

Hebrews

Hebrews 6:13-20 – Trustworthiness of God

March 8, 2009

I. Introduction

A. **Hebrews 6:13-20** . . . For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, [14] saying, "I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply you." [15] And so, having patiently waited, he (*Abraham*) obtained the promise. [16] For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. [17] In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, [18] so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. [19] This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, [20] where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

B. The Trustworthiness of God

1. **Hebrews 6:13-14** . . . For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, [14] saying, "I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply you."
 - a. The great truth spoken here is that when God makes a promise, there is no one greater than God to vouch for the integrity of God or guarantee the fulfillment of God's promise.
 - (1) What this means is that God, alone, becomes the guarantee that He will do what He promises to do.
 - (2) And what this means for us today is that the fulfillment of God's promises – including His promises concerning those who trust in Him for salvation from the power, practice, and penalty of sin – do not depend on our faith or our righteousness or our importance to Him or our uniqueness or our having been elected and predestined (*for those who believe only the elect are saved*) but on God and God alone.
 - (3) The point that I am trying to get across to you is this: the fulfillment of God's promises depend first and foremost on His character – but it also depends on His love for us and

His power to accomplish what He says He will do, and it depends on His wisdom and His timelessness.

- b. God is a god of His word because He is of such a nature as to choose to do nothing less than keep His word. In fact, keeping ones word is so important to God that He made it one of the ten commandments (**Exodus 20:7**) and He had Jesus speak about it in the Sermon on the Mount (**Matt. 5:33-37**).

2. **Hebrews 6:16** . . . For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute.

- a. Why do we need to provide someone greater than ourselves to witness or vouch for or guaranteed we will keep our word? We all understand that when we humans give our word, it is possible for something to go wrong and our promise to be broken.
 - (1) It is possible we are dishonest from the outset and never intended to keep our word.
 - (2) It is possible something will go wrong and we can't keep our word/promise
 - (a) Such as a significant change in our circumstances, like what is happening today in our economy,
 - (b) Such as a loss of power or position,
 - (c) Or we die before being able to fulfill our promise.
- b. Interestingly, in spite of the well-known possibilities that we humans will not or cannot keep our word, we still enter into contracts and have those giving testimony in court solemnly swear on the Bible that they will tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth. We still use oaths and promises to put an end to conflicts or to remove suspicion that we will not live up to our word.
- c. God cannot appeal to anyone greater than Himself – but He doesn't need to either.
 - (1) His character is such that He will not lie or promise what He has no intention of delivering.
 - (2) In addition, he has the power and position to guarantee the fulfillment of every promise He makes. No one has more power or a higher position – which means there is no being or circumstance that can stop Him from fulfilling His promises.

- (3) But what is more, death cannot stop Him either. He is timeless – without any beginning or end.
 - d. And what does this mean for us? God is trustworthy!! And what He says He will do He will do!!
 - (1) Now we may choose to distrust God. We may even develop seemingly rock solid logical arguments against the reality of God or the goodness of God or the involvement of God in our lives.
 - (2) But does our distrust of God change His character or His power or His timelessness or His love or His faithfulness? Can we argue God out of existence? Can any of our arguments against God alter His character? Of course not.
 - (3) All the distrust in the world and all the arguments against God's existence or His goodness change nothing about God. Such things may change the way we view God, but they do not change God, himself.
 - e. This truth stands regardless of what we humans think or reason or say – **there is no one greater than God – and what He promises to do, He will do.**
3. But there is more: **Hebrews 6:17- 20** . . . In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, [18] so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. [19] This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, [20] where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.
- a. God not only gave promises to Abraham about his offspring becoming a great nation made up of people of faith, God added an "OATH" for our sake – those of us who would come to faith in God long after Abraham died.
 - (1) I see this as another example of God's graciousness toward us because we are weak humans with frail minds who are too easily tempted toward distrust of God which too often results in falling away from God.
 - (2) Each Advent season we celebrate another example of God's graciousness toward us in accepting our fear of

- coming into His awesome presence and solving our weakness by giving us someone like ourselves whom we could relate to. And who is that someone? Jesus Christ!
- b. Back to verse 18 – what are the two unchangeable things? God’s character and His oath. These become our **City of Refuge** and our **Anchor of hope**.
 - (1) The City of Refuge was a place where anyone who killed another person could run for safety until a trial could be held and one’s guilt determined.
 - (2) The Anchor of hope is what holds us secure in the midst of a storm-tossed sea.
 - c. Have you made God’s character and His promises your confident trust, your refuge, your anchor of hope?
 - (1) Double-mindedness is unstableness. Single-mindedness is spiritual health and produces inner peace in the midst of life’s worst storms such as the world cannot know.
 - (2) You may be facing severe crisis in your life. Certainly, we as a nation and as a people are facing a serious economic crisis. How is your faith? Where is your anchor cast? What is your hope for a good outcome based on? Who is the one you trust to be your provider, protector, healer, and security for eternity?

II. Our Response to the trustworthiness of God

- A. **Hebrews 6:15** . . . And so, having patiently waited, he (*Abraham*) obtained the promise.
 - 1. God called Abraham out of Ur – where he lived with his father. It wasn’t until 25 years later that Isaac was born. Abraham was old. Sarah was barren and possibly beyond child-bearing age. They had lived as aliens and strangers all those years.
 - 2. Yet Abraham believed God. He trusted God’s promise and stayed true to that trust in God – waiting **patiently** for God to fulfill His promise.
- B. Faith without patience will be short-lived faith and fail to lead us to God’s desired ends. Why?
 - 1. Because, in the case of Abraham, God did not seek the death of Isaac on that day so many years ago. **God was seeking to own the heart of Abraham.** Not by force or by some magical means that Abraham could not resist – but by a willing, intelligent, heartfelt decision on Abraham’s part. A decision made by Abraham

because he had come to the place where he did not want to give anything less to God.

2. What does God's trustworthiness mean to you?
 - a. Does it compel you to the kind of faith and patience that Abraham had?
 - b. Does it drive you to give your heart to God? And when I say give your heart to God, I mean wholly, not mostly.
 - c. Let me ask you two questions?
 - (1) If God showed you something that needed changing in your life, would you devote yourself to doing whatever it would take to change it as quickly and as completely as possible?
 - (2) If someone near and dear to you showed you something that needed changing in your life, would you devote yourself to doing whatever it would take to change it as quickly and as completely as possible?
 - d. You see, the answer to those two questions is the answer to whether you want to give your heart to God wholly, or only mostly.
- C. God is trustworthy! So much so that we are right to have a strong sense of assurance that He will do what He says He will do. And when I say He will do what He says He will do, I mean all of it! But to enter into the real and lasting and life impacting joy of God's trustworthiness, we must choose the kind of faith that Abraham had – the kind of faith that compels us to give Him our whole heart.