

## Hebrews 6:13-20 (ESV) – God’s Secure Promise

**Main point:** God is a sure and steadfast anchor for the soul.



**Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.**

**Background:** The writer of Hebrews (maybe Paul, maybe Peter) is encouraging his readers to “go on to maturity” in their faith, not being “sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (6:11-12).

### **Focus of the study:**

<sup>13</sup> [W]hen God made a promise to Abraham, since God had no one greater by whom to swear, God swore by himself, <sup>14</sup> saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” <sup>15</sup> And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. <sup>16</sup> For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. <sup>17</sup> So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, God guaranteed it with an oath, <sup>18</sup> so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

<sup>19</sup> We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, <sup>20</sup> where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever ...

### **Questions:**

1. v. 12: *In Jewish history, Abraham is a very special person. I wonder who knows who Abraham was, what made him special? There’s even an old song, “Father Abraham...” (Father of what?)*
  - a. Abraham was chosen by God to be father of the Hebrew nation
2. *This story goes all the way back to Genesis, the beginning of the Bible! God had tested Abraham to see if Abraham would be willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, a foreshadowing of God giving up his own Son, Jesus, for us. After Abraham passes the test, listen to the promise that God made to Abraham:*
  - a. Genesis 22:15-18: “<sup>15</sup> The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven ... <sup>16</sup> and said, “I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. ..., <sup>18</sup> and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”
3. *So God makes an oath; God “swears by himself.” Let’s talk about oaths. What is an oath?*
  - a. A promise, a commitment
4. *When you swear something, make an oath, take a vow, what does that mean?*
  - a. You WILL do it – no question, no ifs, ands, or buts
  - b. Commitment to action, attitude
  - c. Permanent and serious
  - d. A confirmation. *What does it mean to confirm something?*

5. *What kinds of things do we swear to? What about... (Build these out one at a time, using examples, what it means, what it represents.)*
  - a. Marriage vows: promise to love, obey, cherish, until death
  - b. Military or police or firefighter vows: promise to safeguard nation, uphold the Constitution, protect
  - c. Testimony in court: promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth
  - d. Religious vows: promise to chastity, poverty, service
6. *When does an oath not work?*
  - a. When someone doesn't take it seriously
  - b. When someone looks for a way out
  - c. Distrust
  - d. When someone lies
7. *In the Hebrews passage, God swears to Abraham by God's own name. Why was this an excellent guarantee? Is there anything stronger or more solid than the character of God? What is God's character?*
  - a. Love, mercy, forgiveness, TRUTH
  - b. *What is the one thing that God cannot do?*
    - a. God cannot lie
8. *What was the essence of God's promise to Abraham? (Reread Genesis 22:17: I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore ... <sup>18</sup> and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed)*
  - a. "through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed": blessing to the whole world!
9. *I wonder what that promise means for us? (Read Hebrews 18-19: "so that ... we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.")*
  - a. *What is an anchor, and what does it do? (Build this out, examples about boats in storms, in harbors, when wind is fierce, when you don't know where you are...)*
    - a. Holds the boat in place; provides security, safety; won't tip over
  - b. *How is the hope we have in God and his character like an anchor for our souls?*
    - a. When everything around us threatens to swamp our boat, we can be sure in God's presence and our eternal safety
10. *God said he would bless "all nations." Who does that include? Who inherits that promise?*
  - a. Everyone! Includes us
11. *How long does it take to receive a promise?*
  - a. Sometimes takes a very long time...
12. *What do we need to do while we wait?*
  - a. Trust; obey; fix our hope on God, for our safety and blessing now and forever.
13. *How can we encourage one another to live and look forward in hope?*
  - Ask for prayer requests for today.
  - Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
  - End with a song, e.g., first verse of Amazing Grace

## Hebrews 6: 13-19

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## **Genesis 22:15-18**

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