

## Prayer: Communicating with The Father Series: 3

### The Intercessory Prayer of Abraham

#### Genesis 18.17-33

- **Prayer of Intercession**

- Standing in the gap in prayer
- prayer to hold back judgement and pray for blessing in the land.

Ezekiel 22.29-30

“The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger. So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one”

Abraham stands in the gap for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah

- **Abraham prays according to the purpose of God**

- God revealed to him His purpose for Sodom and Gomorrah (v17)

“Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets”  
Amos 3.7

- When we pray we should always pray according to His counsel and will – His Word

“Put Me in remembrance; let us contend together; state your case, that you may be acquitted”  
Isaiah 43.26

- Abraham prays for His own and also for those who treated him badly. (v24)

- Abraham’s concern was for every man – His nephew Lot and even the wicked men of the cities

“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you”  
Matthew 5.44

- **Boldness**

- He approaches God and asks His request with boldness (v22-25)
- He knows the nature and character of God – He believes that justice will be done  
vs25 – “*Far be it from You to do such a thing as this*”
- Abraham knew the covenant he had with God

- We have boldness and access through Jesus (Ephesians 3.11-12)

“according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him”

- **Fervency**

“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much”

James 5.16

- The word fervent in this verse means: to be active, powerful and efficient in operation to cause change

Another definition of fervent is ‘to strive, to be hot, to boil, zeal’ – one of the Greek words translated as fervent also gives us our word ‘to agonise’

- Abraham was so passionate for these people. He was blessed to be a blessing - He had a promise from God that all families of the earth would be blessed in him. (Genesis 12.3)
- He prayed fervently for the people of these cities, he agonised over them, he recognised that his action (intercession) had power to change things.

- **Persistence**

- Abraham did not give in interceding for Sodom & Gomorrah. He persisted right through until he had assurance from God that if ten righteous people could be found that the cities would not be destroyed

- Jesus taught us that we should be importunate (persist and persevere, having the audacity and boldness to ask) in our praying until we have the assurance that the prayer is answered.

- Intercession is about being persistent until we get the assurance that our prayers have been answered (Luke 11.5-13; Luke 18.1-5)

“I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs” Luke 11.8

“yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me”  
Luke 18.5

- **God's nature extends beyond what we ask**

- Abraham got the assurance that the cities would not be destroyed if ten righteous were found – but not even five were found.
- God is a God who goes beyond our expectations – even though ten righteous could not be found, He still spared Lot and his family

“[God] ..is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think”  
Ephesians 3.20

- God knows what we need before we ask Him, but when we ask Him in faith He gives us more than just what we ask.
- Solomon asked for wisdom to judge God's people right – God gave him what he asked and added to it - riches, wealth honour. (2 Chronicles 1.7-12)

“On that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask! What shall I give you?"  
... "Now give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours?"

Then God said to Solomon: "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honour or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king — wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honour, such as none of the kings have had who were before you, nor shall any after you have the like." ” (vs 7, 10-12)