

# Hebrews 7:26-28 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST  
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The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18			EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25	
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST

DOCTRINE	DUTY
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD	

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)  
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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**Hebrews 7:26** For it was **fitting** for us to have **such** a **high priest**, **holy**, **innocent**, **undefiled**, **separated** from **sinners** and **exalted** above the **heavens** ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [Toioutos gar hemin kai eprepen \(3SIAI\) archiereus, osios, akakos, amiantos, kechorismenos \(RPPMSN\) apo ton hamartolon, kai hupseloteros ton ouranon genomenos; \(AMPMSN\)](#)

**Amplified:** [Here is] the High Priest [perfectly adapted] to our needs, as was fitting—holy, blameless, unstained by sin, separated from sinners, and exalted higher than the heavens. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**KJV:** For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

**NLT:** He is the kind of high priest we need because he is holy and blameless, unstained by sin. He has now been set apart from sinners, and he has been given the highest place of honor in heaven. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Young's Literal:** For such a chief priest did become us--kind, harmless, undefiled, separate from the sinners, and become higher than the heavens,

<b>THE WORK OF OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST THE LORD JESUS CHRIST</b>		
<b>PAST</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>FUTURE</b>
He has appeared at the Cross for <b>Propitiation</b>	He now appears at the right hand of the throne for <b>Intercession</b>	He shall appear a Second time for the elect's final <b>Deliverance</b>
He appeared for our <b>Redemption</b>	He now appears for our <b>Representation</b>	He shall appear for our <b>Rewards</b>
He has appeared in <b>Humiliation</b>	He does appear in <b>Exaltation</b>	He shall appear in <b>Universal Manifestation</b>
He has appeared for our <b>Justification</b>	He does appear for our <b>Sanctification</b>	He shall appear for our <b>Glorification</b>

**FOR IT WAS FITTING THAT WE SHOULD HAVE SUCH A HIGH PRIEST HOLY, INNOCENT, UNDEFILED, SEPARATED FROM SINNERS, EXALTED ABOVE THE HEAVENS:** [toioutos gar hemin eprepen \(3SIAI\) archiereus hosios akakos amiantos kechorismenos \(RPPMSN\) apo ton hamartolon kai hupshloteros ton ouranon genomenos \(AMPMSN\):](#)

- Heb 7:11; 8:1; 9:23-26; 10:11-22) (Heb 2:10; Luke 24:26,46
- Heb 4:15; 9:14; Exodus 28:36; Isaiah 53:9; Luke 1:35; 23:22,41,47; John 8:29; 14:30; Acts 3:14; 4:27; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22; 1 John 2:2; 3:5; Revelation 3:7
- Heb 1:3; 4:14; 8:1; 12:2; Psalms 68:18; Matthew 27:18; Mark 16:19; Ephesians 1:20-22; Ephesians 4:8-10; Philippians 2:9-11; 1 Peter 3:22; Revelation 1:17,18

**Amplified:** [Here is] the High Priest [perfectly adapted] to our needs, as was fitting—holy, blameless, unstained by sin, separated from sinners, and exalted higher than the heavens.

**Wuest:** For such a high priest is fitting to us, holy, without guile, undefiled, having been separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

**For** - Always pause to ponder this **term of explanation**.

KJV says "for such a high priest became us" which **Wuest** explains - The word "became" is the translation of prepo which means "to be becoming, to be seemly, to be fitting." The Messiah as High Priest was as to His character, one who was fitting to us. There was an essential fitness in the provision God made in Him as High Priest of the believer. That essential fitness consisted of the qualities mentioned in Heb 7:26–28. That is, we sinners being sinful and dependant upon the mediation of a priest, needed a sinless one. What a contrast this is to the Aaronic priests who were themselves sinners and who needed in the last analysis, a High Priest to mediate salvation for them. ([Wuest Hebrews Commentary](#))

**It was fitting** (prepo) means that which is proper or suitable.

**Cole** explains "**It was fitting** points to Christ's suitability for His saving work (Morris, p. 72). It means that He "answered exactly to the requirements of the predicament" that we were in as sinners (Hughes, p. 271). The author piles up five terms that emphasize the perfect purity of Jesus."

**Spurgeon** - There is no approach unto God except through the intercession of Christ. Does not this teach the grand principle of the evil of sin, and teach it in the plainest manner? The distance that sin puts between the sinner and God, and the necessity of mediation in order that a just God may commune with the imperfect—are not these fully taught by the institution of the perpetual intercession of the Son of God? This is as much a declaration of the righteousness of God as was the substitutionary death on Calvary.

**Newell** on "**us**" (KJV) - Humbly we would call attention to the emphatic place in this sentence of the word "us." For here we have the "partakers of a heavenly calling" in plain view.

**High priest** ([749](#))(**archiereus** from **arche** = first in a series, the leader or ruler, idea of rank or degree + **hierous** = priest - **hieros** is that which is determined, filled or consecrated by divine power) refers to the priest that was chief over all the other priests in Israel. This office was established by God through Moses instructions in the Pentateuch. The high priest functioned as the mediator between Jehovah and Israel (cp new order under the **New Covenant** - 1Ti 2:5) performing sacrifices and rituals like other priests, but in addition acting to expiate the sins of the nation on the annual [Day of Atonement](#) (See **commentary** on Lev 16:1-34)

## **CHRIST'S PERSONAL CHARACTER: HOLY**

**Holy** ([3741](#))(**hosios**) pertains to being without fault relative to deity, devout, pious, pleasing to God, holy. It describes a person who lives right before God and so is described as devout, dedicated or holy. It is thus quite fitting that **hosios** describes Jesus our Messiah as the prophesied Holy One (Acts 2:27, 13:35), the Great High Priest (Hebrews 7:26), our soon coming King (Revelation 15:4-[note](#)) and the One Who reigns forever as the Holy One (Revelation 16:5-[note](#))

**Hosios** speaks of personal piety, an inner attitude of conforming to what is felt to be pleasing to God and consistent with religious practices. In Classical Greek **hosios** referred to the everlasting principles of right, not constituted by laws or customs of men, but antedating them; such as the paying of the proper rites of sepulture.

**Steven Cole** - **Hosios** refers to practical holiness, being separate from sin and evil behavior. It does not mean being separate from sinners, because the Lord Jesus was the friend of sinners. But the devout man does not carouse with sinners in their sin. Rather, he seeks to lead them to repentance. The devout man takes God and the Word of God seriously. He doesn't take the things of God as a joke. He lives in obedience to God's Word. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**Hosios** not **hagios** = "The former speaks of personal holiness, while the latter speaks of holiness as a state of separation to God. It speaks of holiness as that state of a person who is undefiled by sin, free from wickedness." ([Wuest Commentary](#))

**Newell** - "Holy" has reference to nature. Gabriel's announcement of our Lord's birth was, "That which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God." Twice the word is used in Acts 2:27; 13:35: "Thy holy One"; Christ as we have seen, "through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God" (Heb. 9:14). When it came to Calvary, the end of His earthly life, He was still the Holy One; and in Revelation 15:4, "Thou only art holy." ([Hebrews Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

**Hosios** is used only 8x in the NT - Acts 2:27; 13:34-35; 1Ti 2:8; Titus 1:8; Heb 7:26; Rev 15:4; 16:5.

Rev 15:4-[note](#) "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou alone art **holy** (hosios); For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE THEE, FOR THY RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN

REVEALED.”

Rev 16:5-[note](#) And I heard the angel of the waters saying, “Righteous art Thou, who art and who wast, **OHoly** (hosios) One, because Thou didst judge these things;

**Hosios** is used in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** to describe our Jehovah.

Deuteronomy 32:4 "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and **upright** (Heb = yashar - straight, right; **Lxx** = hosios) is He.

Psalms 16:10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your **Holy One** (**Heb** = **hasid** = kind, benevolent, merciful, pious; **Lxx** = hosios) to undergo decay.

And in amazing set of uses of **hosios** in the **Septuagint (Lxx)**, we see that it frequently is used to describe the character of men and women as "**godly ones**" (**Heb** = hasid; **Lxx** = hosios) (Ps 4:3, 12:1, 31:23, 32:6, 37:28, 50:5, 52:9, 79:2; 85:8; 86:2; 89:19; 97:10; 116:15; 132:9, 148:14; 149:1, 5, 9)! Sinners lost in Adam, redeemed in Christ, to live and look like Christ enabled by the Spirit of Christ! Amazing grace indeed!

## **CHRIST'S PERSONAL CHARACTER: INNOCENT**

**Innocent** ([172](#)) (**akakos** from **a** = without + **kakos** = constitutionally bad) is literally without evil or not (constitutionally) bad. It means "guileless, free from malice and craft." ([Ibid](#)) Jesus is free of everything that is evil or harmful. What a great High Priest we have the privilege to approach!

**Webster** says of **guile** (the antithesis of the character of Christ) - Craft; cunning; artifice; duplicity; deceit; usually in a bad sense. Who does that definition remind you of?

**Cole** - It may point to Jesus' moral purity, in contrast to the outward ritual purity of the Levitical priests. Though they may be pure outwardly, inwardly they were defiled as sinners. But Jesus was completely pure throughout

**Newell** - The next word is "guileless." It means, without an evil thought—like an innocent little child. Such was Christ! This word is very difficult for us, because, since Adam sinned, this world is crowded with a race none other than guileful. Now in Christ there was no guile whatever. He said, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (John 12:47). This was the reason publicans and sinners crowded around Him. Unconsciously, they found One Who was guileless as any child! He spoke words which, because He was The Light, discovered indeed their sins to them,—but, all the while, they knew He was the Friend of sinners! Gently and guilelessly He could say to the Samaritan woman who had had five husbands, and was then living with a man not her husband, "Thou saidst well, I have no husband." Our Lord is still the "guileless" One, "the same yesterday and today, and forever." He is not today a judge, a severe inspector. Think not of Him so! The day of His judging (Acts 17:31) is not come. Rely on Him as your Friend. It is impossible, except by God's help, to conceive of this guilelessness in the One Who knew all things, Who "knew what was in man" (Jn. 2:25). But it is of inestimable comfort to our hearts, this fact of guilelessness in our Great High Priest! of utter absence of evil thoughts concerning us. ([Hebrews Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

## **CHRIST'S PERSONAL CHARACTER: UNDEFILED**

**Undefiled** ([283](#))(**amiantos** from **a** = not or without + **miaíno** = defile especially by staining, as with color) describes the man who is absolutely free from any blemishes which might make it impossible for him to draw near to God. The blemished victim cannot be offered to God; the defiled man cannot approach him; but the one who is **amiantos** is fit to enter into God's presence. This term is not merely ritual or ceremonial purity (like OT priests - Lev 21:10-15-[note](#)) but genuine ethical cleanness. When Jesus was ministering on earth, our Lord was a friend of publicans and sinners (Mt 9:10; 11:19), and yet His contact with them did not defile His character or His conduct. There was contact without contamination. He was not isolated, but was separated!

**Wuest** on **amiantos** - "free from that by which the nature of a thing is deformed or debased, or its force or vigor is impaired." ([Wuest Hebrews Commentary](#))

**Newell** - unsoiled. Literally it means unstained, undyed by foreign color; consequently, uncontaminated. (The word without the negative is used in Heb 12:15). Such was our Lord that though passing through the midst of and thronged by publicans and harlots, and ecclesiastics full of Satanic pride, of sin and stain of every sort and degree, He remained unsullied, undefiled. This affords our hearts measureless comfort and confidence. It is such a high priest, unstained by the sin and sinful scenes that confront us daily, Who is at the right hand of God, ever keeping His own. ([Hebrews Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

How wonderful that because our Great High Priest is **undefiled** (amiantos), He is able to lead us into our "inheritance which is imperishable and **undefiled** (amiantos) and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for" us. (1Pe 1:4-**note**) An undefiled Priest and an undefiled inheritance. Surely this suggest what our real "inheritance" is -- Christ Himself, our firm Cornerstone, our abundant Life today and forever and ever. Amen

### **Jesus, Holy, Undefiled**

Jesus, holy, undefiled,  
Listen to a little child;  
Thou hast sent the glorious light,  
Chasing far the silent night.

Thou hast sent the sun to shine,  
O'er this glorious world of Thine;  
Warmth to give and pleasant glow,  
On each tender flow'r below.

Now the little birds arise,  
Chirping gaily in the skies;  
Thee their tiny voices praise,  
In the early songs they raise.

Thou, by Whom the birds are fed,  
Give to me my daily bread;  
And Thy holy Spirit give,  
Without Whom I cannot live.

### **CHRIST'S PERSON: SEPARATED**

**Separated from sinners** - Clearly this does not that He did not have contact with them, like a monk moving to a secluded monastery. His enemies were in a sense correct when they referred to Him as a "friend of tax-gatherers and sinners." (Mt 11:19) He was "a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners" because He had come "to seek and to save that which is lost" (Lk 19:10). **Cole** adds that "He was the friend of sinners, He kept Himself separate and undefiled. Unlike the Levitical priests, who had to keep themselves away from anyone who would defile them ritually, Jesus could mix with sinful people and yet their defilement did not affect Him. He could touch lepers (Mark 1:41), the ritually unclean, and even the dead (Luke 8:40-56) without contracting their defilement. Instead, His purity and life-giving power were imparted to them!"

**Separated** ([5563](#)) (**chorizo**) means to separate objects by introducing considerable space, so in this case pictures mortal men on earth and our High Priest Jesus in heaven, in the holy place (exalted above the heavens). The **perfect tense** defines this as His abiding, permanent state.

**Wuest** on **separated** - the Messiah is separated from sinners in that in His service as High Priest, He is void of all contact and commerce with sinners, removed far away in His glorified state and body, into God's Holy of Holies. ([Ibid](#))

**Newell** - No Pharisee would understand this. Look at Luke 15:1, 2 for example: "All the publicans and sinners were drawing near unto Him to hear Him. And both the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." See also Matthew 9:10-13. But you say, Publicans and sinners drew near to Him in perfect liberty, for was He not everywhere known as a friend of publicans and sinners (Matt. 11:19; Lk. 7:34), "eating and drinking" with them? He was! praise God for it! And yet all the while this astonishing, to us impossible, but glorious fact remained: separated from sinners. This separation does not mean as Alford contends that He was "void of all contact and commerce with sinners, removed far away in His glorified state and body, into God's holy place" (Alford, *en loc.*). This idea defeats any true understanding of this wondrous expression. For if Christ must be carried up to Heaven to be separated from sinners, all the four blessed things already affirmed of Him are defeated. Note that "separated" is the participle in the passive voice, aorist. I am thankful that the passive voice is used, for our blessed Lord did not say, Behold Me: I have separated Myself from sinners. (Although He did say, with the calmness of Deity, "Which of you accuseth Me of sin?" And there was no answer to that!) His was not such a physical withdrawal from the world as that which the monks and nuns and all the hermits (Prov. 18:1) follow—taking their sin with them into their self-deceiving seclusion! But it was as the Sinless One: "I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father." "I am not of the world." What a strengthening of heart to us to know that this Jesus, the holy, guileless, undefiled One, separated from sinners,

has passed through this earthly scene! By His whole history among us there unfolds before us the holy flower of Deity—of “God manifested in the flesh.” Separated from sinners indeed was He, yet did the publicans and sinners draw near to Him, for here was a Teacher such as they had never heard, Who spoke with the authority of Heaven, Whom yet in their hearts they knew for a friend! Thus was fulfilled in Him this blessed passive voice, separated from sinners. ([Hebrews Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

## **CHRIST'S PERSONAL POSITION: EXALTED!**

**Exalted** ([5308](#)) (**hupselos** from **hupsos/hypsos** = height, elevation) means high, elevated, lofty.

Listen to Twila Paris' great worship song [He is Exalted](#) - if this song doesn't stimulate a desire to bow down and worship Him with heart felt praise, I don't know what will - surely a small foretaste of that coming glorious day when we are in the presence of the Exalted One, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Amen

**Exalted above the heavens** - Literally "Having become higher than the heavens." But He is not unavailable to His sheep...in fact He sits in the Throne Room, ever interceding (Ro 8:34b-note), and always ready to come to our aid (Heb 2:18-note, [see especially the sense of the great Greek word **boetheo** = come to the aid] cp Heb 13:6-note) and ever ready to hear our pleadings for mercy grace to help in the nick of time (Heb 4:16-note).

**Cole** - 'Exalted above the heavens "embraces the truth of Christ's resurrection, ascension, and glorification, and it portrays the supreme perfection of our ever living High Priest in the sanctuary above" (Hughes, p. 275). It means, "The power of his all-sufficient atoning work is available without diminishment to us today as it was to the believers of the first century, and it is so because he who died for us is alive from the dead and enthroned on high" (ibid.).

**Newell** - Now in Ephesians 1:20 and 21 we read:

"God wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule, and authority and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

In Ephesians 4:10 we see Him as "ascended far above all the heavens." And in Hebrews 4:14: "Having been a Great High Priest Who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God;" and in Chapter 8:1:

"Now in the things which we are saying the chief point is this: We have such a High Priest, Who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."

Here then is the High Priest that became us, who in the infinite wisdom and grace of God are partakers of a heavenly calling. Are we born again (another, literally, down from above)? We have a High Priest above. Is our citizenship in Heaven? Our representative, our "Forerunner" and Great High Priest is already there, a Man in the glory. Has God,

"being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, enlived us together with Christ ... and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenlies"?

Even so! And although we ourselves are yet traveling through the world in our unredeemed bodies, the earthly tabernacle in which we groan, being burdened, yet Christ, the Firstfruits of the resurrection, the First-born from the dead, has already ascended up on high, and been greeted by God as High Priest forever! And to Him has been given the place of honor at the right hand of God.\*

There used to be a teaching that Heaven was at the center of the created universe, which revolved around it! Not so. The throne of God is far above all the heavens, far above His created universe. Our Great High Priest was made higher than the heavens. But His position "far above all" does not change His affections, His sympathy. How humbling it is to us who "look to the hole of the pit whence we have been digged" by sovereign Divine mercy and grace, we who have received a heavenly calling, with such a High Priest as this!

Indeed, this one blessed verse, Chapter 7:26, could afford an excuse to that great man of God, John Owen, the Puritan, to write his commentary of nine volumes on this wondrous epistle to the Hebrews! ([Hebrews Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

**Hebrews 7:27** [Who does not need daily \\*, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself \(NASB: Lockman\)](#)

**Greek:** [os ouk echei \(3SPA1\) kath' hemeran anagken, hosper oi archiereis, proteron huper ton idion hamartion thusias anapherein, \(PAN\) epeita \(3SAA1\) ton tou laou; touto gar epoiesen \(3SAA1\) ephapax heauton](#)

[anenegkas. \(AAPMSN\)](#)

**Amplified:** He has no day by day necessity, as [do each of these other] high priests, to offer sacrifice first of all for his own [personal] sins and then for those of the people, because He [met all the requirements] once for all when He brought Himself [as a sacrifice] which He offered up. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**KJV:** Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

**NLT:** He does not need to offer sacrifices every day like the other high priests. 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 sacrificed himself on the cross. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Wuest:** Who does not have daily need, even as those high priests, first for their own sins to be offering up sacrifice, then for those of the people, for this He did once for all, having offered up Himself.

**Young's Literal:** who hath no necessity daily, as the chief priests, first for his own sins to offer up sacrifice, then for those of the people; for this he did once, having offered up himself;

**WHO DOES NOT NEED DAILY LIKE THOSE HIGH PRIESTS TO OFFER UP SACRIFICES FIRST FOR HIS OWN SINS AND THEN FOR THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE: hos ouk echei (3SPAI) kath hemeran hosper (just as, even as, like) hoi archiereis proteron huper ton idion hamartion thusias anapherein (PAN) epeita (3SAAI) ton tou laou:**

- Heb 7:10; Heb 10:11; Ex 29:36-42; Nu 28:2-10
- Heb 5:3; 9:7; Leviticus 4:3-35; 9:7-24; 16:6,11
- Leviticus 4:13-16; 9:15; 16:15 )

Heb 10:11-**note** And every priest stands **daily** ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

**Who does not need** - Greek negative is absolute = Jesus does absolutely not need to offer sacrifices!

**Need** (compulsion) ([318](#))(**anagke** from **ana** = up, again, back, renewal, repetition, intensity, reversal + **agkale** = arm when bent) refers to any necessity or compulsion, outer or inner, brought on by a variety of circumstances. It can mean necessity imposed either by external conditions or by the law of duty.

**Sacrifices** ([2378](#))(**thusia** from **thuo/thyo** = to slay, sacrifice or kill a sacrificial victim; to bring a religious offering to a deity) refers literally to animal sacrifices that were slain and offered on the altar.

**Sins** ([266](#))(**hamartia**) literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later hamartia came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. Hamartia in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). It pictures the idea of missing His appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, sin is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As Martin Luther put it "Sin is essentially a departure from God."

Our Lord, was perfect and sinless and did not need to offer sacrifices for Himself, but instead, He offered Himself as the Sacrifice for our sins once for all.

**First for his own sins - Moses** received instructions for the **priests** when they sinned writing that...

If the anointed priest sins so as to bring guilt on the people, then let him offer to the LORD a bull without defect as a sin offering for the sin he has committed. 4'And he shall bring the bull to the doorway of the tent of meeting before the LORD, and he shall lay his hand on the head of the bull, and slay the bull before the LORD. 5'Then the anointed priest is to take some of the blood of the bull and bring it to the tent of meeting, 6and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil of the sanctuary. 7'The priest shall also put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense which is before the LORD in the tent of meeting; and all the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which is at the doorway of the tent of meeting. 8'And he shall remove from it all the fat of the bull of the sin offering: the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat which is on the entrails, 9and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, which is on the loins, and the lobe of the liver, which he shall

remove with the kidneys 10(just as it is removed from the ox of the sacrifice of peace offerings), and the priest is to offer them up in smoke on the altar of burnt offering. 11'But the hide of the bull and all its flesh with its head and its legs and its entrails and its refuse, 12that is, all [the rest of] the bull, he is to bring out to a clean place outside the camp where the ashes are poured out, and burn it on wood with fire; where the ashes are poured out it shall be burned. (Lev 4:3-12-**see commentary**)

The high priest did not make daily sacrifices for his sins, but when he did sacrifice on the Day of Atonement, it was necessary to offer first for himself (Read Lev 16:6-11-**see commentary**). Christ always intercedes for His people but never offers sacrifice for Himself.

**Then for the sins of the people** - Moses wrote

'Now if the whole congregation of Israel commits error, and the matter escapes the notice of the assembly, and they commit any of the things which the LORD has commanded not to be done, and they become guilty;14 when the sin which they have committed becomes known, then the assembly shall offer a bull of the herd for a sin offering, and bring it before the tent of meeting.15 'Then the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, and the bull shall be slain before the LORD.16 'Then the anointed priest is to bring some of the blood of the bull to the tent of meeting;17 and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle [it] seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil.18 'And he shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar which is before the LORD in the tent of meeting; and all the blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which is at the doorway of the tent of meeting.19 'And he shall remove all its fat from it and offer it up in smoke on the altar. 20 'He shall also do with the bull just as he did with the bull of the sin offering; thus he shall do with it. So the priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven. (Lev 4:13-20-**see commentary**)

**BECAUSE THIS HE DID ONCE FOR ALL WHEN HE OFFERED UP HIMSELF: touto gar epoiesen (3SAAI) ephapax heauton anenegkas (AAPMSN):**

- Heb 9:12,14,25,28; 10:6-12; Isaiah 53:10-12; Romans 6:10; Ephesians 2:22; Titus 2:14

#### **Related Passages:**

Titus 2:14+ (Christ) gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

**For** - Always pause to ponder this strategic **term of explanation**.

**Once for all** (2178)(**ephapax** from **epi** = upon, at + **hapax** = once, a compound of "ha-" ["="heis" in compounds] and "pax" [pegnumi = make firm, bring together] = giving hapax the fundamental meaning of numerical singularity and completeness which needs no additions) means once and for all or all at once.

**Friberg** says that ephapax is used "as a religious technical term for the uniqueness and singularity of the Christ's death and the resultant redemption once and for all (Heb 10:10)

Ephapax - 7x in NT and all but 2 refer to Jesus' finished work - Ro 6:10; Heb 7:27; 9:12; 10:10; 1Pet 3:18; Jude 1:3, 5.

Beloved, Christ does not need to be "re-sacrificed" as if such a thing could even happen. Once for all means once for all time and forever. When Christ shouted "It is finished" (Jn 19:30-**note**), He served notice that once and for all time, the price for sin and sinners was "Paid in Full!" Let us rejoice in the sure word - "**once for all!**"

**John Piper** - This is a great word (ephapax)—“once for all.” The effect it has is to make Jesus the center of history. Every work of God’s grace in history before the sacrifice of Christ looked forward to the death of Christ for its foundation. And every work of God’s grace since the sacrifice of Christ looks back to the death of Christ for its foundation. Christ is the center of the history of grace. There is no grace without him. Grace was planned from all eternity, but not without Jesus Christ at the center and his death as the foundation. Paul says in 2 Timothy 1: 9 that God’s “grace ... was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.”

**Offered up Himself** - Something no Levitical priest was ever asked to do! The Levitical priests were the shadow of which Christ is the substance (Col 2:17-**note**). Jesus, as our Great High Priest, **offered up** the sacrifice of Himself by **bringing** His body **up** to the Cross.



**Spurgeon** - Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world, and "offered up Himself" as a sacrifice for sin. The great High Priest, who officiated on the occasion of that wondrous and unique sacrifice, was Jesus Christ Himself. He offered up himself When He bowed His head, it was because He would do it, and willingly yielded up His soul, committing His spirit to the Father—not under constraint, but "he offered up himself." Oh, this makes the sacrifice of Christ so blessed and glorious! They dragged the bullocks and they drove the sheep to the altar; they bound the calves with cords, even with cords to the altar's horn. But not so was it with the Christ of God. None did compel Him to die; He laid down his life voluntarily, for He had power to lay it down, and to take it again. So far as Christ was Himself alone concerned, there was no necessity that He should die. He was infinitely glorious and blessed. "He offered up himself," but not for Himself; then, for whom did He die? For men. We are told that He took not up angels, but He took up the seed of Abraham—He took up sinful men.

**Offered (399)**(**anaphero** from **ana** = up, again, back + **phero** = bear, carry) literally means to carry, bring or bear up and so to cause to move from a lower position to a higher position. It serves as a technical term for offering sacrifices offer up (to an altar). Figuratively (as in 1Pe 2:24-**note**) **anaphero** means to take up and bear sins by imputation (act of laying the responsibility or blame for) as typified by the ancient sacrifices. Jesus our Great High Priest bore our sins as our substitutionary sacrifice, dying in our place, in order to bring about atonement for our sins. The priests in the Old Covenant could not bear our sins.

It is interesting to note that the Jewish people did not crucify criminals. They stoned them to death. But if the victim was especially evil, his dead body was hung on a tree until evening, as a mark of shame (Dt 21:23). Jesus died on a tree—a cross—and bore the curse of the Law (Gal 3:13). The force of **ana** = up, appears in the fact of the altar was in fact elevated.

**Anaphero** is used in Heb 9:28-**note** of Jesus "bearing the sins of many", to offer up a sacrifice of praise in Heb 13:15-**note**, of Abraham offering up Isaac James 2:21-**note**, of believer priests offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ in 1Pe 2:5-**note**, and lastly of Jesus Himself Who "bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness (1Pe 2:24-**note**).

**Anaphero** is used frequently in the **Septuagint (LXX)** to translate the Hebrew verb **qatar**, which means to offer up (offer up in smoke). Thus a majority of the uses of **anaphero** are in passages that refer to the Levitical sacrifices (Lev 2:16-**note**; Lev 3:5, 11, 16-**note**; Lev 4:10, 19, 26, 31-**note**, Lev 6:15-**note**, Lev 7:5, 31-**note**; Lev 8:16, 20-21, 28-**note**; Lev 9:10, 20-**note**; Lev 16:25-**note**; Lev 17:6-**note**)

**Isaiah** uses **anaphero** in a prophecy of the Suffering Servant, the Messiah

As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will **bear** (Heb = **sabal** = to bear a load; carry burdens as a slave, used in Isa 53:4; **Lxx** = **anaphero**) their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong, because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors. Yet He Himself **bore** (Hebrew = **nasa** - to lift, to take away; **Lxx** = **anaphero**) the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors." (Isa 53:11-12, cp Isa 53:4-6)

When **John the Baptist** saw "**Jesus** coming to him" he declared the fulfillment in essence of all the OT animal offerings when he declared "Behold, the **Lamb** of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29)

**Hebrews 7:28** For the **Law appoints men as high priests** who are **weak**, but the **word** of the **oath**, which came **after the Law**, appoints a **Son, made perfect forever** (**NASB: Lockman**)

**Greek:** [o nomos gar anthropous kathistesin \(3SPA\)](#) [archieis echontas \(PAPMPA\)](#) [astheneian, o logos de tes horkomias tes meta ton nomon huion eis ton aiona teteleiomēnon.](#) (**RPPMSA**)

**Amplified:** For the Law sets up men in their weakness [frail, sinful, dying human beings] as high priests, but the word of [God's] oath, which [was spoken later] after the institution of the Law, [chooses and appoints as priest One Whose appointment is complete and permanent], a Son Who has been made perfect forever. (**Amplified Bible - Lockman**)

**KJV:** For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

**NLT:** Those who were high priests under the law of Moses were limited by human weakness. But after the law was given, God appointed his Son with an oath, and his Son has been made perfect forever. (**NLT - Tyndale House**)

**Wuest:** For the law constitutes high priests men having infirmity, but the word of the oath which was since the law, constitutes One who is in character Son (a High Priest), who is perfected forevermore.

**Young's Literal:** for the law doth appoint men chief priests, having infirmity, but the word of the oath that is after the law appointeth the Son--to the age having been perfected.

**FOR THE LAW APPOINTS MEN AS HIGH PRIESTS WHO ARE WEAK: ho nomos gar anthropous kathistesin (3SPAI) archiereis echontas (PAPMPA) astheneian:**

- Heb 5:1,2; Exodus 32:21,22; Leviticus 4:3

**For** - Always pause to ponder this **term of explanation**.

**Law** (03551)(**nomos**) has the primary meaning of that which is conceived as a standard or generally recognized rule of civilized conduct. Clearly this refers to the Old Covenant and the regulations of that called for the establishment of the Levitical priesthood (e.g., **see commentary** on Leviticus 8:1-33).

**Appoints** (put in charge, made) (2525)(**kathistemi** from **katá** = down + **hístēmi** = to set or stand) means literally "to stand or set down". Most of the NT uses of **kathistemi** are figurative and refer to "setting someone down in office" or appointing or assigning a person to a position of authority. To put in charge or to appoint one to administer an office.

**High priests** (749)(**archiereus** from **arche** = first in a series, the leader or ruler, idea of rank or degree + **hierous** = priest - **hieros** is that which is determined, filled or consecrated by divine power) refers to the priest that was chief over all the other priests in Israel. This office was established by God through Moses instructions in the Pentateuch. The high priest functioned as the mediator between Jehovah and Israel (cp new order under the **New Covenant** - 1Ti 2:5) performing sacrifices and rituals like other priests, but in addition acting to expiate the sins of the nation on the annual **Day of Atonement** (See **commentary** on Lev 16:1-34)

When he officiated, the OT high priest wore an ephod (see Hebrew word for **ephod**), an elaborate vestment on which were two onyx stones, each inscribed with the names of six of the tribes of Israel. (**See consecration ceremony of the priests** in Lev 8:6-33-**see commentary**) Attached to the ephod by gold chains was a breastplate, on which were twelve more precious stones representing the twelve tribes. Therefore whenever he went into the presence of God, he carried with him all the tribes of Israel. The high priest symbolically bore the children of Israel to God on his heart (his affections) and on his shoulders (his strength). This represented what the priesthood was to be: first, a heart for the people, and secondly, the strength to bring them to God. Many of these priests no doubt had a heart for the people. But none of them was able to bring the people to God. They could not even bring themselves to Him.

**Cole on priests who are weak** - Those priests were weak (Heb 7:28) sinners, standing before God with their own sacrifices before they could represent other sinners. But Jesus didn't need a sacrifice because He was without sin. Rather, He offered Himself as the sacrifice, and that, once for all!

**Spurgeon** - Our High Priest is of such dignity that none can be compared with Him. He is the Son of the Highest, the equal of the Father. I want you to think of this truth, because it may help you to see how great must have been the merit of the sacrifice when it was God Himself who "offered up himself." He was no mere delegated or elected priest, but Christ Jesus Himself, in whom "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col 2:9)—Christ, who is the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His person. He it was who stood at the altar presenting "himself" to God as the one and only sacrifice for sin.

**Weak** (769)(**astheneia** from **a** = without + **sthénos** = strength, bodily vigor) means literally without strength or bodily vigor = want of strength = lacking strength. Literally **astheneia** refers to bodily diseases or ailments (Lk 5:15, 13:11, 12, Jn 5:5, 11:4, 28:9). Another meaning of **astheneia** is incapacity to do or experience something, an inability to produce results, a state of weakness or limitation (1Co 15:43; 2Co 11:30; 12:5, 9, 10, 13:4; Ro 8:27; Heb 4:15; 5:2; 7:28; 11:34)

**Wuest** - The law constitutes men who are constitutionally weak, morally, spiritually, physically, high priests, whereas the sworn declaration of God constitutes the Son High Priest, who is perfected forevermore.

**Richards** adds that **astheneia** "expresses powerlessness. The weak are without strength, incapacitated in some serious way. (Expository Dictionary)

**Jesus Christ**, our **omnipotent** Great High Priest has no such weakness. He carries our names on His heart and on His shoulders. But He needs no ephod or breastplate as symbols, for He has true affection and true salvation. He perfectly loves us and He can perfectly save us. **He is able**.

**BUT THE WORD OF THE OATH WHICH CAME AFTER THE LAW APPOINTS A SON MADE PERFECT FOREVER: ho logos de tes horkomias tes meta ton nomonhuion eis ton aiona teteleiomenon (RPPMSA):**

- Heb 7:21; Ps 110:4
- Heb 7:3; 1:2; 3:6; 4:14; 5:5,8
- Heb 7:21,24
- Heb 2:10; 5:9; Luke 13:32; John 19:30

**But - term of contrast**

**The word of the oath** - Which he had just written "for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, "THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, 'THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER'" (Heb 7:21-**note**) He is quoting Psalm 110:4-**note** Examining the context we see that Ps 110:1 was an oath spoken by the Father to the Son - "The LORD (The Father) says to my (David's) Lord (Christ): "Sit at My (the Father) right hand, Until I make Thine (Christ) enemies a footstool for Thy (Christ's) feet." Then in Psalm 110:4-**note** we see David notes the Father's oath to His Son - "The LORD (the Father) has sworn and will not change His mind, "Thou (the Son) art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

As **John Piper** says "The **oath** comes after the **law** and, in fact, points already in the Old Testament to the end of the Law as a ritual system....So the final High Priest is the Messiah, the Son of God, in the order of Melchizedek, not Levi or Aaron (Ed: Which would have had to be the case if the Law were still being invoked), and is installed by an **oath**, not by the **Law**, which is passing away."

**Made perfect** does not imply that Jesus was not perfect. As explained below this verb expresses the truth that something has attained its goal or is fully accomplished.

**Made perfect** (5048)(**teleioo** related to **teleios** from **telos** = an end, a purpose, an aim, a goal, consummate soundness, idea of being whole) means to accomplish or bring to an end or to the intended goal (telos). The Levitical Priesthood was like a giant sign in the Old Testament saying "*This way to Jesus.*" The Old was but a shadow of which Jesus is the substance (Col 2:17-**note**). **Teleioo** means that Jesus brought the priesthood to its end, so that it now needed nothing necessary to be complete. **Teleioo** is in the **perfect tense** which conveys the sense that Jesus' priesthood is abiding, permanent and will continue (and then the writer adds "forever!")

Notice the recurrence of the favorite idea of **perfect/perfection** (Cp. Heb 2:10; 5:9; 6:1; 7:11, 19, 28; 9:9; 10:1, 14; 11:40). The writer of Hebrews is trying to get across to those of his Jewish readers who were vacillating between the Old and the New Covenants and thus repeatedly uses the word perfect or perfection.

**Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary** has a definition of **perfect** = "Finished; complete; consummate; not defective; having all that is requisite to its nature and kind." That sentence would make an excellent summary of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ!

**Spurgeon** - If you will not accept this Christ, there will never be another; and if you will not be saved by His redemption, you will never be redeemed at all. And there is this comfort about it—that He only died once because there is no need that He should ever die again. His one death has slain death for all who trust Him. His one bearing of sin has put their sin away forever. God now can justly forgive the believing sinner; and He may well blot out the debt when it has been paid by His Son. Well may He remit the sentence against us now that His Son has stood in our place, and borne the penalty due to our sin. God is therefore just when He justifies those for whom Christ died.

**John Piper** explains how Jesus is **made perfect** and then summarizes this section -

Jesus never dies. He never has to be replaced. He has an indestructible life. He will outlive all his foes. He will be there for us long after everyone we depend on is dead. Sometimes children fret that Mommy or Daddy won't live to take care of them. And sometimes we parents fret that we won't be alive to take care of our children (especially when at age 50 we adopt a baby girl). But that is why this truth is so precious. The priesthood of Jesus—the one who prays for us, as we saw last week, and the one who is sympathetic with us, as we saw in Hebrews 4:15—this **has been perfected forever**. Not for a decade or a century or a millennium. But forever. To that we look when we think about how uncertain our lives are. The great and overarching point of this text at the end of chapter 7 and the beginning of chapter 8 is that we have a great High Priest, Jesus Christ, Who came into the world as the Son of God, lived a sinless life, offered himself as a perfect sacrifice for the sins of his people, rose to everlasting life at the right hand of the majesty of God, and there loves us and prays for us and bids us draw near to God through him. **He did not come to fit into the old system of**

**priestly sacrifices. He came to fulfill them and end them.** He is the reality; they were the shadow and the copy of the reality. When the Reality comes, the shadow passes away. **Now let me draw out some implications of this for the life of worship.** The High Priesthood of Jesus—the coming of the reality instead of the shadow—fulfills and brings to an end the physical center of Old Testament worship, the tabernacle and the temple. It fulfills and brings to an end the official priesthood. It fulfills and brings to an end the sacrificial offerings. It fulfills and brings to an end the dietary laws. It fulfills and brings to an end the priestly vestments. It fulfills and brings to an end the seasonal acts of atonement and reconciliation.

What this means, in essence, is that the entire worship life of the Old Testament has been radically refocused onto Jesus himself and has become a radically spiritual thing, as opposed to an external thing. The external is still important, but now the spiritual is so radically pervasive that virtually all of external life, not just church life, is the expression of worship. “Present your bodies as living sacrifices which is your reasonable service of worship” (Romans 12:1). That’s all the time and everywhere. “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31)—all the time, everywhere. The money that the Philippians sent to Paul he says in Php 4:18 was “a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.”

In the New Testament, all the focus is on the reality of the glory of Christ, not the shadow and copy of religious objects and forms. It is stunning how indifferent the New Testament is to such things: there is no authorization in the New Testament for worship buildings, or worship dress, or worship times, or worship music, or worship liturgy or worship size or thirty-five-minute sermons, or Advent poems or choirs or instruments or candles. In fact, the act of getting together as Christians in the New Testament to sing or pray or hear the word of God is never even called worship. I wonder if we do not distort the Biblical meaning of “worship” by using the word almost entirely for an event for which the New Testament never uses the word.

But all of this makes us very free and, perhaps, very frightened. Free to find place and time and dress and size and music and elements and objects that help us orient radically toward the supremacy of God in Christ. And frightened, perhaps, because almost every worship tradition we have is culturally shaped rather than Biblically commanded. The command is a radical connection of love and trust and obedience to Jesus Christ in all of life.

There’s a reason for this radical spirituality of worship in the New Testament. And the reason is this. The New Testament is a missionary document. The message of this book is meant to be carried to every people on earth and incarnated in every culture in the world. And that is why our High Priest came and ended tabernacle, and sacrifices and feasts and vestments and dietary laws and circumcision and priesthood. The Old Testament was mainly a come-and-see religion. The New Testament is mainly a go-and-tell religion. And to make that possible, the Son of God has not abolished worship, but made it the kind of radically spiritual engagement with God in Christ that can and must happen in every culture on the earth. Worship is not trivialized in the New Testament, but intensified, deepened, and made the radical fuel and goal of all missions.

The frightening freedom of worship in the New Testament is a missionary mandate. We must not lock this gospel treasure in any cultural straitjacket. Rather let us find the place, the time, the dress, the forms, the music that kindles and carries a passion for the supremacy of God in all things. And may our communion with the living God be so real and the Spirit of God so powerfully present that the heart of what we do becomes the joy of all the peoples we are called to reach. ([Our High Priest is the Son of God Perfect Forever](#))