

Genesis 13-14 - Blessed and a Blessing

To read:
Psalm 110
Hebrews 7

I. Introduction

A. This morning we are going to continue in Abraham's story with chapters 13 and 14 of Genesis

1. Last week we looked at chapter 12 and saw four promises of God to Abraham that are all fulfilled in Christ
 - a. Christ prepares a land for God's people
 - b. Christ is God's people
 - c. Christ is the blessed ruler of God's people
 - d. Christ is the blessing to God's people
2. And we saw that Abraham responded in faith
 - a. Abraham obeyed and went - he ran after the promises of God even when he couldn't see them
 - b. Abraham waited and worshipped - he didn't strive to take God's promises
3. But, at the end of last week, we left Abraham in a less encouraging situation
 - a. Abraham acts without faith and goes to Egypt, no longer waiting for God but trusting in himself and scheming
 - b. But, God protects him despite his lack of faith and brings him back from Egypt safely

B. Read Genesis 13-14

C. This morning, we are going to look at these stories and ask a series of questions

1. What promises does God make? and How do these promises point to Christ?
2. How does Abraham respond? and What does this teach us about faith?
3. How is Abraham blessed and a blessing? and How does this prefigure Christ?

II. What Promises Does God Make?

A. In chapter 13, after the debacle in Egypt, God reaffirms both of His promises to Abraham

1. God promises that Abraham will inherit the land
 - a. Genesis 13:14-15 - *The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever.*
 - b. Genesis 13:17 - *Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you."*
2. God promises that Abraham will have offspring to possess the land
 - a. Genesis 13:16 - *I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.*

B. So, there are not new promises, but there are new developments in the promises

1. God reaffirms the promises despite Abraham's failures in Egypt
 - a. The journey to Egypt could have been the end of Abraham's story, God would have been justified to reject Abraham and choose another because of Abraham's lack of faith
 - b. But God demonstrates the nature of His promise in chapter 13 - I've said this several time, but it is worth repeating, God's promise is based on His grace, not Abraham's faith
 - c. So, God's grace is greater than Abraham's failure and God reaffirms His promise despite Abraham's journey to Egypt
 - d. The promise continues even when Abraham fails because the promise is based on God, not Abraham
2. God reaffirms the promises when Abraham returns to faith
 - a. God's promises had never failed - God worked to protect His promise even when Abraham was living outside of faith in Egypt
 - b. But, the promises of God are not mentioned in the Egypt episode - they are there in the background, but the burden of the passage is that the promise are imperiled by Abraham's actions
 - c. God only gives Abraham the assurance of those promises when he returns to the land of promise
 - d. When Abraham returns and calls on the Lord and demonstrates his faith by letting Lot choose the best of the land, then God reaffirms His promise
 - e. The promises hadn't gone away, but the assurance of the promise happened when Abraham lived by faith
3. God reaffirms the promise more abundantly than Abraham's faith
 - a. We'll discuss this more in our section on Abraham's actions, but Abraham let Lot choose the best of the land, and Lot chose to go east toward Sodom which was well watered like the garden of the Lord
 - b. When Abraham sets aside his right to claim the best of the land, this is a great act of faith, he is believing the promise of God rather than trying to grasp what he thinks is his
 - c. But notice there is a correlation between Abraham's faith and the reaffirmation of the promise - Abraham let's Lot journey east, but God tells Abraham to look north, south, east and west and all the land would be his
 - d. So, God's promise was correlated to Abraham's faith, but it was also much greater than Abraham's faith - Abraham gave up something according to his faith, but God's promise was much greater than Abraham's faith

III. How Do The Promises Point to Christ?

A. We have already looked at how the promises point to Christ last week

1. I'm not just going to repeat myself this morning - we saw that Christ is God's place, that Christ is God's people, that Christ is the blessed ruler of God's people and that Christ is God's blessing to His people
2. What I am going to do is examine is how the reaffirmation of the promises also points to Christ

B. Christ is the source of grace: God's grace is earned by and found in Christ

1. God's continued bearing with Abraham even after failure is a pattern that continues through the whole Bible - Scripture's testimony is that mankind is not good enough to earn His promises in any way
2. Even our faith is not good enough to earn the promises of God - Abraham started with great faith, but that faith didn't earn him the promises or bring about the promises - it was God's grace that gave the promises
3. Ephesians 2:8-9 - *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works so that no one can boast.*
4. Like Abraham, nothing we do, not even our faith, earns us the promises of God. But, how does this point to Christ? The grace of God is only given in Christ - when God shows Abraham unmerited favor even after he fails, it starts a pattern that is fulfilled and justified in Christ
5. II Timothy 1:9 - *Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,*
6. In one sense, God's favor is completely unmerited because we can't merit it, but in another sense God's favor toward us is completely merited, because Christ has completely earned it for us
7. Our faith rests in Christ having completely earned the promises of God, our faith does not strive to earn the promises of God, because the promises of God are in Christ
8. So, when God continues showing grace to Abraham, this calls us, who are on this side of the cross, to see the reason for God's continuing grace - the person and work of Christ!

C. Christ is the source of assurance: assurance is found in looking to Christ

1. Abraham received assurance in the promise only when he returned to faith, and we could make some good points about how real faith is necessary for the assurance of God's promises. But, again, how does this point to Christ?
2. Assurance was given through faith in the promise, but we could emphasize that two ways:
 - a. Assurance is given through **faith** in the promise
 - b. Assurance is given through faith in the **promise**
 - c. I think Scripture would call us to emphasize it the second way, assurance comes from the promise, we receive it through faith, because it is faith in the promise
 - d. So, as much as Christ is the promise, then our assurance comes from looking unto Christ
3. Hebrews 10:19-22 - *Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*
4. So, yes, assurance comes through our faith, but faith cannot be detached from its subject, Christ. We have assurance because Christ has washed us with His blood, He has opened for us a living way to God, and He is our High priest. As we just described, He perfectly earned God's favor for us. So, our faith can rest and have assurance because Christ has won the promise for us.
5. Assurance may come through faith, but it is not based on faith. Assurance is based on Christ and His work. This is why God gives assurance of His promise when we walk in faith, because when we walk in faith we have our eyes on Christ and what He has done for us, how He has earned the promises of God for us.
6. Hebrews 12:2 - *looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

D. Christ is the goal of faith: Christ is the reward for which our faith is willing to lay aside things in this world

1. God's reaffirmation of His promise both reflected but also greatly superseded Abraham's faith, again, how is this fulfilled in Christ? - I think we can see the answer again by turning to a passage of the New Testament that shows a similar response to sacrificial faith
2. Mark 10:29-30 - *Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.*
 - a. In this passage, Christ promises to reward sacrificial faith with greater things than were sacrificed, things related to the sacrifice, but ultimately much greater - very similar to the promise to Abraham
 - b. But, I think as we talk through the logic of this passage, we will see how this correlation and increase is rooted in Christ
 - c. First, we see that the purpose of the sacrifices made was Christ - "*Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left... for my sake and for the gospel*" - we can give up things in this world because we are seeking Christ and His gospel, we can give up houses and lands in this world because we are seeking Christ, we can give up families and children in this world because we are seeking Christ
 - d. Second, we see that the related promises are found in Christ - Christ says that we will "*receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions*" - Christ doesn't mean that if we give something up magically we'll end up with more of it, instead it means if we give up houses and lands, we have a place in Christ here in the church, if we give up family here in this world we have a greater family here in God's people, if we give up children here in this world we can see greater children through the gospel, but all of these things are in Christ, because these things were given up in order to seek Christ, in Christ these things are given back to us
 - e. Third, we see that the ultimate promise is Christ - Christ says that we will receive "*in the age to come eternal life*" - as we consider this ultimate promise, we need to turn to another New Testament reference, John 17:3 - *And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.* - we are promised that sacrificial faith will ultimately end in eternal life, but eternal life is only good because it is the eternal knowledge and enjoyment of Christ - Christ is the ultimate reward of faith, Christ is the goal of faith
 - f. So sacrificial faith is rewarded in correlation to the sacrifice but also much greater than the sacrifice because sacrificial faith's goal is Christ
3. Another passage perhaps makes this point even more clearly: Matthew 13:44-46 - "*The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*
 - a. Again, there is a sacrificial faith in this passage, the man goes and sells all he has, but the sacrificial faith is not the focus of the parable - it's kind of in the background
 - b. The focus of the parable is the reward that is obtained when the sacrifice is made - the kingdom of heaven is so valuable that it is a no-brainer to go sell everything to get it
 - c. And last week we saw that the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Kingdom of God is defined in Christ - it is Christ who is this great treasure
4. So, Christ is the goal of faith, Christ is our great reward
 - a. This is why we can have a sacrificial faith, because we know in whom we have believed
 - b. We have tasted and seen that the Lord is good
 - c. God's promise to us is affirmed in correlation to our faith, but also much greater than our faith because the goal of our faith is Christ
 - d. When Abraham let Lot choose the best of the land, he believed he had a better reward and God affirmed that to him, and ultimately that greater reward is Christ
 - e. So, once again, the core of the message is not how great Abraham's faith is, it is how great the promise is, and the promise is Christ

IV. How Does Abraham Respond to the Promises?

A. Like last week, there are three main responses that Abraham has to God's promises

1. In verses 1-4, Abraham returns to the land of promise and calls on God
2. In verses 8-13, Abraham allows Lot to choose the best of the promised land
3. And in verse 18, Abraham builds another altar to the Lord
4. So, let's examine each of these responses briefly

B. Abraham returns to the land of promise and calls on God

1. Genesis 13:1-4 - *So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the LORD.*
2. The first response we see here is Abraham turning around and going back to Canaan and calling upon God
3. This response is what was lacking in the second half of Genesis 12, during Abraham's journey to Egypt we do not see him living by faith in the promise or calling on the name of the Lord
4. But, after being chastised by Pharaoh, or really by God through the agency of Pharaoh, Abraham turns around and comes back to his former life of faith, living as an foreigner in the land of promise and calling on the name of the Lord
5. So, Abraham, turned around, or we might say Abraham repented in action, he turned away from his faithlessness and returns to faith and calls upon God - Abraham's first response is repentance in action

C. Abraham gives Lot the first choice of the land

1. Genesis 13:8-9 - *Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left."*
2. Abraham's second response is to give Lot the first choice of land - we've already discussed this briefly, but we'll consider it here again
3. This response is ultimately a response of faith, because it shows Abraham really believed God's promises - He didn't need to grasp or strive after the promises, God would give him the promises
4. So, instead he could seek peace and lay aside his rights, believing the promise of God to give him the land
5. But we must be careful to note that Abraham's response is not a forfeit or despair in the promise - he didn't let Lot take the best of the land because he figured he would never have the land
6. In verse 12, it emphasizes that Abraham still lived in the land, he lived by faith in the land God promised
7. But he lived there by the principle of 'now and not yet' - he believed that God had promised to give him the land, so he lived as though that promise were true now - he lived in the land - but he also recognizes that the consummation of that promise has not yet come, and so does not strive after the promise or attempt to take it by force - he lets Lot choose the best part of the land
8. So, Abraham's second response might be called faith in the now and not yet of the promise - he lived as though the promise were true but also believed that God would be the one to fulfill it in the future
9. Abraham was content to let Lot have the land, because he found his ultimate hope in the future, not now

D. Abraham builds an altar in the land

1. Genesis 13:18 - *and there he built an altar to the LORD.*
2. This is the third altar Abraham has built in the land - we consider the first two last week and saw that the altar represents Abraham spending his time in the land worshipping the God who made the promise
3. And this is the only response this morning that we see comes after the reaffirmation of the promise
4. What strikes me is that every time Abraham again sees the promise of God, every time God reaffirms His promise to Abraham, Abraham is moved to worship
5. Whenever Abraham has his eyes on the promise, Abraham's life is a life of worship, Abraham's faith is lived out by worshipping the God who made the promises

V. What Do The Responses Teach Us About Faith?

A. Faith is continually repenting from sin and returning our gaze to the promise

1. When Abraham failed in faith, he didn't forsake the promise, when he came to his senses, he repented and returned to the promise, and this is what God calls His people to do in all ages
 - a. I John 1:8-9 - *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
 - b. II Corinthians 7:9-10 - *As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.*
2. The life of faith is not acting like we don't fail in faith sometimes, nor is it striving now, by our good works, to earn or to continue meriting the promise - the life of faith is often heartfelt repentance when we fail in faith - we follow our father Abraham who sometimes failed in faith, but when we fail, we repent
3. We neither deny our failure nor do we persist in our failure, but we acknowledge our failure and turn around and seek the promise once again - the life of faith is a life of repentance

B. Faith is finding our hope in the future and thus being ready to set aside our rights now

1. Abraham's faith was set on a future hope, and our faith is also set on a future hope
 - a. Hebrews 11:9-10 - *By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.*
 - b. I Peter 1:13 - *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*
 - c. II Peter 3:13 - *But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*
2. So, Abraham was able to set aside the good things of this world, even things that were rightfully his, because he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, and by faith, so must we:
 - a. Mark 10:29-30 - *Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.*
 - b. I Corinthians 8:9, 13 - *But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak... Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.*
 - c. I Peter 3:9 - *Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.*
 - d. This giving up is an act of faith because we are showing the world we desire the promises of God more than the promises that are available in this world
3. So, faith is not looking for good in this world, in fact, it might be described as expecting a lot of bad in this world, but rejoicing through that because we are looking forward to something much better
 - a. We don't struggle to get stuff in this world, we don't struggle to stand on our rights in this world, we don't even attempt to right wrongs that are done to us in this world
 - b. We give up all that, because our eyes are fixed on our future hope

C. Faith is spending our now lives in the worship of God who has made the promises to us

1. We saw this last week as the companion to waiting on God and not striving to gain the promise ourselves
2. But, let's emphasize it once again, while we look forward to our future hope, we worship God
3. This is how our lives ought to be characterized, our faith is demonstrated when we give up the things of this world and when, instead, we spend our lives in the worship of God who has promised us better things
4. As an example, what did Paul and Silas do after being beaten and thrown in prison in Philippi - *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them*
5. Even when everything was taken from them, Paul and Silas spent their lives worshipping God

VI. How is Abraham Blessed and a Blessing?

A. Abraham is a blessing to Lot and the King of Sodom

1. Like I said earlier, we are treating the first half of chapter 14 as background information this morning
 - a. The first half of chapter 14, though, does set up a situation where Lot is in significant trouble, having been captured by Chedolaomer as part of a rebel alliance of kings and this becomes an avenue where Abraham can be a blessing as God promised to Lot and to the King of Sodom
1. He blesses Lot by rescuing him from Chedolaomer
 - a. Genesis 14:13-16 - *Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner. These were allies of Abram. When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people.*
 - b. Lot's situation must have been a truly fearful situation - he was taken captive as a rebel and was being carried as a possession back to Elam - he had no hope left in the world, only service as a slave or worse treatment by his captors
 - c. But, Abraham intervenes, he takes his army - which, by the way, apparently Abraham had an army, something that affects our understanding of his waiting on the promises of God - and delivers Lot
 - d. Abraham is a blessing because Abraham is the deliverer, Lot was captured - Abraham delivered him
2. He further blesses the King of Sodom by refusing to take the plunder
 - a. Genesis 14:21-24 - *And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' I 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."*
 - b. We could say much about how the King of Sodom responds to Abraham, but I don't want to focus on that right now - instead I want to see what Abraham does
 - c. Instead of seeking the spoil of his victory, Abraham freely gives it away - we could have treated this under the topic of faith, because it demonstrates great faith, and it will probably come up next week
 - d. But this also is a blessing - Abraham is not only the deliverer, he is a deliverer who blesses the delivered

B. Abraham is blessed by Melchizedek

1. Genesis 14:18-20 - *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.*
2. This, at least to me, has to qualify as one of the most mysterious passages in the Bible, but also a passage that is heavily cited in the New Testament, especially related to its obscurity
3. But, it fits our pattern perfectly, Abraham is not only a blessing, but he is also blessed by Melchizedek - an interesting character who is only mentioned here in Genesis
 - a. As far as we can tell from the text, he is a Canaanite king of the city that would, in the next millennium, become Jerusalem
 - b. He also, in contrast with all of his people, a worshipper of God and a priest of God most high - although most of the world had turned away from God, there was still a lingering knowledge of God
 - c. But other than that, we know nothing about him, which actually becomes an important Biblical point
4. There are at least three parts to this blessing
 - a. Melchizedek provides for Abraham - he sets out bread and wine as they return from battle
 - b. Melchizedek speaks a blessing to Abraham - he calls on God to bless Abraham
 - c. Melchizedek speaks a blessing to God - he recognizes that God is the only source of blessing
5. Abraham responds by giving him a tenth of everything - this is an affirmation of Melchizedek's priesthood and a submission to the blessing that Melchizedek has given

VII. How does this prefigure Christ?

A. Since both blessedness and blessing are promises made to Abraham and since all of the promises made to Abraham are found in Christ, somehow the fulfillment of these promises must point to Christ

1. When Abraham is blessed and a blessing, God is fulfilling His promises in a small way
2. But Christ is the ultimate blessed one and the ultimate blessing, so these stories must somehow prefigure or typify Christ and who He is

B. Abraham was a blessing: Christ is our deliverer

1. A theme of salvation in the Old Testament is the deliverer, he who delivers God's people from the enemy
 - a. Judges (eg. Judges 3:15) - *Then the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man.*
 - b. Throughout Judges, God sent deliverers to rescue His people from bondage, this is also seen in Moses and David and other characters who deliver God's people from their enemies
2. In Psalms especially, it is understood that the ultimate deliverer is God
 - a. Psalm 144:1-2, 5-7 - *Blessed be the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle; he is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield and he in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me... Touch the mountains so that they smoke! Flash forth the lightning and scatter them; send out your arrows and rout them! Stretch out your hand from on high; rescue me and deliver me from the many waters, from the hand of foreigners,*
 - b. Ultimately it is God who is our deliverer, it is God who will come down in battle to destroy the enemy
3. The prophets then point to a greater deliverer, identified with God, who will come to bring salvation
 - a. Isaiah 63:1-6 - *Who is this who comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he who is splendid in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save." Why is your apparel red, and your garments like his who treads in the winepress? "I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me; I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath; their lifeblood spattered on my garments, and stained all my apparel. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come. I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me. I trampled down the peoples in my anger; I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."*
 - b. Notice the language of a warrior-deliverer who is coming to destroy the enemy and redeem His people - this deliverer is the preacher of Isaiah 61, but also God Himself somehow
4. And Christ is the fulfillment of this theme, He is our deliverer, having defeated sin, the devil, and death
 - a. Hebrews 2:14-16 - *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.*
 - b. Notice that, in the fulfillment, the author of Hebrews ties it back to Abraham - Christ is the deliverer and has delivered the offspring of Abraham - the type of the deliverer, the recipient of the promise
5. And our deliverer has not only saved us, but has given us the plunder of his victory
 - a. Psalm 68:1-2, 18 - *God shall arise, his enemies shall be scattered; and those who hate him shall flee before him! As smoke is driven away, so you shall drive them away; as wax melts before fire, so the wicked shall perish before God! ... You ascended on high, leading a host of captives in your train and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there.*
 - b. Psalm 68 again describes God the warrior-deliverer who leads the captives free which is quoted in Ephesians as referring to Christ - notice the small change in wording to help us understand the sense
 - c. Ephesians 4:7-8 - *But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."*
 - d. Christ is the deliverer of Psalm 68, but not only has he delivered, he has given his spoil to the captives! We receive the bounty of His work!

C. Abraham was blessed: Christ is our great high priest and king

1. Even in the Old Testament there was some understanding that Melchizedek typified a promise of God
 - a. Psalm 110:4 - *The LORD has sworn, and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."*
 - b. Psalms 110 anticipates that there will be a priest who would be both king and priest, a priest-king who would utterly triumph over his enemies, and a priest-king who would be God Himself
 - c. Hebrews, especially, teaches us that this priest-king is Christ, but actually, this Psalm is referenced multiple times in the New Testament
2. The Melchizedek type promised a character greater than Abraham
 - a. Hebrews 7:1-4 - *For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 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. 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. See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils!*
 - b. The author of Hebrews starts Hebrews 7 with this discussion about who Melchizedek was
 - i. Remember, above, that we know very little about Melchizedek, but the author of Hebrews capitalizes on this to teach us about Christ
 - ii. First, he takes what we do know, Melchizedek was King of Salem, that is King of Peace
 - iii. And Melchizedek means King of Righteousness, so he is a type of a King that brings righteousness and peace
 - iv. Then he takes what we don't know - he is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life and understands him to be a type of an everlasting priesthood
 - c. And then the author talks about how Abraham gave him the tithe
 - i. Melchizedek pointed out that this mysterious character would be much greater than Abraham
 - ii. Abraham was promised that kings would come from his body, but Melchizedek typified the coming king, and king of righteousness and peace who would live forever as a priest
3. The Melchizedek type promised a king greater than David
 - a. The Melchizedek Psalm, Psalm 110, is also quoted in Matthew 22 and Acts 2
 - b. Acts 2:29-36 - *"Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.' Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."*
 - c. This elusive Psalm that proclaimed a restoration of the Melchizedek priesthood pointed to a king who was greater than David that would come
 - d. Melchizedek, sitting on the throne of the city of God, ruling in righteousness and peace typified the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, a king who would sit on David's throne forever

4. The Melchizedek type promised a greater priest than Aaron
 - a. Hebrews 7:11-17 - *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? For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."*
 - b. A major problem for the first century Israelite believer must have been how Christ could be a priest? He wasn't a Levite! In fact, I wonder this sometimes myself in reference to some Old Testament statements
 - c. But Hebrews tells us that Christ isn't a priest according to Aaron, but a priest according to Melchizedek, a priesthood of a different and higher order
 - d. So, Melchizedek, a priest who came before the installation of the Aaronic priesthood, typified not only a king greater than David, but a priest greater than Aaron who would serve forever based on His incorruptible life
5. The Melchizedek type promised the same blessings again to God's people
 - a. Christ has set before us bread and wine - Matthew 26:26-29 - *Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."*
 - b. Christ has blessed us before God - Ephesians 1:3 - *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.*
 - c. Through Christ we bless God - Hebrews 13:15 - *Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.*
6. Christ is that character, that priest, that king, and that blessing
 - a. Christ is the King who brings righteousness and peace, the priest who has lived and will live forever
 - b. Christ is the King who sits on David's throne
 - c. Christ is the Priest who supersedes Aaron's priesthood
 - d. Christ is the one who has provided for His people, has blessed His people, and allows His people to praise God
7. Melchizedek is a mysterious character, but he teaches us much about Christ, perhaps he is a mysterious character precisely for this reason - *Great indeed, we confess is the mystery of godliness!*