



God Seeks Intercessors

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence, and give Him no rest till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."—[Isa. 62:6, 7](#).

*"And He saw **that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor**"—[Isa. 59:16](#).*

"And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered, and there was none to uphold."—[Isa. 63:5](#).

"There is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth himself to take hold of Thee."—[Isa. 64:7](#).

"And I sought for a man that should stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none."—[Ezek. 22:30](#).

"I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you."—[John 15:16](#).

On the study of the starry heavens, how much depends upon a due apprehension of magnitudes. Without some sense of the size of the heavenly bodies, that appear so small to the eye, and yet are so great, and of the almost illimitable extent of the regions in which they move, though they appear so near and so familiar, there can be no true knowledge of the heavenly world or its relation to this earth. It is even so with the spiritual heavens, and the heavenly life in which we are called to live.

It is specially so in the life of intercession, that most wondrous intercourse between heaven and earth. Everything depends upon the due apprehension of magnitudes. Just think of the three that come first: There is a world, with its needs entirely dependent on and waiting to be helped by intercession; there is a God in heaven, with His all-sufficient supply for all those needs, waiting to be asked; there is a Church, with its wondrous calling and its sure promises, waiting to be roused to a sense of its wondrous responsibility and power.

God seeks intercessors. —There is a world with its perishing millions, with intercession as its only hope. How much of love and work is comparatively vain, because there is so little intercession. A thousand millions living as if there never had been a Son of God to die for them. Thirty millions every year passing into the outer darkness without hope. Fifty millions bearing the Christian name, and the great majority living in utter ignorance or indifference. Millions of feeble, sickly Christians; thousands of wearied workers, who could be blessed by intercession, could help themselves to become mighty in intercession.

Churches and missions sacrificing life and labor often with little result, for lack of intercession. Souls, each one worth more than worlds, worth nothing less than the price paid for them in Christ's blood, and within reach of the power that can be won by intercession. We surely have no conception of the magnitude of the work to be done by God's intercessors, or we should cry to God above everything to give from heaven the spirit of intercession.

God seeks intercessors. — There is a God of glory able to meet all these needs. We are told that He delights in mercy that He waits to be gracious, that He longs to pour out His blessing; that the love that gave the Son to death is the measure of the love that each moment hovers over every human being. And yet He does not help. And there they perish, a million a month in China alone, and it is as if God does not move. If He does so love and long to bless, there must be some inscrutable reason for His holding back. What can it be? Scripture says, because of your unbelief. It is the faithlessness and consequent

unfaithfulness of God's people. He has taken them up into partnership with Himself; He has honored them, and bound Himself, by making their prayers one of the standard measures of the working of His power. Lack of intercession is one of the chief causes of lack of blessing. Oh, that we would turn eye and heart from everything else and fix them upon this God who hears prayer, until the magnificence of His promises, and His power, and His purpose of love overwhelmed us! How our whole life and heart would become intercession.

God seeks intercessors. —There is a third magnitude to which our eyes must be opened: the wondrous privilege and power of the intercessors. There is a false humility, which makes a great virtue of self-depreciation, because it has never seen its utter nothingness. If it knew that, it would never apologize for its feebleness, but glory in its utter weakness, as the one condition of Christ's power resting on it. It would judge of itself, its power and influence before God in prayer, as little by what it sees or feels, as we judge of the size of the sun or stars by what the eye can see.

Faith sees man created in God's image and likeness to be God's representative in this world and have dominion over it. Faith sees man redeemed and lifted into union with Christ, abiding in Him, identified with Him, and clothed with His power in intercession. Faith sees the Holy Spirit dwelling and praying in the heart, making, in our sighings, intercession according to God. Faith sees the intercession of the saints to be part of the life of the Holy Trinity—the believer as God's child asking of the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit. Faith sees something of the Divine fitness and beauty of this scheme of salvation through intercession, wakens the soul to a consciousness of its wondrous destiny, and girds it with strength for the blessed self-sacrifice it calls to.

God seeks intercessors. —When He called His people out of Egypt, He separated the priestly tribe, to draw nigh to Him, and stand before Him, and bless the people in His name. From time to time He sought and found and honored intercessors, for whose sake He spared or blessed His people. When our Lord left the earth He said to the inner circle He had gathered around Him—an inner circle of special devotion to His service, to which access is still free to every disciple: "I chose you, and appointed you, that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you."

We have already noticed the six times repeated three wonderful words—*whatsoever—In My Name—it shall be done*. In them Christ placed the powers of the heavenly world at their disposal—not for their own selfish use, but in the interests of His kingdom. How wondrously they used it we know. And since that time, down through the ages, these

men have had their successors, men who have proved how surely God works in answer to prayer. And we may praise God that in our days too, there is an ever-increasing number who begin to see and prove that in church and mission, in large societies and little circles and individual effort, intercession is the chief thing, the power that moves God and opens heaven. They are learning, and long to learn better, and that all may learn, that in all work for souls intercession must take the first place, and that those who in it have received from heaven, in the power of the Holy Ghost, what they are to communicate to others, will be best able to do the Lord's work.

God seeks intercessors. —Though God had His appointed servants in Israel, watchmen set by Himself to cry to Him day and night and give Him no rest, He often had to wonder and complain that there was no intercessor, none to stir himself up to take hold of His strength. And He still waits and wonders in our day, that there are not more intercessors, that all His children do not give themselves to this highest and holiest work that many of them who do so, do not engage in it more intensely and perseveringly.

He wonders to find ministers of His gospel complaining that their duties do not allow them to find time for this, which He counts their first, their highest, their most delightful, their alone effective work. He wonders to find His sons and daughters, who have forsaken home and friends for His sake and the gospel's, come so short in what He meant to be their abiding strength—receiving day by day all they needed to impart to the dark heathen. He wonders to find multitudes of His children who have hardly any conception of what intercession is. He wonders to find multitudes more who have learned that it is their duty, and seek to obey it, but confess that they know but little of taking hold upon God or prevailing with Him.

God seeks intercessors. —He longs to dispense larger blessings. He longs to reveal His power and glory as God, His saving love, more abundantly. He seeks intercessors in larger number, in greater power, to prepare the way of the Lord. He seeks them. Where could He seek them but in His Church? And how does He expect to find them? He entrusted to His Church the task of telling of their Lord's need, the task of encouraging and training, and preparing them for His holy service.

And He ever comes again, seeking fruit, seeking intercessors. In His Word He has spoken of the "widows indeed, who trust in God, and continue in supplication night and day." He looks if the Church is training the great army of aged men and women, whose time of outward work is past, but who can strengthen the army of the "elect, who cry to Him day and night." He looks to the great host of the Christian Endeavour, the three or four

millions of young lives that have given themselves away in the solemn pledge, "I promise the Lord Jesus Christ that I will strive to do whatever He would like to have me do," and wonders how many are being trained to pass from the brightness of the weekly prayer-meeting and its confession of loyalty, to swell the secret intercession that is to save souls. He looks to the thousands of young men and young women in training for the work of ministry and mission, and gazes longingly to see if the Church is teaching them that intercession, power with God, must be their first care, and in seeking to train and help them to it.

He looks to see whether ministers and missionaries are understanding their opportunity, and laboring to train the believers of their congregation into those who can "help together" by their prayer, and can "strive with them in their prayers." As Christ seeks the lost sheep until He find it, Gods seeks intercessors.

God seeks intercessors. —He will not, He cannot, take the work out of the hands of His Church. And so He comes, calling and pleading in many ways. Now by a man whom He raises up to live a life of faith in His service, and to prove how actually and abundantly He answers prayer. Then by the story of a church which makes prayer for souls its starting-point, and bears testimony to God's faithfulness.

Sometimes in a mission, which proves how special prayer can meet special need, and bring down the power of the Spirit. And sometimes again by a season of revival coming in answer to united urgent supplication. In these and many other ways God is showing us what intercession can do, and beseeching us to waken up and train His great host to be, every one, a people of intercessors.

God seeks intercessors. —He sends His servants out to call them. Let ministers make this a part of their duty. Let them make their church a training school of intercession. Give the people definite objects for prayer. Encourage them to take a definite time to it, if it were only ten minutes every day. Help them to understand the boldness they may use with God. Teach them to expect and look out for answers. Show them what it is first to pray and get an answer in secret, and then carry the answer and impart the blessing.

Tell everyone who is master of his own time that he is as the angels, free to tarry before the throne and then go out and minister to the heirs of salvation. Sound out the blessed tidings that this honor is for all God's people. There is no difference. That servant girl, this day laborer, that bedridden invalid, this daughter in her mother's home, these men and young men in business—all are called, all, all are needed. God seeks intercessors.

God seeks intercessors. —As ministers take up the work of finding and training them it will urge themselves to pray more. Christ gave Paul to be a pattern of His grace before He made him a preacher of it. It has been well said, 'The first duty of a clergyman is humbly to beg of God that all he would have done in his people may be first truly and fully done in himself.' The effort to bring this message of God may cause much heart-searching and humiliation.

All the better. The best practice in doing a thing is helping others to do it. O ye servants of Christ, set as watchmen to cry to God day and night, let us awake to our holy calling. Let us believe in the power of intercession. Let us practice it. Let us seek on behalf of our people to get from God Himself the Spirit and the **Life** we preach. With our spirit and life given up to God in intercession, the Spirit and Life that God gives them through us cannot fail to be the Life of Intercession too.

The Ministry of Intercession: A Plea for More Prayer by Andrew Murray

¹³ And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

¹⁴ If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. John 14:13-14

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give *it* you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. John 16: 23-24

