

DEVOTION FOR THE SIXTH THURSDAY OF EASTER

PSALM 110:1-7

The Lord says to my Lord; “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”

The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies!

Your 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.

The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

The Lord is at your right hand; He will shatter kings on the day of His wrath.

He will execute judgement among the nations, filling them with corpses; He will shatter chiefs over the wide earth.

He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore He will lift up His head.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Old Testament Reading: Numbers 10:1-36 *The Lord’s trumpet calls Israel to faith and faithfulness*

New Testament Reading: Hebrews 7:1-28 *Jesus guarantees a better covenant*

“JESUS & MELCHIZEDEK”

Melchizedek is a shadowy figure. He appears in the book of Genesis after Abraham rescues his nephew Lot from a coalition of five kings. Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, brings bread and wine and blesses, both God and Abraham. This is a sign to Abraham that God Most High will indeed keep His promises to him. Abraham gives thanks and honours God Most High by giving Melchizedek a tenth of His possession. Then He disappears, mentioned once in Psalm 110 and again in the book of Hebrews where the author compares his priesthood to the eternal priesthood of Christ. Who was Melchizedek and what does he represent?

Martin Luther was of the opinion that Melchizedek was the patriarch Shem, son of Noah and last survivor of the pre-flood world. He carried the true religion of Noah into the world and passed it on to his descendants, in particular to Abraham; to whom the promise of universal blessing was given; and from whom the Christ would come. It is certain that he was a priest of God Most High, the God who called, promised and blessed Abraham. His priesthood predates and is apart from the priesthood and covenant God made with Israel through Moses. In this he represents the covenant God would make with all people through Christ, who fulfilled the law with His sinless life and satisfied its demand for justice through the shedding of His blood on the cross.

Even as Melchizedek was priest of the Most High God, before God made covenant through Moses and established the Levitical priesthood, so Jesus is before Moses in terms of His being and greater than Moses in terms of the covenant God made through Him. The Levitical priests were sinful men and had to offer sacrifices for their own sins as well as the sins of the people. The sacrifices they offered had to be repeated perpetually. They didn’t take away sin. They showed the presence of sin and the continuous need of forgiveness. Jesus has a greater priesthood, because as the Son of God from eternity, He had no sin. He was able to offer a better sacrifice, because it actually took away sin; once, for all and forever. Moses can show us our sin, but only Christ can take it away and forgive us. Therefore, *“He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him.”*

Regardless of whether he was the son of Noah or not, Melchizedek represents and foreshadows Jesus. He is our great high priest, the guarantor of a better covenant, the author of our salvation, the one who saves to the uttermost all who draw near to God through Him.

“THE INFANT PRIEST WAS HOLY BORN” CCLI #453681

**The infant priest was holy born, for us, unholy and forlorn.
From fleshly temple forth came He, anointed from eternity.**

**This great High Priest in human flesh was icon of God’s righteousness.
His hallowed touch brought sanctity; His hand removed impurity.**

**The holy Lamb undaunted came to God’s own altar lit with flame.
While weeping angels hid their eyes, this Priest became a sacrifice.**

**But death would not the victor be, of Him who hung upon the tree.
He leads us to the Holy Place, within the veil, before God’s face.**

**The veil is torn, our Priest we see, as at the rail on bended knee,
Our hungry mouths from Him receive, the bread of immortality.**

**The body of God’s Lamb we eat, a priestly food and priestly meat.
On sin parched lips the chalice pours, His quenching blood that life restores.**

**With cherubim and seraphim our voices join the endless hymn,
And “holy, holy, holy” sing to Christ, God’s Lamb, our Priest and King.**

PRAYER

Jesus our great High Priest, you have entered into the heavenly temple and made atonement for human sin with your sinless blood. You cried, “It is finished,” and committed your life into your Father’s hands. Immediately, the veil of the temple was torn and the barrier of sin that barred us from the presence of God was removed. In you, we have access to the Father in peace. In our baptism, you promise us a share in your resurrection and a place in Your Father’s house in eternity. Bless us with your Spirit, draw us near you in faith and hold us close to your loving heart. In your Name. Amen

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven.

Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,

Forever and ever. Amen

THE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION

Hebrews 7:25

“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.”