

# Hebrews 5:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

## Analysis

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By now they should be teachers, yet they need someone to teach them 'basic principles' (Greek 'stoicheia' - elementary truths). The milk/solid food metaphor indicates spiritual immaturity. Reformed theology emphasizes progressive sanctification - believers should grow in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18). Stagnation indicates spiritual illness, as saving faith produces growth. The 'oracles of God' likely refers to OT Scriptures pointing to Christ.

## Historical Context

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The extended time since conversion ('for the time') suggests these were not new believers but those who should have matured. Their failure to grow was culpable negligence, not innocent ignorance.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. What evidence of spiritual growth or stagnation do you see in your life?
2. How can the church better equip believers to move from milk to solid food?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ	γὰρ	όφείλοντες	εῖναι	διδάσκαλοι	διὰ	τὸν	χρόνον
and	For	ye ought	to be	teachers	when for	G3588	the time
G2532	G1063	G3784	G1511	G1320	G1223		G5550
πάλιν	χρείαν	ἔχοντες	τοῦ	διδάσκειν	ὑμᾶς	τινὰ	τὰ
again	need	have	G3588	that one teach	you	which	G3588
G3825	G5532	G2192		G1321	G5209	G5101	
στοιχεῖα	τῆς	ἀρχῆς	τῶν	λογίων	τοῦ	θεοῦ	καὶ
principles	G3588	be the first	G3588	of the oracles	G3588	of God	and
G4747		G746		G3051		G2316	G2532
γεγόνατε	χρείαν	ἔχοντες	γάλακτος	καὶ	οὐ	στερεᾶς	
are become such as	need	have	of milk	and	not	of strong	
G1096	G5532	G2192	G1051	G2532	G3756	G4731	
τροφῆς							
meat							
G5160							

## Additional Cross-References

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**Hebrews 6:1** (References God): Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

**Hebrews 5:13** (Parallel theme): For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

**1 Peter 2:2** (Parallel theme): As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

**Colossians 3:16** (Parallel theme): Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

**2 Samuel 16:23** (References God): And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

**Ezra 7:10** (Parallel theme): For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

**Isaiah 55:1** (Parallel theme): Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

**Acts 7:38** (Parallel theme): This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

**Psalms 34:11** (Parallel theme): Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

**1 Corinthians 14:19** (Parallel theme): Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.