

vs.13- the greatest encouragement to faith and patience is the confidence that God's promises are trustworthy

- as the writer has just instructed the readers to imitate those who live by faith and patience, he now gives them a popular example

*Abraham is a good choice as he is the patriarch of the Jews and he lived before the Levitical system of worship

*Gen.15:6- Abraham's life is a great model of faith (And just like Abraham, the persevering faith of the Jewish readers would enable them to inherit the promises of God

-"sware by Himself" - the word "sware"(omnuo) means to affirm or promise in an oath (God is greater than all and put His character and faithfulness on the line with His oath)

vs.14- vs.13 & 14 are quotes from Gen.22:16-17

(And Gen.22:16-17 is a restatement from Gen.12:2-3)

Truth- the fact that God said it assures its fulfillment

-"multiplying" - God continues to fulfill this promise each day as true believers are Abraham's seed- Rom.4:16

vs.15- "promise" - note the singularity here- this refers to Isaac

(In 11:13 it says they died "not having received the promises- plural)

*this means that they didn't live to see it all play out but they saw it begin with Isaac and understood how God would eventually fulfill it (11:13, John 8:56)

Truth- Abraham received the promise but was never told that it would be fulfilled in his lifetime

vs.16- since God accompanied His promise with an oath, the author attempts to show the value of an oath (an oath means that one's integrity and reliability are on the line)

- even when men take an oath, when swearing by something greater than themselves, it is regarded as confirmation (as good as done)

-"end of all strife" - meaning that there is no contradictions, ends all debates

*if a man's oath is taken this seriously, how much more reliable is an oath that's given by God?

vs.17- "heirs of promise" - all believing posterity of Abraham (Jew and Gentile alike)

-"immutability" - (ametathetos) fixed or unalterable

-"counsel" - (boule) purpose

Truth- the complete fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham is Christ- John 8:56 again

*God desired to show His unalterable purpose to all believers so He gave Abraham the promise long ago

vs.18- "two immutable things" - this is God's promise and His oath

*God's promise is based on His unchanging word and the fact that He "cannot lie"

- the Lord bases His oath on His holy character

-"consolation" - (paraklesis) comfort, solace, encouragement

-"fled for refuge" - this phrase is used in indication of the cities of refuge

(Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan)

*if a person accidentally killed someone, they could flee to one of these and escape punishment (This hope would cause them to race to one of these cities without hesitation)

*the writer implies in all this that true refuge is found in Christ

vs.19- "anchor" - this meaning is a rope that keeps a ship tied to a dock

(The dock is immovable and if the ship is "anchored" to it, it won't drift away)

-"within the veil" - this is the place the High Priest would enter to obtain atonement for sins

(This place is known as the dwelling place of God to the Jews)

*Christ went inside the veil and anchored us to the throne of God

vs.20- "forerunner" - he mentions Christ as this as He first entered into the presence of God, offered His blood as our High Priest, and now gives us the hope and assurance that we too can enter into His presence (4:16)