

March 5, 2023  
La Jolla Christian Fellowship  
**GENESIS. Behind The Curtain: Abraham – Part 2**  
**Episode 6: Abraham Pleads for Sodom**  
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### Genesis 18:16-33

<sup>16</sup> When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way.<sup>17</sup> Then the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?<sup>18</sup> Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.<sup>19</sup> For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."<sup>20</sup> Then the Lord said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous<sup>21</sup> that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know."<sup>22</sup> The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord.<sup>23</sup> Then Abraham approached him and said: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?<sup>24</sup> What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it?<sup>25</sup> Far be it from you to do such a thing--to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"<sup>26</sup> The Lord said, "If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake."<sup>27</sup> Then Abraham spoke up again: "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes,<sup>28</sup> what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city because of five people?" "If I find forty-five there," he said, "I will not destroy it."<sup>29</sup> Once again he spoke to him, "What if only forty are found there?" He said, "For the sake of forty, I will not do it."<sup>30</sup> Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?" He answered, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."<sup>31</sup> Abraham said, "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?" He said, "For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it."<sup>32</sup> Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?" He answered, "For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it."<sup>33</sup> When the LORD had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home.

1. **Standing in the gap:** The role of the righteous is to intercede for the lost.

"If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our bodies. If they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees. Let no one go there unwarned and unprayed for." *Charles Spurgeon*

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

**The rise and fall of nations: Vs. 17** Then the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?<sup>18</sup> Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.

- **Vs. 17b** shows God's sovereignty over nations.
- **Vs. 17a** "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?"

**An Outcry Vs. 20** Then the Lord said, "The **outcry** against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous<sup>21</sup> that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me.

- **Sodom is mentioned in the bible 47 times (38OT,9NT)**
  - **Sins of Sodom: Genesis 13:13** Now the people of Sodom were **wicked** and were sinning greatly against the Lord.
    - **Arrogant: Isa 3:9** The look on their faces testifies against them; they parade their sin like Sodom.
    - **Gluttonous and uncharitable: Ezekiel 16:49** "Now this was the sin of your sister **Sodom**: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy.
    - **Sexually Immoral: Jude 1:7** In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. (Rape Gen 19:5)
  - **Outcry:**
    - **Rev 6:9-10** When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. <sup>10</sup>They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"
    - **Genesis 4:10** The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood **cries** out to me from the ground.

**Was Sodom irredeemable? Matthew 11:23** And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades. For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in **Sodom**, it would have remained to this day.

**The Role of Intercessors: Vs. 22** The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord.<sup>23</sup> Then Abraham approached him and said: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?"

- Abraham had rescued Sodom once before. (Genesis 14:17)
- In this passage, the fate of the wicked hinges upon the righteous.

### Small Group Questions:

1. How big of a role does intercession play in your spiritual life?
2. Why would God employ the righteous as intercessors when He could just pardon the guilty?
3. What would be some of the outward characteristics of an intercessor?
4. Does intercession have its limits?
5. Is the church seen more as judge or intercessor? How could we change that perception?