


# JESUS OVER EVERYTHING

HEBREWS READING GUIDE

WEEK 11



# JESUS OVER EVERYTHING

WEEK 11  
MARCH 27, 2023



CHURCH IN THE SQUARE

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EVERY DAY ...

... A PASSAGE TO READ,

... SOME COMMENTS TO CONSIDER,

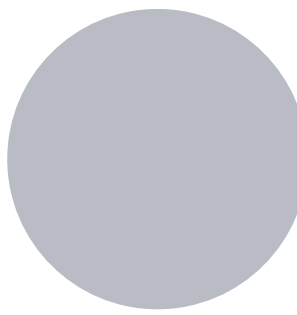
... THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK,

... A PRAYER TO PRAY.




# WEEK 11

## HEBREWS 6:9-20




**DAY 1**  
**HEBREWS 6:9-12**  
WHAT GOD REMEMBERS AND  
FORGETS  
**5**



**DAY 2**  
**HEBREWS 6:13-15**  
GOD MAKES AND KEEPS PROMISES  
**7**

**DAY 3**  
**HEBREWS 6:16**  
WORDS THAT BORROW POWER  
**9**

**DAY 4**  
**HEBREWS 6:17-18**  
ENCOURAGEMENT IS ABOUT INTIMACY  
**11**



**DAY 5**  
**HEBREWS 6:19-20**  
HOPE ANCHORS THE SOUL  
**13**

# DAY 1 WHAT GOD REMEMBERS AND FORGETS

## First read Hebrews 6:9-12

God has a selective memory. Theologians debate what this means experientially. But biblically speaking, it's clear God "forgets" some things and others he "remembers." God tells the prophet, Jeremiah, **"For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more"** (Jeremiah 31:34). In Hebrews we're told God doesn't **"overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints"** (v.10). God forgets sin. He remembers righteousness.

At first blush this may seem like a license to be spiritually sluggish (v.12). *If God only remembers the good and forgets the bad, then why suffer through obedience?* Well, it's necessary to keep in mind that when we talk about God's memory we're talking about relationship. His memory tells us our relationship is built on love. Likewise, forgetting isn't about ignorance. It's not as if God becomes cognitively unaware of our sins. Rather he does something about them. He forgives. Author Tim Keller explains "To forgive someone's debt to you is to absorb the debt yourself" (*Forgive*, 6). That's relationship.

Remembering isn't about merit. It's about grace. The writer has just warned his readers about falling away (vv.4-8). But now he assures the "beloved" that "better things" are secured for them through this salvation (v.9). That's because in his most profound act of remembering and forgetting, God in Christ died in our place and for our sins. He fully absorbs our spiritual debt. That's why he could forget our sins—he paid for them. Moreover, in his love, we find strength when we remember **"those who through faith and patience inherit the promises"** (v.12b).

# DAY 1 WHAT GOD REMEMBERS AND FORGETS

1. How does God's memory demonstrate his love?
2. What do you wish you could "forget" about yourself? How does God's selective memory bring your comfort and encouragement?
3. Why is the cross God's most profound act of remembering and forgetting?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*Thank you for forgetting my sin, not out of ignorance but out of love. Help me to see myself the way you do. Help me to treat others the way you treat me.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

# DAY 2 GOD MAKES AND KEEPS PROMISES

## First read Hebrews 6:13-15.

The Lord promises the patriarch Abraham, ***“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”*** (Genesis 22:17). And God is true to his word. Through Abraham (and his wife, Sarah), God gives birth to the nation of Israel---the people from whom Jesus is born and to whom Jesus is given. In other words, Abraham ***“obtained the promise”*** of becoming a father, a nation even, which blesses every nation (v.15 and Genesis 12:7).

This is not a happenstance. This is who God is. This is what God does. God makes and keeps promises. And we learn something about his character in both acts.

In making promises God makes himself known and invites us--his people who take him at his word--into his purposes. In keeping promises the Lord demonstrates his faithfulness and thus helps us see the virtue of trusting him. ***“Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him,”*** says the writer of Proverbs (Proverbs 30:5).

This is why God ***“swore by himself”*** when he promises Abraham (v.13). No one is greater than him and no one else can do what he does--he always fulfills what he forecasts. Therefore the writer of Hebrews continues to invite us, his readers, to trust and patiently wait for God to bring about his purpose of salvation. God's Word needs no added power because nothing is more trustworthy than the God who makes and keeps promises (see 2 Corinthians 1:20).

# DAY 2

## GOD MAKES AND KEEPS PROMISES

1. What divine promise do you need to remember this week?
2. Are you waiting patiently and trusting the Lord in this season? Why or why not?
3. How does the gospel give us confidence that God makes and keeps promises?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*Help me to remember that you've promised*

*\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Give me faith to believe that what you've promised, you will do.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*



# DAY 3

## WORDS THAT BORROW POWER

### First read Hebrews 6:16.

One of the ways humans reflect God's nature is by making promises. Whether we're sworn into a governmental office, swear to tell the truth before a judge, or exchange vows in a wedding ceremony, we make promises. But unlike God, when we make promises we have a natural impulse to borrow power from outside of ourselves. We do this to give our words more confidence. Presumably, our words on their own are less believable.

In American culture, these additives are still very religious. We put a hand on the Bible. We swear to God. Or, more colloquially, we swear on a family member's grave. Essentially when people **"swear by something greater than themselves"** they're accepting accountability to a higher power (v.16a see also v.13).

In Jesus' day, Jewish people swore by heaven, earth, the temple, Jerusalem, or even the Lord's name (*NTC*, 173). Words that borrow greater power are meant to give assurance. But Jesus forbade swearing by anything. He says simply, **"Do not take an oath at all ... Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil"** (Matthew 5:34,37). In other words, just tell the truth. *Why? What distinction is Jesus making for his followers and the rest of the world?*

Well, I think it's because in Christ our words don't need to borrow power because our whole lives are in his power. Our whole being is "sworn to God" through Christ and we've been filled with his Spirit and power (see Acts 1:8).

# DAY 3 WORDS THAT BORROW POWER

1. Why do you think God cares so much about the truth?
2. Are you being true to your word right now?
3. How does the gospel empower us to be true to our word?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*Forgive my sin. Too often I'm bound by a worldly value of borrowing power by worldly means instead of simply living with the faithfulness and integrity of Christ. Help me to walk in wholeness today, in the way and power of your Son.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

# DAY 4 ENCOURAGEMENT IS ABOUT INTIMACY

## First read Hebrews 6:17-18.

Usually, when we think about encouragement we think about reassuring gestures and compliments—which may or may not be true! While kind words may lift spirits over minor obstacles, suffering demands something more substantial. Fortunately, the writer of Hebrews has something else in mind.

God makes a promise to encourage his people. He speaks an oath so that **“we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement”** (v.18). His promises are motivated by encouragement. In the original language, encouragement means *to call someone to oneself*. You see, encouragement isn’t about kind words. It’s about intimacy. Specifically, it’s about drawing near to someone in suffering.

God wants to be close to us. He wants to give us his strength and love. He even wants to identify with us. He wants to be our refuge so we can **“hold fast to the hope set before us”** (v.18). That’s why in Christ we are eternally encouraged. Because in Christ God doesn’t just say a kind word, he becomes the incarnate word (see John 1:14).

# DAY 4 ENCOURAGEMENT IS ABOUT INTIMACY

1. What does God's intimacy reveal about his trustworthiness?
2. How do you need to be encouraged this week? Who in your community needs encouragement?
3. What aspect of the good news do you find encouraging this week?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*(Inhale.) You are true.*

*(Exhale.) Help me to trust.*

*(Inhale.) You do not lie.*

*(Exhale.) Help me to trust.*

*(Inhale.) You do not fail.*

*(Exhale.) Help me to trust.*

*(Inhale.) You draw near.*

*(Exhale.) Help me to trust.*

*(Inhale ... Exhale.)*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

# DAY 5

## HOPE ANCHORS THE SOUL

### First read Hebrews 6:19-20.

Prevailing culture shifts and changes like the weather at sea. Paul warns his readers in Ephesus not to be **“tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine”** (Ephesians 4:14). One moment we’re pulled to call a political leader a *communist*. The next we’re pushed to call another a *fascist*. Like rain, we’re drenched with the sorrow of war and the shame of comparing ourselves to the latest influencer. Amidst the chaos and confusion, we long for stability and hope.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us, in Christ, we have **“a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul”** (v.19). Specifically our hope is that Jesus has entered the presence of God, **“behind the curtain”** and advocated **“on our behalf”** (v.19,20). Jesus is our hope. He is our peace.

Whatever storm or story pulls and pushes us in this life, we are held fast by the truth and beauty of the Savior who makes peace (see Romans 5:1). Jesus offers peace that persists amidst the storm. It’s the eye of a tornado; a place of calm and rest, though the world spins out of control all around us. The Lord does not always change our location or circumstances. In fact, Jesus promises we’ll have trouble in this life (see John 14:33). But in the trouble, he always transforms us. He makes us new even as we wait for the world around us to be made new. The world is being redeemed, but we’ve already found peace.

In Christ, you’re safe and can be at rest. He is the anchor of our soul.

# DAY 5


## HOPE ANCHORS THE SOUL

1. How does this passage teach us about God's sovereignty?
2. What feels overwhelming to you right now? How might the Lord bring you peace in the middle of the pressures you're facing?
3. Why is the peace Jesus secures on the cross so transformative?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*Everywhere I look I see chaos and confusion. Thank you that in Christ all things hold together, including me. I'm at peace with you.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*



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