

I. Review

- A. The writer has just given a strong warning of the dangerous place the readers have found themselves concerning the digression of their faith. After such a stern warning the writer now encourages their hearts to remain and to press into faith to obtain the great promise of salvation and its accompanying benefits.
 - 1. The writer puts Abraham forward as the father and example of the kind of persevering faith that the readers are to emulate. When we meditate upon the account of his life, we find that Abraham's faith was tested through trial and purified through perseverance.
- B. We are encouraged to lay hold of the strong consolation of the promise of God concerning salvation that has been given to us through faith just as it was given to Abraham. The great hope and promise of salvation is the refuge to which we run to receive comfort and to renew our soul in seasons of pain and waiting.

"It is a strong consolation that can deal with outward trials when a man has poverty staring him in the face, and hears his little children crying for bread; when bankruptcy is likely to come upon him through unavoidable losses; when the poor man has just lost his wife, and his dear children have been put into the same grave; when one after another all earthly props and comforts have given way, he needs a strong consolation then; not in your pictured trials, but your real trials, not in your imaginary whimsied afflictions, but in the real afflictions, and the blustering storms of life. To rejoice then, and say, 'Though these things be not with me as I would have them, yet he has made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure;' this is strong consolation. - Spurgeon

II. Verse by Verse (Heb. 6:19-7:10)

- A. This Hope as an Anchor - This is such powerful and true imagery. The anchor of hope for our mind, will, and emotions is the promise of salvation which we have absolute surety we will receive if we remain in faith. Just as an actual anchor is unseen when it is holding the ship steady in turbulent waters, so our anchor is not yet seen but holds us steady through tribulation and over time.
 - 1. As we pointed out in many of our past sessions, the author is clear that the salvation and hope that he is referring to is the installment of the messianic kingdom and its corresponding benefits. (Heb 1 quotes Ps. 45, 110; Heb. 2:5-10; Heb. 3 "Rest" in context)

2. Hundreds of pictures of anchors have been found in the catacombs and caves in and around the regions where the early church suffered great persecution in the first few generations of our faith.

- B. This Hope is Jesus on the Earth - The bible refers to our great hope as a living hope because our hope is a living person who can never die and will do all that He has promised to do. The Hope of the gospel has been and will always be connected to Jesus personally who physically fulfilled all that God had promised to do for His covenant people. We set our hope fully upon the coming of the Lord to set up His Kingdom and restore all things through His righteous rulership. (Hope of the Gospel: Acts. 1:6; Mt. 20:20-23; 170 Chapters have this as its main theme; 1Pet. 1:3-5, 13, 3:15; Rom. 15:4-13; 1 Co. 13:13; 1 Th. 5:8; Heb. 3:6; Heb. 6:19; 1 Jn. 3:3)
- C. He is our Forerunner - Tied to our hope is the truth that Jesus is our forerunner. A forerunner by definition goes before those who will come after. If He suffered and died on behalf of love for those who follow, so will they. If He did not stay in the grave but was resurrected in a physical glorified body, so will those who follow. If He entered into the most holy place into the very presence of the father, so will those who follow. If He exercises His authority through love-based intercession that moves heaven and earth as a priest, then so, too, those who follow will stand in intercession before the father on behalf of love.
- D. **High Priest According to the Order of Melchizedek** - The author has brought us full circle back to the theme of Jesus as the merciful and faithful great high priest in the order of Melchizedek. As pointed out in chapter 5, the author has “much to say” concerning Jesus as the High Priest in the order of Melchizedek. In fact, the writer is going to spend over 3 of our next chapters expounding upon this reality. The discussion concerning whether or not Melchizedek was actually the preincarnate Christ is not what's important here. However, understanding his roles and function is key to understanding the role and function of Jesus as our High Priest, the same as Melchizedek was to Abraham.
1. Abraham - It is only fitting that the forerunner and father of our faith is the one who encountered the great high priest, Melchizedek. The author just took us on a journey of the persevering faith of Abraham as our example to follow and now takes us deeper still into the glory of the story of Abraham as it relates to the journey of all believers. (Gen. 14:10-20; Ps. 110)

2. Melchizedek the King - When we are first introduced to Melchizedek, the writer points out two things. The literal interpretation of the meaning of his name is “righteous one” and that he was the king of “Salem”, meaning peace. Salem is also the ancient name of Jerusalem. It's interesting to note that true and lasting peace is produced by righteousness. Jesus is the king of righteousness and the prince of peace who will, through His righteous rulership of the earth from Jerusalem, institute a never-ending reality of peace on earth. (Ps. 72:3; Is. 32:17; Rom. 14:17; Jam. 3:18)
 3. Melchizedek the Priest - God did not allow the kings of Israel to be priests and the priests to be kings. According to the instructions God handed down to Moses, only those of the tribe of Levi, the sons of Aaron, could be priests. Biblically, we do not necessarily see that a Levite could not be a King, but we do see clearly that a violation of the law would be for any other genealogy besides Levi to be a priest. When any non-Levite kings of Israel attempted to function in priestly roles they were judged by God. (1 Sam. 10:8, 13:13-14, 2 Chron. 26:16-23)
 4. King and Priest - Melchizedek, who was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, is truly a unique exception in all the old testament. It really isn't that Jesus has Melchizedek's kind of priesthood. Instead, Melchizedek has *Jesus'* kind of priesthood. The author states that Melchizedek was made like the Son rather than the Son being like him. Just as Melchizedek was made like Him in function, so are all who are in Christ, for He has made a way for us to function as kings and priests now in this age and even more in the age to come. (1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6, 5:10)
 - a. The point that Melchizedek has no recorded genealogy is pointing out that he was not qualified by his lineage but rather he was appointed by God uniquely. That he has no recorded death is speaking of the reality that his priesthood is unending. (Heb. 5:1-6)
- E. Superiority of Melchizedek over Abraham and the Levitical Priesthood - It is important now to remember the purpose of this letter being written to the Hebrews. They are feeling extreme pressure and temptation to deny faith in Jesus for salvation and go back to confessing and placing their faith in Judaism. In this section the writer is going to show the surpassing greatness of the High Priestly function and role of Jesus over the function and role of the Levitical priesthood in the Torah/Law. At the same time, the writer will show that Jesus is greater than Abraham who was the chief and celebrated patriarch of the Jewish faith.

5. Melchizedek received tithes from Abraham - The priesthood of Levi received tithes from Israel as a commandment. Abraham voluntarily gave tithes to Melchizedek. This makes Abraham's giving to Melchizedek greater than Israel's payment of tithes to the priesthood instituted by Moses. Spoils is literally translated the "top of the heap", referring to the choicest spoils of war. When Abraham tithed to Melchizedek the tenth that he gave, he was giving the best of all he acquired. (Num. 18:21-24)
 - a. When Abraham did this, in a way his unborn children also honored and paid tithes to the priesthood of Melchizedek. For if Abraham honored the superiority of Melchizedek over himself, then he surely viewed Melchizedek greater than his offspring. Therefore, the priesthood of Melchizedek is honored above the priesthood of Levi.
6. Melchizedek blessed Abraham - The lesser is blessed by the greater. This principle also shows that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham because he blessed Abraham. On his part, Abraham accepted that Melchizedek was greater when Abraham received the blessing. The "greater" applies to the position of holiness or righteousness above the Levites and Abraham in order to be in a position to bless them.

"The blessing here spoken of... is not the simple wishing of good to others, which may be done by inferiors to superiors; but it is the action of a person authorized to declare God's intention to bestow good things on another." (Macknight)