

# CHRIST IS THE PERFECT HIGH PRIEST: A COMPLETE SALVATION HEBREWS 07:25–28

## *Introduction*

Jesus Christ can save man — completely and perfectly. Jesus Christ can give man a complete and perfect salvation. How? This is the subject of this passage: *Christ the perfect High Priest — a complete salvation.*

- I. The High Priest with a perfect power (v. 25).
- II. The High Priest with a perfect life (v. 26).
- III. The High Priest with a perfect sacrifice (v. 27).
- IV. The High Priest with a perfect appointment (v. 28).

## **I. *Hebrews 07:25 Jesus, High Priest with Perfect Power***

Jesus Christ is the High Priest with a perfect power. This is one of the great verses of Scripture. Note the power of what it is proclaiming:

*Heb 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.*

Four significant things about Jesus Christ are being said.

1. Jesus Christ lives forever in the presence of God. Note how this glorious truth is proclaimed time and time again in this chapter alone.
  - => He has an “indestructible life” (v. 16).
  - => He “lives forever” (v. 24).
  - => He “has a permanent priesthood” (v. 24).
  - => He “always lives” — lives forever and ever (v. 25).
  - => He “has been made perfect forever” (v. 28).
2. Jesus Christ lives to intercede for man. This is the picture of Jesus Christ as High Priest before God. But note: it does not mean what is so often pictured — that Jesus Christ has to beg and plead with outstretched arms for God to receive man. God the Father loves man with a perfect love, which means that God will save man. But God is also just, perfectly righteous and just. Therefore, God has to judge and punish sin just as much as He has to save man. How could God do both? There was only one way:
  - => God had to send His own Son to earth to die for man. God had to give His own Son to bear the guilt and punishment of sin for man. God had to send His own Son to bear the justice and judgment of God against sin.

Therefore, in Jesus Christ we see both the perfect love and justice of God. We see God’s love in that He was willing and determined to send His Son to die for man.

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And we see God's justice in that He was willing to cast the wrath of His justice against His own Son when God took the sins of men upon Himself.

The point is this: Jesus Christ has lived upon earth as the perfect God-Man. Therefore, He stands forever before God as man's representative and man's intercessor. This is His very purpose for living before God: to intercede for man, to offer up His own sacrifice for sins in behalf of man.

3. Jesus Christ is able to save all persons completely. What does it mean to be saved completely (panteles)? It means to be saved "completely, perfectly, finally and for all time and eternity" (Amplified New Testament). It means that Jesus Christ presents us to God as perfect. He presents us in His righteousness as perfected forever. Therefore in Christ — because He intercedes for us and because He stands before God as the perfect and eternal sacrifice for our sins — we become acceptable to God. But it means much more. In outline form, when Jesus Christ saves us completely it means...
  - that He saves us from sin, death and condemnation (Jn. 5:24; Rom. 8:34).
  - that He saves us to live with God eternally (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 8:39).
  - that He saves us to be the citizens of the new heaven and earth (2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1f).
  - that He saves us to rule and reign over the universe right along with Him throughout all of eternity (Lk. 12:42-44; 22:28-29; 1 Cor. 6:2-3).
4. Jesus Christ saves only those who come to God by Him. Note: we are to come to God. We are not to curse God, deny God, neglect God, ignore God, rebel against God or reject God. We are to come to God, but we are to come to God *through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ alone can intercede for man.* Only the Son of God Himself stands before God as the perfect and eternal High Priest. Only He can save man completely. Therefore, a person must come to God through Him and Him alone.

**Rom 8:34** *Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

**1 Tim 2:5** *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

**Heb 7:25** *Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.*

**Heb 8:6** *But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.*

**Heb 9:15** *For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

**Heb 9:24** *For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.*

**Heb 12:24** *To Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*

**1 John 2:1** *My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.*

## II. **Hebrews 07:26 Jesus Christ, the Sinless High Priest**

Jesus Christ is the High Priest with a perfect life. Straightforward and without equivocation — here is the kind of High Priest we need; here is Jesus.

1. Jesus Christ is “holy” (hosios): to be set apart and separated to God; to be separated from sin and from all evil, and from immoral, wicked and lawless behaviour. Jesus Christ is perfectly and eternally set apart from sin and free from all immoral and lawless behaviour. Jesus Christ is absolutely *holy*.
2. Jesus Christ is “blameless” (akakos): not evil, free from all guile, deception, envy and malice against anyone. William Barclay says that “Jesus *never hurt any man*” (*The Letter to the Hebrews*, p. 89). We might say that Jesus Christ was so good that there was nothing but good in Him. There was nothing but the goodness and love of God in Him, and that was all that He ever shared with man. Jesus Christ is absolutely *blameless*.
3. Jesus Christ is “pure” (amiantos): unstained by sin; absolutely free from all moral impurity, uncleanness and defilement. Jesus Christ was completely free from anything that would keep Him from approaching God. He is absolutely *pure*.
4. Jesus Christ is “set apart from sinners”: that is, He is totally different from sinners. He never sinned; He never gave in to sin. He was tempted just as all men are, but He never yielded to temptation — not to a single one. Therefore, He stands apart, completely separated and different from all other men. Jesus Christ is the Perfect and Ideal Man. Jesus Christ is absolutely *set apart from sinners*.

**Isa 53:9** *He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.*

**Luke 23:41** *“We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”*

**John 8:46** *“Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?”*

**2 Cor 5:21** *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

**Heb 1:9** “You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

**Heb 7:26** Such a high priest meets our need — one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.

**1 Pet 1:19** But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

**Heb 9:14** How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

**1 Pet 2:22** “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

**1 John 3:5** But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.

5. Jesus Christ is “exalted above the heavens.” This is several things.

⇒ Jesus Christ alone was raised from the dead never to die again. Other people had been raised from the dead, but they all were to die again. But not Jesus Christ. He alone was raised never to die again.

⇒ Jesus Christ alone was taken up into heaven in bodily form. He ascended in bodily form to remain forever in the presence of God.

⇒ Jesus Christ alone was exalted to the right hand of God; He was exalted to never leave the position of sovereignty as the Supreme and Majestic Lord of the universe.

**Mark 16:19** After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.

**Acts 2:36** “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

**Acts 5:31** God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

**Heb 1:9** “You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

**1 Pet 3:22** Who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand - with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

**Eph 1:20** Which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

**Phil 2:9** Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

**Rev 5:12** In a loud voice they sang: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!”

Jesus Christ is “exalted above the heavens” in a perfect and absolute sense. He sits as the Perfect High Priest before the throne of God forever and ever.

### **III. *Hebrews 07:27 High Priest with a Perfect Sacrifice***

Jesus Christ is the High Priest with a perfect sacrifice. The High Priest among men had one major function: to make sacrifice for the sins of the people. Actually the High Priest himself did this only once a year. The regular priests made sacrifice for sins on a daily basis when people came to make confession. The one day of the year when the High Priest made sacrifice was a very special day known as the Day of Atonement. It was special because it was the day when the High Priest took the blood of the sacrificial lamb into the Most Holy Place and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. This was the only time man could enter the Most Holy Place, for it was the place where the very presence of God dwelt. Imagine being able to enter the presence of God only one day a year. And then only the High Priest himself could approach God.

The point to note is this; the High Priest was a mere man who was imperfect and sinful just like all other men. Therefore, he had to offer up a sacrifice for himself before he could ever offer sacrifice for the people. Barclay describes the scene well:

*“Now the very first item on the ritual of that day was a sacrifice for the sins of the High Priest himself. He washed his hands and his feet; he put off his gorgeous robes; he clothed himself in spotless white linen. There was brought to him a bullock which he had purchased with his own money. He laid both hands on the bullock’s head to transfer his sin to it; and thus he made confession: “Ah, Lord God, I have committed iniquity; / have transgressed; I have sinned, I and my house. O Lord, I beseech Thee, cover over the sins and transgressions which I have committed, transgressed and sinned before Thee, I and my house.” The greatest of all the Levitical sacrifices began with a sacrifice for the sin of the High Priest himself.” (The Letter to the Hebrews, p. 91).*

But note: Jesus Christ is the High Priest with the perfect sacrifice. As the former verse shows, Jesus Christ was sinless and perfect. Therefore, when He sacrificed His life for the sins of men, it was a perfect sacrifice. Being perfect, it never has to be done again. His sacrifice had to be done only once — all because He is the perfect High Priest.

**Gal 1:4** *Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.*

**Eph 5:2** *And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

**Heb 9:26** *Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.*



**Titus 2:14** *Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for him self a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.*

**1 Pet 1:18-19** *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

**1 Pet 2:24** *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

**1 Pet 3:18** *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*

**1 John 3:16** *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.*

**Rev 1:5** *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first-born from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.*

#### **IV. Hebrews 07:28 Jesus Christ, High Priest**

Jesus Christ is the High Priest with a perfect appointment. Men — mere men — are appointed to be priests by the law. The law can appoint no one else but men with infirmities and weaknesses — men who are imperfect, frail, sinful and dying. But the glorious message of this passage offers eternal hope for man. Why? Because God has given us two wonderful things: God has given His Word that He will give us a perfect and eternal High Priest to save us, and God has sworn that He will fulfil His Word. God has assured us with a double surety. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has been forever made perfect (teteleiomēnon). Jesus Christ is the perfected and eternal High Priest promised and sworn by God to save man. What greater salvation and surety could we ask than to have God send His own Son to perfect us and to give us eternal life and the glorious privilege of living forever with Him — the glorious privilege of ruling and reigning with Him throughout all of eternity.

**Heb 2:10** *In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.*

**Heb 4:15** *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.*

**Heb 5:9** *And, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.*

**Heb 7:28** *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. ■*