



Hebrews 2-6

NT #45 Bible Reading Class
Pastor: Wentang Wang

B R C
Study the Bible
and follow Jesus

Oak Canyon

W.Wang

A Bible Reader's Conviction

- *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and **training in righteousness**, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16-17, NIV)*

A Blessed Journey

1. *May you study God's Word with a reverent heart and walk in His will.*
2. *May the Lord's Word flourish, and may He add to the church those who are being saved.*
3. *May the Lord bless your days of reading the Scriptures.*

Study the Bible, follow Jesus



The Guiding Principles of BRC



- Christ-Centered
- Bible-Based
- Mission-Minded

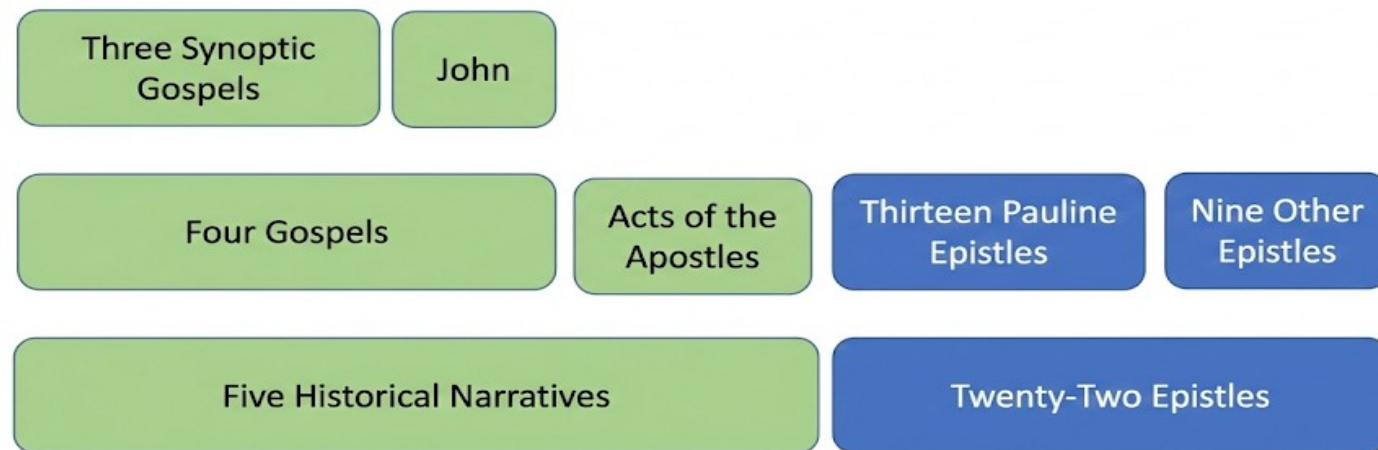
BRC: A Gentleman's Agreement



- *I'll complete weekly reading assignment*
- *I'll watch weekly teaching video in its entirety*
- *I'll complete weekly quiz (closed book)*

The Structure of the 27 Books of the New Testament

- *The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) John*
- *The Fourfold Gospel, Acts, The Thirteen Pauline Epistles, The Other Nine Epistles (General Epistles and Others)*
- *Five Books of Historical Narrative, Twenty-Two Books of Doctrinal Teaching*



The background of the slide is a photograph of a sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with clouds, illuminated from below by the sun, creating a warm orange and yellow glow. In the foreground, there is a dark silhouette of a grassy hill. On the right side of the hill, a large, simple cross is visible, also in silhouette. The text "Better!" is written in a large, black, serif font, and "Hebrews" is written below it in a smaller, black, serif font.

Better!

Hebrews

Hebrews: The Incomparable Christ

• Characteristics of the Book of Hebrews

1. *Strong Old Testament background*

- The book contains extensive quotations from the Old Testament—over fifty direct quotations and many more indirect references. Anyone who reads Hebrews must have a considerable understanding of the Old Testament.*
- Traditionally called “Hebrews,” because the intended recipients were believed to be Hebrew (Jewish) Christians.*

2. *Rich theological content*

- The book covers major theological topics: theology proper, Christology, soteriology, bibliology, angelology, anthropology, ecclesiology, and eschatology.*
- Among these, Christology is the richest.*

Hebrews: The Incomparable Christ

3. *The author is unknown*

- *The book does not identify its author, which has led to much speculation throughout history: some say Barnabas, some say Apollos, others say Paul.*
- *Hebrews is divine truth revealed by God through an unnamed believer. The true author is God. Since God did not preserve the writer's name, we do not need to guess or argue about it—our task is simply to receive the truth in the book.*

Hebrews: The Incomparable Christ

- **Theme of Hebrews**
- **The Superiority of Christ:** *The theme of Hebrews is “the superiority of Christ.” It demonstrates that Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, completed the work of redemption and became the eternal mediator between God and humanity. He is far above angels, Moses, and earthly high priests—He is incomparable.*



Hebrews: The Incomparable Christ

- **“Better”**: *Hebrews* describes Christ’s superiority using the word **“better”**:
- Jesus introduced a **better hope** (7:19)
- Jesus became the mediator of a **better covenant** (7:22)
- Jesus’ ministry is **better**, just as He is the mediator of a **better covenant**, established on **better promises** (8:6)
- Jesus offered a **better sacrifice** (9:23)



Outline of Hebrews

- **Doctrine and Life**

- *Hebrews can be divided into **Doctrine** and **Life**. The doctrinal section focuses on “**The Excellent Christ**,” and the life section focuses on “**The Excellent Christian**.”*

1. **The Excellent Christ, 1:1–10:18**

- A. Christ is the **higher revelation**, 1:1–4

- B. Christ is **more honorable**, 1:5–7:28

- 1) More honorable than angels

- 2) More honorable than Moses

- 3) More honorable than earthly high priests

Outline of Hebrews

1. The Excellent Christ, 1:1–10:18

*c. Christ is **better**, 8:1–10:18*

- 1) A better covenant*
- 2) A better sanctuary*
- 3) A better sacrifice*

Outline of Hebrews

2. The Excellent Christian, 10:19–13:25

- A. Excellent spiritual life, 10:19–40*
- B. Excellent life of faith, chapter 11*
- C. Excellent life of discipline, chapter 12*
- D. Excellent daily life, chapter 13*

Christ Surpasses All These

- **The confusion of Jewish believers**

- *In traditional Jewish thought, the Law was the highest revelation, angels the most exalted spiritual beings, Moses the greatest servant of God, and the high priest the holiest human figure.*

- *Many Jews who believed in Christ still held these deeply rooted ideas. They were unsure whether Christ was beneath these or above them.*

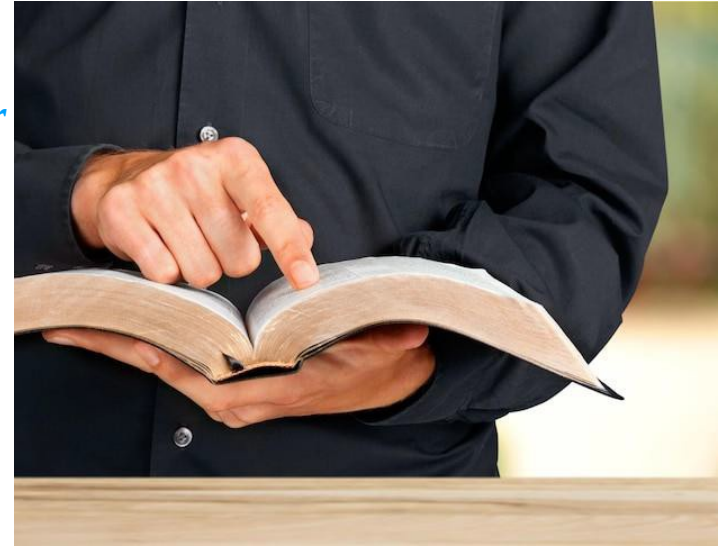
- **Christ's place in the believer's life**

- *The main purpose of Hebrews is to prove that Christ is above all these. Christ is far superior to the Law, angels, Moses, and earthly high priests. Christ is higher and better; therefore, in the believer's life, Christ must hold the highest place.*

- In today's terms: Christ is far above political positions, ideologies, worldly pursuits, theological camps, denominations, and church structures. He is the higher, better, and unique One.*

Introduction to Hebrews, 1:1–4

• *In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is **superior to theirs**. (1:1–4)*



The Excellent Christ (I): Christ as the Higher Revelation

- **The God who speaks**

- *Hebrews 1:1–4 is the introduction, showing that God is a speaking God, a revealing God. Christ, as the Son of God, is God's highest speech and highest revelation.*

- **Two kinds of revelation**

- 1. *In the past, through the prophets*

- 2. *In these last days, through His Son*

- *Christ is far superior to the prophets—He is the higher revelation. The prophets were God's servants preparing the way for Christ. Christ is the Son of God, who personally came to reveal God to us.*

The Excellent Christ (I): Christ as the Higher Revelation

- **Knowing Christ** — *The introduction clearly presents Christ:*

1. Christ's identity

- 1) He is the Son of God*
- 2) He is the radiance of God's glory*
- 3) He is the exact representation of God's being*

The Excellent Christ (I): Christ as the Higher Revelation

2. Christ and creation

- 1) The universe was created through Him (Christ is the Creator, not a creature)*
- 2) He is the heir of all things (Christ is the Lord of all, not part of creation)*
- 3) He sustains all things (Christ upholds all things by His powerful word)*

3. Christ and redemption

- 1) He provided purification for sins*

The Excellent Christ (II): Christ Is More Honorable

1.Christ is more honorable than angels

- **What are angels?**

1. *In relation to God: Angels are God's messengers and servants (1:7)*
2. *In relation to people: Angels are ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation (1:14)*

- **Who is Christ?**

1. *In His nature: Christ is the Son of God (1:5)*
2. *In His coming: Christ is the Firstborn brought into the world (1:6)*
3. *In His kingdom: Christ is the enthroned King (1:8–9)*
4. *In creation: Christ is the eternal Creator (1:10–12)*

Angels Are Ministering Spirits

- *Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (1:14, NIV)*

What We Have Heard, 2:1–4

• Therefore, we must pay the most careful attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. The message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment. How shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.(2:1–4)



The Excellent Christ (II): Christ Is More Honorable

1.Christ is more honorable than angels

- **The message of angels vs. the message of Christ**

1. *The message of angels is the Law*

- *The message spoken by angels (the Law) was binding*
- *Everyone who violated the Law received the punishment they deserved*

2. *The message of Christ is salvation*

- *First preached by the Lord Himself, then by those who heard Him*
- *If those who violated the Law were punished, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?*

Christ Identifies with Humanity

1. Christ identifies with humanity in human nature

- *Human beings are a little lower than the angels*
- *Christ became human, making Himself for a little while lower than the angels*

2. Christ identifies with humanity in suffering

- *Christ became flesh and blood and went through death*
- *Christ rose from the dead and destroyed the devil who holds the power of death*
- *To free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death*

Christ Identifies with Humanity

3. Christ identifies with humanity in temptation

- Christ was tempted and is able to help those who are being tempted*
- Christ became like His brothers and sisters in every way, in order to become a merciful and faithful high priest before God*

A Merciful and Faithful High Priest

- *For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. (2:17, NIV)*

Christ and Moses, 3:1–6

• *Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory. (3:1–6)*



The Excellent Christ (II): Christ Is More Honorable

2.Christ is more honorable than Moses

1.Who is Moses?

- 1) Moses is God's servant, faithful in God's house*
- 2) Moses is part of the house*
- 3) Moses is a witness to "what would be spoken later"*

2. Who is Christ?

- 1) Christ is the Son of God, ruling over God's house*
- 2) Christ is the builder of the house*
- 3) Christ is the fulfillment of "what would be spoken later"*

Entering God's Rest

1. Two Joshuas

- 1) *The first Joshua is **Joshua** son of Nun, Moses' assistant*
- 2) *The second Joshua is **Jesus**, the Son of God, Moses' Lord (The Greek name "Jesus" is the same as the Hebrew "Joshua")*



Entering God's Rest

2. Two kinds of rest

- 1) *The first rest is Canaan, the resting place God prepared for His people Israel*
- 2) *The second rest is salvation, the resting place God prepared for His people, the Christians (4:9)*





Entering by faith

1. They shall never enter God's rest (4:3, 5)

- *Many Israelites angered God in the wilderness; therefore God did not allow them to enter His rest (the Promised Land), 3:7–11*
- *They could not enter because of unbelief, 3:19*



Entering by faith

2. We must make every effort to enter that rest (4:11)

- *Those who have believed enter that rest, 4:3*
- *Anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their own works (not by works, but by faith in the Lord), 4:10*
- *We must make every effort to enter that rest (obedience to God), so that no one falls by following their example of disobedience, 4:11*

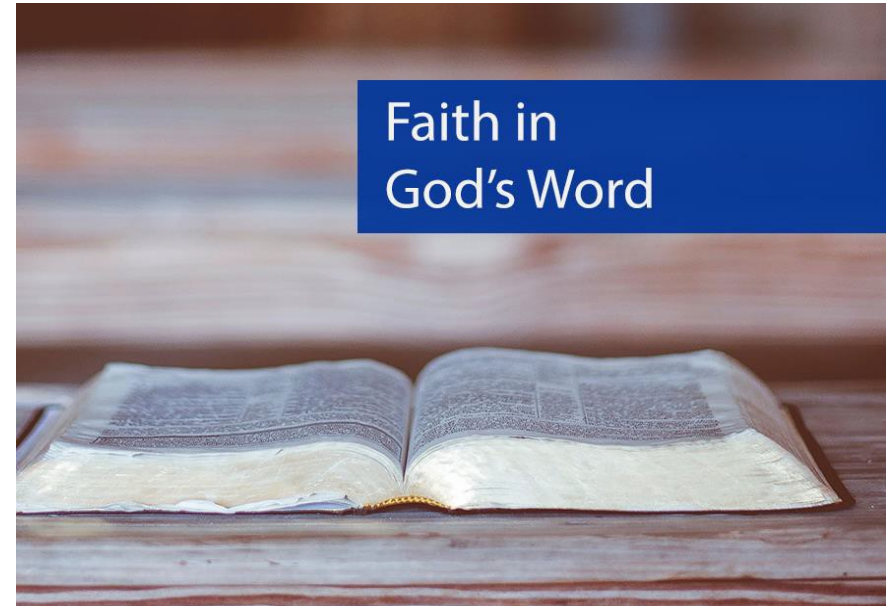
Mixing God's Word with Faith

1. Faith expresses itself in obedience to God's Word

- *Entering God's rest requires faith*
- *Joshua obeyed God's Word, therefore he entered God's rest*

2. Hearing the Word requires faith

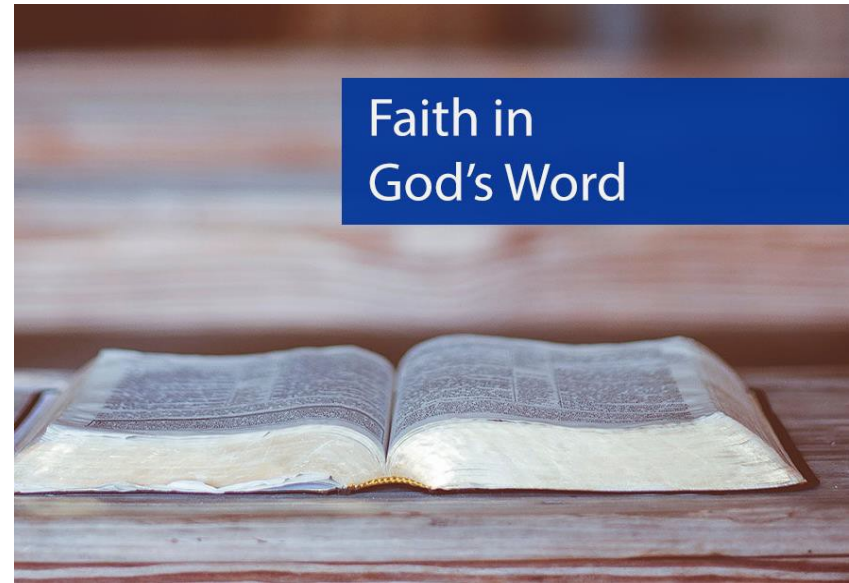
- *Some heard the Word but it did them no good, because they did not combine it with faith, 4:2*



Mixing God's Word with Faith

3. God's Word is living and effective

- *God's Word is the living Word, with the power to pierce and discern the heart*
- *Reading God's Word is like coming before God; everything in our hearts is laid bare before "the Lord with whom we have to do"*



The Word of God Is Alive and Active

- **The Word of God is Alive and Active**

- *For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (4:12-13, NIV)*

Jesus Our High Priest

• *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (4:14-16, NIV)*

Holding Firm to the Word We Confess — Entering the Final Rest: The Throne of Grace

1. Holding firm to the word we confess

- *This word is the gospel, 4:2, 6*
- *To confess is to believe; holding firmly to the gospel brings us into God's rest*

2. Coming before the throne of grace — the final rest

- *The final rest is not Canaan, but God Himself. By faith we enter the Most Holy Place and come before God's throne of grace*

3. Through the great high priest who has ascended into heaven

- *Only the high priest may enter the Most Holy Place*
- *For all who believe the gospel, Jesus is their high priest; through Him they may come boldly before the throne of grace*

The Excellent Christ (II): Christ Is More Honorable

3.Christ is more honorable than earthly high priests

- *Three things about the high priest:*
 1. ***The qualification of the high priest — God's calling***
 - *The high priest is chosen from among the people.*
 - *This honor of being high priest is not something anyone takes upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was.*
 2. ***The duty of the high priest — to act on behalf of the people in matters related to God***
 - *Appointed to act on behalf of the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.*
 3. ***The sympathy of the high priest: understanding human weakness***
 - *He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and going astray, because he himself is subject to weakness.*

Two Kinds of High Priests



1. The earthly high priest chosen from among people, 5:1

- 1) *A descendant of Aaron*
- 2) *A priest only temporarily*
- 3) *According to the order of Aaron (lesser than Abraham)*
- 4) *Must offer sacrifices for his own sins, 5:3*

Two Kinds of High Priests



2. The great high priest who has ascended into heaven, 4:14

- 1) The Son of God*
- 2) A priest forever*
- 3) According to the order of Melchizedek (greater than Abraham)*
- 4) Does not need to offer sacrifices for His own sins, 4:15*

Two Kinds of Christians

•in the order of Melchizedek. We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who **lives on milk**, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But **solid food** is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (5:11–14, NIV)



Two Kinds of Christians

1. Infants who drink milk

- 1) Unable to receive deeper truths (“*you no longer try to understand*”)
- 2) Though they have studied, they remain at the elementary level (“*need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again.*”)
- 3) Dependent on others to feed them (“*lives on milk*”)
- 4) Not familiar with the truth (“*not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness*”)



Two Kinds of Christians

2. Adults who eat solid food

- 1) Able to study, listen to, and absorb God's Word*
- 2) Their minds are trained and discerning in God's truth*
- 3) Able to distinguish good from evil*



Move Beyond the Elementary Teachings of Christ

- *Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. (6:1–2, NIV)*

Growing to Maturity

1. Leaving the elementary teachings of Christ — including these six items:

- 1) Repentance from dead works: turning away from sin*
- 2) Faith in God*
- 3) Various baptisms: from John's baptism to baptism in the name of the Lord*
- 4) Laying on of hands: appointing overseers and deacons, establishing ministry*
- 5) Resurrection of the dead*
- 6) Eternal judgment*

2. Pressing on to maturity

Apostasy and Perseverance

- *The following two conditions are the theme of Hebrews chapter 6:*

1. Apostasy

- *Falling away from the truth (6:6), even after being enlightened and experiencing grace, yet ultimately not believing.*

2. Perseverance

- *Patient endurance (6:15), believing in the Lord throughout life, never turning back, holding firmly to the truth until the end.*



Apostasy

• It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace. Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned. (6:4–8, NIV)

Those Who Fall Away

- **Characteristics of Those Who Fall Away :**

1. **Enlightened** — *they once heard the gospel, the true light (John 1:5)*
2. **Tasted the heavenly gift** — *experienced God's goodness*
3. **Shared in the Holy Spirit** — *felt His conviction or power*
4. **Tasted the goodness of God's Word** — *found it pleasant*
5. **Understood the powers of the coming age** — *aware of future judgment*

Those Who Fall Away

- **Two views:**

1. *They were Christians who later abandoned the faith.*
2. *They were never true believers—though exposed to the gospel, church, or even baptism, they never truly believed.*

- **Our understanding:**

1. *The Lord keeps His own sheep; none can snatch them away. True believers never lose salvation.*
2. *This passage refers to those who almost believed, seemed to believe, but never truly believed.*



Perseverance

• Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case—the things that have to do with salvation. God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. (6:9–12, NIV)

Those Who Persevere

- **Believers must persevere:**

1. *Because God has not forgotten you, 6:10*

2. *Because we have good examples*

- *“Imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.” (6:12)*

- *Abraham persevered and received what was promised, 6:15*

3. *Because of God’s promise and oath*

- *Through these two unchangeable things (God’s promise and oath), God cannot lie, giving strong encouragement to those who take hold of the hope set before them, 6:18*

Those Who Persevere

- **Believers must persevere:**

- 4. *Because Jesus Christ is our hope*

- *We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure, entering the inner sanctuary behind the curtain. Jesus, our forerunner, has entered on our behalf, becoming a high priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. (6:19–20)*

We Have This Hope as an Anchor

- We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. (6:19–20, NIV)*
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