

Hebrews 7:20-28

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 26 June 2016

Preacher: Arthur Jackson

[0 : 00] And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath. But this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him, The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever.

This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant. The former priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office. But he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever.

Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separate from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests. But this word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a son who has been made perfect forever.

[1 : 20] However, this is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Shall we pray? Jesus paid it all.

All to him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain. He washed it.

White as snow. Lord, the song says it. And we praise you for the experience of our sins being washed by the blood of Jesus.

Whom have we in heaven but you? There's no one we desire on earth besides you. Our souls love you.

We desire you. And I pray, oh God, that our desire for you would be greater than anything in this life.

[2 : 28] You know the things that war in our souls. And even this morning, the things that settle upon us as your people. You know the battles of the mind and of the heart.

And thank you, Lord, that you're acquainted with all of our ways. You said, call unto me and I will answer you. Show you mighty things that you didn't even know about.

So, Lord, may this word this morning not simply inform us, may it transform us for the glory and honor of God.

We bless you this morning. Hear our prayers, oh God. In Christ's name. Amen. For such a high priest has become us who is holy and harmless and undefiled and separate from sinners who doesn't need as the earthly priest to offer for himself sin on sacrifice for sin.

For he's done it once. I'm sorry. But the song Jesus paid it all.

[3 : 58] I remember this verse in my days of memorizing King James. And here we stand this morning with opportunity to proclaim it in its context for God's people this morning.

Humbled by it, by the opportunity to so share with God's people. Hebrews chapter 7.

Third message from that particular chapter. Two we've already covered. And so with this particular message, not only do we come to the end of a chapter, we come to the end of Hebrews, this series, for this particular season.

We'll return to it. We'll return to it without me in the fall. But God has given us capable expositors and ministers of the word.

And we praise God for them. The goal of the author in chapter 7 is really very, very simple. He wants us to see that Jesus is priest par excellence.

[5 : 35] That's his goal. He wants us to see Jesus in that vein. That French term is used to distinguish an entity, a person, as better than all others of the same kind.

That is the author's goal. It can refer to people to distinguish them by quality of the excellence of their labors, their craft, a parent, an attorney, a craftsman, par excellence.

A cook known for preparing exquisite meals can be referred to as a cook par excellence.

A physician known for her exceptional skills can be referred to as a physician par excellence.

So the writer on today presents Jesus as priest. par excellence. A priest beyond priest.

[6:53] A mediator beyond mediators. He exceeds all who had preceded him and his priestly labors were so sufficient that no one needed to follow him.

He strengthens what he has already said in the verses 1 through 19 and in a word the priesthood of Jesus he is going to say is perpetual and perfect and available for all who trust him.

Think about that. It's perpetual and it's perfect and it's available for all who trust him.

And just in case you didn't know it today you need a priest. You need a priest.

We sang a song this morning. Holy holy holy Lord God almighty.

[8:09] Huh? How is it that sinful people like you and me can approach holy God?

You need a priest in order for us to approach a God that is thrice holy.

Infinitely holy. Huh? Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that has what? Clean hands the pure heart. He's not lifted up his soul to vanity vain things. Huh?

And it is only through the one that has clean hands Christ that you and I can approach.

Holy God. So in verses 20 through 25 the writer notes the following. Jesus is a permanent priest.

That's what he wants to communicate.

[9:18] Jesus is a permanent priest. In verses 26 through 28 we know that Jesus is a perfect priest.

He's a permanent priest on the one hand. He's a perfect priest on the other. And his priesthood is perpetual and perfect and he's available.

All will put their trust in him. What about the text as it relates to Jesus permanent? Did you notice the text in verse 20 where we start?

And it was not without an oath for those who were formerly became priests were made such without an oath. As you look at the verses the stress is really on the foreverness if you will.

The perpetual nature of Christ in the role of high priest. priesthood just like Melchizedek that foreshadowed Jesus in his priestly ministry.

[10:34] Key word forever. You see it there in verse 21. But you are a priest forever. First time that we see that word forever.

As a matter of fact, turn over to chapter 1 of Hebrews and verse 8. This is the first time that we see the forever word in the book of Hebrews.

Verse 8. But of the son, he says, your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.

The reference there in chapter 1 is to his eternal and universal rule. As we turn back to chapter 7, the reference is to the permanence of his priesthood.

Verse 3 speaks of, we see the forever word, verse 17, 21, 24, 28, forever. ever. Something that does not have any in.

[11:52] Something that is perpetual, something that goes on and on and on. Check out verse 24 because this verse really is a key to understanding what we are talking about.

But he holds his priesthood, there it is, there's our word, permanently because he continues forever. So the permanence is based on an oath appointed priest. You see that? His appointment was by the oath of the Lord.

And again, the language that we see there, it emphasizes the deal is actually done. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind.

You are a priest forever. Doubly reinforced. You have the Lord, as it were, taking an oath.

[12:58] He doesn't break his oaths, but again, he reinforces it. He's sworn and he will not change his mind. Again, he reinforces it.

Then the great statement puts things into play, sets things in motion, the appointment or the art nation, if you will, of God's son as God's priest.

It's forever. This is not your BFF, folks. This is really forever, huh? And ever, and ever, huh?

We've already seen that our Lord became a priest not on the basis of legal requirement concerning his bodily descent, verse 16, but on the basis of an indestructible life.

That goes on and on and on. Huh? The result is that Jesus, verse 22, is the guarantor or the guarantee of a better covenant.

[14 : 03] who is a guarantor it's one who accepts the legal obligation for payment the person who assumes a debt accepts responsibility for something to be paid I'm probably talking to people here like myself you ever put your signature on the line of a debt that was not yours what do they call it cosign it ever get hung that's a good word for it isn't it shackled by someone else's debt Jesus is the guarantee guarantor for your sin debt and for mine Jesus paid it all all to him we owe sand it left a crimson state but he washed it another way of saying it

Jesus paid the bill folks though his death is burial resurrection ascension those who trust in him are guaranteed forgiveness and there are other benefits and the Hebrews is going to talk about them of the new covenant relationship that was ordained initiated through the blood the saving death of Jesus Christ the benefits the things that flow from his priestly work that extend to you and me as his children the nature and the specifics of the oath were such that he he would be irreplaceable he's going on forever we don't need anybody else to fill in period done he's the high priest the one the presence of God on behalf of his people a new priestly order initiated on the basis of Jesus death resurrection and ascension permanence based on an oath

God's word is solemn word that he follows through the original promise keeper if you will but notice this permanence based on an oath in verses 20 through 22 but then there's the permanence versus prevention by death look at verses 23 through 25 the former priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office but he holds the priesthood permanently there it is because he continues forever yeah wow author he's highlighting something else for the consideration of his audience and for us under the old order there were many plural priests because they were mortals like you and me and they could not continue by reason of their death they were subject to death unable to continue they die yeah but did you also notice he lives forever did you did you notice that because he lives forever he serves forever he's the irreplaceable priest and he is priest par excellence huh he holds the priesthood permanently no term limits no retirement no limitations huh no shortcomings permanently if you will verse 25 is what could be called a priest at work verse consequently he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him because he always lives to make intercession here

Jesus is on duty folks huh that's the idea here huh he serves forever huh according to chapter 8 verse 1 take a look down on your page now the point is this of what we're saying is this we have a high priest one who is seated at the right hand of God right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven there he is priest at work huh right hand of God from the heavens from heaven's throne room he exercises his priestly ministrations if you will that's what we see in verse 25 huh because he lives eternally he can save completely huh the word uttermost speaks of the quality and the completeness of what he does huh nothing lacking in the priestly service of Jesus it's complete huh it's perfect if you will he's always there present on duty to intervene appropriately for those who are being saved huh ah what a message here huh

Jesus saves the message that particular message friends comes into focus huh it's a message to him for the lost people those outside of Christ to embrace it's a message it's a message for those who belong to him to share it is a life transforming message huh did that message transform you transform me 15 year old kid huh trying to be grown huh but God got a hold of me huh many years ago my life has never been the same as if you went to a meeting one night my heart wasn't right but something got a hold to me let the church say man huh the permanence of our Lord's role comes into view in verses 20 through 25 he is forever on duty huh uh not as a uh you know something that has shelf life and it has a date on it when it expires huh not so with

[20 : 50] Jesus God has ordained his son as his priest for his people forever huh glory to God it's permanent but also if you notice in verses 26 and following it's perfect yeah the superlative excellence of Jesus is also related to his perfection he is the perfect priest huh now let's not confuse Jesus with some who bear the name of priest priest or minister or reverend today for some people the word priest is a bad word because of the things that have been associated with people who were in that particular role and not simply those of a priest of a catholic tradition there are those who have been dishonoring to the name of

Christ while even occupying roles and responsibilities associated with being an under shepherd priest is not a bad word huh earthly priests and ministers are fallible huh and some indeed have betrayed their role as servants of God taking advantage of people exploiting and abusing them and

we grieve both the losses of those who suffered under their hand as well as those who have dishonored God in that particular role let me ask you a question a point of application are you praying for your ministers are you praying for your pastors huh we'd appreciate your prayers that God would strengthen us in our role that we would be faithful under shepherds that we would honor God's name amongst God's people that we would be instruments of healing rather than instruments of harm we need your prayers huh but the snapshot of what we see in verse 26 is the snapshot of a perfect priest notice for it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest holy innocent unstained again those words concern his character who he is spotless guilty vile and helpless we spotless lamb of God was he full atonement can it be only because he is a perfect high priest huh so the language here is so poetically beautiful and it brings into view the excellencies of the one who serves as our high priest forever perfect in his qualifications for the role five qualities listed again overlap perhaps for emphasis stressing the quality of who he really is our lord sinless character is in view in the first part of the verse but his separation then is in view separated from sinners just like an earthly priest went to a certain place apart from earthly people in order to minister so Jesus ministers in the heavenly sanctuary separated apart even from those that he is ministering to and on their behalf so we see he separated his resurrection his ascension his exaltation is what are in view in the latter part of the verse so he's perfect in his qualifications on the one hand but he's perfect in his execution as we see in verse 27 his offering of himself it met the specifics of what

God required over and over unlike the priest of old who sacrifices for his sins and those of others he had no need check it out old order there was a need to offer up sacrifices for the priest sins and for others but he has no need on the one hand many of them verses one of him they die prevented by death he doesn't he continues forever they are subject to death he lives without an oath them him with an oath without sin and weakness they are compassed about with weakness weakness is stress we've seen it haven't we high priest is beset with weakness chapter 5 verses 2 and 3 notice too that the former commandment is put aside because of its weakness chapter 7 verse 18 and the law appoints men in their weakness chapter 7 verse 28 but he verse 28 the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests but the word of the oath there it is again that's what we started with that's what we're ending with which came later than the law appoints a son who has been made perfect forever he has no weaknesses doesn't share the weaknesses of those he has who ministers to but he offers himself for others what am I saying today

Jesus God's son is priest par excellence his priesthood is perpetual and perfect and available for all who trust him who needs a high priest if you and I are ever going to be right with God you need a high priest and God has provided one for us in his son for sinful man to approach holy God we need a priest what was foreshadowed in the old was perfectly fulfilled in Jesus everything needed in a mediator Jesus fulfills that I love another song to God be the glory great things he has done so loved he the world that he gave us his son and check this out who yielded his life an atonement a wrath averting sacrifice a wrath appeasing offering huh an atonement for sin and he opens the life gate that all may go in and so what do you say to that praise the

Lord praise the Lord let the earth hear his voice praise the Lord praise the Lord let the people rejoice oh listen to this come to the father how are we going to do it through Jesus the son and what we're going to do we're going to give him the!

[28 : 38] why? got some help this morning Jesus priest par excellence so why seek some other source for forgiveness why slip back into an old system as the Hebrew Christians were tempted to do to seek a right standing and again they needed firm footing going forward so he's driving home truth and particularly he's arrived he's telling them how Melchizedek foreshadowed Christ in this these ways why not come to him he's the one who says to the uttermost why not run to him and find mercy in the very presence of God oh that's why the writer again again speaks about drawing near to

God drawing near to God and he tells you how to do it through Christ through him let us therefore draw near to God oh here friends are implications for not only our salvation but our sanctification and our service for the king in the world here's basic kinds of things this is what we have received and embraced and understand and run into the world that's in need of transformation in need of this very message and this very person Christ yes I know that our city has great and grave kind of needs I know that our school system is in shambles I know that we have more crime that we want to think of I know that different neighborhoods are crumbling under the weight of inept kind of

government and various kinds of things but these things in a sense are external and needed but the thing that's needed the most is something that the transformation of the heart that comes in and through the person and the work of

Christ and as these things work through the inside out and we just don't want to stop with having received ourselves we want to carry this message forward and carry the Jesus touch into our communities that's our responsibility God anointed Jesus of Nazareth who went about doing good healing all who repressed the devil because God was with him he went he taught he preached and he touched teaching and touching in tandem part of the ministry of Jesus in the world he's mighty to save because he's available as God's high priest he's offered himself once for our sins he's available here this morning for strength he not only saves through his offering but he strengthens and helps those through his intercession several times in the book we see he's at the father's right hand and he intercedes there

God's son is God's priest for God's people his priesthood is perpetual and perfect and available for all who put your trust in him from the beginning of the book friends we've been gripped by the superlative stature of God's son the son whose greatness exceeds that of the messengers of old both men and angels whose ministry is greater than that of Moses whose rest is greater than that offered by Joshua his priesthood is greater than that of the sons of Levi and Aaron their ministrations in the old economy were shadows and types of what was fulfilled in Christ he's God's superlative son and the correct posture friends before him is one of persevering faith and trust and humility before him God's son is God's priest par excellence and so let us come boldly to him that we too may obtain mercy find grace to help in our time of need he's sufficient for our salvation sanctification and our strength to serve him in this world let me pray father thank you for this morning and this opportunity to stand before this your people and we praise you for our Lord Jesus Christ who is before the throne of God above and he ever lives to plea for us Lord Jesus we thank you for the opportunity to serve you and to worship you this morning blessed be your holy name God