much as he does not speak of it as having  
formerly been in use, but as yet subsisting”).

**17.] In which behalf** (nearly equivalent to “wherefore.” This seems the best  
rendering, and not, with the A. V., to take  
it as signifying *wherein* or *in which*) **God,  
willing to shew more abundantly** (than he  
would have done without an oath) **to the  
heirs of the promise** (from ch. xi. 9, Isaac  
and Jacob were *“co-heirs of the same promise”* with Abraham. But there is no  
need to confine the title to them: it may  
well be extended down to us, who are “the  
seed of Abraham and heirs according to the  
promise,” Gal. iii. 29) **the unchangeableness of His counsel, interposed** (became mediator: so Josephus says in one place,  
“They said these things with an oath, and  
constituted God the Mediator of their promises.” And thus when He Himself swears, having no greater to swear by, He swears  
by Himself, so making Himself as it were  
a third person between the parties to the  
oath) **with an oath** (the instrument: it  
was by means of the oath that He exercised the office of interposer or *Mediator*): **that by means of two** (“what two?” says  
Chrysostom: and replies, “the saying and  
promising, the adding an oath to His  
promise.” The Writer is impressing on  
us the strength of that *method of assurance* which God has been pleased to give us, in that He has not only promised  
[in both cases in question], but also confirmed it by an oath) **unchangeable things, in which** (as the material of the lie, if  
it were possible) **it is impossible for God  
ever** (this force is given by the original  
construction, which distributes the proposition into separate incidents) **to lie** (in each and either of them, it is out of all  
question that falsehood should be suspected  
in Him), **we may have strong encouragement** (or, **exhortation**, which amounts to  
the same better than *consolation:* see  
ch. xii. 5, xiii. 22, where the same Greek  
word occurs), **who have fled for refuge to  
lay hold on the hope** (taken here objectively, or very nearly so: hope as embodying the thing hoped for) **set before  
us** (proposed to us as a prize in a contest):  
**which** (viz. the hope: in its subjective  
resting on objective grounds now to be set  
forth) **we have** (not, *“we hold fast,*” as  
some) **as an anchor of our soul** (the similitude is a very common one in Greek and Roman writers; and on coins and medals,  
where hope is represented by an anchor.  
A saying is attributed to Socrates, “A  
ship is not to he held by one anchor, nor  
life by one hope”), **safe and firm** (the adjectives belong to **anchor**, not to “which [hope].” An anchor may be unsafe and  
unsteady, as well as safe and firm), **and  
entering into the part within the veil**(first, to what is **entering in** to be referred? to the *anchor*, or to the *hope?*  
The former is the more obvious construction: and has been accepted by many, thus explaining it: “As a ship’s anchor does  
not fasten in the water, but enters the  
earth beneath the water, and there fixes:  
so our hope, the anchor of the soul, thinks  
it not enough to enter the vestibule, i.e. is  
not content with earthly and visible blessings, but penetrates even to those things which are within the veil, even into the  
very Holy of Holies: i.e. lays hold of God