

PRAYERS OF JESUS

By Ana Watts

SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 7:23-25

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he [Jesus] holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

OBSERVATION

The former priesthood provided men to lead and make sacrifices for the sins of the people. Now that Jesus is the sacrifice and priest, we no longer need men to be our mediator, because Christ fills that role. The enduring sufficient nature of Christ's sacrifice is matched by His permanence in praying for us.

- He is able to save to the *uttermost*. The Greek word means *full-ended, entire, complete*. He will finish the work He began; because I belong to Him, He won't lose me (Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 1:12). Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection makes the way for us to have a relationship with God that will last forever.
- Those who *draw near* to God through Him... "Draw near" means *to approach, that is come near, visit, worship, assent to*. Salvation must be His way, through Christ alone.
- He *always* lives... means "*every when,*" *that is at all times...* always... evermore. He does not die as the Jewish priests did (v. 23).
- To make *intercession...* means *to confer with, to entreat*.

Intercession almost sounds like Jesus is praying to the Father for us, hoping to keep Him from punishing us, but this is not the case! After He died for our sins, He *sat down* at the Father's right hand (Hebrews 10:12). Jesus isn't asking the Father to be lenient with us; His scars have settled the issue! Our High Priest presents His perfection, beauty, and excellence in which God is satisfied completely.

Albert Barnes, an American theologian (1798-1870), wrote these stirring notes on this passage: "He constantly presents the merits of His death as a reason why we should be saved. The precise mode, however, in which He makes intercession in heaven for His people is not revealed. The general meaning is that He undertakes their cause and assists them in overcoming their foes and in their endeavors to live a holy life (1 John 2:1). He does in heaven whatever is necessary to obtain for us grace and strength; secures the aid which we need against our foes; and is the pledge or security for us that the law shall be

honored, and the justice and truth of God maintained, though we are saved. It is reasonable to presume that this is somehow by the merits of His great sacrifice, and that that is the ground on which all this grace is obtained. As that is infinite, we need not fear that it will ever be exhausted.”¹

1 John 2:1 does not mean that we need to be saved every time we sin. Jesus’ sacrifice is once for all time. If we do sin, Jesus calls attention to His perfect righteousness in our defense. He prays that though we may be faced with temptations, our faith would not be shipwrecked (Luke 22:31-32). Every prayer of Jesus is paid for with His precious blood.

OBEDIENCE

Each day as we are faced with fear or anxiety, apprehension about the future, despondency of spirit, temptation to sin, and even when experiencing ease and comfort (during which time faith may be easily wrecked), let us remember the prayers of Jesus. Read John 17, and make a list of what Jesus is praying on our behalf. Presented with such love, how can we neglect talking to Him about everything?

“The only way to Heaven is prayer; a prayer of the heart, which everyone is capable of, and not of reasonings which are the fruits of study, or exercise of the imagination, which, in filling the mind with wandering objects, rarely settle it; instead of warming the heart with love to God, they leave it cold and languishing. Let the poor come, let the ignorant and carnal come; let the children without reason or knowledge come, let the dull or hard hearts which can retain nothing come to the practice of prayer and they shall become wise.”²

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for praying for me. I desperately need Your prayers. Father, thank You for hearing my prayers. Because You incline Your ear to me, I will call on You as long as I live (Psalm 116:2). Thank You for helping me in my weakness. When I do not know what to pray, thank You for the Holy Spirit interceding for me with groanings too deep for words, according to Your will (Romans 8:26-27). Teach me to run to You quickly with, for, and in everything. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

¹ Barnes, Albert. Commentary on Hebrews 7:25. Barnes’ Notes on the Whole Bible. www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/Hebrews-7.html. 1870.

² Jeanne Marie Bouvier de la Motte Guyon, The Autobiography of Madame Guyon. 1791.