

**An Anchored Hope**  
**Hebrews 6:19-20**  
**Part Three**

We are presently studying the Book of Hebrews. This book was written by an unknown author to a group of Hebrew Christians living in Rome, who under a great persecution had begun to struggle in their faith and were even considering returning back to Judaism.

This author in response to that struggle wrote this book. Hoping that God would use this book to strengthen their faith and protect them from falling away.

So in order to accomplish this, what did the author emphasize in this book? The author emphasized the superiority of Christ. So, what have we have seen so far?

We have seen that Christ is superior to the prophets. We have seen that Christ is superior to the angels. And now we are seeing that Christ's priesthood is superior to all other priesthoods. This is the section of Scripture that we are now examining.

So within this section, how has the author, up to this point in our study, gone about establishing the superiority of Christ's priesthood? First of all, he introduced the heavenly high priestly ministry of Christ in **Hebrews 4:14-16**. Secondly, he explained that Christ's heavenly high priestly ministry was by God's appointment and according to the order of Melchizedek in **Hebrews 5:1-10**.

This triggered a strategic detour or in other words he did not believe he could continue to go forward and expand on what he had just said without warning them. And this is exactly what the author began to do, in **Hebrews 5:11**.

So what did this author do at the beginning of this warning section? The author began this warning section with an exhortation. He exhorted his readers "**to pursue maturity.**" He felt it was necessary to exhort them to pursue maturity because of their dullness of hearing. The author then spelled out for his readers in very blunt terms the consequence if they, in failing to

heed his exhortation, actually “**fell away**” and detached themselves from their confession as well as from fellowship with true believers.

And what was the consequence? The author told them that if they fell away and detached themselves from their confession as well as from fellowship with true believers, after having been exposed to the blessings of such without ever becoming a true disciple of Christ, “**it would be impossible for them to be renewed to repentance**”

This obviously was a very harsh pronouncement. So, what did the author do next? He then softened that harsh pronouncement, addressing them “**as beloved**” and then telling them how he, because of certain fruit he had seen in their lives, was convinced of “**better things**” concerning them.

This brings us to where we are now in our study of this book, as this author brings this warning section to a conclusion.

And how is this author bringing this warning section to a conclusion? After the author had softened his harsh warning, he emphasized God’s trustworthiness and thus the certainty of their future hope (Hebrews 6:13-20). This is how this author is bringing this warning section to a conclusion.

And why is this author bringing this warning section to a conclusion in this way? I believe he did this in order help them to be as convinced as he was that if they did in fact persevere, as he believed they would persevere, that they, based on the trustworthiness of God, would not be disappointed but would in fact most definitely realize their future hope.

So how did author within these verses go about emphasizing the trustworthiness of God?

The author began with the example of Abraham (Hebrews 6:13-15). So now let me read for you **Hebrews 6:13-15**. “**For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, (14) saying, ‘I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply you.’ (15) And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise.**” So did this author, after he had softened his harsh warning, then go on to emphasize God’s trustworthiness and thus the certainty of his reader’s future hope by first of all presenting the example of Abraham? Yes! I believe,

based on these verses, this is exactly what he did. So what did the author do next in order to advance this same purpose?

The author then elaborated on the finality of oaths (Hebrews 6:16-18). So now let me read for you **Hebrews 6:16-18** and see if this is not so. **“For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. (17) In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, (18) so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us [or in other words the hope of heaven].”**

So did this author after the example of Abraham then move on to the finality of oaths in order to continue his emphasis on God’s trustworthiness and thus the certainty of their future hope? Yes! I believe based on these verses that is exactly what he did. But the author is not done. So, what did the author do next?

The author, in concluding his emphasis on God’s trustworthiness and the certainty of his reader’s future hope, reintroduced the topic of Christ’s heavenly high priestly ministry (Hebrews 6:19-20). He did this in **Hebrews 6:19-20**.

So now let me read these verses for you. **“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, (20) where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”**

So did this author, based on these verses, conclude his ongoing emphasis of God’s trustworthiness and the certainty of his reader’s future hope by reintroducing the topic of Christ’s heavenly high priestly ministry? Yes! I believe he did, and as we examine these verses this morning I believe this will become even clearer.

So let us now begin by looking at the very first phrase of **verse 19**. **“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul.”**

So, what is this hope that is referred to here in **Hebrews 6:19** “**as an anchor of the soul**”? The hope that this author referred to here in Hebrews 6:19 is the same hope that he referred to in Hebrews 6:18 which last week we determined to be the hope of heaven.

So why would this author say this to his readers that this hope of heaven they have “**as an anchor of the soul**”?

This is not a difficult question to answer if we understand what a literal anchor is and its function. A literal anchor is a device normally made of metal used to connect a vessel to the bed or floor of a body of water to prevent the craft from drifting due to wind or current. Or in other words, a literal anchor is designed to provide stability for a boat or ship when it might be or is in fact experiencing winds or currents that if not countered might lead to the loss of the boat or ship.

So with this understanding of what a literal anchor is and its function let us go back to the earlier question, why would this author say to his readers that this hope of heaven, “**they have as an anchor of the soul**”?

If those readers would have taken hold of the hope that was set before them or in other words the hope of heaven as they should have based on **Hebrews 6:18**, not only would their affection for things of above have increased and their affection for the things of earth have decreased, as I mentioned to you last week, but something else would have happened.

Their hope of heaven would have begun to act like an anchor for their soul or in other words the eternal part of their being. Anchoring their soul to the seafloor? No! Anchoring their soul to the bottom of a lake? No! It would have anchored their soul, the eternal part of their being, to heaven.

And what would have been the benefit of that for his readers? Taking hold of the hope of heaven would, like a literal anchor, provide his readers spiritual stability and thus protect them from various forces that might draw them away and cause them spiritual loss.

This is why this author said to his readers that they should take hold of the hope of heaven for if took hold of the hope of heaven, their hope of heaven would become as an anchor for their soul. And this is exactly what this small

congregation of Hebrews needed at that particular time, for they were being battered by this persecution that had come upon them and they were in danger of being spiritually swept away.

And nothing is different for us. If we continuously take hold of the hope of heaven, that has been made possible through Christ, thanking God in the morning and throughout the day for this wonderful gift, then guess what? Not only will our affection for things above increase and our affection things below decrease, as I mentioned last week, but we will also find that our hope of heaven that we have taken hold of will begin to act like an anchor for our soul, providing us spiritual stability and protection from those forces acting upon us to draw us away.

So if take hold of this hope, this hope of heaven in this way, will this anchor fail us or in other words will it fail to stabilize us or to protect us from being swept away? No! This anchor, if we take hold of it, will not fail us. How do we know this from our passage?

The author considered the hope of heaven that he was encouraging his readers to take hold of to be “sure” and “steadfast.” Let us continue to read **verse 19** and see if this is not so. **“This hope [this hope of heaven] we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast.”**

So did this author consider the hope of heaven that he was encouraging his readers to take hold made possible through faith in Christ to be **“sure”** and **“steadfast?”** Yes! Absolutely!

If we take hold of this hope, will it hold us and will it protect us from being swept away? Will it protect us in Bad times? Yes! Will it protect us in good times? Yes! If we take hold of this hope, this hope, acting like an anchor, will not fail us! For this author described this hope as “sure” and “steadfast.”

So, what do these words mean? The word “sure” (ASPHALES) literally means “not to make totter,” or in other words it refers to something that cannot be made to **totter** when put to the test.

And what does the word “steadfast” mean? The word “steadfast” (BEBAIOS) comes from a word that means “sustaining one’s steps in

going,” or in other words it refers to something that will give the necessary endurance when it is put to the test.

So why was this author so certain that the hope of heaven, that he was encouraging his readers to take hold of would prove itself to be so “sure” and “steadfast” when tested?

This author considered the hope of heaven that he was encouraging his readers to take hold of as “sure” and “steadfast” because he saw that hope as being anchored inside the “veil.”

And how do we know this? Let us continue to read **verse 19**. **“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil.”** So based on these words did this author see the hope of heaven, that this author was encouraging his readers to take hold of, as being anchored within the veil? Yes! He did! The hope of heaven was the anchor but he saw the anchor, which was the hope of heaven, as being anchored inside the veil.

So what does this mean? The “veil” is a reference to the curtain that had separated the “holy place” of the tabernacle from the “Holy of Holies” where God’s presence was manifested.

In the Old Testament and under the Old Covenant it was only the Jewish high priest who could enter through this veil and into God’s manifested presence and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement. And why was this? It was because of sin. This curtain, this veil, in effect in the Old Testament and under the Old Covenant kept the people of God from the presence of God.

But this has changed with the coming of the New Covenant sealed in Christ’s blood. When Christ died on the cross and paid the debt of our sins something amazing happened. Let me read for you **Matthew 27:50-51**. **“And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. (51) “And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.”**

Though the veil under the Old Covenant once stood as a picture of separation, it now, under the New Covenant, stands as a picture of access

made possible through Christ's death (Matthew 27:50-51). It was torn thus picturing access.

Because the veil has been torn through Christ's death, when we exercise faith in Christ and embrace the hope of heaven made possible through Christ's death our hope of heaven in effect enters within the veil or in other words becomes anchored within the veil.

And to whom does our hope become anchored to within the veil? Our hope becomes anchored to Christ, our great heavenly high priest, who after having suffered death on our behalf as God's sacrificial lamb, and after having paid the debt of our sin in full, then entered into the presence of His Father or in other words He entered into the heavenly holy of holies, where he now sits at the right hand of His Father, as our great heavenly high priest.

What a beautiful picture! If we continue to take hold of the hope set before us our souls are inside the veil to Christ.

And how does this author refer to Christ whom our hope of heaven has been anchored to within the veil? The author refers to Christ as a **"forerunner."** Let us go back to our passage and see if this is not so. We will begin with **verse 19** and read through **verse 20**. **"This hope we have [the hope of heaven, the certain of heaven] as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters the veil, [and then what does it say?] (20) where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us."**

Under the Old Covenant the high priest entered the earthly Holy of Holies once a year as a representative, but under the New Covenant Christ, our high priest, has entered the heavenly Holy of Holies as our forerunner.

The high priests of Israel were not forerunners. They were only representatives. But Christ was more than a representative He was forerunner! For whom was He a forerunner? He was a forerunner for us.

Though the people of Israel were never able to enter into the Holy of Holies, hopefully we, in having taken hold of the hope of heaven through faith in Christ, have our hope presently anchored there, and if our hope is presently anchored there, then guess what? We will one day be there because our great heavenly high priest is not like the other high priests of the Old Testament.

He is greater, having become through His death, burial resurrection, and ascension a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Are there forces also working against us that threaten us, and would they if left unchecked possibly sweep us away. Yes! Absolutely! So, what are we going to do? Let us take hold of the hope set before us, so that our hope of heaven might be anchored inside the veil to Christ, our great heavenly high priest, who is not like other high priests but who has become through His death, burial, resurrection and ascension a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

May God give us the grace to continuously take hold of the hope that has been set before us that we, in having our hope anchored to Christ inside the veil, might be spiritually protected from drifting away