

The Book of Hebrews

Part 17: Daybreakers (Heb. 6:19-20)

I. Beyond the Veil of Our Flesh

As Hebrews 6 has developed, we've discovered the message of Christ within, which is the ultimate meaning of the "hope" outlined in Scripture.

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.

...which takes us to final lines of the chapter:

**19 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.
(Hebrews 6:19-20)**

The author has been building for some time toward this mysterious character from the book of Genesis, a priest-king named Melchizedek. This will be the focus of the next four chapters. Right now, we will continue to explore the connection between Colossians 1:27 ("*Christ in us, the hope of glory*") and the sure and steadfast hope "*which enters within the veil.*"

Later in Hebrews, Jesus's flesh is compared to the veil:

**19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh
(Hebrews 10:19-20)**

With this in view, the hope that *enters the veil* speaks to the hope of Christ within our own outer veil of flesh and blood.

As we've previously discussed, the three parts of the Jewish temple connect to the body, soul, and spirit of humanity. In this temple there were two veils—one on the outside everyone say that brought you to the Holy Place (corresponding to the soul) and then a second one that led into the Holy of Holies (corresponding to the spirit).

Christ as our true High Priest has entered the veil into our soul and spirit. No matter what we see on the outside, Christ dwells within (2 Corinthians 5:16). Glory is inside of us and we can taste of this now, but we also have a sure and steadfast hope that one day this glory will manifest on the outside.

Hebrews is challenging us to trust in this living Hope. We are called to be like Abraham who trusted in a similar promise even when it felt like “hope against hope.”

18 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, “So shall your descendants be.” 19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; 20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. (Romans 4:18-21)

The “outer person”—the veil—of both Abraham and Sarah looked utterly incapable of producing life. Yet God spoke a Word and declared life was within them, and that this life would manifest on the outside—and then multiply!

This is our living hope! And even when things seem hopeless and we do not feel the presence and glory of God within (or in others), we trust in this living hope of glory nonetheless.

II. The *Psychē* of Christ

The writer of Hebrews declares that this hope is an anchor of the soul. The Greek term translated as “soul” is *psychē*. It speaks to a person’s mental and emotional life. It is their personality as well as the choices they make. Thus, the word is often translated as a person’s very “life.”

Therefore, the hope of glory within the outer “veil” of our flesh is an anchor for our mind, emotions, and overall life.

An anchor was used to hold a ship secure to a certain location, keeping it from drifting due to winds and waves.

Our soul—our inner life—experiences much turbulence in this world. Our emotions, thoughts, and decisions can be greatly impacted by storms around us—storms of temptation, spiritual attack, general stress, and other kinds of pressures. Traumatic events, rejection, and all kinds of negative encounters beat down on the soul in an attempt to lead us astray or completely shipwreck our lives.

When he was in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus talked about his *psychē*.

It’s important to remember that Jesus had a flesh and a soul. The flesh and soul are not evil. They are designed to be anchored to the Spirit in order to stay in the “harbor” of health and fruitfulness.

**38 Then He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.”
(Matthew 26:38)**

On this night of his arrest, Jesus’s own soul experienced horrific affliction. Jesus was experiencing some of the worst pain imaginable, including betrayal from a close friend and a complete rejection from those he came to serve and love. As these things beat on his soul it caused him to experience deep grief, even to the point of his physical body breaking down (see Luke 22:44).

Like all of us, Jesus encountered incredible storms upon his mind and emotions that impacted his body. This was the epitome of the reality that stress affects the body.

Jesus knew that he and the disciples needed to keep watch. They needed to stay awake to something that was bigger and stronger than the winds and waves swirling around them.

In Hebrews 5, we learned about Jesus’s suffering and how he learned to trust and stay devoted to the voice of the Father over his life:

**7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety (*his ability to consistently trust and take hold of the Father’s word*). 8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience (*listening*) from the things which He suffered.
(Hebrews 5:7-8)**

Jesus’s flesh and soul wrestled with intense resistance from outside forces. In this place, he learned to cling to the anchor of the Father’s love.

Jesus overcame in the same way we are called to overcome—by faith (1 John 5:4). This is part of the reason he is called “*our forerunner*” because he passed through the veil that seems to separate us from the intimate presence of the Father. We are called to go beyond the veil into the arms of Abba, trusting in his goodness no matter what.

Jesus resisted lies telling him the Father wasn’t good. This was him surrendering to the Father’s good plan (“not my will, but thine be done”).

Through the things he suffered as a man with a flesh and a soul, Jesus grew in trust (the meaning of “obedience” in Hebrews). This has been the whole point of the book of Hebrews—to get us to trust like him in the truth of who we really are as beloved children of God.

This is what he knew he had to stay spiritually awake to in Gethsemane because the storm-like feeling of abandonment was trying to overcome his soul. He also called his disciples to do the same:

**41 Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.
(Matthew 26:41)**

This is the same word for flesh that speaks of “the days of His flesh” in Hebrews 5:7. To reiterate—the “flesh” in this case is not evil, but weak. Jesus encountered the weakness of flesh as well.

The flesh is weak in that it gets barraged by outside forces constantly. More importantly, it is weak because it cannot produce godly actions on its own. It is only meant to be a vessel, like a ship, guided by the greater force of the Spirit.

Because of our weakness, we need to remain aware that we are anchored to the Spirit. In other words, we need to stay tuned and awake to the truth, which happens through prayer and communion. These are the two things Jesus engaged in during the night of his suffering. This is what it means to keep watching, which the disciples were having a hard time doing.

III. Acts 27 & the Anchor of our Souls

The word for “anchor” shows up in only other place in Scripture. It is a place we’ve visited before when looking at another term from Hebrews when we learned about the kind of “help” Jesus gives to us.

**15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. (You can be “weak” and not sin!) 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
(Hebrews 4:15-16)**

We found that this is a nautical term about reinforcing a ship with ropes and cables during a storm. The word shows up in the account of the storm the apostle Paul experienced in Acts 27.

This same chapter is also the only other place where the term “anchor” appears. **This link between Hebrews and Acts 27 is no coincidence.** This difficult event in Paul’s life turns out to be another lesson on what it means to walk in overcoming faith.

In the story, Paul is under arrest. Paul has a promise from God of bringing the Gospel to world leaders and nations and yet he is experiencing the complete limitation and weakness of being imprisoned.

This is a total contradiction to the promise in his life, yet he is trusting like Abraham that he will be fruitful and multiply. This is why he writes in Philippians that his limitation of prison is only serving to increase the gospel’s influence. This is a beautiful reminder about clinging to hope even when it seems hopeless.

During his imprisonment, Paul makes an appeal to the higher courts of Rome which leads him on a long trip to the capital by way of ship. At the beginning of their journey, the weather for the travel looks good but Paul has a prophetic sense that something terrible is going to happen and tries to warn the captain and crew.

Unfortunately, they do not listen. This speaks to how suffering in this world is often unnecessary and caused by people simply not listening to the wisdom of God. Our own suffering is often impacted by the world around us rejecting God's ways.

13 When a gentle south breeze began to blow, they assumed they could make it, so they pulled up anchor and sailed close to Crete. 14 But it wasn't long before the weather abruptly worsened and a storm of hurricane force called the Nor'easter tore across the island and blew us out to sea.

(Acts 27:13-14 TPT)

Notice how the crew pulled up their anchor thinking they could handle the trip. But then a storm hit and they were blown way off course and set into a direction of destruction.

This speaks to when we fall asleep to the good news; when we lose our heart's grip on the goodness of God and the embrace of his love. When we abandon this anchor (often because things are going well or we feel we're doing fine), we find ourselves hit with winds of temptation, doubt, attack, fears, and our souls can be driven off course. This is what Jesus warned about in the Garden to his sleeping disciples.

Thankfully, in this story we find a message of continued grace. During a particularly difficult night of bad weather, Paul has an angelic visitation in the midst of their hopeless situation and is told they will survive.

22 Now listen to me. Don't be depressed, for no one will perish—only the ship will be lost.

(Acts 27:22 TPT)

Paul tells them that even though their outward vessel will be destroyed, the life within it will make it through.

This is a parable of our lives and the hope we have of Christ within. Even when we experience setbacks and make terrible mistakes, there is a conquering life inside of us. Even in defeat, Christ will rise from the ashes. The life within us will triumph in the end. In the words of Paul to the Romans, there is nothing that can separate us from the love of our Father.

We don't want unnecessary suffering and loss. We want to be fruitful and triumphant throughout all of life—and there is provision for this! However, we have a peace-giving assurance in this promise over our souls. Our souls will be preserved no matter what we go through.

Our emotions may go up and down, our thoughts may torment us, but these things do not override the ultimate victory of Christ within. We have an anchor beyond the veil of the flesh and the soul (through both curtains!). Even when we don't feel it or sense it, there is nothing that will stop the glory of Christ from being the end of our story.

Remember that Paul expressed this word of encouragement after a spiritual encounter in the night. This connects us back to Jesus's call to the disciples to stay spiritually alert. When Jesus prayed in the Gethsemane, an angel came and strengthened him and kept him from going off-course.

Prayer (focus and conversation with the Father) and communion (celebration of Jesus's victory) is the way we take hold of the hope within us. As we meditate on Christ and look to God, heavenly strength comes to us.

With that in mind, it's incredible to see what happens with Paul at the end of the story:

33 Just before daybreak, Paul urged everyone to eat. He said, "Today makes two full weeks that you've been in fearful peril and hunger, unable to eat a thing. 34 Now eat and be nourished. For you'll all come through this ordeal without a scratch." 35 Then Paul took bread and gave thanks to God in front of them, broke it and began to eat. 36-37 There were 276 people who ate until they were filled, and were strengthened and encouraged. 38 After they were satisfied, they threw the grain into the sea to lighten the ship. 39 When daylight came, the sailors didn't recognize the land, but they noticed a cove with a sandy beach, so they decided to run the ship ashore.

(Acts 27:33-39 TPT)

Paul leads all these prisoners and unbelievers in a time of communion! He guides them to the true anchor of their souls. Amazingly, this is right after we see them dropping anchors again...

29 Fearing that we might run aground somewhere on the rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern and wished (*prayed*) for daybreak.

(Acts 27:29)

This is the promise of communion when we feel everything is falling apart. It is incredible that right after this moment "daybreak" comes and they begin to see a cove, a place of harbor. Even though their ship will not make it, they make it to the shore—without a scratch just as Paul promised (see the final verse of the chapter, v. 44).

This is the hope of the gospel! The life of Christ is on the inside of us. Even if things seem rough and betrayal and rejection occurs, even death itself—resurrection is always on the other side.

The life inside of us cannot be destroyed. And as we learn to listen and stay anchored, we can avoid many other heartaches in this life. We can never totally escape suffering because of the

broken world around us and the decisions of others. Regardless, our living hope always prevails, and nothing can separate us from it.

16 So no wonder we don't give up. For even though our outer person gradually wears out, our inner being is renewed every single day. 17 We view our slight, short-lived troubles in the light of eternity. We see our difficulties as the substance that produces for us an eternal, weighty glory far beyond all comparison, 18 because we don't focus our attention on what is seen but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but the unseen realm is eternal.
(2 Corinthians 4:16-18 TPT)

Follow-up Encounter:

Get a few people together and enjoy communion with a full meal. Come together with the purpose of instilling hope in one another. Share your concerns and needs and pray together. Remind one another that everything is going to be OK! Give God thanks and praise for the hope of glory that resides within your souls. Ask for wisdom to stay awake and alert to his voice in this season of your lives.

End your time with a celebration of victory. Receive his victorious grace as you drink the cup and eat the bread!