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Recommended Citation

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THE NEVER CHANGING GOD

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 44
HEBREWS 6:12-17

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God is so great that he cannot change. God is perfect, therefore, no improvement can ever be made in God. This study will carry us back to the essence of God and will remind us again and again just how great God really is. In fact, God has to be great and perfect in order to put up with us and to tolerate us.

"I cannot do it alone
The waves run fast and high
And the fogs close chill around
And the light goes out in the sky;
But I know that we two
Shall win in the end
Jesus and I.

Coward, wayward and weak
I change with the changing sky
Today so eager and brave,
Tomorrow, not caring to try;
But he never gives in,
So we two shall win
Jesus and I.

I cannot row it myself
My boat on the raging sea
But beside me sits another
Who pulls and steers with me
And I know that we two
Shall come safe into port
His child and He.

Strong and tender and true,
Crucified once for me!
Never will he change I know,
Whatever I may be!
But all he says I must do,
Ever from sin to keep free.
We shall finish our course
And reach home at last--
His child and He."

No, God never changes. After we have been with him a million years, he will still be the perfect God. The Scripture we are about to study will help us again get into our minds a proper image of God and how he operates in dealing with his people.

HEBREWS 6:12 "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." "That" is a conjunction hina plus me and is used to introduce a negative purpose clause along with the subjunctive of the verb. "That ye be not" is the aorist middle, subjunctive of ginomai which means "to become something you were not before." A good way to translate a negative purpose clause is by the word "lest." So this means "lest ye become something that you were not before." This aorist tense is a constantive aorist and gathers into one whole the entire action of your life. The word for "slothful" is nothros and refers to the neglect of Bible Doctrine. This is negative volition toward doctrine. This is a permissive middle and means the believer allows himself to slip into the neglect of doctrine. (We saw this same thing in Heb. 5:11.)

Now no believer can afford to do this. Such factors as boredom, loneliness, disillusionment, a frantic search for happiness, frustration and self-pity can lead to the neglect of doctrine. A frantic search for happiness leads to an emotional revolt in the soul and always results in our being indifferent to Bible doctrine.

The Trouble Spot

These reactor factors cause negative volition toward doctrine, and this emotional revolt in the soul puts our spiritual life in a deep freeze and develops a vacuum in the soul. Into this vacuum is sucked all

kinds of strange and inaccurate doctrine. As a result there is a total blackout in the soul. In the Bible this is called darkness or hardness of heart.

How To Lose The Indwelling Christ

At the moment of your salvation, Christ came into your soul to start a fellowship relationship with you. We call it "occupation with Christ." But once we start neglecting doctrine we drive Christ out and now he is on the outside knocking. (Rev. 3:20) With Christ on the outside, the stage is set for the neglect of Bible Doctrine. Slothful here means a neglect of doctrine.

The Opposite Of Slothful

The word "followers" is the nominative plural of mimetes and really means "imitators." "Of them" refers to the Old Testament saints of faith. To avoid the neglect of Bible Doctrine, we should become imitators of these great saints of faith. God could have used many, but for his illustration here, he used Abraham. Abraham is a pattern for Old Testament salvation and spirituality. Abraham is also well documented in the New Testament in Romans 4 and James 2 and here in our passage.

Super Grace Is Possible

If a believer will stay faithful to Scripture he can very quickly attain to super grace. The first characteristic of the super grace life is occupation with Christ. That's the cup into which God will pour. This is the illustrations God will use here in explaining this to us. Abraham will not only be the father of a new race, the Jews, but he will also be the father of many Gentile nations. The word is ethnos and this means Gentile or Arab nations. (Genesis 25:1-4)

Remember, the word ethnos is never used of Jews, but of non-Jewish people. Abraham became the father of a new race, and Moses became the father of the new nation, the Jews.

The key to the life of Abraham was his sexual super grace blessing. The dominant key to the life of Moses was leadership. Then when David came along, the dominant key to his life was Kingship and Leadership. Much later on the key in the life of Jeremiah was tremendous blessings from God in his old age. The key to Paul's super grace blessing was doctrine. Paul was the greatest doctrine man of all time.

It Came Through Faith

Thus far this verse has said, "Lest ye become neglectful of Bible Doctrine, but instead you should become imitators of them (the super grace type) through faith. Now this is dia plus the genitive of pistis. Now pistis does mean faith, but it also means the sum total of that which is believed so it means doctrine. Here it means faith-rest and living by doctrine.

It Came Through Patience.

This word "patience" is from makrothumia and it means consistency and stability. (You can't come to Bible class for a while and then fade out.)

Abraham Up And Down

Now Abraham should have reached this super grace status when he was about 40, but he didn't reach it until he was 99. He was a lot like many of our people are today. They are all hot for doctrine for a

while and then fade away. They are all out, and then they flop. That was the exact picture of Abraham. He was up and down, up and down for a period of over 50 years, but by the grace of God, he finally made it. God can't dish out all he has in store for you unless you have the stability to stick with it. Millions of Christians put the cart before the horse and they run ahead of God and won't wait to learn his truth. This verse is saying to us that God is perfect and anything he provides for us is perfect.

The Inheritance

Abraham finally received the inheritance, and you will too if you remain steadfast. "Inherit" is the present, active, participle of kleronomai. This is an aristic present and it means if you keep at it all of a sudden you are there, you have arrived at super grace. This is accomplished by faithfulness. The promises have been true all along but at last you have entered into them.

Correct translation of verse 12

"Lest you become apathetic toward doctrine, but become instead imitators of them (the super grace type) the ones who through faith (learning doctrine) and consistency acquire the possession of the promises." That word "promises" is from epaggelia and it refers to divine perfect promises. God had promises "multiplying, I will multiply thee" and finally Abraham got out of the way and let God accomplish his purpose.

Summary

1. This illustration is taken from Abraham who was in a different dispensation from ours and will be in a different resurrection battalion.
2. However, we are in the royal priesthood, and our super grace blessings are even greater than the super grace blessings of Abraham.
3. However, the super grace promises applied to Abraham just as they apply to us today.
4. Abraham is used as a pattern for Old Testament salvation. Romans 4:1-16 and Romans 4:22-25.
5. Out of this illustration of Abraham will come the two immutable things--
 - a. The oath of God in verse 13.
 - b. The promise to Abraham in verse 14.
 - c. Then verse 15 will tell how Abraham rose to super grace status.

HEBREWS 6:13 "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself," We have the word "for" from gar to alert us that a new subject will be discussed in this verse. Persistence in learning doctrine is the key to our objective. This is a temporal particle and means "For when". Next we have Ho Theos meaning "The God." He is the one who handles all super grace blessings. Next we have "having promised", and this is an aorist, middle, participle of epangello and really means "God produces something."

The Highest Authority

We will see God swear by himself because he was the greatest authority. "Because" is from epei, "he had no one greater by which to swear." "He had" is the imperfect, active, indicative of echo and it means God had something that no one else in the universe had. "By whom" is kata oudeis and this is a genitive of description. There was no one greater

than God and since he swore by the greatest, he would swear by himself. The words "He sware" is the aorist, active, infinitive of omnuo. There was no one greater by whom he could swear. There was no one in angelic creation greater and no human being greater, so God chose to swear by himself. He chose to keep the promises based upon his own name.

"He sware by himself" is the aorist, active, indicative of omnuo and is a culminative aorist and it means this is the way every one of his promises comes out--just exactly like he made them.

God Is The Solution

Since God is the solution to our problems, he is going to keep the oaths based upon his own name and character. Anything that God provides in super grace is worth waiting for. In this verse God has put his own character on the line. "By himself" comes from kata heautou and this is the highest source there is. Our blessings, our salvation, our provision, our everything comes from him.

Summary

1. Here are two immutable things: the oath based on the character of God, and the promise that he would carry out that oath. The oath is related to his person (who he is) and the promise is related to his message (what he says).
2. This solemn oath specifies just who he is--the greatest there is has placed it all on the line.
3. Since there was no one greater, he had to make the oath in his own name and upon his own person.
4. God's oath is always perfect and permanent.
5. This has an analogy to the pastor-teacher. He represents the perfect person with the perfect message. God's authority is his perfect character. The pastor-teacher's authority is his spiritual gift which came from God. God's message is the perfect authoritative Word of God and the pastor's message is to unveil that perfect message.

HEBREWS 6:14 "Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." "Saying" is the present, active, participle of lego. This is a static present and it means the statement of fact. Anything that comes out of the mouth of God is a fact. This is a temporal participle so it should read, "When he was saying." This is a quote from Genesis 22:16-17. Then we have the word "surely" but it means definitely from eimen.

BLESSING, I WILL BLESS THEE

MULTIPLYING, I WILL MULTIPLY THEE

This is the second immutable thing, this is the promise. A perfect promise made by a perfect character.

This oath and promise, the two immutable things, are based on the decree of God made in eternity past. These two particles eimen translated here "surely" mean this--"Just as definitely and as surely as I am God."

The Blessing

The word "blessing" is a present, active, participle of eulogeo. This is a tendential present and is used for an action that is purposed by God. God promised it quite a long time before it happened. He promised he would be the father of a new race, the Jews. He promised that he would be the father of many Gentile nations. He also promised that he would be the father of us all and this refers to his spiritual seed. This tendential present means an action that hasn't taken place when spoken, but sure to come about. The participle means that this is a fact of future accomplishment.

Now we move to the future tense of eulogeo and it is translated "I will bless." This is a nomic future, and means a future promise to be fulfilled by God, so certain that we accept it as already having been accomplished.

The Amazing Wonder Of God

God's decree and omniscience in eternity past took into account the stumbling and failures of Abraham, but he finally arrived at 99 at the place God wanted him to be, and God's foreknowledge had taken it all into his divine computer and it came out right on the second, not a minute early or late.

THE DOCTRINE OF CATEGORICAL GRACE

THE CATEGORY

THE INVOLVEMENT

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. <u>Salvation grace.</u>
This comes by faith in Christ. Man's volition is involved. This is non-meritorious volition resulting in faith in Christ.</p> | <p>The involvement is all the Trinity has been able to do in saving man. This is the strategic victory in the Angelic Conflict.</p> |
| <p>2. <u>Living Grace</u>
This involves all that the Trinity must do to keep us alive in the Devil's world.</p> | <p>Our own volition is not involved here, the sovereignty of God does this for us.</p> |
| <p>3. <u>Super Grace</u>
This is based on James 4:6. It is "Greater grace" but it means super grace. This is maximum growth and your volition is involved.</p> | <p>The involvement here in this is man's volition beamed toward the Word of God.</p> |
| <p>4. <u>Surpassing grace</u>
This is Ephesians 2:7. This is all that God will do for us in eternity.</p> | <p>No volition of ours is involved in any way at this point.</p> |

Summary

1. This part of the promise refers to a super grace blessing for Abraham. He couldn't have super grace blessings until he reached super grace status.
2. The super grace blessing was sexual prosperity which resulted in the Birth of Isaac--and God threw in prosperity, fame, promotion.
3. His sexual prosperity came to him when he was 99.

4. Genesis 17:1 shows that Abraham never gave up--he kept on keeping on.
5. This is so important that in the New Testament Romans 4 and James 2 both discuss this experience of Abraham.
6. There is more to this super grace blessing--Abraham will have a land and a city. This is part of the surpassing grace. Hebrews 11:8-9

This verse goes on to say "Multiplying" and this is a present, active, participle of plethuno. This also is a tendential present, and it means a thing which is still in the future, but certain in reality. Then we have "I will multiply" and this is a nomic future of plethuno and it means that though it hadn't come to pass, it is a certain fact in the mind of God.

HEBREWS 6:15 "And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." "And so" come from two conjunctions kai and houtos and should be translated "and thus." Our life is exactly on this same basis.

- a. God takes an oath that he has certain things for you.
- b. Then he goes on and fulfills that promise.

"After he had patiently endured" is an aorist, active, participle of makrothumao and this refers back to verse 12 where we had makrothumia the noun. Patiently means faith and persistence. Here it means "having persisted." This is more than 50 years of effort and faithfulness. "He obtained" is an aorist, active, indicative of epitugchano and means to obtain, to reach a goal, to cross the goal line. This is the culminative aorist. He had arrived.

Summary

1. Persistence in the realm of faith leads to ultimate victory in the Angelic Conflict.
Behind all this is the perfect plan of God. This is accomplished by our attitude toward the perfect Word of God. This is Romans 8:28 taking over in our lives. All things "blended together."
2. This tactical victory includes maximum love for Jesus Christ and means occupation with Christ.
3. This means that exactly the same kind of victory God had for Abraham he has for us also.
4. Abraham persisted in spite of many trips into reversionism.
5. God will see that you make it to super grace if you don't give up.
6. Abraham actually took hold of two immutable things--The oath and the promise.

HEBREWS 6:16 "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." This "for" from gar changes the subject to oaths that men take. This is a present, active, indicative of omnuo and instead of swearing by themselves, they swear

by a high power, namely God. "By the greater is kata megas. The word for "oath" is horkos and the words "for conformation" come from eis bebaiosis and means "with reference for guaranteeing."

So this verse correctly translated says--

"For mankind constantly takes an oath by the greater (by God) and to the opposition, to them such an oath with reference to guaranteeing security is the termination of all opposition."

HEBREWS 6:17 "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:" Wherein should be translated "by means of which." Then we have "The God" from Ho Theos, and this is with reference to his person. The word "willing" is a present, active, participle of boulomai and it means to decree. This is a present, active, participle and it means this is permanent truth and this is always the purpose of God. "More abundantly" is from perissos and it means "beyond this." God quoted these decrees, but he has many far beyond these that are not written down here. God stopped quoting these decrees when the Canon of Scripture was finished, but there are decrees for you just as real and as valid as are these for Abraham.

God's Demonstration

The words "to show" are an aorist, active, infinitive of epideiknumi and it means to demonstrate. "Unto the heirs" includes you and me and every believer of the Church Age. The word for "heirs" is kleronomos and that means you.

We come in on these immutable promises.

Then we have the word "confirmed" and this is from the aorist, active, indicative of mesiteuo and it means confirmed. You have a confirmed reservation, a guaranteed reservation, even if you are a late arrival. A correct translation of this verse--

"By means of which oath The God, sovereignly decrees, to the heirs of the royal priesthood the unchangeableness of his decree, and he guarantees it by means of an oath."

Summary

1. Here are the guarantees God made to all royal priests, including you and me.
2. You are a royal priest, so live like it.
3. These promises from God are guaranteed to you by two immutable things--
 - a. The oath which refers to the person of God.
 - b. The promise which refers to the promise of God.
4. This double guarantee is backed up by who God is. So don't you dare doubt the reality of God's perfection and his perfect promises.