

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 1ST–2ND, 2025 // HEBREWS

AN ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL (HEBREWS 6:13–20)

The writer of Hebrews rebuked his readers for being spiritually immature and too lazy to learn (5:11–14).

- He urged them to grow in their faith and move beyond basic teachings (6:1–3).
- He then gave a strong warning about the dangers of falling away from faith (6:4–8), stating that those who reject Christ after knowing the truth place themselves in a dangerous position.

However, in 6:9–12, he offers much-needed encouragement to his readers to persevere in faith and good works.

- Now the writer of Hebrews will offer us even more encouragement. Just as Abraham patiently waited for God's promise to be fulfilled in his life, we too can trust God's unchanging promise of salvation to us through Jesus.
- Jesus is the anchor our souls desperately need.

GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM (VS. 13–15)

God gave Abraham a promise that He'd make him and his descendants a mighty nation.

- Considering the circumstances, this was quite the promise!
- God gave Abraham a guarantee of this promise—He swore by Himself.
- In other words, God put His own name, reputation, character, and integrity at stake.

THE NATURE OF GOD'S PROMISES (VS. 16–17)

- God's promises, like His character, are unchanging and reliable.
- God's oath to Abraham showed how serious He was about the nature of His promises.
- Abraham shows us an example of real faith.
- God spoke, Abraham believed God (even when it was costly), and after patiently waiting, Abraham obtained the promise.

REFUGE, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND HOPE (V. 18)

- The two unchangeable things are God's promises and God's oath to keep His promises.
- It is impossible for God to lie. God only speaks truth.
- When God speaks through His son Jesus, saying whoever believes in Him will never die but have everlasting life, we must be like Abraham and believe and obtain this promise!

AN ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL (V. 19)

Jesus is the hope, our strong encouragement, and the firm and secure anchor for our souls.

- If we placed our faith in Jesus, we have "fled for refuge" within Him and are safe and secure.
- Life will be full of storms (Matthew 7:25)
 - Storms of pain, loss, grief, hardship, and suffering
 - Storms of spiritual deception and attack
 - Storms of doubt, discouragement, and darkness
- Trying to find refuge and an anchor through the stuff of the world is woefully insufficient when we go through life's storms.
- The storms will sometimes rage in a violent manner, but our anchor will always hold.
- Our anchor, Jesus, has "entered the inner sanctuary behind the curtain." This is a reference to the holy of holies within the temple.

JESUS AS OUR FORERUNNER (V. 20)

In Jewish thought, the most sacred place on earth was behind the curtain in the holy of holies—the very presence of God Himself.

- The high priests entered this place as representatives, but Jesus entered this place as our "forerunner."
- This means if we trust and follow Him, we will enter this place just as He entered this place.

DOES THE BOAT HOLD THE ANCHOR OR DOES THE ANCHOR HOLD THE BOAT?

- Faith is the rope/chain, but Christ is the anchor. Faith is not what secures us; Christ is.
- Our grip on Him may weaken at times, but His grip on us never does (John 10:28–29).
- If the anchor is not secured, we will drift. True saving faith trusts in Christ's strength, not our own works, feelings, or religious systems.

MELCHIZEDEK, KING OF SALEM (HEBREWS 7:1–3)

In Hebrews 5:6, the writer quotes Psalm 110:4 to introduce the idea that Jesus' priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood.

- Jesus' priesthood is eternal and preeminent, according to the "order of Melchizedek."
- Who in the world is this mysterious Old Testament figure who shows up briefly in Genesis and why is he referenced here?

After a victory over four invading kings from the east (Gen. 14:1–16), Abraham heads home with his nephew Lot, whom he had just rescued from kidnapping.

- Abraham and Lot have plunder they had received as a reward from their battle.
- Melchizedek, who is called the "king of Salem" and a "priest of God Most High," blessed Abraham and praised God for giving him victory.

In response to Melchizedek's blessing of bread and wine, Abraham gives him a tenth (10%) of everything he had won.

- "Melchi" = king, "Zedek" = righteousness; he is also from "Salem" = peace.
- Melchizedek was the king of righteousness and king of peace.
- The Bible is also silent on Melchizedek's genealogy; we are told nothing about his origin.

WHO IN THE WORLD WAS MELCHIZEDEK?

- Option 1: A Christophany (an appearance of Jesus before His incarnation).
- Option 2: An angelic figure of some kind.
- Option 3: A mortal, historical priest-king of Salem (later to become known as Jerusalem) who was a foreshadowing (or a "type") of Christ.

Those who see Mel as more than a mortal human look at v. 3 and conclude He was either divine or some sort of spiritual being.

- The verse really does not claim that Melchizedek appeared on the earth without parents or a family. It just shows that Scripture does not mention his birth or death.
 - This specific trait of Melchizedek resembled Jesus in that Jesus lives eternally with a permanent priesthood.
- Most likely, Melchizedek was simply a mortal man who, in many ways, resembled, prefigured, and foreshadowed Jesus as the son of God.
- Jesus is our priest and king, just as Mel was priest and king (those offices were always separate in Israel, but Mel was both).
 - Jesus is our true and ultimate King of Righteousness and Peace! Mel's priesthood was before Aaron's, which is also significant.

A SUPERIOR PRIESTHOOD (HEBREWS 7:4–10) ABRAHAM'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT (V. 4)

Abraham was one of the greatest and most important figures in the Jewish faith. But even Abraham, the patriarch, acknowledged that in Melchizedek something greater was being revealed to him.

- How did he respond? He honored what he saw as greater than himself through sacrifice. What do you sacrifice for? Is it a worthy sacrifice?

THE LEVITICAL TITHE (VS. 5–6)

The "sons of Levi" (the priests) had authority from the law to collect tithes from their people because of God's commands.

- But Melchizedek was greater than the Levites, because Abraham himself (great-grandfather of Levi) gave a tithe to Melchizedek. This shows that his priesthood was more special and eternal than the priesthood of Levi and his sons.

THE INFERIOR IS BLESSED BY THE SUPERIOR (V. 7)

The fact that Abraham was blessed by Melchizedek shows Mel was better than Abe. When he received that blessing, Abe accepted that Mel was greater than him.

- He also acknowledged Melchizedek as greater through his gift of the tithe. The giving of our time, money, and talent is an acknowledgement of something greater than ourselves.

When the people of Israel gave their tithes to the Levitical priests, they were just giving to ordinary humans (v. 8).

- But when Abraham gave his tithe to Melchizedek, he was giving it to someone who represented and foreshadowed something (someone) far greater.
- In a sense, Levi himself paid Melchizedek a tithe! Why? Because he was still "within" his great-grandfather Abraham when Abe tithed (vs. 9–10).

WHAT'S THE POINT?

1. Jesus is superior as our great High Priest.
 - Jesus' priesthood is eternal and transcendent, just as Melchizedek's appearance represents eternity and transcendence.
 - Jesus is greater than Abraham AND Levi. Both Old Testament heroes acknowledged the superiority of Jesus in their honor of Melchizedek.
2. Have we acknowledged the superiority of Jesus?
 - Talk is incredibly cheap (Titus 1:16). We honor what we truly see as greater than ourselves through this thing called sacrifice.
 - The giving of our time, money, and talent is an acknowledgment of what we actually believe to be greater than ourselves.

A SUPERIOR ANCHOR

- None of us are exempt from storms. We all search for something to be an anchor when the storms come.
- Some look to money, others to relationships, and still others turn to distractions, wishful thinking, or hopeful idealism.
- None of these things are sufficient. We have a superior anchor in Jesus.

A SUPERIOR PRIEST

- All of us are searching for meaning in life. How did we get here, where are we going, why are we here, and what's the point to all of this?
- In our search for meaning, we look to things greater than ourselves. What we sacrifice to and give of ourselves to is what we truly believe is greater.
- Only Jesus can give us transcendence and meaning.

OUR ANCHOR HOLDS

God Himself has given you promises, and it is impossible for Him to lie!

- To give you eternal life and forgiveness of your sins if you believe and trust in Jesus.
- To never leave you or forsake you.
- To give you peace that doesn't make sense.
- To work out all things for your good and His glory.

WHAT ARE WE TRULY ACKNOWLEDGING AS GREATER THAN OURSELVES?

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a field or a priceless treasure that we are willing to sell everything for and give everything up to obtain (Matt. 13:44–45).

- If we do not understand the value, we will not understand the price.
- How high of a price are you paying for things that are ultimately not that valuable?
- How low of a price are you attributing toward what is eternal and infinitely valuable?

ARE YOU HONORING THE LORD THROUGH SACRIFICE?

- How are you giving God your time?
- How are you honoring God with your finances?
- How are you honoring God with your talent, energy, and opportunities?