

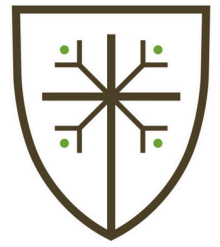
CLOSER ATTENTION

The Journey Home Through Hebrews



An Ordinary Time Sermon Series | Fall 2026

SERMON NOTES



September 20, 2026

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"The Mystery of Melchizedek"

PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

TEXTS

Genesis 14:17-23

Hebrews 7:1-11, 23-27

Matthew 22:41-46

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the parts of your life you try to keep separate from God? Where do you let him in?
2. Do you find it easier to view Jesus as a priest or as a king? What are some steps you can take to view him as both?
3. Where can you practice generosity?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

The book of Hebrews is laden with Old Testament references particular to the time and culture. Today, we explore the illustration of Melchizedek and his prefiguration of Jesus, answering three questions: Have you met Melchizedek? Have you met Jesus? If so, how do you know?

The Argument

In Hebrews chapter 7, the overarching argument is that Jesus is better and the fulfillment of the Old Testament covenant relationship, sacrifices, priesthood, and kingship. All these categories pointed the way to him. Focusing specifically on the priesthood, Melchizedek helps us understand why Jesus fulfills this role. The Levitical priesthood was always designed to end, whereas Melchizedek, when mentioned in Genesis, existed before the Levitical priesthood was established and also has no beginning or end to his service documented. Similarly, Abraham, Levi's forefather, bows and gives ten percent of his possessions to this mysterious priest-king. Another detail to the mystery is that Melchizedek's name literally means the king of righteousness, and the city over which he reigns, Salem, can be called "peace." Melchizedek is not Jesus, but he points to Jesus, who fulfills completely the Old Testament.

The Priest-King

When Jesus references Psalm 110 in the Gospel reading, he reframes the verses to show the Messiah as equal to God. The Jewish people thought the Messiah was David's son and would be a military leader, but Jesus, the true Messiah, was not what they expected him to be. Jesus is more than a political figure, freeing the Jewish people from Rome and us from other oppressors; in fact, our biggest problems and oppressors are not what we believe them to be. Rather, they are sin and death. Only God can defeat those. Despite this need, we relegate Jesus to be either priest or king—more often than not in our modern time, it's the former. The danger in doing so is that we want the forgiveness and mercy that the priest offers as the representative of the people to God, but avoid subjecting ourselves to the king's will in his position as representing God to the people. We must acknowledge Jesus as the fulfilled Melchizedek, which is to say priest and king, because Jesus is the *perfect* priest and king who defeated death and who shares divinity with God—as Psalm 110 stated—meaning he is interceding on our behalf and coming to us as Lord for all time.

The New Life

The Levitical priesthood had to end because it would never make us perfect—every sin paid, forgiveness secured forever, made wholly clean. No priest could bring about such perfection because they were never qualified to do that; they had their own sins, so we therefore need a high priest who is qualified differently, these qualifications being an indestructible life and sinlessness, amounting to Jesus being perfect before God, interceding for us and reuniting us with the Lord. We see Abraham entrust himself fully to Melchizedek rather than his own past ways of preserving himself and forming compromises, and it changes him. When blessed by Melchizedek and served bread and wine—in other words, experienced radical hospitality and grace—Abraham becomes generous. This can be true of us too, when encountering the perfect bread and wine in Jesus. We can be forgiven forever and can become like him: self-giving, considering others over ourselves, and entrusting our whole life to God.