

Session 15 Hope Anchored Within The Veil

Before the Silence: A Study of Hebrews

Session 15 | Hebrews 6:9-20

From Solemn Warning To Certain Hope (Hebrews 6:9-20)

Session 14 examined Israel's extraordinary privileges and the danger of repudiating the Son after receiving such light. The rain-soaked field producing thorns stood near to cursing (**Hebrews 6:7-8**). The writer now turns to his beloved Hebrew hearers with confidence that their continuing love and service point toward a better outcome.

The movement is from **faithful ministry** (vv. 9-10), through **diligent hope** (vv. 11-12), to **God's promise and oath** (vv. 13-18), and finally to **Jesus within the veil** (vv. 19-20). In the approaching crisis of the late pre-70 setting, Israel's hope rests upon God's faithfulness and Messiah's enduring priesthood.

Hebrews 6:9-10 - Better Things Of You

But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Exegesis

- **“Those ... them” / “you”** distinguishes the people described in verses 4-6 from the readers directly addressed in verse 9. The writer expects better things of these beloved hearers; he has not pronounced the threatened outcome upon all of them. This is a change of focus within the same address, not necessarily a change of audience.
- **“Better things”** contrasts with the thorns, curse, and burning of verses 7-8. Their ministry gives grounds to expect fruit consistent with the salvation set before them.
- **“Things that accompany salvation”** belong with salvation; they do not purchase it. In this national setting, the Hebrew generation could forfeit its opportunity to receive the kingdom, while the particular faithful hearer could still receive the blessings accompanying the promised salvation. National judgment would neither erase that hearer's hope, including resurrection, nor cancel God's future purpose for Israel.
- **“For God is not unrighteous to forget”** grounds encouragement in God's character. Their costly service has not escaped His notice, even if persecution makes it appear unrewarded.
- Love **“toward his name”** takes visible form in practical service to His saints, not merely preaching or holding an office. **“Have ministered ... and do minister”** includes both past faithfulness and continuing care.
- **“You”** addresses the hearers together; **“every one”** in verse 11 brings each hearer's responsibility into the appeal.
- **Hebrews 5:12 and 6:10 address different matters.** The hearers had failed to mature in understanding, yet they had

demonstrated—and continued to demonstrate—love through service to the saints. Their doctrinal sluggishness did not erase their faithful ministry. Verse 11 calls for the same diligence in holding their hope unto the end.

Closely Relevant Cross-References

- **Hebrews 10:32-39** - These hearers had lost goods while retaining an enduring possession; the writer urges patience and expects faith rather than withdrawal.
- **Matthew 10:40-42** - Receiving Christ's messengers and giving even a cup of cold water carry His promise of reward.
- **Matthew 25:40** - The King counts service to **“the least of these my brethren”** as service to Himself, paralleling love toward God's name shown by ministering to His saints.
- **Malachi 3:16-17** - The LORD remembers those who fear Him and identifies them as His own amid coming judgment.

Text And Translation Notes

- **“Have shewed”** translates Greek *enedeixasthe*, aorist middle indicative, second person plural. The aorist views their demonstrated love as a whole; it does not imply that the action occurred only once or has ceased.
- **“Have ministered”** and **“do minister”** translate an aorist active participle and a present active participle of *diakoneō*, to serve: past service and continuing service.
- **“You”** in verse 9 is grammatically plural; verse 11 uses a distributive expression, **“every one of you.”**

What The Passage Does Not Say

- It does **not** withdraw the warning of verses 4-8 or accuse every hearer of having fulfilled it.
- It does **not** make charitable work the price of justification or teach loss of salvation in the age of grace.
- It does **not** promise that faithful Hebrews will escape all suffering or physical death.

Hebrews 6:11-12 - Diligence Instead Of Dullness

And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Exegesis

- **“Every one of you”** brings personal responsibility into the corporate appeal. Confidence concerning the group does not make individual diligence unnecessary.
- **“The same diligence”** calls for the earnestness already evident in their love to be expressed in holding the hope before them.
- **“Full assurance of hope unto the end”** means settled confidence maintained through the waiting. The hope is rooted in Israel’s promised Messianic future, which the following verses connect to Abraham and the exalted Priest.
- **“Not slothful”** answers the diagnosis of being **“dull of hearing”** in 5:11. The interruption about immaturity now moves toward its remedy: trust God’s word and persevere.
- **“Followers”** calls for imitation of faithful people. Abraham supplies the immediate example of faith joined with patience.
- **“Inherit the promises”** concerns receiving the inheritance pledged to Israel’s fathers. The following verses identify the

promise to Abraham; the word does not have identical scope in every passage.

Closely Relevant Cross-References

- **Acts 26:6-7** - Paul describes the hope of God’s promise to the fathers, toward which Israel’s twelve tribes looked.
- **Hebrews 3:6** - The Hebrew house is called to hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope unto the end.
- **Hebrews 10:35-36** - Patience is necessary as the hearers move toward receiving the promise.

Text And Translation Notes

- **“Diligence”** translates Greek *spoudē*, earnestness or zealous effort; speed alone does not express its meaning.
- **“Slothful”** and **“dull”** in 5:11 translate the same Greek adjective, *nōthros*.
- **“Inherit”** translates Greek *klēronomeō*, to receive an inheritance.

What The Passage Does Not Say

- It does **not** make patience passive or permit the hearers to disregard **“unto the end.”**
- It does **not** turn Israel’s covenant inheritance into a formula for earning membership in the Body of Christ.

Hebrews 6:13-15 - Abraham And The Sworn Promise

For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware 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.

Exegesis

- **“For”** introduces Abraham as verse 12’s example of faith and patience.
- **“He could swear by no greater”** declares God’s supremacy. His oath appeals to His own identity and truthfulness. God swears by Himself concerning both blessing and judgment, as the cross-references below show.
- **“Blessing ... multiplying”** recalls Genesis 22, where God swore after Abraham’s testing concerning Isaac. **“Thee”** addresses Abraham personally, while the multiplication includes his descendants. The promise has national and worldwide implications.
- **“After he had patiently endured”** joins faith with waiting. Abraham trusted God’s ability despite contrary circumstances.

- **Why “the promise” cannot mean Isaac’s birth here:** Isaac was already born in **Genesis 21:1-5**. The oath quoted in Hebrews 6:13-14 comes from **Genesis 22:16-18**, after Abraham had offered Isaac and God had spared him. Reading verse 15 within that sequence, Abraham could not then obtain Isaac’s birth as the fulfillment of this oath. He obtained **God’s sworn confirmation of blessing and multiplied seed after the testing concerning Isaac**. This reading distinguishes the confirmed promise he received from the complete inheritance still awaited in **Hebrews 11:13, 39**.

Closely Relevant Cross-References

- **Genesis 21:1-5; 22:15-18** - Isaac is born according to God’s word; later God swears by Himself to bless Abraham and multiply his seed.
- **Romans 4:18-21** - Abraham is persuaded that God can perform what He has promised despite human impossibility.
- **Hebrews 11:13, 17-19** - Abraham’s faith includes confidence in resurrection, yet the patriarchs die without receiving the complete promised inheritance.
- **Luke 1:68-75** - Zacharias connects Israel’s redemption and deliverance with the oath God swore to Abraham.

God swears by Himself (Hebrews 6:13)

Reference	KJV Wording	What God Confirms
Genesis 22:16-18	"By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD"	Blessing Abraham and multiplying his seed—the direct background to Hebrews 6:13-14.
Isaiah 45:23	"I have sworn by myself"	Every knee will bow to Him; His declared word will stand.
Jeremiah 22:5	"I swear by myself, saith the LORD"	The royal house will become desolate if they refuse His words.
Jeremiah 49:13	"For I have sworn by myself"	Judgment and desolation upon Bozrah in Edom.
Jeremiah 51:14	"The LORD of hosts hath sworn by himself"	Babylon will be overwhelmed by invading forces.
Amos 6:8	"The Lord GOD hath sworn by himself"	Judgment upon Jacob's pride and the surrender of the city.

Text And Translation Notes

- **"Blessing I will bless"** repeats the verb root for emphasis, following Genesis 22:17's Hebrew infinitive absolute construction. Compare **Genesis 2:17**: **"dying thou shalt die"** means **"thou shalt surely die."** Both reinforce certainty. Hebrews 6:14 preserves the pattern in Greek with a participle and future verb: God will certainly bless and multiply.

What The Passage Does Not Say

- It does **not** say Isaac was first born after the oath of Genesis 22; his birth precedes that event.
- It does **not** say Abraham possessed the land and every promised national blessing before he died.
- It does **not** turn the Abrahamic blessing into a guarantee of personal wealth for every reader.

Hebrews 6:16-18 - Two Unchangeable Assurances

For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

Exegesis

- Verse 16 explains the familiar purpose of an oath: appeal to a greater authority settles a disputed matter. God uses this recognizable form to strengthen the heirs' assurance.
- **"The immutability of his counsel"** means His declared purpose does not change. God interposes an oath to guarantee that purpose to the heirs; He does not promise that their surroundings will remain undisturbed.
- **"Two immutable things"** are God's promise, expressing His unchanging counsel, and His confirming oath. Neither can fail because it is impossible for God to lie. Judgment upon an unbelieving generation does not cancel His sworn purpose for Israel.
- **"Strong consolation"** is powerful encouragement for people under pressure. Its foundation lies outside their feelings, in what God has said and sworn.
- **"We ... who have fled for refuge"** includes the writer and

responsive Hebrew hearers. They have turned toward the divinely provided hope. Israel's cities of refuge provide a fitting background, but no city is named and a detailed correspondence should not be forced.

Closely Relevant Cross-References

- **Numbers 23:19** - God is not a man who lies; what He has spoken He will perform.
- **Psalms 105:8-11** - God's remembered covenant connects Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the promised land.
- **Romans 11:28-29** - Israel remains beloved for the fathers' sakes; God's gifts and calling are without repentance.
- **Numbers 35:9-15** - Cities of refuge provide God-appointed protection for the unintentional manslayer.

Text And Translation Notes

- **"Confirmed"** translates Greek *mesiteuō*, to interpose or guarantee. The KJV supplies **"it"** for English clarity.
- **"Fled for refuge"** translates a Greek verb meaning to flee for safety; the verb itself does not name a city of refuge.

What The Passage Does Not Say

- It does **not** imply that God needed an oath because His word alone was unreliable.
- It does **not** guarantee kingdom participation to every Israelite regardless of response to the Son.
- It does **not** make every promise in Scripture a promise addressed directly to every reader.

Hebrews 6:19-20 - The Anchor And The Forerunner

*Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;
Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

Exegesis

- **“Which hope”** carries forward the hope of verses 11 and 18. The anchor illustrates the certainty of God’s promised future, rather than introducing a different hope.
- **“An anchor of the soul”** pictures stability amid danger and delay. **“Sure and stedfast”** describes the hope’s reliability, not the absence of storms around the hearers.
- **“Within the veil”** is sanctuary language. Their hope reaches into God’s presence, where Jesus has already entered; its security exceeds that of the visible Temple order facing judgment. His heavenly priesthood secures Israel’s promised future.
- **“The forerunner ... even Jesus”** identifies One who has gone ahead on behalf of those addressed by **“for us.”** His entrance anticipates their access, going beyond Aaron’s restricted annual entrance.
- **“Made an high priest”** concerns His appointment, not the beginning of His existence. **“For ever after the order of Melchisedec”** returns to 5:6, 10 and prepares the hearers for

chapter 7’s priestly exposition.

Closely Relevant Cross-References

- **Leviticus 16:2, 15-17** - Entry within the earthly veil was restricted and required the appointed priestly offering.
- **Psalm 110:1, 4** - The Messiah at God’s right hand is also the sworn Priest for ever.
- **Hebrews 9:11-12, 24** - Christ enters the greater sanctuary by His own blood and appears in heaven itself before God.
- **Hebrews 10:19-22** - Jesus’ blood and priesthood provide the basis for drawing near with full assurance.

Text And Translation Notes

- **“Forerunner”** translates Greek *prodromos*, one who goes ahead. This is its only New Testament occurrence.
- **“Melchisedec”** represents the Greek form of the Hebrew name rendered **“Melchizedek”** in the Old Testament.

What The Passage Does Not Say

- It does **not** reduce hope to optimism or the veil to a symbol of private emotion.
- It does **not** place Jesus in Aaron’s genealogy or authorize a modern succession of Melchisedec priests.
- It does **not** finish the explanation of Melchisedec; chapter 7 develops the priesthood introduced here.

Teaching Summary

One-sentence summary: The Hebrew hearers are called to diligent faith and patience because God’s unchangeable promise and

oath secure their Messianic hope in Jesus, the forerunner and eternal High Priest already within the veil.