

A Priest-King Named Melchizedek

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- [0 : 00] Good morning. Scriptures this morning are taken really from two passages.! Genesis chapter 14, verses 17 to 24,! And then Hebrews chapter 7, verses 1 through 10.
- ! So Genesis chapter 14, verses 17 to 24. And then Hebrews chapter 7, verses 1 through 10. Give me a second to get there.
- Genesis 14, 17. After his return from the defeat of Keridolima and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Sheva, that is, the king's valley.
- And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God most high. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram by God most high, possessor of heaven and earth.
- And blessed be God most high, who has delivered your enemies into your hand. And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. And the king of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself.
- [1 : 24] But Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted my hand to the Lord God most high, possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, I have made Abram rich.
- I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Anah, Ashkol, and Mamre take their share.
- And then Hebrews 7, 1 to 10. And it reads, For Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him.
- And to him, Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace.
- He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God.
- [2 : 55] He continues, a priest forever. See how great this man was, to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the spoils?
- And those descendants of Levi, who received the priestly office, have a commandment in law to take tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, though these also are descended from Abraham.
- But this man, who does not have his descent from them, received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.
- In the one case, tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one whom it is testified that he lives. One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.
- Thank you very much, Fay.

[4 : 25] For those of you who were here last week would probably recall that as we are working our way through the book of Genesis, Genesis, and we considered Genesis 14, that I passed over this section in Genesis 14, verses 17 to 24.

I touched on it, but really did not address it. This section, it refers to Melchizedek. And the reason I didn't address it is because I felt having a single message to focus on it, a single sermon to focus on it would serve us better.

Because really, Melchizedek is just mentioned once here in the book of Genesis and one other place in the Old Testament, which we'll look at shortly.

But all the other mentions of Melchizedek, eight other times, they're all in the book of Hebrews. And in Hebrews 7, the passage that we just read, five times Melchizedek is referred to in that particular section of the letter of Hebrews.

And here's the reason. This is the most important reason I thought that an entire sermon dedicated to Melchizedek would be helpful for us. So we're kind of launching out of the series in Genesis to try to get an understanding of this person, Melchizedek, because the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

[6 : 17] And those of you who read your Bible, I'm sure that you have come across this term in the book of Hebrews repeatedly. Apparently, Jesus is a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Now, why is that? Why is the Lord Jesus referred to as a priest after the order of Melchizedek?

But in this morning's sermon, I want us to consider the answer to that question. And my prayer is, as we do, this is my sincere prayer for us this morning. I pray that as we consider this somewhat mysterious person in Scripture, and this unusual term for the Lord Jesus Christ, my prayer is that our knowledge of our Savior will increase, but more than that, I pray that our love for our Savior.

And the ministry that he ever lives to perform for us will grow in love. I pray that we would love him more as we understand more what he does through this term that he is a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

But first, let me pray for us. Father, we bow our hearts as an expression of our need for you. Lord, I need you to help me to proclaim your word faithfully to these who are gathered here.

[7 : 49] And Lord, we all need you to help us to hear your word as we should. Would you grant illumination to us, Lord, as we open your word this morning?

I pray you'd help us to lay aside every distraction that will cause us to not focus upon and hear all that you will say to us. Lord, we say, Master, speak.

Your servants are listening. What will you say to us? And Lord, we pray that what you say to us, what you speak to us, what you reveal to us will result in greater love in our hearts for you and greater glory to your holy name.

We pray all these things in Christ's name. Amen. Now, once again, the reason I think this is so important that we dedicate this sermon to this single sermon on Melchizedek is because the Lord Jesus is referred to a priest as a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

And I want us to first consider the history of Melchizedek, who he was, and then I want us to consider the order of Melchizedek, what it means.

[9 : 13] So the history of Melchizedek, who he was, and then the order of Melchizedek, what it means. So first, let's consider the history of Melchizedek. And we have the history right here in Genesis 14.

For the first time in verse 18, we are introduced to Melchizedek. We're told in verse 17 that when Abram returned from the defeat of Cedar-Omer and the other kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him.

And we're also told that Melchizedek, king of Salem, also went out to meet him. Look again at verses 18 to 20 where we are first introduced to Melchizedek.

It reads, And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram by God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth.

And blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand. And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

[10 : 28] Now, not only is this the first time that Melchizedek is mentioned in Scripture, but this is also the very first time that a priest is mentioned in Scripture. In verse 18, Melchizedek is referred to as a priest of God Most High.

And the term God Most High is a reference to the true and the living God, to Yahweh. But Melchizedek is not just a priest.

We're told that he is a king, that he is the king of Salem. And Salem is an area that later became to be known as Jerusalem. It was in the land of Canaan.

And some of you might remember when we were working our way through the book of Genesis earlier in chapter 9, we came across the account where Canaan, who was Noah's youngest son, he came upon his father, drunk and laying naked in his tent, and he exposed that to his brothers.

And when Noah became aware of what his son did, Noah cursed him. But when you read the curse, you realize that Noah was not just cursing Canaan, but he was cursing all of his descendants as well.

[11 : 48] And I think this account that we are considering with Melchizedek is very significant for us because it helps us to see that despite this curse on Canaan and his offspring, and despite the wickedness of the Canaanites, which we will see as this unfolds, the knowledge of God was not lost among the Canaanites.

The knowledge of God was not lost. Here they have a priest. They have a priest of the Most High God who is serving the Lord in the midst of the wicked Canaanites.

He is Melchizedek, who is also the king of Salem. Now Melchizedek's name, when it's translated, it means king of righteousness.

And Salem, the place where he is the king of, that is translated as peace. So we have Melchizedek, he is a king of righteousness, that's the translation of his name, but he's also a king of peace.

And notice that we're told that Melchizedek does two specific things when he comes to meet Abram in verses 18 to 20.

[13 : 10] In kindness and as an expression of his care for Abram and the men who went with him, they came back no doubt weary from battle and tired and hungry and Melchizedek goes out to meet them and he meets them with bread and wine.

And we shouldn't think for a moment that that's the little wafers that we have or the little cup that, no, he ran out with sufficient food for them. But more importantly what we see Melchizedek doing is Melchizedek blesses Abram and he blesses him by God most high, the possessor of heaven and earth.

And we've been seeing this as we work our way through Genesis that God is the creator of all things. He created it, he possesses it, it belongs to him.

And Melchizedek blesses Abram, blesses God and blesses Abram and he credits God for Abram's victory. It wasn't that Abram and his 318 men and the others who were with them were so powerful that they won the victory.

He said, no, the reason you won the victory is because God most high gave your enemies into your hands. And we're told that Abram gave him a tenth or some translations say tithes of all the spoils of war that he brought back.

[14 : 41] And there's an obvious comparison, there's a glaring comparison that we find in these verses that we're considering from Genesis 14. It's a comparison between Melchizedek king of Salem and the king of Sodom.

You can't miss the comparison between these two kings. Melchizedek is a generous and a gracious king. He doesn't come to Abram empty-handed. He comes to Abram bearing gifts, bearing the gifts of bread and wine and he blesses him by God most high.

Melchizedek doesn't ask for anything from Abram. He doesn't demand anything from Abram. Abram responds to Melchizedek in his office as a priest of God most high and he gives him tithes of everything.

But notice the king of Sodom. The king of Sodom comes to Abram empty-handed and he ungratefully and selfishly commands Abram.

That is a command that he gives to Abram when he says to him in verse 21 give me the persons. That is that is a command.

[15 : 55] That is an imperative. Give me the persons and you take the goods for yourself.

He selfishly commands Abram to give the people he rescued and the goods that he recovered he said you give me the people you take the goods.

And what we see is that Abram again took nothing from did nothing for Melchizedek king of Salem and priest of the most high God but Melchizedek gives him bread and wine and blesses him.

Abram rescues the people of the king of Sodom recovers all of their goods and still the king of Sodom comes to him empty handed and he is making selfish demands and then making it seem that he is doing something for Abram by saying you can keep the goods for yourself.

And by right and rule of law the rule of war sorry Abram had the right to keep the goods and the people for himself because he recovered them.

[17 : 22] And so Abram outrightly rejects the king of Sodom's offer he takes nothing for himself even though he had every right to keep everything except the share that the men who went with him as allies in battle had earned.

But the only other mention that we have of Melchizedek in the rest of the Old Testament is found in Psalm 110. And you might want to turn there.

Psalm 110 is a messianic psalm. It is a psalm of David. And David prophesies of this coming Messiah this Savior that God has promised to rescue his people this anointed king will rescue his people from their enemies and from their sins.

And Psalm 110 is the most frequently quoted psalm in all the New Testament. And Psalm 110 verse 1 is the most frequently quoted Old Testament verse that we find in the New Testament.

Very significant to bear that in mind because it helps us to see how the Old and the New Testaments are connected together. it's one big story. It's a connected story.

[18 : 40] It's an unfolding revelation. And what we have in these first four verses of Psalm 110 gives us further understanding, well, additional understanding, of Melchizedek.

God's So let me read starting in verse 1. The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter.

Rule in the midst of your enemies. Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power in holy garments from the womb of the morning. The dew of your youth will be yours.

The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Now notice in verse 1 that we see it says the Lord that's all in all caps.

The Lord in all caps. And whenever you see that in the scriptures it is a reference to the name of God by which he revealed himself.

[19 : 59] It's the name Yahweh. And what David says is the Lord Yahweh says to my Lord.

He says to my Lord. And notice my Lord or Lord is a lower case. It's not in all caps as the first reference to the Lord.

So here in verse 1 what we see is the psalmist David who is the author of this psalm says Yahweh speaks to another person whom David refers to as his Lord.

And in verse 4 David continues with what Yahweh says to his Lord. Notice what Yahweh says to his Lord. Yahweh has sworn or he's taken an oath and will not change his mind and what Yahweh swears to David's Lord is these words.

You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Now this is the second time that Melchizedek is mentioned in the Old Testament.

[21 : 20] Melchizedek is mentioned and it's also the final time that Melchizedek is mentioned in the Old Testament. And in this final mention God himself swears an oath to David's Lord declaring to him that he will be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Now some natural questions arise. First, who is David's Lord? Who is this one that David says, my Lord? That Yahweh swore to my Lord, you are a king, a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Now again, we have already encountered Melchizedek earlier in Genesis 14, but now we are looking at something a little different which is the order of Melchizedek and the question is what is this order of Melchizedek?

And we can't answer it from the Old Testament. We cannot answer it from the information that we have so far. We can speculate and one speculation is as good as the other, but we are not able to move any further from the revelation that we have here in the Old Testament about what this order of Melchizedek is all about.

And to answer that question, we have to turn to the only other part of scripture where Melchizedek and the order of Melchizedek are mentioned, which is in the New Testament and in the book of Hebrews.

[23 : 02] So let me ask you to turn over to the book of Hebrews, and this brings me to the second and the final part of the sermon. So this looks like a short sermon, but it just looks that way.

It's actually a long sermon. Hopefully it's a good sermon. I heard it said that a good sermon doesn't have to be long, and a bad sermon shouldn't be long.

So hopefully this is one of those. I don't know which it is. So we come to the book of Hebrews where the writer picks up on this obscure figure in the Old Testament by the name of Melchizedek.

And the passages that we'll be looking at, selected passages from chapters 5, 6, and 7. And as we do this, I think it's helpful for us to bear in mind the context and the argument of the book of Hebrews.

The writer of the book of Hebrews is writing to a group of Jewish Christians who had come under severe persecution for following Christ.

- [24 : 30] And some of them had begun to turn back into Judaism. They'd gone back into animal sacrifice and following the Old Testament instead of recognizing that Christ was the fulfillment of all of that.

And in their discouragement many of them went back. And the writer to the Hebrews is writing to them and he's urging them not to return to Judaism. He is making a case.

He is arguing to them. He is trying to say to them that Christ is superior to everything that you have in the Old Testament.

He is superior to Moses. He is superior to the Levitical priests. He is superior to the sacrificial system. He is saying that the Old Covenant is an inferior covenant that's been passed away for the New Covenant.

He is pleading with them and he is trying to present before them arguments as to why they shouldn't go back into legalism and into Judaism.

- [25 : 35] His argument is Christ is the superior high priest. And part of his argument about Christ being the superior high priest, what he does is he draws on this historical figure Melchizedek and he develops this idea or this designation of Christ as being a priest of the order of Melchizedek.

And so what he does is he uses Genesis 14 and Psalm 110 as the basis for his argument that he makes to these discouraged Christians. So let's start reading in Hebrews 4 and verse 14.

We're going to get into 5 but I think this is a good lead into chapter 5. So Hebrews chapter 4 and we want to start it in verse 14.

He writes, Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. Let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin.

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

- [27 : 16] For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God. To offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.

He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward because he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this, he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins, just as he does for those of the people.

And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, you are my son, today I have forgotten you.

As he says also in another place, you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. And in verse 6, he is quoting Psalm 110, verse 4.

In verse 7, now, in the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to him who was able to save him from death.

- [28 : 37] And he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through the things he suffered, and being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

So here we encounter for the first time this reference to Jesus being a high priest of the order of Melchizedek. Or to start at an earlier point, this is the first time that we encounter after Psalm 110 verse 4, this designation as of the order of Melchizedek.

Now let me summarize a couple of things that the writer to the Hebrews is saying in this passage that we just read. First, he's making the point in verses 11 to 13, in 14 to 16, sorry, 14 to 16 in chapter 4, he's making the point that Christ has ascended into heaven and he is exalted as our great high priest and that Christ is able to sympathize with our weaknesses so that we can draw near to the throne of grace and we can find mercy to help us in our time of need.

The first thing he's saying to us, he's saying that Jesus Christ has ascended into heaven. He's exalted as the great high priest and he's able to help us in our time of need when we come to him.

The second thing he's saying is in verses 5 and 6 of chapter 5 and he's saying that Christ did not bestow this honor upon himself to be exalted as our great high priest but instead he was appointed by God and he draws on the Levitical system where not everyone could have been a priest.

[30 : 40] You had to have descended from Aaron. You had to be a part of the Aaronic line and the line of Levi in particular and that's what God ordained.

That's what God ordered. And he's saying likewise Jesus did not assume this priesthood that he has, this great high priesthood that he has. He didn't assume it to himself.

He says God appointed him as this high priest. And again notice in verse 6 he quotes Psalm 110 and notice what he does.

Remember when we were looking at Psalm 110 we could not tell who David's Lord was. We can tell now. We can tell now because the writer to the Hebrews under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit says that that verse in Psalm 110 verse 4 was written about the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

He is David's Lord. He is the one to whom Yahweh, God the Father, swore, you are my son, you are a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

[31 : 53] You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. This is a very important point. don't miss this point that we have here, we're not left to our speculation and our own ingenuity.

We are told in inspired scripture that the reference in Psalm 110 verse 4 is the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And that's what he ends on in verse 10, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek. This is so essential for us to grasp as we try to consider how Jesus is a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

God himself appointed him. And God who cannot lie swears and says you are a priest forever.

Forever after the order of Melchizedek. And then in verses 9 and 10 of chapter 5, the writer to the Hebrews assures us, as he did the original audience, that Jesus is the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him and having been designated by God as high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

[33 : 30] So in verse 6, the writer to the Hebrews is telling us that the word spoken in Psalm 110 verse 4 was spoken to Jesus by Yahweh. That's his designation, your priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

The writer to the Hebrews again refers to Jesus as being a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek in the very last verse of Hebrews 6 in verse 20.

And then he goes on in the passage that was read earlier in Hebrews 7 and he explains how Jesus is designated as a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Now notice in verses 1 to 3 of Hebrews 7, the information that we have there, that's old information. We can gather that information from the account in Genesis 14.

That's not new information for us. It just tells us he recounts essentially what we read earlier in Genesis 14, how Melchizedek came out to meet Abram after he came back from the slaughter of the kings.

- [34 : 57] He tells us how Melchizedek is a priest-king who is both king of righteousness and king of peace. But when we come to verse 3, we encounter some additional information about Melchizedek that we are encountering for the first time.

And right away, I must alert you that this is a difficult verse. In trying to understand the meaning of this verse, theologians are all over the place and are divided on what it actually means.

Some theologians say Melchizedek was an angel who took on human form for Abram. Others say Melchizedek was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ himself.

But I think when we read the account in Genesis 14, it doesn't allow for those interpretations. You read it naturally and you have to kind of force those in to come away with the conclusion that Melchizedek was an angel who took on human form or that Melchizedek was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ himself.

From Genesis 14, what we're able to see is Melchizedek has every indication that he was a historical person. He was the king of Salem, a real place.

- [36 : 27] He was a real functioning priest of God Most High. So then what are we to make of these words, this additional information that we have in verse 3 of Hebrews 7?

That Melchizedek had no father or mother or genealogy, that he had no beginning of days, nor end of days, but resembling Jesus, the Son of God, he continues a priest forever.

We'll have to lean on a really, really smart theologian this morning to offer what I think is a helpful explanation of verse 3.

Arkant Hughes, in his commentary on Genesis, this is what he says about those who say that Melchizedek was an angel, or Melchizedek was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ.

He writes, but such interpretations are unnecessary because the writer is simply using a rabbinical method of interpretation from silence.

- [37 : 49] His point is that the Genesis account does not mention Melchizedek's parents or genealogy or when he was born or when he died, therefore giving a type of what would be fleshed out in the qualifications of Christ.

So essentially what Kent Hughes is saying is he's saying that the writer to the Hebrews employed a method of interpretation that was common among the rabbis where in some places where scripture might be silent on a point.

They flesh it out to make a point that they're actually seeking to make. And so the writer to the Hebrews is trying to make the point of the superiority of Jesus as a priest.

And what Kent Hughes is saying is he employs this method of rabbinical tradition to speak where there is silence and he fills it out in such a way to show the eternity or the forever like nature of the priesthood of Jesus Christ after the order of Melchizedek.

His point is that Jesus is both king and priest and Melchizedek typifies and points to Christ and his superior priesthood Christ who is both king and priest.

- [39 : 25] Some of you are looking at me as if that is as clear as mud. But again the bottom line that I think we need to see from this is that Jesus is superior and he's different from all the Levitical priests.

Let's think about that a little bit and maybe it becomes clearer as we work through. Under the Mosaic law in order to serve as a priest one had to be from the lineage of Aaron from the tribe of Levi.

That was what God set up. That was God's design. It was discrimination. God discriminated against all the other tribes.

But it was his right to do that. But Jesus was not a priest by genealogy. He was not from the tribe of Levi.

Jesus was from the tribe of Judah. And just like Melchizedek with no reference to any kind of genealogy.

[40 : 46] Jesus was a priest by God the Father and he appointed him as priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Another consideration is that the Levitical priests could only serve as priests a maximum of 30 years. priests and even if they could serve longer, if there was no limitation on how long they could serve, they were still going to die.

And so they were limited on both sides. They were limited by God's design to say it's 30 years maximum, you can serve as a priest. But even if that limitation was not there, you needed this whole tribe from which the priests will come because you had no one who could continue as a priest in an ongoing way.

You needed replacements for these priests as they would die. But as he likens Jesus to Melchizedek, the writer to the Hebrews draws on this absence of genealogy for Melchizedek and the idea that he had no beginning or he had no end, to make him eternal, to show that Jesus is eternal and to make the point of the eternal nature of the priesthood that Jesus had.

Jesus was a priest forever by himself. All the Levitical priests together could not be priests forever. but Jesus by himself, the only one in the order of Melchizedek.

[42 : 37] He is the only priest. There were no other ones after him. There were no other ones after him because he needed no other ones after him. Indeed, no other ones qualify after him.

Listen to this other quote from Kent Hughes. He writes, the silence of the biblical record regarding Melchizedek's days suggests a continuous priesthood for Melchizedek that foreshadows what perfectly was and is fulfilled in Christ, who ministers continually without interruption.

Let's jump down to verse 11. I want to read to verse 17. Verse 17. The writer to the Hebrews writes, Now, if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood, for under it the people received the law, what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek rather than one named after the order of Aaron?

for when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belong to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar.

For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe, Moses had nothing to say about priests. this becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest not on the basis of legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.

[44 : 47] for it is witnessed of him, again quoting Psalm 110 verse 4, you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

And so here again, he is pointing to the inadequacy of the Levitical priesthood. You had these priests who were coming and dying and dying and dying, and in a sense, what it was pointing to a need for a priest who would not die, for a priest who will continue forever.

And Jesus Christ was appointed by God to be that priest who would be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Let me continue down in verse 18.

For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness.

[46 : 04] For the law made nothing perfect, but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. And it is not without an oath.

For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath. But this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him, the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, you are a priest forever.

This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant. The former priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office.

But he holds, he, Jesus, holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever. over. Look at verse 25.

This is the conclusion of the point about Melchizedek. He's done now. This is the conclusion of his argument. Consequently, he, meaning Jesus, is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

[47 : 31] This is the conclusion of Jesus being a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. He has this forever ministry.

He has this ministry that continues. And he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them, without exception.

Without exception. To put it another way, there's never a moment that those who belong to Christ are not being prayed for.

When we forget to pray for ourselves, when others may not pray for us, we have one who is a faithful high priest who doesn't die. He has an indestructible life, whom God has sworn that forever he will be this interceding high priest for his people.

He intercedes for them on behalf of God the Father. Brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek Christ.

[48 : 49] Because his priesthood is an enduring priesthood, a priesthood that doesn't end. And he's the only one, because he needs no one else.

Only one priest is necessary, and that is Jesus Christ, and he is sufficient. He has no limitations. And the reason that we are going to make it, brothers and sisters, the reason that all of us who belong to Christ, who he's put his name upon, the reason we're going to make it is because we have a faithful high priest who intercedes for us, who will never fail, who will never falter, who has no limitation, no weakness, God has appointed him.

We can have confidence in him, brothers and sisters. Not going to fall asleep, not going to be tired on the job. There's not a thing that concerns you, or a thing that concerns me, that misses his gaze, and his faithful intercession for us.

And the reason that we will make it, the reason that we will complete the journey, and we will be home with God, is because we have a faithful high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek is referred to as the king of righteousness and the king of peace.

[50 : 31] Jesus is the king of righteousness. Jesus is the king of peace. And he makes us righteous righteous by his own sacrifice of himself.

He makes us righteous by his own sacrifice of himself whereby we might be forgiven by God and we might be made right before God. And he's the king of peace because through him we can have peace with God and because of him we can know the peace of God in life's darkest circumstances.

And notice the order of those two for Jesus. He's first the king of righteousness then the king of peace.

It is only as we are made right with God that we will have peace with God that we can have the peace of God. We see in Melchizedek the first time he is mentioned in scripture this he's his first priest he's the first priest in scripture but he's also the first priest who comes and serves bread and wine.

And he points to the last priest recorded in scripture who served bread and wine. It's Jesus Christ himself.

[51 : 56] Melchizedek the first priest who served bread and wine in scripture is a picture of the grace of God. It's a picture of the grace of God because we see him coming out to Abram requiring nothing of Abram asking nothing of Abram but giving gifts to Abram giving something to Abram that he needed in the form of sustenance and nourishment for his body.

It's a picture of the grace of God that was fulfilled eventually in the Lord Jesus Christ. The last priest who came bearing bread and wine.

And we see the embodiment of the grace of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. On that night that he was betrayed that he told his disciples this is my body and this is my blood.

My body broken for you, my blood shed for you that he was going to be doing in a very short period of time. When Melchizedek came as a picture of the grace of God that he brought to Abram, it was a reflection, it was an indication of the riches of God's bounty and the fruitfulness of the earth in the bread and the wine that he brought.

That was the indication of it. The one who had blessed Abram, the one who was Abram's God, he was giving Abram gifts from his earth. But the bread and wine for Jesus represented his broken body and his shed blood that he would offer on the cross for sinners.

[53 : 47] And not just in that instance, but brothers and sisters, every time that we come to the Lord's table and we partake of the Lord's supper, we are feeding our souls, we are nourishing our souls, reminding us that we are to be feasting on the Lord Jesus Christ in an ongoing way.

My prayer for us this morning is that as we reflect on this term that Jesus is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, as a matter of fact, even as we hear this word Melchizedek, I pray that it would stoke in our hearts fresh reminders of our great high priest and how God appointed him by oath.

The God who cannot lie says, I swear that you're going to be a priest forever. I swear that you're going to intercede for your people forever.

no defect in your ministry, no break in your ministry, this ongoing faithful ministry so that he can save to the uttermost all those who come to God through him.

And I pray that we'll be amazed by the ministry of our great high priest, the faithful ongoing ministry of our great high priest. And again, brothers and sisters, this is why we're going to make it safely home.

[55 : 15] Because we are faithful high priest. Not because there's anything special with any of us. You've heard me say it, often I say it again, if God had called us, unfolded his arms and tell us to come, none of us would make it finally home.

None of us. But he not only calls us to come, he promises he will bring us safely home. And the way that he ensures that is he has appointed a great and faithful high priest who intercedes for us forever before the throne of God.

I pray we'd be amazed that this love and amazed that this king who died for us and now who lives for us to ever intercede for us before the throne of God.

Let's pray together. Father, thank you for swearing an oath that the Lord Jesus Christ would be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

A priest whose ministry will never be interrupted. A priest who is able to be touched by the feelings of all of the weaknesses that his people face.

[57 : 04] A priest who is able to be a tender high priest to them but is also able to be a strong high priest forever in deceiving for them in their weakest moments, in their darkest moments, ensuring that they will make it finally home.

Lord, cause our hearts to grow in affection and in love for the Savior for our great high priest who is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

We pray and ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.