

## Milk versus Solid Food

In the earliest Greek manuscripts of the book of Hebrews, it begins with “to the Hebrews.” This indicates that the author of Hebrews is writing to Jewish Christians. Because temple activities are mentioned, Hebrews may be intended for those Believers who were in or around Jerusalem.

The author of Hebrews desires to tell his audience more about Jesus Christ, but he is stymied:

**Concerning him we have much to say**, and it is difficult to explain, since you have become poor listeners. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the actual words of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to distinguish between good and evil. (Heb 5:11-14, NASB)

1. List your observations of the text that you observe of these “infant” Believers. Discuss your observations.

2. Can you explain this figure of speech “milk?” What does it represent?

3. Can you explain the benefits of “solid food?” How does it train you to distinguish between good and evil?

4. Why did the author of Hebrews expect all Believers to be teachers by now? What do you observe of these verses?

The LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.” (Gen 18:17-19, NASB)

Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” (Ex 19:5-6, NASB)

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### Teacher Notes

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1. List your observations of the text that you observe of these “infant” Believers. Discuss your observations.

Encourage the student to observe everything he can about the description of these Believers who chose not to grow spiritually.

**Poor listeners** – in the first century, most people could not read so education was by oral tradition. A poor listener was a poor student or someone not interested in learning.

**You have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the actual words of God** – they did not understand the basic elements of God’s word and perhaps even forgot. They needed someone to remind / re-teach the basic essentials of God’s word.

**You have come to need milk and not solid food** – this figure of speech is used elsewhere in the Bible and describes what form of God’s word that a Believer can consume. It is a revealing statement of a Believer who was thought to be more mature.

**Unacquainted with the word of righteousness** – this is saying one is ignorant of God’s word.

**Untrained to distinguish between good and evil** – this is the consequence of not knowing God’s word and a poor testimony of a Believer.

2. Can you explain this figure of speech “milk?” What does it represent?

Ask the student what “milk” represents. Help him tangibly understand this figure of speech.

Milk represents the elementary principles of the actual words of God. It is like someone summarizing the basic information about Jesus Christ. For example:

Jesus was the Son of God. He died for your sins. By coming back to life on the third day after death, He demonstrated that He was God and had power over death, etc.

When a Believer can consume real food, the actual words of God, he would learn about subjects like agapē love, sin, atonement, etc. And through the process of knowing God’s word, learn how to be holy and make decisions pleasing to God.

3. Can you explain the benefits of “solid food?” How does it train you to distinguish between good and evil?

Ask the student: how does Bible study help your life? Can you give an example?

God’s word really does two things:

God tells you about yourself. For example, you learn that sin is about what you desire.

God tells you about Himself and what He desires for you. For example, you learn about His power, presence, knowledge, and His great love for you.

In learning about yourself and God, you learn that your moral standard pales in comparison to God’s standard. When you change your mind to God’s perspective, it affects how you live and what matters in life. You’ll discover that you become more discerning and make better choices in life.

God uses Bible study as a means to talk to you and remind you how to have a blessed life with God by distinguishing between good and evil.

4. Why did the author of Hebrews expect all Believers to be teachers by now? What do you observe of these verses?

The LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? **For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD** by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.” (Gen 18:17-19, NASB)

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Ask the student: why did God choose Abraham? What was necessary for Abraham to do so that God would fulfill His promises to Him?

Abraham was chosen, because God knew he would teach his children to “keep the way of the LORD.” Abraham would teach his next generation God’s word.

One of God’s promises to Abraham was the Promised Land, which was only accessible to Believers - those who had the faith like Abraham were considered descendants of Abraham. Abraham taught that the invisible God was real and to have a faith in Him. In teaching others, God would “bring upon Abraham what He had spoken about.” If there were no Believers, God could not fulfill His promise of the Promised Land.

Ask the student: what role do people play when they become God’s “own possession among all the peoples?”

If you become a Believer, you are to God a member of His “kingdom of priests.” God expects you to grow in your faith in God and become capable to teach others about Him just like Abraham. Through you, God wants others to come to faith and enjoy His promise of the Promised Land heaven.