Hebrews chapter 6 continues from the discussion in Chapter 5 regarding those addressed in Hebrews 5:11-14. Who, because they are living on milk and not solid food are unable to grow in their walk. In this chapter, the writer of Hebrews wants them to understand their position and relationship with Christ.

In understanding Hebrews, it is important to understand who the audience is. Depending on the audience, the interpretation can vary. Hebrews Chapter 6 is one of the more discussed chapters of Hebrews and is used by those of both Arminists and Calvinists as a proof text to justify their position of the “saved” believer. Hebrews 6:4-6, is the section often in question. Are those addressed, believers or unbelievers? If believers, is this an argument for the losing of one’s salvation? If unbelievers how could they have been enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, been partakers of the Holy Spirit, tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come?

Hebrews 6

1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,
2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.
3 And this we will do if God permits.
4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,
5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,
6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.
7 For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God;
8 but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

First Principles

Verses 1-3

Elementary Principles of Christ: The Greek word translated to “Principles” is \(\alpha\rho\chi\varepsilon\nu\) (ar-khay'); which translates into beginning or first. The same word is used in Hebrews 5:12

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1 Arminism is the theological stance of James Arminius, and the movement, which stemmed from him. In Arminius’s view, believers may lose their salvation and be eternally lost, using passages as I Peter 1:10, “Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election, for if you do this you will never fall” Arminians seek to nourish and encourage believers to so that they remain in a saved state.
2 The theological position of John Calvin (1509-1564) which taught the unconditional atonement of the believer, meaning salvation could not be lost, if someone is truly saved. Calvinism is best known for the acronym T.U.L.I.P.: Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and the Perseverance of the saints.
For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Hebrews 5:12

John Mac Arthur in his commentary writes that those referenced here are unbelieving Hebrews who have never committed to the Gospel of Christ. Elementary means the types and shadows of Christ pictured in the Old Testament as opposed to basic Christian teachings.

"Elementary teaching about the Christ (Messiah) that the unbelieving Jews were to leave was the Old Testament teaching about Him—another indication that it is not immature Christians (Babes) that are being addressed…...the issue here is not that of growing in spiritual maturity as a Christian, but of coming into the first stage of spiritual maturity by becoming a Christian."

The other option is that those being addressed in Hebrews 5:12-6:8 are believing Hebrews, but immature in their faith walk, the result of just living on milk. In that case, the “Elementary Principles” would apply to basic Christian doctrines.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Hebrews 5:12

**Perfection**: The Greek word for “Perfection” is Greek word, \textit{teleiothß Teleiotes}, meaning the state of the more intelligent, or moral and spiritual perfection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views of those addressed in Hebrews 5:11-6:3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is being addressed in Hebrews 5:11-6:3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews who have heard the Gospel, but have not committed to Christ. They are holding on to the “First Principles” rather then turning to Christ. (Mac Arthur, Hebrews)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>…..repentance from Dead Works</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faith toward God</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Baptisms</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Laying on of hands</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resurrection</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eternal judgment</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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4 Ibid,
5 Ibid.,
We will do: The writer plans to go on to more substantial issues beyond the “First Principles”, which is hard because his audience is “Slow to learn”, because they need milk and are still infants in their understanding. In Hebrews 5:10 reference was made to Melchizedek, which will be continued after this parenthetical break from Hebrews 5:11 to 6:20.

The discussion about Melchizedek resumes in Chapter 7, along with an explanation of Jesus Christ, the High Priest, of the New Covenant in Chapter 8, and the shadow of the Earthly Temple in chapter 9. To understand these issues requires a foundational understanding of Christianity, from which the writer of Hebrews wishes to take his audience.

What is impossible?

Verses 4-8

It is impossible; To understand this contentious text, the Greek word translated impossible, ἀδύνατος Adunatos (ad-oo'-nat-os); needs to be understood. This word literally means (a) no (dunatos) power. This same word is used in Hebrews 6:18 (“It is impossible for God to Lie”), in 10:4 (“It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”) and 11:6 (“Without faith it is impossible to please Him”). Some have tried to translate this word as “Difficult” these earlier verses would make no sense if this were the case. Adunatos means it is without power, impossible.

The question is, What is impossible? The answer is “Those who fall away” to “Renew them again to repentance”.

Who then has fallen away?

Three options have been proposed about who is being referred to here.

- A hypothetical group, that does not exist.
- Unsaved individuals who have been associated with the Gospel
- Saved individuals who have lost salvation

| 3 Options | A Hypothetical Impossibility since the truly saved “Cannot be snatched out” of the hand of Christ | These individuals were never saved but only had a taste of salvation by association | These were saved individuals who have lost their salvation.
<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once enlightened;</td>
<td>Saved, they have seen the light. (Eph. 1:18)</td>
<td>The enlightenment has to do with intellectual perception of spiritual biblical truth(Page 142)</td>
<td>These individuals were saved and knew Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasted the heavenly gift:</td>
<td>Salvation is God’s Gift to man. Romans 6:23 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Romans 11:29</td>
<td>The did not feast but only tasted Christ (2 Cor. 9:15) Page 143</td>
<td>Experienced the gifts of salvation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partakers of the Holy Spirit:</td>
<td>The “Holy Spirit” is God’s Guarantee of Salvation. We are sealed till the day of redemption. (Eph 1:14)</td>
<td>Gr. Metochos” has to do with association, not possession. These Jews never possessed the Holy Spirit, they were</td>
<td>Being saved, they had the Holy Spirit, hence they were partakers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 ibid
If they fall away:

If someone is truly saved they cannot fall away, since that would mean Christ lost one of his sheep which He says He cannot lose. They could not be brought back to the place of excitement about Christ. (Page 147)

If they fall away from Christ, losing their salvation.

The word impossible is like a wall, its telling us something is impossible. The reason those in verses 4-6 cannot be saved, is because if they were saved, once they fell away they could not be brought back to repentance and thus were never "Saved" to begin with. In addition they being saved and losing "Salvation" would violate The promises and power of the Father, Son and Spirit.

These verses are more likely demonstrating an impossible situation, because if it were possible then Christ would have to die again. The position of those who are "Truly" saved is a secure position not based on our ability but on Christ's sacrifice.

**Salvation Proof Texts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proof Text</th>
<th>Reasoning</th>
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</table>
| **Ephesians 1:4,13-14** | • God choose us we did not choose Him.  
• The Holy Spirit is God’s guarantee of redemption.  
• We are God’s purchased possession |
| 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,  
13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,  
14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. | |
| **John 10:26-29** | • Christ knows his sheep  
• They shall never perish  
• They cannot be snatched from Christ.  
• They cannot be snatched from the Father. |
| 26 "But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.  
27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.  
28 "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.  
29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. | |
| **2 Corinthians 5:5** | • The Spirit is God's Guarantee |
| 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. | |
| **John 6:37,39** | • All the Father gives will come to Christ.  
• Christ will lose none that are given by the Father. |
| 37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.  
39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. | |
| **Romans 8:28-29** | • God foreknew the saved  
• The saved are predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.  
• The predestined are called, justified and glorified. |
| 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.  
29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.  
30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. | |

http://www.truthnet.org/Christianity/Hebrews/Hebrews6
What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

2 Timothy 2:19
Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

**Salvation must be maintained-Arminism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proof Text</th>
<th>Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hebrews 6:6</td>
<td>If they fall away, to renew them again to repentance. Hebrews demonstrates the possibility of falling away. Therefore salvation must be maintained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrews 10:26</td>
<td>For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins. Here we see that if sin is committed after knowledge of truth is received that there is no other hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew 5:13</td>
<td>&quot;You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. Salt loosing flavor is an picture of the Christian loosing salvation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 15:6</td>
<td>&quot;If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. The Christians can choose to abide or not abide (Live) in Christ those who turn are burned in the fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Peter 2:20-22</td>
<td>For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. Verse 21 says these individuals knew the way of righteousness but turned from it demonstrating one can loose their salvation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 15:16</td>
<td>If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. The brother (The Believer) can sin to point where it is useless to pray for that person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew 7:21-22</td>
<td>21 ‘Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many who claim to know the Lord will not enter into Heaven. Even though miracles were done through their ministry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew 12:31-32</td>
<td>31 ‘Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. The Christian can loose salvation when sinning against the Holy Spirit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Peter 1:10</td>
<td>The potential of stumbling is possible for</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; those who are not diligent.

earth which drinks in the rain; Using the example of nature, the productive Christian life will produce a good crop, the unfruitful life only thorns and thistles.

The beloved

Verses 9-12

9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner.

10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end,

12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Beloved: the Greek word ἀγαπητὸς Agapetos comes from agape, the highest kind of love.
The beloved are the saved, this is the same group in Hebrews 5:11 to 6:3. Though the writer of Hebrews was hard on them, and calling them infants, who need milk but should be eating solid food, here he encourages them. Telling them they do not fall into the hypothetical category, because they are saved. He hopes to take into deeper, “Solid food”, away from elementary teaching.

Accompany salvation: The Greek word ἑχω Echo (ekh'-o) means to have, hold, own or possess. They possess salvation. MacArthur separates this group in verses 9-12 from those in 5:11-6:5, he understands these as unsaved Jews, as opposed to saved Jews. He writes,

Accompanying salvation is not infancy but maturity, not milk but solid food, not inexperience in righteousness but perfect righteousness, not repentance in dead works but repentance toward God unto life. 8

To separate this group from those being addressed in 5:11 to 6:8, forces the text. Either, somebody is saved, or not saved. But those who are saved have fruits of salvation which are mentioned here.

Your work: Works and fruit separate those who are saved, from those who not saved, but claim to be saved. This is the point the writer is trying to make with this group of struggling believers.

This group has fruits of salvation, they are involved in ministry, they love the Name of the Lord and support the brothers in Christ.

Same diligence: The writer is encouraging them to keep going, to not rest. Paul uses the example of the runner in I Corinthians, who trains for a race,

24Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

25And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.

26Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.

27But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

I Corinthians 9:24-27

8 ibid, page 152
Assurance: Means having “Full confidence”, not questioning your status, but resting in Christ and his work. He is warning the reader to not slow down, but to keep progressing in their walk till the very end.

Become sluggish: The warning to believers is to not become “Dull”, Greek πνευματικός Nothros, this same word is used earlier in 5:11, where he wants to explain to them more about Melchizedek (Hebrews 5:10), but is limited because they have become “Nothros” or dull in hearing. Here, he is warning them to not do the same in their walk, as they have done in their hearing. The writer, like Paul in I Corinthians is urging them on in their walk, to imitate the those who inherited the promise through faith and patience, inherited God’s promise. Abraham is then used as an example of God’s promise and why we can be confident.

Abraham as an example

Verses 13-20

13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,
14 saying, “Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.”
15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.
16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute.
17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath,
18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.
19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,
20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Promise to Abraham: The promise quoted here is from Genesis 22:16, after Abraham took Isaac, his son, to the top of Mt. Moriah. God swore by Himself, to bless Abraham.

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;
18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Genesis 22:17-18

Swore by Himself: God swore by Himself, because there is none greater, He is the standard of “Truth”, for this reason it is impossible for Him to lie. He would have to deny his person to lie.

In Genesis 15:7-8 God passed through the divided animals signifying his “Covenant” with Abraham. The Hebrew word for Covenant is בְּרִיָּה (beriyah); meaning “To cut”, when an covenant was made both parties walked between the divided animals to signify that if either party failed to live up to their agreement, may they be cut in half like the animals who they are walking between. In essence, God was telling Abraham, if He did not fulfill his agreement with him, may God be cut in half. Abraham did not walk through the animal halves, only God passed through the animal parts.

The heirs of promise: The promise was to Abraham and to his seed, those who would inherit the promise God made to Abraham. The Church, the body of Gentile and Jewish Believers, is grafted into the promises of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Romans 11).
Immutability: The Greek word means, αμετατόπιστος Ametathetros means not transposed, not to be transferred, fixed, or altered. God’s word is unchangeable, for the reason God cannot lie, He is the standard of what is true. The two items his Promise and Oath and since it is impossible for God to lie, we can rest in his promise.

Strong consolation: For this reason, the believer can be confident in Jesus, because he has entered the “Holy of Holies” in Heaven. He is our High Priest after the order of Melchizdek.

High Priest forever: The Earthly Temple and Priesthood were only a shadow and type of what was to come. This Heavenly picture is described in detail from Hebrews 7 to 10. For this reason we can put our rest in Jesus. He is our forerunner, He has gone ahead of us to prepare a place for us, in His Fathers house. (John 14:1-3)