liar, the promise will be fulfilled. Just as God carried out His promise to Abraham, God will carry out His promise to us. Since Christ is the mediator for all believers, our sins are taken care of, and will not lead to a loss of salvation.