

The Life of Faith, Pt 5: The King and Priest We All Need (Genesis 14:18, Psalm 110, Hebrews 7)

We're going to be looking at Genesis 14 again this week, but turn to Luke 24 first. This is Part 5 of our series studying the life of Abraham and how it applies to our life of faith, and we've already seen how the NT book of Hebrews spends much of Hebrews 11 on the life of Abraham, but then it says in our life, we fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith, Abram's and ours (12:2). As we look at Abraham or anyone in the OT, even the greatest in the cloud of witnesses, we must be looking to Jesus. In Luke 24, Jesus Himself explains how we're to look to Jesus in all Scripture.

Luke 24:27 *Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, [i.e., starting with the first book of Moses, Genesis] He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures ...*

The context is the resurrection of Jesus, and in Luke's account, the first time we see the resurrected Lord, He joins 2 disciples as they walk on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus (v. 13). And the first thing the resurrected Lord wants His disciples to know is that all of Scripture, the whole OT, from the beginning, explained these days. There's things concerning Jesus in all Scripture, starting in Genesis and "all the Scriptures" includes Gen 14 having things about Jesus. And notice the effect in v. 32 of seeing OT truths concerning Jesus

... ³² *They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us [spiritual heart-burn] while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was **explaining [or opening] the Scriptures to us?**" ... [now look at v. 44 where He says to His disciples] Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.**"*

All things written about Christ in the book of Moses (Genesis to Deuteronomy) and the Psalms and the Prophets must be fulfilled. That's true in general, and there is also something specific about Christ in Genesis 14, which is also expounded by the psalms, and the prophets, and then later by the NT apostles Jesus illumined. I wish I could have heard Jesus expound the themes from Gen 14 and how they pointed to and were fulfilled by Him, but we do have enough in other Scriptures to explain to us and open up to us, with the Lord's help, to see Jesus in Gen 14. May we get holy heartburn

⁴⁵ *Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,* ⁴⁶ *and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day,* ⁴⁷ *and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.*

It’s in Genesis that we first read of “all the nations” who would be blessed by the gospel through Abraham and his descendants (12:3). It’s in the same chapter that Abraham builds an altar to the LORD, a place of sacrifice signifying his need for forgiveness of sin (12:7) and Abraham proclaims the name of the LORD before the nations he travelled through (12:8), the very things Jesus spoke of here in Luke 24:47. In Genesis 13 we see his repentance, turning back to the altar near Bethel (*house of God*) after his sin in Egypt (13:1-4).

And now in tonight’s text, Genesis 14, we have nations that come near the very place where Jesus spoke these words, and we see a man come on a road from Jerusalem (then called Salem) to meet Abraham (then called Abram) and to proclaim the Lord’s name in the presence of other nations, even sinful nations, and *beginning from Jerusalem*, as Jesus said, God’s deliverance is proclaimed.

Gen 14:17 *Then 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).¹⁸ And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.¹⁹ He blessed him and said, “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.*

LOOKING TO CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. **Personal Presence of Christ (Gen. 1:1, 26; John 1:1-3)**
2. **Prefigured Christ (Gen 2:24; Eph 5:31-32)**
3. **Pre-incarnate form of Christ (Gen 3:8; John 1:18)**
4. **Prophecy of Christ (Gen 3:15, 12:3, 22:18; Gal. 3:8, 16)**
5. **Pointing to need for Christ (Gen 4-5, 9-11; Rom 5:14)**
6. **Parallels with Christ (Gen 6-8; Mt 24:37, 1 Pet 3:18-22)**
7. **Pictures, Types, and Shadows of Christ (Gen 14:17-20)**

In Gen 14:17 a king meets Abraham in the *King’s Valley* (later the Kidron Valley). A later and greater descendant of Abraham, Jesus, a greater King AND Priest, would cross that same valley (Jn 18:1).

It was right after the Last Supper, also with bread and wine, after King Jesus had prayed His “High Priestly Prayer” (Jn 17) and was about to fulfill His Priestly role (Jn 18). Gen 14:18 isn’t prophecy, but it’s a parallel and a picture or type or shadow that later readers could see similarities: ¹⁸ *And Melchizedek **king** of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a **priest** of God Most High.*

This is not a *prophecy* (#4) of Christ or communion. I don’t think Melchizedek is *personally* Christ (#1), or a *pre-incarnate form* of Christ (#3), though some have suggested he, is based on Heb. 7. But this man, who is mysterious, does at least *pre-figure* Christ (#2), *points us to* Christ (#5), has many *parallels to* Christ (#6), and *pictures, types, or shadows of* Christ (#7) that we can see in:

- **HIS PERSONAL NAME**
- **HIS PLACE AS KING**
- **HIS PRIESTHOOD FOREVER**

[Melchizedek points us to the King and Priest we all need]

1st, **HIS PERSONAL NAME** is significant, according to Heb. 7: *This Melchizedek...first, his name means “king of righteousness...”*

Melchizedek’s name means *king of righteousness*; a word picture of One who fully lived up to the name, *The King of Righteousness*. The point of Heb 7 is how King Jesus is like Melchizedek on many levels, starting with the meaning of his name and Salem. Heb 7:2 explains that “Salem” (c.f. Heb. *shalom*) means “peace, and that the meanings of the names *righteousness* and *peace* are significant.

Psalm 85:10 “...**Righteousness and peace** have kissed each other.” In the Messiah promised in the OT, righteousness and peace come together, in an intimate and affectionate way, those 2 attributes are married. Isaiah 9:6-7: *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given ... and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**. Of the increase of **his government and of peace** there will be no end, on the **throne** of David and over his **kingdom**, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with **righteousness** from this time forth and forever...*

[Messiah would rule in both righteousness and peace]

God’s justice and righteousness must be satisfied for our sin before man can ever have peace with God. At the cross the 2 meet. God’s righteous judgment is fulfilled and peace is won at Calvary. Peace and righteousness kiss in Jesus; peace (the meaning of Salem) and the righteousness of the King (meaning of Melchizedek’s name). That’s the 1st point of parallel, Melchizedek’s personal name ...

2nd: MELCHIZEDEK'S PLACE AS KING

Look at Gen 14:18 again: *And Melchizedek king of Salem ...*

Ps 76:2 explains that Salem is an old name for Jerusalem or Zion. The Jewish rabbis also called it Jerusalem,¹ and the ancient Jewish historian Josephus writes 'they afterward called Salem Jerusalem.'² Melchizedek, this Gentile believer, is the first king of Jerusalem.

It would be 1,000+ years before a descendant of Abraham would sit on Melchizedek's throne as king of Salem/Jerusalem: David. It would be David, the first Israelite king of that city Melchizedek the Gentile righteous king ruled. David writes the only other mention of Melchizedek in the OT in Psalm 110, also about Zion/Jerusalem and Gentiles. Now turn to Matt 1, another 1,000 years after David.

The words "king" and "Jerusalem" appear together in nearly 1,000 verses in the Bible, but after David and Solomon, the kings of Jerusalem are not righteous for the most part for 1,000+ years, and by NT times, the 'king of Jerusalem' is a very unrighteous Gentile.

Mt 1:1 *The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah [i.e., the coming King, Anointed One] the son of David, the son of Abraham*

2:1 *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ² "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.*

Herod thought he was king of Jerusalem, but there's a greater King that wise men who apparently had the Hebrew Scriptures knew and they come from afar bearing gifts for a king. In Mt 5:35 Jesus says Jerusalem 'is the city of the Great King,' not Herod, the great King of heaven. Jerusalem has been the city of God since back in Gen 14

Now fast-forward to Mt 19. There hasn't been a righteous king of Jerusalem for centuries, but one greater than Melchizedek is come:

⁴ *This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:*
⁵ *"SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION [alt name for Jerusalem] 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY ...'¹⁰ When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" [Now flip forward to Luke 19, where Luke gives us some additional details in fulfillment of Zechariah/Ps 118]*

Luke 19:11 *While they were listening to these things, Jesus went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately ...*²⁸ *After He had said these things, He was going on ahead, going up to Jerusalem ...*³⁸ *shouting: “Blessed is **the King** who comes in the name of the LORD; **Peace** in heaven ... [Gen 14]*

*...⁴¹ When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it,⁴² saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, **the things which make for peace!** But now they have been hidden from your eyes.⁴³ “For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side,⁴⁴ and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize ...*

Lk 21:24 describes that judgment on Jerusalem beginning in 70 A.D.:²⁴ *and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles **until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*** [Since 70 A.D. Jerusalem has been trampled by Gentiles/Muslims, Israel scattered to all nations, but that would end before the end, before the King returns:]²⁷ *“Then they will see **THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory.** [not a donkey that time]²⁸ “But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your **redemption** is drawing near.”*

Luke 2:38 says godly Jews look for the redemption of Jerusalem. 70 A.D. would not be the end of Jerusalem, redemption is to come

Sproul: ‘the times of the Gentiles are related to the occupation of Jerusalem by non-Jewish people. But this Gentile occupation of Jerusalem will not endure indefinitely. There is a crucial “until” mentioned here. This word fixes a temporal point of completion. This text figured prominently in eschatological expectations that were rekindled in 1967 when Jews wrested control of Jerusalem from the Arab Gentiles who had controlled it [many centuries].’³

Lloyd-Jones said: “To me 1967, the year that the Jews occupied all of [the old city of] Jerusalem, was very crucial. Luke 21:24 is one of the most significant prophetic verses ... It seems to me that that took place in 1967—something crucially important that had not occurred in 2,000 years ... we are living in the time of the end...”⁴

Other theologians aren't so sure, but one thing is sure in Rom.

11:25: ... *that a partial hardening has happened to Israel **until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in***; ²⁶ *and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, **THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION***... [another name for Jerusalem, very similar language to Luke 21:24]

Zech. 12:6 *"In that day...inhabitants of Jerusalem **again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem**...[and in v. 10 God says]"I will pour out ... on **the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced***

...

Zech 14:5 says the pierced one will return to Jerusalem: **the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!** ... ⁸ *And in that day living waters will flow **out of Jerusalem**...* ⁹ *And the LORD will be king over all the earth ...* ¹⁰ *All the land will be changed ... but **Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site** ...* ¹¹ *People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for **Jerusalem will dwell in security**.* [Peace will come to Jerusalem after its King returns]

This *King of Jerusalem* theme literally runs Genesis to Revelation; literally this city appears from the beginning to the end of the Bible till the one Melchizedek prefigures finally takes His place as King, the Prince of Peace becomes King of Righteousness in Jerusalem. Melchizedek prefigures and points to and parallels and is a picture or type of Christ in #1 His Personal Name, #2 His Place as King...
#3. HIS PRIESTHOOD FOREVER

Gen 14:18 *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now **he was a priest of God Most High**.* ¹⁹ *He blessed him...* [i.e., a priestly blessing, in end of v. 20 Abram tithes to this priest]

This would be most striking to the original Hebrew readers of OT:

- True priests were descended from Abram's grandson Jacob through his son Levi and his tribe (the Levites, later Aaron) but here is a true priest of the true God centuries earlier and there is no genealogy for him or records of descent, death?
- This man is a spiritual superior or authority to even Abram, as Melchizedek blessing Abram indicates, as well as the fact that Abram gives tithes to this man as spiritual leader?
- Melchizedek is a Gentile greater than Abram, a Priest who is a mediator between God and man, a leader in worship?
- Even Father Abram needs a priest/mediator, one greater
- Israelites could not be both Priest and King by OT Law?

Abram is called a prophet in Gen 20:7. Here prophet, priest, and king come together, the only man in OT who's both priest and king

But the OT promises another to come like Melchizedek...Messiah. Turn to Psalm 110. Zech 6:13 says Messiah would "*sit and rule on His throne* [i.e., as King]. Thus, ***He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.***"

The 2 offices of King and Priest are joined again in the Messiah. In the OT Law to Israel, a King couldn't be a Priest (and vice-versa). In Psalm 110, though, one of David's descendants will be both: *A Psalm of David* [first descendant of Abram to be king of Salem].¹ ***The LORD says to my Lord:*** [i.e., God the Father to God the Son] "***Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.***"² ***The LORD will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion*** [another name for Salem in Ps 76:2], ***saying, "Rule in the midst of Your enemies."*** [Millennial kingdom of Zech 14, not yet eternal state because Zech 14 still has enemies of the King]

Ps 110:4 is one of the most important promises of God the Father to the Messiah: ***The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."***⁵ *The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.*⁶ *He will judge among the nations...*

Now turn to the book of Hebrews. The first verse of Psalm 100 is directly quoted 7x in the NT as applying to Christ, and many more indirect quotations or allusions to Ps 110 can be found in the NT.

Heb 1:8 *of the Son He says, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.* [i.e., King of Righteousness] ...¹³ *But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"?* [quoting Ps 110:1]

^{2:17} *Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*

^{4:15} *For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.*¹⁶ *Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace ...* [the Priest has a throne, Priest and King]

^{5:1} *For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins ... [so Melchizedek would have done] ... ⁴ And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was. [we don't know how or when Melchizedek was called by God as priest, but God appointed Him] ⁵ So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"; ⁶ just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."* [This is what the LORD said to David's Lord, the Father to the Son, you are a priest forever of Melchizedek's order] ... ¹⁰ *being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. ¹¹ Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.*

^{6:20} ... *Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. ... ^{7:1} For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. ³ Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life ...*

I think the simplest way to understand that is that Genesis doesn't mention his parents or his genealogy, when he was born and died, unlike everyone else in the chapters before, and by the inspiration of God that is intentional to make people say "who is this man?" just as they would later say of Jesus "who is this man?" It doesn't mean Melchizedek was an angel or wasn't human (5:1 says priests must come from humanity), it's just that the OT doesn't mention his parents or trace his priestly role to Abraham's great-grandson Levi (who wasn't born yet) or to Aaron (hundreds of years later).

It doesn't mean he never died, if we keep reading, Hebrews 9:27 says it is appointed unto man to die. But the OT doesn't mention his death or the end of his priestly order; it's a *priesthood* to live on. I don't think Melchizedek *is* the Son of God, as some think, but it says in v. 3b Melchizedek is "...like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually. ⁴ Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils.

⁵ *And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham.* ⁶ *But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them [i.e., Melchizedek, not related to Abraham or Levi] collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises.* ⁷ *But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater.*

The point: Melchizedek is independent from and greater than the line of Abraham or the priestly line that would come from Levi, and in this way he points us to one greater, not from tribe of Levi.

...¹¹ *Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for **another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?*** ¹² *For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.* ¹³ *For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to **another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar.*** ¹⁴ *For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke **nothing concerning priests.*** ¹⁵ *And this is clearer still, if another priest arises **according to the likeness of Melchizedek,*** ¹⁶ *who has become such **not on the basis of a law of physical requirement** [i.e., Levi], but according to the power of an indestructible life.* ¹⁷ *For it is attested of Him [Jesus], **“YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.”***

...²¹ *(for they [Levites] indeed became priests without an oath, but He [Lord Jesus] with an oath through the One who said to Him, **“THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, ‘YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER’ ”**);* ²² ***so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.*** ²³ *The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing,* ²⁴ ***but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently.*** ²⁵ *Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.* ²⁶ *For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest ...*

^{8:1} *Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high **priest**, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the **throne of the Majesty in the heavens...** [He's both Priest and King]*

^{10:11} *Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;*¹² *but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,*¹³ *waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.* [Yet another reference in Hebrews to Ps 110, His kingdom to come]¹⁴ *For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.*

...²¹ *and since we have a great priest over the house of God,*²² *let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*²³ *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful ...*

^{12:2} *fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand [Ps 110] of the throne of God.*

As Jesus said in Lk 24: “*all things which are written about Me in ... Moses [incl. Gen 14] and the Prophets [incl. Zechariah] and the Psalms [incl. Ps 110] must be fulfilled.*” In our life of faith, may Jesus continue to open our eyes as we read the OT to see the things concerning Jesus in all Scripture, and may our hearts burn and then bow before our enthroned eternal Priest and King of Righteousness

¹ Genesis Apocryphon, 22:13.

² Josephus, *Antiquities*, 1.10.2 [1:180].

³ R.C. Sproul, *The Last Days According to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), chapter 3.

⁴ C. Henry, “Martin Lloyd Jones: From Buckingham to Westminster,” *Christianity Today*, (February 8, 1980).