

**GEN. 18:17-33 Part 2 -**

***“Gen 18:25 Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”***

Questions:

- Is real intercession a frequent part of your prayer life?
- Do you stand on His promises? His mercy? His love for all men?
- Do you ask for Him to save the wicked as well as the righteous?

**PART 2:**

Last time we saw: **Prayer always begins with God; God enlists partnership with Him in prayer to accomplish what He wants; Prayer is always based on a promise, warning or a conviction of God’s will.**

And **this leads us to the next step in prayer, that of intercession:** This is a remarkable account. It sounds as though Abraham is backing God into a corner and making Him lower the ante every time. Perhaps we would have not interceded in that way. – “Lord, destroy them; they have it coming!” **Abraham had no time for self-righteousness, smugness, or sentimental nonsense however.**

- **Abraham recognizes the mercy of God!** Notice the way he is arguing. This is so easily misunderstood. Abraham is not trying to shame God into doing the right thing by appealing to His self-respect in this reminder,
- **Abraham is basing his appeal on the knowledge of God's nature. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"** -- as a mother might shame her child into doing right. God does not need anyone to remind Him to do right, or to tell Him it would be wrong to slay the righteous with the wicked.
- **Standing on a promise of God’s faithfulness,** Abraham knows **God would never destroy the righteous with the wicked.** Now he is asking him to **go further and spare the wicked** for the sake of fifty righteous.
- **Abraham is recognizing the basis of God's mercy in every age since then.**

*Gen 18:22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD.*

- When these two angels left to go down to the city, Abraham could have said goodbye and gone back to his tent. But **it appears that Abraham did not let the Lord go. He stood yet before the Lord.** There was **something on his heart.** We see in the following dialogue the emotion, the strong passion, that is awakened in this man's heart by God's proposal.

*Gen 18:23 And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"*

*Gen 18:24 Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? –*

- **First, Abraham recognizes the mercy of God.** Notice the way he is arguing.

Gen 18:25 *Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! **Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?***"

- **Abraham is basing his appeal on the knowledge of God's nature.- *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*** He knows God would never destroy the righteous with the wicked. Now he is asking him to go further and spare the wicked for the sake of fifty righteous. **Abraham is recognizing the basis of God's mercy in every age since then.**

Gen 18:26 *So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."*

Gen 18:27 *Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, **I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord:***

- **In addition** to the recognition of God's mercy, we note Abraham's **awareness of his own status** before God. In Verse 27, Abraham answers: "*Indeed now, **I who am but dust and ashes. Lord,***
- **I haven't any right to ask this of You.** You, Lord, are wholly righteous, true, and I don't need to tell you what to do. Who am I, a man, talking to you -- but Lord, I can't help but say this thing that is on my heart. *Would you not spare the city if there are only 45 instead of 50?"* This is the **kind of language which delights God to hear and honor**, for it is the **very opposite of the pride and deceit** that makes us think we can demand of God what we want.

Gen 18:28 *Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?" So He said, "If I find there **forty-five, I will not destroy it.**"*

Gen 18:29 *And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?" So He said, "I will **not do it for the sake of forty.**"*

Gen 18:30 *Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?" So He said, "I will **not do it if I find thirty** there."*

Gen 18:31 *And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?" So He said, "I will **not destroy it for the sake of twenty.**"*

Gen 18:32 *Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will **not destroy it for the sake of ten.**"*

- Notice Abraham's consideration for **the protection of the righteous in Sodom.** Abraham continues his dialogue until he comes down to ten people and stops there.
- **Why stop at ten?** Possibly because **there were ten members in Lot's family.** Abraham knew that, and he had Lot and his family in mind all along. He thought if he could just **get the Lord to agree to save the city for ten, Lot's family would be saved** -- reasoning that, by this time, **Lot must have won at least his own family to the Lord.**
- Abraham **never asks God to spare Lot and his family, but out of compassion for the wicked**, he keeps trying to **save the whole city for the sake of Lot and his family.**
- He **appeals to God on whatever ground of mercy he can find.** The evil of this city must have often revolted Abraham, this righteous man, but he is anxious to give it every last possible chance he can.
- The **passion that speaks through true prayer is this recognition of God's mercy and an awareness of man's uncertain vision and his limited wisdom.**

- God has a deep concern for the protection of the righteous, and, simultaneously, compassion on the foolish, lustful men who inflict the hurts. God seeks the slightest opening to show His mercy.

## SUMMARY

- **Abraham recognizes the mercy of God!** Notice the way he is arguing. Abraham is not trying to shame God into doing the right thing by appealing to His self-respect in this reminder,
- **Abraham is basing his appeal on the knowledge of God's nature.** "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"
- He knows **God would never destroy the righteous with the wicked.** Now he is asking **Him to go further and spare the wicked for the sake of a few righteous.**
- **Abraham is recognizing the basis of God's mercy in every age since then.**
- **Do you claim His promises as a central part of your prayers?**

### *The Love of God – Phelps, Penrod & Gardner*

v. 1 *The love of God is greater far  
Than tongue or pen can ever tell:  
It goes beyond the highest star,  
And reaches to the lowest hell;  
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,  
God gave His Son to win:  
His erring child He reconciled,  
And pardoned from his sin.*

*Refrain:*

*Oh, love of God, how rich and pure! How  
measureless and strong!  
It shall forevermore endure— The saints' and  
angels' song.*

v. 3 *Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
And were the skies of parchment made,  
Were every stalk on earth a quill,  
And every man a scribe by trade;  
To write the love of God above  
Would drain the ocean dry;  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,  
Though stretched from sky to sky.*

Verse 3 was penciled on the wall of a narrow room in an American insane asylum by a man said to have been demented. The profound lines were discovered when they laid him in his coffin.

### *Sweet Hour of Prayer – Sandy Patti*

*Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!  
That calls me from a world of care,  
And bids me at my Father's throne  
Make all my wants and wishes known.  
In seasons of distress and grief,  
My soul has often found relief,  
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,  
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!*

### *I Need Thee Every Hour*

*I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord;  
no tender voice like thine can peace afford.*

*Refrain:*

*I need thee, O I need thee; every hour I need thee;  
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to thee.*

### *Just as I am, Without one Plea*

*Just as I am, without one plea,  
Just as I am, without one plea,  
but that thy blood was shed for me,  
and that thou bidst me come to thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

### *Turn Your Eyes on Jesus*

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace. (3X)*