

# *The Eternal Perfection of the Once for All Offering*

*Hebrews 7:25-28<sup>1</sup>*

“He sacrificed for their sins, once-for-all.” I want this morning for this phrase to grip us with the mighty hand of its truth. What Jesus did in His earthly death and resurrection was a once-for-all sacrifice for sin. It was sufficient and final. His sacrifice on Calvary was the great reality which cast its shadow in the Old Testament sacrifice. So, the author of Hebrews keeps asking us, “If this is the final, sufficient and superior sacrifice, why are you returning to the weak and powerless shadows?”

We must pay attention to this. Without this truth our salvation has not been secured. We are not saved from our sin. We are not reconciled to God. We have no hope. We are eternally condemned. We need a redeemer. But not just any redeemer. God has set the standard for what He will accept. Ultimately, it is a *who* God will accept.

<sup>25</sup> Consequently, he [Jesus] is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

One of the challenges in preaching is not to lose the flow. Verse 25 begins with “consequently”. It is a conclusion to an argument. So what conclusion are we to draw from all this? Two faith sustaining, hope giving truths emerge.

## **Jesus is able to save completely.**

In other words, what the law could not do in its weakness and powerlessness and uselessness because of our sinful nature, the power of Jesus’ indestructible life has done. What a word! What hope! What an assurance! But notice: this is true of those who come to God through Him. For the recipients of the book of Hebrews, they must leave the Old Testament system and embrace Christ. They must no longer come to God through animal sacrifice and human priests. They must come to God through Jesus Christ.

And so must you. You cannot come to God on any other principle or any other person or by any performance and be saved completely except through the cross and the resurrection.

## **Jesus is able to intercede eternally.**

That Jesus can save completely is because He does intercede eternally. This will only be a life-transforming reality for us when we recognize that our major problem is not finances, or health, or friends, or psychological wholeness or fulfillment or meaning in life. When, by grace through the Word, the Spirit unfolds to us our surpassing sinfulness, then we will cling with obeying trust to the sustaining power of Jesus continuing intercession.

And now an explanation. The next sentence begins with a “For” ...

<sup>26</sup> For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. <sup>28</sup> For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

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Let's linger over this important and deep text for our time today.

## **His Majestic Purity (v.26)**

The priesthood of Jesus is superior because of Jesus' holiness. If Old Testament sacrifices had to be without spot or blemish, how much more must the final sacrifice be utterly perfect. And this is what we need – this kind of priest.

### ***His Sufficiency***

The sacrifice of Christ meets our need. Don't miss this. I do not know all the hungers of your heart. But this one thing I am absolutely sure of: Jesus our priest meets our need.

This phrase is often translated "It is fitting for us to have this kind of priest." What does that mean? It is just like God to give and it is just like us to need this kind of priest. Jesus is exactly suited both to the character of God (v.26) and to the need of man (v.27).

### ***His Characteristics***

Jesus is exactly suited to meet our need because of these characteristics. When you go to apply for a job, they want to know what qualifications you have for the job. They also are looking for certain kinds of people with certain characteristics to work there. So be clear about this: for Jesus to be our sufficient high priest, He had to meet these qualifications.

Holy – Here is that inner quality and power of God's central attribute. Holiness could not be merely added to Him like one adds clothes. Holiness had to be His skin, and bones and blood. This was not holiness in theory or in prospect or in hope. It was a bright reality. We know that this was so for even at His birth, Mary was told that He would be "that holy one conceived in her."

Innocent – He must also be blameless, not guilty of any charge against Him. If holiness is His internal character, then this is His outward conduct. Many may be ready to charge Him with wrong doing, but investigation reveals that what He was on the inside directed every choice He made to actually glorify God.

Undeified – Our sufficient priest must live among sinful humanity, but must not be contaminated by contact with it. Imagine what it was like for Jesus to walk among sinful men and women and children as the holy and blameless one. All of His rubbing shoulders with sinful humanity did not defile or contaminate or corrupt Him.

Separate – The phrase here refers to His not being connected with their depravity. It does not mean that Jesus lived in isolation from sinful people. It is quite evident from the Gospel records that Jesus spent a lot of time with sinners. What this means is that Jesus was not connected to the root of depravity inherited from Adam. Being virgin born, He is set apart from the whole of men and women born in sin.

Exalted – Finally, our sufficient priest must have God's seal of approval. This God did in the resurrection and ascension and exaltation of Christ.

Illus: software with the seal of authenticity FDA seal of approval on food.

Jesus is superior in His sacrifice because He Himself was, in all ways, without sin.

## **His Final Sacrifice (v.27)**

The priesthood of Jesus is superior because of Jesus' sacrifice. If verse 26 speaks of what we need then verse 27 speaks of what Jesus did not need.

## ***How It Is Different***

We must understand how Jesus' sacrifice is different from the Old Testament. This difference also sets it apart from all other religious sacrifices as well. Do not think that this is merely a message for Jews. No beloved, this is a message for pagans, for anyone who brings anything anytime in any way to gain access to God and His favor other than the final and sufficient work of Christ. And I am talking to each of you just as this text talks to me.

It may be daily or weekly or monthly or only at Christmas and Easter, but there is this sense of coming to God at this time and in this way because God will be pleased that I am here. Well, I have bad news for you. If you are even here this morning to draw near to God on any other grounds than the final sacrifice of Jesus, you may be near geographically but you are still distant spiritually.

It is different in that it is *NOT DAILY*. All systems of religion including the Old Testament bring sacrifices on some regular basis. It is something I have seen in Africa. It is something we read in the Scriptures. And for many even in our day and time, people still try to do. And this kind of religion is weak and wearying. What a great thing it is that Jesus' one sacrifice of Himself put an utter end to all sacrificing that follows. May God be pleased to open eyes to see and hearts to feel and wills to embrace this saving truth. Jesus' sacrifice is not and cannot be, daily.

It is different in that it is *NOT FOR HIMSELF*. All of us know that all men we know have erred and sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. In the Old Testament, when the High Priest came on the annual Day of Atonement to sacrifice for sin, he had to offer sacrifice first for his own sin so that his offering up of the sacrifice for the nation could be accepted and he could enter the holy of holies. But this is not so with Jesus. When He was sacrificed, the sin He bore was not His own. He had none. The sin He bore was that of His elect people. Their sins were rolled on Him and He was sacrificed on the cross as our sin-bearer.

So these blessed, saving truths show us how the sacrifice of Jesus is sufficient and superior: not daily and not for Himself.

## ***How It Is Final***

There are phrases that uniquely identify products. We associate (and advertising makes sure that this is so) these phrases with these products. We all know what "the real thing" is and who had "a better idea". So we must always associate this phrase with the cross: "The once-for-all sacrifice." Now be clear about this once-for-all. It does not mean "once for everybody." That is an accident of the English. What it does mean is "once forever never to have to be done again." It is final, finished, done. No priest has since nor ever can again offer sacrifice for our sins. I say again with all the passion coming from a soul that has banked his eternity on this: this is the finished work of Jesus.

That Jesus' offering of Himself is final also shows us what man's problem really is. Man's problem is *sin*. What we tend to think of man's problems in social, emotional and psychological terms. Man is lonely, alienated, unfulfilled, sick, searching for meaning and hope and purpose. While these all may be true, they are not the root of the problem. Jesus came to deal with sin – to deal with at its root. Consequences of sin are dealt with in the process of sanctification.

Do you understand? Beloved, Jesus is all we need. He is our sinless sacrifice. Rest your soul in Him.

## His Eternal Appointment (v.28)

Jesus is superior as our priest because of His sinlessness, His sufficient sacrifice and because of His appointment. He was appointed as a Son. This sentence shows us two important truths about His eternal appointment as our priest.

### *The Weakness of Men*

We have already seen that men are weak. They are weak in their sin. And yet the Law appoints them as priests. In the shadow lands of the Old Testament, this is what was done as a pointer to that which was to come. Those shadows were like this the Lord's Table, they and it have no saving benefit in itself. It is only as these things actually point us to Christ. It is only when we trust and embrace and obey Him in faith that those Old Testament sacrifices and this New Testament ordinances serve in the way God ordained.

### *The Perfection of the Son*

What the Law could not do, God did in the accompanying of His New Covenant with an oath. He appointed His Son as the final High Priest who would offer the final sacrifice. He was perfect. He was the perfect Son. And God's oath made Him a priest. We then truly honor Christ and glorify Him when we lean with all our trust on Him.

Our great saving high priest is God's eternal Son. God the Father made this appointment with a promise. What was promised the Son, involves us. What was promised the Son, was given to us. That is, we have become God's holy, sanctified, transformed people.

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## Reflect and Respond

### Hebrews 7:25–28 (NLT, Adapted)

<sup>25</sup> Therefore Jesus is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him. It is Jesus who lives forever [in order] to intercede with God on their behalf.

<sup>26</sup> Jesus is the kind of high priest we need because he is holy and blameless, unstained by sin. He has been set apart from sinners. He has been given the highest place of honor in heaven. <sup>27</sup> Unlike those other high priests [or any priests of any kind], Jesus does not need to offer sacrifices every day. They did this for their own sins first and then for the sins of the people. But Jesus did this once for all when he offered himself as the sacrifice for the people's sins.

<sup>28</sup> The law appointed high priests who were limited by human weakness. But after the law was given, God appointed his Son with an oath, and his Son has been made the perfect High Priest forever.

I invite you today at this moment to do that. Trust and treasure the One whose offering of Himself is the once-for-all final sacrifice for your sin.