

# HEBREWS: THE INFINITE SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS CHRIST

## X. The Superiority Of Christ Our High Priest To The Aaronic Priests

(Hebrews 7:23-28)

### I. Introduction

- A. We live in an era of great need for an encouraging word amid man's discouraging spiritual failure, so a word from God on the infinite supremacy and sufficiency of His Son Jesus Christ is both desirable and fitting.
- B. The Epistle of Hebrews offers it, and Hebrews 7:23-28 clarifies the superiority of Christ our High Priest Himself to the Aaronic priests, so we view the passage for our insight, application and edification:

### II. The Superiority Of Christ Our High Priest To The Aaronic Priests, Hebrews 7:23-28 ESV.

- A. In contrast to the Aaronic priests, Christ's High Priestly ministry saves completely, Hebrews 7:23-25:
  - 1. In the Aaronic priesthood, there had to be a long line of priests to serve the needs of God's people because those priests were mortal and would die because of sin. However, Christ continues forever in His sinless, resurrection life, a High Priest with an unchangeable priesthood, Hebrews 7:23-24.
  - 2. Because Christ's priesthood is unchangeable, He can bring His saving ministry as a priest to completion, to save completely, in contrast to the ministry of any Aaronic priest, Hebrews 7:25 NIV:
    - a. The Greek word rendered "to the uttermost" (*panteles*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 613) can mean either (1) "forever, for all time" or (2) "completely, fully, wholly," Ibid.
    - b. Since the author of Hebrews already stated that Christ's priesthood is unchangeable due to His endless resurrection life, to avoid making the author appear to be redundant, we hold that *panteles* here means "completely," that Christ's unchangeable priesthood equips Him to save us believers completely! (NIV)
- B. In contrast to the Aaronic priests who could not always minister, Christ always ministers, Hebrews 7:26 a,b:
  - 1. The Aaronic priests at times were unholy, guilty, stained and polluted by their relationships with other sinners, what left them at times unable to minister acceptably before God for His people.
  - 2. However, Jesus Christ is **always** holy, innocent, unstained and separate from sinners, so He is always able to be effective in His ministry in our behalf as believers, Hebrews 7:26a,b ESV.
- C. In contrast to the Aaronic priests who were limited in exaltation to this earth as mere priests, Christ is exalted above the heavens because He is enthroned as a king and priest at God the Father's right hand, Hebrews 7:26c with 1:3-4; Psalm 110:1,4.
- D. In contrast to the Aaronic high priests who needed daily to offer sacrifices first for their own sins and then for the sins of the people, Christ did this "once for all" (*ephapax*, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 799) when He offered up Himself as the sinless sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, Hebrews 7:27; 1 John 2:2:
- E. In contrast to the Aaronic high priests who were appointed to their offices in their sinful weaknesses beginning with the directives of the Mosaic Law, the Psalm 110:4 word of the divine oath that came later than that Law appointed the Son of God as an everlasting Priest, and He has been made perfect forever, Hebrews 7:28.

***Lesson:*** *Where the Aaronic priests could not completely save since they were mortal and would die before completing the ministry God's people needed, Christ is eternal in His resurrection life and can bring His saving work as High Priest to completion for God's people. Where the Aaronic priests could not always minister due to personal unholiness, guilt, stain and pollution in relationship with other sinners, Christ is always holy, innocent, unstained, separate from sinners and thus always able to be effective in His ministry. Where the Aaronic priests were limited in exaltation as mere priests, Christ is exalted above the heavens as King-Priest at the Father's right hand. Where the Aaronic priests needed to offer sacrifices daily for their own sins besides the sins of the people, Christ in offering Himself as the perfect, complete sacrifice offered Himself "once for all." Where the Aaronic priests were appointed to their offices by Moses under the Law, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was appointed by God the Father's divine oath, so Christ is perfected forever as our High Priest.*

***Application:*** *(1) Though the Roman Catholic Church (a) has many priests in an earthly priesthood like the Aaronic priesthood (b) who are sinners marked by sinful infirmity (c) and who repeatedly offer up the alleged sacrifice of Christ in the Mass (Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 55-56), Christ's TRUE High Priestly ministry presents (a) the perfect High Priest in Christ, (b) Who, without sin, (c) offered up Himself as the Perfect Sacrifice "once for all" to the complete satisfaction of God the Father. Thus, the Roman Catholic priesthood is not only erroneous, but infinitely inferior to Christ's priestly ministry! (2) May we then go to Christ "at all times, fully confident of His capacity to serve" our every need, Ibid.*