

Wait Patiently for the Promise

Many times, throughout the Epistles in the New Testament, we can read many words of encouragement to the first century church. This is because these first century believers were facing all kinds of trials and persecution because of their departure from the Old Covenant Law.

These believers had responded to the call of God by believing and obeying the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. In today's study, we are going to focus on one such passage of encouragement given to the early Hebrew believers.

Let's read **Hebrews 6:10-15**. Here we read some powerful words of encouragement and admonition. Notice **verse 10** starts out by saying God will not forget their labor and love for the Name of Jesus as they minister to others.

They are told to be not slothful but to stay diligent and keep their hope until the end. Next, a very important comparison is made to the faithfulness of Abraham. Here, those believers were reminded of the faith and patience of Abraham.

Abraham was given a huge promise: ***“Surely blessing I will bless thee and multiplying I will multiply thee.”*** Verse 15 pinpoints the beginning of the fulfillment of this promise. After Abraham patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

Let's review exactly what this promise actually was.

We can read about the call of God in Abram's life in **Genesis 12:1-4**. Here we read that Abram was 75 years old when he responded to the call of God. God promised to make Abram a great nation which would be a blessing to all the families of the earth.

Because Abram responded to the call of God, this promise had a beginning. Abram was 75 years old when he began his journey of faith. Ten years had passed, and still no promised heir. Sarah was barren and thought that God “needed a little help”, so she gave her handmaid to Abraham to obtain a son who would be heir to Abraham.

When Ishmael was 13 years old, the Lord appeared to Abraham once again. Let's read in **Genesis 17:15-19**. Here the Lord makes it very clear that this son, the heir of the promise, would be born to Abraham, who is now 100 years old, through his wife Sarah, who has been barren all of her life and is now 90 years old.

In **Genesis 17:21**, God names who the heir of Abraham will be and when he will be born to Abraham and Sarah. It is Isaac who will be born the very next year. **Hebrews 6:15** tells us: ***“.... after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.”***

Isaac marked the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise God made with Abraham.

We can actually calculate the years that Abraham patiently waited: we read that Abram was 75 years old when he first responded to the call of God. We also read how Abraham was 101 years old when Isaac was born.

We can see that Abraham waited for 26 long years. Those 26 years must have seemed like an eternity to Abraham and Sarah. We can read about more about this miracle birth in **Hebrews 11:11-12**. The Church in Rome was also reminded of the faith of Abraham in **Romans 4:18-21**.

Let's go back to **Hebrews 6:11-12**. Here the early believers are to hope to the end as Abraham did. There is a direct comparison between the waiting period of Abraham to the waiting period of the early church.

They were told to hope unto the end. The end of what? The Apostle Peter said in **1 Peter 4:7**, “... *the end of all things is at hand*...” Paul says in **1 Corinthians 10:11** “... *the ends of the ages are come*...” It was the end of the Old Covenant world that was very near to those first-century believers. (**Hebrews 8:13**) It was ready to vanish away.

A covenantal change was on the horizon. Jesus was getting ready to come and bring judgment on the Old and usher in the New. Jesus made a very important time statement in **Matthew 16:27-28**.

There were some standing there listening to Him that day who would be alive to see the “**end**” come and the New Covenant consummated. There were some standing there that day who would see the Return of Jesus in all of His glory. Jesus also said the time had come that all things that were written would be fulfilled. (**Luke 21:22**)

Now, let's compare the time that Abraham waited for his promise and the time the early Church waited for the promise of the Return of Jesus Christ. Abraham waited 26 years; the early Church waited 40 years. This is a relatively close range in years although those extra 14 years brought out the scoffers. (**2 Peter 3:3-4**) Jesus and the Apostles had taught with such imminency regarding His soon Return, that 40 years seemed like an eternity.

Conclusion

Why would the writer of Hebrews encourage those first century believers to wait patiently for the promise just as Abraham did? There had to be a direct similarity in the time span that Abraham waited for the promised heir and the time that the first century church waited for the Return of Jesus. Why would the writer of Hebrews even compare a 26-year waiting period to a 2,000-year waiting period?

The answer is simple: Jesus did what He said He would do and did it when He said He would do it.

That 26-year waiting period for Abraham was compared directly to the 40-year waiting period that the early Church endured. This is another Scriptural proof that Jesus returned in AD 70 to bring judgment and end the Old Covenant with its Old Heavens and Old Earth and to consummate the New Everlasting Covenant.

[BACK](#)