

Prevailing Intercession

by Henry Law

The sermon emphasizes the vital role of Jesus' intercession for believers, illustrating its power and necessity in the Christian faith.

Scripture: Exodus 17:11, Psalm 16:11, John 14:16, John 17:24, Romans 8:34, Ephesians 2:18, 1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 4:16, Hebrews 7:25, 1 John 2:1

Topics: "Intercessory Prayer", "Christ's Mediation"

Description

Henry Law preaches on the powerful lesson from Exodus 17:11, where Moses' intercession with uplifted hands brought victory to the Israelites. He draws parallels to the ongoing spiritual battle believers face against unseen enemies like the race of Cain, Ishmael, and Esau, emphasizing the need to stand firm in faith and prayer. Law highlights the significance of Jesus' continuous intercession for believers at the right hand of God, showcasing His unwavering love and commitment to securing blessings and protection for His people. He delves into the depth of Christ's intercession, revealing how it brings forgiveness, preservation, the gift of the Holy Spirit, acceptance of prayers, and the ultimate promise of eternal presence with Him.

Transcript

"As long as Moses held up the staff with his hands, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites gained the upper hand." Exodus 17:11

Alarms soon trouble the advancing host. Amalek attacks their rear. Esau's tribe has evil will against the house of Jacob. The birthright sold, the blessing lost, had deeply laid the seeds of malice. And now occasion ripens hatred into fierce assault. Believer, the race of Cain, of Ishmael, of Esau still lives. Be ready. Their hate is sure. Their wily steps are near. When least expected, they will plot their worst. How shall such foes be met? He who follows Christ must neither flee nor yield nor fear. He must stand fast in faith, and he must kneel in prayer. So Moses teaches. He commands Joshua, 'Choose some men, and go out, fight.' Heaven's crown sits only on a warrior's brow.

But carnal weapons are impotent alone. In fighting, by not fighting, we prevail. So when Joshua struggles in the plain, Moses wrestles on the hill. He seeks the summit, bearing the rod. Prayer brings all heaven to the aid. Thus Israel's hands are strong or weak as those of Moses rise or drop. Large Gospel lessons here expand before us. We may roam up and down this field and find no end in gathering precious fruit. But one especial tree calls us to shake its richly-laden boughs. Moses interceding on the hill shows Jesus

interceding on the higher heights.

Come then, my soul, with joyful wing fly upward. It is good, it is wise, it is blessed, to be much with Jesus in the suffering valley. Faith visits often the manger, the garden, and the cross. It seeks all sin's remission in the stripes, the wounds, the agony, the death of the bleeding Lamb. But these amazing truths are but the porch of more amazing glories. Hence it delights to follow Jesus in His bright ascent, to gaze undazzled on the throne, to mark His present doings by His Father's side.

What? Is He still engaged in work? Wondrous tidings! Hear, all who call Him Lord--He ever loves you, and ever labors in your cause. His eye is never turned away. His hands cannot hang down. His heavens are the office-chamber of your soul's concerns. Do you ask, What is His work? Listen, the Holy Spirit cries, 'He ever lives to make Intercession.' His every day and every hour is ceaseless energy of interceding love.

Do you add, But what is Intercession? An intercessor stands between two parties, pleading for the one to look with favor on the other. The parties here are God the Father, and poor worms of earth. 'If any man sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' Before the Father, then, the Mediator pleads. But is not the Father an overflowing ocean of free grace? Is it not His grand delight to crown His sons with all heaven's blessings? Why, then, shall prayers, like constant incense, move Him to give what He is unwilling to withhold? Salvation's scheme is wholly ordered to show forth love in brightest rays. It is to aid this end, that Intercession has its place.

Believer, what kindles flames of comfort in your heart? What decks your brow with smiles, when trials and temptations throng? Is it not a view of Jesus pleading at God's right hand? The thought is rapture, peace, and victory. Remove the Advocate, and all your hope goes down in gloom. Christ prays, because He loves so much. He prays, because the Father loves not less. Intercession is the fair fruit of their co-loving heart.

Next, see for whom this Intercession strives. Imagine a father begging for his much-loved son, a mother for her first-born child, brother for brother, friend for friend, the ardent bridegroom for his darling bride. What cries! What tears! What earnestness! What moving words! What melting arguments! What strong appeals! What fervor of desire! What bold resolve to gain the petition! But all these ties, with all their warmth, converge in Jesus. In Him there is the father's deep affection, the mother's tenderness, the brother's zeal, the friend's devoted sympathy, the bridegroom's burning love. He urges, These are My children--the travail of My soul--the offspring of My wounds--My sister--My spouse--My beloved, around whom My heart has been entwined forever--the bride of My Father's gift, and of My loving choice--My portion--My jewels--My crown--the sheep of My pasture--My wealth--My delight--the members of My mystic body--the very apple of My eye. Such prayer is as the heart-strings strained. Reader! are you one with Christ? Then all day long, and all time long, He wrestles thus for you.

Mark, also, how Jesus executes this office. Come, see the proceedings of the heavenly court. Jesus appears. This is the opening act. The Spirit teaches, 'Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' He presents His person. The Father's eye rests on Him. Oh! with what love, what rapture, what delight! It is His son, His only begotten Son, His well-beloved Son, His elect One, His beauty, His express image, His glory, His treasure, compared with whom the heavens are an empty void, and all worlds' charms a vacant nothingness. It is Jesus--even the Servant, who has performed all His will--who has brought all honor to His attributes--who has ransomed all His people--who has filled heaven with all its song. Jesus Himself appears. O my soul, your cause is in good hands!

Jesus appears. But in what form? A LAMB is seen, 'looking as if it had been slain.' What, then, does He show? His wounds, His bruises, His scars, His pierced hands and feet, His open side. There is no eloquence like the eloquence of a slain Redeemer! There is no argument like the argument of a God-man's death. The blood of Abel cries. Much more the blood of Jesus. It loudly proves that His people are all bought with a worthy price, that their sins are all washed away, that they are all whiter than snow, that the covenant is all fulfilled, and that every grace is their purchased due. Thus Christ appears as 'He that lives and was dead.' O my soul, your cause is in good hands!

Jesus appears. But by what right? He comes as one whom office and duty bring. He is called and appointed and ordained to this especial work. He comes, because He must be faithful to the trust received. He comes, because it is His privilege to pass the veil. The great day in which atonement must be pleaded has arrived. The High Priest cannot be absent. O my soul, your cause is in good hands!

He comes, also, with authority. He prays as one who may command. Equal addresses equal. O wondrous thought! what can the language be? 'Father, I will.' Yes! It is even so. 'Father, I will.' 'I will,' is God's petition to a granting God. The kingly Priest with king-like power prays. O my soul, your cause is in good hands!

He enters, also, as Advocate. As such, His Intercession has judicial force. He states the laws of the realm, the statutes of the empire, the decrees of the sovereign, the rights of the subject, the justice of the case, the demands of equity and truth. He unfolds the volume of the covenant of grace. He claims a judgment in accordance with well-counseled compact. Righteousness fails, heaven's edicts must be rewritten, if such pleadings be cast out. O my soul, your cause is in good hands!

Believer, perhaps next you anxiously enquire, what is the significance of such mighty Intercession? You sigh, Oh! that I surely knew what are the blessings which He seeks for me. Draw near. His interceding voice sounds in the Gospel-page. He cried boldly and clearly from the cross, 'Father, forgive them.' He cries as boldly and as clearly from the throne, 'Father, forgive them.' As king He reigns, taking away sin. As quick as the sin-stain defiles, He spreads His wounded hands. Pardon cannot linger. Sins and iniquities are remembered no more.

Listen! He pleads again. It is, that His flock may be kept. 'Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me.' The prayer is heard. Jehovah's wings become their shield. Omnipotence defends them. Angels encamp around them. All things work together for their good. Each foe is foiled. The chosen seed gets safely to heaven.

His word, also, is gone forth, 'I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth.' The eternal Spirit hastens to comply. He flies with conquering wing into the willing heart. He shows the cross in its attractive glory. He shines upon the sacred page. He lifts up Jesus to the enraptured gaze. Without Christ's prayer the Spirit never comes. Without the Spirit, there is no faith, no truth, no godliness on earth.

He next gains acceptance for our prayers. What feeble babbling is our holiest worship? But answers come, surpassing our largest hopes. How can it be? The incense of Christ's merits fills the censer. Thus more is granted than the suppliant sought. We coldly plan, we feebly work, to magnify His name. But we succeed, and He is glorified in us. But how? His voice wins help and help we receive. Believer, pray much. Pray more. Think whose prayers are mixed with yours. Work much--work more. Think who obtains for you the strength to prosper.

Will Christ ask more? He surely asks, until God's treasury is drained. He speaks again, 'Father, I will that those also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am.' This is the summit of His love. This is the summit of His people's joy. He has no heaven without them. They have no heaven but with Him. His throne is for them. Their throne is by His side. Believer, mark it, you must ever be with the Lord. This Intercession is the golden chain which draws and binds you to Him. It is uttered. It is continued. It is heard. It is granted. His presence is your endless heritage.

It must be so. This Intercession must prevail. Mark the ascending steps by which the Spirit leads up to the proof. Read Romans 8:34. Christ's death is full redemption. 'Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died.' His resurrection rises higher. It manifests in clearer light the acceptance of the finished work. 'Yes, rather, that has risen again.' His ascension soars yet higher. It crowns assurance with a heaven-high crown. 'Who is even at the right hand of God.' But Intercession reaches heights more lofty. It consummates, it perfects, it applies, it secures complete salvation. 'Who also makes Intercession for us.' Blessed death! it reconciles. More blessed life! it much more saves. Blessed blood! it redeems. More blessed Intercession! It saves to the uttermost. O my soul, your cause is in good hands.

Let others seek their mediators many, who are mediators none. Let others fly to intercessors many, who are intercessors none. Will not you shout that Christ is enough--Christ is All!

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