

In chapter 6 of Hebrews the author is encouraging the believers

- to continue to grow in spiritual maturity.

He also urges the believers to move beyond

- the elementary teachings of Christianity.

He issues a strong warning against falling away

- after having experienced
- God's truth and blessings.

Those who deliberately turn away after hearing the truth

- were compared to the land
- producing thorns instead of useful crops.

Despite the warning, the author expresses confidence in the believers

- in that they were showing evidence
- of their salvation by the way
- they were treating fellow believers.

He is exhorting the believer,

- not to become sluggish,
- don't become lazy in your faith.
- don't become stagnant, but press on,

We are to imitate those who through faith and patience

- inherit the promises of God.

In other words, keep the faith all the way thru,

In this last section we're covering this morning

- the author speaks of the promises
- God made to Abraham to bless him,
- and we are part of that blessing.

The author had just finished exhorting his readers to

- "imitate those who through faith
- and patience inherit the promises."

We remember the promise, it was that a son to be born to Sarah, Abraham's wife.

Abraham and Sarah were starting to get up there in age.

- Sarah was 65 and Abraham was 75 years old
- when God made the promise.

In Gen 12 Abram received the promise that

- he would become a great nation,
- and that his descendants would be as numerous
- “as the dust of the earth” Gen 13:16
- or like the stars of heaven Gen 15.

Imagine Sarah and Abraham having to wait

- another 25 years before God
- delivered on His promise

But God made good on His promise.

Heb 6:13-20

13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. 17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

If God had not made good on His promise,

- His word would mean absolutely nothing
- to anyone in the future.

Gen 22:15-17

15 Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, 16 and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son — 17 blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

Verse 13 of Hebrews says

- there is none greater than God.

When God made the promise to Abraham, He swears to Himself.

There is none greater than God Himself,

When you think about God,

- the Creator of the universe,
- and you think to yourself,
- how did all of this happen,

- we are in awe of who He is!

We see people change, cultures change, trends change, governments change, but God does not change.

In fact, we're going to see later that God is immutable, meaning, He can't change.

1 John 3:2

2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Our knowledge of God is limited to our faith at the moment.

One day we will see Him clearly for who He is.

But Paul says in Philippians 3 that one day

- we will be fully capable of beholding
- His presence without fear or limitation.

1 Cor 13:12

12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

Let's take a look at some of God's attributes this morning

First attribute: God is Eternal:

Ps 90:2

2 Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever You had formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

That's a prayer of Moses.

Moses recognized God is from everlasting to everlasting,

- meaning from eternity past to eternity future.

Heb 11:1

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

There are many scientific theories of how some believe the universe began.

The theory we hear most is the big bang theory

- dating back about 14 billion years.

Others have other theories.

- most agree that there was a beginning.

What's important to us as believers is not how it began,

- but who set it all into motion.

God's second attribute is that He is Omnipotent.

Jer 32:17

17 'Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You.

Nothing is impossible for Him!

God is God and He can do anything He chooses to do!

- We should never limit God
- and His power and His love for us.

When Jerusalem was under siege by the Babylonians,

- God told Jeremiah that the city
- was going to fall to Nebuchadnezzar,
- God told Jeremiah in chapter 32
- to purchase a field in his hometown of Anathoth,
- about 3-5 miles north of Jerusalem.

Why would God have Jeremiah do such a thing

- if Jerusalem was under siege?

This showed Jeremiah's complete trust and faith in God

- in that God not only controlled
- the present state of Israel, but
- He also controlled the future of Jerusalem.

God not only promised to restore them physically,

- He also promised to renew them spiritually
- in the previous chapter.

Jer 31:31-34

31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah — 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on

their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

The third attribute of God, He is omniscient, Psa 147:

Ps 147:5

5 Great is our Lord, and mighty in power;
His understanding is infinite.

Understanding in Hebrew means "wisdom, insight or discernment."

To say that God is infinite literally means "without number."

- In other words, God has no boundaries.

So God can swear to no one because there is none greater than Him.

- And much like He kept His promise to Abraham,
- He will also keep His promises to us.

God is not slack in His promises to the believers.

2 Peter 3:9

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Where was Peter coming from? He was addressing the scoffers,

- those who doubted the return of Christ.

They scoffed at the idea of Christ returning for His church

- because, from their perspective,
- things were going as normal.

God's past actions show that He is not inactive.

Peter mentioned God's patience with mankind by saying

2 Peter 3:8

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

God doesn't operate on our time.

So never count God's delay as denial, it's not neglect, it's mercy.

Heb 6:14

14 saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."

The author is now referring to the promise spoken of in the previous verse.

It's the promise which came to Abraham and Sarah when they had no descendants.

- What's the lesson for us, **WAIT!**

Jesus said not to worry about tomorrow,

- for tomorrow will worry about its own things.

After issuing that statement, He followed with the sermon on the mount.

He taught that we need to trust Him for our daily needs.

Lam 3:22-23

22 Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed,
Because His compassions fail not.

23 They are new every morning;
Great is Your faithfulness.

His mercy and compassion are renewed each day.

- He gives us the grace we need for that day,
- not yesterdays, not tomorrows, todays!
- God gives you strength for today.

Tomorrow He will supply what you need all over again.

- If we're worrying about tomorrow,
- we're robbing God of what He wants
- to provide for us today.

At the same time, don't take back what you gave Him yesterday.

- He's already taken care of that for you.

At the last supper, Jesus made a promise.

Mark 14:25

25 I tell you the truth, I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new in the Kingdom of God."

He's not going to celebrate until we're there with Him.

God said to David:

Ps 138:2

2 I will worship toward Your holy temple,
And praise Your name

For Your lovingkindness and Your truth;
For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

This is as God saying He's put His name on the line.

David was praising God for two specific attributes in this verse:

One was His lovingkindness.

Then David said:

For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

David was saying that God's reputation is tied to His word,

Matt 11:28-30

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

This was Jesus speaking to the Jewish people

- who were worn down by the burdens of
- the Pharisaic laws and man-made traditions.

He wanted them to know,

- "Hey, I won't lay that on you,
- in fact, I'll carry the load for you!"

Bison face storms, domesticated animals turn away.

Jesus says, Come to Me, I will give you rest! He didn't say to walk away, He said to come to Him.

Heb 6:14

14 saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."

Physically, the Jews are descendants thru Isaac

- and the Arabs thru Ishmael.

Spiritually, if you're a believer in Christ,

- then you're a spiritual descendant of Abraham
- since you share in the same faith.

Paul made this clear to the Galatians:

Gal 3:7

7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

Gal 3:29

29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

This means whether you're Jew or Gentile

- and have believed in Jesus,
- then you've become part of that spiritual family,

Old and NT point to Jesus:

Gen 22:18

18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

In Hebrew, "seed" can refer to a descendant (singular) or many descendants (plural).

Paul clarified this for us:

Gal 3:16

16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

The only way to be truly blessed

- and the only way to obtain salvation
- is thru Christ and thru Him alone.

Heb 6:15

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute.

Interestingly, the two words used in verse 15,

- "patiently endured" are from the same Greek word "makrothumée."

It means "long suffering as opposed to hasty anger or punishment."

Abraham waited patiently to receive the promise,

- 25 years to be exact.

That's when he and Sarah bore Isaac.

- But God wasn't finished because He promised
- to multiply his descendants beyond number.

We've all heard the term, "Patience is a Virtue."

That is essentially saying that you're willing to wait calmly,

- you'll endure thru hardships
- or remain steadfast without frustration.

James 1:2-4

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

James wrote this during a time of intense persecution, hardships and poverty.

- Yet, he tells them to count it all joy.

He wanted them to understand that their afflictions were not in vain,

- but were intended to build them up,
- to mature them

When our faith is tested, it should produce patience,

When you think of patience, think of growing, think of maturing in the Lord.

Abraham believed God's word to be firm.

Heb 6:16

16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. 17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability (unchanging, never to change) of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

Heb 6:16-18 (NLT)

16 Now when people take an oath, they call on someone greater than themselves to hold them to it. And without any question that oath is binding. 17 God also bound himself with an oath, so that those who received the promise could be perfectly sure that he would never change his mind. 18 So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us.

There are some things that God cannot do, lying is one of them.

- Another is when He makes an oath,
- He doesn't change His mind.

God had already promised to bless Abraham and his descendants.

- But, to further solidify His promise,
- He confirmed it by an oath.

God's won't change His plan of salvation.

Therefore, says the author in verse 18,

we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us.

19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

We have the assurance of salvation and eternal life thru Christ.

God has made it so easy for mankind to reach Him,

Summary:

God swore by Himself because there is none greater. He promised to bless Abraham and He has blessed him.

We can be assured God's word will stand because He cannot lie.

And finally, God is a refuge for those who come to Him.