

**NOTES FROM ASSISTANT PASTOR STEVEN DRIVER'S  
Easter Sunday 31st March 2024 pm  
TEXT: Hebrews 7 v 23-28  
Scripture references from the ESV  
Jesus - our great High Priest**

**Hebrews 7 v 23-28** The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office,<sup>24</sup> but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost<sup>[b]</sup> those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

<sup>26</sup> For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. <sup>28</sup> For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

Have you ever thought how helpful it would be if Jesus were here on earth with us now? We would be able to have an actual personal relationship with him, and chat through things. We could really experience his gentleness and approachableness. However, right now, he is on his throne – mighty and powerful but distant. We are left to wonder

**Where has the gentle compassionate approachable Jesus from the gospels gone?**

The book of Hebrews shows us that Christ, in his ascension, administers his gentleness to us in his role as our great high priest.

**Now he is more approachable than he ever was on earth!**

In the Bible, the Levitical priests were the ones who were appointed to mediate for and intercede between God's people, administering God's appointed sacrificial system to atone for the sins of the people. However, this

priesthood was only a shadow of Jesus' priesthood. Under the Levitical priesthood, sacrifices had to be continually repeated and were basically ineffective, as the law made nothing perfect.

### **Jesus is the perfect once-for-all sacrifice**

His priestly role does not end there (vv23-24). As our permanent priest, though his atoning work is completed, Jesus is still doing so much for each one of us.

1. **He is constantly interceding for our sins (v25).** Through his sacrifice, Jesus has won for us every blessing, and even now he is making sure we receive those blessings.

The Levitical priest not only offered the sacrifice, he also went into the holy place, symbolically ascending to God's throne room where he brought the prayers of the people through the sweet aroma of incense. That was all a shadow of what was to come.

Jesus was the perfect sacrifice on earth, and having risen, he then truly ascended into the actual holy place (the palace of heaven), and now intercedes in the prayers of his people all the time. He works on our behalf in the throne room, declaring that our sin has been atoned for. When we sin, and do not feel worthy to pray, praise or even to go to church, let alone come to Christ, Jesus meets us in those moments time and time again and says "Father forgive them, for the sake of my blood."

Jesus sees each individual sin. They are not all lumped together in a box so that he does not actually have to see them. He witnesses the depths of each sin, understanding the true depravity, yet he intercedes for us on account of his blood.

2. **He is constantly praying for us (v25).** It is some comfort to know that our fellow Christians are praying for us but consider this – Jesus is constantly praying for you. He lives to make intercession for us. He is asking that we be given everything we need **to the uttermost** to be saved. His prayer is

for the Father to bless us and supply us with everything we need for the journey home. It is not the case that once we have been saved, we must just hold on until we die, when everything will be put right. In asking the Father on our behalf, Christ is dispensing to us everything we need for the journey, and the Father gives it gladly.

This is why we have the Holy Spirit (**John 14:16-17**). After his ascension, Jesus asked the Father to give his people another helper, and it is through this helper that we can know the closeness of Christ with us, as we are in him and he in us.

**Jesus has uttered the name of every one of us who has been saved.**

- Take a moment to consider that. Not only has he said your name, but he is continually saying your name. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords knows you, he knows your name and he knows what you need.

**Jesus Christ, firstborn of all creation and member of the triune God has said your name.**

What he prays for us is specific to each of us who have been saved. He prays that:

- You will be sanctified, increasing in your love for him
- You will grow more into his likeness, knowing him more and more and being kept by him
- You will be drawn to his word
- You will have the strength you need for the coming week

You do not know what will happen in the next week, but Jesus does, and he is already interceding to give you what you need to keep going in him. The Father, whose desires are the same as his Son's, says yes and amen to all he asks.

When we think about the world around us, and the problems that we face, it is easy to be fearful. We can be fearful:

- of what our friends will think of us
- of looking stupid as we step out in faith
- of what is happening to our fellow Christians around the world

Yet would we still be fearful if we could hear Christ praying for us in the next room?

There is still more to understand.

In his role of High Priest, Jesus is presenting our prayers to the Father.

- He has washed away the stain of the sin of our prayer.

Our prayers are imperfect and have sin-filled motivation. Even when we pray the Lord's prayer, it is threaded through with our imperfections as we speak the words. However, the words we pray are heard and held in the hands of Jesus, and he presents them to the Father through the cleansing work of his blood. Thus, our prayers, formed by the work of the Spirit in us, are made perfect.

**When you pray, Jesus is praying with you.**

- Take a moment to consider that. He is perfecting your prayers and presenting them to the Father.

Jesus is our great High Priest who is constantly interceding and praying for us. He knows us better than we know ourselves and he wants us to come to him and know him more.

Though he is no longer on earth, we are able to chat with him and indeed we should be doing that. If you are in him, he is already intimately involved in your life. That means you can come to him even when you feel terrible about your spiritual state. You can come to him as you are, without fear of getting it wrong. With Jesus as our great High Priest, you are free to speak what is on your heart.

**Jesus knows your prayer and perfects it, praying with you.**

What an encouragement to live more boldly for Christ and to proclaim his name to all around us.

Jesus is always speaking of us to the Father  
Let us be always talking of him to those around us.