

The Priesthood of Melchizedek

by Zac Poonen

Understanding Jesus' humanity and temptation is crucial to relating to him and understanding his victory over sin.

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Scripture: Genesis 14:18-24, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:1, Philippians 3:5, Hebrews 6:20

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the spiritual application of Old Testament events to grasp New Testament truths better. It delves into the significance of Jesus being a forerunner, a title often overlooked, and the need to seek understanding of all aspects of God's Word to deepen our Christian walk. The story of Melchizedek blessing Abraham is used to illustrate the principles of blessing others, trusting God for provision, and guarding against covetousness and pride.

Transcript

Like I said once before, three quarters of the Bible is the Old Testament. And even though the old covenant that God made with Israel and the law has been abolished, the Old Testament books, they've not been abolished. So there are lots of things we can learn from there, because we see many references to them in the New Testament.

So we need to see the spiritual application of that. And when we see those Old Testament events and their spiritual application, we understand the New Testament truths better, just like when Jesus explained truth with a parable or a story. So these Old Testament stories, for example, like the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt, becomes more real when we understand it in New Testament terms.

And the overcoming of sin becomes more clear when we understand how the giants of Canaan were killed, and how Canaan was possessed. So every Old Testament event that has a New Testament application becomes like a parable that explains this New Testament truth more clearly. And I personally have found great light in seeing these Old Testament stories as parables.

So I want to share with you one more of them. In Hebrews, in chapter 6, we read of a title of Jesus that very few Christians and churches ever speak about. And lots of churches speak about Jesus as the Good Shepherd, the Door, the Light of the World, the Resurrection, and the Life.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life, and the Life and many titles like that. But in Hebrews 6:20, we read about Jesus as a forerunner. And if you've come to this church, you've heard that many times.

But if you've grown up in any other church, I'm almost certain you've never heard it, because nobody ever preaches on it. Nobody ever speaks on it. And if there's any part of the New Testament that's left out, in that degree, we become a loser.

It's like you go to school, and you just don't study one subject. You can pass in all the other subjects. And this may be an important subject, and you fail.

So if there is something which is not written in the New Testament, then of course, it doesn't matter if you don't understand it fully. But if there's something written in the New Testament and particularly a title of Jesus, and we don't seek to understand what that means, in that measure, our Christian life is going to be shallow. So God has given us his word to give us light.

Jesus said in John 17, 17, sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. That's what Jesus said.

So if God's word is truth, as Jesus said, and we are to be sanctified or made holy by that, if there's any portion of God's word which I leave out, in that measure, my holiness will be less. And I wonder why. Well, the answer is because you left out some part of God's word.

And particularly if it's a title of Jesus that's supposed to show us something. Forerunner is very simple. It's a simple word that means four means in front.

And forerunner means one who ran in front. And we read that later in Hebrews 12, verse 1 and 2. Let us run the race, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. This truth is made clear, most clear, in the book of Hebrews.

And that is why you rarely hear preachers preaching from Hebrews, except a few favorite verses. It's rare to find people taking a Bible study on Hebrews. It's rare to find messages on Hebrews.

Now, if you don't believe me, you can search the internet and discover that. Hebrews is not a very popular book. Most Christians don't.

If you ask them which is their favorite book, they certainly won't say Hebrews. If you have listened to my series of Through the Bible in 70 Hours, there are many books I devoted only one hour to. But the book of Hebrews, I devoted four hours to it, more than any other book.

Because the book of Hebrews speaks about the humanity of Jesus Christ more clearly than any book in the whole Bible. And that is very important in our time, because that is almost denied by Christians. And when Jesus was on earth, it was his deity that everybody should have known, should know, because his deity was denied.

They looked at him and they saw he's a man. I mean, if you were to ask the average person in Israel, is Jesus a man, he'd say, sure, he's a man just like us. But very few could see that he was God.

And when Jesus asked people, who do you say that I am? Some said Jeremiah or Elijah. Can you imagine mistaking Jesus for Jeremiah or Elijah? Today we are surprised at that. But when he moved around in Israel, he looked so ordinary, a man, but he was a prophet in the eyes of others.

So they said, this may be one of the prophets, come back. But Peter said, you're the Christ, the son of the living God. And by that he meant the second person of the Trinity.

And Jesus said, you're blessed, because you did not understand this with your human flesh and blood cleverness, but it was revealed by the Father to you. And that's in Matthew 16. And immediately after that, he said, on this rock, on this revelation that you got, Peter, I will build my church.

Many people think that Jesus is referring to Peter as the rock. No, Peter only means a small stone. But that confession that Jesus, that Peter made, a revelation of Christ, he said, because you've seen that, on this revelation, Christ revealed, I will build my church.

So they already knew him as a man. They needed to see him as God, completely God, completely man. On this revelation, the church is built.

Today, in our time, almost all Christians will acknowledge that Jesus is God through Christians, even those who are not born again. But when it comes to the fact that he was a man just like us, except for sin, very few acknowledge that. And even though, theoretically, they say, yes, he was a man, otherwise he couldn't have died on the cross, they don't see the practical implications of that for their daily life, except that he died for their sins.

Whereas in the book of Hebrews, the main thing he points out is, because he was a man like us, he lived like us. He was tempted like us, Hebrews 4.15. He had no resources other than what we have. If there is some temptation that comes to you, any temptation, you can be absolutely sure the same temptation came to Jesus.

And it came to Jesus with greater intensity than it comes to you. I'll tell you why, because he came from a place of perfect purity. And therefore, there was a revulsion in him to sin.

Whereas we have grown up, as it were, in a slum, we don't have that revulsion. I mean, something like hygiene, people have grown up in a slum. If they get moved to another house with a lot of cockroaches and rats and all, they're not so disturbed, because they've lived with that.

Whereas if you've grown up in a very, very hygienic surrounding in a house where there wasn't even a lizard or a rat or a cockroach, and then you go and live in a slum, boy, you'll have a, it'll be much more difficult for you to live there than that person who's grown up in a slum. We need to recognize something like that. Jesus came from heaven, from perfect purity, that when he lived in this earth, which is a slum of sin, it was much more difficult for him than for you and me.

So temptation came to him with a far greater intensity. Not only he was tempted like us, but he was tempted far more strongly, and he overcame. So that is a great truth that helps us in the time of temptation.

And this is something that I have preached in this church for 40 years, that Jesus was tempted exactly like me. And I preach it because it was the one truth that helped me to come to an overcoming life, that helped me to overcome anger, anger, sexual lust, bitterness, complaining, grumbling, and love of money, and everything. Because when I was tempted, I would say, Lord Jesus, when you were in Nazareth, you were tempted exactly like I am being tempted right now.

And you did something about it, that you didn't sin. I want to do the same thing so that I don't sin. If you see this, you can understand it.

You can explain to somebody that Jesus is God, and he may not believe it. And I can explain to you that Jesus was a man like us and may have no practical result in your life. So you need to ask God to make this clear to you, like revelation.

I believed all my life that Jesus was a man. But when I was around 36 years old, it came to me as a revelation. And it was on that revelation that we built, CFC was built.

It's like Jesus said to Peter, flesh and blood has not revealed this to you. My father in heaven, on this rock, I will build my church. He connected the building of the church there in Matthew 16, verse 15 to 18, with revelation from heaven as to who Jesus was.

And if you get revelation from heaven, and that God gives to anybody who seeks for it, he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. He does not reward those who lazily seek him. So it's up to you.

You seek God in a lazy, half-hearted way, don't be surprised if you don't get revelation. But if you seek him wholeheartedly, you will get revelation. If you're desperate, particularly if you're desperate to overcome sin, if you're not desperate to overcome your anger, you sort of live with it, you're not desperate to overcome jealousy and bitterness and love of money and strife, you sort of live with it, you'll never get revelation.

Because it's only those who are desperate to be free. The Bible says in Exodus 2, the last verses, that the children of Israel were desperate after 430 years of slavery. They said, oh God, when are you going to deliver us? And it says they sighed, they groaned.

They used to come back late at night from their slavery and sigh and groan at home. God heard their cry, it says, and delivered them. That's a principle in God's dealings with us.

He will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart. It says in Jeremiah 29, 13. And if you don't search for me with all your heart, you can say, the Lord says, you will not find me.

You'll understand some truths, but you won't find God. There's a lot of difference between understanding the truths of the Bible and knowing God himself through the Bible. A world of difference.

It's like a painted fire and a real fire. A painted fire can look like a real fire from a distance, but when you come near it, it doesn't give any light, it doesn't give any warmth. So whenever you come to scripture, you must say, remember the Holy Spirit who inspired scripture is the only one who can really explain it to you.

If you're reading a book, and you have the author of that book sitting next to you, you can go to any sentence in that book and say, hey, what do you mean by this sentence here? You know this is the privilege we have? They didn't have it in the Old Testament. They didn't have the Holy Spirit right next to them. They had to try and discern what is the meaning of the law.

There were so many laws they studied, studied, studied, and very often they got it wrong. But when the Holy Spirit is sitting next to us, the one who wrote this book, it's wonderful. He gives us revelation.

He opens the eyes of our heart to see things that human eyes have not seen, human ears have not heard, and not entered into the heart of man, the wonderful things that God has prepared for those who love Him.

I want to encourage you, my dear brothers and sisters, to seek God for revelation on the scripture. So turn with me to Hebrews 6. So Jesus is a forerunner.

There's another title mentioned about Him here. He has become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. The Old Testament law taught that there were priests who were like intercessors and mediators between man and God.

It was symbolic of Jesus who would be the final mediator between God and man. 1 Timothy 2 verse 4 and 5 says there is one mediator between God and man. The man, Jesus Christ.

That means I can't approach God directly. It can only be through Jesus Christ. There is no other way.

He said, I am the way. No one comes to the Father except by me. Whatever everybody in the world may say, whatever people say about religious leaders, etc., between God and man there is only one mediator.

You don't need a second mediator. You don't need Mary to help you to go to Jesus. You don't need a pastor or an elder to help you find what Jesus wants you to do.

You can go to Jesus directly through him to God. Jesus is called here a priest. The Old Testament priest was a symbol of Christ who was a mediator between God and man.

The first high priest was Aaron. Then later on through his sons there were high priests always, all the time Israel had a high priest. That is a picture of Jesus Christ.

That order in the Old Testament is called the priesthood of Levi. But this is called the priesthood of Melchizedek. If this was not mentioned in the New Testament I wouldn't waste my time talking about it.

But since this is mentioned here it is important for us to understand it. The next verse it says, because it is connected to his being our forerunner. Melchizedek, king of Salem priest of the most high God.

He is the first priest of God that you read of. He lived before Levi. He lived in the time of Abraham who was the great grandfather of Levi.

He is called the priest of the most high God who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. When we read that it is good to turn to the Old Testament and see what this Melchizedek did so that we can understand Jesus better. Remember we are looking at the Old Testament to understand our savior and our high priest better.

So turn with me to Genesis. Genesis and chapter 14. If you are not familiar with this story let me explain it to you.

In the previous chapter Abraham's nephew Lot decided to move to Sodom because he wanted to make money there, it was a wealthy place. But while he was there it says in chapter 14 verse 1 a number of kings king of Shinar and the king of Lasser and the king of Elam and the king of Goim four of those kings made war with the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and with some of the other kings and they defeated Sodom and then these kings took Lot captive. They defeated Sodom and Gomorrah and it says in verse 12 they took Lot, Abraham's nephew and his possessions and took him away.

And a fugitive came to Abraham in verse 13 and told him this news. When Abraham heard verse 14 that his relative had been taken captive you see the largeness of Abraham's heart Lot had taken advantage of

Abraham's goodness. God never called Lot to leave Ur of the Chaldees.

He called only Abraham. But Lot went along with him and Abraham said We have a lot of problems when we allow unconverted relatives to come and influence us in our relationship with God. It's one of the lessons we can learn there.

Lot told Abraham, leave your relatives come with me. But somehow he took his nephew Lot with him and caused him a lot of problems. Anyway, but you see the largeness of Abraham's heart that when Lot cheated him as it were and took the best part of the land and went away and he heard that Lot was taken captive.

How would you feel if somebody cheated you of your property, your rightful inheritance even though you were good to him you made him a partner in your business and he took advantage of you and went away with the major share of the business and then one day you discover that he lost it all and he got into calamity. How would you feel? I think even the average Christian would say Well, he deserves it. He is reaping what he has sowed.

You may even find a little delight in your heart that that happened. But not Abraham. It's amazing how this man Abraham who was under not even the old covenant, before the old covenant had such a largeness of heart towards someone who had done evil to him that challenges us when we say we are Christians.

Some of these Old Testament examples challenge me tremendously when I see the reaction in my heart to certain things and I say Lord I am just ashamed that should not be my reaction. I mean even if I followed Abraham my reaction should be better. Leave alone if I am following Jesus Christ who hung on the cross and said Father forgive them for they don't know what they are doing.

Abraham's reaction was so good that he gathered his servants 318, verse 14, 318 servants and imagine the risk he took to go and fight with four kings and their armies who had defeated Sodom. He was not only a man with a large heart but he was a man who had faith in God. You can't go with 318 not soldiers but just servants and go and fight huge armies.

But it says here like a military commander, verse 15, he divided his forces against them by night and defeated them, verse 15, and pursued them and he brought back all the property they had stolen and he brought back his relative Lot with Lot's property and also the women and the people. It was a tremendous victory and the great danger that Abraham had at that time was two things. One, that he would be puffed up that with so few people he defeated four kings who had defeated four other kings earlier on.

Secondly, there was a law in those days in battle that if you win a battle against the enemy, all the property of the enemy becomes yours. All their gold and silver and fancy clothes and tents, everything becomes yours. That was a law of battle.

So he became very wealthy. All these things were his legally because he won the battle. So he was in danger of pride and covetousness or coveting what was rightfully his to take that.

That is the time that Melchizedek comes to meet Abraham. You read there that after his return verse 17 verse 18, Melchizedek, the king of Salem brought out bread and wine that means he brought food for all these 318 servants in Abraham's family, maybe 320 people and he was a priest of God Most High and he blessed Abraham and said to him two things. Notice the two things he told Abraham.

He did not give him a big sermon. He gave him a two sentence sermon which was like a powerful two hour sermon. Listen carefully.

Blessed be Abraham of God Most High possessor of heaven and earth. So the first thing he was telling Abraham was you got all this property, right? Don't forget that you belong to God who owns all the heaven and the earth. What is this which you collected? A few worthless empty coins.

That's all you got compared to possessor of heaven and earth. So don't be so taken up with all this wealth you suddenly accumulated. Retain your dignity to the man who belongs to the possessor of heaven and earth.

Secondly What is the second danger Abraham was in danger of? Pride because he won the battle. So Melchizedek says to him, Blessed be God Most High He was the one who delivered your enemies into your hand. Don't ever think that you managed to win this with your cleverness or your servants were so smart.

It had nothing to do with them. It had to do with God's goodness to you that he defeated your enemies and gave them into your hand. He saved Abraham with two sentences from two serious sins that would have destroyed Abraham.

Covetousness and pride. In Colossians 3 5 it says covetousness is idolatry. I don't know whether you've read that verse that when you covet, covet means to desire something that God has not given you.

You desire a woman that God has not given you. When you lust after a woman, that's desiring a woman God has not given you as your wife. It is idolatry.

You're making that woman an idol. All lusting after women is idolatry. If you desire something that another brother has which you don't have, it's idolatry.

If you're jealous of the wealth of another brother, it's idolatry. You desire the position that another has, it's idolatry. It's all covetousness, desiring what God has not given you.

So, Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek. What do we see here in Melchizedek? First of all, he came with some food. He came to meet Abraham's physical need.

And secondly, he met Abraham's spiritual need. And we wonder, how did he come? Who told him? He never knew. He'd never met Abraham before.

He never knew anything about this battle or any such thing. But one thing we read, he was a priest of God Most High. He was not a false priest of one of the false gods.

He was a priest of the true God. See, there were people in those days who, like Job, were in touch with God. Like Noah, like Enoch.

Melchizedek was one like that. And he was in touch with God and he was praying, perhaps. I'm sure he must have been.

And God must have spoken to him when people are in touch with God constantly. God speaks to them. And God must have told him, I want you to take a whole lot of food for three, four hundred people.

And I want you to go in that direction towards that place. He didn't know what for. He didn't know who was there.

But he took it and he went and God said, one of my servants is there. You've got to go and bless him. You've got to bless him with food and I'll give you words to speak to him.

This is how Jesus has come. The priest after the order of Melchizedek has come to us to bless us according to our need. He does not ignore our physical need.

He provides for us. Even physically. The law that he gave to the disciples was if you seek do not be anxious about what you shall eat or what you shall drink.

If you seek the kingdom of God first and his righteousness all these things like food and drink and clothing that includes shelter will be provided for you. There is a very clear promise in Matthew 6.33 for every person if you seek God's kingdom first and his righteousness you are guaranteed according to that promise that all your earthly needs food, clothing, shelter and education for your children so that they can get food clothing, shelter when they grow up. This is promised.

And that is what we see first of all Melchizedek coming with meeting our earthly need. Do you know that in the Lord's Prayer the first three requests, there are six requests all together. The first three are concerning God.

The Lord be thy name thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. And then there are three requests for us. And do you know that in those three requests our physical need is mentioned first before our spiritual need Isn't that interesting? I mean if we were arranging the Lord's Prayer we would first forgive us our sins deliver us from evil and then last give us our daily bread but that's not the way Jesus put it.

We shouldn't try to be super spiritual. The first request for us is not forgive us our sins give us this day our daily bread then forgive us our sins as we forgive others and then lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. That's victory over sin.

So he was teaching us to pray Lord provide my physical need then forgive my sin as I forgive others then give me victory over sin. Those are the three requests in the Lord's Prayer. But the first is our physical need and that's what we see here.

Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek who is interested in your and my physical need. He is not ignorant of it. He does not say forget it.

Only the spiritual matters. That sounds spiritual but it's not true. That is ascetic.

Ascetic means a person who thinks that his body is all unimportant but it's only the spirit that matters. No, the body is important. In fact when Paul says in Romans 12 through the Holy Spirit in view of all the mercies of God what will you give in return to him? Present your body as a living sacrifice.

In non-Christian religions the body is considered either unimportant or to be indulged in. All heathen religions teach the indulgence of the body. Enjoy yourself.

That's why sex is a very important part of non-Christian religions. They have temple prostitutes to satisfy the lust of the priests and food in abundance. The body is important.

And then the opposite side is also another part of heathen religion. Suppress the body. There are hermits and all who suppress their body in different ways.

But that's also not Christianity. In Christianity we are taught to treat our body with respect because it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. We must eat wisely.

The Bible speaks in Philippians 3 verse 16 to 20 speaks about those who have made their stomach their God. So that's the danger of going to the other extreme. Jesus Christ was balanced.

He knew how to fast and he knew how to feast. If you only know how to feast something is wrong. If you only know how to fast something is wrong.

Jesus could fast and feast. They called him a gluttonous man. He wasn't gluttonous but he enjoyed a good meal and if he was hungry and you offered him a second helping he'd say thank you.

He would take it. But the one who took it, Jesus, was also one who knew how to fast for 40 days. There was a balance in Jesus' life.

He was balanced but he didn't despise his body and we are not to despise our body. We must take care of it. All these people who say I won't take medicine when I'm sick I will trust God.

They are despising their body. They are committing suicide. I see that Jesus as the priest of the Order of Melchizedek is very interested in providing our need.

Abraham was tired, exhausted, no food available anywhere and Melchizedek came with food. Before he gave him a message he gave him food. Give us this day our daily bread then we go to the forgiveness of sins.

I just want to mention that I don't think many of us need it because we love our bodies already but I mention that so that we don't think we don't have to feel guilty about having a good meal or don't have to feel guilty about taking care of our bodies. We don't have to be guilty about wearing decent clothes. We don't have to feel guilty about building a house for us to live in.

We don't have to feel guilty about giving our children a good education so that they can also take care of their earthly needs. That's very important. Jesus is interested in that.

And then Jesus is interested the priest of Melchizedek is to protect us from two very serious sins. Covetousness and pride. These are the two things that come very quickly to us.

That when we are blessed materially we can get taken up with that. Abraham suddenly, he already had enough for his needs. He wasn't starving.

He already had plenty. But suddenly he got this immense wealth which he did not anticipate. It's like if you suddenly land with an inheritance from your father or someone and you got a huge amount of property and money which you didn't even anticipate.

You can get taken up with that. And that could be a means by which the devil leads you away from God. In the years that I've been a believer I have seen more people go away from God through prosperity than through poverty.

Poverty drives a man to God. Prosperity drives a man away from God. I've seen that happen.

I've seen it happen in people in CFC who were close to God in the days when they were poor. When they didn't have much. They lived in a one room house, two rooms.

Yes, it's a fact. There are people in CFC who when I first met them they were living in one room. But God prospered them.

They were blessed. Their children were blessed. They got a good education.

Then they drift away from God. They would have been a million times better if they had lived in that one room house forever. Not that they have to.

God provides us with better facilities. There's no sin in staying in a two bedroom house or a three bedroom house. There's nothing wrong in that.

But if that drives us away from God I would rather go and live in a hut. You see that? Abraham the great man was in danger with all his knowledge of God of drifting away because he suddenly got an abundance more than he needed. I want to say that to all of you.

Jesus as the order of Melchizedek comes to warn you you belong to the possessor of heaven and earth. Listen to that. Have you suddenly got a job which gives you a huge amount of salary? There are young people here in their 30s who are earning fantastic amounts of salary a month way beyond what their parents ever earned in their entire lifetime.

You consider yourself blessed, good, but consider also that you're in tremendous danger. Jesus the high priest after the order of Melchizedek comes to remind you of that danger. That's why God sent Melchizedek to Abraham.

Beware. He didn't give him a big sermon. He didn't give him a big exhortation on covetousness like I'm giving you right now.

I'm just expanding on what Melchizedek said. He just said remember that God is the possessor of heaven and earth. And because of that we read later on in Genesis 14 He came just in time to warn him.

It says in Genesis 14.21 The king of Sodom said to Abraham The king of Sodom knew the laws of battle that one who wins the battle can get all that he has won, all that property. So the king of Sodom according to the laws of battle said to Abraham Give me the people of Sodom. Take all the goods for yourself.

And that must have been millions and millions and millions. Take it all for yourself. And see what Abraham says.

He uses the new title of God which he just learned from Melchizedek. He had never used that title before. He says I have sworn to the Lord God most high verse 22, possessor of heaven and earth that I will not even take a thread or a shoelace of anything that is yours lest you say I have made Abraham rich.

God will make me rich and I don't want you to get the credit for it you king of Sodom. So I will not even take a thread from you or a shoelace from all these things lying here. You can take it.

To whom did he make that promise? He says I made a promise. Verse 22, I made a promise to God, possessor of heaven and earth. He had never thought of God as possessor.

You don't read that title anywhere in the Bible before that. It was Melchizedek who came and revealed God as possessor of heaven and earth to Abraham and so it is somewhere between verse 20 and verse 22 that Abraham made that promise to God. As soon as Melchizedek went away Abraham realized God is a possessor of heaven and earth.

Oh God I promise you I won't touch any of this. I will trust in you to make me rich not the king of Sodom. Imagine if Melchizedek had not come Abraham just like us would have been covetous and say wow this is my legal right.

It's like your salary. Whatever you got in battle was like your salary. It was your rightful inheritance.

What Abraham was giving up was his rightful inheritance. I don't want it. I won't take it.

Sometimes God tells you to give up your rightful inheritance. He may do that sometimes. I remember before I was married my wife's father had built a house and transferred it to her name.

It was in her name completely before we got married. When we got married subsequently there was no dowry of course but I felt this can look like a dowry even though I never asked for it. It was already in her name.

What a father has already transferred to his daughter is not a dowry. It's just his gift. Every father has a right to do that.

But we felt we should return it. So we returned it. We said we don't want anything.

Give it back. I don't want it to be said that somebody else made me rich. When I got married there were people who thought I'm going to make my wife, I married a doctor because I wanted to make her work and support me.

No. I wanted my heavenly father to get all the glory. I said he will support me not my wife.

That's one reason why she never worked. Because God has to get the glory for taking care of his servant. There was nothing wrong in making her work.

It's perfectly alright for a sister to work and earn money particularly. If you've got a good profession as a doctor you can earn millions. What I'm saying is you can live by the rule book and say I deserve this so I get it.

Or you can live with a large heart and say Lord will that bring dishonor to you if I do it like that? What will bring greater honor to you? And if God sees you've got a heart like that which is free from covetousness, free from grabbing even what you deserve you'll be amazed to see what God casts into your lap. When we give up what we have a right to let me turn you to a verse in 2 Chronicles. There's a story here in chapter 25, 2 Chronicles 25 of a king called Amaziah who was 25 years old.

You know we can learn something from these Old Testament stories. I told you that's why 3 quarters of the Bible is the Old Testament. And it says he did right in the sight of the Lord, verse 2, but not with a whole heart.

It's like a legalist who does what is right but not wholeheartedly. And because of that he didn't know God so well. You know a legalist can do what is right but he doesn't know God so well.

Because he does what is right but not with his whole heart. You need to ask yourself whether sometimes you do what is right, but you say, okay well God wants me to do it, I'll do it, but I don't feel like doing it. That was Amaziah.

But God was merciful to him. So what happened?

An enemy came to fight with Amaziah and so he assembled Judah and verse 5 the last part of verse 5 he gathered 300,000 soldiers but they were not strong enough for his army so he went to Israel you know in those days Israel was divided into two countries Israel in the north, Judah in the south and Israel was all idolatrous, Judah was not idolatrous Amaziah was the king of Judah and in order to increase the size of his army he went to idolatrous Israel and collected 100,000 warriors who were idolaters, made them also part of his army, made a mixed army and paid them, verse 6 100 talents of silver to pay 100,000 people mercenaries who come to fight for you that must have been millions and billions of rupees and now he said my army is strong and a man of God, thank God for faithful men who

will even dare to tell a king the truth, came to him and said oh king, don't let the army of Israel go with you because the Lord is not with Israel they are idolaters, if you go with them ok, all the best, but God will bring you down because God has got power to help or to bring down, verse 8 and Amaziah said that's fine, but I've already paid these people millions of rupees I've already paid them in advance I'll lose that, they're not going to give me back when I send them home, and look at his answer man of God answered the Lord can give you much more than this the Lord has much more to give you than this which you give up I was a young Christian, about 23 years old when I read that I remember the Lord speaking to me saying the Lord has much more to give you than this don't ever be

reluctant to give up something which you feel is a bit of a compromising situation or which is not 100% righteously earned give it up, give it up don't think of what you lose, the Lord is able to give you much more than this whenever you're in a compromising situation and you're not too sure, is this money righteous or not better to leave it I've often prayed that I will not have one rupee in my bank account which is not righteously earned which is not 100% what is mine and if I lose and many times I have lost things in the eyes of the world but not in God's eyes God has always given me much more than this it's a principle, maybe it's a word for somebody sitting here today your God is the possessor of heaven and earth he's not only your God, he's your father and Jesus said if you seek the

kingdom of God first his righteousness, all that is needed will be added to you so when Jesus comes to us as the priest of Melchizedek he provides our earthly need and then he seeks to protect us from covetousness and teaches us to trust him that he will provide our need no human being should get the credit for the way your heavenly father takes care of you and if people fight with you over something God says give it up don't fight for it, I'll replace it with something better I've experienced that again and again and again in my life I hope you have some blessed experiences like that, that you have a testimony of what God can do for you the second thing Melchizedek said was remember that God is the one who delivered these enemies into your hand Genesis 14.20 and that's the second thing

Jesus as the priest of Melchizedek high priest of the order of Melchizedek comes to protect us from, from pride when you've accomplished something when you've won a victory when you've overcome something when you've been mightily blessed could even be that you did some ministry for the Lord and the Lord

mightily blessed it go before God and say Lord that was you, thank you I give you the glory, it wasn't my ability or my cleverness or anything it's so easy for us to take the glory after God has blessed our ministry or done something through us that ruins the rest of our life and our ministry that's another thing I have seen young people who start out so well anointed by God, humble God fearing young people you see them 10-15 years later and they are no longer the same humble God fearing

people God has blessed them and blessed their ministry something big has come out of it and it's gone to their heads and they are no longer ordinary people now they are famous, well known there's an air about them that you can't get near them now because they are so big be careful that doesn't happen to you maybe you've done well in your profession don't take the credit to yourself it was God who did it, God who helped you it was God who helped you to solve those problems God who helped you to get that degree you got or the multiple degrees you got fall before God's face always and give Him the glory every victory you won, every ministry you accomplished every sin you overcame Melchizedek said to Abraham God was the one who delivered your enemies into your hand so that was the second

reason why Abraham refused to take any money from the king of Sodom he said hey I didn't win this victory by the way king of Sodom you thought I won the victory if I won the victory according to the law I have a right to take all this I just want to tell you I did not win this victory that's another reason why I can't touch all this wealth it was God who won the victory so let him have it and so he said I'll take nothing, Genesis 14.24 except what these young men have eaten and the share of the men who were with me I see something of Abraham there also this is my stand king of Sodom, but I will not make my standard the standard for these men they fought a battle, they deserve something, let them take it you must have the largeness of heart to let other people live at another standard than

you do you're a servant of God, you live at the highest standard but if somebody else wants at a lower level, let them live there I'm not going to force them to live at my level here are these men, I won't deprive them of what they deserve, they don't have the understanding I have of God is my master he provides for me, maybe these 318 servants don't know God like that, so they won a battle and they worked hard, king of Sodom, you can give them their portion this is the mark of a man of God he's very strict with himself but very large in heart towards other people that's how we are to be and we don't judge them, they live at that level but we live at a higher level, the apostle Paul once said all things are lawful for me and all things are not profitable so I don't do all the lawful

things, because I select from 100 lawful things, I may select 5 profitable things and those are the only things I do but other believers who don't live at my level they are welcome to do all the lawful things but they will live at that level always, they will live at a low level I mean it's like children who are happy with 40% marks I passed, mommy I passed I got 40% in maths, I got 40% in physics I got 40% in chemistry I got 40% in English, I got 40% in history I got 40% in Hindi, I got 40% I passed which of you parents are happy with such a child? your child got passed and got promoted do you think God is happy with a child who says I'm on my way to heaven, my sins are all forgiven, I got 40% I got pass marks some of you may think God is happy with you, he's not just like you as a

father, not happy with a child who is just aiming for 40% pass marks particularly if your child is intelligent and got the ability and capacity to get 95 or 100, he'll challenge him and say hey, you got the capacity to get 100 math, most of the subjects work hard, that's what God says you have the capacity to become a spiritual man of God woman of God, why do you want to live at that low level of saying that's lawful, that's lawful, that's lawful, seek for what is profitable select from all the lawful things, that which is profitable it's

been a great grief to me to see brothers and sisters who when they first came to CFC they were so zealous, they were very careful about the type of movies they watched, but they've descended they're not watching pornography no, that would be unlawful but

they are just at the edge of the cliff, they haven't fallen over the cliff but they're trying to find out how close can I come to the edge of the cliff without falling over this is a good movie, fine and you keep watching it and you see, that's fine but look at the amount of time you have wasted day after day after day after day there are people who watch these television serials, interesting stories you know how much more your life could have accomplished if you had spent a little bit of that time studying the Bible and if your children had seen you studying the Bible I remember one of my sons telling me he said, Dad, I can never forget as a little boy when I woke up from bed I would see you in the sitting room with the Bible that spoke more to me than all the exhortations about studying

the Bible it's what your children see that matters more so I'm so grieved when I see so many people who God brought to this church with a purpose to accomplish something great in their lives and somehow or the other the devil has tripped them up not into grievous sin, you haven't gone and committed adultery or stolen a bank or any such thing but I fear that many of you have slipped from God's highest and best if Jesus is the high priest after the order of Melchizedek we are to be priests after the order of Melchizedek we are to have that same spirit to bless others physically according to their needs just like Melchizedek did and to have a word from the Lord that will help our brothers to be free from some problem that they are going to face Melchizedek prophetically prepared Abraham for

a problem he'd face with the king of Sodom and do you know that God can use you as a junior priest of the order of Melchizedek and God can give you a word that will help somebody you share something with maybe when you spoke to them on the cell phone or when you visited their home or they visited you something that will protect them from some danger they are going to face next week you can prophesy but you have to be careful like Melchizedek to listen if Melchizedek was spending his time watching movies he would not have heard what God was telling him to do he'd have missed what God had for him he had to listen, what is God saying to me take it seriously or if he spent his time in useless pursuits gossiping, backbiting he won't hear what God is saying think of whether God has a ministry

for you junior priest of the order of Melchizedek and the other wonderful thing I see here is you never hear of Melchizedek after this he doesn't appear anywhere in the Bible after this Jesus is called a priest after the order of Melchizedek but the person himself never turns up he comes, blesses Abraham and disappears this is the priesthood of Melchizedek to bless people and disappear not to wait around there to get a vote of thanks no, no, no Melchizedek did not want any vote of thanks he came, he did what God told him to do, bless somebody and disappeared that is the ministry of Melchizedek that's how Jesus blesses us, that's how the Holy Spirit blesses us so often God does something for us in answer to prayer and we say, ah that's because I happened to go there at the right time or

that's because that doctor came there at the right time and that's because this person gave me the money, we don't give the glory to God Jesus came and blessed us, the Holy Spirit did something for us and because he didn't make a big hullabaloo about it we think it was a coincidence or, no it wasn't some of those things which you think happened accidentally or a coincidence, that was the Holy Spirit who loved you and did something for you don't give that credit to man or to your own cleverness or it was an accident, it was God who was interested in you who came to help you at the right time to give you a job, to give you a house to answer your prayer, give him the glory but we can learn something from that, how we

are to bless other people and not make a big fuss about it bless, disappear

let people forget about your name why do you want the credit, why do you want to hang around until they give you a word of thanks for what you did don't look for it, don't expect it expect your thanks from God to whom you did it it's a great ministry, I hope you understood something today from the high priest after the Order of Melchizedek who is a forerunner who has shown us how we are to be priests after the Order of Melchizedek like him, let's pray I want you to think of something specific that the Lord has spoken to your heart if you watch over that you will be able to preserve it if you neglect it, you lose it that which God has spoken to you guard as a sacred deposit and like Abraham made a promise to the possessor of heaven and earth before he encountered the temptation you make a

promise to God right now and say Lord that which you spoke to me today I want to deal with that in my life I want to live choosing the profitable and not just the lawful I want to sift out from among all the lawful things that which is profitable and live at a higher level maybe some of you need to say Lord I look back to time years ago when I first came to CFC how I was so grateful for every little thing you gave me but you've given me so much now and I've just taken it all for granted and drifted away from you and as a result my children have drifted away from you as well forgive me Lord help me to come back to you and bring my children back to you to be wholehearted disciples of Jesus Heavenly Father we know you love us you never speak to condemn us you always speak to encourage us and

we pray that everyone will go from here with a word of encouragement no one will feel condemned or discouraged because you came to lift us up not to condemn us thank you we know that's your purpose you're a loving father we pray that everyone who heard the word will respond to it we pray in Jesus name Amen

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