

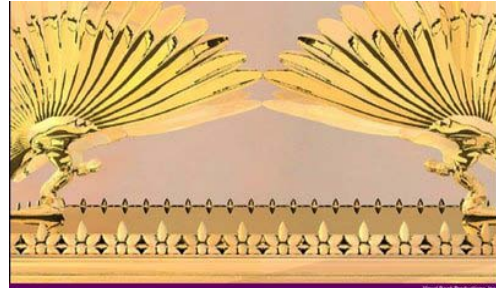
## Superior Priesthood and Promises

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### Hebrews 8:1-7

[NIV, Emphasis and interpretation added]

8:1. “The point [*sum, capstone*] of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand [*place of honor, exaltation, power*], of the throne of the Majesty [*Mighty God*] in heaven” (cf. Luke 22:69).



In all that the writer had said in chapters 5-7, he now sums it up with a statement about the chief point concerning Jesus' priesthood. The highest proof of Jesus' superiority is that he is sitting down. This role for a Jewish priest was incomprehensible. The Levitical priests never sat down. Hebrews 10:11-12 states that: “Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest [Jesus] had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God” (cf. Hebrews 1:3). The priests performed their religious duties and then got out of the holy places. There was no place for them to sit down and no need to, since their work was never finished.

The only seat that is in the Holy of Holies in heaven is the “Mercy Seat,” the very throne of God. The Levitical priests would fearfully go on into the Holy of Holies, of the earthly temple, once a year on the Day of Atonement to sprinkle the Mercy Seat with the blood and then they would get out of there. Jesus entered the true Holy of Holies in heaven and made the sacrifice of his own blood, once and for all, doing what the entire Levitical system could never accomplish. Christ finished the work, and as far as salvation is concerned, he is sitting down.

8:2. “[Jesus] who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up [*built*] by the Lord, not [*pitched*] by man.”



Since He is a superior priest who has ascended to heaven, He ministers in a superior sanctuary. He doesn't minister in a tent like the earthly Tabernacle. His temple is in heaven. He ministers in the real Holy of Holies (cf. Psalm 102:19). Hebrews 8:2 refers to the true tabernacle, as opposed the earthly tabernacle, which was a shadow or copy of the reality in heaven.

8:3. “Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one [priest, Jesus] also to have something to offer.”

John MacArthur, internationally known Bible teacher and pastor states, "There were two kinds of sacrifices. The first kind of sacrifice was the meal offering.... In the meal offering, there wasn't any bloodshed.... The other kind [of sacrifice] was the sacrifices of blood.... In the Old Testament, all of the meal offerings had to do with thanksgiving and dedication. It was not for the atonement of sin.... So we see that Jesus... is continuing to do this. For none of us... can praise God, can dedicate ourselves to God, can truly worship God or truly thank God unless we do it through... Jesus Christ.... Christ continues even now to minister gifts to God, our gifts." Christ receives our thanksgiving and our worship and brings them to his father on our behalf. On the other hand, he no longer ministers in the area of sacrifice-- that work is finished.

8:4. "If he [Jesus] were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law (the ceremonial law of the Levites).

8:5. They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven [not the real thing]. This is why Moses was warned [of God] when he was about to build the Tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern [sketch, outline, copy] shown you on the mountain [cf. Exodus 25] [also see [Tabernacle Video](#)].

8:6. But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs [the Levitical priests] as the covenant [cf. Jeremiah 31:31-34] of which he [Jesus] is mediator [arbitrator, go-between] is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

8:7. "For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another" (cf. Hebrews 9:18-26).



The sacrificial work has been done by the very Son of God who gave up his pure and sinless life as a sacrifice for our sin. This work could never have been completed by the religious works of the Levitical priesthood. Nor can it be completed by our religious works. This atoning sacrifice of Jesus continues to be an act of grace,

initiated by God toward a people that he loves. Let us rejoice and lift up our thanksgiving, praise, and worship to Jesus who continues to minister before God, presenting our gifts to the Father.

## What's Your Next Step?

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You are loved!

*Larry Roach*



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