

## Hebrews Chapter 6 Continued

**Hebrews 6:11 "And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:"**

“You”: The author is speaking again to unbelievers but appears to intentionally distance this particular group from the would-be apostates of (verses 4-6), who are in danger of being impossible to restore.

“Diligence”: This term can carry the idea of eagerness or haste. It is a plea for unbelieving Jews to come to Christ immediately. If these uncommitted Jews followed the example of the active faith of the saints (verses 9-10, 12); they would obtain the salvation which gives “full assurance of hope until the end” (10:22; Col. 2:2). Salvation should not be postponed.

In the last lesson, we were talking about the responsibility of the mature Christian. We are to work the work of a Christian right up until the hour the Lord returns. We sing a song here at the church I attend that says, “we'll work till Jesus comes”.

So many Christians are falling away today. Many think it is too hard. We are told in advance that in this life we will have tribulation.

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

In the next Scripture in Jesus' own words we find out just what we must do.

Matthew 24:13 "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Those who are weak in the faith will give up, and fall away.

1 Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

**Hebrews 6:12 "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."**

“Slothful”: The same Greek word is translated “dull”.

“Followers”: This concept is repeated (in 13:7), and is inherent in the many illustrations of faith given (in chapter 11).

“Inherit the promises”: The inheritance and the promises of salvation are a theme of this epistle (verses 13, 15, 17; 1:14; 4:1, 3; 9:15; 10:36; 11:7-9, 11, 13, 17, 33, 39).

Slothful means lazy. Captain John Smith, in the colonies, was not the first one to say “no work no eat”.

It is in this Scripture;

2 Thessalonians 3:10 "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

There are numerous Scriptures on this subject of not being slothful. I will give two here.

Proverbs 12:24 "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute."

Proverbs 13:4 " The soul of the sluggard desireth, and [hath] nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat."

The faith that we have must be the type which wears well with time.

Romans 2:7 "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life:"

Those who endure to the end receive the promise of eternal life.

Matthew 24:13 "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

These Scriptures leave no doubt what we must do.

Verses 13-18: God’s covenant with Abraham, which involves salvation (Gal. 3:15-25), is secure, being based upon “two immutable things”, that is, elements that cannot change. First, God’s promise is based on His own unchanging Word. He cannot lie, nor will He allow His Word to fail (Matt. 5:18; John 10:35; 17:17).

Further, His Word was confirmed “by an oath”. And since He can swear by none greater, He swears by Himself. He rests His Word on His holy character.

We see here, that he is not just speaking of just plants which are thorns, but people as well. As we said before, it is terribly important that we be doing the work God has called us to do. We want Him to say when we stand before Him, Well done thy good and faithful servant. The fruit that should be showing in our life is spoken of in these next two verses.

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith," "Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

“Verses 6-13”: Abraham. To encourage the Hebrews to rely upon faith as opposed to holding on to the Levitical system of worship, the writer cited the example of Abraham, who, as the great model of faith (Romans 4), should be imitated (verse 12).

“Swore by Himself”: As recorded (in Gen. 22:15-19), God promised unilaterally to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant.

**Hebrews 6:13 "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,"**

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, taught that we should not swear by anything. We cannot even swear by our own head, because we cannot make one hair white or black. God, on the other hand, controls everything. He can swear by anything He wants to, because He controls everything.

He swore by Himself, because there is no greater. He is the Truth. The Truth cannot lie.

Titus 1:2 "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"

**Hebrews 6:14 "Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."**

(Quoted from Gen. 22:17), this summarizes the essence of God's promise. The fact that God had said it, assured its fulfillment. It is significant that the quote in Genesis is in the context of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, who was the immediate fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. Ultimate fulfillment would also take place through Isaac and his descendants.

We know that the promises made to Abraham were for him and his seed forever. These promises are for the Christians, because we are the seed of Abraham.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Now that we know these promises are for the believers in Christ, let us see what they are.

Genesis 48:4 "And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee [for] an everlasting possession."

Genesis 12:2-3 "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:" "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

When we read of the Christians in heaven dressed in white robes, washed in the blood of the Lamb; we find there are so many that they are without number. I quote:

Revelation 7:9 "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;"

Revelation 7:13-15 "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."

God's promise to Abraham is fulfilled in the believers in Christ.

**Hebrews 6:15 "And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."**

“Patiently endured”: Abraham was an example of the patience mentioned (in verse 12). He received the promise in the beginning of its fulfillment by the birth of Isaac, but he did not live to see all the promises fulfilled (11:13).

Romans 4:18 "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be."

This was so impossible in the flesh, because Abraham would be a hundred years old and Sarah would be ninety. Isaac was a son of promise, not of the flesh.

Genesis 21:5 "And Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."

Verses 16-18: God's Word does not need any confirmation from someone else. It is reliable because God Himself is faithful. People confirm their promises by appealing to someone greater (especially to God), as witness. Since no one is greater than God, He can only provide an oath from Himself. By doing so He is willingly (verse 17), accommodating Himself to human beings who desire the confirmation because of the characteristic unreliability of human promises.

**Hebrews 6:16 "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation [is] to them an end of all strife."**

Even ungodly men like Herod honored their oath. When a man took an oath, it was the penalty of death if he lied, so everyone believed when someone took an oath.

Matthew 23:20-22 "Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon." "And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein." "And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon."

An oath is a very serious thing.

**Hebrews 6:17 "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed [it] by an oath:"**

Who are the heirs according to the promise? We will see in this next Scripture.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Immutability means unchangeable. This means then, that the promises God made will not change. They are forever.

Psalms 33:11 "The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."

Isaiah 14:24 "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, [so] shall it stand:"

We see from these Scriptures that once God has thought it, He will never change it.

**Hebrews 6:18 "That by two immutable things, in which [it was] impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:"**

“Two immutable things”: These are God’s promise and His oath. The Greek term behind “unchangeable” was used of a legal will, which was unchangeable by anyone but the maker of the will.

“Fled ... refuge”: In the LXX, the Greek word is used for the cities of refuge God provided for those who sought protection for avengers for an accidental killing (Num. 35:9-34; Deut. 19:1-13; Jos. 20:1-9; Acts 14:5-6).

“Hope”: Hope is one of the themes of Hebrews. It is also the product of Old Testament studies (Rom. 15:4). Hope for the fulfillment of God’s salvation promises is the “anchor of the soul” (verse 19), keeping the believer secure during the times of trouble and turmoil.

God's spoken and written Word are unchangeable. Truth cannot lie, as we said before. God is Truth.

Numbers 23:19 "God [is] not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do [it]? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

We read how important to God His Word is; in Jesus' own words.

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Verses 19-20: Starting (at the end of verse 18), the author uses three pictures to demonstrate the security of being in Christ. First, it is described as a safe retreat for the believer, as were the six cities of refuge in the Old Testament to those allowed their protection (Num. 35:6-32). Second, our hope is "sure and steadfast" as is a well-placed, unbending anchor. Our anchor is not located in the deepest sea but in the highest heaven.

The third figure is that of a "forerunner". Though the figure changes, the location does not. Our forerunner is likewise positioned in the sanctuary of heaven. As our forerunner, Jesus is far different from the Old Testament priests. In the sanctuary, they could intercede for the people, but they could not lead the people in themselves.

As our forerunner, Jesus has opened the way before us, that eventually (and certainly), we might enter in with Him.

Our hope is embodied in Christ Himself who has entered into God's presence in the heavenly Holy of Holies on our behalf. By this line of reasoning the writer returned to the topic which he left (in 5:10), the Melchizedekian priesthood.

**Hebrews 6:19 "Which [hope] we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;"**

The Christian's hope is of the resurrection. We see in this next Scripture that the Christian is not like the rest of the world who is without hope.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:" "Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Jesus opened the way to the Father for us when He was crucified for us. He brought down the veil of partition for us.

Mark 15:38 "And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom."

**Hebrews 6:20 "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, [even] Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."**

Jesus is even now seated in heavenly places. In fact, He is seated at the right hand of the Father. He is preparing a place for us, and when the Father says it is time, we will join Him at the right

hand of the Father. Jesus is our High Priest. He carried His own precious blood to the Father to pay for our sin. Jesus represents us before the Father even now. The promise to the believers in John is beautiful.

John 14:1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." "In my Father's house are many mansions: if [it were] not [so], I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also."

All believers are the bride of Christ. He is coming back for us, if we have remained faithful to Him.

2 Corinthians 11:2 "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ."

### **Hebrews Chapter 6 Continued Questions**

1. How long are we to work for the Lord?
2. In the world ye shall have \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In Matthew 24:13, we find that who shall be saved?
4. What are we told to be in 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 things?
5. What does slothful mean?
6. In 2 Thessalonians 3:10, what commandment was given about those who would not work?
7. Who did God swear by?
8. Why did He swear by Him?
9. Why can we not swear by our own head?
10. Where is the Scripture found that says God cannot lie?
11. Who were God's promises made to?
12. How do the Christians fit into these promises?
13. What are the promises?
14. Who are the great multitude in heaven that are without number?

15. How are they dressed?
16. Why did it seem impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have Isaac?
17. What is final, and leaves no room for strife?
18. If you swear by the altar, what else do you swear by?
19. Who are the heirs according to the promise?
20. What does immutability mean?
21. What is the hope, for the Christian?
22. How was the veil in the temple torn?
23. Who was made our High Priest forever?
24. When will Jesus come back for His bride?
25. What wonderful promise is made to the Christian in John 14?