



Be Greatly Encouraged  
Hebrews 6:13-20  
April 26, 2020

Both we and the Christians addressed by the book of Hebrews have faced difficulties and discouragement, over a long period of time. They were in danger of drifting from their faith or even falling away altogether. Perhaps we are prone to drifting as well or maybe to looking somewhere else for hope. Like them, we could stand to “be greatly encouraged” (v. 18). Question: will you pay attention to what God says to encourage us if it isn’t the kind of encouragement you are hoping for?

#### Our Situation

1. Christians have fled the dangers of sin and the world to find refuge in God (v. 18 ESV, NASB; cf. Psalm 46:1; 62:8).
2. God promises us eternal life. Hebrews calls it entering his rest or eternal inheritance (4:1; 9:15). It is also referred to as eternal life, crown of life, and inheriting the kingdom (Titus 1:1-2; James 1:12; 2:5; 1 John 2:25).
3. These promises still lie in the future. We are traveling toward them in hope. Think of being on a sea voyage.
4. This voyage to our ultimate home can seem really, really long and difficult. There are dangers, and we can drift off course, get discouraged and even give up.
5. But God wants to encourage us to hold on to our hope (lit. translation of v. 18, see ESV, NASB). His way of encouraging us here is not to say he will remove our troubles. Rather, he seeks to encourage us to hold on to our hope in the midst of our troubles. The essence of why we should hold on is that we can

absolutely bank on God keeping his promise to bring us home with him.

#### Reasons Why we can Trust God’s Promise

1. When God promised to bless Abraham, he reinforced it with an oath, and after waiting patiently Abraham received what had been promised (vv. 13-16).
2. We are heirs of that same promise of blessing, and we, too, have received it, in Christ (v. 17; cf. Acts 3:25-26; Romans 4:16; Galatians 3:7-9, 29).
3. God has made a promise and oath to us too. A careful reading of v. 17 suggests this (see ESV, NASB, NRSV), but it’s true even if that is not what v. 17 is saying. That promise is that Jesus is our High Priest who enables us to draw near to God, who constantly intercedes for us, and who saves us to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:11-28). God reinforced this promise with an oath as well, just like he did with his promise to Abraham (7:20-22).
4. Jesus, our forerunner, has already arrived at the final destination to which we are headed (Hebrews 6:19-20).

God is telling us that in times of long difficult struggle, we need to be encouraged to hang onto our hope of being with him forever, and he gives us several reasons for believing the promised hope is true. We yearn for relief now, but instead, God encourages us in the present by pointing to our ultimate relief in the future. On a long voyage, when we face storms, this hope can serve as an anchor for our souls to keep us steady and steadfast, not moved off course by the winds and waves.

Prayerful consideration of the enormous value of what we hope for at the end of our journey will help us see our present troubles in proper perspective (2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Romans 8:18). We also need to recognize that the very troubles we long to be relieved of can actually help us grow in the hope that God is telling us we need to hang onto. This seems ironic, but the Scripture states it clearly (Romans 5:1-5).