
Words of Truth

Hebrews 6:13-15

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After being instructed not to be slothful, but to go forward with endurance; the promise made to Abraham is now brought into this letter. It fits, because the penmen had addressed inheriting the promises. Thus, our study in this article will be upon these words: *“For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise”* (Hebrews 6:13-15).

To learn about God’s promise to Abraham, a verse by verse study in the book of Genesis is required (Genesis 12:1-25:11). To read about God swearing by Himself, you should focus on the time Abraham was told to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice as a test for Abraham (Genesis 22:1-19). The wording that is being referenced in our study today is from these Scriptures within the aforementioned context: *“And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice”* (Genesis 22:15-18). That covenant between God and Abraham stood as the hope for Israel (Deuteronomy 29:13, Isaiah 45:17-25, and Luke 1:67-80). That promise continues to stand today as hope for all of humanity (Galatians 3:8-29).

God has, even on other occasions, sworn by Himself (Deuteronomy 28:9, Isaiah 45:23, Jeremiah 22:5, Jeremiah 49:13, Jeremiah 51:14, and Amos 6:8). The prophet Micah stated: *“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old”* (Micah 7:18-20). He is the “Most High”, so there was no greater whereby He could have sworn by (Psalms 83:18 and Psalms 92:8).

Abraham was promised that he would be blessed (Genesis 24:1) and multiplied (Genesis 17:1-2). God did as He promised. In fact, He later used this as evidence for His

people to look upon to gain their faith, confidence, and trust. Notice: *“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody”* (Isaiah 51:1-3).

However, the promises to Abraham were not just a given. Abraham had to have faith (Romans 4:16-22 and Hebrews 11:8-19) and continue in obedience (Genesis 26:5). He had, like all others, had to patiently endure to see the end of the promises of God (James 5:7-11). What we see being done in this teaching is powerful. Things that happened in the past serve as an example to learn from to this very day (Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:1-13).

From the lesson about God keeping His promise to Abraham, these saints as well as we can learn that God keeps His word. This is a huge lesson. Our hope depends on the integrity of God. Think about these words: *“Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour”* (Titus 1:1-3). We will discuss this point in more detail later in the chapter (Hebrews 6:17-18). For the sake of our current study, consider how that knowing God will keep His promises aids the faithful to continue to live faithfully.

Like Abraham, all Christians have to patiently endure (Matthew 10:22). That is, to live faithfully until the time we die (Revelation 2:10) or until Christ returns if that happens before we die (Matthew 24:35-25:46 and I Thessalonians 4:13-5:9). To do so, we have to have the motivation of knowing that we have eternal life (I John 5:13; 5:20). God is not going to change His mind. He is not going to turn from us because of all the evil in the world. We can know that because God kept His promise to Abraham even though the children of Israel were more often unfaithful than faithful (Deuteronomy 9:13-24 and Acts 7:51). As we have here in El Paso studied through most of the Old Testament, we have seen the great frustrations the Lord endured at the hands of His people. He was heavily grieved by them (Psalms 78:1-72, Psalms 95:1-11, Isaiah 63:10, etc.). God still kept His promise to Abraham (Matthew 1:1; cf. Galatians 3:16).

We know that we have to run the race of this life with patience (Hebrews 12:1-3). Whenever you find the run to be hard, let that hardship turn to the strengthening of your faith (James 1:3-4). Later in this epistle we find this: *“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)”* (Hebrews 10:23). We can count on God. Therefore, let us keep on regardless of how difficult things may get in this life.