

**Title: “Who Is Praying for You Today?”**

**Text: Hebrews 7:17-28**

As Americans enter 2012 they face the question, “Which of the Presidential candidates will best represent the citizens of the United States of America?” Who will best understand and implement historic phrases of our democracy such as “liberty and justice for all?” Will “by the people and for the people” carry any weight in his decisions?”

[For the communicator I have added at the end of the message a brief paragraph by David Ramsey in which he describes the value of governmental representation to the colonists. Besides adding to insight to this message on prayer it would be helpful in messages on patriotic days and Thanksgiving Sunday.]

In the spiritual realm the writer of Hebrews addressed the issue of the representation of their needs before God Almighty. He was alarmed by the number of Hebrew Christians that were returning to the Levitical system of representation. He gave them and us four superior qualifications of Jesus to serve as the believer’s Supreme Priest.

Transition—Jesus excels on four distinctive levels when compared to the Levitical priesthood:

**1. IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF A BETTER DOCUMENT.**

The Levitical priesthood was guided by the Mosaic law and gave its support to its implementation. See Heb. 7:11. But in verse 12 that contract was inadequate demanding a different working agreement. Notice the way it is described in verses 18-19 as being weak and useless. Someone put it this way, “the former way of doing things, a system of commandments that never worked out the way it was supposed to, was set aside; the law brought nothing to maturity.” Peter put it succinctly in Acts 15:10 when he asked, “Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers, have been able to bear?” Paul underlined this in Romans 3:20. He wrote, “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.” The Levitical system could not in itself complete the task of saving people. The blood of animals was not valid per se. See Hebrews 10:4, 11. Nor could the law produce the change that enabled men to live lives of

righteousness. It was not that the law in itself was weak, but it was weak when left to the fallen will of humanity to live up to it. Romans 8:3, I Timothy 1:8-10 and Galatians 4:9. [I believe one of the best illustrations of this was given by Dr. J. Vernon Me Gee. He described the weakness of our flesh as that of a well done chunk of roast beef. If one tried to lift it from the pot with a fork it would just fall apart. To properly lift the roast one needs to use a spatula which can get under the roast and lift it up.]

But Jesus brings a new working agreement which is call the New Covenant. It is based on God's "I will," instead of "if you will." Simply put it offers His all for out nothing. It is His life in us producing acts of righteousness that please God. See II Corinthians 3:4-6 and Galatians 2:20.

Transition: Not only was Jesus operating from a new system, but He enjoyed.

2. A higher level of longevity. He was sworn in by the Everlasting Father. See Heb. 7:20.

As High Priest Jesus was not the next one in line, but He was the head of the line, v. 16-17. The Levites waited to hear the word, "Next." But Jesus heard, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased...Listen to Him." See Heb. 7: 20-21.He came from a different tribe than Levi. His heritage was from Judah, Heb. 7:20-21. The communicator would do well to retell the narrative in Genesis 44:33-14 and the intercessory pray of Judah in Gen.44:30-34. This quality established the kind of representation that would be found in Jesus. See Gen. 49:10

[Transition: With a better document and a higher anointing Jesus possessed a non tempt able nature. In theology it is called Impeccability.]

3. As a priest He would not fail.

He had no dark side in Him.

The priestly sons of Eli, the priestly sons of Samuel, the behavior of Aaron in the Golden Calf fiasco, and the high priest in office when Jesus walked on earth are a few examples of corruptible priests. All solely human priests had to offer personal sacrifices for their own

failures and sins, but not so Jesus. See Hebrews 7:27-28. Jesus could find no better sacrifice than himself. In verse 26 his incorruptibility is spelled out:

Holy—possessing piety with no hint of pollution,  
Blameless—having never harmed another by His deeds,  
Pure—stainless, without blemish so that nothing hinders him  
from drawing close to God.  
Set apart from sinners-- He is in heaven, in an environment  
where He is unhindered in carrying out His ministry.  
Exalted above the heavens—the highest being in heaven.

{Transition: Now the writer takes us to that fourth level of excellence.}

4. Jesus cannot be recalled or replaced.

Mortal priests lacked continuity for the worshippers, 7:23 As folks began to have confidence in the priests they had observed for years through many personal trials they would lose them in death. It also would take time to build confidence in the new priest.

But Jesus was indestructible. Jesus ever lives as recorded in 7:25. He is able to bring to completions...No often this verse is applied to the down and out sinner described in term of the “gutter most” but “utter most” is for all of us that Jesus will take us all the way to heaven. It is best illustrated in Luke 22:31-32. Peter will later write about it in I Peter 1:5 in which the believer is kept by the power of God.

CONCLUSION: Sometimes people are asked, “Do you know the name of your state representatives, or the names of your congressperson in the House of Representatives? Often the person responds apologetically, “No, I don’t” A more critical question would be, “Do you know your representative in Heaven, the One who is your advocate with the Heavenly Father?”

I love the song I first heard in the DTS chapel:

My faith has found a resting place,  
Not in a man-made creed;  
I trust the ever living One,  
That He for me will plead.

[As promised this might be a helpful illustration with messages that are preached around the fourth of July, Memorial Day, etc. ONE OF THE TRIGGERING FACTORS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WAS TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION. HISTORIAN DAVID

RAMESY SAID THAT THE COMMON PEOPLE OF AMERICA REASONED THAT “If a British parliament, in which we are unrepresented, and over which we have no control, can take from us any part of our property, by direct taxation, they may take as much as they please; and we have no security for any things that remains, but a forbearance on their part, less likely to be exercised in our favour, as they lighten themselves of the burdens of government, in the same proportion that they impose them on us. Deep in the heart of the colonists was the desire to have proper representation.”]