

## The Intercessors

Happy Sabbath, and blessed New Moon to all. This week, we have a day that is both a New Moon and a Sabbath. It is a day to both celebrate our relationship with our Father in Heaven, and to examine that relationship to see if there is anything that would keep us from receiving and manifesting to others the very best that infinite love has to offer.

This week, our topic will facilitate just such an examination, and just such a celebration. It is called “The Intercessors,” and as we go through this subject, I want you to keep a question firmly in your mind. That question is this: “Am I an intercessor?”

In order for you to critically examine yourself, to see if you are in the faith, (2Cor 13:5) to see if you have ceased from all sin, and to honestly and accurately answer that question, of course we have to look at what it means to be an “intercessor.”

By way of definition, that term means, “A negotiator. One who acts as an intermediary between two parties.” It isn’t a term that I can recall hearing all that often when listening to sermons from other Churches, or even other Adventist Churches, and yet – just like the Gospel, just like righteousness by faith, it is a most central matter for the Christian. To be a Christian, to be a follower of Yahshua, indicates that one is an intercessor. Yahshua Himself was an Intermediary between His father and sinful humanity, making peace within Himself and through His own sacrifice, to create a place for us (who are the redeemed) to exist.

In the history of Israel, we find that it is an intercessor who was missing when the nation was in spiritual crisis. This just demonstrates the importance of the role for the people of Yah. So the question again that I want you to ask yourself is: “Am I an intercessor?”

Let’s look at some early examples of this concept.

One of the very first examples in Scripture is that of Abraham. We read:

“And Abraham drew near, and said, ‘Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty 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?’

“And Yahweh said, ‘If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.’” (Gen 18:23-26)

And as we read through the remainder of the chapter, we find Abraham managing to do precisely as an intercessor does... negotiate with the Most High to spare the cities should He find, instead of fifty, forty five, and then forty, and then thirty five... all the way down to ten. At that point, Abraham ceased his intercession, thinking perhaps that, “Surely, there are ten righteous men in Sodom.” But this act of intercession was not about entirely about the people of Sodom; Yah already knew the end from the beginning, of course, and the agents of holy destruction were already about their work.

The intercession was about the character of the intercessor, revealing Abraham's care for the people, and his familiarity with Yah, that He could even think to ask what he did. It was also a hard lesson for the patriarch to learn, for the world was worse than he had realized, and his place as a "friend of Yah" was more unique than he would have liked.

The next major example that one could easily site is actually the first that came to mind when preparing this study. In fact, it was in reading about Moses that the idea for this question of intercession arose in the first place. Last week, I was editing a pamphlet that Giselle is working on, and I came across a quotation of a Biblical passage that is used as the foundation of one of pastor's studies (which Giselle translated into the pamphlet) and one of our earlier studies as a Church that I presented.

The passage that has inspired us to speak on more than one occasion is this:

Following the incident with the golden calf at the foot of Mount Sinai, "Moses returned unto Yah, and said, 'Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin – and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.'

"And Yahweh said unto Moses, 'Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee; behold, mine Angel shall go before thee. Nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them.' And Yahweh plagued the people because they made the calf which Aaron made." (Exo 32:31-35)

Here we see the Christian character near-perfected, and it is revealed to us through the work of one who is interceding on behalf of the sinners. Are we doing the same? Are we intercessors?

We must be aware of what it means to fulfill the things that are said of us. As you read the Book of Ephesians, or the Book of Philippians, where Paul is praising the work of the saints, you must accept this as a letter written to you – telling you what you are like in Christ. All that our earlier brothers have done, they have done as a member of the family which we have all (relatively recently) joined through conversion and baptism into the united and unique Body of Christ.

We have been praised through our brethren, and we ought to feel responsible for living up to, and then far exceeding, the things for which they were praised. Of course, there are other epistles where Paul points out where the congregations have not lived up to the light they have been given, and they had a work to do to remedy their course of action. The New Testament shows us the Church working as it should, and reveals the Church dealing with problems. For one example, we see places where just a few deceivers, just a few false teachers, just a few errors, could cause major problems in the places where the apostle had labored. If anything, this should highlight the importance of communication among various members of the Body, for this is also a part of the work of intercession.

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." (1 Pet 2:9)

This is a verse that should hold much meaning for a Creation Seventh Day Adventist. We have been called out of darkness, and if we are called into His marvelous light, then we are standing in that light indeed. But now, if we are called, and if we are chosen, and if we are standing in Yah's marvelous,

wonderful light, what are we? The apostle says we are a “royal priesthood.” This is what it means to be one who stands in Yah’s light.

It is not said that some become priests and intercessors. It is not said that, “Among those who stand in the light, many will go forth and be priests among the people.” No. If you are called out of darkness, and if you are in Yah’s light, then you are a priest of Heaven, and your work as a child of the light is to be an intercessor. So, are you an intercessor? Have you been called out of darkness? Are you standing in His marvelous light? These are three questions, but they are one question.

We must be interceding for the sinners. We must pray for them to see the choice placed before them, and to walk the path laid out by Yahshua. We must pray for, and work with, those who are specially called to preach the Gospel truth. We must stand in the presence of Yah every day, and do as Abraham did, and as Moses did... and know the fate of those who do not respond to the labors done on their behalf.

And there is more as well. We must also be able to intercede for one another. It is written, “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” (Phil 2:4) Now, this does not mean to be a gossip, or an interferer needlessly in one another’s lives. We have spoken in the past about “officiousness,” and the Scriptures tell us also, “But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.” (1Peter 4:15) Now, of course there are degrees of the severity of sin, in terms of the impact it has on others... but it is certainly interesting that Peter places being a “busybody” in the same list, with hardly a pause, with murder and stealing.

There is a narrow road to life, and there are few that find it. The fact that the road is narrow means that the rest of the countryside, that which is not “the way,” is broad and easily found. We are cautioned against being “a busybody,” but if we steer too far away from that extreme, we become disconnected, and unable to intercede for one another. We are to be aware of one another’s needs, as the Philippians verse indicates, so that we will know what to ask of our Father on our brethren’s behalf.

This idea, of being an intercessor, is an excellent one for examining ourselves. It really IS most central to a life in harmony with the Gospel. One of the responsibilities of being a priest of Yah is to separate the light from the darkness (as our Father did in the beginning) and to put a difference between the holy and the unholy. The question of intercession is one such tool that we can use to determine righteousness vs. unrighteousness.

Let us look at the issue of the third angel’s message. It speaks about the Mark of The Beast. It speaks about Satan working through human agencies to impose his will upon humanity, which is thereby led away from sincere worship of the Almighty. Satan accomplishes this goal by applying secular force, which acts upon the carnal fears of those who are not already “dead to self,” and causes them – forces them through fear – to submit to violations of divine principle.

This may show itself in various ways: a Sunday Law, a Trademark Law, or any other way in which a union of the church and the state can position itself between God and man. Now, notice the mirror-image here. An intercessor places himself between Yah and man in order to draw them closer together, to atone one to the other and to remove barriers. An “anti-intercessor,” who follows an anti-Christ, (just as an intercessor follows Christ) imposes himself between Yah and man in order to widen the difference, in an

attempt to prevent that man from drawing near to the Father by worshipping Him according to the leadings of his conscience. This is a divider, not an intermediary.

There are some who will look at the SDA Trademark for example, and think, "That is perfectly fine." There are some who would be okay with a National Sunday Law, thinking to do Yah a favor. But they do not understand what it is to be "like Christ," to be an intercessor. We can know, beyond any controversy, that the trademark law that we resist is Satanic in spirit, and entirely contrary to Christianity in nature, because those who impose it are not seeking to intercede for those whom they are attacking.

It is a very simple thing to examine.

Those who would seek to restrict the religious liberty of others cannot be intercessors. They cannot follow the example of Christ, who stood between Yah and man for the purpose of giving humanity freedom that it had never had before.

If we call our brothers forth before unbelievers to answer for their wrongs (or imagined wrongs) against us, we are really doing the opposite of interceding for them. We are causing them to have to seek out an intercessor against us. In the case of the Church, Her intercessor is her Husband, Christ Yahshua Himself, and the Holy Spirit of the Father and the Son.

So we can be general in applying this principle, but from the beginning, I have been asking you to be specific – specific to your family, to yourself. Yahshua, our Savior, "ever liveth" to make intercession for His people. As it is with Him, so it is also with us. We must intercede for others, and for one another. This is what it means to be "friends," to be "friendly," and warm, and loving, as a child of the Most High. This is what separates the true followers of Yahshua from those who do the works of unrighteousness, or support those who do such works, or... fail to protest against those who do such works. It is an easy division to see once we become aware of it.

Yahshua said to us, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Mat 5:14-17) Setting an example for others to follow is a light to the world, and the purpose of that light is to show others the way in which they ought to walk. This is the work of that royal priesthood.

He also said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." (Mat 5:13) We are those who give an example of Yah's light, and His praises, and we preserve the earth, as salt does, and as ten righteous men would have preserved the cities of Sodom. But we must actively perform this role. Nobody was interceding for Sodom, and it was destroyed.

We must examine ourselves to see that we are performing this role. Are we intercessors? There are people among us, for whom we need to intercede, and some quite urgently. We must be about our Father's business with regard to those who have needs, both nearby, and wherever we go as ambassadors of Heaven, and intercessors between sinners and the King of Heaven.

This is how we will show forth His praises.

Are there any questions or comments?