

Hebrews Lesson 8 Articles

In v. 17, the writer says that God did all this for Abraham that the “heirs” might know the dependability of God’s counsel and promise. Who are these heirs? According to v. 18, all true believers are heirs, for we are Abraham’s children by faith (see Gal. 3). So, there are “two immutable things” that give us assurance: God’s promises (for God cannot lie) and God’s oath (for God cannot change). The unchanging Word of God and the unchanging Person of God are all we need to assure us that we are saved and kept for eternity. We have a “hope” to anchor our souls, and this “hope” is Christ Himself (7:19–20; 1 Tim. 1:1). How can we “drift” spiritually (2:1–3) when in Christ we are anchored to heaven itself? We have a sure and steadfast anchor; and we have a “Forerunner” (Christ) who has opened the way for us and will see to it that we one day shall join Him in glory. Instead of frightening saints into thinking they are lost, this wonderful chapter warns against unbelief and an unrepentant heart and also assures us that we are anchored in eternity.¹

For the subtle tendency to slip back under pressure, there are two great truths to grasp for a remedy. In the first place there is the promise of God and, to illustrate this truth, the writer goes back to Abraham, the great father of the Jewish nation, but, even more, the supreme example of one who took God at his word (v. 13–15). Abraham’s faith in the assurance of a family, through whom God would bless the world, was sorely tested, but he kept believing because God had promised and he would never let him down. The principle remains the same except that these readers, and we today, have so much more to encourage faith.

What Abraham could only see dimly in the future has now become a reality, and here is the second great truth, called a hope and an anchor in 6:19. The metaphor is gloriously mixed, with the nautical reference becoming ecclesiastical—an anchor in the sanctuary! The surprise should alert us to the unexpected and dramatic. Not only do we have the promise of God, but also we have the very presence of Christ to strengthen us. That presence is Jesus in his high priestly role in heaven itself (v. 20), way beyond the wonder of the Jewish high priest and his annual appearance in the earthly sanctuary. There should be no turning back from that unique truth, and to challenge his readers further, the writer now draws on sacred history, bringing forward as his witness the shadowy but vital figure of Melchizedek.²

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe’s expository outlines on the New Testament* (693). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

² Hacking, P. H. (2006). *Opening up Hebrews*. Opening Up Commentary (39–40). Leominster: Day One Publications.