

(Romans 8:26, 27, 33)

### THE MINISTRY OF INTERCESSION

True intercession happens when our spirit joins the Holy Spirit in interceding for our brothers and sisters in His groans and understanding of their sufferings. “And He Who searches the hearts, knows the intent of the Holy Spirit when He is interceding for us, for He intercedes in harmony with the will of God” (Romans 8:27).

#### The difference between prayer and intercession

Prayer is something prayed for or requested as in a petition; intercession is mediation, pleading or prayer in behalf of others (Webster’s dictionary).

The intercessor has a tremendous responsibility before God and men. Before interceding, his first step is to take time with the Father and make things right with Him, so that the door of heaven will be opened to receive his intercession. To the married men Peter had this to say, You married men should live considerately with [your wives], with intelligent recognition, honoring the woman as the weaker, but also joint heirs to the grace of life, **in order that your prayers may not be hindered and cut off** (I Peter 3:7).

Before we take the responsibility toward others’ burdens, we must rid of all bitterness from our hearts. “If you know that your brother has any grievance against you, go first make peace with your brother; and whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you” (Mark 11:25) and hear your prayer of intercession.

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me”. In another words, If I gaze at and consider willful sin to enter my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayers (Psalm 66:18). Knowing what is right and not doing it is sin of iniquity expressed in the hardness of the heart toward God and His teachings. That’s why it closes the door of heaven and our prayers are not heard.

Because Intercession without love is like meaningless babbling words, it is necessary for us to have love for the person we are interceding for. This ministry requires a complete devotion to God, in order to know Him and to know how to consistently stand on the gap for someone in times of trouble. God is looking for that person who will stand in His presence, keeping someone’s arms raised until the battle is won.

When a High Priest, while interceding for the people in the presence of God, was found at fault, he would be killed there in His presence and not be exited from His presence alive; his responsibility to intercede for the people **had to start with him**. It should apply to us too, for

we have to be clean from our sins of iniquities, to be able to intercede for others and find favor in the eyes of our heavenly Father. We must learn how to call on the Lord knowledgeable of Whom He is, of what His word says, for a powerful manifestation of His presence to exist in us with an answer to our prayers. The intercessor must feast with the Master every day at His table as He offers us breakfast with Him. In the breaking of the morning He calls us, "Come [and] have breakfast" (John 21:12). The food is prepared, the table is set. All we have to do is to join Him! He promised that those who seek Him in the morning will surely find Him. What's keeping us? Perhaps something must die in us, for us to experience the glory of the Lord as it happened in the life of the prophet Isaiah.

In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah saw the Lord (Isaiah 6:1) and in His presence Isaiah's lips were purified for he saw himself for what he was, a man of unclean lips, dwelling among people on unclean lips. That speaks of pride, arrogance, for it shows the absence of humility in the person, who uses words to bring others low. When we enter the presence of the Lord to intercede with lips purified, sins confessed, with a heart bent toward Him, and love in our hearts for those who we will intercede for, then our God will reward us and bless us and those we are praying for. "Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up" and we His servants, will continue to behold the glory of God, as we are constantly being transformed into His own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another (II Corinthians 3:18); for we are destined from the beginning to be molded into the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). And that is sanctification offered to those whom He chose. Healing through sanctification takes place first in the level of the soul (mind emotion, will), before it reaches the body. In the renewing of the mind, the emotions are healed and the purpose of the will be to please God. When my soul listens to the Spirit of God, then I am confirming that I am born again and in the path of my sanctification until He calls me home. The ministry of intercession is not simply praying for someone; it is rather allowing God to work molding us to become instruments that bring healing and blessings in the lives of our brothers and sisters.

Job left us a good example of intercession, when God told him to intercede for his friends. For Job to be able to do that, he had to forgive them, for as we know they were everything to Job, but friends. In his obedience to God and in forgiveness, he was blessed. I believe that forgiveness opens the door of the heart to intercede for the enemy. Job was restored physically emotionally and spiritually, and his friends were blessed with forgiveness also from God. Job, in the last moments of his trial, he confessed, "I know that You can do all things and that no thought or purpose of Yours can be restrained or thwarted". How spiritually discerned Job was! He understood that God and not Satan was in control of his life and in humbleness of his heart, he said, "I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I loathe [my words] and abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:1, 5, 6). Not one time did he bind Satan!

In his intercession for his nephew Lot, Abraham showed humility in the realization of whom he was in the presence of God, when he said, "Who am I but dust and ashes have taken upon myself to speak to the Lord". He pleaded for his nephew knowledgeable of God's righteousness in judgment. He asked, "Will You destroy the righteous together with the wicked, and will the

number of righteous found in the city make a difference in Your decision to destroy the whole city” (Genesis 18:23-33)?

No one has gone through longer deserts than Moses did: forty years as the son of Pharaoh witnessing the suffering of his people, forty years in the desert of Midian keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro and forty years in the desert of Sinai en route to the Promised Land. A hundred and twenty years of wanderings Moses never arrived at his destination. Moses is remarkable in his humble spirit, as he led the nation of Israel and not once, he looked back. He was remarkable also in his intercession for his people with prayer of intercession for forgiveness for them. He prayed, Pardon, I pray You the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your mercy and loving-kindness, just as You have forgiven [them] from Egypt until now. And the Lord answered, I have pardoned according to your word (Numbers 14:12, 19-20). When the people committed the sins of adultery against God, by going after the god of Egypt, God told Moses, “Let me alone, that my wrath may burn against them and that I may destroy them; but I will make of you a great nation”. Moses interceded for the nation praying, “Lord, why, does your wrath blaze hot against Your people, whom You brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self and said to them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit it forever” (Exodus 32:23,10-13). Moses had to have a relationship with God to have the freedom to say what he said and to pray the way that he prayed for the people. He also had to know the Word and promises of God, for him to put God in remembrance of them. God answered, “I will do this thing also that you have asked, for you have found favor, **loving-kindness, and mercy in My sight and I know you personally and by name**” (Exodus 33:17). In Numbers 12:6-8, relates the relationship that God had with Moses, “With Moses, I speak mouth to mouth; clearly and not in dark speeches; and he beheld the form of the Lord. Why were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses”? To no other prophet had God spoken the way He spoke to Moses. Yes, He knew him by name and personally.

The prophet Daniel interceded for his people with prayer of repentance, confession, with fasting and supplication. Daniel, like Moses, was knowledgeable of God’s Word. He brought God to remembrance concerning the duration of their captivity in Babylon to be seventy years, according the words of the Prophet Jeremiah. The time had arrived for them to return and rebuild the temple and the city. Now he enters the presence of God in behalf of the people, the city praying and supplication, “O Lord, according to all Your rightness and justice, I beseech You, let Your anger and Your wrath be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy Mountain. . . O my God, incline Your ear and hear; O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, give heed and act! Do not delay, for Your own sake, O my God, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name” (Daniel 9:16, 18-19).

The angel Gabriel was sent to him, with these words, “At the beginning of your prayers, the word went forth, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved” (Daniel 9:23). At that time, God revealed to Him great prophecies that concerned his people, especially concerning

the seventy weeks set apart for Israel in which reveals the building of the city, the death of Messiah, the coming and ruling of the anti-Christ and where he will originate.

These intercessors are noticeable for their knowledge of the Word of God and for their relationship with God. They were ordinary people through whom God worked extraordinary things. Abraham was considered the friend of God; Moses, God knew him by name and personally. God considered him to be the most humble man in the face of the earth; Job was called God's servant and none was found to be like him in righteousness; Daniel was the greatly beloved of God.

As we intercede for our brothers and sisters in Christ and for our families, let's learn from those whom were so successfully in their lives of prayer of intercession.

### **PERSEVERANCE IN INTERCEDING**

In the case of Job, before God restored his blessings with health and prosperity, He told him to pray for his friends. We all remember what these friends meant to Job, as they acted not as true sympathetic friends, but as judge. How to pray for friends, when we are bitter against them? (1) confess to God your feelings of bitterness (2) repent of them; (3) ask for His love to interfere with your feelings of bitterness, when they surface in the time of your intercession for your friend. (4) As you intercede, forgive and let go of all bitterness toward that person. Job was given the opportunity to forgive, when God told him to pray for his friends and he obeyed. I believe that when he answered to the command of God, forgiveness was in his heart, and our loving Father blessed him with double his riches, his children and longevity of life.

Abraham, when interceding for his nephew Lot, showed humility in the realization of whom he was when he, in his persistence, said, "Who am I but dust and ashes have taken upon myself to speak to the Lord". He pleaded with God through two questions, "Will You destroy the righteous together with the wicked", and will the number of righteous found in the city make a difference in Your decision to destroy the whole city? Abraham believed in the righteousness of God in His judgment, and faith led him to know that He would save Lot and his family, and it was done! When interceding, we must ask God for His compassion to flow through us; take the time to receive it and apply when you are interceding. You will feel the Holy Spirit crying through you as you pray!

Through his journey in the desert, Moses always interceded for the nation of Israel; in fact if it were not for Moses' intercession for Israel, Israel would not be today. When Israel believed the negative report from the spies, and doubted God's promises by rebelling against God and Moses, God said, "I will smite them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and will make of you [Moses] a nation greater and mightier than they. But Moses prayed to the Lord, "Pardon, I pray You, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your mercy and loving-kindness, just as You have forgiven [them] from Egypt until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to your word (Numbers 14: 12, 19-20).

The first time Moses stayed with the Lord forty days and forty nights, to receive the tables of the Testimony, the people committed adultery against God, as they made for themselves "gods

which shall go before us". The Lord God said, "Let Me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and that I may destroy them; but I will make of you a great nation". Moses, however said, "Lord, why does Your wrath blaze hot against Your people, whom You brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self and said to them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit it forever" (Exodus 32:23,10-11-13). For Moses to intercede for Israel the way he did, he had to have a relationship with God; he had to know the Word, as he repeated back to God and that compelled Him to act in his favor, for, He said, **"I will do this thing also that you have asked, for you have found favor, loving-kindness, and mercy in My sight and I know you personally and by name"** (Exodus 33:17)

The prophet Daniel interceded for his people with prayer of repentance, confession, with fasting and supplication. He prayed, "We have sinned, and dealt perversely and done wickedly and have rebelled, turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. Neither have we listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in You name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land (Daniel 9:4-6). Daniel, like Moses, knowledgeable of God's words, reminded Him of the duration time of their captivity was to be of seventy years. He said, "According to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass by before the desolations pronounced on Jerusalem should end; and it was seventy years (Daniel 9:2). He prayed, "O Lord, according to all Your rightness and justice, I beseech You, let Your anger and Your wrath be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain . . . O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and look at our desolations and the city which is called by Your name. . . O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, give heed and act! Do not delay, for Your own sake, O my God, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name (Daniel 9:16, 18, 19). There is always certainty of an answer, when we pray the words of God! God sent His angel Gabriel to give the message to Daniel after his prayer. The angel said, "At the beginning of your prayers, the word went forth, and I have come to tell you, **for you are greatly beloved** (Daniel 9:23). Moses, God knew him by name and personally; Daniel, was greatly beloved; Abraham was God's friend; Job was considered God's servant, none found like him in unrighteousness. How should this speak to us?