

The Sacrifice of the Son Hebrews 7:18-28

There are things in life and history that we should never forget. If you are married you should never forget your anniversary, your spouse's birthday, or your children's birthdays. In the history of the United States, we should never forget the American Revolution which won our independence, the Civil War, WW II with the bombing of Pearl Harbor, D-Day and other events, and 9/11. Most importantly we should never forget who God is and what he has done for his creation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We should never forget the sacrifice of the Son on the cross as the payment for our sin.

The writer of Hebrews has reminded us that our focus needs to be on the Son, Jesus Christ, who is both completely divine and completely human. He is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of God's being and is worthy of worship. He has reminded us of the faithfulness of the Son who was sent by the Father as the builder of God's house, his people, and is the faithful eternal high priest. He has reminded us about the service of the Son as our eternal high priest who overcame every temptation and remained without sin. He is able to sympathize with our weaknesses and come to us in our time of need. He is an eternal high priest who brings eternal salvation. In our passage today, the writer of Hebrews will write about the Sacrifice of the Son. David Jeremiah says "The word *sacrifice* is the costliest word in the biblical lexicon, especially when it comes to the price God paid—allowing His Son to be sacrificed for our sins. Sacrifice means to offer up something of one's own—to relinquish ownership, to give it up for a higher purpose or calling."¹

¹ David Jeremiah, [*Turning Points with God: 365 Daily Devotions*](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2014), 304.

Raymond Brown writes that “Jesus was not only the perfect priest; he was the perfect sacrifice. In this letter Christ is priest, sacrifice, altar and even the ‘curtain’ which was rent on that first Good Friday so that everyone might have direct access to God. The Jewish priest offered the blood of bulls and goats both for himself and for his contemporaries (9:6–7). Christ *offered up himself*, not the blood of animals, and he did it all for others, not for himself. The sacrifice of Christ is unique in its permanence, its purity, its efficacy and its cost. *He did this once for all when he offered up himself*. Under the law people had to be content with the service of weak priests who, like themselves, were frail and fallible; weak, because they were merely human, imperfect, and because they were inevitably sinful. Our high priest is by contrast pure and spotless, *made perfect for ever*, that is, completely efficacious. An Italian commentator on this epistle, Teodorico, describes the closing verses of this section as ‘a hymn to the High Priest ... as though an outburst of the joy of humanity which has at last found the high priest qualified to understand its weaknesses and to come to its aid: so far above us and so near to us; himself in need of no cleansing and able to cleanse and cancel all our guilt.’”²

¹⁸The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless ¹⁹(for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

²⁰And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, ²¹but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a

² Raymond Brown, [*The Message of Hebrews: Christ above All*](#), The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 137.

priest forever.’’²² Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

²³ Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. ²⁶ Such a high priest meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.³

1. Sacrifice of the Son Provides a Better Hope

The first point I want to make from this passage is that the sacrifice of the Son provides a better hope. We need hope in this life. The biblical understanding of hope is a confident expectation. Genuine hope is not wishful thinking, but a firm assurance about things that are unseen and still in the future. David Peterson says “A better hope is introduced with the high-priestly ministry of Jesus, by which we draw near to God. The certainty of a once-for-all cleansing from sin and of the possibility of continuing in an eternal relationship with God is at the heart of this better hope.”⁴ Leon Morris writes that “The thought of what is better is

³ [*The Holy Bible: New International Version*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Heb 7:18–28.

⁴ David G. Peterson, “[Hebrews](#),” in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 1337–1338.

characteristic of Hebrews, and hope is central to the Christian way. The gospel is “better” because it enables people to “draw near to God.” It was this that the old way could not bring about, but the new way can.”⁵ Warren Wiersbe says “The writer kept in mind the temptation his readers were facing to go back into the old temple system. This is why he reminded them that Jesus Christ has accomplished what the Law could never accomplish: He brought in a better hope, and He enables us to draw near to God.”⁶ Bruce Barton emphasizes how great this better hope is for us. “And this hope *is how we draw near to God*. We can enter God’s presence because Jesus makes us righteous. With our sin completely obliterated, we can stand in God’s presence. When we draw near to God, we have a better foundation for approaching God than those who tried to approach him through the law. Our hope is in Jesus. This is a hope that Old Testament followers of God never possessed. Our “hope” is not some vague wish; rather, we can be certain of what we hope for because of the character of the one who promised it to us.”⁷ The sacrifice of the Son provides a better hope.

2. Sacrifice of the Son is a Guarantee

The second point I see in this passage is that the sacrifice of the Son is a guarantee. Jesus functions as our guarantee of our salvation. Ray Stedman reminds us that “Many items on the market today carry with them a warranty or guarantee. It constitutes the manufacturer’s

⁵ Leon Morris, [“Hebrews,”](#) in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Hebrews through Revelation*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 69.

⁶ Warren W. Wiersbe, [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#), vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 301.

⁷ Bruce B. Barton et al., [Hebrews](#), Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997), 103–104.

promise that the item sold will fulfill the buyer's expectations. Our author now sees God's oath, uttered in a fifth reference to Psalm 110:4, as the guarantee that the better hope available from the new Melchizedek will be delivered as promised. No such oath was given in establishing the Levitical priesthood. As in 6:17, where God's oath to Abraham is said "to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised," so again God's oath in Psalm 110:4 reassures believers today that God has provided a merciful, faithful, faultless, competent and sympathetic high priest. He will meet their needs for cleansing, courage, wisdom, and personal support in danger or sorrow. This "stress-management program" is fully and continuously available. Also, he *will not change his mind* about it, for, indeed, he offers no other alternative! The old covenant will no longer work and no secular or pagan solution to the problem of sin and spiritual immaturity is acceptable."⁸

Warren Wiersbe says that "As the Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ is God's great Surety. Our risen and ever-living Saviour guarantees that the terms of God's covenant will be fulfilled completely. God will not abandon His people. But our Lord not only guarantees *to us* that God will fulfill the promises. As our Representative *to God*, He perfectly meets the terms of the agreement on our behalf. We of ourselves could never meet the terms; but because we have trusted Him, He has saved us and He has guaranteed that He will keep us."⁹ Peter O'Brien writes that "The *better covenant*

⁸ Ray C. Stedman, [Hebrews](#), The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Westmont, IL: IVP Academic, 1992), Heb 7:20–28.

⁹ Warren W. Wiersbe, [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#), vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 302.

picks up the idea of the *better hope* (v. 19) and specifies the form that it will take. Jesus is the ‘surety’ or *guarantor* of the new covenant, which is parallel with the designation *mediator* of it. The word rendered ‘surety, guarantor’ is a legal term that was commonly used in Hellenistic Greek of a surety who assumed responsibility for another person’s debt if the latter could not meet it.”¹⁰ We had a debt that we could not meet, our sin. The sacrifice of the Son makes him the guarantee that our debt of sin has been paid and that he has saved us.

3. Sacrifice of the Son Saves Us Completely

The third point is that the sacrifice of the Son saves us completely. David Peterson says that “Jesus is *able to save completely those who come to God through him*. The idea of ‘approaching’, ‘drawing near’, or ‘coming’ to God is prominent in Hebrews. Fundamentally, it expresses the idea of a relationship with God. The OT priesthood and sacrificial system only imperfectly provided for such a relationship, but Jesus is able to *save completely* those who relate to God through him. The language of salvation here implies deliverance from the alternative, which is the judgment of God. In fact, Christians can look to Jesus for help at every stage in their earthly pilgrimage, *because he always lives to intercede for them*.”¹¹

Leon Morris emphasizes that “From Christ’s unchanging priesthood the author draws an important conclusion about the salvation Christ accomplishes. The verb “to save” is used absolutely, which means that Christ will save in the most comprehensive sense; he saves from all

¹⁰ Peter T. O’Brien, [*The Letter to the Hebrews*](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 271.

¹¹ David G. Peterson, [*“Hebrews,”*](#) in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 1338.

that humanity needs saving from. The expression rendered “completely” is an unusual one. Christ’s salvation is a complete deliverance no matter what the need of the sinner. The verb “is able” refers to power. Christ’s inviolable priesthood, a priesthood that can never be put away, means that he has the capacity (as others have not) of bringing a complete salvation to all who approach God through him.”¹² This is all possible because of the sacrifice of the Son. Bruce Barton reminds us that “Salvation comes through Christ, whose sacrifice brings forgiveness for sins. Being ethical, working diligently to help others, and giving to charitable causes are all commendable, but all of our good deeds cannot save us or make us right with God. Neither can religious systems or sacrifices.”¹³ Only the sacrifice of the Son can save us, and his sacrifice saves us completely.

4. Sacrifice of the Son Meets Our Needs

The next point emphasized in this passage is that the sacrifice of the Son meets our needs. We need a substitute who is holy, blameless, and pure. The Son fulfills all of those requirements. Thomas Lea writes that “three personal traits describe the ideal high priest. The first refers to personal holiness. Jesus was a perfect accomplishment of all God required. No one could find in Jesus any deficiency or failure. The second word blameless describes Christ as innocent or without guilt. Jesus had no craftiness or malice. The third word pure refers to Jesus as having no moral contamination. These three words describe Jesus as having holiness by nature and also as remaining pure in all his contacts

¹² Leon Morris, [“Hebrews,”](#) in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Hebrews through Revelation*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 71.

¹³ Bruce B. Barton et al., [Hebrews](#), Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997), 102.

with sinful human beings. Second, in relationship to human beings Jesus was set apart from sinners. Jesus was sinless, and this fact set him apart from sinful human beings. Jesus' service in the office of high priest also set him apart from other human beings. The holy High Priest can perfectly serve the needs of a sinful person to come to the holy God for salvation. Third, despite Jesus' likeness to human beings, he nevertheless stands above them, for he was exalted above the heavens."¹⁴ "In serving as our High Priest, Christ also brought with him purity. No one could uncover sin in Jesus. His own friends witnessed of him, "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth" (1 Pet. 2:22). Even his enemies remained silent when he challenged them to point out sin in his life (John 8:46). Those who found fault with Jesus accused him of associating with sinners (Mark 2:15–17). We glory in Jesus' ability to heal people who are morally sick and make them righteous. In Jesus we have a Savior who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens (Heb. 7:26)."¹⁵

Bruce Barton writes that "Not only is Jesus a suitable High Priest because he has an indestructible life, but he has certain other characteristics that show him as the High Priest who *meets our need*; that is, a High Priest who could truly save us. Jesus is *holy*, meaning that Jesus knew no sin. Jesus perfectly fulfilled all that God is and all that God required in a high priest who would bring salvation to sinful people. He is *blameless*, meaning he is without evil and is completely innocent. During his earthly life, even as he faced temptation, he

¹⁴ Thomas D. Lea, [Hebrews, James](#), vol. 10, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 137.

¹⁵ Thomas D. Lea, [Hebrews, James](#), vol. 10, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 139.

remained completely obedient to God and completely without sin. He is *pure*—that is, he remains undefiled even as he deals with sinful people in a defiled world. He is *set apart from sinners* because Jesus' sinless life separates him from sinful creation. Yet it was only through his separation by his sinlessness that he could act on our behalf. He is *exalted above the heavens*. He is greater than any other high priest because he represents people in the very throne room of God.”¹⁶ The Apostle Paul says in Colossians 1:21-22 that even though we were once enemies of God and alienated from God because of our sin, we have been reconciled to God through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ who presents us as holy in God's sight, without blemish, and free from accusation. The sacrifice of the Son meets all our needs in this present life and in eternity to present us to God.

5. Sacrifice of the Son is Finished: Once-For-All

The sacrifice of the Son is finished. Jesus is the final and complete sacrifice for our sin. It is not something that needs to be repeated. It is a once-for-all sacrifice. As Jesus said on the cross as he gave up his spirit. It is finished! The work necessary for our salvation is finished by Jesus Christ the Son through his sacrifice.

David Peterson writes that “As a faultless high priest, he sacrificed for the sins of God's people *once for all*, when he offered himself. This is a new thought, explaining exactly how he made ‘purification’ (1:3) or ‘atonement for the sins of the people’ (2:17). Note the emphasis on the *once for all* nature of his sacrifice here and in 9:12, 26, 28; 10:10. Unlike the high priests of Judaism, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. The

¹⁶ Bruce B. Barton et al., [Hebrews](#), Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997), 107–108.

perfection of his sacrifice is associated with the perfection of the victim. Jesus also meets our need as high priest because he is now set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. His heavenly exaltation means that he *always lives* to apply the benefits of his saving work to us.”¹⁷ Jesus indicated he was presenting himself to God as a sacrifice for others. Bruce Barton writes that Jesus “was completely sinless, never needing to offer a sacrifice for himself, nor did he need to repeat his sacrifice. When he sacrificed himself for sins, his perfect sacrifice obliterated the penalty of sins once for all, bringing the sacrificial system to an end. He forgave sins—past, present, and future. The Jews did not need to go back to the old system because Christ, the perfect sacrifice, had completed the work of redemption. You don’t have to look for another way to have your sins forgiven—Christ was the final sacrifice for you.”¹⁸ Just as we die and face judgment, Jesus died once-for-all for our salvation.

Thomas Lea writes “Since he was sinless, Christ did not need to offer any sacrifice for himself. He needed only to offer a single sacrifice once for all. He offered himself for sinful human beings, and he needed to offer no repetition.”¹⁹ “His permanent priesthood allowed him to give us the complete salvation we desperately need. His permanent priesthood allows him to present himself one time for the sins of his people. His single sacrifice permanently accomplishes the job of

¹⁷ David G. Peterson, [“Hebrews,”](#) in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 1338.

¹⁸ Bruce Barton et al., [Life Application New Testament Commentary](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 1032.

¹⁹ Thomas D. Lea, [Hebrews, James](#), vol. 10, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 137–138.

bringing us to God.”²⁰ In points of application he says that we can offer praise and thanksgiving to God for the greatness of the ministry which Christ has for us. Find hope in the fact that Christ is able to save us completely. Cast the burden of our failures on Christ because his sacrifice has paid for all our sins. Make no excuses for our own failures but claim strength and forgiveness from Christ to move forward in obedience.²¹

Hebrews 10:10 says “we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Hebrews 10:14 says that “by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.”

Romans 3:25-26 says “God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished. He did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”

Romans 8:3 says “For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man.” 1 Peter 3:18 says “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” 1 John 2:2 says that Jesus is “the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for the sins of the whole world.”

²⁰ Thomas D. Lea, [Hebrews, James](#), vol. 10, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 139.

²¹ Thomas D. Lea, [Hebrews, James](#), vol. 10, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 140.

Bruce Barton gives us some additional applications of this passage. We draw near to God through prayer, worship, and Bible meditation. We do not need not live like a monk, but we most likely need more prayer in our lives. We need to make worship a priority. Bible meditation may include verse memory, songs, and quiet personal reading. The Bible is the word of God for you.²² We can use the Bible every day to teach us, correct us, guide us, direct us, encourage us, inspire us, and remind us of everything God has done for us.

D.L. Moody shares a story “In Ireland, some time ago, a teacher asked a little boy if there was anything that God could not do. The little fellow said: “Yes, He cannot see my sins through the blood of Christ.”²³ We should always remember and be thankful for the sacrifice of the Son. Never forget who God is and what he has done through the willing, voluntary sacrifice of the Son.

²² Bruce B. Barton et al., [Hebrews](#), Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997), 104.

²³ D. L. Moody, [Moody's Stories: Being a Second Volume of Anecdotes, Incidents and Illustrations](#) (New York; Chicago; Toronto; London; Edinburg: Fleming H. Revell, 1899), 30.