

Such a High Priest

by Anton Bosch

This sermon delves into Hebrews chapter 7, emphasizing the unique priesthood of Jesus Christ who is able to save completely and eternally, contrasting the earthly priests who had weaknesses. It highlights Jesus as the perfect high priest who offered himself as a once-for-all sacrifice, unlike the continual sacrifices of the Old Testament priests. The sermon explores how Jesus, as the true tabernacle, gives believers direct access to God's presence through his broken body, symbolized in the Old Testament tabernacle's design and rituals.

Scripture: Hebrews 7:24, Hebrews 7:26, Hebrews 8:1, Hebrews 8:5

Topics: "The Unique Priesthood of Christ", "Access to God's Presence"

Description

This sermon delves into Hebrews chapter 7, emphasizing the unique priesthood of Jesus Christ who is able to save completely and eternally, contrasting the earthly priests who had weaknesses. It highlights Jesus as the perfect high priest who offered himself as a once-for-all sacrifice, unlike the continual sacrifices of the Old Testament priests. The sermon explores how Jesus, as the true tabernacle, gives believers direct access to God's presence through his broken body, symbolized in the Old Testament tabernacle's design and rituals.

Transcript

We're in Hebrews chapter 7 from verse 26, but let's read from verse 22, verse 23. Hebrews chapter 7 from verse 23 through chapter 8 verse 6. So Hebrews chapter 7 reading from verse 23. Also there were many priests because they were prevented by death from continuing, but he because he continues forever has an unchangeable priesthood.

Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For such a high priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens. It does not need daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the people's, for this he did once for all when he offered up himself.

For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of oath, the word of the oath which came after the law appoints the son who has been perfected forever. Now this is the main point of the things we are saying. We have such a high priest who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the law directed and not man.

For every high priest is appointed to both to offer both gifts and sacrifices, therefore it is necessary that this one also have something to offer. For if he were on earth he would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law. They serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle, for he said, see that you make all things according to the pattern shown you in the mountain.

But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry and as much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant which was established on better promises. So we ended up on verse 26, the first part of verse 26, for such a high priest was fitting for us. So he was the answer, he was right for our need.

We find the same idea in the book of Genesis, that God made Eve as a helpmeet for Adam, fitting for Adam. And so Jesus meets our need, our need to come into the presence of God. And he is holy, he is harmless or innocent, he is undefiled, and he is separate from sinners.

And he has become higher than the heavens. And so God has highly exalted him and given him that name which is above every other name. Now verse 27, who does not need daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and for the people's.

For this he did once for all when he offered up himself. So we've been seeing the various differences between the earthly priests and the Lord Jesus. And here is one of the other differences again.

Those priests, he said, had to make sacrifices every day. And we're going to find this idea over and over in the rest of the book of Hebrews, that they could never sit down, they could never come to a point where the work was finished, because there was always new sin that needed to be dealt with. And so there was new sacrifices that needed to be made.

Not only did they have to make sacrifices for the people, but they had to make sacrifices for themselves. So before they could officiate at the altar, they had to first cleanse themselves. They first needed to make atonement for their own sins first, before they could make sacrifices for the people.

Of course there's a very important principle here which still applies to us today. There are many who want to preach and minister and do various things. There are many who do these things, but they don't deal with their own situation first.

The high priests in those days needed to deal with their own sin first. Once they've dealt with that, then they could deal with the sins of others. You find the same idea when you fly those who have flown.

Know that you get that briefing that nobody ever listens to, and part of that briefing is that if there's a shortage of oxygen, the oxygen masks will come down and they tell you, first put the mask on yourself before you try and help somebody else. Don't try and help your kids and not help yourself first, because if you help them, you may faint in the process, and then you're of no good. So you need to fix yourself first.

Get your own mask on, then you help those who are around you. The same principle here. The priests had, but Jesus didn't need to do that.

Jesus didn't need to make a sacrifice for himself, because he was sinless. He was the perfect Lamb of God, and so he doesn't need to make his own sacrifice, and the sacrifice which he makes for sin is a once-for-all sacrifice. The sacrifices, and this is a thought which the writer is now introducing and which he is now going to expound on in subsequent, in the next three chapters, and that is that the sacrifice that

Jesus made was once for all, and it dealt with sin.

The sacrifices that the priests made—we've said this before, but this is going to come up over and over—the sacrifices that the priests made could not remove sin. They could only cover the sin for a time. How long would they have to cover the sin for? Until the perfect sacrifice came in the form of Jesus.

And so the sacrifices they made was an interim thing, and of course it could last 1,500 years, 1,400 years from Moses until the coming of the Lord Jesus. And so their sins were covered, but they were never washed away. Only the blood of Jesus could wash away sin, and so all of those who died in faith in the Old Testament died in anticipation of the final sacrifice that Jesus would make.

And so they go into Abraham's bosom. They're not able to go into the presence of God the same way as we do in the New Testament. That's a whole other story, but Jesus' sacrifice is a complete one.

For this he did once for all time. You can insert time there, because that's the point he's making. He did it once.

He doesn't need to make the sacrifice again and again. Now you remember that in chapter 6 he said that those who fall away, it's impossible to renew them again, because in order to renew them, the sacrifice that Christ has to be sacrificed again. He cannot be sacrificed again.

He made one sacrifice once and for all. It was a complete sacrifice. He cried, it is finished.

The price has been paid, and the sin of the world, the sin of all who will come to him, has been dealt with and has been paid for. And so you can see the huge contrast between those priests who, first of all, could never say, I'm done. I've finished.

I've done the work. Jesus completed the work. Their sacrifices, they had to deal with their own issues first, then they could make sacrifices for the people.

Jesus did not need to make a sacrifice for himself. Their sacrifices could only cover sin. In anticipation of the cross, Jesus' sacrifice does not cover sin.

It washes it away. And we'll see in a moment, he speaks about the fact, we may not get there that far, but further down in the passage, in chapter 8, he says that their sins and iniquities, I will remember them no more. In other words, they are not just wiped away, they are erased forever.

Now verse 28, for the law appoints as high priests. Now you remember he introduced this idea in the previous sections that the priests in the Old Testament were appointed by the law, and they had to uphold the law. The Lord Jesus has not made a high priest by the law, but he has made a high priest by the oath of God.

You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. And so the Lord makes Jesus a high priest by an oath. So the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness.

It doesn't mean that the law specifically picks out people who have weakness, but by definition, every priest and every high priest in the Old Testament had weakness because he was human. There is not one of us who does not have weakness. Notice he doesn't say weaknesses, but weakness, sin, the propensity to do the wrong thing.

That is endemic in every single one of us. And so the law then makes priests of men who have weakness. Well, you say, well, why didn't God use somebody who didn't have weakness? Well, because there was no man.

There was no one who was without sin until Jesus came. And so the law makes men who have weakness, but the word of the oath—you're a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek—the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. And so again, he's reminding us that they became priests because by the law, he becomes a priest by the word of oath, that God swore that he would be a priest, and that none of those priests in the Old Testament were appointed by an oath.

None of them were appointed personally by God except for Aaron in certain respects in the beginning, but they are appointed by the law. Now when we get to chapter 8, so now this is the main point of the things we are saying. So he's now saying of everything he has spoken about in chapter 5—and remember chapter 6 is an interlude, is in parentheses in a sense—and then chapter 7, so those two main chapters 5 and 7, the main point, everything can be summed up, he says, is this, and I think some translations use the word this is the summation or the summary of the things we are saying.

We have such a high priest. Now remember a few verses back, if we go back to verse 26, I think, for such a high priest, for such a high priest was fitting for us who is holy. Now if you go to chapter 8 and verse 1, he uses the same words.

Now this is the main point of things we are saying. We have such a high priest. He's not, while he's contrasting Jesus to the Old Testament priesthood, at the same time it's not a fair comparison.

It's not even like apples and oranges, it's like stones and oranges. They're like stones, he's like an orange, and I mean, I know it's a weak illustration. So he's not even trying to compare Jesus in that sense to them.

He's comparing now Jesus by himself. We have such a high priest. In other words, not only is he greater, but he cannot even be compared to them.

Such a high priest who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens. Now here he's introducing a thought which he will pick up again later on. Remember there's these points that he touches on, and then he amplifies them later on in the letter.

And so we have such a high priest, obviously meaning Jesus, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens. The point that he is seated is, there are two points, two things that flow from that. The first is, this is a point that he will pick up a little later, by being seated he is signifying that the work is finished, that the work is done.

In theory, if you're doing a job, you don't sit down unless you have a break, but generally you should not be sitting down until the job is finished. Once the job is finished, you can kick back and relax. The high priests stand daily, the book of Hebrews says.

We'll come to that verse later on. They stand daily. The tabernacle does not have a chair.

There is the mercy seat where God presences himself, but it's not a chair as such, it's just a slab of gold. But there is nowhere for them to sit. They have to stand all the time, and what does that mean? It means the work is never done.

There's always sacrifices that need to be made. But Jesus, he says, having made this once-for-all sacrifice, has sat down, meaning the work's done. And so he has completed the work, therefore he can rest from his labor.

Unfortunately, many people want to rest before the job has even begun. The right thing, of course, is to rest once the job is finished. And so he is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty.

So not only is he seated, signifying the work is finished, but he is seated at the right hand of the throne, the throne of God, and sharing the throne of God. And so now he's introducing the fact that Jesus is the King, that he is seated in a throne. He's not just seated in a lazy boy or any kind of chair, he is seated in the throne of God.

And so he is God, he is the King. Now remember in the previous chapter, we saw Melchizedek, who was made after Jesus. What was distinctive of Melchizedek that was unique to him that was not true of any other priest, that he was a king and a priest, the king of Salem, and he was the king of peace.

And then he was the priest of the Most High God. And so he was both a priest and a king. Remember we said that no priest in the Old Testament, no Levitical priest, no priest after Aaron ever was a king, and no king ever was a priest.

And there was that one man, Uzziah, who tried to do the work of the priest, and you remember that God judged him. And so the priests and the kings were separate, but Melchizedek was both a king and a priest, and Jesus is both a king and a priest. So he's speaking about the fact that he is a high priest, but he is seated in the throne of God.

And so he is king, and he is priest, and he is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty of God in the heavens. So now he's introducing another thought which he's going to develop, and you can begin to see how that he writes, how that he introduces a word, and then he develops that word. And if you don't read the scripture carefully, if you don't read it attentively, you'll never get these things.

But the new thought that he's introducing now is the idea of the heavens. So he is not seated in the throne of David in Jerusalem in a temple, or in a palace, but he is seated in the heavens. So now the whole picture changes from down here, where the sacrifices are made, to heaven itself.

Verse 2, a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. Now remember we have a problem with this word minister, because it's not used so much in America, but certainly in Britain and in South Africa. If they ask somebody like me, what do you do? You don't say you're a pastor, you say you're a minister.

Here you say you're a pastor. So we think of a minister as a pastor, somebody who leads a church or a, yeah, a church. But the word minister means a servant, a servant.

And so he is, and so really the translation, this is not a good translation, because it is a good translation, because the word minister does mean servant, but we don't understand that because of the way we use that word. So really a better translation would be a servant of the sanctuary. Now again, can you see the contrast? He's just told us that he is a king.

He is seated at the right hand of the majesty, but he is serving. He's a servant. Those two ideas again are conflicting.

The same way as you don't get a priest and a king outside of Jesus and Melchizedek, you don't get a servant and a king. The king is by definition not a servant. We speak in democratic countries, we speak about the government as being the servant of the people, and those who are bureaucrats are supposed to be civil servants, civil servants.

Well, we all know that doesn't work that way. They are not civil servants, they are masters of the populace. They dictate and they control, and even though you pay their salary, you say, yes sir, no sir, three bags, full sir.

But the word servant is never associated with a king. A true great statesman, and there have been great statesmen in the history of America and of other countries, have always understood that they are a servant of the people. Today that idea has been totally lost, but Jesus is both a king and he is the servant.

Now he's not the servant in the sense that he washes our feet the way he washed the feet of the disciples, but he is our servant in the sense that he serves us in intercession. So he's not just there saying, well the work is finished, and while the work is finished, while the work of atonement, of paying the price for our sin has been done, the work of saving us has not been done. We understand that concept that I have been saved, I'm being saved, I will be saved.

So there's an ongoing process. As a pastor, I know the pain and the difficulty, well the joy of leading someone to Christ. But I've also come to understand that that's only the beginning.

Now I've got to get them from here to heaven, and that's much harder sometimes than getting them saved. And so he's gotten us saved, but now he needs to keep us saved. He needs to sanctify us, he needs to get us into, and so he is continuing to do the work of saving, not in the sense of paying the price for our sin, but in the sense of interceding for us, pleading our cause before the Father.

And so he's still a servant in that sense, and he is a servant now of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle. So now he's introducing another thought, it's going to come back to the heaven bit, the sanctuary and the tabernacle. Now remember that in the Old Testament, God, and we're going to see this, he speaks about it in a few, in the next verse or the verse after, that Moses builds the tabernacle.

God shows him a pattern in the mountain. When Moses is up in the mountain for 40 days, 40 nights, one of the things that God shows him there is the pattern for the tabernacle. Now we don't know exactly what that means.

Did God show him a drawing, a blueprint, or maybe God showed him a model, but he was shown how it needed to look. And then God gives him very specific instructions, we'll see that in a moment, that he needs to build it exactly according to the pattern that he had seen, according to the model, or the plan, or the blueprint that God had shown him. In the tabernacle, you remember, there were three parts.

There was the outer court, in which was the altar of sacrifice, and then the laver, and then there was a screen, and this was open outside, there was a fence around it, made of fine linen, and with posts seated in sockets of silver, and then you got into the tabernacle itself, which was covered with, I don't remember anymore, five layers of different materials, and on the outside, badger skin or pauper skin, we don't exactly know, but leather on the outside, and then inside were two compartments, the holy place and the holiest of all. The holy place, on the left-hand side, as you came in, had the menorah, the lampstand, seven branches of the candlestick. Right in front of the veil, and we spoke about that veil recently in the book of

Luke, as Jesus died, that is the veil that was torn, but directly in front of the veil was the altar of incense, and then on the right-hand side was the table of showbread.

Then there was the veil, and beyond the veil was the holiest of all, so the outer court, the holy place, and the holiest of all, or in some translations the holy of holies, or the sanctuary. So the sanctuary does not just refer to the tabernacle as a whole, but refers specifically to the holiest of all. So he is then a minister, a servant, same way as the priests were servants in the earthly tabernacle, he is a minister of the sanctuary of the true tabernacle, which the Lord erected, and not man.

So now this introduces a whole new world. So he's saying that there's a tabernacle that man erected. Who is that man? Moses.

Now obviously Moses didn't do it on his own. The book of Exodus tells us about all the skilled craftsmen who did the gold work, and the woodwork, and the weaving, and all the various crafts and skills that were needed to build it, but men built it under Moses's direction. But now he's saying there is a sanctuary of the true tabernacle which God has erected, and he's going to expound on this in the next couple of chapters.

Now the question then is, what is that true tabernacle? There are many who say that there is a, that the tabernacle that Moses built, and remember the temple later on was built on the same pattern, the same, but much bigger, different in some respects, but the same concept with the outer court, and the holy place, and the holiest of all, with the same furniture, and so on. Now there are those who then say that this tabernacle that Moses built is a copy of a tabernacle in heaven, and that there is such a tabernacle in heaven which is reflected by the one that Moses built, and they base it on this verse. And so he is a minister of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle.

Why does he say the true tabernacle? Because the other tabernacle was a shadow or a type. We will see that in a moment. So you have the true and you have the shadow, the real and the shadow.

Remember Jesus said that the true worshippers will worship in spirit and in truth. It doesn't mean truth as opposed to lies, but it means truth as in the sense of reality, not in pictures or shadows or types, but in reality. So there is then a real tabernacle.

Does that then mean that there is a building in heaven? Well I don't believe that. There are many and who believes that there is such a tabernacle. I have all sorts of problems with that.

First of all because God is a spirit. God does not dwell in buildings, even in heaven itself. Heaven is his throne, earth is his footstool.

So the idea of God contained in a building of some sort, no matter how big and glorious it would be, I just find difficult to accept. I also find it difficult to accept the idea that the tabernacle did not just consist of the holy place, but consisted of an altar and a laver and all sorts of other bits and pieces. Is there an altar in heaven? I don't believe so.

The altar, where is the altar? The altar is at Calvary. That was the fulfillment of the altar that was in the tabernacle. Remember the tabernacle was a picture of something else.

I'm going to come to that in a moment, but the altar of sacrifice was a picture of the cross. Those animals that were killed, every animal that was killed, every blood that was, time blood was shed, it was pointing to Calvary, pointing to the ultimate and final sacrifice. So Calvary, the cross, becomes the altar.

All right, so what is that tabernacle? And I believe the answer is in John chapter 2 verses 19, and I'm going to skip over verse 20 and go to verse 21. Jesus answered and said to them, destroy this temple. Remember this was the accusation that was brought against him at his trial.

He said he's going to destroy this temple that Herod had built. Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. But he was speaking of the temple of his body.

Now what was the purpose of the tabernacle? And we can use the tabernacle and temple interchangeably. While the one was temporary, it was really a tent, it was movable, they would collapse it and they would pack it and they would carry it to the next campsite and then they would re-erect it. The temple was permanent, it was built out of stone and wood and all of those kinds of things.

But the principle is still the same. What was the purpose of the tabernacle and what was the purpose of the temple? It was to bring men into the presence of God. That was the only purpose.

It was not primarily a place to teach. Our understanding today is different. The church is not the means through which we come into the presence of God.

I know many Christians, both in traditional religions and in evangelical circles and charismatic circles, believe that this is where we come to meet with God. No, we don't meet with God here. You should be walking with God every moment of the day.

He lives within us. So why do we come together? Well, we come to worship and we come to be taught. Those are the main things.

And I know in some circles there is no teaching going on, it's all just worship. But we don't come here to meet with God. That's a wrong concept.

If this is the only place you meet with God, I don't know that you're a Christian, because God does not dwell in this building. Yes, where two or three have gathered in his name, there he is. But he dwells within our hearts.

Abide in me and I in you. That's where we meet with God. All right, but the temple and the tabernacle was there as a place to come into contact with God.

God manifested his presence. God didn't actually live there, but God manifested his presence in the holiest of all, in the form of the glory of God that descended. But now, how do we, when we first get saved, and as we continue, how do we now get into the presence of God? We said that we should be living in his presence, but how do we get into his presence? What gives us access? What gave them access in the Old Testament? The sacrifices gave them access.

And then remember that access was limited. The people could come to the outer court, the priests could go into the holy place, only the high priest could go into the sanctuary, into the holiest of all, and that once a year. So what gives us access into the presence of God? Not the church, but the broken body of the Lord Jesus.

And that was a significance to remember, that when he died, the veil was torn from top to bottom, indicating that access was now available into the very presence of God. And the book of Hebrews is going to come back to that thought later on. And so what gives us access into God's presence? Jesus' broken

body.

Later on in chapter 10, I think, he'll say to us that we have access by a new and living way through his body and through his blood. And so if the temple was that that gave them access into, brought them into God's presence, Jesus' body is the temple that now gives us access into the presence of God. So when he is then speaking, let's go back to verse 2. The ministry of the sanctuary of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

I believe that when he is saying the true tabernacle, he's meaning Jesus, because Jesus spoke of himself as that tabernacle. Now when it says true, and I'll finish on this verse, remember I said that the true is juxtaposed, it's put opposite the shadow. So when you have a man in the in the bright sunlight, there is a shadow.

That is not the true, that is the shadow. The man is the true, is the real thing. The rest is a shadow.

So what did the Old Testament tabernacle then speak of? I've said it gives us access into the presence of God, but the Old Testament tabernacle was a picture of Jesus. Every aspect of that tabernacle was a picture of Jesus. And we would have to do a whole study, and we did do that back in Burbank if I remember right, but every piece of that, every bit of furniture, every part of every of the foot of the of the the building itself, and of the coverings over the top, spoke of Jesus.

The altar, for example, I've referred to that as the place that made the sacrifice, speaking of the cross, but ultimately speaking of Jesus. Every time you came to that altar, it was pointing to Jesus. Remember that the altar was made out of bronze, overlaying wood, speaking of the judgment of God.

The rest of the tabernacle was made out of the furniture. The lampstand was solid gold, but the altar of incense, and the table of showbread, and the ark of the covenant were made out of wood, overlaid with gold. Wood is common.

Gold speaks of heaven. Jesus is both man and God. The veil itself was made out of blue, and red, and white, and purple.

Speaking red, speaking of his earthly nature. Remember Adam's name is called Adam, which means red or earth. And so Jesus, the red in that veil, speaks of his humanity.

The blue speaks of his divinity. Blue always refers to heaven. Remember they had tassels of blue at the end of their garments, to remind them to look up.

The purple is both royalty, but also a mixture of blue and red. If you mix blue and red, you get purple. So Jesus is the perfect man God, God-man, but he's also royalty.

The white speaks of his sinlessness. And so all of these things speak about the Lord Jesus. And so the earthly tabernacle was a shadow of the real.

The real is not a sanctuary in heaven as such. The real is Jesus Christ. The sanctuary in the Old Testament was the place where you can say God met with them, where the high priest entered into the presence of God.

But that wasn't really the presence of God. Jesus is the presence of God. So let me just jump to the last verse.

I'm not going to deal... find this verse. Yeah, verse 5. "...who serve the copy," speaking of the Old Testament tabernacle, "...who serve the copy and shadow of heavenly things. As Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle, he said, see that you make all things according to the pattern shown you in the mountain." And so we can look at... we'll come back to this verse, but you can look at that tabernacle.

If you changed anything, you changed the dimensions of any of the furniture, you would change a vital description of who Jesus is. If you changed any of the materials, you would change a description of who Jesus is. And so everything had to be made exactly because it represented the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so not only is Jesus the high priest who brings us into the presence of God, but he is God. And so, abide in me. So we're not trying to get into the presence of God.

He brings us into himself, and he presents us to the Father in him. And that's another huge thought. Father, we thank you for your Word, but above all we thank you for the Lord Jesus, who is this perfect high priest.

Lord, that he didn't have to make sacrifice for himself, and Lord, that he was the only one who could make one sacrifice for all time, that could deal with the greatest and the smallest of sins. Lord, that there is no sin so great that his blood cannot permanently erase and wash it away. And though we thank you, Lord, that our sins have not been covered for a season, but Lord, that our sins have been washed away through the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord, that we are not coming to an earthly sanctuary, but we're coming into your very presence. And Lord, that we are able in your presence to cry out, our Father. So Lord, I pray that you'd help us understand.

Lord, help us to grasp just a little bit of these glorious things that you have made available to us through the Lord Jesus Christ. And so Lord, we pray that not only would we understand them, but Lord, that it would generate within us a deep gratitude and worship and adoration for such a Savior who saved us and who continues to intercede for us, continues to minister to us, not just in interceding for us, but praying for us in our difficulties and in our trials. And so Lord, I pray that you'd go with us now, keep us and protect us, help us not to be forgetful.

Hear us of your word. In Jesus' name I pray.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/4mdjKYwBKxA.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/anton-bosch/such-a-high-priest/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net