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A Few Quick Announcements

Connection Card

OH App ... access to current events and past sermons.
Best way to stay informed.

First Steps Lunch next Sunday. If you're a fresh face at One Harbor, take your first step to getting to know us better. We will meet right after the 11:15AM service at the OH Church Office. Lunch and Childcare Provided.

Full details and directions are available on the App in the Events section.

CG's start this week. If you aren't in one, fill out a card.

[Maybe: CGL's and Hosts stand where you are. Want to pray for you]

[sermon notes start on next page]

We are picking back up in our Hebrews series.

This is our 9th sermon in Hebrews.

If you're new to us and are up for it, you can listen to the previous sermons online or on the OH app.

Today we are going to cover a lot of ground ... the last 2 verses of Chapter 6 and all of Chapter 7.

Typically, I like to read the passage up front.

But to keep us from going too long, I'm going to read and preach a portion at a time.

Before we get to it ...

I want us to remember this was a sermon delivered to a 1st century Hebrew church that was heading in the wrong direction.

They were drifting from the faith, and the preacher is trying to get them back on course.

He doesn't give them 10 tips on how to be a better Christian...

He keeps pointing them to Jesus.

As Hebrews they would have grown up in Judaism and the Old Testament Scriptures.

But now as Christians they were called to a new way of life and faith.

But slowly over time they were turning back to their old ways of life.

We do that too.

B/C like them, we need to hope in something that comes with a guarantee.

I'm not saying that's wrong.

It's actually wise.

**Why put your hope in what you know is going to fail? ...
Like Bitcoin or Essential Oils. JOKING!!!**

Actually the Christian faith takes what you hope in very seriously.

It is a common topic in Scripture.

Because...

What We Build Our Hope On Matters Most

The preacher of Hebrews is pointing this out in the verses we are about to read.

It starts out this way...

Hebrews 6:19 - 20

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

That is what we all want ...

A sure and steadfast anchor for our soul.

Other religions call it inner peace...

It's the elusive state we are all searching for.

And this isn't a guarantee if you're a Christian.

We often feel more like a tumbleweed than an anchor.

So how can we get that inner peace?

Where do we go?

Our culture today gives competing answers for that...

One of the biggies is, "You have to find your authentic self."

It's what 20th Century philosopher Charles Taylor calls expressive individualism.

We must celebrate how every individual chooses to define themselves.

And yet another cultural narrative is that you can buy your way into inner peace.

Wealth is a way to secure a sure future.

Still another big push in our day is to build our hope on politics or politicians ...

Or figuring out how to structure society so perfectly that everyone will be happy and secure.

(That's true for both sides of the aisle: left & right. And for capitalists and socialists.)

But our faith rejects all these as false hopes.

It calls us to build our hope on Jesus alone who has gone before us into the place of peace ...

Behind the inner curtain.

Which is referring to the place God dwells.

Our soul will only find peace where God is.

As St. Augustine said, "Our soul is restless until it rests in you."

So this passage gives us the person and place to build our hope on.

But, in case you haven't noticed, we aren't there.

Jesus is ... He's there ...
It says He's gone before us.

But the question we have to wrestle with is this: "How is that a guarantee for you and me?"

Okay, Jesus is there, waiting for me...
But the first thing we want to know is ...
What do I have to do to get there?

**And that is why we need to learn about Melchizedek...
:) [how'd you like that segway?]**

But that is what this preacher brings us right into...
So let's find out how this helps us.

Hebrews 7:1-3

1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 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. 3 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.

Now every good Jewish boy and girl would be familiar with Abraham and this particular story from Genesis 14.

Abraham's nephew Lot had been carried off as plunder B/C the king of his city lost in battle to an alliance of 5 other kings.

Abraham hears about it ... like a good uncle ... rounds up 318 men and defeats the armies of this 5 nation alliance.

He comes back with all the plunder, and his nephew.

Then, Abraham stops at a place called the Valley of the Kings. (Which he isn't.)

And sure enough some kings come out to meet him.

This is where it gets interesting.

Out of nowhere comes this guy Melchizedek.

It says he is King of Salem [centuries later to be renamed Jeru-Salem], and he's also priest of God Most High.

So here comes a rare combo ... King & Priest.

That's like two degrees of awesomeness and power back then.

By comparison to Melchizedek's killer resume, we have Abraham ...

Nomad ... a nobody from nowhere ... no reputation.

Still, Melchizedek comes loaded with bread and wine ...

It's easy to like this guy.

He just wants to bless Abraham.

And He not only blesses him with good food and drink...

He also speaks a blessing over Abraham.

[& only Abraham! awkward for King of Sodom & the 100's of others there...]

Genesis 14:19-20

19 “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth.

20 and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hands.

Isn't that nice!

Actually, it's way more than nice.

See, we don't understand the power of “blessing” like they did back then.

We think of blessing as sending out good thoughts or feelings to make someone feel better.

But back then blessing was a serious thing...

Here is what one scholar & commentator writes about it:

“A blessing assumes that (1) words have power, and (2) our world is connected in unseen ways. For Hebrews blessing assumed that God is an active player in the universe, that human words spoken to God release God’s creative power for good.” - Robert L. Hubbard, Jr.

Melchizedek singled out Abraham to bless his future.

And he connects this blessing to be coming from God Most High.

Which is also Abraham’s God. [same team]

So what is Abraham’s response?

He gives Melchizedek 10% of everything he has.

BUT when the King of Salem tries to make an alliance with him, he rejects it.

In one moment Abraham rejected the same false hopes tempting us today ...

- The false hope of expressive Individualism ... he rejected the glory and attention and potential celebrity for his incredible victory. Instead he assigned it to God.
- The false hope of wealth ... he gave 10% to God.
- The false hope of politics and power ... he rejected the King of Sodom’s offer for an alliance.

Abraham was no fool ... he wasn't going to build his hope on these idols of the heart.

And neither should we...

Hope Built On Our Idols Will Let Us Down Everytime

Our idols promise us blessing in return for our worship ... which is our time, money, allegiance, and hope...

And an idol can be anything we turn to for peace, comfort, security, and meaning.

We all have idols, what are yours?

C.S. Lewis said, "Idols always break the hearts of their worshippers."

Here's why that's true ...

Your idol can never deliver on its promises, because it doesn't possess the power to pull it off.

Anytime you put your hope in yourself, people, politicians, possession ...

You are putting hope in something that has very limited power.

In comparison to Jesus' power ... everything else is inferior.

Hebrews 7:4-10

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

Let me just get this out of the way ...

I will NOT be spending any time talking about Abraham's loins.

The main point of these verses is to show the Hebrew Christians that the former way of Judaism was **inferior** to the new way of Jesus.

And he uses a logical argument: Melchizedek blessed Abraham, therefore Abraham, and all Abraham's descendants in his loins, were inferior.

[okay that's the only time I'm saying "loins" today]

Abraham has no problem with Melchizedek being superior and blessing him.

And it wasn't just because he wanted the free wine.

And if it's true for Abraham ... it was true for all of Israel who descended from Abraham.

One of those tribes were the Levites who were set apart to be priests for the rest of the nation.

So, Melchizedek is even superior to them.

Which means his priesthood is also superior to theirs.

Now, before we get too lost in the sauce ... it's worth asking, "Why do we need to know this? We aren't Hebrews."

B/C you and I are no different to those Hebrew Christians.

They were wandering back to the culture surrounding them, and what they grew up in.

We do the same thing.

We trade the superior for the inferior all the time.

- **Everytime we look, taste, touch what is out-of-bounds for us ...**
- **Everytime we lie or cheat ...**
- **Everytime our behavior is motivated to earn people's approval ...**
- **Everytime we get angry ...**
- **Everytime we overwork or overspend or over-borrow ...**
- **Everytime we overeat, overdrink, over-medicate ...**
- **Everytime we binge on social media, Netflix and all the rest ...**
- **Everytime we slip back into righteousness by works ...**

That is how we trade the superior for the inferior.

That is how we trade Jesus for an idol.

Whenever Jesus isn't the only thing we hope in, our hearts will turn to something else.

B/C our hearts are idol factories ...

They can't stop.

Do you know why that is?

It's because an idol gives us hope that we desperately need...

B/C we recognize that this world isn't all it should be.

We Hope Because We Long For What's Perfect

We don't just want what's better, we want what's perfect.

We'll always trade up for what's better.

But when you get something perfect ... you can't trade up anymore.

Jesus talks about that in the parable of the pearl of great price.

It was perfect.

So a man sold everything else he had for that ONE pearl.

When we find the perfect we stop trading up.

This is what the next passage is getting at with regards to the old priesthood and Jesus...

Hebrews 7:11-19, 26-28

- 11 Now 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? 12 For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. 13 For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.
- 15 This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, 16 who has become a priest, **not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.** 17 For it is witnessed of him,
- “You are a priest forever,
after the order of Melchizedek.”
- 18 For on the one hand, **a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness** 19 **(for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced,** through which we draw near to God.
- 20 And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an

oath, 21 but 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.’”**

26 For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. 27 He 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. 28 For 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.

The Hebrew Christians, by faith in Jesus, traded up to the perfect High Priest...

Think about anything else you put your hope in.

Is it indestructible?

Has it already been made perfect forever?

Is it secured by the promise and power of God?

Jesus isn't just a little better than our idols that give us false hope ...

It's not even a close contest.

So why do we give them any of our time, attention, and worship?

It's B/C we've buried that Pearl of Great price.

We haven't taken it out and looked at it.

Our hearts haven't been captivated in a long time.

When you see the real thing, the counterfeits get exposed as worthless.

It's easy to walk away from them.

We all came in today hoping on something.

But there is only one hope that is true...

Hope Built On Jesus Is An Indestructible Guarantee

repeat

Everything about Melchizedek is pointing to this fact ...

Hebrews 7:22-23

22 This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

23 The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, 24 but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. 25 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.

I want you to think about Jesus being your guarantor.

When do you need a guarantor?

When you don't have the capital or reputation to get what you need.

My dad had to co-sign the lease on my first car as a 16 year old. (94 Nissan Sentra)

Without him they would not give me that car.

He had to sign as the guarantor that loan would be paid if I defaulted.

They wouldn't come after me, they would come after him.

He had the credit score and the assets to back that up... I didn't.

Jesus is the guarantor of what we need but can't get on our own: a better promise, a better hope, a better covenant.

He has the power, the wealth, the position, the righteousness to guarantee your salvation.

That salvation is infinitely more costly than a 4 cylinder car.

And Jesus is the guarantor that will never die.

His life is indestructible.

If my dad died when I was 16, Nissan could have come and reclaimed my car.

With Jesus you never have to worry about your salvation being reclaimed.

He is your indestructible guarantor.

Which is why He WILL save us to the uttermost.

Dane Ortlund in his book *Gentle and Lowly* (can't recommend enough) puts it this way:

“The divine Son never ceases to bring his atoning life, death, and resurrection before his Father in a moment-by-moment way. Christ “turns the Father’s eyes to his own righteousness,” wrote Calvin, “to avert his gaze from our sins. He so reconciles the Father’s heart to us that by his intercession he prepares the way and access for us to the Father’s throne.” ... Our sinning goes to the uttermost. But his saving goes to the uttermost. And his saving always outpaces and overwhelms our sinning, because he always lives to intercede for us.”

-Ortlund

What is your hope built on?

If you aren't a Christian ... don't leave today without making Jesus your only hope.

Everything else has and will let you down.

Your greatest need is salvation that can only come from Him.

Make him your guarantee for eternal life.

[Repent and believe]

If you are a Christian ...

What false hopes did you walk in with today?

Take time now, and this week, and at Community Group to name them.

Our response is to repent of and renounce these false hopes.

Repentance is turning from these idols and running to our Savior who receives us with grace and forgiveness.

He restores to us the true hope and joy of our salvation.

As the Band Comes Up ... We are going to take a minute to pray quietly.

I want to invite you to reflect on what God has been saying and stirring in your heart this morning.

Pray, and ask him to lead you in how to respond.

Let's Pray In Silence

COMMUNION

Jesus, like Melchizedek, blesses his people with bread and wine.

Communion is a reminder of our hope in Jesus as our Indestructible High Priest.

Everytime we take it we proclaim the salvation we have in Him, and the hope that He'll make all things perfect one day.

Take the bread, his body broken for us ...

And the cup, his blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins
...

And as we eat and drink together, let's do it with faith that Jesus is our Great High Priest who will save us to the uttermost.