

HEBREWS 6:13-20
Anchor for the Soul

What's My Line:

A descendent of Shem, one of the 3 sons of Noah

Grew up in an ancient city of Mesopotamia where he and his family were idol worshippers.

Years later he became known as "the father of all who believe"

His given name meant "exalted father" but God changed his name to "the father of many"

He was married and had one child with his wife when they were both well into their golden years.

He was promised descendants as numerous as the stars, yet he only saw the one son.

Easy to guess, right? He is important to the author of this letter because he is mentioned by name 10 times. - ABRAHAM

His life embodied virtues that these Hebrew Christians are called on to imitate; virtues that they needed to experience - faith, patience, and hope.

HEBREWS 6

11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, "I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU." 15 And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise.

16 For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. 17 In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, 18 so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Section 1 Example of Abraham

-CONVINCED OF better things for them

-Be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises

PROXIMITY PRINCIPLE- (Ken Coleman) EXPANDED ILLUSTRATION IN HEB 11.

First, the author refers to Abraham in Gen 22. He is a person and story that would be very familiar to them as descendants of Abraham Heb 2:16

Abraham is commended for his patience and he obtained the promise (though not fully Heb 11:10)

The operative words are faith and patience.

Abraham displayed a great deal of patience. He got a promise of an heir and it took 25 YEARS to happen.

God's timetable is not the same as ours.

Adam and Eve got the promise in Gen 3:15 of a seed who would crush the head of the serpent- thousands of years later Jesus arrives.

Abraham did not have perfect faith, but he had persevering faith.
In Gen 22 after years of waiting for an heir, this is what God says to him...(paraphrase)

“Now Abraham, now that you've been waiting decades to finally have a boy who's going to be your heir, I want you to take him to a mountain in the land of Moriah and offer him as a sacrifice to Me.”

And when he gets to the top of that mountain, as he lifts the knife to plunge it into the body of his son, the angel of the Lord calls out and says, “Abraham, do not touch that boy!” And a ram caught in the thicket is substituted for Isaac and Isaac is spared. And in the very wake of that substitution of that provision of God, the angel of the Lord says again the words of God, “Abraham, I swear I will multiply you and bless you. I promise. I take an oath. I swear My oath to you that I will fulfill the promises that I've made to you.”

And the author of Hebrews wants us to remember that and realize that the way that God assured Abraham was in the context of that miraculous deliverance, swearing an oath to him.

When the author of Hebrews refers to the promise that God made to Abraham, he cites a portion of Gen 22:17. Here is a fuller context..

15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 16 and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

** sideroad...**THE THEME OF “PROMISE” IN THE BIBLE** (Dr. Walter Kaiser)

This thread or theme of “Promise” is one of the most comprehensive concepts in the old and new testaments. While it is somewhat limited, it is also useful in seeing the continuity between the OT AND NT.

Beginning with a victorious “seed” in Gen 3:15 the promise motif builds throughout scripture. The idea is expressed through different words in the OT, such as “word”, “oath”, “blessing”, and “seed”. In the NT we primarily get the term “promise.” Both OT and NT depict the promise through a common formula: “I will be your God, you shall be my people, and I will dwell in the midst of you.”

(Rev 21:3)

This overarching promise has three elements:

- 1) A “seed” or a line of heirs culminating in a chief heir par excellence, which is promised to Eve, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- 2) The land of Canaan, which is given to the Patriarchs and their descendants forever as an inheritance
- 3) That the Patriarchs are the recipients of these favors so that “all the families of the earth might be blessed” by this heritage- this is what is intended by Paul in Gal 3:8 when he refers to the “gospel”. It is this last element that is attached to Gen 22:17,18 which is cited in Hebrews 6.

The “promise” referred to in Heb 6 is not simply a here and now promise, but in v. 11-12 he urges them to hold fast so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end.

Throughout the letter he has been presenting the “heavenly hope” as the fullness of our hope and rest. Like Abraham, we share in the promise of an eternal future in a city whose builder and maker is God – Heb 11:10. Abraham was looking for more than a promised seed for this earthly life.

Section 2 – Principle of an Oath v. 16-18

God's promises are guaranteed by God's own trustworthy character! So, the promise of salvation through Christ is a secure and trustworthy hope.

-Men swear by something greater than themselves. Higher accountability. People tend to lie but will do so less when there is a higher authority in play.

-God can only swear by Himself

-God wants to show the heirs of promise His intentions so that we may have strong encouragement. He swears an oath, not because He might otherwise lie, but for us.

So, God stoops to swear an oath to Abraham in order that he can be assured of the promise. And what the author of Hebrews is saying is this - Christian, you understand that it's not just to Abraham that God has sworn an oath; it is to you.

If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are, the apostle Paul says, Galatians chapter 3, you are, the apostle Peter says, Acts chapter 2, you are, Luke says, Luke 22, Acts chapter 1, you are the heir of God's promise to Abraham. So that oath that God swore to Abraham, guess what, believer? He swore it to you. God stooped to take an oath because He was so concerned that you would be able to believe His promise, that you would be assured of His love and of His purposes, that you would have a hope that could not be taken away from you in the midst of all the hard things that you face in your life. God swore an oath to you.

And the author of Hebrews is reminding you of that event in Genesis 22 because God has sworn an oath to you. That's how much God wants you to have assurance. He's willing to take an oath.

Two foundations of hope – His promise and His oath. God moves our trust from ourselves to get 'er done, from circumstances, to Himself.

Our lives often feel like they are on shifting sand, but with God we have a firm foundation. The sand of time may be sinking, but God's promises are firm and fixed.

The author refers to Abraham so look at what God did with him – call Gen 12, Covenant -15; Sign-17; Oath – Gen 22. Over and over from Gen to Revelation we hear the promise – “I will be your God, you will be my people and I will dwell in your midst.”

-DO WE VALUE THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT IS PROMISED?

We don't have a promise for a heritage like Abraham, but we share in the promise of an eternal future in a city whose builder and maker is God – Heb 11:10

Here in Heb 6 God sets an anchor for our souls.

This passage has little encouragement for us if we are merely living for the here and now. If what we're really after can be found in this life, then the promises of eternity don't stir our souls. They mean little to us.

This begs the question, “Do we really live in light of eternity?”

It is so easy to be caught up in the issues of life- hard and fun- that we don't give much thought to the reality of eternity. The original audience, and MANY people around the world today, live with a keen awareness of the brevity of life.

Eternity does hit us as we experience the death of a loved one or a serious illness, but in our culture, we are prone to avoid thinking about it.

EX: author of “Living in Sin” Jason Micheli – Making Marriage work between I Do and Death - diagnosed with a rare incurable cancer he began to look at life and his marriage differently. Staring at death will do that, but our culture is designed so that we won't think about death, except when politicians say, “If we follow their policies, people will die.”

In the face of eternity, God keeps His promises: v. 17 – the heirs of the promise includes “all the nations blessed by the seed of Abraham”.

Section 3 – The anchor of hope v.19-20

-The hope is an anchor – don't undervalue it. When everything else is changing and tottering, this eternal hope in Christ is our anchor. WHAT IS YOUR ANCHOR?

The anchor is someone we meet before it is something we use for stability in our souls.

The author's perspective is focused on the future grace in store for those who believe. He knows how hard it is to hold fast in a world of sinking sand, so he is constantly encouraging the hearers, and us, to hold on to Christ. He is the anchor.

There is a mixed metaphor in this passage – an anchor and the holy of holies behind the veil.

Jesus is our anchor into the heavens, not into the sea.

He is the forerunner who fixes us to an immovable object – the throne of God, where the son is seated.

Usually we would think that if we hold on to the anchor we'll sink, but in the case of Christ, we will rise to be with him before the throne of God.

Some of us may be temperamentally inclined to struggle with an assurance of our hope or is it just the condition of your life that's making it really hard right now for you to believe? Either case, or both, if you will trust His oath, His covenant, and blood, you will find that they will support you in the overwhelming flood and you will find that they are a foundation that cannot be moved.

Are you struggling to trust God in your life?

We walk daily with the same acts of faith and trust in Christ that we've done all along.

We must continue to cast ourselves on Jesus. He doesn't mind. In fact, the GOOD NEWS, is that He came for that purpose.

If He is good for the big things like eternity, can't we trust Him with the other stuff?

We are called to trust in an anchor that we cannot see. We walk by faith, not by sight. But it is not a blind faith. It is not a faith with no foundation in real life – we have the history of God's dealings with His people and ultimately the life and work of Jesus – his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension.

But we do take these things by faith and not by sight on a daily basis?

Wouldn't it be great to live the Christian life on the crest of some profound spiritual experience?

You've likely had one or more, if you are a believer. They are real and are an encouragement to our hearts, but they aren't permanent. So, we walk by faith in the nature and character of God – His promises and His oath.

Bob Kauflin - Anchor Beyond The Veil

My hope is not in this life, Nor this passing World's reward,
But my hope is in a life That will never fade;

My hope is in You, Jesus, Risen King ascended Lord,
Even death itself could not Hold You in the grave

And Jesus You've gone Before us
And Your faithful ness Never fails
In the darkness You reassure us,
You're our anchor Beyond the veil

And when the storm Is raging And I'm battered by The waves,
You're my refuge And my strength I shall not be moved;
And when the night Surrounds me And I cannot see my way,
You will guide me in Your Righteousness And Your truth

And though we can – not See You We await that glorious hour
When this earthly veil Is finally stripped away;
And when we hear That trumpet And You come With awe some pow'r,
We shall gaze upon The radiance Of Your face

And Jesus You've gone
Before us
And Your faithful ness
Never fails
In the darkness
You reassure us,
You're our anchor
Beyond the veil

Is He Your Anchor?

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