

Intercession (2)

Lesson 4

VERSES TO READ:

Heb. 7:25

Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Rom. 8:34

... It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Read Genesis 18:1-33

A Glorious Intercession

The first clear mention of intercession in the Bible is in Genesis 18, where we see that Abraham was the first intercessor.... In [this chapter] we not only have a story of intercession but a clear revelation of the basic principles of intercession.

Intercession is a great thing in the Bible. Without it God's economy cannot be accomplished. The excellent ministry of Christ today as our kingly and divine High Priest is a ministry of intercession. Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25 both tell us that Christ is interceding for us. Since this matter of intercession is so important, we must devote an entire message to it, mainly

considering the basic principles of intercession. (Life-study of Genesis, p. 677)

According to God's Revelation

The first basic principle of intercession is that it must be according to God's revelation (Gen. 18:17, 20-21). The only intercession that counts in the eyes of God is that which is according to His revelation. This means that proper intercession is not initiated by us but by God in His revelation. This is clearly portrayed in Genesis 18. Abraham did not wake up one morning concerned for Lot and then kneel down to pray to the One on the throne in heaven regarding him. No, while Abraham was sitting at his tent door to cool himself in the heat of the day, God came to him in the form of a mortal man.... Abraham did not recognize at first that it was Jehovah God who was visiting him. Eventually, Abraham realized that this One was the very God. Nevertheless, Abraham was not terrified; he was very restful, conversing with God as with an intimate friend. This conversation must have lasted for several hours.... When God and the two angels were about to leave, Abraham did not bid them good-bye but conducted them on their way, probably walking with them for a good distance. Here we see that our God is not only a loving God, but also a testing God. Although He loves us and knows everything, He often tests us. He knows our heart, the innermost part of our being, but He often says nothing. By testing He draws out what is within us.

What was God's purpose in coming to Abraham in Genesis 18? He surely did not come for a meal; neither did He come to confirm His promise regarding Sarah's giving birth to a son. God came to Abraham because He was seeking an intercessor. On His throne in heaven, God had decided to execute His judgment on the wicked city of Sodom. But God would never forget that one of His people, Lot, was in that city. Lot did not even realize that he had to be rescued from Sodom. What could God do? He had to find someone to intercede for Lot.... Without an intercessor to intercede for His people, God cannot do anything. God has His divine principles. One of them is that without intercession He cannot save anyone. The salvation of every Christian has been accomplished through intercession.

When God came to Abraham, Abraham welcomed Him, providing Him water and serving Him a good meal. Although God spoke to Abraham during the preparation and eating of the meal, He did not disclose the purpose for which He came. Only when God rose up and walked away from the tent and Abraham accompanied and conducted Him and the two angels on their way, did God tell Abraham of His intention.

As Abraham lingered in God's presence, even after the two angels had left for Sodom, remaining standing before Him (18:22), God opened up to him. God did not open to Abraham directly but in the way of implication.... Although God did not say a word about Lot, His intention in

speaking about Sodom was for Lot. These two friends talked about Lot, but neither of them mentioned his name. They spoke about him in a mysterious way, in a way of implication. Abraham knew that God's concern was for Lot, and he interceded for Lot without mentioning him by name. Nevertheless, God knew Abraham's intention as Abraham knew God's intention.

The glorious intercession which Abraham made before God in Genesis 18 was not a prayer from man on earth to God in heaven; it was a human conversation between two friends.... Intercession is an intimate talk with God according to the unveiling of His heart's desire. This is the first principle of intercession.

In order to fulfill the first basic principle of intercession—that it should be according to an intimate revelation of God's heart's desire—we need to pass through a long process. We need to be dealt with, circumcised, and terminated. Then we shall be ready for intimate fellowship with God.... When we have fellowship with God like this, we do not have the sense that we are talking to the almighty, majestic God, but to another human being. This is the meaning of intercession being according to the revelation of God. This intercession is always intimate, mysterious, and in the way of implication. (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 677-681)

Further Reading: Life-study of Genesis, msg. 51