The Supremacy of The Son of God

Studies in Hebrews

Superior High Priest (part 6) Heb. 7:26-28

**Hebrews 7:26-28** For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

**Outlines:**

A. Christ is **Superior to the Prophets** (1:1-3)

B. Christ is **Superior to the Angels** (1:4–2:18)

C. Christ is **Superior to Moses** (3:1–4:16)

            D. Christ is **Superior to Aaron** (5:1-10:18)

1. **Superior High Priest** (5:1-7-28)

a. The Priesthood of Aaron vs Christ (5:1-10)

Third Warning: Don’t Degenerate (5:11–6:20)

b. Christ is a superior high priest in comparison to Aaron’s (7:1-28)

1) Because Christ’s priesthood is of a greater order 1-10

- Melchizedek is a type of Christ 1-3

- Melchizedek greater than Aaron 4-10

2) Christ’s priesthood of an effective order 11-19680

- The insufficiency of the levitical priesthood v11-12

-  A better High priest is announced v13-17

\*  negatively: Not like Aaron 13-14

\*  Positively:  Like Melchizedek 15-17

- The sufficiency of the new priesthood 18-19

3) Superior because of the divine oath 20-22

4) Superior because of its permanence 23-25

5) Superior because of who Jesus is 26-28

2. **Superior Priesthood** (8:1-10:18)

In v 26-28, The author of Hebrews is summing up and concluding his argument throughout chapter 7. Verses 26–28 also serve to introduce the next section (8:1–10:18), in which the author described the priestly work and sacrifice of Christ681.

“was fitting for us” This Greek word πρέπω prepō was used twice in the book of Hebrews. Here and in Hebrews 2:10 “For it was fitting him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” By saying that Jesus was fitting for both the Father and mankind, the author of Hebrews was telling us that ONLY Jesus can **meet the requirement** of (fit well with ) the holiness, justice, righteousness of an infinite God to bring him closer to man. In the same time, Jesus can **meet the needs** of the weakness and sinfulness of a finite human race.

“Such a high priest” Such a high priest,” that is, the one he described in verses 11–25 and the one he would describe in verses 26-28682.

So how “such a high priest would be fitting for us” i.e. is able to meet our need?

1- Because he was able to bring us close to God: (v11-19)

As we have seen, the point of v11-19 is really summarized in v18-19 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, 19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

2- Because he is a guarantor of a better covenant v 20-22

20 And inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath…22 by so much more Jesus has become a [g]surety of a better covenant.

3- Because he is able to save to utmost v23-25

v 25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

4- because of who he is v 26-27:

He is Holy: The word ὅσιος, “devout,” appears in Hebrews only here. In the LXX it describes those whose relationship to God and to others reflects fidelity to the covenant (Pss 12:1; 18:26; 32:6; 79:1–2; 132:9, 16; 149:1–2). The term resumes the motif of Jesus’ obedient relationship to the Father demonstrated through the experiences of his earthly life (5:7–8). As one who was consecrated to the service of God (10:5–10), he was qualified religiously to be the true high priest

LXX The Septuagint, Greek translation of the OT.683

Harmless/pure: The word ἄκακος, “guileless, pure, innocent,” is used in the LXX predominantly with a passive and moral significance. It was an appropriate term for denoting the moral qualification of Jesus to be high priest. It signifies not only that Jesus was guileless in his relationship with other people, but that he was not touched by evil.684

undefiled: The term ἀμίαντος, “undefiled,” denotes cultic purity685

Taken together, these three adjectives describe the sinlessness of the high priest. In contrast to the Levitical high priest, of whom there was demanded only ritual purity (Lev 21:11) and bodily integrity (Lev 21:17), the high priest appropriate to the Christian community was qualified by spiritual and moral perfection686.

He is “separate from sinners” in that he “has become higher than the heavens” The phrase resumes the motif of the high priest who “has passed through the heavens” to gain access to the presence of God (see 4:14). Jesus enjoys direct, unhindered access to God, which enables him to fulfill his high priestly ministry on behalf of his people.687

The holiness of our high priest is emphasized again in v 27. While the OT high priest needed to provide sacrifices to atone for their sins. Our high priest, Jesus, didn’t need to offer any sacrifices to atone for is own sins.

v27 is problematic because the OT high priest offered sacrifices 1st for his own sin and then for the sins of the people only once a year in the day of atonement and not daily. A fact that the author of Hebrews know well 9:7, 25; 10:1.  Although it is difficult to precisely understand the exact meaning of what the author of Hebrews is referring to. It seems that either the author of Hebrews is mixing the ritual of the day of atonement with the constant sacrifices that the high priest was sacrificing (his own sin offering leviticus 4:2-3, also the daily cereal offerings Leviticus 6:19-23) to show the high priest constant sinfulness or that the author of Hebrews had some extra-biblical reference in mind (Sir 45:14 and Philo)688

5- Because of his perfect sacrifice:

The fact that Christ offered himself ἐφάπαξ, “once and for all,” signifies the completeness of his sacrifice. In the NT ἐφάπαξ is a technical term for the definitiveness and uniqueness of the death of Christ and the redemption it secured (9:12; 10:10). In v 27 this term acquires its force from comparison with the temporal expression καθʼ ἡμέραν, “daily,” which qualifies the sacrificial ministry of the Levitical high priests and connotes incompleteness and ineffectiveness.689

6- Because of his indescribable love:

The unique surrender of Christ’s life is considered under the image of sacrifice: ἑαυτὸν ἀνενέγκας, “he offered himself.” In the LXX the verb ἀναφέρειν is a technical term meaning “to offer a sacrifice, to make an offering.” The writer presents Christ as performing an essentially high priestly function when he offered his life to God. The perfection of his sacrifice matches the spiritual and moral perfection of the high priest who is simultaneously the unblemished offering (cf. 9:14).690

**v 28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.**

The profound difference between the two priesthoods is detailed in a concluding contrast summarizing the argument of the entire chapter.691

The author of Hebrews emphasizes 3 main differences here:

1. the basis of the Levitical institution was ὁ νόμος, “the law,” but that of the new priesthood was ὁ λόγος τῆς ὁρκωμοσίας, “the word of the sworn oath,” which was promulgated subsequent to the law;

The first antithesis recalls the argument that the law was ineffective in establishing a priesthood that could attain God’s intended goal for his people (vv 11–19). As a result, God swore an oath to establish a radically different priesthood to supersede the Levitical institution (vv 20–22).692

1. the old priesthood consisted of ἄνθρωποι, “men,” but the new priest is υἱός, “the Son”;

The second antithesis recalls the argument contrasting the many priests who were prevented by death from remaining in office with the one priest of the new covenant who continues forever. The mortality of the old priests contrasts sharply with the eternity and eschatological finality of the new priest (vv 23–25).693

1. the old priests are characterized as ἔχοντας ἀσθένειαν, “affected by weakness,” but the new priest as τετελειωμένον, “has been made perfect.”

In this context, the term ἀσθένεια, “weakness,” is almost equivalent to “sin.”694 The perfect participle τετελειωμένον (“made perfect”) looks at Jesus’ human nature. It does not mean that He was morally corrected or improved. In Hebrews there are three aspects to the perfecting of Christ. First, there is the ceremonial aspect. “To perfect” means “to consecrate” or “to install in office.”55 Second, there is the personal aspect. Jesus was “made complete,”56 that is, He went through the sufferings of life in order that He might experience on a human level what it was like to carry out the task of the Servant of the Lord to the end (2:10; 5:8).57 Third, there is the official or vocational aspect. These experiences “qualified” Him to be a sympathetic High Priest (2:17–18; 4:15–16), and the Cross qualified Him to be the Savior (2:9–11).695

“forever” The expression εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, “forever,” emphasizes the continual effectiveness of his priestly intercession. The verb τελειοῦν, “to perfect,” is accordingly best understood in a dynamic sense as referring to the whole process by which Jesus was personally prepared and vocationally qualified for his continuing ministry in the presence of God696.