

Jesus Our Forerunner

Hebrews 6:20

Nutshell: Jesus is a forerunner “for us.” The way has been cleansed and prepared.

I. Context: The certainty of God’s promise.

II. Text

Heb 6:20 where Jesus entered as a forerunner for us, having become a High Priest unto the Age, according to the order of Melchizedek.

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

A. Paul wrote an inspired book to a Jewish audience; 2 Pet 3:15-16; 1 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 3:1. Hebrews is the only possibility.

1. The “us” of Heb 2:3 only puts the author outside the original 12
2. Peter speaks of the Apostles in the 3rd person as well, 1 Pet 1:12

B. Outline of Hebrews:

The Preeminence of the Son

Authority: God has at last spoken In **Son** (*Ἰερωφῆτ*), ← follow this font
His express image, 1:1-3a

Theme: **The SON** purified us from sin (Priest), then sat in authority (King), **1:3b**

I. Supreme **over** the angels, Inheritor by ordeal, 1:4-14
Therefore hear Him, 2:1-4

II. Supreme **as** man, 2:5-9

Psalm 8- Since man must inherit, 2:5-8a
but man failed, 2:8b, **Christ** became man, 2:9a

Theme reprise: crowned with glory and honor (King), **2:9b**
to taste the death of “each one” of His own (Priest), **2:9c**
to bond with them and help them, 2:10-18

freeing them from bondage to Satan and fear, 2:14-15

III. A better stewardship than Moses, 3:1-6

- Therefore **THINK HARD ON HIM**, unhardening our hearts,
Ps 95- for Moses' folk didn't inherit God's **rest**, 3:7-19;
consequently, **EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY**, 3:13
- IV. A **better Rest** than Joshua, 4:1-11
- ♦ Therefore, fear (4:1a), lest we also miss **God's rest**
Ps 95- David invited his generation into that same **rest** of
Creation, a type of Salvation, 4:1b-8
Christ's Salvation has become the final *Sabbatismos*, 4:9-
10, which we must **EXERT** ourselves to enter, 4:11
For the Word penetrates, exposing us before God, 4:12-13
Theme reprise: Having the highest high priest (**Priest**), the
Son of God (King),
Let us hold to our confession of Him (*Ἰσραήλ*), 4:14
especially since He felt all our temptations +, 4:15
- V. A **better priesthood than Aaron**, 4:14 - 10:18
- VI. Exhortations based on Christ Supreme, 10:19-13:21
VII. Concluding remarks, 13:22-25
- C. “**Let us approach**” (Προσερχώμεθα) in **4:16 and 10:22** tells
us that Jesus' priesthood is **so we will approach God**.
Prayerlessness, then, dismisses Jesus' priesthood.
- D. 5:1-10, OT priests from Aaron; Christ from *Melchizedek*
1. 5:11-14, The Hebrews were too babyish to learn of *Ἰσραήλ*
 2. 6:1-2, Reaffirm the 6 **FUNDAMENTALS** (3 pairs): (hand-
laying a fundamental?) *or* risk being beyond repentance,
6:4-6, like cultivated land that only yields thorns, v 7-8.
- F. But there are signs of life among you! 6:9-11
1. Don't be lazy. Imitate overcomers; e.g., Abe. God's oath
to him is for *our* stability too! 6:12-18,
 2. Our hope in God's promise being an unfailing anchor for
our souls, sunk into Heaven's Holy of Holies, v 19

Kid-speak: Last time we said that our soul has an anchor in
Heaven. What does an anchor do? It holds us in place.

G. *In 6:20, our hope within the Heavenly Holy of Holies is in
Christ, who entered there as a predecessor for us.*

Outline: Hebrews 6:20

I. Further Thoughts on our Anchorage

- II. Jesus Within the Veil
- III. A Forerunner: 8 Aspects of Christ as Our Forerunner
- IV. The Overcomer Theme of Hebrews
- V. “For Us”
- VI. Now On to Melchizedek

H. Heb 6:20, “Where Jesus entered”

1. Entered where? The interior of the veil.
2. What else is there?
 - a. Our “hope,” v 19. Wow. We’re in good company.
 - b. Functioning how? As an **anchor**.

I. More thoughts on “anchor” from v 19, for moving us into v 20

Heb 6:19 which [hope] we have as an ANCHOR of the soul, both unfailling and stable, and entering into the interior of the veil,

1. “Up anchor” usually means to haul it up, but our anchor in Christ’s sacrifice is above, in *Heaven!* - an Up Anchor
2. It secures us *from there*, our Up Anchor!
 - a. It’s strange to think of a cable going *up* from our soul into Heaven
 - b. But that also means no one down here can dislodge it, least of all ourselves! It’s of God’s *design* and *making*.

Kid-speak: Which way does a boat anchor go? Down.
Which way does the anchor of our HOPE go? Up! To heaven.

3. We judge our position relative to a *boat anchor* by what we **see** around us: sea, land, sky
 - a. But our Up Anchor is **unseen**, as indicated in it being our “hope,” Rom 8:24, as well as its locale in Heaven
 - ✓ b. So our Up Anchor will only affect our thoughts and feelings AS we *think on* it/ Him
4. Now consider the seafloors as the earth’s foundation
 - a. Hence, anchors are embedded in the most secure base earth has to offer. That makes it an even better analogy for our bedrock in Christ.
 - b. Ps 24:2; 136:6; 18:15; 2 Pet 3:5
 - c. The simplest way to look at this is just as the seas containing the lowest places. Mountains (being the *top*

- of land masses) ultimately have their *roots* in the sea.
5. Where/ When are *Up Anchor thoughts* most apropos?
 - a. *Whenever we're feeling upended* in any way (strange that “upending” sends us down, not up. Well, it “ends” our “up,” eh?)
 - b. Which can be pretty much all of life, frail as we are, Ps 103:14; 78:38-39 (wow); 89:47; Jms 4:14
 6. We have every right to be the happiest, most contented people of all
 - a. But even so, our happiness always has to exist alongside our pain, Gen 3:17-19; Ps 119:75; Jms 1:2; Prov 14:13; 17:3; Eccl 2:22-23
 - b. and our temptation, Heb 12:1

J. “Where Jesus entered”

1. Inside the Temple veil in Heaven
 - a. Where our hope is, as our soul’s anchor
 - b. Where the Ark of the Covenant is, Rev 11:19, and its Mercy Seat
- ♦ 2. Jesus went inside the veil = He’s High Priest
 - a. He came having offered His life in substitution = He’s the sacrifice
 - b. Priest *and* Sacrifice, offering Himself

Kid-speak: There’s a Temple in Heaven. Jesus went inside the veil, so He’s a *what?* High Priest. But Jesus was the one who died, so He’s also the *what?* Sacrifice!

K. “As a forerunner”

1. A “Forerunner”
 - a. The compound English word well represents the compound Gk word, “one who runs before”
 - b. In literature of the day, mostly of messengers and scouts
 - c. We have the *verb* form 2^{cc}, Lk 19:4 of Zacchaeus
 - d. Jn 20:4, of John “running ahead” of Peter
2. Jesus has “run before” us into the Holy of Holies in Heaven.

L. “Forerunner”

1. What *is* a forerunner most basically?
 - a. Someone who precedes
 - b. Jesus had to go first so we could follow

- c. Our anchoring hope anticipated being where He has gone

Kid-speak: Jesus had to go into Heaven first before we could. What do we call Him because of that? A Forerunner.

- 2. How did He *become* a FORERUNNER?
 - a. He pressed Himself, not to go beyond Himself, but to ensure that He wasn't derailed, Lk 4:1-2
 - i. His fasting was part of that (we join Him)
 - ii. Heb 1:4 introduces Him as one who "became" better than the angels, not as one inherently better (which is also true). He overcame by ordeal.
 - b. He presented Himself, offering the Father His sinless body on the Cross, Heb 10:7 (5-14)
 - c. He proclaimed His victory on the cross to disobedient spirits in prison, 1 Pet 3:19-20

- 3. What did He do *as* forerunner?

- ✠ a. Most directly, per our passage, He provided for our acceptance by bringing His finished sacrifice on our behalf *to* the Mercy Seat, Heb 10:14, 19
- b. He prepared (or is preparing) a permanent place for us based on His redemptive work, Jn 14:2-3
- c. He began producing US, 'after-runners', following Him! Jms 1:18; 1 Cor 15:23
 - i. Aaron could only do that symbolically, with Israel represented in the stones on his breastplate
 - ii. We (with all truly faithful Israel) will be *WITH* our High Priest in Heaven
- d. He prays for us as a round-the-clock intercessor, Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; 9:24

- 4. How should we *respond* to having such a "forerunner"?

- a. Heb 10:21-22
- b. "In Christ," Rom 6:11; 2 Cor 2:14; 5:17; Eph 2:10; Philip 4:7; 2 Tim 1:13;
- c. "In Him," 2 Cor 5:21; Eph 1:4; Philip 3:9; Col 2:6; 1 Jn 2:5, 27-28

M. The Forerunner as Overcomer

- 1. Hebrews has presented Jesus from the start (1:4) as an overcomer
 - a. 2:10, perfected "through sufferings"

- b. 2:18, “being tested/ tempted”
- c. 4:15, “tempted in all respects per *our* likeness”
- d. 5:7, “strong crying out and tears... heard because of His devoutness”
- e. 5:8, though a Son, He “learned obedience through what He suffered”
- f. 5:9, “having been completed,” clearly implying that the task was not accomplished until He had died


Kid-speak: How hard was it for Jesus to save us from our sins? The hardest thing anybody ever did!

- 2. The term Paul already used for Christ as overcomer is “trailblazer,” 2:10; lit., “first/chief leader”
 - a. He’ll go back to this term in 12:2. Often translated “author.” *He’s gone ahead to scout things out.*
 - b. “Forerunner” and “trailblazer” have similarities
- 3. With this theme of overcoming by ordeal, “forerunner” caps it with a picture of great inclusivity
 - a. “First leader” implies followers
 - b. But “Runner ahead” implies it even more clearly
 - i. Having given us strong, positive incentive in this last part of chap 6, Paul ends it with a snapshot of Christ + us. We’re together with Him.
 - ii. What He did, He did “for us”

N. “For us”

- 1. A huge, tiny phrase
 - a. Someone said their Greek studies were worth it just to have learned this little phrase: *hyper haymone*, “for us”
 - b. Probably grammatically connected to “entered,” though “forerunner” is possible
 - c. Of course, Christ “entered” inside the veil *as a* “forerunner” for us, so the effect is similar either way
- 2. Same phrase 20x; noteworthy among them:
 - a. Probably most famously, Rom 8:31;
 - b. Rom 5:8b; 1 Thess 5:10; Titus 2:14; 1 Jn 3:16; Gal 3:13
 - c. Rom 8:34; Heb 9:24 (above, III. L. 3. c.)

Kid-speak: What are the two words that make us feel really good about what Jesus did? He did it all ____ _____. For us!

- O. “having become a high priest unto the Age, according to the order/ grouping of Melchizedek”
1. Here we are, back where we left off at 5:10-11
 - a. In between has been this notable insertion
 - b. (Paul is good at big parentheses; cf., 2 Cor 2:13-7:5-7)
 2. Again, “having become,” after the successful *offering* of Himself + the Father’s *acceptance* of His sacrifice
 3. “High priest”
 - a. Everything is topsy turvy for the Jews if Jesus is a priest at all (actually, set right, not topsy turvy)
 - b. They’re willing to say he’s a prophet (though a strange and not-very-original one), but priest...
 - c. Then it becomes topsy turvy for us if *we* go back and borrow Aaronic stuff
 4. “Unto the Age”
 - a. Usually translated “forever”
 - b. It is His death/resurrection that inaugurated this new age we’re in! (a *real* New Age)
 - c. The Millennium and New Heavens & Earth are just extensions of the Age we’re already in. Their power and authority reside in the Cross/Resurrection.
 - d. And that’s from now on. No more new ages.
 - i. Though many wonders may yet spring from the womb of the Cross
 - ii. But, though utterly new to our experience, they’d be on the same platform on which we stand today
 5. “According to the taxonomy of Melchizedek”
 - a. Yes, this is the *Gk.* word from which we get “taxonomy,” but just the “tax” part; categorization, classification (“tax” as in \$ is from a *Latin* root)
 - b. We’ll have the “order of Aaron” in 7:11
- P. “Melchizedek”
- ★ 1. THE ARGUMENT OF HEBREWS HINGES ON THE CHANGE OF THE ORDER OF THE PRIESTHOOD!
2. (Oh, no big deal then. Just that.)
 3. And that’s where Huge Exposition number 2 is now going: Ps 110 and Gen 14.
 - a. Paul’s next big sermon is on those two texts
 - b. The first big exposition was on Ps 95 in Heb 3 & 4
 -  c. *That* one showed their **need of this one!**

Kid-speak: There's *two kinds* of priests in the Bible. One kind comes from Aaron. But Jesus comes from the *other kind*. Who does that one come from? Melchizedek. (Whoa! Wotta name!)

- ☞ 4. How well does the modern church, or the church through history, know her need of it?
 - a. I fear not well, judging from her knowledge of the Melchizedekian priesthood itself
 - b. If Melchizedek was just necessary technical info that can become a footnote (as it has), then why is it accorded so much space and such centrality in Scripture?

IV. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, “Uphold the strengthless”) Jesus did what He did “for us.” That includes you!

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V. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, “Convince, rebuke”): **What have I done wrong? How have I lost righteousness?**  
Is Christ *distant* in my thoughts or prayer, rather than one whose work of forerunner brings me *near*?

VI. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, “Exhort/encourage”):  
**How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?**  
I will take courage to draw near, since Christ provided for it.

VII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How do I take this on the road?**  
Jesus, grant me a **calm** to walk in, given all the initiative You have taken and the responsibility You still take for my soul.

Vision: Everything we do in the Christian life is with one hand on our hope-anchor's cable. Since it's anchored in Heaven, then, we're always like mountain climbers, maneuvering our path up the mountain, Ps 18:33; Job 39:1-4.

Christ trailblazed the path for us. Now He's in the best place to get us there, because it is His sacrifice, behind the veil, that evokes from the Father the edict to the Spirit that our foot shall not stumble unto falling.