

**Hebrews**



**Promises  
Faithfully  
Kept**

# Hebrews 6.13-20 (ESV)

## Confidence in the Promise- Keeping God

There is a noticeable difference between the Triumphant Entrance of Palm Sunday and the Via Delarosa of Good Friday, as different as things were supposed to be and how things are because of sin.

The war in Ukraine is still going on, even though it is not being reported on as much right now by major networks. This last week images started coming through of men, women, and children, having been killed in the streets and their bodies left where they fell. Included in these murders was the dean of a theological seminary. A president of another theological seminary in Ukraine, “For us as a nation, it’s a very difficult time. Seeing what other human beings could do to innocent civilians, women and children, and elderly people is [incomprehensible]. And days will go before we will learn how to live with this reality. We will not be able to understand it or accept this reality, but we will have to learn how to live with that reality.”

He is not accepting this reality as normal or good. He is saying it is horrific and that it should not be normal. But as Christians living in Ukraine, they will endure through even this time.

His statement is not some poor pitiful statement of “It is what it is.” As Christians, we should never just say, “It is what it is,” which simply states how things are. We are the people of an eternal hope, even in the midst of the most horrific atrocities that the world and Satan can throw at us, we are people of an eternal hope. Our circumstances may look dire for a time, but they will not be so when Christ returns. Sin, hatred, death, selfishness, gloom, and doom will have no place in the new heavens and earth.

It may be this way now, but it will not be so when the world is healed and made new. God is at work. Jesus has already risen. The war is won, but there is a battle that must be fought by faith and trust.

We may not be experiencing the trials of the Ukrainian people right now. We should be thankful to God for that, and we should also take advantage of the peace we

mostly experience to prepare for when greater trials do come. We must learn to trust God in confidence.

**13 For when God made a  
promise to Abraham, since he  
had no one greater by whom to  
swear, he swore by himself,**

**14 saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” 15 And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.**

**16 For people swear by  
something greater than  
themselves, and in all their  
disputes an oath is final for  
confirmation.**

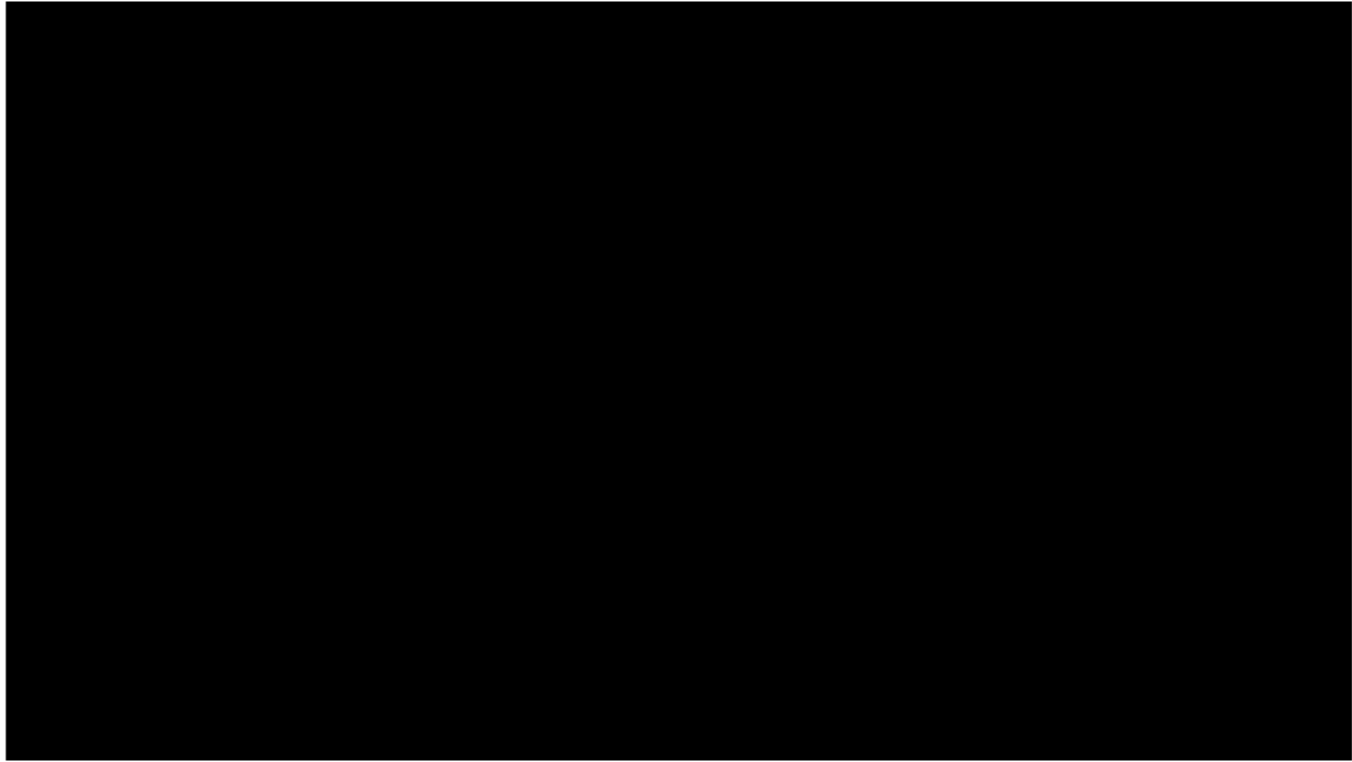
**17 So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath,**

**18 so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.**



**19 We have this as a sure and  
steadfast anchor of the soul, a  
hope that enters into the inner  
place behind the curtain,**

**20 where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.**



Pray

**Have confidence that God will  
keep and hold you through the  
most difficult trials.**

**That kind of confidence is only  
gained by trial.**

1) Have confidence that God will keep and hold you through the most difficult trials.

That kind of confidence is only gained by trial.

Do you trust God?

I should ask, "Do you trust God according to His purposes?"

It is easy to say we trust God when things are easy. We may even begin to think God exists to bring us comfort and luxury.

Our goal should not be easy living nor martyrdom but constant trust in God.

As Proverbs 30:7–9 reads:

Two things I ask of you;

deny them not to me before I die:

8 Remove far from me falsehood and lying;

give me neither poverty nor riches;

feed me with the food that is needful for me,

9 lest I be full and deny you

and say, "Who is the Lord?"

or lest I be poor and steal

and profane the name of my God.

Calm seas do not make one a sailor. God provides what we need daily to trust Him. And the trials that we endure are intended to refine us and solidify our trust in God.

The author of Hebrews implored his readers to consider Abraham, one who had faith in the promise keeping God, even as he had to wait patiently for fulfillment of the promise.

God promised to bless all nations by means of Abraham's offspring, who would be more numerous than the stars of the sky. The near fulfillment of this promise was initiated in the miraculous birth of Isaac. But the author of Hebrews points out that the greater fulfillment Abraham looked forward to and trusted in was the ultimate healing and blessing of all nations by means of one particular later offspring, Christ Jesus.

**See  
Gen. 12:1–3; 15:4–6; 22:16–17**

Put on screen: See Gen. 12:1–3->15:4–6->22:16–17

12 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

15:4 And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.” 5 And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” 6 And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

22:15 And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven 16 and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his[a] enemies,

Blessing/all nations/through your offspring,seed (cf. Gal. 3:16)/as numerous as the stars of the sky/then offer your ONLY son/trusting that God would provide a substitute or raise Isaac from the dead, as God promised to bring about this great multitude through Isaac, the Only Son. In the imagery of the mountain sacrifice of the ram in place of the only son, we get both a foreshadowing of the Temple sacrifices and of the greater and final sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah.

God was telling Abraham that He would bless all nations by means of His only Son, the only Son descended through Abraham, the Only Son of God, the only Son who would be the perfect sacrifice.





Jesus said that he would draw all peoples to himself when He is lifted up. Jesus has been lifted upon the cross and afterward raised and ascended, being exalted by the Father and being given the name that is above every name.

And so now Christ draws all peoples to Himself as the Spirit works within His chosen people to live for and speak about Jesus, especially through difficulty.

Abraham acknowledged the sovereignty of God as the only God and as God over all of creation, even over death.

What if God asked you to stop holding onto the very blessings He has given you, and asked you to trust Him and His purposes?

Comforts  
Dreams  
Public opinion  
Accolades  
Promotions  
Even family and friends



**Place your confidence in the  
immutable, promise-keeping  
God, so that your hope in Christ  
will endure.**

2) Place your confidence in the immutable, promise-keeping God, so that your hope in Christ will endure.

The author of Hebrews says there are two unchangeable things that give us hope that God will keep us and stay with us and that He will set everything right. The latter reason he mentions is an oath. God used what we were familiar with to reassure us. He swore by Himself, as there is no one greater than God. If God were to ever look to anyone else to verify Himself, He would not be God. If we ever look to anything else to verify God's Word, we are saying we do not believe Scripture to be God's Word.

The oath was to reassure us of the former unchangeable reason listed by the author. God is immutable in His character and purpose to glorify Himself by bringing about eternal salvation for His chosen people from among all nations.

Before I pull out the theological dictionary for the word immutable, let's point out who you are not to look to for confidence, particularly yourself.

A stubborn confidence in oneself and one's own purposes says, "I will bless myself by means of myself, regardless of what God and the church want to do."

I know that these truths apply to both men and women, but please permit me to speak to the men for a second.

Are you prepared to lead your family in knowing and trust God?

One command in the NT includes you being prepared to teach and discuss theology and Scripture with your family at home. Are you currently able to answer theological questions your wife has or know the resources on how to answer? Even better, are you asking more questions for your kids to then think about the deep truths of God? Or have you passed this primary responsibility on to someone else?

A failure to plan for that responsibility is a plan to fail. From what I know of the men of this church, none of you are okay with the idea of failing your wife and children.

So, let's move forward in Christian faith in confidence.

Stanley shared last week, "The greatest catalyst to spiritual confidence is spiritual fruitfulness." As you bear fruit of the Spirit, you grow in your confidence....IN GOD. The confidence we seek is to be in God, not in self. Growing in knowledge but not faith or love is dangerous. As J. I. Packer echoes Paul in Knowing God, we must apply truth in love or else we will be tempted to pride.

Still, we are called to know and love God so we CAN'T NOT grow in knowing Him. So we must pursue Him in love and truth. Again from J. I. Packer, "Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of Deity. And while humbling and expanding, this subject is eminently consolatory."

When James calls us to trust God and not doubt, he is not saying to "wish like you really mean it." In that same section, he refers to God as the Father of heavenly lights, in whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." (Jas 1:17)

Immutability refers to the changelessness of God. God does not change.

Timothy George notes that in His changelessness, God "is actively involved with the world he has made and [the Son] entered directly into that world as a squirming baby in a messy manger. God's immutability refers to God's constancy and faithfulness.

Malachi 3:6: I am the Lord, I do not change; therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Immutability refers to God's constancy, reliability, and complete sovereignty over all things, so nothing ever catches him by surprise.

J. I. Packer says there are six things we need to draw out about God's immutability to encourage us in persevering faith in Christ:

-God's life does not change

Jeremiah, Romans, the Psalms, 1 Timothy, and Isaiah all remind us that God is from everlasting to everlasting, the immortal God, who remains the same, who is the first and the last.

The Bible starts with the great presupposition of God's eternal and immutable existence. Because God does not change, we can be confident in His character, for Him to keep His promises according to His purposes.

-God's character does not change

You can get cosmetic surgery to change your looks. You can even pay doctors to mutilate you now. You can also change in your perspective and personality. You may have been bubbly and can become a crank. Or, praise God, you can be a horrible sinner who comes to salvation.

But God is the One who declares His name as, I am who I am. The shortened version is simply I am. Whatever is true of God will always be perfectly true of God at all times into eternity.

-God's truth does not change.

Do you ever have to apologize or retract what you said? Or do you ever send texts that were autocorrected and have to send the edits after?

This week I asked someone in our church if they were okay with something. He responded, "Fraud, so yeah." He meant, "Fraid, so yeah." Thankfully the matter did not pertain to money.

God never has to take anything back. God's Word abides forever and will never return void, the word of our God will stand forever."

God's Word stands true still today. Instead of denying its claims, those who live in sinful pride about their lifestyles affirm all the more its teachings without even realizing it.

John 10:35: Scripture cannot be broken.

-God's ways do not change

God still judges sin and sinful people. He still loves justice and mercy. He still hates uneven scales. He still loves and shows grace to His people. He still forgives sins for those who look to Christ by faith. The way we relate to God in covenant according to His progressively revealed plan may have changed, but this is according to His eternal plan and is consistent with His immutability.

-For God's purposes do not change

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

This is the grace and promise fulfilled that Abraham and all the OT longed to see in fullness.

And because the Son is God, God's Son does not change.

As Heb. 13:8 reassures us, Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Our confidence is not in our ability to persevere. Rather, our confidence is in the One who calls and preserves His people. Because He preserves His people, Christians persevere.

That leads to the final point from today's passage.

**Keep looking to Jesus, our heavenly high priest, so we endure through any suffering.**

3) Be assured of God's sovereign plan to redeem and keep His people by remembering Jesus's heavenly priesthood on your behalf.

When trials come, and they will come if you belong to God, know that you have a High Priest who has already entered into the Father's presence for you, who intercedes with your name on His lips, with your life represented in His scars.

So when trials come, remember that God is sovereign. Remember that correction does not mean rejection. It means loving discipline. What others mean for evil, God will use for good to grow you in Christlikeness, as you look to God in trusting faith.

Martin Luther shared his testimony of how He sought to trust God by simple faith according to the pure gospel. And he and his beliefs were attacked by those who sought to keep people under their control and away from the freedom of salvation by grace through faith. The more he sought to live for Christ, the more he had to depend on Christ, and the more that suffering refined his faith.

"For as soon as God's Word takes root and grows in you, the devil will harry you, and will make a real doctor of you, and by his assaults will teach you to seek and love God's Word. I myself (if you will permit me, mere mouse-dirt to be mingled with pepper) am deeply indebted to my papists that through the devil's raging they have beaten, oppressed, and distressed me so much. That is to say, they have made a fairly good theologian of me, which I would not have become otherwise. And I heartily grant them what they have won in return for making this of me, honor, victory, and triumph, for that's the way they wanted it. ("Preface to the Wittenberg Edition of Luther's German Writings," 1539)

Hard times are used by God to refine your faith in the One who has gone before you. Are you willing to trust God as Abraham did? Are you willing to trust the Father as the Son did? You are able to as God works in you by His Spirit according to faith in Christ.

Yes, there will be wisdom that you grow in as you do, but it will only come about as you trust in the Promise Keeping God.

Take advantage of times of peace and waiting in order to grow in your knowledge and trust of God. Then you will be more equipped to put that trust in practice when the harder times of life do come.

