

## **Heartfelt Intercession (I looked for someone to stand in the gap)**

The title scripture is taken from the book of Ezekiel chapter 22 verses 23 to 31 and in the full context reads as follows: “Again the word of The Lord came to me. “Son of Man say to the land: You are a city who has not been cleansed or rained on in the day of wrath. There is a conspiracy of princes within her like a roaring lion tearing her prey, they devour people, take treasures and many precious things and make many widows within her.

Her priests do violence to my law and profane many things, they do not distinguish between the holy and the common; they teach that there is no difference between the unclean and the clean; and they shut their eyes to the keeping of my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. Her officials within her are like wolves, tearing their prey: They shed blood and kill to make unjust gain.

Her prophets whitewash these deeds for them by false visions and lying divinations. They say this is what The Lord says when The Lord has not spoken. The people of the land practice extortion and commit robbery; they oppress the poor and needy and mistreat the foreigner, denying them justice. I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so that I would not have to destroy it.

I found no one, so I will pour out my wrath upon them and consume them with my fiery anger; bringing down on their own heads all that they have done” declares the sovereign Lord. These people were doing wicked things and The Lord was looking for someone like Moses who would stand between them and God.

As we have seen from Moses and other great intercessors of the past when someone (or preferably a great number of people) cry out to God confessing their own sin and the sin of the nation, then these prayers prayed faithfully and continually can turn away the wrath of God from any city or nation. It certainly seems that this world is currently under the judgement of God. Because He is gracious and kind we are seeing the minimum consequences of this.

If we do not (as a nation or a city) repent of so blatantly going against the known will of God proclaimed in scripture and we continue in things that we know God hates then we will continually bring upon ourselves the wrath of God to a greater and greater degree. We can see that this happened to other countries in the past and is happening now with several nations of the world.

If we want to know what to pray in general then we can see this in Daniel chapter 9 verses 3 to 27 inclusive. “So I turned to The Lord and pleaded with Him in prayer and petition, in fasting and in sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to The Lord my God and confessed: Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love with all those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned and done wrong.

We have been wicked and have rebelled. We have turned away from your commands and laws. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors and to all the people of the land. Lord you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame \_ the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you.

We and our kings, our princes and our ancestors are covered with shame Lord; because we have sinned against you. The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against Him; we have not obeyed The Lord our God or kept His laws which He gave us through His servants the prophets. All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you.

Therefore the curses and sworn judgements written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and our rulers by bringing upon us a great disaster. Under the whole of heaven nothing has ever been done like that which has been done to Jerusalem.

Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sort the favour of The Lord our God by turning away from our sins and giving attention to your truth. The Lord did not hesitate to bring this disaster upon us, for The Lord our God is righteous in everything that He does, yet we have not obeyed Him.

Now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name which endures to this day, we have sinned, w3e have done wrong Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from Jerusalem your city, your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our fathers have made Jerusalem and your people and object of scorn to all those around us.

Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favour on your desolate sanctuary Give ear Lord God and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your name. We do not make request of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. Lord Listen, Lord forgive. Lord hear and act. For your sake my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your name”.

While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of the people of Israel, and making my request to The Lord my God for His holy hill \_ while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in my earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me; “Daniel, I have now come to give you inside and understanding.

As soon as you began to pray, a word went out which I came to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision. Seventy sevens are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. Know and

understand this, from the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler comes, there will be seven sevens and sixty two sevens. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the sixty two sevens the Anointed one will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler will come and destroy the city and the sanctuary.

The end will come like a flood, war will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed, He will confirm his covenant with many for one seven, in the middle of it he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. At the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.” We can see that as Daniel prayed this prayer as he did a great deal more than just once, there came an angelic visitation to him.

I wonder what would happen if we copied Daniel’s example in persistent praying in this way, with tears and fasting because of the future that the people would face if they did not change their ways, repent and return to The Lord. If Daniel had not interceded for this people, quite literally who on earth would have done? Can you see a parallel with our national situation today?

We have been turning away from the ways of The Lord and the true and only gospel for decades, and what has followed as a direct consequence? People lost billions when banks went bankrupt, this was followed by literally years of austerity hitting the poor far more severely than anyone else in society.

The very people who have turned against us we have allowed into this country by their hundreds of thousands, declaring a different “gospel” and some wonder why freak weather is prominent with intense heat followed by a month’s rainfall in a few days, then a wet winter which caused flooding which some people have still not recovered from to this day. As a direct result the threat of terrorism in our own country is greater than it has ever been.

During the Second World War King George VI called the nation to prayer on six occasions because the situation that British and allied troops were facing was overwhelming. Surely there is as much need to call the nation to prayer today as there has ever been in the past? 2 Chronicles chapter 7 verse 14 reads: “If my people who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, pray and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven and heal their land.”

In Daniel chapter 9 where you read Israel read Britain, where you read Jerusalem read the name of the city or town that you live in and you will see that the spiritual state of this nation has met with a disaster that we have in effect brought upon ourselves by turning away from the God who has been so faithful to us in the past. The need for intercessors to be raised up in this country is as great as it was during the Second World War.

Surely this applies today as much as it has ever done. Daniel is not the only one God has used very powerfully in intercession, let us look at the way Moses interceded for the people of Israel when they had turned away from The Lord after being in the wilderness for 40 years. The following passage is from Exodus chapter 32 verses 3 to 24 inclusive.

“When the people saw that Moses was so long coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said: “Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses we don’t know what has happened to him. Aaron answered them “Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing and bring them to me.”

So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they gave him and made it into a cast idol in the shape of a calf: fashioning it with a tool. Then he said “These are your gods Israel who led you out of Egypt.” When Aaron saw this he built an altar in front of the calf and announced: “Tomorrow there will be a festival to The Lord. So the next day the people arose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings.

Afterwards they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry. Then The Lord said to Moses “Go down, because your people who you brought up out of Egypt have become corrupt. They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it saying: “These are your gods Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.

Then The Lord said to Moses: “I have seen these people and they are a stiff necked people. Now leave me alone, so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them, then I will make of you a great nation.” But Moses sought the favour of The Lord his God. Moses said:” Lord why should your anger burn against your people whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand?

Why should the Egyptians say it was it was with evil intent that you brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and wipe them off the face of the earth? Turn from your fierce anger and relent and do not bring disaster on your people, remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by yourself to make their decedents as numerous as the stars in the sky and give your descendants all this land I promised them and it will be their inheritance forever.”

Then The Lord relented and did not bring this disaster on His people that He had threatened. Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back. The tablets were the work of God, the writing on them was the writing of God engraved on the tablets.

When Joshua heard the sound of the people shouting he said to Moses: “There is the sound of war in the camp.” Moses replied: “It is not the sound of victory, it is not the sound of defeat; it is the sound of singing that I hear.” When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hand, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. He took the calf that the people had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it. He said to Aaron: “What did these people do to you that you led them into such a great sin?”

“Do not be angry my lord” Aaron, answered, “You know how prone these people are to evil. They said to me: Make us gods who will go before us, as for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.” So I told them “Whoever has gold jewellery to take it off. Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire and out came this calf.”

Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughing-stock to their enemies. So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said: “Whoever is for The Lord, come to me.” All the Levites rallied to him and Moses then said to them: “This is what The Lord God of Israel says: “Each man strap sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp, from one end to the other, each killing his friend, brother and neighbour.”

The Levites did as Moses had commanded and that day about 3000 of the people died. Then Moses said: “You have been set apart for The Lord today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and He has blessed you this day.” The next day Moses said to the people: “You have committed a great sin, but I will now go up to The Lord, perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.”

So Moses went back to The Lord and said: “Oh, what a great sin these people have committed, they have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive the sin their sin but if not then blot me out of the book I have written. The Lord replied to Moses: “Whoever has sinned against me I will block out of my book. Now go, lead the people to the place I spoke of, and my angel will go before you.

However, when the time comes for me to punish, I will punish them for their sin.” One of the things we need so much to pray for in these final days is that God would visit our cities and nation in mercy before He visits us in wrath. This is the final judgement of God’s wrath before the great outpouring of God’s wrath upon the earth, an event for which we shall not be here for.

Jesus words to His people about this time of wrath was brief but profound, and is found in Luke chapter 21 verses 34 to 36 inclusive. “Be careful or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life and that day will close on you like a trap, it will come on all those who live on the earth. Be on the watch and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before The Son of Man.” Remember that by the grace of God most of us are destined for salvation but we should be fervently interceding for those whose destiny at this time is to spend eternity in hellfire, unless our prayers can get them onto the right path.