

Text: Heb 7.26-28

Some years ago, we were in San Francisco for a missions conference hosted by one of our supporting churches at the time. One of the things they did for their missionaries was take them to a men's warehouse store, with an allowance to buy a new suit. I recall talking about the suit I was looking at with the owner of the store. At the time I had gotten a little too heavy and was worried that if I bought a suit that was fitting for the new me, I might expand even further.

The owner said this to me, "Comfort. It's all about comfort." He meant it was better to buy clothes that fit than clothes that were uncomfortable. I have that jacket on today... (Alas, I am approaching that same size, it seems.)

Our text today talks about our having *Such a High Priest* who is "fitting for us." He fits us completely. He is all we need. No matter what state we are in, he is perfect for us.

Such a High Priest!

We've been talking about him through all this chapter. This is our ninth message in this chapter, all of them building up in our mind the importance of the role of our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are talking about reasons to be loyal to him. F. F. Bruce has a powerful beginning to his comments on these last verses of the chapter, the summary and final reason our high priest is so fitting for us.

"The new priesthood is better because the new priest is Jesus. Jesus, who endured sore temptations on earth; Jesus, who poured out his heart in earnest prayer to God; Jesus, who learned by suffering how hard the way of obedience could be; Jesus, who interceded for his disciples that their faith might not fail when the hour of testing came; Jesus, who offered up his life to God as a sin offering on their behalf—this same Jesus is the unchanging high priest and helper of all who come to God through him."¹

Read Heb 7.26-28

Proposition: Our high priest is fit for us now and forever.

¹ F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 175–76.

I. Because of his majestic character (26)

A. The summary

1. These verses wrap up the whole argument of our high priest
2. “Such a high priest” points back to what the author said
3. But it also points forward, more emphatically, to what he is about to say

B. The high priest is always fitting for us

1. Continuous tense verb
2. High priest a slight change, he has been saying “priest” throughout (in keeping with Ps 110.4)
3. Now it is high priest

C. The five characteristics

1. Three are almost synonymous (holy, innocent, undefiled)

a. Holy

- 1) Not the usual word for holy (*hagios* – emphasizes separation, separateness)
- 2) Rather stresses blamelessness
- 3) In OT system, one who was holy in this way met all the obligations of the covenant
- 4) It is related to the word for “lovingkindness” — *hesed*, or “covenant loyalty”
- 5) The person who is holy practices *hesed* — he keeps the covenant

“In mind and conduct He perfectly fulfils the divine requirements.”²

b. Innocent

- 1) “free from evil” — “un-evil”

² Hauck, 492.

2) Not touched by evil in any way

c. Undefined

1) Root refers to “to paint in colour” hence “to spot” or “stain”

2) Related to an English word, “miasma”

Miasma = a vaporous atmosphere of contamination or corruption

Customer who grew his own garlic and ate it every day. You went to his house and the miasma of garlic infused your clothes, your hair, everything.

3) Jesus came into this world, in the miasma of corruption and sin, and left the world untouched by it: undefined

“The three terms are not descriptive of static moral qualities but of dispositions demonstrated by the incarnate Son in spite of his complete involvement in the life of common humanity.”³

2. Two qualities produced by action

a. Separated from sinners

1) The whole OT ritual of the priesthood typified separateness from sin

a) Ritual bath

b) Putting on priestly robes in holy place

c) Performing the rituals

d) Removing the robes, bathing again

Separated from sinners

2) Jesus maintained his purity throughout his incarnation

a) Laid aside his glory

b) Stayed pure from all contamination

³ Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 192.

- c) Bore the weight and guilt of sin on the cross
- d) Rose from the grave in triumph, uncontained by sin
- e) Ascended to glory

Separated from sinners forevermore

Perfect tense, past action, ongoing effect

b. Exalted above the heavens

- 1) Chapter 1 told us Jesus was seated at the right hand of God
- 2) And related that Jesus was higher than angels
- 3) He is above all in the presence of God, a once for all action (aorist tense)

All these qualities speak to who Jesus is. Now we will talk about what he did.

II. Because of his magnificent achievement (27)

A. Small interpretive complication in this verse

- 1. Daily sacrifices vs. a sacrifice for his own sins and then for the people
- 2. The second set occurred once a year on the Day of Atonement
- 3. Daily sacrifices occurred daily, but almost always officiated by lesser priests, not the high priest
- 4. Many suggestions in the commentaries! — two seem better than others
 - a. The author is conflating two aspects of the sacrificial system in one statement
 - b. Or, the daily sacrifices are also daily mirrors of the one Day of Atonement sacrifice, though the ritual is different

Sort of a “shorthand” for the high priests work on that day

B. Major point of this achievement

1. Year after year, day after day, the Levitical priests offered up sacrifices
 - a. Exodus 1446 BC, Aaron appointed by, say, 1445
 - b. Crucifixion AD 30 (approx.)
 - c. 1475 years of sacrifices, if offered every day
 - 1) 1475 Days of Atonement
 - 2) If no days missed, 1475 yrs x 365 days x 2 (morning and evening sacrifice) = 1,076,750 sacrifices
2. He sacrificed ONCE for all when he offered himself

He is fit for our high priest because of his magnificent achievement

And now for a summary statement of the whole chapter...

III. Because of his marvelous perfection (28)

A. The Law appoints weak men to the office

B. The Oath, coming after, appoints a Son

1. The Oath comes after because the Law cannot make the priest perfect at all
2. But the Son has been made perfect forever
 - a. In Heb 2.10 and 5.9, we are told of Jesus' perfection through sufferings

Heb 2.10 ¶ For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

Heb 5.9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

- b. The holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens High Priest is perfected forever

3. The Son sits at the right hand of the Father

- a. Last week we emphasized that he doesn't plead for us, he claims us
- b. This week I want to emphasize his permanent perfect place at the Father's side
- c. He never slumbers or sleeps

I had a friend in the real estate business who for a couple of years was the top realtor in town. He had a slogan on his sign that said, "I never sleep." Radio guys would call him up in the middle of the night to find out if he was awake.

- d. The thing is this: every earthly high priest for those 1475 years had to sleep every night
- e. Our high priest never sleeps, he is always ready to intercede for us

Conclusion:

Proposition: Our high priest is fit for us now and forever.

Why would anyone go back on him?

Why would anyone refuse to come to him in the first place?