

## Intercession (3)

### Lesson 5

#### VERSES TO READ:

Col. 1:9

Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Phil. 2:20

For I have no one like-souled who will genuinely care for what concerns you;

Phil. 2:21

For all seek their own things, not the things of Christ Jesus.

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#### For God's People and according to God's Heart

In principle, Abraham's intercession for Lot was like the intercession in the church in the New Testament. In Abraham's time, God's people on earth were composed of two families, the families of Abraham and Lot. A part of God's people, Lot's family, had drifted into the wicked city of Sodom. In like manner, some of the church people have drifted into the world. Just as Abraham interceded for that part of God's people who had drifted into Sodom, so we must intercede for the brothers and sisters

who have drifted into the world. (Life-study of Genesis, p. 682)

#### For God's People

When God revealed to Abraham what was on His heart, Abraham immediately understood what God meant. Apparently Abraham interceded for Sodom; actually he interceded for Lot.... God did not mention the name of Lot to Abraham, but Abraham understood.... They understood each other because they were intimate friends. How can we prove that Abraham was actually interceding for Lot? The proof is in Genesis 19:29: "And when God destroyed the cities of the plain, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out from the middle of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities among which Lot dwelt." We are not told that God remembered Lot but that He remembered Abraham. This verse tells us clearly that God answered Abraham's intercession by rescuing Lot from Sodom.

#### According to God's Heart

Since all proper intercession is according to the revelation which is out of God's heart, it must also be according to God's heart.... Proper intercession must always touch the heart of God.

Proper intercession must always be initiated by God's visitation on the human level. Whenever we have the deep sense that God has come to us on a human level,

we shall realize that this is the time when God will initiate an intercession for us to carry out. For this we must learn to linger in the presence of God. If He would begin to walk away, we must stay in His presence and tell Him, "Lord, I don't want to lose Your presence. I want to linger here with You." Your lingering in His presence will open up His heart and draw out His desire. We have seen that Abraham did not abruptly say good-bye to the Lord but walked with Him for a certain distance. This reveals that, in a certain sense, God is very human. If we would linger in His presence, He would be so human as not to leave us. He would remain with us because of our lingering with Him. I have experienced this many times. I did not leave God's presence and He did not leave mine. As a result of that lingering, God opened His heart to me and the proper intercession came forth.

Intercession is not merely prayer; it is an intimate conversation. In this chapter Abraham was not praying; he was talking to his intimate Friend on a human level, saying, "Will You indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Abraham seemed to be saying to God, "Is this Your way? Let me remind You that You should not do it this way. There might be fifty righteous people in the city. Will You not spare it for the fifty righteous people who might be there?" This was a conversation. Then Abraham continued, "Far be it from You to do such a thing, to put to death the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked. Far be it

from You! Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justly?” (18:25). This was a strong challenge to the Lord. Have you ever had such a challenging talk with God? Very few have ever done this. But when you have come into intimate fellowship with God on the human level and know His heart’s desire, you can challenge Him, saying, “Lord, is this Your way?” This is neither praying nor begging; it is challenging God in a very friendly conversation.... A basic principle of intercession is that intercession is a challenging talk, not a praying or a begging. God wants us to challenge Him. When

Abraham challenged God, God might have said, “I have found a man on earth who knows My heart so well that he does not pray, ask, or beg; he challenges Me. I must do what he says because I have been challenged by My dear friend. Now I am not as concerned for Lot as I am for Myself.”... This is real intercession. Abraham made six proposals to the Lord, reducing the number from fifty to ten. After that, he did not have the burden to make a seventh proposal. He might have been led by God’s presence not to do so. When God told Abraham that He would not destroy the city for the sake of ten righteous persons (18:32), Abraham was disappointed. Lot had his wife, two unmarried daughters, and some married daughters with their husbands. According to Abraham’s figuration, there must have been at least ten people in Lot’s family, if all his sons-in-law were included. Abraham was surprised and disappointed to learn

that there were not even ten righteous people in Sodom. (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 681-685)

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