

Hebrews: Jesus is Better
“A Better High Priest”

October 2, 2022

As We Gather

Melchizedek is one of most mysterious characters in the Bible. He makes a brief appearance in Genesis 14 where, as the king and priest of Salem, he receives a tithe from Abram. But he is more than that. He becomes the symbol and icon for a priesthood distinct from the priesthood that followed Aaron. What does it mean that Jesus is considered a priest in the order of Melchizedek and why is that good news for us?

Jesus is indeed a better High Priest than anyone who came before or after. And because of this, our relationship with our saving God is secure. Today we'll explore what that means.

Welcome

+ Gathering +

“Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me” LSB 761

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill Thy Law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Invocation

Confession

"King of Kings"

In the darkness we were waiting
without hope without light
Till from Heaven You came running
there was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfil the law and prophets
to a virgin came the Word
From a throne of endless glory
to a cradle in the dirt

Chorus

Praise the Father praise the Son
Praise the Spirit three in one
God of Glory majesty
Praise for - ever to the King of kings

To reveal the kingdom coming
and to reconcile the lost
To re - deem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross
For even in Your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation

Prayer

Children's Church

Jesus for our sake You died

Chorus

And the morning that You rose
all of heaven held its breath
Till that stone was moved for good
for the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
and the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
to the Father are re - stored

And the Church of Christ was born
then the Spirit lit the flame
Now this Gospel truth of old
shall not kneel shall not faint
By His blood and in His Name
in His freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
who has resurrected me **Chorus**

Praise for - ever to the King of kings

+ Service of the Word +

First Reading: Genesis 14:14-20

When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan. ¹⁵ During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. ¹⁶ He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.

¹⁷ After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).

¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, ¹⁹ and he blessed Abram, saying,
"Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
Creator of heaven and earth.

²⁰ And praise be to God Most High,
who delivered your enemies into your hand."
Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Second Reading: Hebrews 7:1-28

This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, ² and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.” ³ Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

⁴ Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! ⁵ Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, from their fellow Israelites—even though they also are descended from Abraham. ⁶ This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. ⁷ And without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater. ⁸ In the one case, the tenth is collected by people who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. ⁹ One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, ¹⁰ because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

¹¹ If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood—and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthood—why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? ¹² For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also. ¹³ He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. ¹⁵ And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, ¹⁶ one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is declared:

“You are a priest forever,
in the order of Melchizedek.”

¹⁸ The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

²⁰ And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, ²¹ but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him:

“The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind:
‘You are a priest forever.’”

²² Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.

²³ Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

²⁶ Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men in all their weakness; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

Matthew 26:57-68

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled. ⁵⁸ But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome.

⁵⁹ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰ But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.

Finally two came forward ⁶¹ and declared, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'"

⁶² Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent.

The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God."

⁶⁴ "You have said so," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What do you think?"

"He is worthy of death," they answered.

⁶⁷ Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him ⁶⁸ and said, "Prophecy to us, Messiah. Who hit you?"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You O Christ!

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Sermon

"A Better High Priest"

Offering

Musical Offering

"The Angelus"

Jr. Handbells

by Charles Gounod Arr. by Martha Lynn Thompson

Prayers

Please add your prayer requests to the chat.

Thanksgivings

Pastor: O Lord, we praise You.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Petitions

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

St. John's People and Families

Hagen & Laurie Bresee
Aaron, Meghan, Ella, & Henry Eisberg
Dustin, Brie, Parker, Hunter, & Tanner Jones
Janet Peterson
Jeffery, Chelsea, & Stella Squibb
Melissa and Amelia Burmester
Sonyia and Leland Grabski
Tod, Jenny, & Amayla Kawachi
Steve, Michelle, Dugan, & Bear Perotti-Kline
Trevor, Stephanie, & Brooklyn Sheehan

The Lord's Prayer

People: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Benediction

"All Depends on Our Possessing" LSB 732

1 All depends on our possessing
God's abundant grace and blessing,
Though all earthly wealth depart.
They who trust with faith unshaken
By their God are not forsaken
And will keep a dauntless heart.

2 He who to this day has fed me
And to many joys has led me
Is and ever shall be mine.
He who ever gently schools me,
He who daily guides and rules me
Will remain my help divine.

3 Many spend their lives in fretting
Over trifles and in getting
Things that have no solid ground.
I shall strive to win a treasure
That will bring me lasting pleasure
And that now is seldom found.

4 When with sorrow I am stricken,
Hope anew my heart will quicken;
All my longing shall be stilled.
To His loving-kindness tender
Soul and body I surrender,
For on God alone I build.

5 Well He knows what best to grant me;
All the longing hopes that haunt me,
Joy and sorrow, have their day.
I shall doubt His wisdom never;
As God wills, so be it ever;
I commit to Him my way.

6 If my days on earth He lengthen,
God my weary soul will strengthen;
All my trust in Him I place.
Earthly wealth is not abiding,
Like a stream away is gliding;
Safe I anchor in His grace.

Offering

<http://stjohnslutheran.net/give/>

You may also mail your offering to St. John's (3521 Linda Vista, Napa, CA 94558)

Memory Verse for This Week

Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy,
blameless, pure, set apart from sinners,
exalted above the heavens.

Hebrews 7:26

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Serving in Worship Today

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Lay Readers	Gerry Schneider & Matthew Wahlers
Organist	Erin Blackwood
Sound Technician	Martin Meissenhalter
Streaming Technician	Joshua Wright
Projection Technician	Sarah Kramer
Worship Preparation Team	Ruth Peterson, Marlen Virkus
Ushers	Lisa and Soren De Young
Children's Church	Sarah Santora, Pam Watkins, Debbie Kirkpatrick
Worship Band	Pastor Mike & Teresa Schmid, Neill Barker, Christopher Newman, Heidi Newman