

In the midst of a changing world, the believer can be assured of God's faithfulness to keep His word. Jesus is the believer's High Priest (2:17; 3:1, 4:14, 15; 5:5, 6, 10) who has done all which is needed to bring us into God's rest. Because God's word is sure, it is important and helpful to imitate those who demonstrate faith and long-suffering (6:12) and keep focused on Jesus.

***I. He has given a tangible example to follow: Abraham (6:13–15).***

1. God had already promised much to Abraham (Genesis 12:1–3, 7; 13:14–17; 15:1–21; 17:1–21), when he told him to offer his only son, Isaac (Genesis 22). But Isaac was key to the fulfilment of most of those promises. In the argument of the author of Hebrews, the promise of Isaac and of an Offspring from Isaac through whom nations would be blessed was of utmost importance.
2. When Abraham followed through in obedience, though God stopped him at the last moment, the author of Hebrews cites what God said in Genesis 22:16–17, that He swore by Himself to bless Abraham and multiply his descendants.
3. Though Abraham did not see the fulfilment of many of the promises, he essentially received this promise by getting Isaac back. He had shown "long-suffering" as he believed God and waited 25 years for Isaac's birth and then was tested with the charge to sacrifice his son.

Such examples of faith and long-suffering are patterns for us to imitate. Hold on to the promise of eternal blessing in Jesus Christ alone and do not let circumstances cause despair.

***II. He has given a doubly trustworthy encouragement to motivate (vv. 16–18).***

1. In biblical times people swore by someone greater, usually a deity, to confirm what was said and put an end to argument, because the deity was expected to execute judgment on one who failed to keep the oath.
2. God swore an oath by Himself, since there was none greater, even though His promise was sufficient. He swore to make clear to us that nothing could change His purpose, His design for salvation in Jesus Christ who would become our perfect High Priest.
3. God's promise and oath are "unchangeable" because He cannot lie, and thus they guarantee the salvation He is working out. It is salvation provided for those who have fled this fallen world under God's judgment and found safety in the hope which God offers in Jesus Christ.

God cannot lie. His Word is truth (John 17:17). Jesus is the truth (John 14:6). To promise with an oath doubly emphasizes that there is eternal salvation for all who believe.

***III. He has given a divinely secured hope to focus on (vv.19–20).***

1. Our hope, which is embodied in Jesus, is likened to an anchor for our very lives (v.19). It is attached in the most secure place possible, in the very presence of God, pictured as the most holy place of the tabernacle. Our hope is there, because that is where Jesus has been seated (Hebr 1:3).
2. Jesus, anchoring our hope in heaven, is also a "forerunner" on our behalf. He has gone before us into the Father's presence with the expectation that we will follow (cf. John 14:2b–3). He is rightfully there, but now functions for us as High Priest, having made atonement for our sin forever and interceding for the believer.

Follow patterns like Abraham. Embrace the principle of God's absolute truthfulness. Focus on the Person of Jesus. These are God's gracious gifts, demonstrating His faithfulness to help us hold firm to His promise. Don't let your circumstances pull you away from the hope which you have been given in Jesus Christ. Whatever life's struggles may be, they are within the unchangeable purpose of God to shape believers into the image of Christ and bring them to glory.

*Questions for further reflection and discussion:*

- Read Hebrews 11:8–19. To what extent did Abraham receive what God had promised? How did the patriarchs explain that? Did Abraham doubt that God would keep His promise about Isaac? Why/why not?
  - What does it mean to our thinking about history, that God thought of believers 1,500+ years later when He swore to bless Abraham? What does it mean to you personally?
  - The songwriter Edward Mote in "The Solid Rock" refers to Hebrews 6:19 when affirms resting on God's unchanging grace, even when we cannot see Jesus, because his "anchor holds within the veil." Could anything cause God to deny a true believer His grace (cf. Romans 8:38–39)? If the anchor holds by God's grace, what is the believer's responsibility? What should you be doing?