

## The King Priest

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### Hebrews 7

- If you have been with us for the majority of the year, we have been walking through the book of Hebrews together.
- And there is a name that has popped up a few times that we haven't really discussed. And that name is Melchizedek.
  - And I haven't really dug into who he is or why he is mentioned as of yet because I knew chapter 7 was coming where he is completely unavoidable.
  - Now, Melchizedek is a very mysterious figure because he kind of shows up out of nowhere in Genesis chapter 14
  - If you remember a few weeks ago, whenever we were talking about Abram's rollercoaster of a spiritual life, and at one point his nephew Lot had found himself caught in the middle of a war and he and his family were captured.

- Abram get's word, and goes out in faith, takes 318 able bodied men from his camp and goes and conquers those kings and got his nephew and his family back.

- Then we see in verse 17:

- ***“After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (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.”***  
-**Genesis 14:17-20 (ESV)**

- Then after Genesis 14, Melchizedek isn't mentioned at all again, until suddenly about 1000 years later, King David is under

inspiration of the Holy Spirit as he writes Psalm 110.

- And in this Psalm, he talks about seeing this picture of the Father speaking to the Son, and he says:

- ***“The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at My Right Hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool...The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” -Psalm 110:1, 4 (ESV)***

- Then after Psalm 110, another 1000 years goes by without a word being mentioned about Melchizedek, until he pops up again in the book of Hebrews and in chapter 7 the writer writes:

- ***“For this 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 he continues a priest forever.” -Hebrews 7:1-3 (ESV)***

- You know there is something within us, that is always searching for validation.
- It starts whenever you are a child, you are always after the validation or affirmation of your parents
  - It’s the kid, doing something they think is cool, and they say, “Dad! Dad! Dad! Are you watching Dad?? Did you see me Dad?? DAD! DAD!”
  - Then once you get a little bit older, you search more so for the validation of your friends or your peers. We constantly want to fit in, to be a part of something. It is probably the most evident in this day and age in the

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validation that we try to find in social media and things of the like.

- Maybe you're not that into social media, but there are still other ways we are constantly looking for validation. I know for me, if I find myself in a group chat, and I send a GIF that I find to be absolutely hilarious, i'll find myself constantly checking my phone, impatiently waiting for that affirmation that I am indeed hilarious.
- Then there comes a point in time where we look for the validation in a relationship or a significant other.
  - I remember when Rachel and I first started dating, I brought her to one of our church league basketball games that Chavis and I were playing in, and at this point in my life I had gotten past the point where I really took these games seriously
  - But this time I had brought a date to the game, so I'm playing super hard and I'm getting buckets

- And Chavis says, "Boyyy you know you got a girl in the stands, you NEVER play like this!"

- And then later on you start to look for validation in your kids
  - You want them to think you're awesome, YOU want to be the one that makes them happy! You want them to want to be just like you!
  - I remember months ago, I spent entirely too much money on getting Fletcher a brand new, Eagles, Kelly Green, little hoodie just for him
  - And the day it was delivered I found myself looking out the window like a dog, just waiting for the mail man to arrive. And when it came I was so excited, I ran out to the mail box, got it out, opened it up, and ran over to Fletcher and was like, "Hey buddy! This is for you!!"
  - And he looks at it for a few seconds, and just goes..... "No." And goes back to

playing. I had never been so devastated as a father....

- But we can all think of all of the various ways that we desire and look for affirmation and validation from so many things and so many people
  - *And I believe that desire is placed innately within us because it all goes back to us being children, really desiring the affirmation of our Heavenly Father*
  - And we are all guilty, of having that constant thirst for validation because we try to find it in other things or other people rather than being content with our validation in Him.
- And this is true for everyone, no matter where you are on the spectrum of faith, even for the non-believer.
- The famous playwright, Arthur Miller, who wrote Death of a Salesman, stated that after he stopped believing in God, he continued to carry around this sense of judgement and that he felt this constant need to prove himself to

others. Later on in his life he came to realization that he had just replaced the need to be approved by God with the need to be approved by others.

- There was also a Jewish agnostic, Ernest Becker who wrote in his book, The Death of Denial, (After he had ceased believing in God he realized, ***“The self glorification that we need in our innermost being, we now look for in the love partner. The love partner becomes the divine ideal within which to fulfill one’s life. What is it that we want when we elevate the love partner to this position? We want to be rid of our faults. We want to be rid of our feeling of nothingness. We want to be justified. We want to know that our existence hasn’t been in vain. We want redemption, nothing less...”*** -Ernest Becker: ***The Death of Denial***
- The writer of Hebrews wants his readers to understand that the ultimate validation that they are looking for is found only in Jesus. Who

is their Ultimate King and their Great High Priest.

- He is writing to a group of believers who are enduring extreme persecution, who need to know that their suffering is not in vain
- He is writing to a group of believers that do not have the affirmation or validation from many of their friends, family, and the religious leaders of the day because they have gone away from the traditional Jewish traditions to follow Jesus...and they need the validation that they are on the right path
- And in order to encourage his readers, the writer points them back to man who had not been mentioned in scripture for a 1000 years.
- He explains how the purpose of Melchizedek ever being mentioned in Scripture is to give us a picture of Jesus being for us everything that we need Him to be for us.
- You know, some say that the book of Hebrews isn't a very practical book. And I get why they say that because you're not going to get a 5-

step process of how to better your marriage, or some practical steps to success in this book.

- You just get a whole lot of Jesus: This is Jesus, Jesus is better than this, Jesus is better than that
  - But you know, that is why I believe that this book is actually SO very practical because I'm telling you the best way to better your marriage, is to know Jesus more
  - The best way to find success is to find more of Jesus
  - Because you will find the most fulfillment and validation for you life, for your soul, and for your spirit, whenever you seek Jesus above all else
- And the first thing that the illustration of Melchizedek shows us about Jesus is that:
  - **JESUS IS THE KING THAT COMES TO BLESS**
  - *"For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning*

*from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him...” -Hebrews 7:1 (ESV)*

- You see Melchizedek didn't come to pronounce judgment, or condemnation, he didn't come to form an alliance or talk politics....He came to Abram to bless him.
- Similarly Jesus comes to us, (because we can't get to Him) he comes to us, he seeks us out so He can offer us our ultimate blessing
- Jesus Himself said in John 3:17, ***“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.”***  
***-John 3:17 (ESV)***
- We find our blessing in the Person of Jesus Christ
  - We don't find our blessing in a promotion
  - We don't find our blessing in a relationship
  - We don't find our blessing in parenthood

- We don't find our blessing in our reputation or religious performance
- We find our blessing in Saving and Redeeming work of Jesus and all of those areas of our lives become blessed whenever we find our validation in the Blessings of Christ
  - Now that does not mean that if you focus on Jesus, pray a little more, read your bible a little more, and raise your hand in worship a little more often your bank account is going to boom and all of your wants and dreams will come true.
  - No, when the psalmist says *“Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart”*
    - He means that when God becomes your ultimate desire, your heart will begin to line up with His heart
    - Your wants will begin to line up with His wants

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- Your desires will begin to line up with His desires
- And then you will experience so much more blessing in all of the areas of your life, because you're not putting the pressure on them to validate you
- You can just enjoy the blessings that your job, your family, your friends, your activities are because your validation is found in the Person of Jesus and your salvation first and foremost...everything else is just a bonus
- This in fact is so practical because, like we've said, no human being was ever meant to be the fulfillment of another human being's life
  - If you look to your spouse or significant other for the validation of your life you will put a strain on your marriage and the relationship will suffer
  - If you put the pressure on your children to be your validation, you will smother them and they will end up resenting you for it
- If you put the pressure on your friends, peers, or coworkers to be your validation you will become a toxic person to be around
- If you put the pressure on the people in the church for your spiritual validation you will look at people more than you will at Christ, you will be sorely let down, and miss the point of what church is all about.
- Now this doesn't mean that we don't care about the people around us, because family, friends, coworkers, and church are all awesome!
  - Paul tells us that we should live in such a manner where people can speak well of us
- But the writer of Hebrews does this throughout the whole book. He doesn't talk about bad things that we should flee and replace with Jesus
  - He talks about good things that Jesus is better than

- The angels, Abraham, Moses, Aaron, the law, Melchizedek, where all good things and good people....Jesus is just better!
- And whenever we look first and foremost to King Jesus and find our validation in the Love, Forgiveness, and Acceptance that He blesses us with...then we actually be a better blessing to those around us, because we're not putting the pressure on them to give us something that only Jesus can provide.
- That's why Jesus says in Matthew 6, "Don't worry about what you have and what you look like...your Heavenly Father knows everything you need (paraphrased)
- ***"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."* -Matthew 6:33 (ESV)**
- Because He's not only the King that comes to bless... the 2nd thing we see from the illustration of Melchizedek is that:

## **- JESUS IS THE PRIEST THAT COMES TO PROVIDE**

- *"And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.)"* -Genesis 14:18 (ESV)
- So Melchizedek came to bless Abram, and also provided and physical and spiritual need.
- Let me explain, the term bread here means food, in general, and was most likely used to feed the troops that came back from battle
- However, it would have made more sense to bring water if the sole purpose was for the nourishment of the troops
- Yet he brings wine. In Jewish culture, wine was a symbol of God's blessings, joy, happiness, abundance, and new beginnings.
  - And Jesus in his very first miracle at the wedding of Cana, turned water into wine.
  - And wine was served at these weddings because they were celebrating a new beginning for the newly married couple, the



blessing of God in their lives, and the joyous occasion

- However, if word would have gotten out that they had run out of wine, then the superstitious Jewish people would have been led to believe that God was not blessing that marriage, the joy would be lost, and the celebration would be over.
- However, by Jesus turning the water into wine, He showed that He has come to bring about a new beginning, He has come to bless, and He has come to bring joy
  - And I don't know about you, but I believe that Joy is a deep spiritual need
- And it kind of rounds out what the Illustration of what Melchizedek is pointing out about Jesus
- Because the writer points out the meaning of his name when he says, ***“He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of***

***Salem, that is, king of peace.” Hebrews 7:2 (ESV)***

- And we know from the context of Genesis that he brought with Him the symbol of Joy
- And this excites me, because Paul says that is what the Kings Reign is all about!
- He says in Romans, ***“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” -Romans 14:17 (ESV)***
- So everything that you need for a Right Standing with God, Jesus provides!
- Everything that you need to find Peace for your soul, Jesus Provides
- Everything that you need to have Joy in your Spirit, Jesus Provides
- And whenever you find your fulfillment and validation in the Blessing and Provisions that Jesus died in order for you to have...there will be an unexplainable joy about you

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- And that word joy doesn't mean that we pretend that hardships don't happen or that everything is sunshine and rainbows
- The word Joy means to have a "calm delight"
- It means that whenever Jesus is the source of your validation there will be a contentment about you, no matter the circumstances
  - When you have the joy of Jesus in your life, you won't be so easily rattled, and you will be very hard to offend
  - I like to say it all the time, we as Christians should be the most unoffendable people on the planet
- Because if I am content in who Jesus is, and who I am in Him, what could anyone say about me that outweighs what God says about me or the work that He has done for me?
  - *"Oh you think I'm dumb for believing in God? Well...there was a time I thought that way,*

*but if you get to know Him the way I know Him, He'll change all of that..."*

- *"Oh I'm a hypocrite? You're right, I do my best to practice what I preach, but man, I'm sure glad His mercies are new every morning"*
- *"Oh, I'm not being very Christ like? You're right, I know, I'm not like Christ, that's why I need Him!"*
- You see, when your validation is found in Jesus, you don't have anything to prove to anyone
- This is why the writer says in verse 22, ***"This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant." -Hebrews 7:22 (ESV)***
  - Because the old covenant was all based around performance
  - Your standing with God and other people was all about performing well, and as soon as you messed up you had to perform a

- sacrifice, or someone would perform a sacrifice on your behalf
- Therefore the spiritual life was based more around fear and walking on egg shells
  - And that wasn't all necessarily a bad thing, that law was set up to let us know the seriousness and the weight of our sin and humanity's desperate need for a Savior.
- And there was this perpetual cycle of priests that had to constantly be in office to perform these sacrifices because the people could never stop sinning in some capacity
    - And there was this whole system in place where the priests had to be confirmed with a birth certificate from a certain line of heritage
    - At the age of 25 they would enter a sort of internship for 5 years and then from the ages of 30-50 they would serve in the office of priest
      - And after they aged out, someone would take over
- And this is what made Melchizedek such a polarizing figure, because we don't see a record of him ever beginning the office of priest or ending the office of priest.
  - According to the Old Testament records it seems as if his kingship and priesthood never ended
  - Because whenever someone is introduced in scripture they are always introduced along with their lineage...who they came from and often who came after them
  - However, he just seems to appear out of thin air, with no mention to his beginnings or endings.
    - Now some speculate that is because Melchizedek was a Theophany
      - That is a Old Testament sighting of Jesus
      - I do not think that is the case because the scripture doesn't fully lend to that
      - We see cases of Jesus appearing in the Old Testament, like Him wrestling with

Jacob and appearing in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

- Those I believe to be Theophanies, this I don't believe is one of those instances...and for a few reasons
  - But mainly because Hebrews doesn't say that he was the Son of God, but that he resembled the Son of God
- The recording of Melchizedek in Scripture was divinely placed the way that it was in order to point us toward the Kingship and the Priesthood of Jesus
- And the writer goes on to say that this gives us a picture of Jesus because: ***“The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but [JESUS] holds His priesthood permanently, because He continues forever. Consequently, 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.” -Hebrews 7:23-25 (ESV)***

- So Jesus is the King that comes to bless, He is the Priest that had come to Provide, and, for our last point for today:
- JESUS IS THE KING-PRIEST THAT INTERCEDES**
- This was the other thing that separated Melchizedek from any other person in the old testament, the fact that he held the office of both King and Priest at the same time
  - That had never been said about anyone else until the writer of Hebrews says it about Jesus.
- Now this should give us so much confidence, assurance, and validation, because we do not just have a Priest that intercedes for us, but we have One who intercedes for us with the Authority of a King

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- And whenever the King intercedes for you, there is no room for argument or further speculation. What He says goes.
- Now the term intercession, was a legal term that meant to appear on the behalf of another.
- And I think a lot of times whenever we think of Jesus interceding on our behalf we get the picture of something like a traffic court lawyer.
  - And we think of it like a situation, where we've been caught speeding and we have someone pleading our case, begging the judge for mercy and asking for a reduced sentence
  - And we kind of picture Jesus in that way interceding for us before the Father, saying, "Oh Father, I know Kenny's messed up, but please don't hold it against him too much. Pretty please forgive him. You remember whenever I went to earth and hung on the cross, you kind of owe me one Big Guy...do me a favor, go easy on him."
- But that's not an accurate picture of Jesus. Whenever He walks into the spiritual courtroom on my behalf, and then the enemy is throwing accusations against me, He walks in with Authority and demands Justice.
- You know, in the spirit of honesty and transparency, I have been known to appear in traffic court a time or two.
  - It should have been a lot more times that I've been, I may or may not have been pulled over 9 times before I got my first ticket.
  - I somehow kept getting out of them, but eventually it caught up to me
  - Emma has described me as driving like a Bat out of....I'll let you finish that sentence. I don't use that kind of language...
- But I remember one time a few years back I had one of my former students who was moving into the dorm of my alma mater North Greenville University, to pursue a degree in youth ministry, and I went to go help him move in

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- And as I was driving to campus, I may have been going a tick over the speed limit...and I was pulled over.
  - I received my ticket and I had to appear in court
  - Now I went to my court date, and the judge was gracious, he did give me a reduced sentence, I paid my fine, and I went on my way.
  - I was actually so thankful that it turned into a sermon illustration that evening with the youth group.
- However, months later, I got a letter in the mail that my license had been suspended.
- And this was at the beginning of the covid season so it took weeks for me to be able to get ahold of the people I needed to get a hold of in order to get an explanation
  - And it turned out that the records were not transferred properly from South Carolina to North Carolina and in the eyes of North

Carolina my debt had not been paid so they suspended my license

- However, whenever I got the right people on the phone, and got the situation resolved, I didn't not have to appear in court again, I did not have to pay another fine
  - Everything was reinstated, and justice was served, because the debt had already been paid
- Brother and Sister, Jesus has paid your debt!
- But for some reason, we too often decide to keep ourselves on trial
- We think that there is still work that we have to do to become approved, or we feel like there is still a debt to be paid
  - But the truth of the matter is, it doesn't matter what your past holds or what your current struggles are
  - When you draw near to Him, you are saved to the uttermost

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- And when the enemy comes to condemn and accuse, your King-Priest goes before you and declares with Authority, that debt has been paid!
  - He demands Justice because He has already paid that debt Himself!
  - He rebukes the accusation of the enemy!
    - “\_\_\_\_\_”s debt has been paid with My Blood!”
    - “\_\_\_\_\_” has been sealed with My Spirit!”
    - “\_\_\_\_\_” is free from condemnation because of Me!”
    - “YOU” have been Redeemed, Restored, and Set Free by the King Himself!
- THAT is what validates you. THAT is what fulfills you. THAT is what gives you purpose! THAT is what you need to keep repeating and believing over your life!
- You validation is not based on your performance, it’s based on HIS!
- That’s what makes this such good news, because if you think about the court room scene...your representation doesn’t reflect you, YOU reflect your representation
  - If your representation looks weak and afraid, you will look weak and afraid
  - If your representation looks confident and controlled you will look confident and controlled
- I am so thankful that my representation isn’t a reflection of me
- But in His goodness and His grace, I get to reflect HIM
- Whenever we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we are called to reflect the Kingly-Priesthood that Jesus operates in
- That’s why Peter says, ***“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may***

***declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.” -1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)***

- Oh we need some believers today, that are so confident in their validation that the cross has provided that we can intercede for each other with Spiritual Authority
- We need some believers that will demand Justice and rebuke the lies of the enemy over each other and over ourselves
- And if you ever get to questioning what the truth about your identity in Christ, I encourage you to take a walk down Romans chapter 8:
- Because the fact that you are a part of a Royal Priesthood, led by the King-Priest Himself: That means...
  - *Whenever the enemy comes accusing...you can declare with authority:*
  - ***There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” -Romans 8:1 (ESV)***

- *Whenever the enemy tries to make you think God can't do anything significant through your like, you can say THAT'S NOT TRUE!*
- ***..The Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you..” -Romans 8:11 (ESV)***
- *When the enemy tries to get you to question where you stand with God...you can proclaim with all confidence*
- ***“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” -Romans 8:16 (ESV)***
- *When we see one of our brothers and sisters seemingly defeated, we can declare to them:*
- ***“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.” -Romans 8:28 (ESV)***
- *This will not defeat you...*



- ***“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” -Romans 8:37 (ESV)***
- ***“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” -Romans 8:39-39 (ESV)***
- Know it, Believe it, Repeat it!
- It's who we are, because it's who He made us to be
- And the only way we are going to walk confidently in our identities in Christ, is if we bow and surrender to the King-Priest Himself, and find all of our validation in Him
- He came to bless you, to provide for you, He intercedes for you so that you can walk in a freedom that you never thought possible
- You can be free from the constant need to be approved by others
- You can be free from the constant pressure to perform
- You can be free from self-defeat
- Because your validation isn't dependent upon you
  - I someone on social media this week that said, “The only validation you need is yourself”
  - That's not true...
  - And the ironic part is that the only reason that was posted was to gain the validation of others that they was thinking the right way about validation
  - You can't validate yourself, and if you try you're just going to be a very salty individual because you'll constantly be searching for that validation but never actually find it

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- And the only reason we would want to be the validation of our own lives is because we want to be god of our own lives...we want to be king of our own hearts.
- But we're about to sing a song that tells me the only 3 things that I need to know:
  - He's the King of My Heart
  - He's Good
  - He'll Never Let Me Down
- Man, if I believe and am confident in those three things, what more do I need??