

Hebrews 6:13-15 Commentary

PREVIOUS

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST
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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Swindoll's Chart](#), [Interesting Pictorial Chart of Hebrews](#), [Another Chart](#)

The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18				EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST
DOCTRINE				DUTY
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD				

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

THE FIVE WARNING PASSAGES IN HEBREWS

Heb 2:1-4 (notes)

Heb 3:7-4:13 (notes)

Heb 5:11-6:12 (notes)

Heb 10:26-31 (notes)

Heb 12:14-29 (notes)

Hebrews 6:13 For when **God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, (NASB: Lockman)**

Greek: [To gar Abraam epaggeilamenos \(AMPMSN\) o theos, epei kat' oudenos eichen \(3SIAI\) meizonos omosai, \(AAN\) omosen \(3SAAI\) kath' heautou.](#)

Amplified: For when God made [His] promise to Abraham, He swore by Himself, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: For example, there was God's promise to Abraham. Since there was no one greater to swear by, God took an oath in his own name, saying: ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: When God made his promise to Abraham he swore by himself, for there was no one greater by whom he could swear, ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: For when to Abraham God made promise, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by himself

Young's Literal: For to Abraham God, having made promise, seeing He was able to swear by no greater, did swear by Himself,

FOR WHEN GOD MADE THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM SINCE HE COULD SWEAR BY NO ONE GREATER: To gar Abraam epaggeilamenos (AMPMSN) o theos epei kat oudenos eichen (3SIAI) meizonos omosai (AAN):

- Heb 6:16, 17, 18. Ge 22:15, 16, 17, 18. Ezek 32:13. Ps 105:9, 10. Is 45:23. Je 22:5. 49:13. Micah 7:20. Lk 1:73, 74
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

For or **because** (gar) is a **term of explanation** = writer now goes on to support and explain what it means to be imitators of those who thru faith and patience inherit the promises. What promises? The precious and magnificent promises of 2 Peter 1:4 (note). God wants His beloved to have strong encouragement.

Made a promise (1861) ([epaggello](#) from **epi** = an intensifier of the verb + **aggello** = to tell, declare) means to proclaim, promise, declare, announce, claim (profess).

Here is the corresponding noun **Promise** (1860) ([epaggelia/epangelia](#) from **epí** = intensifies verbal meaning + **aggéllo** = to tell, declare) originally referred to an announcement or declaration (especially of a favorable message) but in later Greek came to mean a declaration to do something with the implication of obligation to carry out what is stated (thus a promise or pledge). **Epaggelia** was primarily a legal term denoting summons, a promise to do or give something, but in the NT speaks primarily of the promises of God. **Epaggelia** is used in Hebrews 14 times in 13 verses (27.4% of all 51 NT uses) (See **notes** Hebrews 4:1, Hebrews 6:12, 6:15, 6:17, Hebrews 7:6, Hebrews 8:6, Hebrews 9:15, Hebrews 10:36, Hebrews 11:9, 11:13, 11:17, 11:33, 11:39)

TDNT summarizes this word group **epaggello/epaggelia** writing that it has the following nuances...

- The first sense is "to indicate," "declare," "declaration," "report."
- When the state declares something, it becomes an "order."
- In law we find the senses "accusation" and "delivery of a judgment."

d. We then find the senses "to declare an achievement," "to show one's mastery," "to profess a subject."

e. Another sense is "to offer," "to promise," "to vow." As regards promises, tension between word and deed is felt, so that promises are often seen as worthless.

f. A special type of promise is the "promise of money," and in this sense the idea of a "subscription" or "donation" arises (state liturgies, gifts to rulers at their accession, priests promising gifts in support of their candidature).

g. In the Hellenistic period we also find a sacral use for the "proclamation" of a festival. Among all the instances, only one example has been found for the promise of a deity. ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., and Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

Examples of God swearing - Genesis 22:16 (when he did not withhold Isaac his only son) Micah 7:20 (Israel was unfaithful and did not "deserve" to receive His promises, but He had sworn to the patriarchs - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob - that He would keep the Abrahamic Covenant - to wit, Israel would be restored to the promised land, a promise yet to be fulfilled in the **Millennium**); Lk 1:73 (Zechariah father of John the Baptist filled with the Spirit expressed his faith in God's promise to Abraham to keep His covenant) Isaiah 45:23, Jer 22:5, 49:13)

God's integrity and faithfulness are the real theme of Heb 6:13-20. Abraham is simply an example of those who trust God's faithfulness to His Word, His Promises - this truth alone makes our trust of any value.

The Hebrew readers who recognized the truth of the gospel, who had seen miracles performed by the apostles, were still afraid to let go of the familiar old ways and rituals of Judaism. They were hesitant to believe completely in the Messiah. As the writer has exhorted (see note Hebrews 6:11) they needed to remain diligent. And so the writer spurs them on to faith (cp faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of Christ - see note Romans 10:17) and patience by emphasizing the immutable promise given to their forefather Abraham. Thus the writer addresses both man's part in laying hold of the hope set before him and the Godward side of the unchangeableness of God and His sure promises.

Swear ([3660](#)) (**omnuo**) means to affirm the truth of a statement by calling on a divine being to execute sanctions against a person if the statement in question is not true (in the case of a deity taking an oath, his divine being is regarded as validating the statement). In this case God's Own Divine being is regarded as validating the statement.

Omnuo is repeated in this middle section of Hebrews...

Hebrews 3:11 (note) As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"

Hebrews 3:18 (note) And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?

Hebrews 4:3 (note) For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "As I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter My rest," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.

Hebrews 6:13 (note) For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,

Hebrews 6:16 (note) For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute.

Hebrews 7:21 (note) (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, "The Lord has sworn And will not change His mind, 'Thou art a priest forever' ")

This verb is used in the Septuagint (LXX) of God swearing to keep His covenant to bring Israel into the land (Dt 1:8, 35, 2:14, 4:21, 31, 6:10, 18, 23, 7:8, 12, 13, 8:1, 18, etc > 30x in Deut.)

F B Hole ([Biographical Note](#)) writes that...

We need to have a hope which is resting upon a very well established basis if we are to hold it with full assurance. It is this thought which leads to verses 13-18. Abraham stands before us as a great example not only of faith but of hope also. It was when he had offered up Isaac, as recorded in Genesis 22:1ff, that the promise of blessing was given, which culminated in "the Seed," which is Christ, according to Gal 3:16. That great promise had behind it not only the authority which always accompanies the bare Word of God, but also the added sanction of His solemn Oath.

How beautiful is this glimpse which we have of God, stooping to consider the feebleness and infirmities which

mark even the best of His creatures! Here are Abraham and the later heirs of the promises. How easily their faith may waver! How full of uncertainties is the world in which they find themselves! Then God will condescend to their weakness and reinforce His Word by His Oath, saying, "By Myself have I sworn, saith the LORD." ([Hebrews Commentary Notes](#))

HE SWORE BY HIMSELF: omosen (3SAAI) kat heautou

- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

By (kata) Himself - This special use of **kata** with the verb of swearing gives resultant meaning "he swore by Himself"

This concept of God binding Himself to His Word by His eternal Person is seen in the OT...

Genesis 22:16 and said, "By Myself I have sworn (LXX = omnūo), declares the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son,

Isaiah 45:23 "I have sworn (LXX = omnūo) by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.

The writer is appealing to his Jewish readers on "turf" that many would have been familiar with because a popular saying (and one true to Scripture) in the first century Jewish synagogues was that God had confirmed His promise to Abraham with an **oath** (Ge 22:16). In response to Abraham's obedient faith, God reaffirmed His pledge to bless Abraham, reinforced by a promissory oath in which he named himself as the guarantor of his word. (Ge 22:16-18)

Note the remarkable concentration of **forensic** (legal or used in court for act of judging) language in Hebrews 6:13-18. The distinctive character of the vocabulary finds ample illustration in the Septuagint (LXX) and in secular Greek contracts preserved among the papyri.

Hebrews 6:13-20 An Anchor for Your Soul

Sermon by Steven Cole

Fishermen tend to be incurable optimists. A guy asked his neighbor how the fishing was going. "Better," he said. "Last week I went out for four hours and didn't catch a thing. Yesterday, I got the same result in only three hours" (Reader's Digest [8/87], p. 80).

Many confuse optimism and biblical hope. Biblical hope is optimistic, but it differs greatly from worldly optimism or positive thinking. Biblical hope is an optimism based on certainty and truth, not upon a cheery disposition that looks on the bright side. If hope rests on mere fantasy, it is worthless. To be valid, hope must be based on truth and certainty. Since our God is the God of hope (see note Romans 15:13), we who represent Him to this hopeless world must be people of hope-not mere optimists, but people filled with hope because of the certainty of God's promises in Christ.

The author of Hebrews was writing to people who were facing hardship and persecution because of their Christian faith. A few were tempted to abandon Christ and return to Judaism. He is urging them to persevere by putting their focus on the superiority of Jesus Christ and the salvation that He has provided. He is trying to instill in them biblical hope-not just a positive, cheerful disposition-but a steady attitude of joy based on the promises of God, who cannot lie.

He uses a metaphor used only here in the Bible, of an anchor. But instead of going down into the ocean, this anchor goes up into the heavens, behind the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us. He has become our high priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek. Thus he brings his discussion back to where he left off before his lengthy exhortation (see note Hebrews 5:10); in the next chapter he will develop this theme. But here he is saying, The certain hope of our future salvation is an anchor to steady our souls while we wait on God in present storms.

The main reason a ship needs an anchor is to ride out storms so that it is not blown off course or into the rocks or reefs nearby.

Even in a safe harbor, a ship needs an anchor so that it will not drift, hit something, and sink. Whether in the storms of life or in the harbor during the calm times of life, we all need an anchor for our souls so that we do not destroy our lives.

Verse 19 begins, “which we have” (Greek text). Some understand the antecedent to be “strong encouragement”; others think that it is “hope.” Still others think that since Jesus Himself is our hope, that He is our anchor. All of these views are somewhat overlapping and complementary. God’s sure promises give us strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. In the final sense, we do not hope in hope itself, but in Christ, and all that is promised in Him. But it seems to me that the anchor is the certain hope of salvation that God has provided in Christ. In the storms of life, if we take hold of the hope of His salvation, we will have the steadiness for our souls that we need to endure.

1. The hope of our future salvation is certain.

The author hammers home the absolute certainty of our salvation. He uses Abraham as an example of one who through faith and patience inherited the promises (see note Hebrews 6:12). He goes back to Genesis 22:16-17, where after Abraham displayed his faith in God by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, God swore by Himself surely to bless Abraham and to multiply his descendants. Then the author applies this to the heirs of the promise, namely, believers in Christ. He gives four reasons why our hope of salvation in Christ is certain:

A. Our hope of future salvation is certain because God’s promises have never failed any that trusted in them.

Abraham is “Exhibit A” of a man who trusted God against all odds and found Him to be faithful. Paul called Abraham “the father of all who believe,” and added, “In hope against hope he believed...” (see notes Romans 4:11; 4:18).

Abraham’s life is the story of God initiating and promising, with Abraham responding in faith. God appeared to Abraham while he was still named Abram, living in Ur of the Chaldees. He commanded Abram to leave his relatives and that city and go to a place that God would show him (Acts 7:2, 3). Abram’s obedience was not easy. In that day, you didn’t just pack up a U-Haul and head out on the interstate, keeping in touch with the folks back home through frequent emails and phone calls. To move hundreds of miles away meant permanent separation from family and friends. There were unknown hardships to be encountered. Would the people of the new land be hostile or friendly? Could you provide adequately for your family there? What about learning the new language? There weren’t real estate offices to help you get resettled into a new home. Where would you live?

But Abram obeyed. God had promised to multiply Abram, making him the father of a multitude. His name, Abram, meant, “exalted father,” but his wife Sarah was barren. They were getting up in years, but had no children in spite of God’s promise. Can you imagine the encounters he had as he and Sarah moved into Canaan? This 75-year-old man says, “Hello, my name is Abram [exalted father].” The Canaanite responds, “Nice to meet you. How many children do you have?” “None yet.” Right!

But then God added insult to injury. When Abram was 99, the Lord appeared to him, reaffirmed His promise to multiply him exceedingly, and then changed his name to Abraham, meaning “father of a multitude”! He has been waiting for 24 years since God first promised to give him a son. He still has no children, except for Ishmael through Hagar. But now he tells everyone that God has given him a new name, “father of a multitude”! It would be like a bald man named Harry, and God says, “Let’s change your name to Bushy-haired Harry”!

When Abraham died at 175, he had fathered several nations through Ishmael’s descendants and through the sons that he had with Keturah (Gen. 25:1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16). But as far as sons through Isaac, Abraham died with twin, 15-year-old grandsons, Esau and Jacob. He owned no real estate in Canaan, except for the cave that he bought to bury Sarah. But he died in faith, “looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (see note Hebrews 11:10). Though Abraham didn’t see it, history has validated God’s promise, that his descendants, both physically and spiritually (Gal. 3:7), are as many as the stars of heaven, and as innumerable as the sand of the seashore (see note Hebrews 11:12).

The lesson for us is: There has never been anyone who trusted in God’s promises and was finally disappointed. God may delay the visible answers to His promises, because He always answers in His time, not in ours. We may not see the answer until we’re in heaven. But He is utterly trustworthy to keep His Word. If He has promised eternal salvation to the one who has faith in Jesus, you can count on it as absolutely true!

B. Our hope of future salvation is certain because God’s purpose is unchangeable.

The Greek word translated “**desiring**” (see note Hebrews 6:17) is cognate with the noun “purpose” (same verse), and points to “the deliberate exercise of volition” (G. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* [Charles Scribner’s Sons], p. 84). It means that God purposed to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, which here refers specifically to installing His Son as a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 6:20 - note). This points to His purpose to be glorified by sending His Son to save a people, “the heirs of the promise,” for His name.

It is inconceivable that the Sovereign God would purpose to send His Son to redeem a people for His glory, but then leave the fulfillment of that purpose up to the so-called “free will” of rebellious sinners who are, to use Charles Wesley’s phrase, “fast bound in

sin and nature's night" (Play the hymn ["And Can It Be That I Should Gain?"](#))! If God had left salvation up to the will of fallen sinners, none would be saved, because there is none who seeks for God (see notes Romans 3:10-18).

God calls His people here **"heirs of the promise."** Heirs do not choose to be heirs. If we could choose to be heirs, we'd all be waiting in line for the fortunes of the Kennedy's or the Rockefeller's. Heirs are chosen by the one who owns the estate. It is his prerogative to choose one person and overlook another, because it is his estate and he has the right to dispense it as he chooses.

Yet many today deny that right to Almighty God and say that He must give everyone an equal chance to choose to be His heirs! They stand the biblical doctrine of election on its head, saying that He foresaw that we would choose Him, then He put us on the list! But that view robs God of His sovereignty. His sovereignty means that He chooses the heirs. He chose Abram from everyone else in Ur, and excluded Abram's immediate family members. He rejected Ishmael and chose Isaac. He rejected Esau and chose Jacob. Such choices are God's right as the Sovereign Lord. And if you protest,

"That's not fair," you need to read Romans 9:11-23 (notes), where Paul anticipates and answers that response by saying, in effect, "How dare you even raise the question that God is unfair! He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. And you have no right to answer back to God!"

In Isaiah 46:9-11, God says,

For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, "My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure"; calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.

In the context, God is talking about raising up the pagan king, Cyrus, to accomplish God's purpose. God is not bound by the will of proud man to do what He purposes to do. He has purposed to give an elect people to His Son (John 6:37-40), and He will accomplish His purpose! Denying God's sovereign election makes assurance of salvation shaky. If it's up to man's will, "lots of luck!" But if our hope of salvation is based on God's purpose to the heirs of His promise, then your hope is certain and secure!

C. Our hope of future salvation is certain because God's person is incapable of lying.

The author states the obvious, "it is impossible for God to lie" (see note Hebrews 6:18). If He lied, He would deny His very nature as the God of truth, whose very word is truth (Isaiah. 65:16; John 14:6; 17:17). If God has said that Jesus has made purification for our sins (Hebrews 1:3-note), and that He has entered within the veil as our forerunner as a high priest after the order of Melchizedek (see note Hebrews 6:20), then it is true and we dare not question Him!

We're all prone to bend the truth when it suits our purposes. We don't want to look bad, and so we tell "little white lies." We "overlook" reporting things on our income tax forms that would cost us more in taxes. We withhold the truth when it is to our advantage to keep things under cover. But in spite of our propensity toward compromising the truth, we get offended if anyone challenges the truthfulness of our word, and we would be outraged if they directly called us liars!

But here is the God for whom it is impossible to lie. He has never lied in all of eternity. When we doubt His promises, and especially His promise of salvation to the one who believes in Jesus Christ, we are in effect calling Him a liar! 1 John 5:10 says,

The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son.

Do you believe God's promise concerning His Son, or are you calling God a liar? Our hope of future salvation is certain because God's person is incapable of lying.

So the author has hit three hammer blows to show that the hope of our future salvation is certain: God's promises have never failed; His purpose is unchangeable; and His person is incapable of lying. As if that were not enough, he adds a fourth:

D. Our hope of future salvation is certain because God's pledge backs up His promise.

God's bare word should be sufficient, since His word is al-ways true. But when God says it with an oath or pledge, He wants us to know that it is a done deal! To show the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, God "interposed with an oath" (see note Hebrews 6:17). Because of the weakness of our flesh, God condescends to add the oath to His word to give us double assurance.

In Hebrews 6:15 (note), the author uses a human illustration. When men are having a dispute, and they swear under penalty of perjury to do something, that ends the matter. They must do what they have sworn to do, or they will pay a stiff penalty. But when the God who cannot lie interposes with an oath or pledge, how much more certain is His word! You've got two unchangeable things:

God's promise and His oath. These two things make our hope of future salvation both "sure and steadfast" (Heb 6:19).

Why is this so important? What difference does it make in our day to day lives?

2. The hope of our future salvation is an anchor to steady our souls in present trials.

There is a three-fold progression of thought here:

A. Future salvation is secure for all that have taken refuge in Christ.

The author identifies those to whom he is writing, along with himself, as "we who have taken refuge" (see note Hebrews 6:18). He does not specify what they have taken refuge from, but his Hebrew readers would have immediately thought of the cities of refuge in the Old Testament, where the man guilty of manslaughter could flee from the avenger of blood (Num. 35:11, 12). These cities were a spiritual picture of the refuge that God has provided for sinners to flee for protection from the wrath to come.

In Hebrews 6:20 (note) of our text, the author mentions Jesus as our high priest, within the veil, where God's holy presence meant instant death to any sinner who dared to go there. Although people's eyes are blinded so that they do not see their sin and God's holiness, every sinner needs a refuge from God's coming judgment. Jesus Christ is the refuge that God has provided. The question is, have you fled to that refuge? Have you trusted in Christ alone to save you from your sins? If your hope is in your good works, you are not saved. Your hope of salvation must be in Christ alone.

B. Having taken refuge in Christ, we now must take hold of the hope of our future salvation.

Our salvation is secure because it rests on the promise and unchangeable purpose of God. It is not our feeble grasp of Him, but His firm hold on us, that secures our hope of heaven. But you may wonder, "Why then does the writer encourage us to take hold of the hope set before us? If it depends totally on God and His unchangeable purpose, why do we have to hope in Him?"

John Piper ([Hope Anchored in Heaven](#)) answers this way:

What Christ bought for us when he died was not the freedom from having to hold fast but the enabling power to hold fast. What he bought was not the nullification of our wills as though we didn't have to hold fast, but the empowering of our wills because we want to hold fast. What he bought was not the canceling of the commandment to hold fast but the fulfillment of the commandment to hold fast.

He goes on to cite Paul's statement in Philippians 3:12 (note),

I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

Christ Jesus had laid hold of Paul by His sovereign grace. As a result, Paul pressed on to lay hold of the hope of all that his salvation promised.

This means that we must battle discouragement by taking hold by faith of God's promise to save all who take refuge in Christ. God's promise and His oath are two strong motivating forces to encourage us to grab onto the hope set before us and don't let go. Then that hope becomes an anchor for our souls.

C. The hope of our future salvation anchors us to wait on God in present storms.

The main reason you need an anchor is to keep from drifting into things that would destroy you, especially during storms. Abraham had his storms as he waited on God. In two different moments of weakness, he thought that powerful men would take his wife from him, which would have nullified God's promise of a son through her. And so he lied that she was his sister. At another moment of despair, he went in to Sarah's maid, Hagar, and conceived Ishmael. But in spite of these failures, "in hope against hope, he believed" (Romans 4:18-note), until God fulfilled the promise.

We face numerous types of storms that threaten to rob us of hope in Christ. There are storms of false doctrine that can blow us off course (Ephesians 4:14-note). We must weather them by holding firmly to the promise of salvation in Christ alone by grace alone through faith alone.

There will be storms of doubt, when we question the Christian faith, or perhaps even the existence of God. We can weather them by coming back to the truth of the resurrection of Jesus, which is the bedrock of the entire faith (see note 1 Corinthians 15:1-19). If He is not risen, our faith is in vain. But if He is risen, then our future salvation is certain and our hope can rest confidently in Him.

There will be storms of difficult trials, where we wonder why God is allowing them and question whether He loves us. We weather them by remembering that God, who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, has promised to bring us through every conceivable difficulty to ultimate glorification (see notes Romans 8:28-39).

There may be storms of defeat, where we fall into sin and dishonor our Lord and Savior. We can weather even these storms if we realize that our High Priest is praying for us, that our faith may not fail, and that by His grace, we can be restored (Luke 22:32).

Conclusion

I read of a Christian man who made a trip to Russia in 1993. He felt conspicuous walking down the streets of Moscow and could not figure out why. He wanted to blend in, but it was obvious that people knew he was not Russian. He asked the group of Russian educators with whom he was working whether it was his American clothes: jeans and a Chicago Bulls shirt. "No, it's not your clothes," they replied.

"What is it, then?" he asked.

They huddled together and talked for several minutes. Then one, speaking for the group, answered politely, "It is your face."

"My face!" he laughed. "How does my face look different?"

They talked again and then one of the teachers quietly said, "You have hope." (World Magazine [3/6/99], p. 37.)

As Christians living in a world that Paul describes as "having no hope and without God" (see note Ephesians 2:12), we should stand out as people of hope. The certain hope of our future salvation is the anchor that God has given to us to steady our souls, even in times of storm.

A cheerful older Christian was asked the secret of his triumphant attitude. He said, "I've read the last book of the Bible, so I know how the story ends. I'm on the winning side!" We have a high priest within the veil. He has promised to save all who take refuge in Him. Let's take hold of our certain hope in Jesus!

Discussion Questions

1. How can a believer keep trusting in God when He delays answers to prayers for years? Why does God make us wait?
2. Why is the doctrine of election essential for having proper assurance of salvation?
3. How do we balance the tension between "examine yourself to see if you are in the faith" (2 Cor. 13:5) and "take hold of the hope set before us" (Heb. 6:18)?
4. How should we "process" discouragement? What steps should we take to recover our hope in God? (See Psalms 42 & 43.) ([Hebrews 6:13-20 An Anchor for Your Soul](#))

Hebrews 6:14 [saying](#), "I WILL [SURELY](#) * [BLESS](#) YOU AND I WILL [SURELY](#) [MULTIPLY](#) YOU." (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [legon](#) (PAPMSN) [Ei men eulogon](#) (PAPMSN) [eulogeso](#) (1SFAI) [se kai plethunon](#) (PAPMSN) [plethuno](#) (1SFAI) [se](#)

Amplified: Saying, Blessing I certainly will bless you and multiplying I will multiply you. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: "I will certainly bless you richly, and I will multiply your descendants into countless millions." [NLT - Tyndale House](#)

Phillips: and he said: 'Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you'. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: saying, Blessing, I will bless you, and multiplying, I will multiply you

Young's Literal: saying, 'Blessing indeed I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee'

SAYING SURELY I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU: [legon](#) (PAPMSN) [ei men eulogon](#) (PAPMSN) [eulogeso](#) (1SFAI) [se](#)

- Ge 22:17. Lk 1:73. Ge 2:16. Ge 17:2
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

KJV is more literal than most English translations

Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

In Hebrew the repetition of a verb is meant to give force to what is said, to express the certainty and the greatness of what is asserted.

Surely (ei men) truly, certainly, indeed, verily, certainly. This particle serves as markers of considerable emphasis. This combination of particles has the force of intensifying the juridical solemnity of an action. This particle is unique to Hebrews in NT, but is common in Lxx (Numbers 14:23, 28, 35; Isaiah 45:23; Ezekiel 33:27; 34:8) and papyri as a particle of solemn affirmation or corroboration of an oath. Some have suggested it is best translated "yes".

Bless you - Literally "Continually Blessing indeed I will bless thee, and continually multiplying I will multiply thee" This repetition in Greek of eulogeo (and plethuno), first as a present active participle and second as future active infinitive is a common practice in the LXX to translate the Hebrew inf. absolute, giving emphasis and certainty to the expression--"I shall certainly bless you". "Blessing I will bless," and "multiplying I will multiply," are Hebraisms, repetition being to emphasize the truth stated.

Bless (2127) (**eulogeo** from **eu** = good + **lógos** = word) when used by men toward men it means to speak well of with praise and thanksgiving (English "eulogize"). It means to invoke God's blessing upon them. **Eulogeo** is in the **present tense**.

Don't miss this - God wants His beloved to have a full assurance of hope until the end and He spares no words to emphasize His commitment to that end. How unworthy we are to be deserving of such lavish grace. This truth should humble us and create profoundly grateful, thankful hearts.

AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU: kai plethunon (PAPMSN) plethuno (1SFAI) se

- Ge 48:4. Ex 32:13. Dt 1:10. Ne 9:23
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

God made an irrevocable covenant with Abraham declaring...

And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly. (**Genesis 17:2**)

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. (**Genesis 22:17**)

therefore, also, there was born of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE.
(See notes **Hebrews 11:12**)

Multiply (4129) (**plethuno** from **plethos** = fullness from **pletho** = to fill) means to be made full, grow, increase or be multiplied. In the active sense it means to cause to increase, to cause to become greater in number, to multiply (increase in number especially greatly)

Wuest - The words "blessing I will bless," and "multiplying I will multiply," are Hebraisms, the repetition emphasizing the idea. ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

Hebrews 6:15 And **so**, having **patiently waited**, he **obtained** the **promise**. (**NASB: Lockman**)

Greek: [kai houtos makrothumesas](#) (**AAPMSN**) [epetuchen](#) (**3SAAI**) [tes epaggelias](#).

Amplified: And so it was that he [Abraham], having waited long and endured patiently, realized and obtained [in the birth of Isaac as a pledge of what was to come] what God had promised him. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: Then Abraham waited patiently, and he received what God had promised. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: And then Abraham, after patient endurance, found the promise true. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: and thus, having patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

Young's Literal: and so, having patiently endured, he did obtain the promise;

AND SO, HAVING PATIENTLY WAITED: kai houtos (in this way) makrothumesas (AAPMSN):

- Heb 6:12. Ge 12:2, 3. 15:2-6. 17:16, 17. 21:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Ex 1:7. Hab 2:2, 3. Ro 4:17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. Heb 7:6. Ro 4:13
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And so having patiently waited - Abraham is the prototype who they were to imitate as he had just written exhorting them not to...

be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (see note Hebrews 6:12)

Paul records the example of Abraham's faith writing that "without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform. (See **notes** Romans 4:19. 4:20; 4:21)

Wuest - Patiently" refers back to the word "patience" in verse 12. The word "obtained" is the translation of epitugchano which means "to light or hit upon a person or thing, to attain to, obtain." The word here indicates that Abraham did not personally receive the entire fulfilment of the promise, but only the germ of that fulfilment. The promise was that Abraham was to become a great nation, and that the earth was to be blessed through Abraham. Isaac, born miraculously, was a partial fulfilment of the promise, and the Lord Jesus as Saviour and coming Messiah fulfils all that God promised Abraham ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

Having patiently waited (3114) (**makrothumeo** from **makros** = long, distant, far off, large + **thumos** = temper, passion, emotion or **thumoomai** = to be furious or burn with intense anger) (See study of related word **makrothumia**) literally describes prolonged restraint of **thumos**, of emotion, anger or agitation. It means one's temper is long (as opposed to "short tempered") and does not give way to a short or quick temper toward those who fail. It describes holding out of the mind for a long time before it gives room to action or passion. The picture of this word is that of a person in whom it takes a long time before fuming and breaking into flames!

Trench adds that this word refers to one who has the power to avenge himself and yet refrains from exercising this power.

Makrothumeo describes manifesting a state of emotional calm or quietness in the face of provocation, misfortune or unfavorable circumstances. Love never says, "I've had enough." It suffers indefinitely. It is longsuffering and continues in spite of conduct likely to quench it. This continuance often, but not always, shows itself in restraining anger.

Makrothumeo describes especially patience towards **people** who act unjustly toward us. Another verb meaning to be patient is **hupomeno** which describes patience under **circumstances**, although there can be some overlap for circumstances often involve people. In other words the emphasis of makrothumeo is not so much a call to patience with circumstances as to patience with people. The action indicated by both verbs is essential to development of our Christian character, for patience with people is just as important as patience with circumstances. Patience is the righteous standard God expects all believers to conform to no matter what person he places (or allows) into your life or whatever trying circumstance you might face.

NIDNTT has an interesting note on the noun **makrothymia**...

Positively it expresses persistence, or an unswerving willingness to await events rather than trying to force them. Although perseverance and persistence were familiar to the Stoics, and were, in fact, highly valued by them, makrothymia does not figure in their vocabulary. This was possibly because of the widespread though erroneous belief that its basic idea was one of passive resignation. It must be said that in ancient Greece makrothymia is concerned primarily with the moulding of a man's own character; it is not a virtue exercised towards one's fellows. ([Brown, Colin, Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986. Zondervan](#))

Vine has this note on **makrothumeo** writing that "Longsuffering is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate nor promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger and is associated with mercy, and is used of God, Exodus 34:6, LXX; Romans 2:4 (note); 1 Peter 3:20 (note). ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

Richards adds that the word group makrothumeo and makrothumia...

focuses our attention on restraint: that capacity for self-control despite circumstances that might arouse the passions or cause agitation. In personal relationships, patience is forbearance. This is not so much a trait as a

way of life. We keep on loving or forgiving despite provocation, as illustrated in Jesus' pointed stories in Mt 18.
([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

Abraham was 75 year old when he departed from Haran (Ge 12:4). He was age 100 in Ge 17:17 and yet there was still no Isaac, no son of promise. In Genesis 12 Abram made the decision of his will initially to go forth from his land (but even such supernatural work is wrought by God see **note** Hebrews 13:21, compare **note** Philippians 2:13), his relatives and his father and he did this every time he had a situation in which he could chose to believe God or to trust his flesh.

ABRAHAM'S CIRCUMCISION FOLLOWS HIS JUSTIFICATION		
ABRAHAM'S AGE	PASSAGE	EVENT
75	Genesis 12:4	Called by God from Haran
75-86 (Cannot date from Scripture)	Genesis 15:6	Abraham Justified by Faith
86	Genesis 16:16	Hagar bore Ishmael
99	Genesis 17:1	Abraham Circumcised
100	Genesis 17:17 Genesis 21:5	Isaac is born

Abraham exhibited the attitude (and actions) which endure delay and bear suffering and never give up. In fact Abraham patiently waited (God is so merciful and forgiving... was Abraham patient when he took Hagar to bring forth the child of the flesh? But God does not focus on the "negative" here. PTL!) For 25 years Abraham held fast to God's promise of a seed, his precious Isaac! And even then Abraham did not see the total fulfillment of the Promises of God... see **note** Hebrews 11:13.

Don't give way to a quick burst of temper toward those around you who fail or fall but be considerate toward them, holding off your mind not giving it room to take action or invoke passion. Take a long time before fuming and breaking into flames (in fact don't even start a fire). Summed up by 1Corinthians 13:4 (note) **Love is patient (makrothumeo)** Ultimately such behaviour is only possible by His Spirit controlling and empowering... it is not grit your teeth and go for it. It's surrendering and letting Christ live thru you doing not what is natural but what is supernatural.

HE OBTAINED THE PROMISE : epetuchen (3SAAI) tes epaggelias:

- Heb 11:13. Dt 1:10. Lk 1:68, 69. Lk 16:22. Jn 8:56. Ac 7:5
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

In **Hebrews 11** the writer says...

All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. (see **note** Hebrews 11:13)

And yet the writer says here Abraham obtained the promise, which indeed he did for to this couple well past child bearing age God gave a son, fulfilling his promise to Abraham. And so while Abraham did not personally receive the entire fulfillment of the promises in Genesis 12:1, 2, 3, he did receive the precursor if you will of the promises in the birth of his son Isaac. God's promise was also that Abraham was to become a **great nation** (Genesis 12:2, cp Ge 13:16; 15:5; 17:5,6; 18:18; 22:17,18; 24:35; 26:4; 27:29; 28:3,14; Ge 35:11; 46:3; Ex 1:7; 32:10; Nu 14:12; 24:9,10; Deut 26:5; 2Sa 7:9; 1Ki 3:8,9; Mic 7:20; Ro 4:11; Ga 3:7), and that the world would be **blessed** through Abraham (Genesis 12:3, cp Ge 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; 30:27,30; 39:5 Ps 72:17 Ac 3:25,26 Ro 4:11 1Co 1:30 Ga 3:8,16,28 Eph 1:3 Col 3:11 Rev 7:9). It would be through Isaac, the partial fulfillment of these promises that would eventually come the complete fulfillment in the Seed (Galatians 3:16), the Messiah, the Lord Jesus. The literal promise of **"the land"** (of Israel) is yet to be fulfilled in the Millennium contrary to the teaching by some that God is finished with Israel and the church has now become the heir of God's promises to Israel (see related resource: Study of Galatians 6:16 - **Israel of God**)

Obtained ([2013](#)) (**epitugchano** from **epi** = intensifies meaning + **tugchano** = hit a mark with an arrow) means to acquire or gain what is sought after. So Abe obtained the promise (God's "bulls eye" so to speak) by faith (see v12) the practical outworking of that faith being evidenced by patient waiting. Lay hold of God BY FAITH.

Compare the other uses of this verb **epitugchano** (5x/4v) Romans 11:7 (note) (obtained by faith... see **note** Romans 9:32), Hebrews 11:33 [**note**] (by faith... obtained promises). Compare **tugchano** used in Hebrews 8:6 (note), Hebrews 11:35 (note)

In **Deuteronomy 30:1-10** God prophesied that although Israel would receive cursings for disobedience, He as the covenant keeping God would be faithful (to His covenant promise made to Abraham) to draw the **remnant** back to Himself at the end of the Great Tribulation, the time of Jacob's distress...

"So it shall be **when all of these things have come upon you**, (When? the final fulfillment and culmination of "all" the curses will be during the Great Tribulation) (see also Daniel's Seventieth Week) the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, 2 and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart (such obedience can only be possible with a "new heart" as a result of their entrance into the New Covenant by grace through faith - see prophecy of this "new heart" in Ezekiel 18:31, 36:26, 27, cp notes Hebrews 8:8; 8:9; 10; 11; 12) and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, 3 **then** (expression of time) the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. 4 If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. **5 And the LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it** (thus fulfilling the promise to Abraham of the land to his descendants); and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers (see Millennium notes for the conditions during the Millennial Kingdom). 6 "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants (spiritual circumcision by grace through faith - see Scriptures on Circumcision), to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live. (Bible Knowledge Commentary adds that...

God will graciously grant the nation a new will to obey Him in place of their former spiritual insensitivity and stubbornness. After returning to the Promised Land with a new heart they will remain committed to the Lord and therefore will experience abundant blessing (live). Loving Him wholeheartedly (cf. Dt 30:16, 20), they would not fall back into apostasy as they had done before. A new heart is an essential feature of the New Covenant (cf. Ezek. 36:24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32), which will not be fulfilled for Israel as a nation until the return of Jesus Christ (cf. Jer. 31:31, 32, 33, 34). ([Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., et al: The Bible Knowledge Commentary. 1985. Victor](#))

Promises (1860) ([epaggelia/epangelia](#) from **epí** = upon or intensifier of meaning + **aggéllo** = tell, declare = to announce with certainty as to what one will do) is a declaration to do something with implication of obligation to carry out what is stated. **Epaggelia** was a legal term denoting promise to do or give something. It was a legally binding declaration giving one to whom it is made right to expect or claim performance of the specific act. Most often **epaggelia** is used to describe the promises of God. and provides firm assurance of His future action.

Epaggelia is used in Hebrews 14 times in 13 verses (27.4% of all 51 NT uses) (See **notes** Hebrews 4:1, 6:12, 6:15, 6:17, 7:6, 8:6, 9:15, 10:36, 11:9, 11:13, 11:17, 11:33, 11:39)

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 6:12 so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 6:15 And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise.

Hebrews 6:17 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,

Hebrews 7:6 But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises.

Hebrews 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may

receive what was promised.

Hebrews 11:9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;

Hebrews 11:13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

Hebrews 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

Hebrews 11:33 who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,

Hebrews 11:39; And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,

Earlier in **Hebrews 4:1** the writer had exhorted his readers that they (and we) are to enter His rest while a promise remains.