

NCCC WEEKLY STUDY GUIDE

For the week of March 26th

As we continue in our Lent Season study, “Easter Eggs: Finding Jesus Across Time,” we look today at the story of a mysterious dude named Melchizedek. Hebrews 6:20 (NLT) “Jesus has already gone in there for us. He has become our eternal High Priest in the order of Melchizedek.” Where did Jesus go? Into the Holy of Holies, where God’s presence would meet with His people. Jesus made it possible for us to be in the presence of God because of what He did for us on the cross. We are no longer separated from God, but we now have access to Him. So, who is Melchizedek?

Hebrews 7:1-3 (NLT) “This Melchizedek was king of the city of Salem and also a priest of God Most High. When Abraham was returning home after winning a great battle against the kings, Melchizedek met him and blessed him. 2 Then Abraham took a tenth of all he had captured in battle and gave it to Melchizedek. The name Melchizedek means “king of justice,” and king of Salem means “king of peace.” 3 There is no record of his father or mother or any of his ancestors —no beginning or end to his life. He remains a priest forever, resembling the Son of God.” The name Melchizedek means the king of justice or righteousness. He was the King of Salem, or peace. He was a priest of God, not from the tribe of Levi, but of God. There is no record of his father or mother or his ancestors, but he does remain a priest forever. In this, he resembles the Son of God, Jesus. **What significance does the fact that Jesus is our eternal KING of righteousness and peace hold for you?**

Hebrews 7:4-10 (NLT) “Consider then how great this Melchizedek was. Even Abraham, the great patriarch of Israel, recognized this by giving him a tenth of what he had taken in battle. 5 Now the law of Moses required that the priests, who are descendants of Levi, must collect a tithe from the rest of the people of Israel, who are also descendants of Abraham. 6 But Melchizedek, who was not a descendant of Levi, collected a tenth from Abraham. And Melchizedek placed a blessing upon Abraham, the one who had already received the promises of God. 7 And without question, the person who has the power to give a blessing is greater than the one who is blessed. 8 The priests who collect tithes are men who die, so Melchizedek is greater than they are, because we are told that he lives on. 9 In addition, we might even say that these Levites—the ones who collect the tithe—paid a tithe to Melchizedek when their ancestor Abraham paid a tithe to him. 10 For although Levi wasn’t born yet, the seed from which he came was in Abraham’s body when Melchizedek collected the tithe from him.” What these scriptures are saying is that Melchizedek was greater than the Levitical priesthood. He blessed Abraham, which meant that his authority was greater than Abraham’s. In the same way, Jesus as Priest is greater than the entire Levitical priesthood in the Old Testament. **In what ways has Jesus blessed us? How does that show that He is greater than us? In what ways is Jesus greater?**

Hebrews 7:11-24 (NLT) “So if the priesthood of Levi, on which the law was based, could have achieved the perfection God intended, why did God need to establish a different priesthood, with a priest in the order of Melchizedek instead of the order of Levi and Aaron? 12 And if the priesthood is changed, the law must also be changed to permit it. 13 For the priest we are talking about belongs to a different tribe, whose members have never served at the altar as priests. 14 What I mean is, our Lord came from the tribe of Judah, and Moses never mentioned priests coming from that tribe. 15 This change has been made very clear since a different priest, who is like Melchizedek, has appeared. 16 Jesus became a priest, not by meeting the physical requirement of belonging to the tribe of Levi, but by the power of a life that cannot be destroyed.

17 And the psalmist pointed this out when he prophesied, “You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.” 18 Yes, the old requirement about the priesthood was set aside because it was weak and useless. 19 For the law never made anything perfect. But now we have confidence in a better hope, through which we draw near to God. 20 This new system was established with a solemn oath. Aaron’s descendants became priests without such an oath, 21 but there was an oath regarding Jesus. For God said to him, “The Lord has taken an oath and will not break his vow: ‘You are a priest forever.’” 22 Because of this oath, Jesus is the one who guarantees this better covenant with God. 23 There were many priests under the old system, for death prevented them from remaining in office. 24 But because Jesus lives forever, his priesthood lasts forever.

What stood out to you in the scriptures? We see that Jesus, as our high priest, did what no one else could do for us. Perfection could not come through the Levitical priesthood and the law. Another priesthood with another law would have to take its place. Another priest must be raised up, after the order of Melchizedek. One who would be perfect and His name is Jesus.

What does it mean to you to have confidence in a better hope? Be honest, where do you place your hope? Where should you place your hope?

Look at what the Psalmist says about Jesus! *Psalm 110 (NLT)* “*The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit in the place of honor at my right hand until I humble your enemies, making them a footstool under your feet.” 2 The Lord will extend your powerful kingdom from Jerusalem; you will rule over your enemies. 3 When you go to war, your people will serve you willingly. You are arrayed in holy garments, and your strength will be renewed each day like the morning dew. 4 The Lord has taken an oath and will not break his vow: “You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.” 5 The Lord stands at your right hand to protect you. He will strike down many kings when his anger erupts. 6 He will punish the nations and fill their lands with corpses; he will shatter heads over the whole earth. 7 But he himself will be refreshed from brooks along the way. He will be victorious.*”

What stood out to you in Psalm 110? We see that Jesus is victorious, now and ALWAYS. The old requirement of what it meant to be a priest was gone forever because it was weak and useless. The Priesthood of Christ carries in it, and brings along with it, a better hope. It shows us the true foundation of all the hope we have towards God for pardon and salvation. **In what ways is Jesus victorious? How have you seen this in your life?**

Hebrews 7:25-28 (NLT) “*Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf. 26 He is the kind of high priest we need because he is holy and blameless, unstained by sin. He has been set apart from sinners and has been given the highest place of honor in heaven. 27 Unlike those other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices every day. They did this for their own sins first and then for the sins of the people. But Jesus did this once for all when he offered himself as the sacrifice for the people’s sins. 28 The law appointed high priests who were limited by human weakness. But after the law was given, God appointed his Son with an oath, and his Son has been made the perfect High Priest forever.*”

What stood out to you in the scriptures? We see that Jesus intercedes on our behalf to God the father. **What does this mean and why is it important?**

We know that Jesus died once for all when he offered Himself as the sacrifice for people’s sins. The priests in Israel had weakness because they were human. What weakness did you bring to group today? Maybe you feel undeserving of God’s love. Maybe you have been lying or saying unkind things. Maybe you have brought with you a sexual sin. An emotional affair. Maybe you’ve become distracted by the world. Or your phone. Or your schedule. Maybe you’ve prioritized everything else over your relationship with Jesus. Maybe that weakness makes you human and not evil. **What can Jesus, your perfect High Priest, do with your weakness when you surrender it to Him? Let’s surrender that weakness to Him tonight in prayer.**