

# Intercession - Part 1

by Derek Prince

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*Derek Prince emphasizes the vital role of intercession in the Christian life, illustrating its importance through biblical examples and urging believers to take on the mantle of intercessors in their communities.*

**Duration:** 27:42

**Scripture:** Exodus 32:7-14, Isaiah 53:12, Isaiah 59:12

**Topics:** "Intercessory Prayer", "Atoning Sacrifice"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses four important aspects of Jesus' sacrifice. Firstly, Jesus poured out his soul unto death by shedding every drop of his blood, as the scripture states that the soul of all flesh is in the blood. Secondly, Jesus was crucified alongside two thieves, fulfilling the prophecy of being numbered with the transgressors. Thirdly, Jesus bore the sins of many and became the sin offering for all of us. Lastly, Jesus made intercession for the transgressors from the cross, asking God to forgive them. The preacher also reflects on the concept of God's judgment falling upon America and shares a vivid picture of the devastation it would bring. The sermon concludes with a discussion on Moses' intercession for the Israelites when they worshipped a golden calf, highlighting the importance of intercessory prayer.

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## Transcript

This is tape number 4033, Derek Prince speaking on the Christian life. Message number 15 entitled, Intercession. I want to talk to you on what I believe is one of the greatest themes of the Christian life.

That is the theme of intercession. For an opening scripture I would turn to 1st Timothy chapter 2 verse 1. Where Paul says this, I exhort therefore that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men. Notice that, that comes first of all.

The prayer life of a Christian assembly or group is its first priority and its first ministry. First of all, Paul says supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks. There are various different words used there.

The word supplication essentially relates to the theme of mercy. The cry of the suppliant is mercy. It can be summed up in that one word, Lord I need mercy and I need it now.

I'm not asking for justice, I'm asking for mercy. And there also in that first verse there is the word intercession. The word that we have in English intercession comes from a Latin root which means to come in between.

The intercessor is one who comes in between. In between whom? The answer is in between God and those who deserve the just wrath and punishment of God. The intercessor is one who steps in between.

He lifts up his hand to Almighty God and he says, God these people deserve your judgment. You have every right to smite them. But if you smite them, you'll have to smite me first.

Because I'm standing in between you and them. Intercession was one of the great marks of the ministry of Jesus. And indeed in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, we have that well-known and glorious description of his atoning work.

I suppose Isaiah chapter 53 is essentially the atonement chapter. And the closing verse reads like this. Having described how Jesus came to the cross as the sin offering.

And took his place there. The final verse says, therefore will I divide him a portion with the great. And he shall divide the spoil with the strong.

Because he hath poured out his soul unto death. And he was numbered with the transgressors. And he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

You'll notice that there are four things recorded there of Jesus. He hath poured out his soul unto death. The scripture says Leviticus 17 11, the soul of all flesh is in the blood.

Jesus poured out his soul unto death. When he poured out every drop of his blood. He was numbered with the transgressors.

He was crucified with the two thieves. He bare the sin of many. He became the sin offering for us all.

And he made intercession for the transgressors. He made intercession from the cross. He said father forgive them for they know not what they do.

The judgment that is due to them let it come upon me and it did. And then in Hebrews the seventh chapter. We read about Jesus after death, resurrection and ascension.

As our high priest at God's right hand. And it says there in Hebrews chapter 7 and verse 24. That this man Jesus Christ, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

One that never passes from him. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the utmost that come unto God by him. Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

If you study the life and ministry of Jesus. You arrive at some rather interesting time comparison. He spent 30 years in obscurity, in perfect family life.

Three and a half years in dramatic powerful ministry. And nearly 2,000 years in intercession. That's what he's been doing since he ascended.

He ever liveth to make intercession for us. If we turn again to Isaiah the 59th chapter. We find a terrible list of the sins of God's backslidden people.

And bear in mind that the 59th chapter of Isaiah is written to backsliders. To people who've known God and turned from him. To people who are religious but in rebellion against God.

And the list is a terrible one, I cannot go into it all. But I'll just begin in the twelfth verse of this list. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee.

And our sins testify against us. For our transgressions are with us. And as for our iniquities, we know them.

In transgressing and lying against the Lord. And departing away from our God. Speaking oppression and revolt.

Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backwards. And justice standeth afar off.

For truth is fallen in the street and equity cannot enter. Yea truth failing. And he that departed from evil maketh himself a prey.

And the Lord saw it and it displeased him that there was no judgment. And he saw that there was no man. And wondered that there was no intercessor.

Gradually I believe the Lord has been showing me. That this fearful list of the failings of God's people. The religious people, comes to its climax.

With that statement, there was no intercessor. And I believe that when there is no intercessor to be found amongst God's people. That is the supreme mark of our failure.

In our responsibility to God and to man. And I wonder, as God looks across this large congregation this morning. How he feels about you.

I wonder whether he wonders that there is no man. And that there's no intercessor. In a congregation this size, I'll guarantee you we have many critics.

But I wonder whether there's an intercessor. As a Christian, God didn't call you to criticize. But he has placed upon you a responsibility to intercede.

The people who fail in intercession are usually the most critical. I want to speak to you now about what it means to intercede. What is involved.

And I want to take some patterns from the great saints of the Bible. And I believe the greatest saints were often the greatest intercessor. The men that were closest to the heart of God.

I want to begin with Abraham. Turn with me if you will, or follow with me as I read in Genesis chapter 18. Genesis the 18th chapter.

In this scene, the Lord with two angels comes to visit the tent of Abraham. And Abraham entertains the Lord and the angels. He kills the calf, he feeds them.

It's a very remarkable, wonderful picture. The Lord and his two angels, enjoying the hospitality of Abraham's home. And then at the end, the scene comes to this climax.

The Lord said in a in Genesis 18 verse 17. Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do. Seeing Abraham is my close personal friend, shall I not share my plans and thoughts with him.

And in Amos 3.3 it says, the Lord God will do nothing but he make of known his secrets to his servants the prophets. I'd like to offer you this thought, that if God is willing to share his secrets with you. You better know how to keep them.

Because if God shares his secrets and you spread them abroad. He won't share the next one with you. And then the Lord unfolds to Abraham his purpose.

And he begins here in verse 20 in Genesis 18 20. The Lord said because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great. And because their sin is very grievous.

I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it. Which is come unto me and if not I will know. God is very, very just.

He doesn't accept here's the evidence. He says I've had a lot of bad reports from Sodom and Gomorrah. But I'm not going merely by what I hear.

I'm going to go down and inspect the situation for myself. And then I'll take appropriate action. Now Abraham was very much concerned about Sodom and Gomorrah.

Because his nephew, who was in a certain sense in a backslidden condition, Lot. Was living there in Sodom. And Abraham knew that if judgment came upon Sodom.

Lot and his family would be part of that judgment. So there follows a very fascinating discussion between the Lord and Abraham. And it says the men, that's the two angels, turned their faces from thence and went towards Sodom.

But Abraham stood yet before the Lord. Now that's the position of the intercessor. Abraham stood in front of the Lord and said Lord hold on a moment.

Don't go just yet, I've got something to say to you. In a sense he held the Lord back, that's intercession. And Abraham drew near and said will thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked.

Peradventure there be 50 righteous within the city. Will thou also destroy and not spare the place for the 50 righteous that are therein. That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked.

And that the righteous should be as the wicked. That be far from thee, shall not the judge of all the earth do right. I would say it takes some courage to talk to the Lord like that.

And I marvel at Abraham's intense conviction that God had to be absolutely just. And I believe there's a very important lesson for us. Abraham states the principle, and by implication the Lord accepts it.

That it would be totally unjust for God ever to deal with the righteous, as he deals with the wicked. That if God ever brings judgment upon the wicked. It would be totally out of keeping with his character.

And contrary to his justice, to let that judgment fall upon the righteous. I wonder whether you believe that. You better make your mind up, because it affects you.

In Psalm 91 it says to the believer, a thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand. But it shall not come near thee, only with thine eyes shall they behold and see the reward of the wicked.

Believe me, whatever comes as the reward of wickedness.

Whatever is God's judgment upon wickedness, it must not touch the righteous. He can be right in the midst of it, a thousand can fall at his side, ten thousand at his right hand. But God's justice is pledged that his judgment shall not fall upon the righteous.

How much we need to understand this. You know the trouble with most Christians. They don't know whether they're righteous or not.

That's the truth. If I've been justified by faith in Jesus Christ. I've been made righteous with his righteousness.

And if I know that, stand on it and live according to it. No judgment due to the wicked should ever touch me. Now let's add one thing, I will be persecuted for righteousness sake.

The Bible says everyone that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But let's notice there's a vital basic difference. Between persecution for righteousness sake and judgment for wickedness.

Persecution for righteousness comes upon the righteous from the wicked. Judgment for wickedness comes up from God who is righteous upon the wicked. Now we all are called to endure persecution.

None of us who are believers should ever endure God's judgment upon the wicked. I believe if you really understand that you'll heave a sigh of relief. But as I say the majority of Christians really don't know where they stand.

In Luke 21 Jesus spoke about the clothes of this age. And right at the end of his message speaking to his disciples. He said watch and pray always that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things that shall come upon the earth.

And to stand before the Son of Man. He indicated that it was the will of God for his disciples to escape the judgments of God that were coming upon the wicked earth. And that's in line with the whole teaching of Scripture.

But he said you better be watching and praying. Because if you're not watching and praying you won't qualify to escape. And then he said watch and pray that ye may be counted worthy.

Notice that. Were you worthy to be saved ? No, you were saved by grace. You didn't merit it, you couldn't deserve it.

But when you have been saved you are required to lead such a life of righteousness. That it would be unrighteous of God to judge you with the wicked. That's the Christian life.

We need a very sharp distinction between the righteous and the wicked. At the end of this age, don't let the lines get blurred, because you might be on the wrong side. Jesus said in the 22nd chapter of Revelation, that the time is at hand.

He that is unrighteous, let him be still more unrighteous. He that is filthy, let him be still more filthy. He that is righteous, let him be still more righteous.

And he that is holy, let him be still more holy. There's a wider and wider gulf coming between the righteous and the unrighteous. The filthy and the holy.

The unrighteous and the filthy are going to get worse. But the righteous and the holy are going to get better. You better know which company you're in.

I deplore the teaching which gives Christians a fatalistic, passive attitude towards world affairs. Don't you know brother Prince, that everything is getting worse. No I don't.

And if you find that in the Bible, show me. I have never found it there. It says, wicked men and seducers shall wax worse and worse.

If I'm not a wicked man or a seducer, that doesn't apply to me. You know what I believe. I believe some things are getting worse and worse.

And some things are getting better and better. And I want to tell you I'm amongst the things that are getting better and better. All right we'll go back to Abraham now.

Abraham said Lord if there were 50 righteous in that city, would you spare the city. The Lord said yes. Abraham said what about 45.

God said all right 45. This is the Prince paraphrased version. So Abraham took a deep breath he said Lord how about if there were only 40.

The Lord said all right 40. Abraham took a deeper breath still he said Lord how about 30. The Lord said all right I'll spare it for 30.

Abraham said Lord how about if there were only 20. The Lord said I'll spare it for 20. And the Lord Abraham said Lord just once more and I'll shut up.

Suppose there were only 10 righteous persons in that whole city. Would you spare it for the sake of 10. The Lord said I'll spare it for the sake of 10 righteous persons.

That is a tremendous revelation. I've tried to ascertain approximately the population of Sodom in the days of Abraham. Without going into the reasoning.

I have come to believe that Sodom was a major city. And that its population could not have been less than 10,000 persons. And God said for the sake of 10 righteous persons.

I'll spare a city of 10,000 who are wicked. Now you don't have to be a mathematician to arrive at the proportions. It's one in a thousand.

That's a very interesting proportion. Without going into too much detail. It recurs in Job 33 23.

It says if there be with him an interpreter. One among a thousand that can show unto man his righteousness. So the interpreter is one in a thousand.

And then again in Ecclesiastes 7 28 Solomon says searching amongst men. I have found one in a thousand. It seems to be the proportion that indicates a man of outstanding righteousness.

God says if I can find 10 outstandingly righteous persons in Sodom. I'll spare 10,000 for their sake. One for a thousand.

I like to apply this to modern America. Population of America today is somewhere around 210 million. You take that proportion.

It would require 210,000 righteous persons. To obtain mercy for America. Do you believe there are 210,000 persons in America that qualify ? Are you one of them ? It's a very, very practical question.

Not abstract, not theology. It concerns life and death. I hear people that speak about God's judgment falling upon America.

And let me say America merits God's judgment, there's no doubt about that. But when I hear people talk, in an almost offhand way, about the judgment of God falling upon America. I wonder whether they know what they're talking about.

Because to me it's a horrible picture. I picture devastated cities, parents and children separated. Hunger and disease stalking the land.

Little children with their bellies distended with hunger, crying for parents who were dead. I've seen a little of these things. I've been in two wars.

I've lived in countries where famine is a reality. I believe that any man who had a message from God, would deliver it with tears. Jeremiah predicted fearful disasters that came on his people.

But he was known as the weeping prophet. And when the people of Jesus' time were asked, who they thought he might be. The one prophet that they thought he might be, was Jeremiah.

Because I believe Jeremiah was a young man. And he was a man of deep compassion and concern for the sins of his people. And when people talk emptily about judgment, without compassion and without concern.

I really question whether they've got their message from God. I'm not belittling or minimizing the possibility of God's judgment. In fact, it's because I'm so concerned about it, that I'm preaching about it.

I'd like to take another picture of an intercessor and that's Moses. In the book of Exodus, the 32nd chapter, we see here a tremendous picture. Moses had gone up Mount Sinai to commune with God and receive from him the covenant.

He'd been gone something like 40 days. And Israel said, Moses is gone. As for this man Moses, which brought us out of Egypt, they said we don't know what's become of him.

We need a God. Come on Aaron, make us a God. So Aaron took all their golden earrings, melted them together and made a molten calf.

And then Israel started to dance around it and worship it. Moses was up the top of the mountain with the Lord. And the Lord interrupted their conversation and said, Moses you ought to know what's going down on, going on down at the foot of the mountain.

And there follows a conversation which is so intimate, that it is in a sense amusing. Every time I read it, it causes me to smile. Neither God nor Moses would accept responsibility for Israel.

Each of them pushed the responsibility back onto the other. You'll read it here in the King James, I may just change a few words. Exodus 32 verse 7, the Lord said unto Moses, go get thee down, for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves.

They have turned aside quickly out of the way. They have made them a molten calf and have worshipped it. I'm not reading it everything, but just the outline.

Verse 9, the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff neck to people. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them. And that I may consume them.

And I will make of thee a great nation. I want you to notice that God saw, that he couldn't do it, unless Moses would let him alone. And he said Moses get out of my way, and let me deal with these people.

And he said what's more, I'll redeem my promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I promised to make of them a great nation out of their descendants, but I'll do it out of you. Wouldn't that appeal to your ego.

Blot out the people, after all they've been nothing but a burden on me, since I got them out of Egypt. And start again with me God, and I'll be the great ancestor of this people. Moses didn't react that way.

Verse 11, Moses besought the Lord his God and said Lord.

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