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GENESIS: MELCHIZEDEK

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¹⁷After 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).

¹⁸And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) ¹⁹And he blessed him and said, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!” And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

²¹And the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself.” ²²But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have lifted my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, ²³that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’ ²⁴I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share.”

Genesis 14:17–24 (ESV)

Abram’s meeting the two kings, Sodom and Salem, in the “Valley of the King” (v. 17) follows the war of the kings. Two contrasts occur in this section: first, the king of Sodom’s welcome to Abram contrasts the beneficent action taken by the king of Salem, Melchizedek (vv. 17–20); second, the selfish request of the king of Sodom contrasts the unselfish response of Abram (vv. 21–24). The king of Sodom “came out” (*yāṣā*) to meet Abram (v. 17), but Melchizedek “brought out” (*yāṣā*) food (v. 18) and offered a blessing (vv. 19–20). The first word spoken by the king of Salem is “blessed” (*bārûk*), but Sodom’s king first says “give me” (v. 21). Here, the passage also shows the second contrast; whereas the king of Sodom bargains for a portion of the booty, Abram takes none of it for himself, providing a tenth for Melchizedek (v. 20) and the share belonging to his allies.¹

¹The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.” ²The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies! ³Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. ⁴The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” ⁵The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. ⁶He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. ⁷He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head.

[Psalm 110:1–7 \(ESV\)](#)

¹⁰But Moses said to the LORD, “Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.”

¹¹Then the LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?”

¹²Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.”

¹³But he said, “Oh, my Lord, please send someone else.”

¹⁴Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, “Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.

¹⁵You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do.

¹⁶He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him.

¹⁷And take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs.”

[Exodus 4:10–17 \(ESV\)](#)

¹³For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, ¹⁴saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” ¹⁵And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.

¹⁶For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. ¹⁷So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, ¹⁸so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

¹⁹We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, ²⁰where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

¹For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ²and 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.

³He 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.

⁴See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils! ⁵And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to take tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, though these also are descended from Abraham. ⁶But this man who does not have his descent from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. ⁷It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. ⁸In the one case tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that he lives. ⁹One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, ¹⁰for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

¹¹Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? ¹²For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. ¹³For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

¹⁵This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷For it is

witnessed of him, “You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.”¹⁸For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness¹⁹(for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

²⁰And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath,²¹but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever.’”²²This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

²³The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office,²⁴but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.²⁵Consequently, 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.²⁶For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.²⁷He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

²⁸For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

Hebrews 6:13–7:28 (ESV)

¹ Mathews, K. A. (2005). [Genesis 11:27–50:26](#) (Vol. 1B, pp. 145–146). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.