

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 2ND, 2025 // HEBREWS

ABSOLUTE RELIABILITY (HEBREWS 6:13–20)

STANDING ON HIS PROMISES

God promised Abraham that He would **multiply his offspring** and **bless the nations of the world through his offspring** (Genesis 22:17–18).

- The author mentions the promises made to Abraham to show God's reliability in fulfilling His promises. God has proven to be trustworthy. There is a hope we possess **when we know God's word is reliable**.

IMITATE ABRAHAM'S EXAMPLE

It was only after **"waiting patiently"** that **"Abraham obtained the promise."** We must see that being patient does not mean being inactive, as Abraham pressed on in faith and perseverance (6:12).

- **We are able to patiently endure when we have truly taken hold of God's promises**—when we believe, in every fiber of our being, that God is reliable.

"BY MYSELF I HAVE SWORN..." (GENESIS 22:16)

God came through for Abraham, even **sealing his promise with an oath**, showing that His promises are like His character—they are unchanging.

- People used oaths, swearing to someone greater than them to add reliability to their statements, but **there was none greater than God for Him to swear by**.

WHY DID GOD MAKE AN OATH?

People made oaths to back up their statements because the promises of people are unreliable. Jesus addressed this in Matthew 5:37, urging His followers to be truthful and reliable so that their "yes" and "no" could be trusted.

- Seeing the value that people placed on oaths, God swore by Himself **to establish a foundation of trust in His promises**.

"WE WHO HAVE FLED FOR REFUGE"

The author draws a comparison of the refuge cities of the OT (Numbers 35) to Jesus, **our refuge of hope whom God has set before us**.

- Our refuge is near, open to everyone, a place to dwell, our only alternative when in need, and He provides protection. There is one stark contrast between refuge cities and Jesus: **even the guilty can find refuge in Christ**.

"SEIZE THE HOPE SET BEFORE US"

To avoid persecution, the Hebrews were tempted to flee from Christ. The author encourages the readers by letting them know that security and protection are found when we flee *to* Christ, not *from* Him.

- We have hope as an anchor that **Jesus will lead us into God's glory**, and the rougher the waters, the greater the need for an anchor.

GIVEN ACCESS TO GOD FOREVER

The temple would have had a veil, or curtain, that only the High Priest could go behind to have access to God. The author tells us that Jesus, our High Priest, has **"enter[ed] the inner sanctuary behind the curtain...on our behalf as a forerunner."**

- Jesus has entered the presence of God as a representative and a forerunner so **we can follow Him there**.

NO BEGINNING OR END (HEBREWS 7:1–3)

UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES BEING ADDRESSED

Jesus as our High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek was first mentioned in Hebrews 5:10. After addressing some issues the author will explain that idea in greater detail.

- The Jewish audience reading this would have questions about Jesus as a High Priest since He did not come from the priestly lineage of Aaron (the tribe of Levi).

A UNIQUE SITUATION

Abraham was on his way back home after defeating invading kings who took his nephew Lot captive when he met a mysterious figure named Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18–20).

- Melchizedek was both the **priest of God Most High** and the **king of Salem** (ancient name for the city of Jeru-salem). These offices were not typically held by the same individual.

STRANGE INTERACTION AND NAMESAKE

When Melchizedek met Abraham, he offered Abraham bread and wine and blessed him. In response to the blessing, Abraham gave a tenth (tithe) of all the spoils of war to Melchizedek.

- Melchizedek's name adds to the mystery of this figure. His name means **"king of righteousness"** and he was the **"king of peace,"** since the name Salem means "peace."

SILENCE ADDS TO THE MYSTIQUE

These things, coupled with the Bible's silence on Melchizedek's birth, his genealogy, his death, and the end of the offices he held, have led some to believe he was a heavenly being or a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus (Christophany). They believe that **"resembling the Son of God"** refers to his physical appearance.

OUR KING AND HIGH PRIEST FOREVER

What the silence suggests is that Jesus' priesthood is without end. Melchizedek resembled the Son of God in that we will never know an end to Jesus' kingship and priesthood.

- **Jesus is King and Priest forever, and He is not appointed King and Priest according to the order of this world.**

CONSIDER HIS GREATNESS (HEBREWS 7:4–10) VOLUNTARY GIVING VS. OBLIGATORY PAYMENT

The priesthood of Levi received tithes from Israel as a commandment, but Abraham's tithe was greater because it was given out of reverence and appreciation, not obligation.

- God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7). We do not tithe out of obligation; because God has given everything, we use what is His to advance the Kingdom.

HOW DID LEVI PAY A TITHE TO MEL?

Even the sons of Levi, who received tithes from the people, paid tithes through Abraham, in the sense that they were still in the "loins of Abraham" (KJV) when he met Melchizedek.

- The point is that Abraham was great, but Melchizedek was greater than him. Melchizedek was just an archetype of an even greater High Priest, Jesus.

"...THE INFERIOR IS BLESSED BY THE SUPERIOR"

The Levitical priesthood was comprised of mortals, and though they offered sacrifices to God for the forgiveness of sins, they were unable to save and restore the people.

- The author is using Melchizedek as an archetype to remind us that **only God can completely lead, restore, and save humanity**.

WE CAN HAVE HOPE...

- We can look at the promises of God given to His people in the Bible and read how faithful and true He is, but we must choose to seize the hope set before us.
- If we do not believe in the infallibility of the Word, then these become nothing more than good stories that entertain us but have no real effect on our lives.

...BECAUSE HE LIVES

- We find hope, not in the things of this world, but in the One who created this world. Our hope comes from knowing who Jesus is and what He has done.
- We remember the things of this life are temporary. One day the perfect and eternal High Priest, Jesus, will come back and take us to be with Him forever.