

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 20 December 2021.

Greetings.

I hardly need to tell you that this is the last 'Musings' email before Christmas 2021.

I suspect that some of you (as I) will have sung numerous so-called Christmas Carols over the past week or so. Sadly, the lyrics of some Carols leave a lot to be desired and, frankly, some Carols are of very questionable origin. Yet I have found that even such Carols can sometimes yield a happy turn of phrase.

For my part, one such 'happy turn of phrase' leapt out of the Carol, '*O holy night*'.

(This particular Carol is certainly of most unpromising origin, being (i) based on a French poem written by an unconverted wine merchant with socialist tendencies [*Placide Cappeau*] and (ii) translated into English by a Unitarian Minister [*John Sullivan Dwight*, who denied the truth of the Holy Trinity]. But, then, I observe that the apostle Paul was happy when preaching and writing to quote from non-Christian literature, Acts 17. 28; 1 Cor. 15. 33; Tit. 1. 12.)

The 'happy turn of phrase' which gripped me comes towards the close of the first verse:

'A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn'.

It was the phrase, '**A thrill of hope**', which struck home to me, prompting me to revisit the subject of that distinctive Christian hope which you and I share today.

And what a hope it is! Truly, it is:

- (i) 'A good hope' (2 Thess. 2. 16);
- (ii) 'A better hope' (Heb. 7. 19);
- (iii) 'A living hope' (1 Pet. 1. 3); and
- (iv) 'A blessed hope' (Tit. 2. 13).

I set out below this week's 'Musings' meditation ... which focuses on 'the hope set before us' (Heb. 6. 18).

Would that we might each capture the '*thrill*' of that hope.

Happy reading.

I have decided that, with Christmas less than a week away, this is a suitable time for Malcolm to take a very short break from preparing the Monday Musings.

God willing, I shall be back in two weeks' time, on Monday 3rd January 2022, with a short set of Musings. I should like to think that the attached document contains sufficient edifying material to see you through until then.

It remains only for me to wish each of you a truly 'Wonder-filled' Christmas.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

PS

If you are not familiar with the words and tune of '*O holy night*', you might like to spend less than five minutes listening to American singer Josh. Groban's thoughtful version at ...
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17killxSdC0&t=84s>.

'The Anchor and the Forerunner'¹

SCRIPTURE

That ... we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us; which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entering into that within the veil, where a forerunner is for us entered, Jesus.²

Hebrews 6. 18-20

INTRODUCTION

The writer to the Hebrews speaks of two things which we, as believers, have '**set before³ us**'.

(i) Immediately, there is a '**race**': 'let us run with endurance the race that is set before us' (Heb. 12. 1)⁴ and

(ii) Beyond that, and ultimately, there is a '**hope**': 'who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us' (Heb. 6. 18).

Characteristically, in both contexts, the writer directs our attention to 'Jesus'.

(i) As far as the **race** is concerned, He is our pattern and example: 'let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking away to the pioneer and perfecter of faith, Jesus' (Heb. 12. 1-2).⁵

(ii) As far as the **hope** is concerned, He is our guarantee and assurance: 'who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us ... entering into that within the veil, where a forerunner is for us entered, Jesus' (Heb. 6. 18-20).

When running the **race**, we are invited to concentrate our gaze upon 'Jesus' as the One who carried faith through to its loftiest triumph. But, beyond the race, lies the **hope**, of which 'Jesus', who has entered into the immediate presence of God ('within the veil') as our 'forerunner', is the pledge.

EXPOSITION AND EXPLANATION

1. 'Fled for refuge'.

The writer speaks of us having 'fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us'.⁶

The word translated 'fled for refuge'⁷ occurs only twice in the New Testament. It is used (i) metaphorically here and (ii) literally in Acts 14, where we read that Paul and Barnabas 'fled' to Lystra and Derbe to escape stoning in Iconium.⁸

The following quotations capture something of the Old Testament background and use of the word:

(i) 'Like one fleeing to the sanctuary to lay hold upon the horns of the altar, or as one fleeing to the city of refuge, we lay hold upon the hope which has been set before us in Christ'.⁹

(ii) 'Possibly the author had in mind the unhappy associations of seeking sanctuary at the altar in the Old Testament narratives. Something better than the "security" from which a man might be forcibly removed at the word of a king, as in the case of Joab,¹⁰ was obviously desirable. And so the "extended" metaphor comes into play, for the hope of the altar horns, as he envisages it, reaches beyond the court of the tabernacle and temple, entering right into the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, proof against all hostile interference'.¹¹

(iii) 'The Greek word (*katapheugō*) is used in the Greek Old Testament of the slayer who killed his neighbour unawares, and who, to escape the avenger, flees for refuge to one of the cities of refuge.¹² Here it speaks of the sinner fleeing for refuge from the penalty of sin'.¹³

(iv) 'The words " fled for refuge" suggest a danger on the one side and an asylum on the other'.¹⁴

I note that, here in Hebrews 6, the stress falls not on what the Christians have 'fled' from, but what they have 'fled' to.

2. 'To lay hold on'.

One great New Testament scholar points out:

'The phrase ... seems to mark *the act of grasping and clinging* to that to which we attach ourselves, as distinguished from the act of holding firmly that which is already completely in our possession ... Thus the words imply danger and incite to effort ... The idea ... is "to lay hold on and cling to that which has been so taken".¹⁵

3. 'The hope'.

As indicated by the expression 'set before us', the writer does not use the word 'hope' here of a feeling or state of mind¹⁶—as he had earlier in the chapter: 'show the same diligence to the full assurance of *hope* unto the end'.¹⁷

Rather, pointing us to the future, he uses the word to describe *the object of our expectation*, that which is hoped for.¹⁸

It is helpful to compare the similar use made of the word by the apostle Paul. By way of example, he speaks in terms of:

'The *hope* laid up for you in heaven'¹⁹ and

'Looking for the blessed *hope* and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ'.²⁰

4. 'An anchor of the soul ... entering into that within the veil'.

The Christian's hope enters 'into that which is within the veil'. This expression draws on the typical significance of the Tabernacle, and indicates 'the Holy of Holies'.²¹ The phrase, that is, denotes the immediate presence of God.²²

It has been suggested that:

'The two phrases "*within the veil*" (Heb. 6. 19) and "*without the camp*" (Heb. 13. 13) summarize the epistle'.²³

In other sections of his epistle, the writer exhorts his readers ...

'Let us therefore come boldly unto *the throne of grace*'.²⁴

And ...

'Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into *the holiest* by the blood of Jesus ...let us draw near'.²⁵

In the light of such exhortations, we most gratefully and heartedly sing words composed by Elizabeth Dark:

Through Thy precious body broken
Inside the veil;
O what words to sinners spoken
Inside the veil.
Precious as the blood that bought us,
Perfect as the love that sought us,
Holy as *the Lamb that brought us*
Inside the veil.

And yet, strictly speaking, the phrase 'inside the veil' is used only of our 'hope' – of, that is, 'the object of our expectation' – of that which, for us, lies, as yet, in the future.

It seems clear that the original readers of the epistle were sorely tempted to apostatise and to revert to their former Judaism. They certainly had a real need for something to keep their souls secure amidst the many storms which they were facing. The writer, therefore, urged them to:

'pay much closer attention to what we have heard 'lest we *drift away* from it'.²⁶

There was, the writer knew, the constant danger that the readers should be drawn away from their Christian profession. Hence, his exhortation:

'Be not swept away²⁷ with divers and strange doctrines'.²⁸

But then, thankfully, the writer is able to insist that the believer's 'hope' functions as a secure and dependable 'anchor of the soul'.

And what peace of mind it gives you and me to know that our anchorage is in heaven. We can rest assured that this anchor will never drag!

The following has been written concerning the stability of the Christian's anchor-hope:

'In the first century, sailors would carry their ship's anchor in a small boat and deposit it on the shore so the ship would not drift away as waves beat against it.²⁹ Likewise, the hope that Jesus Christ has planted firmly in heaven should serve as an anchor for our storm-tossed souls. It should keep us from drifting away from God. Our anchor rests firmly in the Holy of Holies, in God's presence in heaven, with Jesus'.³⁰

5. 'The hope ... which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast'.

'Our anchor-hope is "sure and steadfast" ... safe and secure; fixed and firm; certain and settled'³¹ ... 'an anchor of the soul which cannot be made to totter nor break down when put under stress and strain'.³²

The 'immovability (of the Christian's hope) is vividly illustrated by the figure of an anchor. Nowhere else in the New Testament is this used in a metaphorical way. It is a rich image. 'The job of the anchor is to remain fixed in the seabed whatever the conditions at sea. Indeed, the rougher the weather the more important is the anchor for the stability and safety of the boat. It is an apt symbol of Christian hope'.³³

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that:

'The anchor was a popular symbol in the early church. At least sixty-six pictures of anchors have been found in the catacombs'.³⁴

There can be little doubt that it was the words, 'an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast', which prompted Priscilla Jane Owens to pen the chorus of her well-known hymn which begins, 'Will your anchor hold ...?':

'We have an anchor that keeps the soul,
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love'.

The revelation that our anchor-hope penetrates the inner sanctuary of heaven ('entering into that within the veil') sets the limits of the 'anchor' simile. This because:

'An anchor is cast downwards, and fixes itself in the earth at the bottom of the sea; but hope ascends upwards, and fixes itself in heaven, or in that which is therein'.³⁵

Point taken!

Yes, indeed:

'Sailors throw their anchors downwards; we throw ours upwards. Their anchor goes within the veil of the waters into the depths of the sea; ours goes within the veil of glory, into the heights of heaven, where Jesus sits at the right hand of God, "within the veil"'.³⁶

We readily praise God that our anchor does!

6. 'Within the veil, where a forerunner is for us entered, Jesus'.

It is not often that the New Testament presents the believer's hope in terms of a place. More commonly our hope is seen to centre in a person, our Lord Jesus. We read, for example:

(i) 'Father, I will that they also, whom you have given me, be with me where I am';³⁷

(ii) 'Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better';³⁸

(iii) 'So shall we ever be with the Lord'.³⁹

And we can enjoy the thought that, although ...

(i) *wise men journeyed* to see Him;⁴⁰

(ii) *devout Simon waited* to see Him;⁴¹

(iii) *rich Zacchaeus climbed* to see Him;⁴²

(iv) *villainous Herod longed* to see Him;⁴³ and

(v) *visiting Greeks pleaded* to see Him⁴⁴

... the thrilling prospect before you and me is that, one glorious day, *'we shall* see Him'.⁴⁵

Truly, 'Christ Jesus' Himself is 'our hope'.⁴⁶

Occasionally, however, the New Testament does speak (as it does here) of our hope in terms of a place. And we learn that:

(i) there is a place *'prepared'* for us;⁴⁷

(ii) there is a place *'reserved'* for us;⁴⁸ and

(iii) there is a place *'entered'* for us.⁴⁹

7. 'A forerunner ... Jesus'.

Our assurance that, one day, we shall enter into God's immediate presence rests foursquare, the writer says here, on two facts: (i) that *Jesus has already entered there*, and (ii) that He has done so *as our 'forerunner'*.

That is, *our hope* enters 'into that within the veil',⁵⁰ because *our Saviour* already has.⁵¹

(A) The word 'forerunner'.

What, then, we may well ask, is the significance of the word 'forerunner' (Greek, "*prodromos*"⁵²) when it is used of our Lord Jesus?

At its simplest level, the word signifies 'one who runs before', 'who goes in advance'.

Its use in the Greek Bible is confined to just three texts. Apart from its use here,⁵³ it is found on two occasions in the Greek Old Testament.⁵⁴ But neither of those two occurrences of the word sheds any light on its application to the person of our Lord Jesus.

(B) The secular use of the word.

'It is the secular Greek background of the word which is of the greatest interest. In secular Greek "*prodromos*" is very largely a *military* word, and is used of the troops which were sent out in advance of the main army to reconnoitre the ground and to ensure the safety of the main army which was to follow'.⁵⁵

That is, the 'forerunners' (the '*prodromoi*', the plural of '*prodromos*') were the advance guard, who often made lightning attacks on enemy forces to expose the real strength of these forces.

'Herodotus (an ancient Greek writer, geographer, and historian) uses the word of the picked cavalry of the Scythians, sent out in advance of the main army to test the strength of the Persian forces'.⁵⁶

Additionally,

'he uses it of the advance guard of the Spartans sent out to meet the invading Persians'.⁵⁷

Alexander the Great, one of the world's finest cavalry commanders, had a special corps of cavalry who acted as mounted scouts and swift-moving skirmishers. These were his '*prodromoi*',⁵⁸ and their function was to ensure the safety of the main army which followed behind.⁵⁹

The word was used also in *naval* contexts. It was employed to describe small, speedy craft sent before the main fleet. Their purpose was to strike unexpected blows at enemy ships so as to make it relatively safe for their own larger vessels to follow.⁶⁰

Additionally,

'the great harbour of Alexandria was difficult to enter. A pilot boat was sent out to sail in front of the ship entering the harbour and to lead it along the channel, and it is said that that pilot boat was called the *prodromos*. It went first to make it safe for the larger ship to follow'.⁶¹

In summary,

'the whole essence of the word "*prodromos*" ('forerunner') is that ***it describes someone whose function it is to go first in order to make it safe for others to follow***'.⁶²

I am *not* suggesting that the writer to the Hebrews had any of these specific historical occurrences in his mind.

But the fact remains that the word 'forerunner' signified someone who went in front to make it safe for others to follow.

It is possibly for this reason that (unlike preachers and commentators) the Gospel writers never employ it as a description of John the Baptist.

(C) Jesus, our 'forerunner'.

It has been well said that:

'The "*prodromoi*" were the bravest of the brave. They had to take their lives in their hands; they had, if need be, to lay down their lives to make it safe for others to follow. Jesus is the great "*prodromos*" who gave His life to make it safe for us to enter fearlessly into the presence of God'.⁶³

And, because Jesus is the 'forerunner' for His people, it can be said that:

(i) 'When He entered into the holy place, He did it not merely for Himself, but to go before, to lead and conduct the whole church into the same glory';⁶⁴

(ii) 'Within the veil, hope enters with assurance, for Jesus has "gone that we may follow too";⁶⁵ and

(iii) 'Christ Himself ... has taken their anchor right through into heaven itself and embedded it in the unmoveable ground of the presence and throne and character of God'.⁶⁶

(D) The 'forerunner' and the 'High Priest'.

Immediately following his reference to our Lord Jesus as 'a forerunner', the writer makes mention of our Lord's office as High Priest: 'within the veil, where a forerunner is for us entered, Jesus, having become a High Priest forever'.⁶⁷

But, clearly, taken in isolation, our Lord's priestly office failed to convey all that was in the author's mind.

Yes, it was wonderfully true that, as High Priest, the Lord Jesus:

(i) was able to offer the sacrifice of Himself 'to make propitiation for the sins of the people';⁶⁸

(ii) is able to intercede with God for us;⁶⁹ and

(iii) is able 'to appear in the presence of God for us'.⁷⁰

But it was *not* the role of a High Priest to lead others into God's presence.

It has been rightly pointed out that:

'The High Priest of Israel did *not* go into the most holy place as **forerunner**, but *only* as **the representative** of the people. He went into a place whither none might follow him, entering once a year, in the people's stead, not as their pioneer'.⁷¹

No Aaronic High Priest dared take anyone with him 'into that within the veil'. It was unthinkable that Aaron or any of his successors should have entered the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement at the head of a file of men!

It is clearly stated that:

'The priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the High Priest alone once every year'.⁷²

But 'Jesus', our 'forerunner', is the pledge that where *He is* now, one day *we shall be*.⁷³ Indeed, we might go so far as to echo the words of the scholar⁷⁴ who wrote:

'Christ as High Priest goes nowhere where His people cannot follow Him'.⁷⁵

Truly, we can say:

'Jesus has not only entered into God's presence *for us*—though as High Priest He did that. He has also entered into heaven *in front of us*—leading the way and guaranteeing by His own entrance that the path is clear for us to follow'.⁷⁶

(E) The 'forerunner' and the 'first fruits'.

The apostle Paul speaks of our Lord Jesus, risen from the dead, as *the 'first fruits* of those who have fallen asleep'.⁷⁷ As such, the apostle is saying, He is the guarantee of an abundant harvest. He is the guarantee, that is, that, if we die, *we too shall rise* to victory.

But the writer to the Hebrews speaks, rather, of the One who has entered heaven as *the 'forerunner'*. As such, the writer is saying, He is the guarantee that *we too shall enter* the very place where He has gone.

8. 'For us entered'.

Although the writer uses the verb 'to enter' no less than seventeen times in his epistle, he uses it only three times of the Lord Jesus.

On each of those occasions he uses it of His entry *into heaven*:

(i) Its first occurrence, 'a forerunner is for us *entered*, Jesus',⁷⁸ directs us *forward* and tells us something about the *future*.

(ii) Its second occurrence, 'by His own blood He *entered* in once into the holy place, having obtained⁷⁹ eternal redemption for us',⁸⁰ directs us *backward* and tells us something about the *past*.

(iii) Its third occurrence, 'Christ is ... *entered* ... into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us',⁸¹ directs us *upward* and tells us something about the *present*.⁸²

Rearranging these three passages *chronologically*, we learn that '*for us*':

(i) as to the *past*, the Lord Jesus once obtained eternal redemption;⁸³

(ii) as to the *present*, the Lord Jesus now appears in the presence of God;⁸⁴ and

(iii) as to the *future*, the Lord Jesus has entered heaven as our forerunner.⁸⁵

CONCLUSION

It is well known that the writer countered the splendour and impressiveness of the Jewish system by expounding those blessings and spiritual possessions which the Christian enjoys, which are 'better'.⁸⁶

But what answer, we might well ask, did he have to the challenges raised by his readers' persecution and suffering? For, make no mistake, the readers had already endured considerable reproach, affliction and loss. As the writer recognised:

'You endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods'.⁸⁷

Indeed, the original recipients of his epistle had already endured everything short of actual martyrdom. Rather ominously, he wrote:

'You have *not yet* resisted unto blood'⁸⁸

... about which statement, it has been said 'though they knew not how soon *that* might be'.⁸⁹

To no small degree, the writer's answer to their acute sufferings lies in the hope of the Christian! Here is the 'anchor' which his readers so sorely needed to keep their souls secure through all the storms which they were facing.⁹⁰

'The imagery is vivid and telling. The author paints a picture of a boat, battered by the waves but held in place by an unseen anchor that clings to the bottom of the sea ... ***Our hope is pinned on Jesus, who has entered the heavenly sanctuary.*** An anchor lies unseen at the bottom of the sea; ***our hope lies unseen in the highest heaven***'.⁹¹

I close by quoting from one of the many hymns⁹² which we owe to godly Philip Doddridge:⁹³

Jesus the Lord our souls adore,
A painful sufferer now no more;
High on His Father's throne He reigns,
O'er earth and heaven's extensive plains.

Raise, raise my soul, thy raptured sight
With sacred wonder and delight;
Jesus, thy own forerunner, see
Entered beyond the veil for thee.

Loud let the howling tempest yell,
And foaming waves to mountains swell,
No shipwreck can my vessel fear,
Since hope hath fixed its anchor here.

In summary:

in the light of 'the hope set before us',⁹⁴

'let us run with endurance the race that is set before us'!⁹⁵

Notes

¹ This document is a thoroughly 'Revised Version' of an article ('*Christ our Forerunner, Hebrews 6. 18-20*') which was published in the Precious Seed magazine in 1985 (Volume 36 Issue 3).

² 'The human name ('Jesus') of the Lord, is placed emphatically at the end of the sentence', B. F. Westcott, '*The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek Text*', page 164.

³ The Greek verb, 'πρόκειμαι'.

⁴ Compare, 'the joy that was set before ('πρόκειμαι') *Him*', Heb. 12. 2.

⁵ 'Looking away to Jesus, the *pioneer* ('ἀρχηγός') and *perfecter* ('τελειωτής') of faith', Heb. 12. 2.

⁶ Heb. 6. 19.

⁷ The Greek verb, 'καταφεύγω'. The word is an intensive form of the Greek verb 'φεύγω', which 'is more common in the New Testament and (conveys the) idea of "fleeing for safety" or "becoming safe by taking a refuge"—as elsewhere in Hebrews of the prophets who "escaped the edge of the sword" (Heb. 11. 34) and of the inability of those who refuse Jesus to "escape" punishment', J. Girdwood, '*Hebrews (The College Press NIV commentary)*', on Heb. 6. 18.

⁸ 'When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, they learned of it and *fled* to Lystra and Derbe', Acts 14. 6.

⁹ J. M. Flanigan, '*Hebrews (What the Bible Teaches)*', page 125.

¹⁰ 'Joab fled to the tabernacle of the Lord, and caught hold on the horns of the altar. And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord; and, behold, he is by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him ... So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him', 1 Kings 2. 28-29, 34.

¹¹ R. P. Gordon, '*Hebrews*', University of Sheffield, page 98.

¹² Num. 35. 25-26; Deut. 4. 42; 19. 5; Josh. 20. 9. For further details concerning 'the cities of refuge', see Num. 35. 6, 11-28; Deut. 19. 2-10; Josh. 20. 1-9. These six cities (three on each side of the Jordan) were included among, but are not to be confused with, the forty-eight Levitical cities.

¹³ K. S. Wuest, '*Hebrews in the Greek New Testament*', on Heb. 6. 18.

¹⁴ A. B. Davidson, '*The Epistle to the Hebrews*', page 127.

¹⁵ B. F. Westcott, *op. cit.*, pages 106, 164.

¹⁶ 'The word "hope" ... frequently describes the object of expectation: the thing hoped for ... This use of the word is often termed its "objective sense" in contrast to its use in describing an emotion, which is termed its "subjective sense"', the author's article '*Hope*' in the Precious Seed Publication, '*The Treasury of Bible Doctrine*', page 369.

¹⁷ Heb. 6. 11. 'Though the passage began by speaking of hope as a state of the mind (verse 11), here the hope seems rather the external object of hope'. A. B. Davidson, *op. cit.*, page 127.

With Heb. 6. 11 in mind, I cannot agree with the claim made by William Lane Craig: 'In Hebrews, the word "hope" *never* describes a subjective attitude ... but *always* denotes the objective content of hope', William L. Lane, '*Hebrews (Word Biblical Commentary)*' on Heb. 6. 18.

¹⁸ "'The hope" is here (by a figure called metonymy used for "the object of hope set before us as a prize" (compare Heb. 10. 23 RV) ... mooring us to the very throne of God'. F. W. Farrar, '*Hebrews (The Cambridge Bible)*', page 112.

¹⁹ Col. 1. 5.

²⁰ Tit. 2. 13.

²¹ Heb. 9. 3; cf. 'the Holiest of all' (or, 'the Most Holy Place'), Exod. 26. 33-34; Lev. 16. 2.

²² Our anchor is not located in the deepest sea, but in the highest heaven. Our hope, that is, is moored in the heavenly sanctuary.

"We are moored to an immoveable object"—and that immoveable object is the throne of God Himself', F. F. Bruce, *'Hebrews (NICNT)'*, page 131.

²³ W. W. Wiersbe, *'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary'*, page 819.

²⁴ Heb. 4. 16.

²⁵ Heb. 10. 19-22.

²⁶ Heb. 2. 1 ESV.

²⁷ The Greek word, *'περιφέρω'*. This Greek word 'is used in Diodorus and Plutarch of being swept away by a river in flood', Marcus Dods, *'Hebrews (The Expositor's Greek New Testament)'*, Volume IV, page 377. 'Wetstein gives examples of the word being used of objects swept out of their right course by the violence of the current', B. F. Westcott, *op. cit.*, page 436.

²⁸ Heb. 13. 9.

²⁹ Compare, 'the sailors ... had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretence of laying out anchors from the bow', Acts 27. 30.

³⁰ Thomas Constable, *'Expository Notes'*, on Heb. 6. 19.

³¹ J. M. Flanigan, *op. cit.*, page 125.

³² K. S. Wuest, *op. cit.*, on Heb. 6. 19.

³³ D. Guthrie, *'Hebrews (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries)'*, page 146.

³⁴ W. W. Wiersbe, *op. cit.*, page 819.

³⁵ John Owen, *'An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews'*, T. & T. Clark, 1862, Volume 5, page 283.

³⁶ C. H. Spurgeon, *'Expositional Commentary on Hebrews'*, on Heb. 6. 19.

³⁷ John 17. 24; cf., 'I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also', John 14. 3.

³⁸ Phil. 1. 23.

³⁹ 1 Thess. 4. 17.

⁴⁰ Matt. 2. 1-12.

⁴¹ Luke 2. 25-30.

⁴² Luke 19. 3-4.

⁴³ Luke 23. 8. Jesus refused to speak (Luke 23. 9) to the man who had violently silenced 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness', Mark 1. 3 with Mark 6. 27.

⁴⁴ John 12. 20-21.

⁴⁵ 1 John 3. 2.

⁴⁶ 1 Tim. 1. 1.

⁴⁷ John 14. 2-3.

⁴⁸ 1 Pet. 1. 4.

⁴⁹ Heb. 6. 20.

⁵⁰ Heb. 6. 19.

⁵¹ Heb. 6. 20.

⁵² Greek, 'προδρομος'.

⁵³ The corresponding verb occurs in Luke 19. 4: 'and he ran forward (*προδραμών*) before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him' and in John 20. 4: 'the other disciple ran forward (*προέδραμε*) faster than Peter, and came first to the sepulchre'.

⁵⁴ The word occurs in the following two texts:

(i) 'The days were the days of spring, the *forerunners* of the grape', Num. 13. 21 (Greek Old Testament) ... Num. 13. 20 in the English Bible.

(ii) 'The fading flower of the glorious hope on the top of the high mountain shall be as the *forerunner* (i.e. 'early') fig', Isa. 28. 4 (Greek Old Testament).

The word also occurs once in the Apocrypha: 'Nevertheless even those you spared as men, and sent wasps, *forerunners* (*προδρόμους*) of your host, to destroy them by little and little', Wisdom of Solomon 12. 8.

⁵⁵ William Barclay, '*Jesus as They Saw Him*', 1962, page 325.

⁵⁶ *Loc. cit.* The ancient source in mind reads: 'The Scythians sent an advance guard (*prodromoi*) of their best horsemen to meet Darius' army ... After this convoy was first sent on its way, the advance guard (*prodromoi*) of the Scythians found the Persians ... and having found them they camped a day's march ahead of the enemy and set about scorching the earth of all living things', Herodotus, '*The Histories*', Book 4, Chapter 121, Section 1 and Chapter 122, Section 1.

⁵⁷ Barclay, *op. cit.*, pages 325-326. The ancient source in mind reads: 'Mardonius [a Persian general under Xerxes] drew his men off, and when he had now set forth on his road there came a message that in addition to the others, an advance guard (*prodromoi*) of a thousand Lacedaemonians [i.e. Spartans] had arrived at Megara ... That was the westernmost place in Europe which this Persian army reached', Herodotus, *op. cit.*, Book 9, Chapter 14, Section 1.

⁵⁸ The ancient source in mind reads: 'He now sent scouts before the army under the command of Amyntas ... and four squadrons of what were called *Prodromoi*', Arrian, '*Anabasis of Alexander and Indica*', Book 1, Chapter 12.

⁵⁹ See Barclay, *op. cit.*, top of page 326.

⁶⁰ See Barclay, *ibid.*, bottom of page 326.

⁶¹ Barclay, *ibid.*, top of page 327.

⁶² Barclay, *ibid.*, bottom of page 327.

⁶³ Barclay, *ibid.*, the final paragraph of page 328.

⁶⁴ John Owen, *op. cit.*, page 288.

⁶⁵ J. G. Tasker, '*Dictionary of the Bible*', edited by James Hastings, Single Volume Edition, article 'Forerunner', page 269.

⁶⁶ David Gooding, '*An Unshakeable Kingdom: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*', page 88.

⁶⁷ Heb. 6. 20.

⁶⁸ Heb. 2. 17.

⁶⁹ Heb. 7. 25.

⁷⁰ Heb. 9. 24.

⁷¹ A. B. Bruce, '*The Epistle to the Hebrews*', page 234; cf. K. S. Wuest, *op. cit.*, on Heb. 6. 20.

⁷² Heb. 9. 6-7; cf. Lev. 16. 2..

⁷³ See John 14. 3.

⁷⁴ For many years, Marvin Richardson Vincent was the Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Criticism at Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

⁷⁵ Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, on Heb. 6. 20. Compare that which is said of the 144,000 victors who emerge from 'the great tribulation' and who are associated with the Lamb in His triumph: 'these are they who follow the Lamb wherever He goes', Rev. 14. 1-4.

⁷⁶ Edward Fudge, *Our Man In Heaven: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, page 32.

⁷⁷ 1 Cor. 15. 20; cf. v. 23.

⁷⁸ Heb. 6. 20.

⁷⁹ The Greek verb, 'εὐρίσκω'; 'with the suggestion of accomplishing the end which had been in view', W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, page 439.

⁸⁰ Heb. 9. 12.

⁸¹ Heb. 9. 24.

⁸² I note that the writer often employs the past, present and future tenses to describe the glories of our Lord; for example, Heb. 2. 8-9; 9. 24-28; 13. 8.

⁸³ Heb. 9. 12.

⁸⁴ Heb. 9. 24.

⁸⁵ Heb. 6. 20.

⁸⁶ For example, Heb. 7. 19, 22; 8. 6; 9. 23; 11.40.

⁸⁷ Heb. 10. 32-33.

⁸⁸ Heb. 12. 4.

⁸⁹ Matthew Henry, *Commentary of the Whole Bible*, on Heb. 12. 4.

⁹⁰ 'The souls of believers are sometimes exposed to storms; and a stress of spiritual dangers, persecutions, afflictions, temptations, fears, sin, death, and the law, do make up these storms that oftentimes beat upon them', John Owen, *op. cit.*, page 282.

⁹¹ S. J. Kistemaker, *Hebrews (Hendriksen and Kistemaker New Testament Commentary)*, on Heb. 6. 19-20.

⁹² One list of his hymns is given at https://hymnary.org/person/Doddridge_Philip. Four of his hymns with which many are familiar are: (i) 'Behold the amazing sight', (ii) 'O God of Bethel, by whose hand', (iii) 'O happy day, that fixed my choice' and (iv) 'Grace! tis a charming sound'.

⁹³ A very concise biography of Philip Doddridge can be found at <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/doddridge>. I have copied the hymn 'Jesus the Lord our souls adore' from *Hymns founded on various texts in the Holy Scriptures by the late Reverend Philip Doddridge*, number 311. The whole hymnbook can be downloaded free at ... <https://archive.org/details/hymnsfoundedonv00ortogoog/page/n236/mode/2up>.

⁹⁴ Heb. 6. 18

⁹⁵ Heb. 12. 1.