MILK AND MEAT AS IT RELATES TO MATURITY
A Critical Study of Hebrews 5:11-14

by
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Divinity in Grace Theological Seminary
May 1976
Accepted by the Faculty of Grace Theological Seminary
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Master of Divinity

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INTRODUCTION

Spiritual immaturity has plagued the church since its very inception. As early as 50 A.D. Paul warned the Corinthian believers concerning their immaturity. The centuries that followed were marked by periods of revival and renewal in the Christian church in general to help bring it to maturity. The subject of maturity must be seen as a process that takes place in the life of every believer. Every believer that is honest with himself will admit that there were periods of ups and downs in his life spiritually speaking. This is all involved in the process of maturing.

In the fall of 1968, when this writer entered Grace Bible Institute, a period of spiritual reformation began. The highlight of that beginning was a series of messages given by Dr. Myron Augsburger on the subject of maturity. Since that time this writer has been concerned about his stature of maturity. Now, several years later the writer has again been challenged with the Scriptural teaching concerning this subject. Hebrews 5:11-14 is the key passage in all of Scripture concerning immaturity. From this passage this writer will prove that milk and meat refer to the depth in which any doctrine can be studied, rather than referring to the area of doctrine being discussed. This study
will also give the Biblical definition of maturity and how milk and meat refer to that subject. This will all be accomplished by a thorough exegesis of the text as well as by a proper study of the background material related to the subject and the text.

AUTHORSHIP

The search for the author of Hebrews has been going on for centuries. No one really can find enough evidence either internally or externally as to whom it may be. Many contemporary scholars and teachers suggest that the author is unknown. But it is unknown only in the sense that the name is not mentioned anywhere in the text. The author was known to the readers because they accepted it as an authoritative letter.

The early church fathers could not agree as to the authorship. The eastern portion of the church accepted it early as being that of Paul, but even within the eastern church there were differences of opinion. Eusebius states that Clement of Alexandria claimed Paul wrote it in Hebrew and Luke translated it into Greek.¹ Many scholars suggest that this is highly unlikely because the text does not read like translated Greek.

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own opinion said, "If then, any church considers this epistle as coming from Paul, let it be commended for this, for neither did those ancient men deliver it as such without cause. But who it was that really wrote the epistle, God only knows."¹

In the western church the recognition of the book of Hebrews was not as positive. Irenaeus and Hippolytus, who were two church fathers, refused to acknowledge it as Pauline. As a result, the western church would not accept the book as being authoritative.²

Westcott suggests that we can only draw from internal evidence from the book of Hebrews itself, because there was so much disagreement between early church fathers as to who wrote it.³

A study of the epistle shows that the writer was a man of high literary ability, with a style that approached more nearly that of classical Greek than that of any other writer of the New Testament. There are some who suggest that because of what is stated in Hebrews 2:3 that the author could not have been an apostle. The verse states that the writer distinguishes himself from such as had heard

¹Ibid., p. 25.


the word of salvation directly from the Lord, and takes his place among the second generation of Christians. Consequently he puts himself with those who had acquired their knowledge of the gospel through the disciples of Christ.¹

But according to Galatians 1:12 Paul insists that he received not the gospel from men but directly from God. This objection is not insuperable and did not seem to be significant to the early fathers; but it is considered serious by many.

Some of the favorable suggestions for Paul (13:23-25; cf. 2 Th. 3:17-18) come with the association of Paul with brother Timothy. Also, the general pattern of the letter with its doctrinal portion first, followed by exhortations to duty, and the occurrence of certain distinctively Pauline concepts help to point to a Pauline authorship. One of these Pauline concepts would be the usage of the term milk as in Hebrews 5:12-14. The reference to Italy can be understood from a Pauline viewpoint (13:24). A statement of Peter has also been urged to be a reference to Hebrews (1 Pet. 1:1; 2 Pet. 3:1, 15-16). It must be admitted however, that these factors, although consistent with Paul's authorship, are by no means sufficient to settle the case for Paul.²


(1) Certain Christological elements are in agreement with his teaching, such as our Lord's nature as being in the image of God (Heb. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:4), his agency in creation (Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:16) and his obedience (Heb. 5:8; Phil. 2:8). (2) The administration of the Spirit's gifts is referred to in similar language (Heb. 2:4; 1 Cor. 12:11). (3) The new covenant has a place in both (Heb. 9:15; 2 Cor. 3:6). (4) Faith is a cardinal matter for both writers, with Abraham as a leading example of it in Old Testament story (Heb. 11:8-10,12; 17-19; Gal. 3:6-9; Rom. 4). Furthermore, Habakkuk 2:4 is quoted in Hebrews 10:38 and elsewhere only in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11. (5) The word "perfect" seems to be used similarly (Heb. 5:14; Phil. 3:15; etc.). (6) Israel in its conduct during the wilderness wanderings is used as a warning example (Heb. 3:7-11; 10:1-11). (7) The closing section (13:18-25) has several items suggestive of Paul, such as the reference to a clear conscience and the request for prayer for himself (v. 18), the allusion to God as the God of peace (v. 10; cf. 1 Th. 5:23; Rom. 15:33), the reference to Timothy (v. 23) and the closing words, "Grace be with you all," in agreement with Paul's custom.

The modern trend today is to reject the Pauline authorship for several reasons. First, the author's name is not mentioned; second, because of the Hebrews 2:3 reference, and third, the style is not exactly Pauline. Godet says concerning this third point, "It is strange that the apostle would have written in polished Greek with a classical touch to the Hebrews, while all his life he had been writing in a style abounding with rugged and barbarous Hebraisms."

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There are some other likely suggestions to be made but all have some kind of relationship with the apostle Paul resulting in Pauline characteristics. Luther was the first to suggest Apollos as the writer because he was described as eloquent (Acts 18:24), that is, either learned or facile in the use of words, or both. Luke suggests that he was "mighty in the Scriptures." The Old Testament was familiar to him and he could handle it with skill. Further, Apollos was with Paul (1 Cor. 16:12; cf. Ti. 3:13) and with those familiar with Paul's teachings (Acts 18:26). This could account for elements in the epistle that are reminiscent to the Apostle Paul. Finally, he was described as a Jew of Alexandria (Acts 18:24). This accords with the writer's consistent use of the LXX and his employment of patterns of thought readily associated with that center of education. The only fact against his case is the failure of the ancients to connect him with the Hebrews epistle.¹

Barnabas has been another suggestion. Tertullian attributed it to Barnabas with the evidence that he was a Jew, a Levite, a friend of Paul whose teaching must have resembled Paul's closely, and one who could minister to Jew and Gentile alike.²

This writer suggests that if the epistle is not Pauline that it was written by one of Paul's close associates in his ministry either shortly before Paul's death or shortly after. It may be that Paul was not well enough later in his life to write this epistle so appointed someone to write it who was close to him. The result was that the recipients of the letter knew it was from Paul indirectly. At any rate the readers knew that the letter was sent to them with apostolic authority and it was therefore accepted as Scripture.

Destination of the Epistle

This epistle raises several problems, for not only does it appear anonymously, but its destination and purpose are also obscure. The importance of careful examination of all these problems, cannot be exaggerated since they affect both the approach to the epistle as a whole as well as the understanding of the argument. Moreover, its modern relevance clearly depends on a right appreciation of its original setting.

The big question is whether or not the author was addressing a select group of people, or the Jewish church in general.

It is generally agreed that this epistle was directed to Hebrew Christians who were in danger of apostatizing. Because of persecution and discouragement and being typically
too involved in the details of Jewish ritual, they were tempted to slip back into Judaism. They had failed to keep themselves indoctrinated in the apostles' doctrine and thus as time passed they fell into a weakened state spiritually.

The epistle was addressed to Jewish Christians because as Bruce says, "if the readers were indeed Gentile, they were Gentiles so completely disguised in Jewish ideas and wearing a mask with so pronounced Jewish features that the true nationality has been successfully hidden for nineteen centuries."¹ To Gentile ears some of the expressions used in the epistle would be unintelligible; others would be offensive.

Westcott suggests that the recipients were in Jerusalem or at any rate in Palestine, "where Judaism would present itself with practical force."² T. W. Manson suggested that the readers of Hebrews were located in the Lycus Valley on the basis of a comparison between this epistle and Colossians. The special points of connection are: (1) the observance of Sabbaths and new moons, (2) the distinction of meats and drinks, (3) the relevance of the central argument of Hebrews to a condition in which Hebrew Christians desired to continue


²Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. xxxix.
the Jewish ritual system, and (4) the preoccupation of both epistles with angelic intermediaries.¹

When a detailed study is made of the epistle it will be noticed that the writer makes use of the tabernacle in his discussion rather than the temple. The tabernacle by its mobility symbolizes progress, not stagnation. Hebrews stresses the need of hearkening to the voice of God and moving forward with real progress (Heb. 5:11-6:20).

In order to understand who the readers may be we must look again at the internal evidence. There are only several hints to the problem. In Hebrews 13:24 the expression is made, "those from Italy greet you." The they of Italy could be translated to mean that they lived in Italy or outside Italy; either is acceptable so far as the sentence structure is concerned. Then it could mean that Rome was the destination or that Rome was the place from which the epistle was sent.

One thing can be said of Rome, it had a large constituency of Jewish people. This would give reason for the statements concerning persecution in 10:32-34 and 12:4, that brought about loss of life. This is explained either to be Nero's persecution in 64 A.D., or a result of the edict of Claudius of 49 A.D.

At this point we cannot dogmatically say exactly where the epistle was originally sent but that does not take away any power from the impact of its message. It is still the Word of God!

The main purpose of the book was to open up the true significance of Christ and His work, and thus to remove the scruples, hesitations and suspicions which haunted the mind of the Jewish Christian. The Jew who accepted Jesus as Christ had problems to solve and difficulties to overcome of which the Gentile knew nothing.

The writer is aiming to convince his readers that the new Christian order of things is an advance on the old Mosaic order. Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant is compared with the mediators of the old, such as prophets, angels, Moses, Joshua and Aaron, and this comparison occupies the first seven chapters. Then the writer demonstrates the superiority and finality of the covenant which Christ has mediated. He exhorts his readers to do this by holding fast their profession and to use the access to God provided for them (10:19-25). He enforces these exhortations by warnings that reflect the results of what happens to individuals who are not obedient to God and the new covenant. God disciplines those who need it so that His children are brought in line with Godly characteristics that please Him.1

CHAPTER II

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

Comparison Of Warning Passages

There are five warning passages in the book of Hebrews. Each of these warning passages is injected in the text like a parenthesis but yet is pertinent to the discussion at that point. Each one has the purpose of applying the truth under discussion to the lives of the readers. The problem of maturity falls in the third warning passage. In order to gain basic understanding of the problem of maturity in 5:11-14, this writer felt the need to briefly underscore some of the main principles of each of the warnings.

The first warning is found in Hebrews 2:1-4 and warns against drifting. This may be suggested by the word παραρέμεν, which means to drift or to slip away. Its personal subject which is the first person plural (we) indicated not that something might drift away from us but that we might drift away from something. This was a

drifting or a slipping away from and a rejection of the truth of God's revelation in Christ. The writer uses we not because he doubts anything about himself, but because he follows the very common practice of identifying himself with his readers in the exhortation.

An Old Testament analogy demonstrates the author's point. Somehow the law was given by angels. The validity of this law was fully acknowledged by every Jew and every transgression and disobedience (v. 22) brought its appropriate penalty. The present obligation that is pointed out is that of neglecting the great salvation which is in Christ. The result of allowing such a doctrine to slip and never personally allowing it to penetrate the soul is fatal; there is no escape from eternal separation from Christ. The word ἀμελήσαντες which is translated to disregard, was used of men who rudely and wilfully ignored a gracious invitation to a feast (Mt. 22:5), and of Timothy's obligation not to neglect the exercise of his spiritual gift (1 Tim. 4:14).\(^1\)

According to verse four, men are shown that they have no excuse because the gospel was proclaimed by Christ Himself, it was confirmed by the eyewitnesses, and was authenticated by God through various signs by the apostles through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This warning tells us that a terrible judgment is impending to those who reject Christ after they have been taught the truth concerning our great salvation.

\(^1\)Kent, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 49.
The second warning against disbelief is in 3:7-4:16. The exhortation of this passage is that the generation that came out of Egypt did not enter the Canaan rest because of unbelief. Because of this example of failure on the part of Israel, do not allow this same unbelief to contaminate your heart, concerning salvation rest. Israel had hardened their hearts against God because of rebellion. Unbelief is the root of rebellion against God. Samuel told Saul in 1 Samuel 15:23 that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." Israel failed to recognize this with the result that they spent forty years wandering in the wilderness.

Verses 13-15 give the key to the process of unbelief. Unbelief breeds deception (3:13) and deception breeds hardness of heart (3:13,15). The word translated unbelief is ἀπιστίας which is a negative of the verb πιστεύω. Πιστεύω means to believe or be convinced about something or to give credence to something. The negates the word and is translated to mean "one who is unfaithful," or "one who lacks belief or has the lack of belief." One of the early church fathers said that this unbelief is one of the chief sins of a Christian. This was the reason for giving such a warning to these Hebrew Christians. They lacked belief and thus failed to enter into the real rest in this life that salvation in Christ can give to us.1

1 Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, pp. 84-5, 666.
The third warning is closely related to the second in that it is concerned with the dullness of hearing. This warning is found in 5:11-6:20. The problem of immaturity will be dealt with in the main part of this study but for introductory purposes it will help us to see how this warning related to the four other warnings.

Dullness of hearing will always result in immaturity. It is with this fact in mind that the writer to the Hebrews explains in chapter six that immaturity will lead to the practice of old customs which were done away when Christ came to fulfill the law. The writer sets up a hypothetical case (6:4-20) to show to them just how ridiculous it is to always be returning to the old ways (6:1-2) that are no longer to be practiced since the church age began.¹

The fourth warning is against the disregard of doctrine concerning the habitual practice of sin (10:26-31). The mention of deserting the assembly provided the transition to this paragraph of warning, in which the consequences of rejecting the sacrifice of Christ are stated in sobering terms.

The problem was that they had received knowledge of the truth, and still sinned willfully. Ἐκούσιως γὰρ ἀμαρτανότων refers to sinning subsequent to salvation.

The use of the present tense with its emphasis upon durative action prevents us from identifying this as isolated acts of sin for which repentance may follow and forgiveness be obtained. Not only does the tense of the participle argue against this but the clear teaching of other Scriptures in the New Testament assert that Christians who sin may be restored (Gal. 6:1; 1 Jn. 2:1-2). Inasmuch as Christ's offering has been explained as being once-for-all, this willful sinning must refer to rejection of that means of expiation since it is stated in verse twenty-six that no sacrifice is available for it. The close connection to verse twenty-five reinforces the idea that deserting the faith is in view. The conjunction ὅταν in verse twenty-six indicates that what follows is a logical inference from what precedes. For a Christian Jew to abandon Christ meant he had no place to go. To abandon the Christian faith was to depart from the living God (3:12). It is apostasy from the Christian faith that our author warns against.

The fifth warning passage is in 12:18-29. In verses eighteen through twenty-one it is explained that the believer-priest does not come to God by way of the law of Mount Sinai. But each believer-priest comes by the way of Christ, verses twenty-two through twenty-four. By becoming Christians the readers had come into a new relationship with Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant. This is the only time in the New Testament that νεώς is used instead of Καίνος to
describe this covenant. *Néas* denotes what is recent or new in time, while *kaivós* describes what is new in quality or nature.¹ The choice of *véas* here emphasizes the fresh and recent character of the revelation in Christ. His blood, which validated the new covenant for all those who by faith have qualified for its cleansing effects, is speaking a message far better than the blood of Abel, which also spoke.

Verse twenty-five is the key to the warning. It states that attention must be paid to God who speaks to us through His Word because to refuse to do so will result in judgment.

**Immediate Context**

Chapter five begins a section concerning Christ's superiority to the priesthood of Aaron. This section continues through the end of chapter seven. But beginning with 5:11 the author inserts a warning concerning the immaturity of his readers. This warning concludes at the end of chapter six. Then the author returns to the subject that he left at 5:10.

Christ's priesthood had been already explained in 2:17; 3:1 and 4:14-15, so that the ground work has been laid

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for the discussion of chapters five through seven. When the Old Testament speaks about priestly mediation it is not the responsibility of angels, but of men. The function of the priests was to act on the behalf of men (5:1), specifically in regard to those matters having to do with men's relations with God. But the problem was that these priests were men who had fallen natures like everyone else. The priest himself needed a priest, with the result that he could not be perfectly sensitive to the spiritual needs of the people. Because of this need Christ came as our Great High Priest. It is explained for us in 5:5-10 how that Christ became incarnate so that men could personally identify perfectly with him in their needs. The reality of Christ's humanity is revealed in verse seven as it expresses his urgent request, and the manifestation of his grief that he experienced in Gethsemane. As a result of this our Lord proved that he was perfect in becoming our source of eternal salvation.

The fact of Christ being after the order of Melchizedek is mentioned in 5:10. This points to certain differences from the more familiar Aaronic system as is elaborated in chapter seven. It was this doctrine that these Hebrew Christians could not seem to understand. The reasons given for their lack of understanding is explained in the warning that follows.

The previous chapter was concerned with the warnings that the author gave to his readers. Each of the warnings is related to the problem of immaturity. Drifting, distrust, dullness, disregard, and dissatisfaction are all a result of what happens in the life of the believer who is immature and is seemingly unconcerned about maturity.

The subject of maturity is very extensive in the Scriptures. The word used in Hebrews 5:14 is \( \text{τελείων} \). The root of this word is \( \text{τέλος} \). There are ten main words used in the New Testament that have either \( \text{τέλος} \) or \( \text{τελέω} \), the verb form of \( \text{τέλος} \), as their root. According to Strong's Concordance some form of this word is used at least one hundred times in the New Testament.

In the early Greek world \( \text{τέλος} \) referred first of all to achievement or to the fulfillment of a certain law. It was later used to mean completion as a state of accomplishment or perfection. Philo, who was a Greek moralist writer, used the word \( \text{τέλος} \) when he said that God is "the supreme stage" of happiness. Not only does \( \text{τέλος} \) carry the idea of completion or perfection but also includes
the idea of obligation. Thus when we think of this term that we translate maturity, we must include responsibilities along with this goal of perfection that we have claimed to have reached. We are obligated to prove just how mature we really are.

In order to understand Τέλος as it is used in the New Testament it is important to keep in view the original dynamic character of this noun. The best text to bring this out is Luke 22:37, where Jesus said, "For I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished (Τέλος) in me." What Jesus said was, that what concerned him must be actually carried out and fulfilled. In Hebrews 5:1 the form Τέλος is used as an adjective in the substantive sense. The adjective Τελείος is used nineteen times in the New Testament. It is interesting to note that the King James version translates this word perfect seventeen times and, full age once in Hebrews 5:14, and men once in 1 Corinthians 14:20.

Jesus used the word in Matthew 5:48 and the King James version translated it as perfect. Jesus said, "be ye


therefore perfect, even as your father, who is in heaven is perfect." Scofield has a note on this verse that says: "the word (perfect) implies full development, growth into maturity of godliness."¹

Hendrickson in his commentary on Matthew, says that this command is in full harmony with the law. Leviticus 19:2 says, "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them, you shall be holy, for I Jehovah your God am holy." Also Deuteronomy 18:13, "you shall be perfect before Jehovah your God."² What Jesus meant here was not that it is possible to live a sinless life before death but that we are to try to attain to that command of God. Here the word perfect means brought to completion, full-grown, lacking nothing. Jesus is saying that we should set our goal on God's perfect holiness and thus not be satisfied with mediocrity or half-hearted obedience.³

Here in Matthew 5:48 the context of perfect applies to conduct in relation to men. God does not show partiality in this matter. He pours out His blessings on mankind. As God is unrestricted in His goodness, so should the disciples of Jesus be total in their love, even to their enemies. The

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³Ibid.
test to being perfect, or mature in this case, is to be perfect or mature in our ability to see men as God sees them.

In Greek thought and usage *télēcos* often means totality. This justifies the rendering of corresponding Hebrew terms by *télēcos*, primarily in Matthew. The one who does the whole will of God is undivided in obedience to God. The attitude that is behind the question of maturity is, "What lack I yet?" (Mt. 19:20), which was the question concerning maturity that the rich young ruler asked of Jesus. The rich young ruler is not undivided in relation to God. Being whole manifests itself in concrete behavior; to be undivided in relation to God includes detaching oneself from that which separates from God.

James uses *télēcos* in 1:4 when he speaks about the mature man, "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing." Here the word translated perfect is parallel to the words translated entire and lacking nothing. What the text tells us is that the man who is whole allows the whole work of endurance or patience to accomplish its purpose in his life. It is by this process that a man's faith is strengthened. Thus the man who has passed the test of sufferings and has proved his faith is strong, will be found totally obedient to God. It is this man that James tells us is mature. He has been found
faultless in the eyes of God; he is perfect, mature, entire, lacking nothing.¹

The Apostle Paul uses the word *Τέλειος* in Ephesians 4:13. Here the context explains how that God has set certain men in authority over us to teach us, such as pastors and teachers. He says that the purpose of these men is to perfect us into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. The measure of maturity is the stature of the fullness of Christ. According to this text the believer can measure his maturity and can classify himself as either being an adult or a child. The word for measure is *μέτρον*, from which we get our word *meter*, which means to measure.

With this in mind, it is important that we understand how we attain unto that perfect measure of the stature of Christ. As is explained for us in the context of verse thirteen, it is by a process of perfecting through the knowledge of the Son of God. We can measure our own maturity by how much we know about Christ and how well we put what we know to work in our lives. But we should note that even the Apostle Paul did not attain to such stature. He says in Philippians 3:12 that he has not yet attained the absolute perfection of Christ because he was not yet in Christ's presence. Paul uses the perfect tense of *Τελειώ* with the negative *οὐк* to explain that he did not consider

¹Delling, "Τέλος," p. 69.
himself to ever have attained this experiential perfection in the past nor did he consider it so now. Maturity according to Paul, was a process that was never perfectly attained to in this life but should be measured consistently by the believer to see if he has even progressed.

Paul did consider it possible to be mature to a certain extent because in verse fifteen he suggests to those who call themselves mature to behave according to that stature of maturity. Paul says we are to constantly keep in mind the measure of the stature of Christ when measuring our own maturity.

In Hebrews 5:14 the word that is used is τελείων. Here the measuring stick for maturity is whether or not you can digest solid food. The writer to the Hebrews dogmatically states that solid food belongeth to them that are of full age, or mature. The big questions are, what is meant by milk, and what is meant by solid food? The next chapter will answer these questions, but for now we can say that to be perfect as God is perfect is to be mature. A mature Christian is one who tries to attain to every aspect of godliness in Christ, and allows the character and personality of Christ to galvanize the very fabric of his soul. The mature Christian sees things from God’s perspective and does not allow the details of life to control his life style.
CHAPTER IV

WHAT ARE MILK AND MEAT AND HOW ARE THEY RELATED TO MATURITY?

Milk and Meat Defined

In Hebrews 5:11-14 we are brought face to face with several important contrasts. We see a contrast between those who are babes (v. 13) and those who are of full age (v. 14), and between those who need milk and those who subsist on strong meat (v. 12). These contrasts point up the difference between childhood and adulthood in the Christian life, between spiritual babyhood and spiritual maturity.

The word for milk in Hebrews 5:11-14 is used only five times in the Greek New Testament, and is used in a figurative or spiritual sense four out of those five times. It appears in 1 Corinthians 3:2; 9:7; Hebrews 5:12-13 and 1 Peter 2:2.¹ 1 Corinthians 9:7 is the only place that it is used literally. There it speaks about the monetary result that milk can have for those who sell it.² In these other


texts the term is used as a measure of progress in the process of spiritual maturity.

It is highly probable that this word that the writer uses comes from the Old Testament figurative use of the term. The prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 28 had been rebuking the people of Samaria for their immoral living. In 28:9 the people sneer at the prophet Isaiah, that intolerable moralist, by saying, "whom then would he teach knowledge? And to whom make preaching intelligible? To those weaned from milk? To those removed from the breast? For precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, a little here, a little there!" They sneered at the prophet. After all they are of full age, and free. He does not need to teach them knowledge. Are they like little children just weaned and who must be tutored? The problem was exactly that. They were immature and needed to be taught like babies on milk.¹

In 1 Corinthians 3:2 Paul uses the word milk in reference to the Corinthians who were in a state of carnality. This is different in a sense from Hebrews five because there the mention of a carnal state is not brought out, although carnality is the result of immaturity. They are carnal or fleshly because of conditions mentioned in the context. The term carnal is seen here to be a description of the spiritual

estate of a Christian who is dominated by the flesh rather than by the Spirit of God. They are babes in Christ, not because of immaturity but because of carnality.\(^1\) Paul does not mention time here because the Corinthians may not have been Christians as long as the Hebrews had. Paul founded that church in A.D. 50 or 52 on his second missionary journey, according to Acts 18. He wrote 1 Corinthians in A.D. 55 which is only three or four years later. Paul did not expect maturity but he did expect them to live as spiritual, not fleshly or carnal.\(^2\)

Peter uses the word in 1 Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby." The context speaks about ungodly attitudes that a Christian is not to exercise, such as malice, hypocrisy, envy and slander (v. 1). In the next verse he speaks about the "sincere milk of the word." Here milk is not contrasted with meat or solid food but stands alone to refer to the Word of God in general. Milk here has reference to an appetite for the Word. The result of this appetite is that the sin mentioned in verse one will be put out of one's life. A healthy infant is a hungry infant. A spiritually healthy Christian


is a hungry Christian. A lack of desire for the Word is a sign of poor spiritual health.¹

The word for meat or solid food in Hebrews 5:11-14 is used sixteen times in the New Testament. This word (τροφή) is used here alone in a figurative or spiritual sense. The others refer to physical sustenance received from actual food that nourishes the body.² τροφή can be easily translated as food in general. In his notes on Matthew 6:25, Albert Barnes says:

This word means food in general, as it does commonly in the Bible. We confine it now to animal food, or the food of animals. When the Bible was translated, it denoted all kinds of food, and is so used in the old English writers. It is one of the words which has changed its meaning since the translation of the Bible was made.³

In the King James version τροφή is always translated meat, but in the New Scofield Edition of the King James version it has been changed in every case to be translated food.⁴

²Englishman’s Greek Concordance.
⁴The New Scofield Reference Bible.
There is another word used in the Greek New Testament that is translated as meat or food. It is the word ἄρπα. This word is used sixteen times in the Greek New Testament and two of those times is used in a figurative sense. One has a very interesting setting which is found in John 4:31-34. The context finds Jesus dealing with the Samaritan woman. The disciples were with Jesus and prior to this had slipped away for a short while to buy some food (4:8). When they returned Jesus was asked by the disciples to eat with them. Then Jesus said: "I have meat to eat that you know not of." The disciples thought He spoke of physical food. Jesus answers that in verse thirty-four by saying: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Here the meat or nourishment of speaking to this woman about the everlasting water meant more to him than real food. Obedience was more important to Jesus than eating physical nourishing food no matter how hungry he was.

The other text is 1 Corinthians 3:2. This text is relevant to Hebrews 5 because it is used in a context where Paul is speaking about the carnality of the Corinthian believers as was discussed earlier.

The big question that needs to be confronted is what the author has in mind when he speaks of milk and meat. There are some writers who have suggested that milk denotes "the more simple and elementary doctrines of Christianity such as the doctrine of the new birth, of repentance and
faith, while meat denoted the more sublime and mysterious doctrines of Christianity."¹ If this were so, the division between milk and meat is on the basis of the doctrinal areas being considered. We might explain it this way. Some, such as Albert Barnes, would refer to truths concerning salvation as milk doctrine but to truth about the Christian life or prophecy or the second coming of Christ as meat doctrine. And they would say if you are interested only in the simple things of salvation, you are existing on milk, but if you have an interest in the deeper life, or in prophecy, or in the coming of the Lord, you have gone beyond milk to meat. In other words the division between milk and meat is on the basis of the doctrinal areas being considered.

This writer contends that the distinction between milk and meat refers not to the area of Bible doctrine but rather the depth to which the child of God can go in any area of Bible doctrine. There are milk truths in the doctrine of salvation, and there are meat truths in that same doctrine. There are milk truths concerning the doctrine of future things; there are also meat doctrines concerning future things. The difference then, is not the area of truth being given attention but the depth in that truth to which one can go. We need to screen from our minds the fallacy that there are certain doctrines that, by themselves, belong to babyhood,

¹Barnes, Notes on Hebrews, p. 693.
and other doctrines that are reserved for those who are mature. The difference is in depth not in breadth. 

**Milk and Immaturity**

The concept of milk explains itself in Hebrews 5:11-14. Within this text there are three characterizations of those who are on a milk diet. The first characteristic is dullness of hearing, verse eleven. The problem was that they could not understand the doctrines of the incarnation and deity of Christ and how Christ was superior to Melchizedek. This is brought out in verse eleven where the writer says, "of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered." The of whom refers to what had just been stated concerning Christ and Melchizedek. These things were hard to teach or hard to interpret, not because the author was unable to teach, but because of their condition. The verb explains their condition. Πεγόνατε is the perfect tense of the word γίνομαι which means to become or come to be. The significance of the perfect tense is that this tense explains that sometime since salvation they became dull. They were not always in this state but became this way.¹ This explains to us that it is possible for a Christian to degenerate into a moron status of behavior spiritually.

The word for dull is \( \nu \theta \rho \omicron \omicron \). It only appears here and in Hebrews 6:12. It comes from the negative \( \nu \eta \), not, and \( \vartheta \varepsilon \omicron \nu \), to push. Hence hard to push or move which later came to mean dull or sluggish.\(^1\) Another author suggests it means, "difficult to move."\(^2\) In other words these readers were difficult to get moving in spiritual things because of their poor sense of hearing. The word hearing suggests that not only were they not listening with their physical ears, but also were not listening with their spiritual ears in applying truth to their lives.\(^3\) To the devout Jew, who was very conscious of his relationship to God, this would be a very insulting commentary concerning his character.

The word \( \lambda \kappa o\alpha i \)\( \delta \)\( s \) is the plural of \( \lambda \kappa o\omicron \) which is expressed several ways in the Greek New Testament. The first meaning is that of the thing heard, in John 12:38, "That the saying of Isaiah, the prophet, might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?". The second is that of the sense of hearing, in 1 Corinthians 12:17, "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If


\(^3\) Ibid.
the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?". The third is in Mark 7:35 and has reference to the ear, "And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly." Here in Hebrews 5 the ear stands for spiritual perception of truth. It is not a natural inherent and pardonable weakness of which the writer complains, it is rather a culpable incapacity resulting from past neglect of opportunities.\footnote{Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," Vol. IV, p. 291.} When a sinner believes on Christ and is born again, he is given a new capacity not only to receive the revelation which God has made of Himself, but also to understand that revelation, and to assimilate that revelation and make it his own truth. This is where the readers of this epistle had failed in this first characterization.

The second characteristic of one who is on milk is that of dependence upon someone else to teach them spiritual truths, verse twelve. Here it explains, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not solid food."

One of the key words of this verse is **κρόνον**. The root of this word is **κρόνος** which is translated time. Another word that is translated time, in the New Testament is **καιρός**. **Καιρός** is used about eighty-five
times\textsuperscript{1} and is always translated to mean a season of time or a quality of time.\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Χρόνος} is used about fifty times\textsuperscript{3} and is always translated to mean a definite time period.\textsuperscript{4} The significance of \textit{Χρόνος} here in Hebrews 5 is that this word refers to a definite duration of time.

As we evaluate this closely it is possible to see exactly how much time our author is speaking about, if Rome is the place from which this letter was sent. From this we can draw several conclusions as to how many years our author had given them to mature. First we need to establish the time of Christ's death which was about 30 A.D. Second, we need to know about how long it took the gospel to penetrate Rome. No one knows how long that may have been because nothing is mentioned about who started the church in Rome. But we do know that Paul wrote his letter to the Romans in about 56 A.D. and that Nero burned Rome in 64 A.D. in hatred against the Christians. We can gather from this that the gospel was well established there by 50 A.D. The third point is that Hebrews was written approximately 68 A.D. The writer thus had given these readers at least twenty years if not more to be mature spiritually. The rebuke given by the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1}Englishman's Greek Concordance, p. 398.
\item \textsuperscript{2}Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, p. 395.
\item \textsuperscript{3}Englishman's Greek Concordance, p. 804.
\item \textsuperscript{4}Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, p. 896.
\end{itemize}
author was very fair and desperately needed when one considers all the time they had to become well established in the faith. Ten years should have been plenty of time to mature and be able to be teachers, let alone twenty.

The text continues to explain that these believers were also very limited in their knowledge of the oracles of God. They had to be re-taught the "rudiments of the oracles of God." Romans 3:2 helps us to understand what the oracles of God are. This text explains that even the Jews are guilty before God and need redemption through Christ, because "unto them were committed the oracles of God." These oracles of God are the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The word λόγος was used both in classical and Hellenistic Greek for an oracle, or a divine utterance, which helps substantiate the fact that this must refer to the Old Testament Scriptures.¹

The phrase, "τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς," is translated literally, the rudiments of the beginning. The word rudiments (στοιχεῖα) is used by Paul several times, (Gal. 4:3,9; Col. 2:8,20), and refers to the A.B.C.'s of divine revelation. The primary sense is that of the letters of the Greek alphabet.² When this is applied to the oracles of God, it would mean that these A.B.C.'s were elementary truths that should have been understood by the readers.

²Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 107.
The verb used in verse twelve which is translated have become is the same perfect tense as in verse eleven. This also substantiates the fact that they at one time did not need the A.B.C.'s but have degenerated to the point where they need it once again.

The third characteristic of one who is on milk is that he is "unskilful in the word of righteousness," (v. 13). This verse begins with the use of a present tense participle, μετέχων, which is translated, is partaking or is using. The significance of the tense is that it emphasizes a durative action which means that they who are on a continuous milk diet will be characterized by unskilfulness in the word of righteousness.

There is discrepancy among scholars as to the meaning of the word of righteousness. Westcott understands it as the teaching which deals with the one source of righteousness in Christ, and the means by which man is enabled to be made partaker of it. He also says that the absence of the definite article shows that the main conception of the phrase lies in the character and not in the concrete realization of divine revelation. It is not the word of righteousness, the full exposition of the Christian faith, but teaching such as belongs to it.¹

It seems to this writer that the context of verse fourteen clearly states that discernment of right and wrong

¹Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 136.
is involved, and that this should be the normal experience of believers who have grown spiritually. Thus, the word of righteousness refers to God's revelation about righteousness of life which is expected in every believer. The Scripture gives no comfort whatever to the person whose claims to having trusted Christ have not resulted in a life of right living.

It should be pointed out that a noun does not always need a definite article in order to be translated definite. Grammar tells us that the absence of the article places stress upon the qualitative aspect of the noun rather than its mere identity. As this rule is applied here the phrase would emphasize conduct in relation to righteousness. The suckling has nothing to do with teaching righteous conduct; he cannot act for himself, he cannot discern good and evil. Righteousness is not within the suckling's horizon. He cannot as yet be taught it, still less can he be a teacher of it, because he is an infant, a babe. An infant in real life cannot speak and so the illustration denotes here that one who is a spiritual infant cannot speak either. He takes the same rank in spiritual understanding that the infant does in worldly.

This illustration is enforced when a study is made of the word unskillful. This is the only place in the New Testament where this word is used.

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Testament that ἀπειρός is used. Here it can be translated, unacquainted with or unaccustomed to. The immature Christian is unacquainted with the teaching about righteousness. The Apostle Paul's teaching was that those things that were taught to you were to be committed to faithful men that they could teach others also (2 Tim. 2:1-2). In this situation the people had not allowed even milk truth to be applied and confirmed in their souls. The result was that they were unacquainted with these things and unable to teach anyone else.

Up to this point we have considered three characteristics concerning those who are on a milk diet. The first characteristic was dullness of hearing, the second characteristic was that of dependence upon other teachers, and the third was unskillfulness in the word of righteousness.

J. Dwight Pentecost concludes with this paragraph concerning the infant milk fed believer:

The Spirit of God has been given to every child of God. The indwelling Spirit has come to assume, among other ministries, the office of teacher. The Holy Spirit in the child of God meets his need to understand divine revelation and to appropriate divine truth. But if the child of God does not depend upon the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit of God and cannot, apart from dependence upon some other teacher, discover the truths of Scripture, then he is manifesting immaturity, or babyhood, in Christ. The fact that the Christians to whom Paul wrote needed to be taught emphasized their immaturity. It would be perfectly normal, and to be anticipated, that a newborn child of God would depend upon someone to nurture him in the truths of Scripture, just as it is natural for the newborn baby to depend upon another for his nourishment. That is why the New Testament gives abundant instruction concerning those who are pastors, or teachers, of the Word.
of God. They are to feed the babes. That was the com-
mission given to Peter, "Feed my lambs . . . feed my 
sheep." The Word of God anticipates that need. But 
if one has been in the family of God for a long period 
of time and still must depend wholly upon someone else, 
and cannot, through his own study of the Word, feed 
his own soul, that one, regardless of how long he has 
been a believer, is manifesting signs of spiritual 
babyhood.1

Meat and Maturity

With these things in mind concerning the believer 
who is immature we will now turn the discussion to consider 
the believer who is mature. According to this text this 
person is one who has a different diet. It does not only 
include milk but also meat. Meat as was earlier defined 
refers to the depth that the believer has gone in his 
ability to study the Word of God. The meat appetite will 
require long hard hours of concentrated effort in studying 
and applying God's truth.

The word translated meat in the King James version 
in Hebrews 5 is more literally translated solid food. It 
is so because two words appear in the text instead of one, 
\( \tau \rho \sigma \phi \nu \) and \( \beta \rho \varepsilon \mu \alpha \) are the only two words translated 
meat in the King James version. Later translators chose 
the word food to better relate the significance of these 
words as was earlier discussed by this writer. Here the 
word \( \tau \rho \sigma \phi \nu \) is linked with \( \sigma \tau e \rho e \alpha s \) which means solid,

1Pentecost, Pattern for Maturity, p. 271.
firm, or hard. This is the only place in the New Testament that these two words appear together.¹ The verb form of στερεάω is στερεόω which means to make firm, or to make strong.²

The significance of στερεάω τροφή is that the translation, strong food, or solid food, carries with it the implication from στερεάω that this food makes one strong. In other words solid food gives us the growth to be classified as mature.

There are three characteristics of the believer who is on a diet of solid food. These characteristics are found in Hebrews 5:12 and 14. The first characteristic is that of the capability to be teachers. In this verse solid food is contrasted with milk. These are figurative expressions based on academic tradition of Hellenistic Judaism which contains the elements of the wisdom of Stoic pedagogy. Stoic pedagogy distinguishes between the intellectual and philosophical food of adults, and the playful element of instructing children. In the Christian community the source of nourishment is basically the same for all ages, namely, revelation. This revelation is instruction given at different levels of maturity.³

¹Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, p. 774.
²Ibid.
This capability to be teachers is based upon the knowledge of the Word of God that one has appropriated so he can teach someone else. This knowledge is not measured by the number of sermons one has heard, the number of notes one has taken, nor by the number of books and tapes one may have filed away. Knowledge does no one any good until all those facts can be taught verbally and experientially to someone else. Such knowledge and ability to share, answers the deficiency described as dullness of hearing in verse eleven.

Teachers in the New Testament were not a separate order of officials, but a class of men endowed with a particular gift, which they exercised in congregations already established. A comparison of Acts 13:1 with Romans 12:7; 2 Timothy 1:11, 4:3 and James 3:1 will support this concept. Here in Hebrews 5 the reference to teachers is more general rather than specific. The context is not concerned with the gift of teaching as much as the maturity required in order to be capable of teaching.

The doctrine of Christian teachers in the New Testament came to be fixed and authoritative. It was called "the teaching" (1 Tim. 6:1-2; 2 Jn. 9) or the "sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3). Paul warns the Romans against departing from "the doctrine which ye learned," (Rom. 16:17). Later Timothy is called a good minister because he had been "nourished in the words of the faith, and of good doctrine," (1 Tim. 4:6)
The general character of the content of teaching may be inferred from the fact that it is described as the "word of wisdom" and as the "word of knowledge," (1 Cor. 12:8). The former consisted in an acquaintance with "God's wisdom" (1 Cor. 1:21), or the divine plan of redemption, of which Paul speaks elsewhere as "the mystery of God," (1 Cor. 2:1). It is described as the knowledge of elementary Christian truths in the simplest and most direct form. On the other hand, knowledge came by intuition and consisted of insight into truth through spiritual illumination. The first enabled the teacher to explain the truth and the latter qualified him to interpret it.¹

The continuity of the New Testament with the Old Testament must not be overlooked. The teacher began with such truths as were common to Judaism and Christianity. The fundamental doctrine of the existence, unity and holiness of God he would learn from the Old Testament. He appropriated the Jewish doctrines as to the creation of the world and the nature and sinfulness of man. He insisted on the primary demands of the moral law. This is probably what was included in the first principles of the oracles of God.

The second characteristic of the one who is on solid food is that he is skillful in the word of righteousness.

To paraphrase the thought, the apostle is saying that the mature man is the man who can put to use the truth that he knows.

Earlier we defined unskillful to mean unacquainted with or unaccustomed to something. This was a characteristic of the immature Christian. The mature Christian is just the opposite. He is skillful, acquainted and accustomed to the word of righteousness. The word of righteousness was also defined as God’s revelation about righteousness as it is related to right living. At any rate it must deal with concepts concerning righteousness. In its general use, righteousness represents any conformity to a standard whether that standard has to do with the inner character of a person, or the objective standard of accepted law. Thayer suggests the definition, “the state of him who is such as he ought to be.” In the wide sense, it refers to that which is upright or virtuous, displaying integrity, purity of life, and correctness in feeling and action. With reference to man it has to do with man’s conformity to God’s holiness. The mature man concerns himself with making God’s righteousness his life. He is not one who is shoddy or mediocre in using his God given abilities to help others mature also. Because the revelation of God’s righteousness is the main concern of

the Bible it is also wise to note that the mature man is a man who is skillful in God's Word. He is able to go to the Word of God and discern the will of God and the purpose of God as the truth of Scripture is applied to the situations that he faces. The immature man is dependent upon other teachers whereas the mature man is independent and is able to allow God's Word to do its work in his life.

The third characteristic of one who is on a solid food diet is the most exciting of them all. This characteristic is spiritual discernment. "But solid food belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (v. 14).

There are several words that help to define this ability of discernment. The phrase can literally be read, "who have their senses trained by practice." The first word from this phrase in the Greek text is practice. It is \(\varepsilon\varepsilon\iota\varepsilon\nu\), from which we get the word, exercise. It speaks of a skill that is acquired through exercise.\(^1\) This is the only place the word appears in the New Testament and is significant because it helps bring out the truth that being a mature man of the Word of God requires exercise or practice in order to develop that skill. The context implies that just as a man cannot sit down and play a musical instrument without previous exercise or practice neither can the man of

\(^1\)Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 275.
God expect to be able to be a teacher of God's Word without previous exercise or practice in the Word.

The word also implies the idea of a habit. The mature man of God has as his habit or practice the consistent study of the Word of God. Animals by nature have instinct. A baby calf by instinct knows where the milk is, the mother does not need to show him. But man by nature is God-conscious and thus when it comes to spiritual things he does not instinctively desire milk or meat. He must develop that desire by practice and exercise in order to form a habit.

The second word in this phrase is σθενάρια and refers to the organ of sense. Through practice the senses are trained. The word sense refers to the faculty or ability to make moral decisions. The phrase in verse fourteen can be literally read "to have one's faculties or senses trained by practice to distinguish between good and evil." As this is applied to the context we see that those on meat have their senses trained well while those who have retrogressed to milk fail in the test of well-trained senses.

Westcott suggests that these senses refer to "the different organs of spiritual perception," trained, in virtue of their moral state gained by long experience. In other

1Ibid., p. 24.
2Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 137.
words he is suggesting that there are different organs or senses of the soul that exercise perception into different areas of the spiritual things of God. This shows us how God has so wonderfully made us with a capacity of God-consciousness that no other creature of earth can ever experience.

The third word in this phrase is \( \gamma \varepsilon \gamma \mu \nu \alpha \sigma \mu \varepsilon \nu \alpha \), which is translated literally having been trained. It comes from the word \( \gamma \mu \nu \alpha \beta \omega \) which means "to train oneself by something."\(^1\) It is from this word that we get gymnasium, or gymnastic which literally means to train by practice or exercise. It also carries very strongly the idea of repetition. It is only by constant physical repetition of exercise that the body can be trained to respond correctly. Likewise it is only by constant spiritual repetition of exercise in the Word of God that our spiritual senses can be trained to respond correctly. In verse fourteen this word is used as a participle and appears in the perfect tense which substantiates the fact that this kind of exercise was carried on in the past up through the present time by those who are on a meat diet of the Word. It is by consistent repetition, practice and exercise that a habit can be formed in order to train the senses to respond correctly to God.

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\(^1\)Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 166.
There is another participle immediately following ἐγεμνασμένα which is ἔχοντων in the present tense which is translated having. The phrase literally would translate "having (present tense) their senses, having been exercised (perfect tense)." The first having in the present tense emphasizes a durative action of exercising their senses continuously or with repetition. The second having in the perfect tense emphasizes a past action with present results. So as far as time is concerned we have both the past and present included with a durative sense of time in the present. The reason for all this action in this verse is expressed in the prepositional phrase "for discernment both of good and of evil."

The word for discernment is διάκρισιν. It suggests the ability of distinguishing or differentiation of good and evil. It is used in 1 Corinthians 12:10 where a distinguishing or differentiation between spirits is emphasized. It is used in extra-biblical material by Clement of one who is "skillful in the interpretation of discourse."¹

There is much disagreement among writers as to what the author had in mind in this phrase. About half of the writers that this writer read, suggest that the good and evil refers not to a discernment between good and evil moral practice but between good and evil doctrine. They do not

¹Ibid., p. 184.
give any proof as to why they hold to this other than from what several suggested was contextual evidence. They probably were influenced by the interpretation that Clement gave the word for discernment or distinguish, mentioned in the previous paragraph as being skillful in the interpretation of discourse.

This writer contends that both ideas are included in this context. The apostle was not only concerned about right and wrong doctrine but also right and wrong moral living. This can be shown to us by the phrase given in verse thirteen concerning the one who is on milk. He was unskillful in the word of righteousness, implying he was unskillful in his ability to live right as well. Morality is also suggested in the word senses. This word literally means "the faculties or senses to make moral decisions."\(^1\)

At the same time we should be reminded that the author was concerned about right doctrine because in the fourth warning passage (10:26-31) the author warns about apostatizing.

This discernment was the result of good practice, exercise and repetition in the things of God so that the senses of the soul would be well trained to be able to choose between good and false doctrine, truth and error, the good and the bad that can influence a life.

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 24.
Westcott says,

The discernment of good and evil is here regarded in relation to the proper food of the soul, the discrimination of that which contributes to its due strengthening. The mature Christian has already gained the power which he can at once apply, as the occasion arises. This power comes through the discipline of use which shapes a stable character.  

The man who has a consistent meat diet is characterized by these three things: (1) He has the capability to be a teacher, (v. 12). (2) He is skillful in the Word of righteousness, (v. 13). (3) He has a fantastic ability of discernment, (v. 14).

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1 Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 138.
CONCLUSION

In this study we have proven that milk and meat do not refer to the area of doctrine studied but the depth into which any doctrine can be studied. By careful study of this passage it has been proved that milk doctrine refers to those simple statements of truth of any doctrine that any babe in Christ can understand. Meat or solid food doctrine refers to the more complex truths that can be found in any doctrine of the Word of God.

This passage also showed that the man of milk is characterized by being dull of hearing, incapable of teaching, and unskillful in his ability to live right. On the other hand, it characterizes the man of meat or solid food by being capable of teaching what he has learned, by the ability of right living, and he is endowed with an exceptional ability in discernment between good and evil.

Thus we are challenged to become mature believers by studying the deeper truths of the doctrines God has given in His Word.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


