

1. Between verses 6 and 10 the writer shares an agricultural illustration.
2. Divisions of the illustration:
 - A. Good soil - absorbs and drinks moisture well
 - B. Good soil - bears fruit and it is good
3. Application of the illustration in verse 7: Good soil - shares in God's blessing (to have a portion or share of something).
4. Contrasting half of the illustration (v8):
 - A. Soil that is not productive - thorns and thistles
 - B. Rejected - worthless - nigh to be cured (it is near)
5. The language in verse 8 does not suggest a restoring or disciplinary process - it describes punishment that awaits those condemned by God.
6. The word of encouragement/confidence to the Hebrew believers in verse 9 shares the same emphasis as the warning in verse 8.
7. All their work for the saints was for God's name - or for His glory (v10). It will certainly be rewarded, but the idea of reward was not the motivation behind it.
8. That same motivation must also be ours - if we are to be acceptable servants. Work for Christ which is done entirely for the glory of God will not be overlooked by God.
9. In verse 11-12 the writer turns now from love to the other qualities of hope and faith. These also require persistence and continuance.
10. That same earnestness which has been seen through their love at the beginning must now be expressed in faith and hope to the end.
11. This church has known fierce hostility and aggressive opposition. (Hebrews 10:32-34)
12. The promises of God are of supreme importance in difficult times like these. In his love, God makes a pledge to His people that things will be different and better.
13. It is God's promises that sustain His people through these dark days, but they must be received, proved and inherited.
14. It is true that it is God who "carries us along" to maturity - it is also true that the believer must do his part.

15. We must not be slothful (lazy) - we must apply ourselves to the spiritual resources God has given us. We have the promises from God.
16. Like Joshua and Caleb, we must believe God's promise and want to go in and claim the land!
17. The writer now ends this portion with a tremendous argument for the assurance of salvation. Even though we may not be making the spiritual progress we should - we don't have to be afraid that God will condemn us.
18. The writer uses an example from the Old Testament. (v13-15)
19. In spite of Abraham's failures and sins, God kept His promise and Isaac was born. God's main promise to Abraham is recorded in Genesis 22:16-17.
20. Many of God's promises do not depend on our character but on His faithfulness. The phrase "patiently endured" (v15) is the exact opposite of "slothful" (12).
21. The Jewish believers were about to give up; their endurance was running out. "You will obtain and enjoy what God has promised if you diligently apply yourself to growing in your spiritual life," is what the writer stated.
22. God not only gave Abraham a promise, but He also confirmed that promise with an oath. (v16-18)
23. When a witness takes an oath in court, he is confronted with the words "so help me God." We call on the greater to witness for the lesser.
24. Our assurance of salvation is guaranteed by God's promise and God's oath, "two immutable [unchangeable] things."
25. We have "strong consolation" (or "great encouragement") concerning the hope set before us! Hebrews is a book of *encouragement*, not *discouragement*!
26. Our hope in Christ is like an anchor for the soul. (v19-20)
27. We are anchored *upward*—to heaven—not downward. We are anchored, not to stand still, but to *move ahead*! Our anchor is "sure." No earthly anchor can give that kind of security!
28. The writer then clinches the argument: Jesus is our "forerunner" who has gone ahead to heaven so that we may one day follow!
29. The Old Testament high priest was *not* a "forerunner" because nobody could follow him into the holy of holies. But Jesus Christ has gone to heaven so that one day we may follow.