



A North Central Church Season of Prayer

Day 1 — A Prayer for Righteousness and Justice
Genesis 18:20–33

In Genesis 18, Abraham is visited by the Lord and two angels (18:22; 19:1) who repeat the promise made earlier that Abraham and Sarah will have a son. When the promise was first made, Abraham laughed (17:15-16), and on this occasion, it is Sarah’s turn to chuckle. Before the visitors leave, the Lord reveals to Abraham his plan to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the outcry against them. But God desires to save Abraham and his household, “that they may keep the way of Yahweh, to do righteousness and justice ...”

In the conversation between Abraham and God that follows—what we might call a prayer—Abraham asks God to be righteous and just and to spare the cities for the sake of His people who live there.

***20** Then the Lord said, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous **21** 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.” **22** The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord.^[a] **23** Then Abraham approached him and said: “Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? **24** What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare^[b] the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? **25** 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? **26** The Lord said, “If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”*

***27** 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, **28** what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five people?” “If I find forty-five there,” he said, “I will not destroy it.” **29** 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.” **30** 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.” **31** 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.” **32** 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.” **33** When the Lord had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home.*



Prayer

Lord, we honor you as sovereign, just and right. But at times, we live as though we don’t know you at all. No doubt we are blinded by ignorance, by our own willful arrogance, foolishness and pride. We confess our brokenness and the brokenness of our cities, our nation and world. The outcry against injustice is deafening to our own ears; how much more to yours?

Yet Lord, you invite us to know you, to know your heart, to be your people and to walk in relationship with you. You invite us to be your priests, to speak your words to those who suffer, to the powerful, to those who long for hope. You call us to seek both the welfare of the city and the welfare of the saints, who are called righteous only by your mercy through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You invite us to change our minds, and you invite us to change yours. How remarkable!

As you tested Abraham time and again to see if he would stay faithful, help us to remain faithful also. May we glorify you by fostering transformed lives in the image of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit...for the sake of the world.

Submit a Prayer Request

Write Your Own Prayer