

Hebrews

Dr. Charles "Buddy" Parrish
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Hebrews 6:13-20

Vss. 13-16

- God made several promises to Abraham. God promised him a land he had never seen or heard of. God promised him that his descendants would number more than the stars. In Genesis 22:16-18 God does something more, something different. He seals His promise with an oath. Now the gift of God to Abraham is doubly binding. Since there is nothing nor any one higher than God, the Lord became His own witness and guarantor. Doubly binding, this now is an unchangeable promise.
- Where we as humans, as people, have a problem is with the timing. It was another 25 years before Issac was born and before then Abraham had gotten old and Sarah barren. So when God's timing does not match our own we ask ourselves out loud, "God promised, but why hasn't He delivered?" Those with little faith will question whether God can be trusted or even declare that there is no God at all. But just as a good parent gives their children the right things at only the right time, so too does God give His gifts. We are to trust Him and patiently wait for Him to act in His own time and in His own way.
- The promise in Genesis 16 was that not only would Abraham's descendants be blessed, but that they would be a blessing to all the nations. To the author of Hebrews and indeed to the whole of the early church, was fulfilled in Jesus Christ and the creation of the church, which by faith had become the true Israel, the true descendants of Abraham. The true descendants of Abraham are not found through genetics or a family history, but in faith. If you have the faith of Abraham to trust God in all things, then you are his descendant.

Vss. 17-20

- As God so promised Abraham, now He promises the church. Indeed, God is even more desirous to fulfill His promises to the church than to Abraham, the preacher tells us.

- The central theme of these remaining verses of Ch. 6 is Hope. There had already been persecution but there was more to come, perhaps even more destructive and brutal than before. Hope needs to be pushed to the forefront.
- The preacher mentions “two unchangeable things” which he will unpack later, but he tells us that it is in such things that we can take refuge from the storm that is about to break over them and it is here that we can take firm hold of “the HOPE set before us”.
- The metaphor the preacher uses for this hope is that of an anchor. The Greeks had long used the anchor in this way. The great mathematician Pythagoras once said that wealth and fame were poor anchors. Wisdom, he said, and a stout heart and courage “are anchors no storm can shake”. But the preacher to the Hebrews suggests that ours is an even greater anchor, a divine anchor, an anchor that will always hold, an anchor “sure and steadfast”.
- The hope we have, the preacher says, is one that carries us where we have never been before. It takes us behind the veil, into the Holy of Holies, into the very presence of God. Previously, only one person, the High Priest, could go behind the veil and then only on one day of the year, the Day of Atonement.
- But Jesus has opened the way for all of us and as we follow Him, He is the living Hope that leads us behind the veil into God’s presence. He calls Jesus our “forerunner”. The Greek word there has three basic meanings. First, it means one who rushes ahead. Second, it means a pioneer. Third, it means a scout who goes ahead to make sure it is safe for others to follow. This is who Jesus is for us. He has gone ahead of us and conquered sin and death in order that our way is made safe for us to follow.
- Before Jesus, God was always distant, unreachable except for a few and even they approached the deity with fear for their lives. What Jesus has done is more than simply opening the door to God for us, even more than making God our friend. With Jesus, God is now our Abba, the Daddy to our child. He is the loving Father who seeks to only bless and give what is good to His children. His door is open to us all the time.