

## Prayers in Scripture and the Results of Intercession

October 5, 2014

I want to continue on the path that I started last week in our discussion of prayers and the response of God regarding them. We talked about the prophet Moses and Naomi last week and how God worked out the details of their lives for his glory.

Today I want to start with Genesis chapter 12 and work our way through some of the events in Abram's life. The chapter starts by referring to the message that God had given to Abram. He was told to get out of his country, get away from his kindred, away from his **father's house** and head towards a land that God would **show him**. He was promised **that God would make from him a great nation and his blessing would be upon Abram he would make his name great and he would bless others**. God said, "I will bless those who bless you, and curse those that curse you and in you shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram packed up the family and departed and his nephew Lot and his family tagged along with them. Abram was 75 years old when he started on his journey. In verse 9, Abram built an altar and called on the name of the LORD. It wasn't long before Abram got into trouble when he went into Egypt **due to a famine**. He told his wife to **say she was his sister** because he was afraid **that he would be killed** if the king desired his beautiful wife for his Hiram. When the princes saw her beauty, they recommended her to the king and Sarai was taken into Pharaoh's house. Abram was given gifts of animals and servants because of Sarai, but the Lord got him out of the situation by **sending a plague to Pharaoh** and revealing the truth to him concerning Abram and Sarai, his wife. The king called Abram aside and asked him **why he had said that Sarai was his sister**. When he told him that he was afraid for his life, the king **told him to take his wife and all that he had and be gone**. He was sent away from that country. Soon the herdsmen of Lot began to fight with the herdsmen of Abram's. The land wasn't able to support all the people and the animals as Abram was very rich. Abram approached Lot and said, "Please, let there be no strife between your herdsmen and my herdsmen for we are family. There is plenty of land all around us. Tell you what, Lot. You look around and take whatever land you want and I'll take what is left. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right. If you go to the right, I'll head to the left. "Lot looked around and he saw the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere and there was land that looked like **the garden of the LORD** and he chose the plain of Jordan. Lot journeyed east and Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan. Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom. If you continue reading, you will learn that after a while, Lot moved into the city of Sodom and sat at the gate of the city. In chapter 18, the LORD and two angels spend some time with Abram and Sarai and in this chapter he gives them new names, Abraham and Sarah. In verse 19, God lets it be known that he knows Abraham that he will command his children and his household to reverence the Lord and to be obedient to the laws of God so that God's plan can be fulfilled through Abraham.

Then He reveals to Abraham that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah had reached the tolerance level and gone beyond and God was going to destroy the cities.

Abraham began to plead with God. “Will you spare the city if there are 50 righteous people in that city? Surely you will not destroy the righteous with the wicked” God said that he would not destroy the city if there were 50 righteous people found there. Abraham began to think about it and asked if God would spare it for 45 righteous people. See verse 27 of chapter 18. He again asked “What if there are only 40 there. Will you spare it for 40?” The Lord said he would spare it if there were 40. Abraham kept dropping the numbers until he got down to 10. Each time, God said he would spare the city if there were even just 10 righteous people found in the city. But the sad truth was that there were not even 10 righteous people found in that city. However, because of Abraham’s intercession, God sent two angels into the city of Sodom where Lot was sitting at the gate, and as they entered, he greeted them, asked them to come to his house and spend the night and he would show hospitality towards them. They refused and said they would spend the night on the streets. He pressured them to stay at his house, he made them a feast and homemade bread and they ate. But before they lay down, the house was surrounded by the men of the city demanding Lot to send the men outside so they could sexually assault them. The angels struck them with blindness and if you read this account, you will learn that the angels led Lot and his wife and two daughters out of the city before the fire and brimstone of judgment fell on these cities. They were told to flee and not look back, but Lot’s wife looked back towards the city and she turned into a pillar of salt. God remembered Lot and his family because of the intercessory prayer of Abraham, but the cities were not spared the judgment of a holy God.

There are dire consequences to surrounding yourself with unholy, godless people who have no respect for the things of God. If you read these chapters, you will find that the culture that surrounded Lot and his family had an influence on them. The wickedness of the city, though it vexed Lot’s soul, didn’t leave him unscathed. Lot had been influenced from the filthy lifestyles of people around him. His daughters had been brought up around ungodly, unholy cultures and were influenced by them. The family suffered because of their connection with the wicked people of the cities though their lives were spared. Lot’s wife loved the city and her home and she looked back and longed to return and she was turned into a pillar of salt. In 2 Peter 2:6-10, Peter speaks about the fact that God knows how to deliver the righteous out of temptation and to reserve the wicked for the Day of Judgment.

We live in a day where ungodly leaders are demanding that people refrain from preaching and speaking out against the wickedness of our society. Tolerance is being pushed onto Christians and many people are falling under the spell of Satan’s deception. God will not tolerate the trends of the day. His word declares “Without holiness, no man shall see God.” See Hebrews 12:14. Fools say in their hearts “There is no God.”