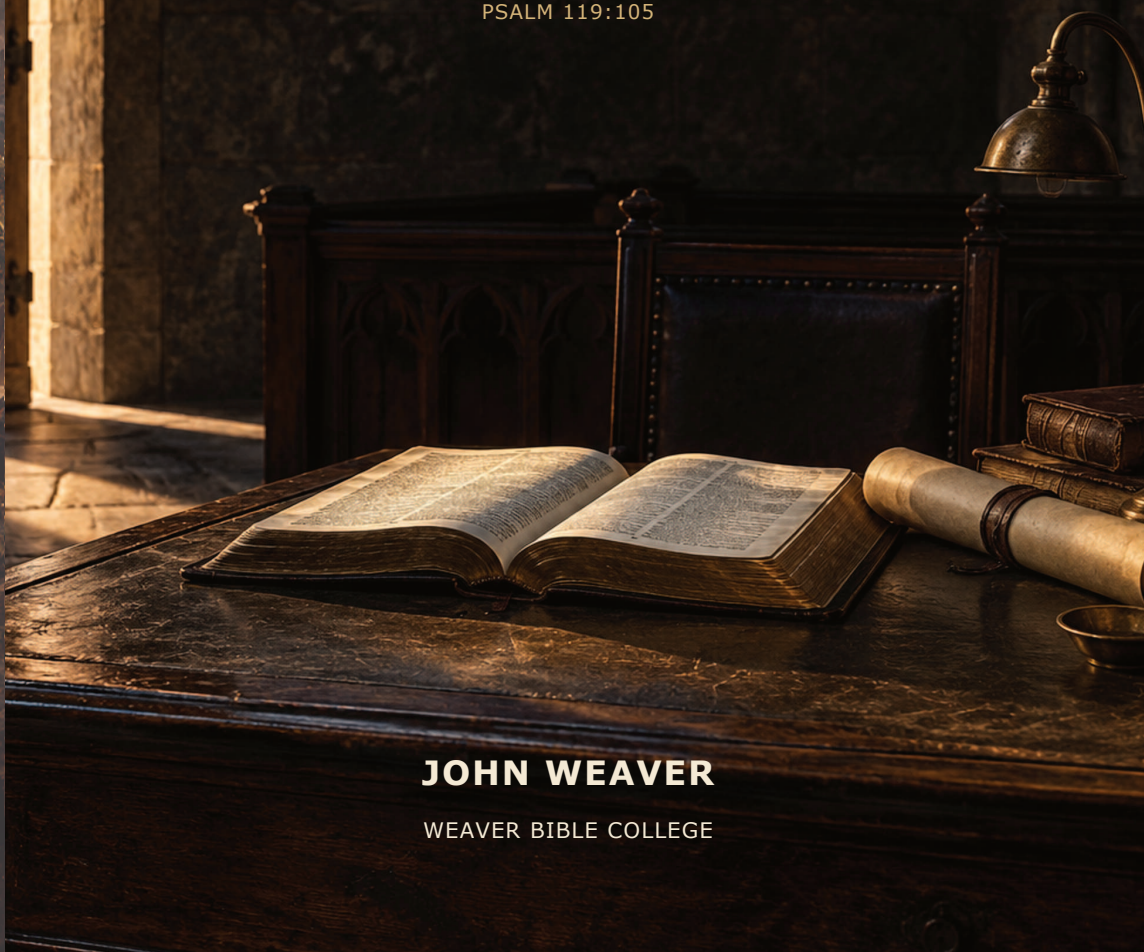
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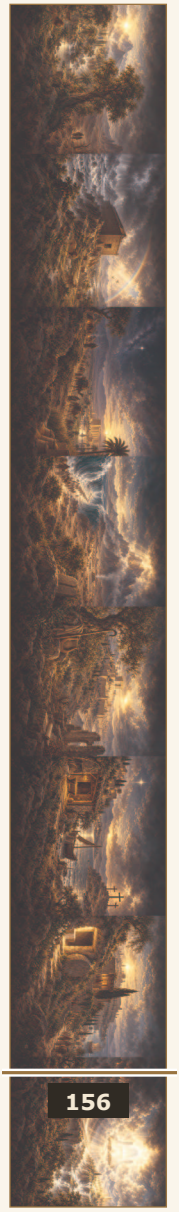
"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE



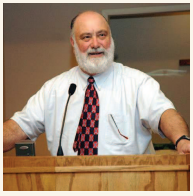
We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

1 JOHN 2:1, EXCERPT

The believer's confidence rests in the person and work of Jesus Christ. John Weaver examines advocacy, intercession, forgiveness, and the security of those who depend on Him. These messages connect Christ's mediation with the honest acknowledgment of sin and the continuing responsibility to walk in faithful obedience.

"I cannot lose my acceptance with God because I cannot lose Jesus Christ, and I cannot lose the work of Christ."

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

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CHAPTER 1

The Divine Advocate - 1

November 22, 2009

Introduction to the Series and Text

I would really encourage you to be here for the next four or five messages. Today, I am laying a groundwork because I am dealing with the divine advocate, or the advocacy of Jesus Christ. Next week, I am going to show how this was understood in the Old Testament. In fact, I am just about convinced that some of those Old Testament saints understood this a whole lot better than we do today, even though we have the completed Word of God. This is going to lead me into three or four messages on imprecatory prayer, and that is why I am going to be dealing with those verses shortly.

John writes, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

So you need to ask immediately, What does it mean to have an advocate with the Father? Why do we need an advocate? You might also ask, What in the world does our advocate do for us?

Definition of Advocate

Let me give you two definitions to show you how, originally, a lot of our legal terminology had a Christian influence upon it. From Bouvier's Law Dictionary, the word advocate is defined this way: "Civil and ecclesiastical law, an officer who maintains or defends the rights of his client in the same manner as the counselor does in common law."

Then, from Black's Law Dictionary: "One who assists, defends, or pleads for another. One who renders legal advice and aid and pleads the cause of another before court or a tribunal, a counselor, a person learned in the law and duly admitted to practice, who assists his client with advice and pleads for him in open court, and then a pleader of causes."

When you think of the term advocate, most of the time we do not think of the Lord Jesus Christ. But the Greek term is more specific than even Bouvier's and Black's Law Dictionary. The Greek word is parakletos. Para is a preposition in the Greek, literally meaning alongside of, and kletos is from the verb kaleo, literally meaning I call. So a parakletos, or advocate, literally means one called alongside of to help, someone called to stand beside us in order to help us. The word is also translated in our Bibles as comforter.

The Holy Spirit as Our Earthly Advocate

In the widest sense of the word, advocate means a helper, a succorer, one who aids, or an assistant. In the strictest sense, it refers to one who pleads another's cause before a judge, a pleader, a counsel for defense, a legal assistant, or advocate.

Hold 1 John, but look in your Bibles to the book of John, chapter 14. Every time you see the word comforter in these verses, it is the same word translated as advocate in 1 John 2. John 14, verse 16: "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that is another paraclete or another advocate, that He may abide with you forever." In verse 26: "But the Comforter, that is the paraclete or the advocate, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 15, verse 26: "But when the Comforter, the Paraclete, or the Advocate, is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeded from the Father, he shall testify of me." Then in John 16, verse 7: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter, the Advocate, the Paraclete, will not come unto you. But if I depart, I will send him unto you."

If you read theological books, or even sometimes devotional books, you will find that the Holy Spirit is referred to as the divine paraclete. It is taken from the Greek word parakletos, which means one called alongside to help. Our Lord is saying that in His absence, we are going to have an advocate here on earth, and it is none other than the Holy Spirit. He is our Comforter. He is our teacher, our illuminator, our instructor, our guide, and our counselor.

If you look in Romans 8, you will find one simple ministry that the Holy Spirit performs on our behalf. Here is the Comforter in a ministry of intercession. Romans 8:26 says, "Likewise the Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit, also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." And verse 27 continues, "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

There are times that you and I are so burdened, and sometimes we are so ignorant, that we do not even know what to pray for. We do not know how to pray. The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit Himself then makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. We may not be able to form the word, but He understands our thoughts, He understands our desires, and He makes intercession for us according to the will of God.

So what the Scripture is teaching is basically this: We have an advocate here with us who is the Holy Spirit, and we also have an advocate in heaven who is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Advocacy as a Family Blessing

Advocacy is God's family blessing. There are other blessings that God bestows upon the righteous and the unrighteous. But justification, sanctification, continued intercession, peace, and advocacy are only for the saints of God. They are given to His children alone. The unsaved do not have the benefit of advocacy. According to the Word of God, they stand alone, helpless and hopeless before the Judge of all the earth. Stop and think about that. What a terrifying experience to stand before the sovereign God of heaven and earth and have no hope and no help. Advocacy is for the children of God alone.

The Purpose of John's Writing: That We Sin Not

In 1 John 2:1, John immediately gives the reason he is writing: “My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not.” First and foremost, John writes to encourage us not to sin. He encourages us to live a holy, godly, obedient life.

The word sin is very unique here. It is not the word for lawlessness. We are not lawless individuals because we are under the law to Jesus Christ. The word here refers to trespassing, offending, missing the mark, and falling short. In other words, John encourages each of us not to fall short, miss the mark, trespass, or offend.

How, then, do we not trespass? How do we not fall short? Let me give you a couple of answers. David said in Psalm 119:80 that he wanted his heart to be sound in God’s statutes, that he might not be ashamed. I might deal with that verse in the not-too-distant future. It is a wonderful verse. David also said in Psalm 119:9-11—and although he speaks of a young man, it applies to a young woman, an old man, and an old woman as well: “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way, by taking heed thereto according to thy word? With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

Notice what he said. If you want to cleanse your way, how do you do so? By taking heed according to God’s Word. “O let me not

wander from thy commandments." Do not let me stray from the Word of God. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." John is encouraging us from the beginning not to trespass, offend, miss the mark, or fall short.

Sin's Effect on Fellowship, Not Sonship

Then, secondly, in verse 1, he writes: "My little children, these things write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." If we do fall short, trespass, or miss the mark, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

None of us are perfect. Do not tell my wife, because I try to tell her I am perfect, but I am afraid she knows better. The godliest Christian, the most holy, the most gifted, the most godly individual, whoever he is and wherever he is, still falls short of the glory of God. He misses the mark in some area.

Note what John is saying: "My little children, these things write unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin," and by "any man" he is referring to any Christian. Advocacy is only for the children of God; the unsaved do not have an advocate with the Father. When a Christian sins, advocacy is connected with the Father: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

What does sin do for a child of God? First of all, it interrupts our communion with the Father, because it grieves Him. When a child of God sins, we do not lose our salvation. We do not fall from being a son, nor do we lose our acceptance before the Father. Ephesians 1:6 says, "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." We are accepted in Jesus Christ. God made us accepted in the Beloved. I cannot lose my acceptance with God because I cannot lose Jesus Christ, and I cannot lose the work of Christ. What Christ did was absolutely perfect and complete.

Sin does not affect our sonship or our standing before God, but it does affect our fellowship, our joy, and our intimacy with the Father.

David sinned, and David sinned grievously. He wrote a number of penitential Psalms, the most famous being Psalm 51. In Psalm 51,

verse 12, while repenting over his sin, David prayed, “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with thy free spirit.” There are many people who want to identify with David’s sin, but very few who want to identify with his repentance. David repented. In this penitential Psalm, he prayed for the restoration of that joy.

David did not cease to become a son. David did not cease to become a believer. He did indeed have his joy, fellowship, and intimacy with God interrupted because of that sin. Therefore, in his repentance, he prayed for the restoration of that joy.

This is not a question of our standing. Sin does not affect our standing. Romans 5, verse 1, says, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Notice that we stand in grace. We do not stand based upon our works. We do not stand based upon our obedience. We do not stand based upon our law-keeping. We stand in grace, and God’s grace does not change. Therefore, when we are talking about sin, we are not talking about losing our sonship. We are not talking about losing our standing.

The Accuser and the Need for an Advocate

But we are talking about a loss of our fellowship, our joy, our communion, our intimacy with the Father. Now let me tell you something else about our sin that's bad. We not only sin, but we also have an accuser. If you will look in your Bibles to Revelation chapter 12 and verse 10, I want you to note what the scripture says concerning Satan or the devil. Look in Revelation 12 and verse 10. Revelation 12 verse 10: "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now has come salvation and strength in the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ for the accuser of our brethren is cast down who accused them before our God day and night." Now you say, what does that have to do with our sin? Well, remember now, he's the accuser of our brethren, and he accuses us before God day and night. I want you to look in your Bibles to 2 Samuel chapter 12. I want you to note what God told David when he was confronted by Nathan.

Look in 2 Samuel chapter 12, and notice if you would please verse 14. Yes, David sinned. David tried to cover his sin. He was certainly unsuccessful. God saw his sin and God knew his sin. Notice, if you would, please, 2 Samuel chapter 12, verse 14: "Howbeit because thou hast done this deed, thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, and the child that is given unto thee shall surely die." Look at, "Howbeit because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born of thee shall surely die." Notice he would please, "Thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." One of the awful consequences of sin, when a child of God sins, the enemies of the Lord say, "I knew he wasn't a Christian."

You say Christ saves from sin. Look at you. They mock. They blaspheme. If you'll look in your Bibles to Psalm 79, you'll see the same truth given again. Psalm 79. And notice if you would please, verse 4. Psalm 79 and verse 4. Look what David writes: "We are become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision of them that are round about us." That's one of the terrible consequences of sin. You become reproached and a reproach upon the name of Christ and upon His truth. Do you realize that's why the Bible in 1 Timothy, chapter three and verse seven, talking about a pastor: "Moreover, he must have a good report of them who are without, lest he fall into the reproach and the snare of the devil." When we sin, oftentimes we give the enemies of the Lord the opportunity to blaspheme.

Scripture refers to Satan as the accuser of the brethren. Satan will accuse us any way that he can. He will use lies, innuendos, half-truths, and also the truth that we provide for him. He will use it to mock God. Job chapter 1 shows how Satan accused Job and, at the same time, mocked God.

The Lord said unto Satan, “Whence comest thou?” Satan answered, “From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” And the Lord said unto Satan, “Hast thou considered my servant Job, knowing that Satan had? Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?” That is, he spits out evil; he cannot stand it.

Then Satan answered the Lord, “Doth Job fear God for naught?” You think Job fears You for nothing? “Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.”

“Now put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.” Satan was saying, in effect, “Job is nothing but a money-grubbing, covetous, selfish individual. The only reason he serves You, God, is because You give him everything. Take it away from him, and he will curse You to Your face. He does not love You.” The implication is that God is not lovable or desirable, and that Job served Him only for what he could get from Him.

Of course, Job lost everything and still retained his integrity. In Job chapter 2, the Lord said unto Satan, “Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

"And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone, and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." God allowed Satan to touch him. From the top of his head to the toe of his foot, he was full of putrefied sores. He took potsherds and scraped himself. Yet the Bible tells us that Job sinned not with his lips. In all of his affliction, he still honored God.

We have an accuser; therefore, we need an advocate. We are sinners; therefore, we need an advocate. Our Advocate not only pleads for us, He defends us as well. He defends us from defamation, false accusation, and outright lies. He represents us and pleads on our behalf.

Jesus Christ the Righteous Advocate

In 1 John 2:1, He says, "My little children, these things I write unto you that ye sin not." Yet He said, "and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Pay close attention to the fact that our Advocate is Jesus Christ the Righteous.

Our Advocate is not only the Lord of Glory; He is the Righteous One. He is not a shyster, a trickster, or a sham. He is not an ethical man. He is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Righteous One. He is righteous, eminently righteous, and possesses the ability to make others righteous.

When the Bible refers to Jesus Christ as the righteous one, it refers to Him as the just one, the righteous one, the virtuous one, one who keeps the commandments of God. He is the innocent one, the perfect one, the one who is acceptable with God. Our Lord said in John 8:29, "And he that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone. Listen, for I do always those things that please Him." The Bible tells us in Psalm 11:7, "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and his countenance doth behold the upright." Jesus Christ is the righteous one, and the righteous Lord doth His righteousness. Our righteousness is only in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the only individual who ever obeyed the law of God personally, perfectly, and perpetually. He never sinned or violated the law of God. The only standing and righteousness that you and I have is that which is found in Jesus Christ. When I come to my Father in prayer and say, “You know, I’ve tried to do that which is right, and I did this and I did that,” I am sorry, but that is unacceptable. Why is it unacceptable? Because I am not righteous. Even in our righteous deeds, there is enough sin to damn us. How many of you have ever tried praying, and as you prayed, vile, wicked thoughts came into your mind, or wrong motives and wrong desires?

When we come to our Heavenly Father, we come standing only in the merits and righteousness of Jesus Christ: “Hear me, Lord, not because I’ve tried to obey You, not because I’ve obeyed You, but hear me because of Christ, who is perfectly acceptable unto thee.” The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 1:30–31, “But of him, that is, of God the Father, are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made of us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” We are in Jesus Christ, made wise, made righteous, sanctified, and redeemed. Why? “That according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” We do not glory in ourselves; we glory in what Jesus Christ has done for us.

That is why 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “For he God hath made him Christ to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of Christ.” God has made Him to be sin for us, that we might be made righteous in Him.

Remember Paul’s pedigree. In Philippians 3:4, Paul wrote, “Though I might also have confidence in the flesh.” If any other man thought that he had grounds for trusting in the flesh, Paul said, “I more.” If you want to trust in the flesh, here is my boast.

Paul writes, “Circumcised of the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.” Was Paul not a sinner? Yes, Paul was a sinner. But when he says “touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless,” he is speaking of the external righteousness of the Pharisees. Then he says, “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

What is Paul saying? “I do not want my righteousness. I want the righteousness of Jesus Christ.” Now look at 1 John 2:1: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” Jesus Christ is the only one with the credentials to practice law in the divine court of the Judge of all the earth. No one else has ever passed the bar exam, because no one else has kept God’s law personally, perfectly, and perpetually. He is the righteous One; therefore, He has personal standing because He has kept God’s law and earned a perfect righteousness. Moreover, He is the Son of the Judge. He is the only Advocate who has never lost a case. Christ has perfect standing to be our Advocate. He stands before the Father, and He also has the perfect plea.

Propitiation: Christ's Satisfying Sacrifice

When we are accused of sin before the Father—"Look at that man. He claims to be a Christian, but he is not perfect. He fell short. You claim him as a son"—our Lord Jesus Christ, our Advocate, says, "Father, look at him through me. I gave him my righteousness." It is not our righteousness; it is His righteousness. John writes, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

A question that taxes many people is this: "I know that we are forgiven for all of our sins committed before we were saved, but what about the sins we have committed after we have been saved? Is not God angry with us over those sins, and do they not affect our standing with the Father?"

Let me answer that in two ways. First, how many sins did you commit before Jesus Christ died? None. You were not alive; you were not even around. Therefore, Christ died for future sins as well as past sins. Secondly, the Old Testament saints were saved by looking forward to the coming work of Christ, and New Testament saints are saved by looking backward in faith to the completed work of Jesus Christ.

This truth becomes more evident when we look at the word propitiation. The Bible says, "and he is the propitiation for our sins." Many Christians cannot even pronounce the word propitiation, and most Christians have no earthly idea what it means. The word propitiation occurs three times in the New Testament. The first is in Romans chapter 3, the second is in our text in 1 John 2 and verse 2, and the third is in 1 John 4 and verse 10. I will quote 1 John 4:10 shortly. But when you read Romans 3:25–26, you will perceive that God saved the Old Testament saints by faith as they looked forward to the completed work of Jesus Christ.

Look in Romans 3:25. In fact, let us read verse 24. Romans 3:24 says, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." We are talking about the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Now watch verse 25: "Whom God, talking about Christ

now, whom God has sent forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say at this time, his righteousness that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

What Romans 3:25–26 teaches very clearly is the justice of God in forgiving and saving the Old Testament saints as well as the New Testament saints. He is just and the justifier. What does that mean? It means God did not cut any corners. He did not allow anyone to get away with sin. He did everything according to His law and according to His justice. Notice again verse 25: "Whom God has sent forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood." Why?

Number one, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. Those Old Testament saints were saved by faith in Christ. He forgave them based upon the fact that Jesus Christ is indeed "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." They looked forward in faith to that sacrifice, and God forbore with them. Then he says, "to declare, I say at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus Christ." So we see now that Jesus Christ is our propitiation. We read it in 1 John 2:2, and 1 John 4:10 simply says this: "That he God sent forth his son to be a propitiation for our sins."

So here is the question that you have to ask: What is propitiation, and how does our Lord's propitiatory sacrifice relate to His advocacy? First of all, let me try to answer this question. What is propitiation? Let me give you a little hint by asking you to turn in your Bible to the book of Hebrews, chapter nine. I am going to show you one other word which is the same Greek word as propitiation. Look at Hebrews 9, verse 5.

"And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat of which we cannot now speak particularly." Now, everyone knows that in the Holy of Holies, you had the mercy seat. You remember Aaron went in once a year and sprinkled blood upon the mercy seat. Guess what? The word mercy seat in Hebrews 9 and verse 5 is the word propitiation. It is the same Greek word. So you ought to know something now: the word propitiation is related to the Day of Atonement. Therefore, it should not surprise you to learn that the

word propitiation refers to an expiatory sacrifice, and expiation refers then to the washing away of sin. Yes, propitiation includes the washing away of sin, but it includes more than that. The word propitiation not only means to expiate, to wash away; it refers to the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, but it also refers to placation and appeasement—to placate or appease someone.

Now, since you are in the book of Hebrews, look very quickly at Hebrews chapter 10. Notice, if you would please, let us begin reading there in verse 1: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect." Skip down, if you would please, to verse 3: "But in those sacrifices, those Old Testament sacrifices, there is remembrance again made of sins every year."

That is why you had to keep doing it. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he said, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared for me." Hebrews 10, verse 6: "In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come in the volume of this book."

"It is written of me to do thy will, O God. Above, when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offering, and for sin thou wouldst not, neither has pleasure therein which are offered by the law. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."

The Old Testament sacrifices were not the true propitiation or the true expiation; they were pictures. Jesus Christ came, and His blood was the true expiation and the true propitiation. The word propitiation means to placate, to satisfy, and to appease.

How does that apply to us? God is holy, and His holiness involved a righteous indignation and anger against us because of our sins. His wrath abode upon us. In His propitiation, our Lord not only expiated and washed away our sins; He appeased, satisfied, and placated the righteous anger and wrath of God.

Let that sink in. Someone may say, "Certainly after we have been saved, when we sin, it surely angers God." I am sure that sin does

anger God. But when you are a child of God, our divine Advocate points to Himself and says, “Father, don’t be angry. Here I am. I have placated, satisfied, and appeased Your righteous anger and wrath.” Jesus Christ is not only the expiation; He is the propitiation. He is our mediator, our Advocate, and our defender.

Martin Luther said it like this: “Christ is not a mere suppliant petitioner. He pleads for us on the ground of justice or righteousness as well as mercy. Though He can say nothing good of us, He can say much for us. It is His righteousness or obedience to the law and endurance of its full penalty for us on which He grounds His claim for our acquittal.”

“The sense thereof is in that He is righteous. In contrast to our sin, if any man sin, the Father, by raising him from the dead and setting it at his own right hand, has once for all accepted Christ’s claim for us. Therefore, the accuser’s charges against God’s children are in vain. The righteousness of Christ stands on our side, for God’s righteousness is in Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is ours.”

“What shall we say, then, to these things as follow? If God be for us, who can be against us?”

There is one other phrase to consider. In 1 John 2 and verse 2, he says, “and he is our propitiation. He is the propitiation for our sins. Not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

The World of Believers

How can Jesus Christ be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world? Here is the answer: He is the propitiation for the sins of the world of believers. I told you earlier, advocacy is only for the children of God; it is not for the unsaved. I have in times preached an entire message just on the word world. Perhaps I should do it again.

The word world is used in many different ways in the Bible, at least thirteen different ways. Usually, when most people hear the word world, they think it means everyone in the world. Many times it does not mean that. In John 1:10, the same Greek word means three different things in one simple verse: “He was in the world and the world was made by him and the world knew him not.” Cosmos each time. “He was in the world”—what does that mean? He was in

the earth. “The world was made by him”—that would be the universe and everything contained therein. “The world knew him not”—that is, the world of his own people. So here the one word world is used three different ways in one verse.

Moreover, the Bible even speaks of the world of the ungodly. Second Peter 2:5 says, “...and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing a flood upon the world of the ungodly.” If there was a world of the ungodly, obviously there is a world of the godly. If there is a world of unbelievers, there is a world of believers.

We could use that same word today. The world of the humanist is not my world. I live in a totally different world than they live in, and they live in a totally different world than I live in. Moreover, when you look at the word propitiation, which means to placate, to appease, to satisfy, it has to refer to the world of believers.

How can I say that? Very simply, because of what the Scripture teaches. Is God still angry with the wicked? Yes, the Bible says in Psalm 7:11, "God judges the righteous, but God is angry with the wicked every day." And He is so angry that, when He judges them, according to Revelation 19, the smoke of their torment will ascend up forever and ever and ever.

So clearly, when you look at the word propitiation in 1 John 2, and the word world in 1 John 2 and verse 2, it has to refer to the world of believers, whoever they are and wherever they may be. Christ has not satisfied, nor placated, nor appeased God the Father for those wicked who refuse Him and will not repent and bow to Him. Scripture says we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. We have an advocate here on earth, the Holy Spirit, but we also have an advocate in heaven who pleads for us and defends us.

Application: Christ's Continual Intercession

Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of God, constantly and continually interceding for us. He pleads for us before the throne of God. He is none other than Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, the Righteous One. What He pleads is not, "Father, they're doing the

best they can." No. What He pleads is His work, His merit, and His righteousness. His intercession for us keeps us alive and keeps us living.

Any success we have in our Christian life—any righteousness, godliness, obedience, or success in the ministry—is due only to the intercession, work, and merits of Jesus Christ. Paul said, "I am what I am only by the grace of God." We have an advocate, and I trust you will see how important the advocacy of Jesus Christ is and what it really means to have an advocate with the Father.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask for Your blessing and help. Teach us, dear Lord, build us up in the most holy faith, and may we see, understand, and comprehend the greatness of Jesus Christ, the greatness of His ministry of intercession, and the fact that He is our advocate. May we give Thee praise. In the name of Christ we ask and pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

The Divine Advocate - 2

November 29, 2009

Introduction and Review

I want you to look in 1 John 2, because I am going to be dealing with the second part of our divine advocate, which I began last week. In 1 John 2, verse 1, we read, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” Very quickly, let me remind you that last week I was pointing out the advocacy of Jesus Christ.

I gave you a couple of legal definitions, and then I went back to the Greek word, paraclete. It is translated as advocate here in 1 John 2 and verse 1, but it is also translated in John 14, 15, and 16 as comforter. I told you that sometimes it is a reference to the Holy Spirit. He is called the divine paraclete. The Greek word is parakletos: para means alongside of. It is a preposition. Kletos is the noun from kaleo, which means I call. So a parakletos is one who is called alongside of to help. In that sense, the word means comforter. At times, in the widest sense of the word, it refers to a helper, a

succorer, one who comes to aid, or an assistant. But in the strictest sense, it refers to one who pleads the cause of another, especially before a judge—a pleader, counsel for defense, or legal assistant.

Our Lord tells us that we have basically two advocates. One is the Holy Spirit, who is here with us today, and secondly, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God the Father. I pointed out how He is the propitiation for our sins. The word propitiation means not only to expiate, to wash away sins, but also to placate, satisfy, and appease. I tried to show you how Jesus Christ did indeed placate the wrath of God.

In light of what I just said, keep in mind the Scripture pointed out in Peter: until the day dawn and the day star arise in our hearts. He talked about the light in the dark, or obscure, place. My statement is this: I cannot help but think that we live in an age in which we have the most illiterate, ignorant, and inferior Christians that have ever lived.

The Ignorance of Modern Christians

When I say that, I mean simply this: when you compare the knowledge and experience of Christians in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries with the knowledge and experience of Christians today, we are like dwarfs standing beside giants. I am not sure if you realize this or not, but practically all of the major theological books were written during those years. In fact, those major theological books are the books that are still being taught today.

If you want to try this little experience for yourself, you may do so. I would challenge you to get one of the old Puritan books, on any subject you choose, and read that Puritan book; then compare it to the pablum that is written today. I had rather read one Puritan book than twenty modern-day books. The truth of the matter is, you will get far more out of one Puritan book than you will ever get out of twenty modern-day books. Those old men were scholars. Those old men studied. They had no television, no telephones, and no cell phones. All they did was study, preach, and teach.

The point I am trying to make is this: in light of what I taught last week on the advocacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, I am afraid that, as you look at the Bible during that dark age of the old covenant, some of those Old Testament saints had more knowledge concerning the advocacy of our God than do the New Testament saints. I believe that is evidenced by the various appeals in Scripture to the sovereign God of heaven and earth for divine intervention.

David is one who appeals to God far more often than many others. Maybe it is because he was hotly pursued and persecuted by his enemies more frequently. But let me show you some of these in the Old Testament. Remember, we are talking about advocacy. An advocate is someone who is called alongside of to help. He is our legal counsel.

David's Appeal in 1 Samuel 24

In 1 Samuel 24:15, David says to King Saul, “The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.”

SCRIPTURE READING - 1 Samuel 24:8-15 (KJV)

In the context, David is being wickedly and wrongly persecuted by Saul. Saul is seeking David's life; he wants David absolutely dead. David had the opportunity to kill Saul, and he refused to do so.

"David also arose afterwards and went out of the cave." David and his men were hiding in the cave. Saul came in, and David just cut off the skirt of Saul's robe. And the Bible says that "David also arose afterwards and went out of the cave and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth and bowed himself. And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord hath delivered thee into mine hand in the cave, and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed."

> "Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee."
>
> "After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea. The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand."
>
> David is informing Saul that his sources are wicked and wrong. Saul has been listening to men, to David's enemies. They have been telling Saul that David is seeking his life and seeking his destruction. David is simply saying, They lied. I'm not after you. I'm not trying to harm you. The evidence is clear. David comes out with a skirt of Saul's robe. He said, Saul, you were in the power of my hand.

I could have killed you, but I did not do so. I spared your life. So you have been grossly misinformed by all of my enemies. And David says, why are you chasing me? I'm nothing more than a flea. I'm nothing more than a dead dog. Why are you after me? I intend you no harm whatsoever.

Now note how David appeals to God. He says in verse 15, "The Lord therefore be judge." Here we have the holy, righteous Judge of all the earth: "The Lord therefore be judge and judge between me and thee and see"—and look what he says—"and plead my cause," "and deliver me out of thine hand."

God's Condemnation of Unjust Judges

David is declaring that he has clean hands. There is no evil intent in him whatsoever; there is no malice, no wickedness. When he asks God not only to be judge and to judge between himself and Saul, but also to plead his cause, God, in pleading David's cause, would be

defending David and delivering him from Saul's hand. The word refers to a legal battle in which David is requesting divine intervention. He is saying, Lord, be thou my advocate. You plead my cause. Here is a wicked civil ruler seeking my life. I've done nothing wrong in the innocency of my hands and the integrity of my heart. I stand before you, Lord. Judge between us, and Lord, defend me and deliver me.

Think of the men and women, many of them whom we know, who have been railroaded by an unjust, wicked, and corrupt judicial system. God specifically condemns unjust judges in Psalm 82. This entire psalm is against wicked, corrupt judges. Notice what God says is the result when there is injustice and wicked, corrupt judges. Psalm 82, beginning with verse 1: "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods." The gods there refer to judges or civil rulers. Our Lord himself uses this and quotes this verse in John chapter 10.

But notice verse 2: "How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?" He tells the judges what they should do: "Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked."

And then he says this about their ignorance and their stupidity. "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness." And I want you to note this statement. "All the foundations of the earth are out of course." What's he saying? He's saying that wicked, corrupt, ungodly judges turn the world upside down. Society is in chaos and confusion because of these judges. And when David is facing an unjust and wicked and corrupt magistrate, he can't appeal to the king. It's the king who is against him. So he appeals to the king of kings, the divine advocate, and he says, intervene for me. It's like in Psalm 10 and verse 12, when he said, "Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble." Now, I want you to turn, if you would, to 1 John chapter 3 and let me show you something. 1 John 3, this is an important passage, beginning there in verse 19. I want you to understand that only an innocent individual is going to ask God to intervene.

If you look in 1 John 3, and notice, if you would, verse 19, the Bible says this, "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." In other words, it's only an innocent man that's going to come before God and say, Lord, you know me. You know my intent. You know my heart. You know everything about me. Lord, I'm willing to be judged.

I have not done this. I am not guilty. I'm willing to stand before Thee in this. But let me point out very quickly, the wicked do not want to be judged. And if you know that you are wicked, and you know that you're sinful, and you know that you've done wrong, you don't want God to intervene. Because you understand that God is no respecter of persons. And so David, at a very early time in his life, began to say, Lord, plead my cause.

David's Prayer in Psalm 35

Now, I want you to turn to Psalm 35, because there's going to be a progression. In 1 Samuel 24, he's just asking God to plead his cause before Saul. We'll look in Psalm 35. And I'm going to be referring in some of the future messages back to this psalm, so it's not my intent to expound the entire psalm today. But look in verse one of Psalm 35. Here's the second passage where David asks God to be his advocate. He says in Psalm 35, verse 1, "Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me."

"Fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help. Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." But notice that in verse 1 he says, "Plead my cause, O Lord." David does not hesitate to ask for divine help. He asks God not only to intervene for him and be his legal assistant, his divine advocate, but also to fight against his enemies. What does he say?

“Strive with them that strive with me. Fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.” David is saying, “These earthly magistrates are not doing what is right. They are corrupt and perverse. Therefore, Lord, I appeal to Thee as my patron and protector.” If you read the entirety

of Psalm 35, you will find that it is a prayer against David's enemies. He invokes God's aid.

He contrasts his integrity and innocency with their cunning, hypocrisy, and malice. At the same time, these imprecations, these curses that he calls down upon his enemies, are based upon their conduct and wickedness. He says to God in Psalm 35, "Lord, once You have destroyed them, exposed them, and brought them down, then I will praise You. I will give You the honor and the glory."

It is interesting that David says in verse one, "Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive against me, fight against them that fight against me." Then he asks God to take up a shield and buckler. He asks God to take up a spear. Do you remember? In Exodus 15, verse 3, the Bible says, "the Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name."

Our divine advocate is not only our patron and protector; He is also a divine warrior. He fights for His saints. Have you ever noticed in Scripture how the saints are referred to as the apple of His eye? You know what the apple is? It is the pupil, the tenderest part of our body. Your eyelids protect your eye so quickly.

Just this week, I stepped into some bushes chasing a cow. It was almost dark, and I did not see the broken limb. It stuck right in my eye and broke off. Although it barely touched my eye, my eyelid caught it, and I was able to reach up and pull it out. My eyelids actually caught the piece of wood. I have had limbs come back, and my eyes automatically close. Why?

Because I am protecting the tenderest part of my body. The Bible tells us in the book of Deuteronomy 32 and verse 10, let me quote it. Listen to what the Bible says: "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." This is talking about Israel. God kept Israel as the apple of His eye.

In Psalm 17 and verse 8, David is praying, and he prays to God: "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings." Lord, protect me the way that You would protect the pupil of an eye. Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings. Then, in Zechariah 2 and verse 8: "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth

you toucheth the apple of his eye." Here is what God says: he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of my eye.

So Psalm 35 is a psalm that teaches us that God is not only our divine Advocate, but He does indeed fight for us, and He undertakes for us. When He fights against our enemies, they shall perish. No one has ever hardened himself against God and prospered.

Now, I want you to understand that if you grasp this truth, especially the advocacy of the sovereign God for His people, it should be an encouragement and an incentive for each one of us to cry to the Lord for help. You remember what He said in Hebrews 13 and verse 5? "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." So our divine Advocate stands by us, and He is never ever going to abdicate His position or His trust.

Let me give you just one quick quote from Spurgeon. Listen to what Spurgeon says. He is talking about verse one of Psalm 35, and he says this.

"Plead against those who plead against me. Strive with my strivers. Contend with my contenders. If they urge their suit in a law court, Lord, meet them there and beat them at their own weapons. Every saint of God shall have this privilege. The accuser of the brethren shall be met by the advocate of the saints. Fight against them that fight against me. If my adversaries try force as well as fraud, be a match for them. Oppose thy strength to their strength."

Jesus does this for all of his beloved. For them he is both intercessor and champion. Whatever aid they need they shall receive from him, and in whatever manner they are assaulted they shall be effectually defended. Let us not fail to leave our case in the Lord's hand. Vain is the help of man, but effectual is the interposition of heaven. What is here asked for as a boon may be regarded as a promise to all the saints.

"In judgment they shall have a divine advocate. In warfare they shall have divine protection." So David says, "Plead my cause, O Lord, against them that strive with me. Fight against them, O Lord, that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler. Stand up for my help. Take your spear and stop the way against me. Don't let them hurt me. Protect me as the apple of thine eye."

David's Prayer in Psalm 43

Notice this progression in Scripture. David is first crying against Saul as an individual. In Psalm 35, he speaks of his enemies—more than one, obviously. But when we come to Psalm 43:1, we read: "Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man." Did you hear what he prayed? "Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation."

The term judge, which he uses first, means nothing less than to ask God to undertake your defense. He expresses that meaning more clearly when he says, "Judge me, O God," with the phrase, "plead my cause." David is praying and pleading that he might be delivered from an ungodly nation. It is important to understand that it is now not just one enemy, nor merely a number of enemies; it is an ungodly nation. The Hebrew word for ungodly refers to someone or a nation that is unmerciful and unjust. The nation against him manifested none of those characteristics of belief in God and obedience toward His law. In other words, it was acting against David with severity and injustice.

It is true that this prayer in Psalm 43 could refer to Saul and his agents, because Saul was king. Saul had a personal bodyguard of 3,000 men and many other soldiers. David may have been saying, "Everyone in this nation is against me," when Saul was attacking him. But it could be more than that. You remember how Absalom and Ahithophel rose up against David, and how Absalom gathered all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, to go to war against him. Basically, the whole nation was against David then.

David also could have been praying this prayer against the Philistines or the Moabites. They were ungodly nations, and they often attacked David and tried to destroy him. It does not really matter whether this prayer was against Saul and his minions, Absalom and Ahithophel, or the Philistines and the Moabites. What David is saying is that his enemies were so many, so numerous, and so multitudinous that they constituted a whole nation.

It seems as if we have a similar scenario in this country. How do you pray when it seems as if the whole nation is corrupt, perverse,

wicked, and practically insane? How do you pray when there is no justice or godliness? How do you pray when your leaders are wicked and immoral, when they are never concerned with doing what is right, holy, and godly, and seem concerned with destroying everyone and everything—the foundations on which we ever stood or ever believed? How do you pray?

Application to Modern America

Psalm 43 gives us the answer. David prayed, “Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation.” Notice that he says, “O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.” The deceitful and unjust man is a man of iniquity and deceit, cunning and wicked in character, cruel and inhuman. He knows what he wants and how to get it, and he does not care whom he hurts or what he does to obtain it. He has no regard for God and, consequently, no regard for man. David asked God, the Judge of all the earth, to intervene divinely, judge him, and plead his cause against an ungodly nation.

Would it not be wise and wonderful to ask God to do what we cannot do? What kind of contest would it be? Congress versus the sovereign God of heaven and earth; the executive branch versus the sovereign God of heaven and earth; the judicial branch versus the sovereign God of heaven and earth; Washington, D.C., versus the sovereign God of heaven and earth; the Justice Department versus the just God of heaven and earth. Who do you think would win in those contests? David says, "Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation."

Lord, there are so many who are wicked, perverse, corrupt, and unjust. I cannot function; I cannot move; I have no control. I cannot do what needs to be done. Lord, intervene, and plead my cause as my divine advocate against an ungodly nation.

Grounds for Praying Against an Ungodly Nation

Listen to what Spurgeon said: "When people are ungodly, no wonder they are unjust. Those who are not true to God himself cannot be expected to deal rightly with his people. Hating the king, they will not love his subjects. Popular opinion weighs with many, but divine opinion is far weightier with the gracious few. One good word from

God outweighs ten thousand railing speeches of men. He bears a brazen shield before him whose reliance in all things is upon his God. The heirs of calumny fall harmlessly from such a buckler. O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. Deceit and injustice are boon companions. He who fawns will not fear to slander. From two such devils none can deliver us but God. His wisdom can outwit the craft of the vilest serpent, and His power can overmatch the most raging lion.

"Whether this was Doeg or Ahithophel is a small matter. Such double-distilled villains are plentiful. And the only way of dealing with them is to refer the matter to the righteous judge of all. If we try to fight them with their own weapons, we shall suffer more serious injury from ourselves than from them. O child of God, leave these thine enemies in better hands, remembering that vengeance belongeth not to thee, but to the Lord."

"Turn to him in prayer, crying, O deliver me. And ere long you shall publish abroad the remembrances of his salvation." God is not only concerned about personal injustices; He is also concerned with national injustices. God is a God of justice. Psalm 89:14 declares, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." Notice that justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne. Proverbs 21:3 declares, "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." God would rather have us do what is right, holy, and just than offer all the sacrifice we could give Him.

Now turn to Jeremiah 22 and see what God asks this sinning, rebellious nation. The world talks about prosperity, and governments talk about prosperity. Look at what God asks. Jeremiah 22, beginning with verse 15: "Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar?"

In other words, you have a wonderful, beautiful home or governmental building. "Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord."

God said, You think you are going to get by because you are prospering? Because you have beautiful marbled buildings and cedar wood? You think you have gold and silver? You think that will get you by? He said, Did not your fathers eat and drink and do judgment and justice? Then it was well with them. Doing justice and judgment is to know Me.

The concept of justice is valid, but it must be grounded firmly and solidly upon the Word of God. Justice is determined by God, not by man. God's Word is the measuring stick for justice. Justice is not subjective; it is objective.

Do you realize that, in the founding of this country, juries determined guilt or innocence based upon the Word of God? Judges walked into the courtroom carrying the Bible. That is why men initially rose out of reverence and respect for the Word of God, not for the judge. The judge was nothing but a servant. But since we have denied God, we have denied His Word. Consequently, justice has become subjective.

It is not what we feel, what the judge tells us, what we think, or what we believe. Whenever justice becomes subjective, it becomes corrupted and perverted; it becomes injustice. That is why, in Amos 6:12, God charged Israel: “You have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock.” Hemlock is poisonous, and gall is extremely bitter.

We live in a day and age when it is a crime to kill game out of season, even if you are hungry, but killing babies is always in season. We live in a day and time when the courts have given people in this nation the freedom to sin but not freedom not to sin or to act responsibly. Our judicial system and our government encourage fornication, sodomy, socialism, welfareism, and outright communism. By the way, they declare that these things are rights.

No one has the right to sin against God, violate God’s law, or thumb his nose in God’s face. It is always wicked and wrong for nations to turn against God, disown Him, and disavow Him. That is expected of pagan nations. But when a nation built upon Christian principles, and claiming to be a Christian nation, turns from God and His Word, fails to obey Him, and fails to apply His Word, the

result will always be chaos, confusion, ultimately disaster, and outright destruction. There are many court cases in which the courts have said this is a Christian nation. But David said, “Plead my cause against the ungodly nation.”

Since David prayed, “Plead my cause against an ungodly nation,” what grounds would we have to pray that same prayer? Many times in the Bible, men such as Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah argued with God.

When I say argued, I do not mean they were fussing and fighting with God, but that they listed God's Word, His promises, or His curses. In other words, they gave forth biblical arguments for God to move or to do certain things. What would be some of our grounds or arguments as we come before God and say, “Now, Lord, we want You to plead our cause against an ungodly nation”? First of all, we must understand that the injustice this nation commits—against believers and nonbelievers alike—is a sin against God's nature.

Injustice, whether you are doing it to believers or unbelievers, is a sin against God's nature. Since injustice is against God's nature as a just God, our appeals are agreeable to God's hatred, wrath, and enmity against injustice. In Romans 1:18–19, the Bible says, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.”

We are specifically told in Proverbs 17:15, “He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.” Whoever condemns the just is a sting in God's nostrils. Whoever justifies the wicked is a sting in God's nostrils. Deuteronomy 32:4 says, “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.” Isaiah 45:21 says, “there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.”

We may ask God to plead our cause against an ungodly nation because the very nature of God itself cries out against injustice. Injustice is unrighteousness. Unrighteousness is a lack of conformity to God's nature, God's being, and God's law. So we may come to God

and say, “Lord, we understand that injustice is against Your very nature. It is against Your very being. Therefore, Lord, we ask You to plead our cause against an ungodly nation, because it is contrary to Your being.” Secondly, since injustice is contrary to God's being and nature, He is inclined to hear our prayer when we cry to Him for justice.

He's not going to be against our prayer; He's going to be for our prayer. The Bible says in Psalm 11, in verse 7, "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright." Remember that the Hebrew word for justice and the Hebrew word for righteousness are one and the same.

Whatever is just is right. Whatever is right is just. So when you read, "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright," you could paraphrase it this way: "For the just Lord loveth justice; his countenance doth behold the just." It is one and the same. Whatever is righteous is just. Whatever is just is right.

Look at this in the light of God giving us a ground to pray and asking God to plead our cause against an ungodly nation. Notice what our Lord is teaching in Luke 18, verse 1: "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." The point of this parable is that we always are to pray and not to faint.

He gives you that up front: "Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man." So there it is very plainly: If you have no fear of God, you have no regard for man. If you have no fear of God, you could care less about justice or righteousness. Then verse 3 says, "And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary."

"And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."

Notice that the widow kept coming and saying, "Avenge me of mine adversary." He would not do it because he had no fear of God and no regard for man. He did not care for the widow, truth,

righteousness, or justice. Finally he said to himself, "I have no regard for God. I have no regard for man. I have no regard for justice. But this widow woman is beginning to get on my nerves. I will give her what she wants just to get her off my back."

Now watch the application that our Lord Himself makes. Verse 6: "And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." Do you think that God is like that unjust judge? Do you think God does not care about justice, righteousness, and truth? No. If that unjust judge gave a woman what she wanted just to get her off his back, how much more speedily, how much more quickly, will God hear our prayers if we are crying for justice and that which is agreeable to His law, His nature, and His being? So, yes, the righteous Lord does love righteousness, and the just Lord does love justice.

Thirdly, here is the third ground we have for praying, "plead my cause against ungodly nation": those who do an injustice to God's people commit an injustice against God Himself.

Turn in your Bibles to Acts chapter 9. Everyone knows this story, but notice that those who commit injustices against God's people commit an injustice against God Himself. When a wicked civil ruler inflicts an unjust punishment upon a child of God, he attacks God and strikes at God. "He that toucheth thee toucheth the apple of mine eye," said God.

Here is the clearest illustration. "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."

Who was Saul persecuting? Christians. "And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" How was Saul persecuting Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of

God. Saul was persecuting Jesus Christ by persecuting the saints of God.

Our Lord views an attack upon His children as an attack upon Himself. So Christ said, “Why persecutest thou me?” Remember Matthew 25. In verse 40, our Lord tells those people, “And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Then in verse 45, He says, “Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.”

When a man fights against the child of God, he fights against God. When you fight against a child, you fight against the Father. You mess with my children, I can chew you up and spit you out. But you mess with my grandchildren, you do not want to know what I would want to do to you. If I am that protective of my children and grandchildren, what do you think it is like with the heavenly Father when He says, “Whoso toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye”? You unjustly, wickedly, and wrongly persecute and prosecute a child of God; you are picking on the Father.

Therefore, David said, “plead my cause against an ungodly nation.” In Isaiah 63 and verse 9, the Bible says, “In all their affliction he was afflicted.” Whatever men do to the children of God, they do to God Himself. We have a ground for praying, “plead our cause against an ungodly nation,” because injustice is contrary to the nature, being, and law of God. Since it is contrary to God, God is for our prayers when we pray for justice and righteousness.

Practical Applications

Moreover, if we are His children, His protecting hand comes forward to protect us. If we are truly concerned with the injustice and unrighteousness in our nation—and I think we should be—we should begin to learn to pray, “plead my cause against an ungodly nation.” We should learn to cry unto God day and night.

And the Scripture says in Luke 18 that He will hear us speedily. The second application is this: we need to learn to pray the imprecatory prayers. Lord willing, the next four messages that I

bring are going to be on imprecatory praying. We need to learn to pray the imprecatory prayers found in Psalm 35, Psalm 43, Psalm 58, Psalm 59, and Psalm 109.

Look at Psalm 68. This is one of those prayers, an imprecatory prayer against God's enemies. David says:

“Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.”

Note what David said: “Let God arise.” When God arises, what is going to happen? His enemies are going to be scattered. All those that hate Him are going to flee before Him. They are going to melt as wax before the fire. They will be driven as smoke before the wind. They will perish at the presence of God.

Thomas Case, in a fasting sermon—not one that you preach quickly, but a fasting sermon—preached before the House of Commons in 1644, entitled "God's Rising, His Enemies Scattering," and had six points. First, the church of God ever had and will have enemies and haters. For against these does the psalmist arm himself and the church with prayer. Second, the church's enemies are God's enemies. They that hate the church hate God: "thine enemies, them that hate thee." Thirdly, God sometimes seems to sleep or lie still and let his enemies and haters do what they will for a season. This also is implied; he to whom we say, arise, is either asleep or lies still. Fourthly, there is a time when God shall arise. Fifthly, God's rising time is his enemy's scattering time, his hater's flying time. Sixthly, it is the duty of God's people to pray him up when he seems to be down and to exalt him in their praises when he does arise to their rescue and redemption.

These words are both a prayer and a triumph, and they are both used by Moses and David. When it appears that God is still or God is asleep, it is our responsibility to say, God, wake up, arise, and do something against these thine enemies. David prayed in Psalm 119, verse 154: "Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word." Deliverance always accompanies the case when God

pleads our cause. If God ever steps in to intervene, if God in His divine advocacy will fight for us, the outcome is guaranteed.

We must learn to very quickly give Him praise and honor and glory. Isaac Craven preached a sermon at St. Paul's Cross in England in 1630. Listen to what he said: "Art thou wrongfully adjudged in the erroneous courts of men? Are truth and righteousness gone aside from their proper places? Is equity neglected and poverty overlaid? Well, have patience a while, cheer up thy fainting spirits. There is a God that beholdeth the innocency of thy cause, and whom thou hast liberty to make thy last appeal. Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me."

"Fight against them that fight against me. Art thou otherwise injured by the hands of malicious men, and doth a penurious estate disable thee to sue for amends? Doth a Nimrod oppress thee, a Laban defraud thee, a covetous landlord gripe thee? Well, take not the matter into thine own hands by attempting unlawful courses. Presume not to be the judge in thine own cause for the fault of a present redress."

Often remember what the Apostle taught the Thessalonians: “It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.” The just God will take care of all injustices. We must learn to pray that God would plead our cause against an ungodly nation and quickly recompense those who fight against Him and seek the destruction of His people, His kingdom, and His righteousness. In doing so, God would deliver us so that we may praise and honor Him in that deliverance.

We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Have you appealed to the Divine Advocate to assist you, help you, deliver you, and plead your cause?

Closing Prayer

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask You to be our advocate and helper. As David, plead our cause against personal enemies who hate us for righteousness’ sake—enemies that are ours, not by our own making, but simply because they hate Thee. Plead our cause, Father, against an ungodly nation and make right all those wrongs

and injustices. Help us to understand that it is a righteous thing for Thee to reward tribulation to those who persecute Thy people. Help us, Lord, in deliverance to give Thee praise, honor, and glory. In Christ's name we ask it. Amen.

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