

Good morning, Arising Church! Today is Sunday, March 15, 2026, it is a good day to be in the House of the Lord! I want to start off by saying it is truly an honor and a privilege to stand before you with my brother Rob. We are grateful and excited for the opportunity to bring the Word of the Lord together today.

**Rob: Share about Pastors giving us the opportunity\*\*\*\*\***

Church, we could not be more well positioned by Adonai for the times we are living in and for the things He has prepared ahead of us. The Lord has been leading us faithfully through every step of the process, and where we are going is nothing less than the greatest expansion of the gospel that we've ever seen.

Our body has been richly blessed with vision for this year. The Lord is equipping and maturing us so that we can carry out the works of service He has entrusted to us. But before we reveal the message that we have prepared for you today, we want to briefly reflect on what the Lord has already been speaking to us through the recent messages.

Church what is this the Year of? The Sword and the Bow!

**(DO NOT READ)**

## SWORD & BOW:

GENESIS 48:22 (NIV)

22 AND TO YOU I GIVE ONE MORE RIDGE OF LAND THAN TO YOUR BROTHERS, THE RIDGE I TOOK FROM THE AMORITES WITH **MY SWORD AND MY BOW.**"

ZECHARIAH 9:13 (NIV)

13 I WILL BEND JUDAH AS I **BEND MY BOW** AND FILL IT WITH EPHRAIM. I WILL ROUSE YOUR SONS, ZION, AGAINST YOUR SONS, GREECE, AND MAKE **YOU LIKE A WARRIOR'S SWORD.**

PSALM 7:10-12 (NIV)

10 MY SHIELD IS GOD MOST HIGH, WHO SAVES THE UPRIGHT IN HEART. 11 GOD IS A RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, A GOD WHO DISPLAYS HIS WRATH EVERY DAY. 12 IF HE DOES NOT RELENT, **HE WILL SHARPEN HIS SWORD; HE WILL BEND AND STRING HIS BOW.**

In this message we saw that WE as the Arising Church are called to embrace both the sword and the bow as two expressions of the same mission. The sword represents the local and immediate fight right in front of us, while the bow represents the far-reaching international vision God is giving this body.

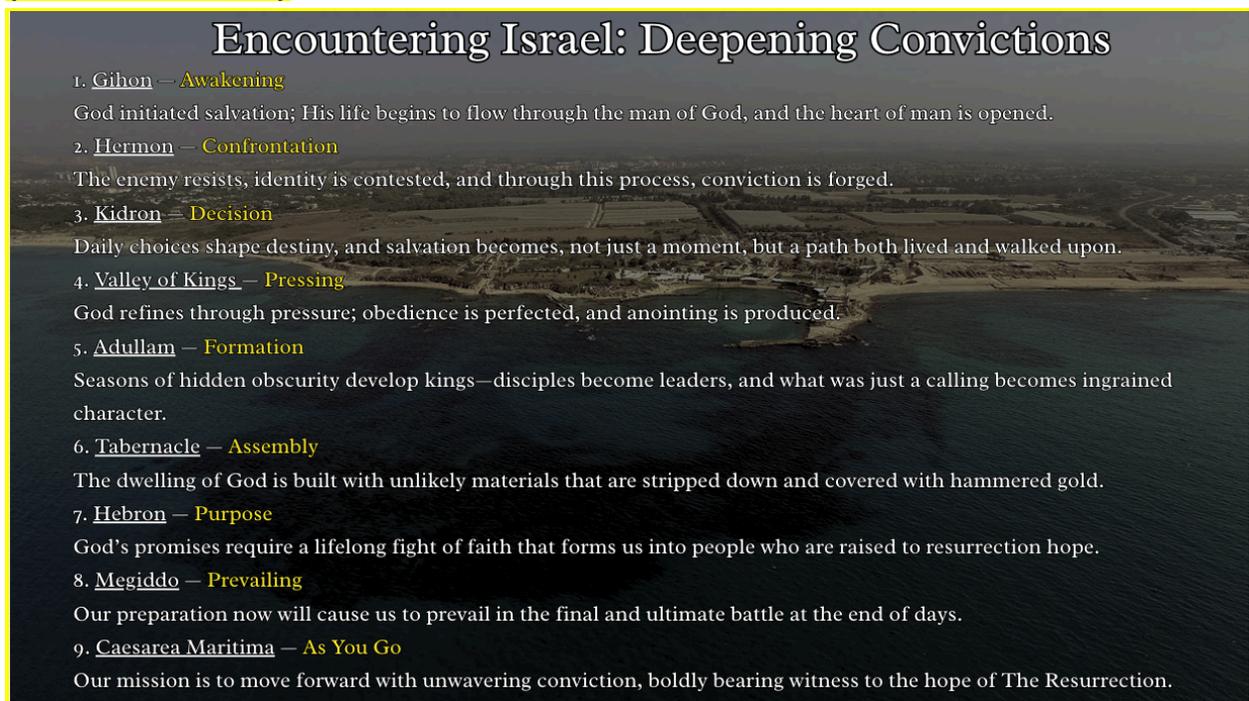
As we devote ourselves fully to the Lord, removing compromise, and become consecrated to his will in our daily lives, He is shaping us into the kind of people who can carry out His mission faithfully.

Through this process, God is also teaching our body how to effectively minister to all people, and specifically how to bring the gospel to those we will encounter among **Muslims** and **Jews**. In this way, the Lord is preparing us to serve both as the sword nearby and the bow that reaches far for the expansion of His Kingdom.

After this, we went through a 9 week series of exploring the geography of the Land of Israel, our Series was titled "**Encountering Israel: Deepening convictions**"

Were you all blessed by these incredible messages? We know you were. But how tragic would it be if all we carried home were memories of traveling the land like casual tourists—collecting facts, snapping photos, and gathering souvenirs. This will not be said of the Arising Church!

### (DO NOT READ)



## Encountering Israel: Deepening Convictions

1. Gihon — **Awakening**  
God initiated salvation; His life begins to flow through the man of God, and the heart of man is opened.
2. Hermon — **Confrontation**  
The enemy resists, identity is contested, and through this process, conviction is forged.
3. Kidron — **Decision**  
Daily choices shape destiny, and salvation becomes, not just a moment, but a path both lived and walked upon.
4. Valley of Kings — **Pressing**  
God refines through pressure; obedience is perfected, and anointing is produced.
5. Adullam — **Formation**  
Seasons of hidden obscurity develop kings—disciples become leaders, and what was just a calling becomes ingrained character.
6. Tabernacle — **Assembly**  
The dwelling of God is built with unlikely materials that are stripped down and covered with hammered gold.
7. Hebron — **Purpose**  
God's promises require a lifelong fight of faith that forms us into people who are raised to resurrection hope.
8. Megiddo — **Prevailing**  
Our preparation now will cause us to prevail in the final and ultimate battle at the end of days.
9. Caesarea Maritima — **As You Go**  
Our mission is to move forward with unwavering conviction, boldly bearing witness to the hope of The Resurrection.

You see this series has done far more than expand our understanding of the geographical landscape of Israel—it has **deepened our convictions** about the call He has placed upon our lives. Every place we explored carries a message, revealing the work God desires to accomplish in His people. We are becoming more acquainted with the delight of God, to craft impossibly difficult situations with the aim of causing men to rise up in the midst of them, and succeed with his divine aid.

Church Are you ready to dive into Todays Word? The Title of Our Message is...



Saints, as we begin this message, turn with us in your Bibles to **Acts chapter 20**. We want to start by establishing the right heart posture that we must possess as we move forward in the Lord's mission. And as you're turning there, say it with us: "**Cup of Intercessors.**"

**(READ SLIDE)**



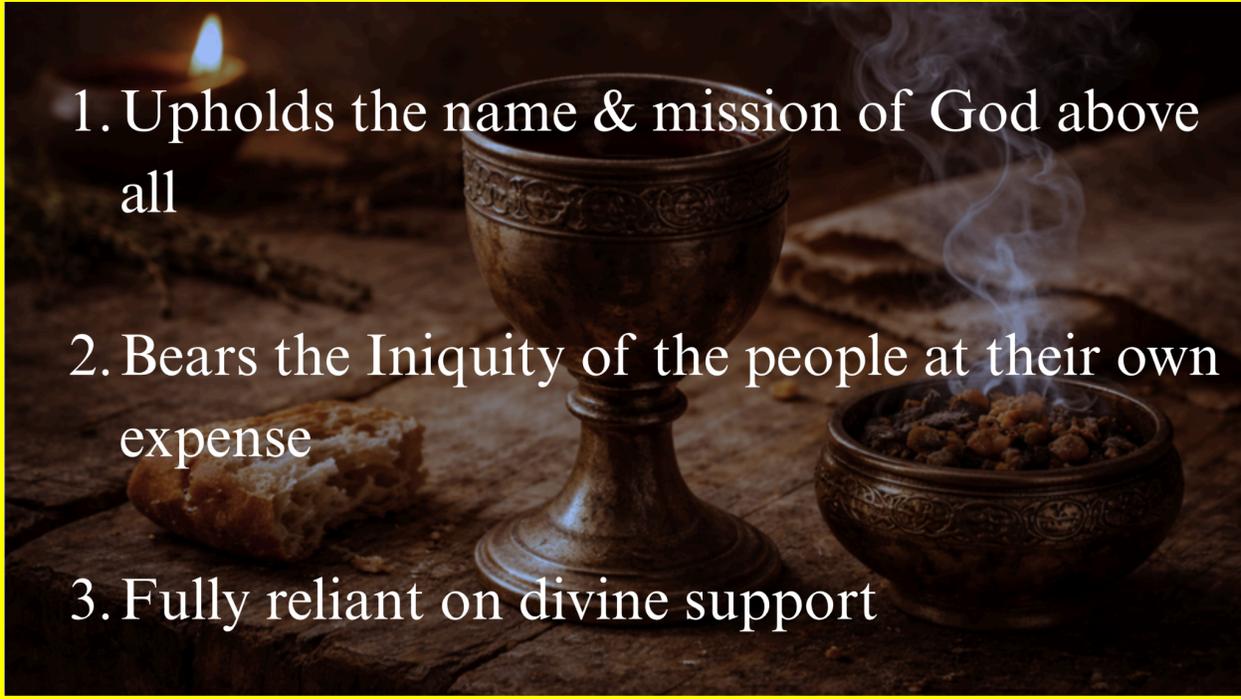
Acts 20:22-24 (NKJV)

22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Arising Church, today we will begin to unfold the theme of true intercession and what it is going to produce—intercession that does not end in words, but leads to obedient, faith-filled action. Just as Paul declares in Acts 20:22-24, that no obstacle will move him, because the mission is more precious than his own life, and church, this is the same attitude that we must take upon ourselves. We are going to show you 3 facets of a true and effective intercessor throughout the scriptures...

Take a Look at this slide

**(READ SLIDE)**



1. Upholds the name & mission of God above all

2. Bears the Iniquity of the people at their own expense

3. Fully reliant on divine support

With that in mind, let's see our first example, beginning in the Law. Turn with us now to Exodus 32.



In Foundations, we have been learning that Moses stands as an intercessor and mediator between the people of Israel and God. We have even seen this reflected in passages like Exodus 30. As we studied the structure of the tabernacle and what each article represents, we saw that even the placement of the Golden Altar of Incense reveals God's design—that the prayers of His people would continually rise before Him.

We have also looked closely at the failures of the mixed multitude in the incident of the golden calf, where the people quickly turned aside from the command of the Lord and corrupted themselves.

Take a Look at

- **Exodus 32:7–10 (ESV)**

[7] And the LORD said to Moses, “Go down, for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. [8] They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them. They have made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’” [9] And the LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. [10] Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you.”

In response to this rebellion, the judgment of God rises against them—His wrath ready to spill out like an overflowing cup upon the people.....However, It is also at this moment—when judgment is imminent and the people deserve destruction—that Moses steps forward as an intercessor.

- **Exodus 32:11–14 (ESV)**

11 But Moses implored the LORD his God and said, “O LORD, why does your **wrath** burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a

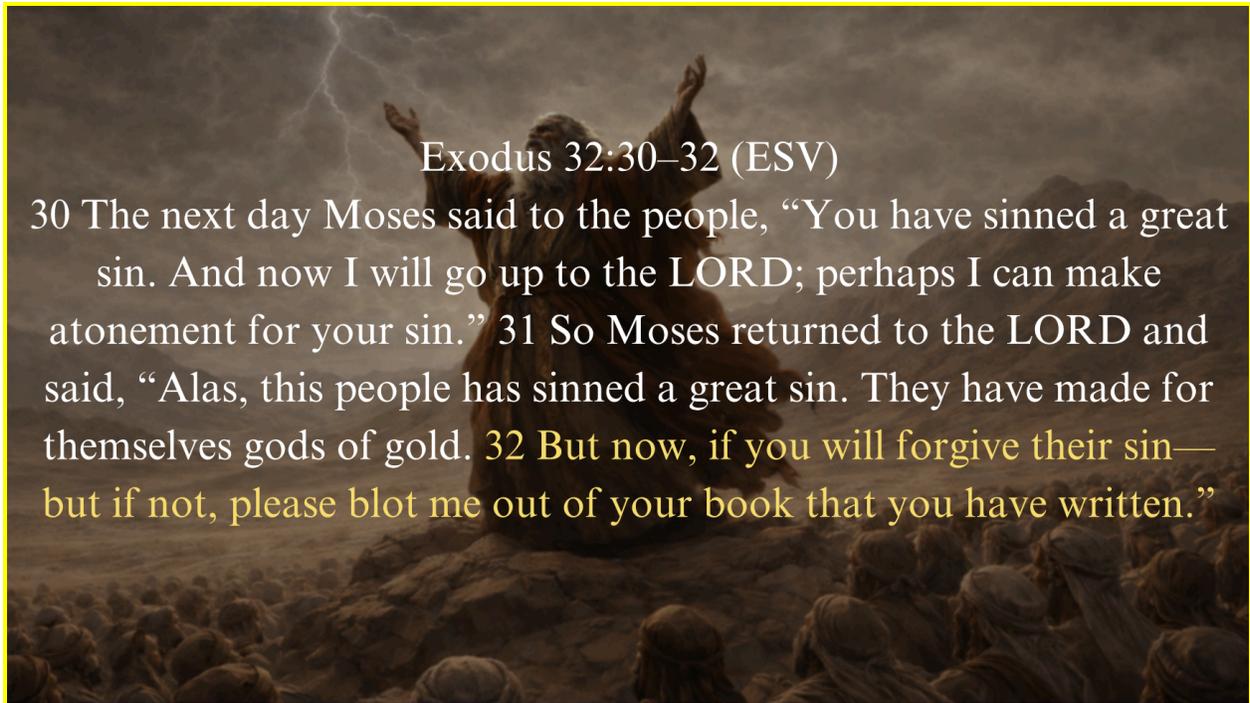
mighty hand? 12 Why should the Egyptians say, 'With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people. 13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.' ” **14 And the LORD relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.**

Moses does not appeal to the righteousness of the people, but instead to the character of God. His concern is not primarily the merit or well-being of the people, but that God's promises would prove true and that His name would be glorified among them. This reveals something essential about true intercession. An intercessor is first consumed with the desire that the name of God would be made great and that His will would come to pass on the earth.

Yet a true intercessor does not distance himself from the cost of bringing this about. Rather than excusing himself from the process, he willingly steps into it.

With that in mind, let us now look at verse 30-32.

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Exodus 32:30–32 (ESV)

30 The next day Moses said to the people, “You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.” 31 So Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. 32 **But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written.**”

Here Moses shows that he would rather forfeit his own eternal standing than see the promise of God to make His people great, fail. Remember, this was not Moses’ sin—he was not among those worshiping the calf. Yet Moses willingly identifies himself with the sin of the people and boldly asks to bear the cost of it.

This is not new to those of you who are attending foundations, but it is certainly worth repeating and necessary for you to grasp if you have a desire to be an intercessor. Moses does not simply say “I offer my life for these people” but rather **“blot me out of your book”** or in other words send me to hell, suffering the judgment that they deserve.

Friends, the weight of this moment cannot be lost on us. Moses’ request stands as a sharp rebuke to the sinful and self-preserving nature of our own hearts. It is almost as though Moses is asking to drink the cup of God’s wrath in place of the people. And in the very next verse, we see how God responds to such a request.

- **Exodus 32:33–35 (ESV)**

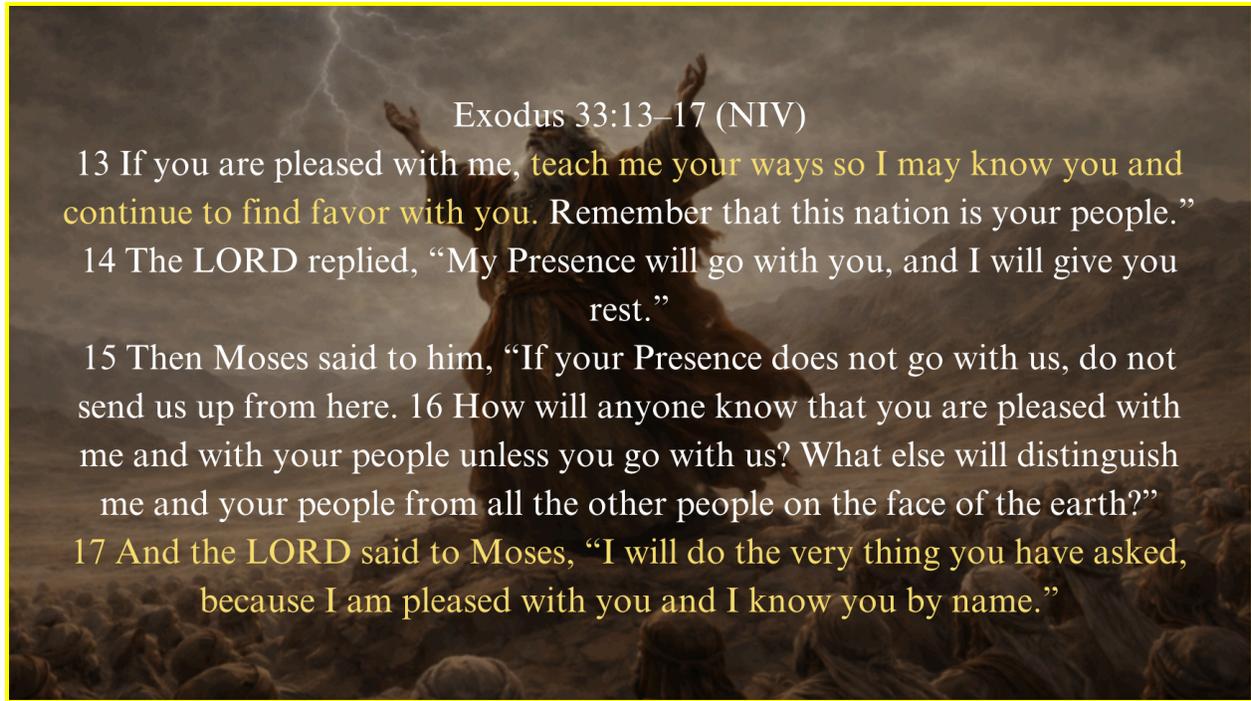
33 But the LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book. 34 But now go, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; behold, my angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.”

35 Then the LORD sent a plague on the people, because they made the calf, the one that Aaron made.

We see in these verses God remains resolute in His judgment of the people and does not permit Moses to atone for their sin. Nevertheless, He commands Moses to go and continue leading the people forward towards the promise land, assuring that an angel will go ahead of them as divine support. Yet Moses understands that the true need of the people, that it is not merely guidance or assistance—**it is the very presence of God Himself.**

Fully aware of this, Moses makes a further appeal to the Lord. Let us now look at how the Lord responds to a man who is deeply concerned for the honor of His name and who joins himself to the will of God, even at great personal cost.

**(READ SLIDE)**



Exodus 33:13–17 (NIV)

13 If you are pleased with me, **teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you.** Remember that this nation is your people.”

14 The LORD replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”

15 Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. 16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?”

17 **And the LORD said to Moses, “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.”**”

Church, what we are witnessing in these passages is Moses functioning as a true intercessor—and in him we are given a pattern to imitate. Even after Israel’s great failure, Moses does not distance himself from the people, leaving them in their state. Instead, he presses in closer to God, pleading to know His ways and to remain in His favor for the sake of the people.

Moses upholds the name and mission of God above all other things, even at the cost of his salvation, bearing the burden of the people before the Lord, and refusing to move forward unless the divine support of God goes with them. And we will see this same heart in another man of Israel. Look at Deuteronomy Chapter 18 verse 15.

- **Deuteronomy 18:15 (ESV)**

15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—

Later on Moses promises to the people that there will be another prophet of Israel like him. Any guesses as to who this might be?

If you said Jesus you are not wrong, rather you are ahead.

We want to now go to our next example and highlight the prophet Jeremiah as one who effectively intercedes.



The book of Jeremiah comes at a critical moment in Israel's history. For generations the prophets had warned the nation to return to the Lord, yet the people continually hardened their hearts. By the time Jeremiah is raised up, they have reached a point where judgment can no longer be avoided.

Yet even in the midst of this judgment, Jeremiah's message is not only one of destruction—it is also one of **consolation and hope**. He stands before the people as an intercessor, calling them to submit to the righteous judgment of God. And within this message, God begins to reveal something greater—the promise of a **new covenant**, where He will write His law upon the hearts of His people.

In **Jeremiah 1**, the word of the Lord comes to Jeremiah, and he responds, *"I do not know how to speak; I am too young."* Like Moses before him,

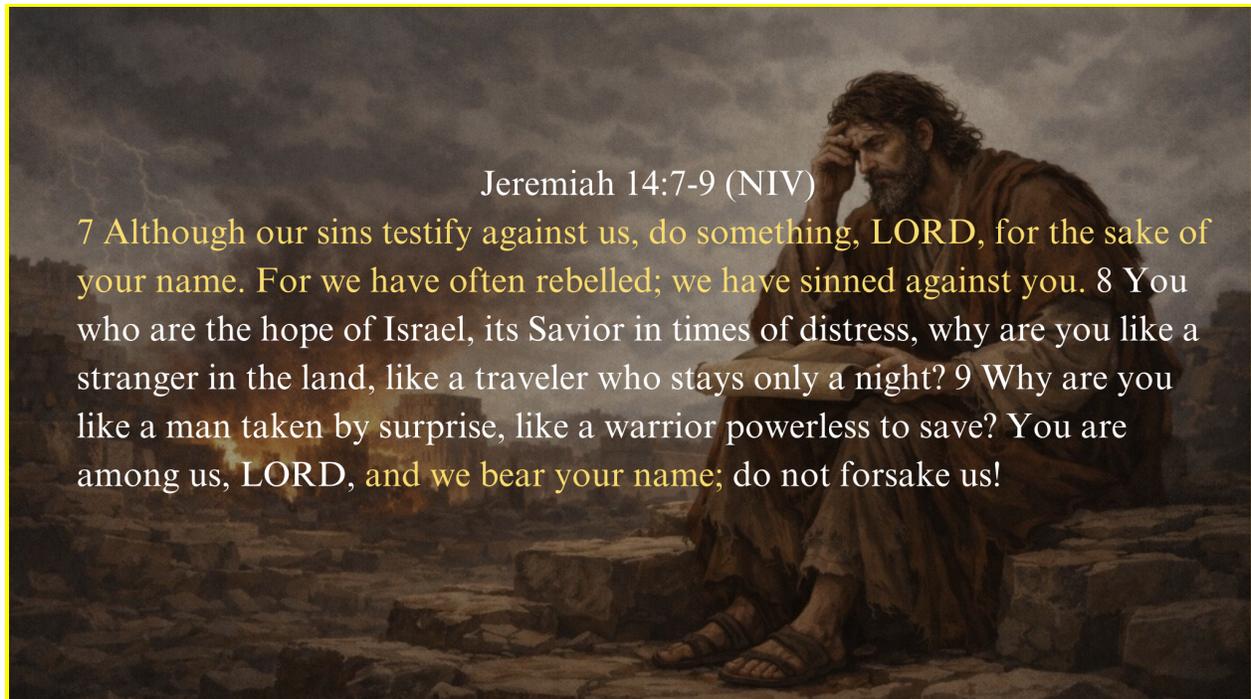
Jeremiah wrestles with feelings of inadequacy, yet God chose him not because he was the most talented or capable, but because he was obedient.

Today we honor Jeremiah as one of the greatest prophets in Scripture, but he was not regarded that way in his own time. Because he faithfully spoke the word of the Lord, he endured public disgrace, great persecution, even to the point of despairing of life itself. Yet he cared more for the name of God and the Mission of God above all else, and was fully reliant on Divine support.

Jeremiah gained little in this life except one thing—a deep nearness to the Lord. Being a prophet cost him greatly, but being an intercessor cost him everything.

With that in mind, let us turn to **Jeremiah 14:7** and learn from his example.

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We found **verse 7** especially remarkable. Jeremiah says, *“Though our sins testify against us, act, LORD, for the sake of your name.”* Jeremiah had been sent by God to warn Israel that their sin had once again filled the cup of God’s wrath and that judgment was about to be poured out upon them. **Yet in his prayer he does something striking—he places himself among the guilty and pleads with God on behalf of the people.** Like Moses before him, Jeremiah shows a deep concern for the name and mission of God above all else, faithfully interceding on behalf of the people, even willing to bear the burden of the people’s sin at his own expense.

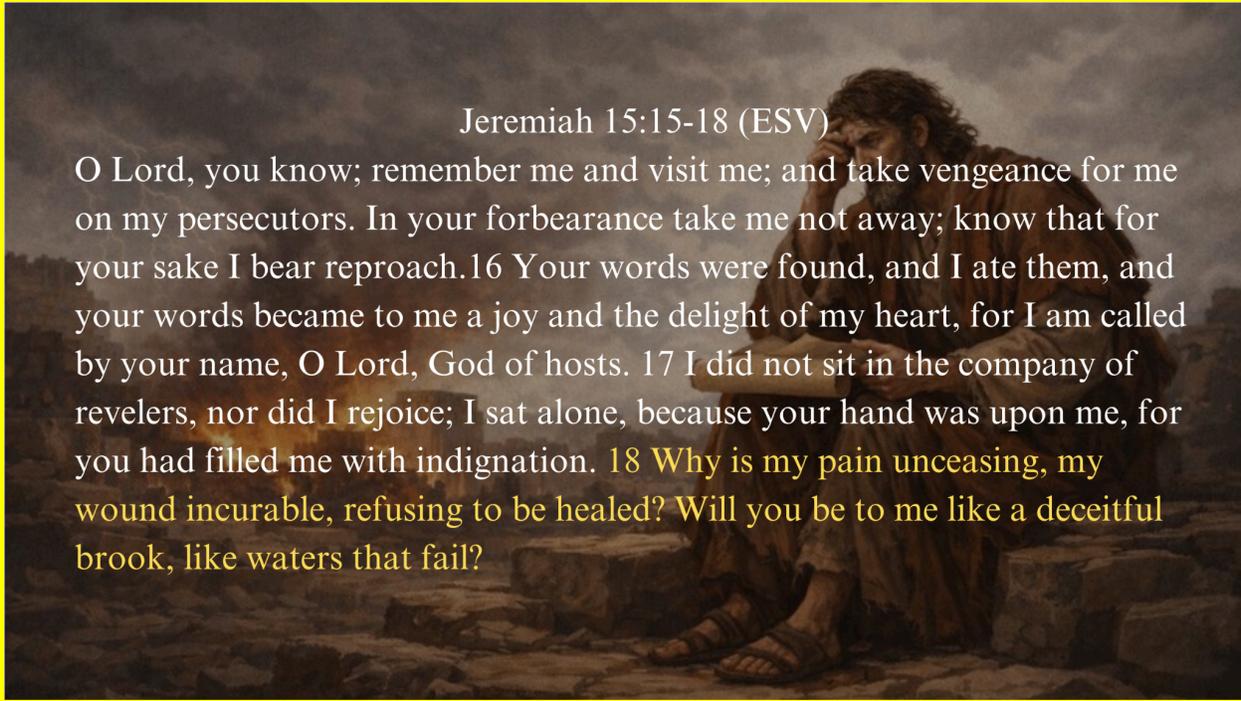
But interceding like this carries a tremendous weight. We begin to see the toll it takes on Jeremiah in chapter 15.

**Jeremiah 15:10 (ESV)**

10 Woe is me, my mother, that you bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them curse me.

In the middle of prophesying and interceding for the people, Jeremiah reaches a point where the burden is so heavy that he laments even being born. All of his labor has only brought him contempt from those he is trying to warn. At this moment, Jeremiah stands at a crossroads—he can either run from the calling because of what he feels, or draw near to the Lord for the strength to continue.

**(READ SLIDE)**



Jeremiah 15:15-18 (ESV)

O Lord, you know; remember me and visit me; and take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In your forbearance take me not away; know that for your sake I bear reproach. 16 Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts. 17 I did not sit in the company of revelers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone, because your hand was upon me, for you had filled me with indignation. 18 **Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail?**

Jeremiah cries out for the Lord to remember him and visit him. He recalls how he consumed the word of God and how it brought him great joy. He remembers the burning indignation within him to carry out the Lord's will. And yet now he brings his heart honestly before God, revealing the deep tension he feels between his **calling** and his **suffering**.

How many of you have felt like Jeremiah in verse 18?

*Why, God? Why do I still have this pain? Will you fail me?*

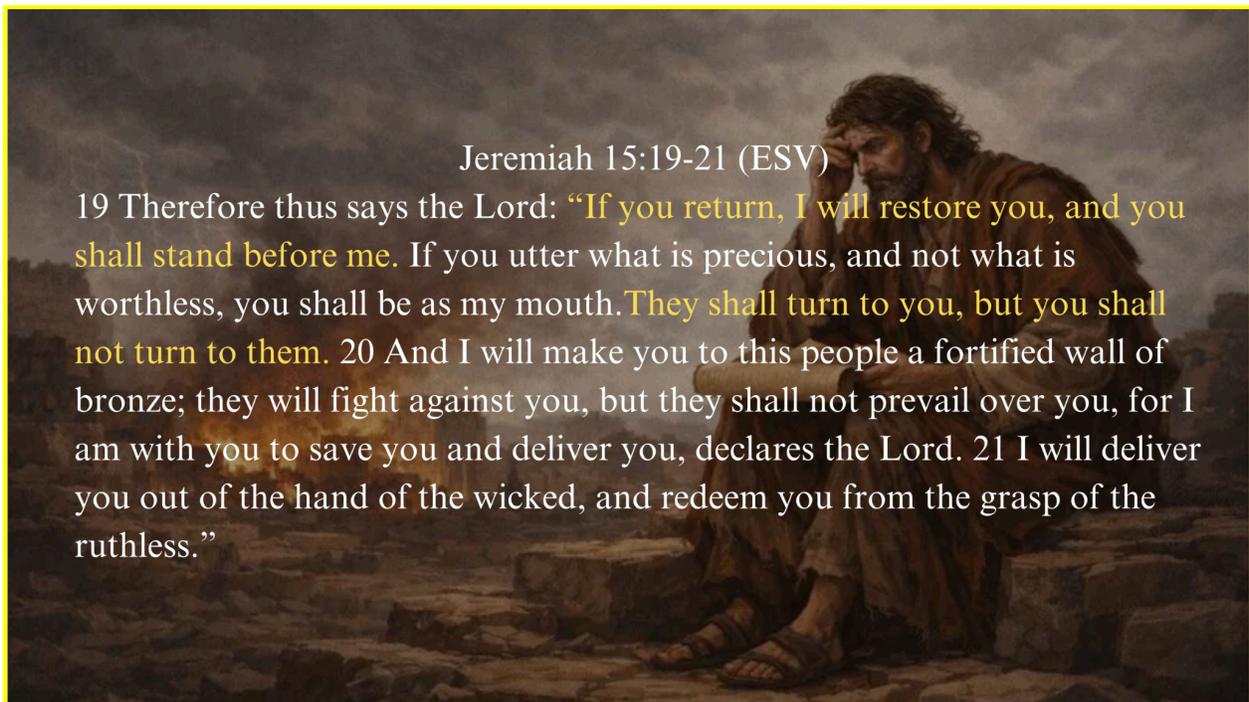
These are some of the most honest and relatable questions found in the Word of God. Considering the burden Jeremiah carried, they almost seem justified. It is as if Jeremiah is saying, *"Lord, I am trying to uphold your name. I am trying to bear the burden of others at my own expense... but I don't know if I can keep going."*

However, as we continue in this progression, we see that God is not unaware of Jeremiah's afflictions. Instead, He responds in a profound

way—restoring Jeremiah’s purpose, sharpening his vision, and giving him the divine strength needed to continue the mission.

Let's continue in vs. 19-21

**(READ SLIDE)**



God responds in a way that can feel quite offensive, he begins with saying "If you (Jeremiah) will return, I will restore you", in other words if you will repent. **There is never an inappropriate time for God to correct you, knowing this can be the difference between receiving divine aid and missing it because of your own pride.** God corrects Jeremiah and then begins to give him vision for going forward and a promise that he indeed is with him to save and deliver him. Saints we know many of you are working to carry out great faithful actions for the Lord, and in the midst of doing so let the Lord correct you, fill you with fresh vision, and bolster your walk with divine support.

Though Jeremiah identifies with the sin of the people in chapter 14 and is willing to bear it for the sake of the Lord’s name, God makes clear in

chapter 25 that Jeremiah is not the one who will drink the cup of wrath, but the one who must deliver it.

Let's turn to Jeremiah 25

**(READ SLIDE)**



Jeremiah is commanded to make the nations—including Jerusalem and the cities of Judah—drink the cup of God’s wrath. He faithfully fulfills his role, prophesying against the people while also interceding for them. Yet he cannot drink the judgment God intends to pour out. Like Moses before him, Jeremiah’s prayers and actions could not atone for the people.

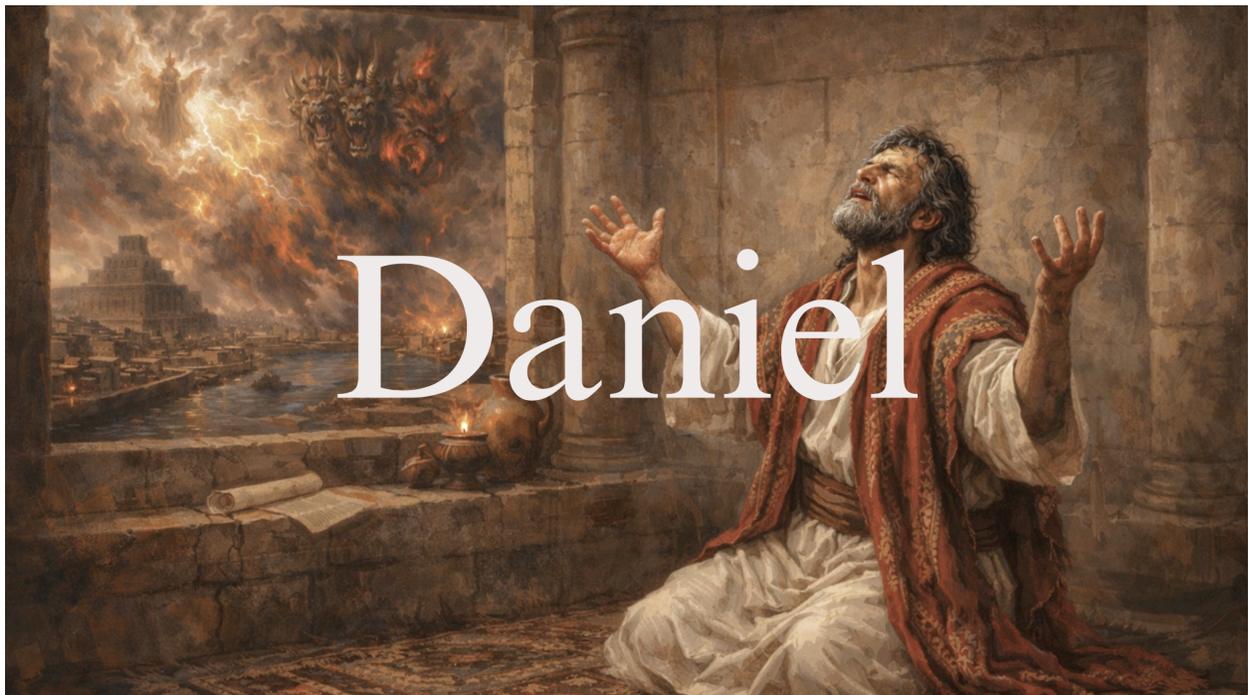
Jeremiah 25 stands as a remarkable passage—one whose significance would be recognized nearly seventy years later by another faithful man of intercession.

Before we go there, there is an important application for us to learn from Jeremiah here. Jeremiah was not afraid to **speak the Lord’s judgment**, especially when it was difficult, and at the same time he also would **intercede for the very people he was warning**. He carried both truths

faithfully—declaring the righteous judgment of God while pleading for the people.

Saints, we must do the same. We cannot shrink back from proclaiming what the Lord has spoken, but neither can we harden our hearts toward the people we are sent to. Like Jeremiah, we are called to uphold the word of the Lord and **intercede for others, even when it costs us personally.**

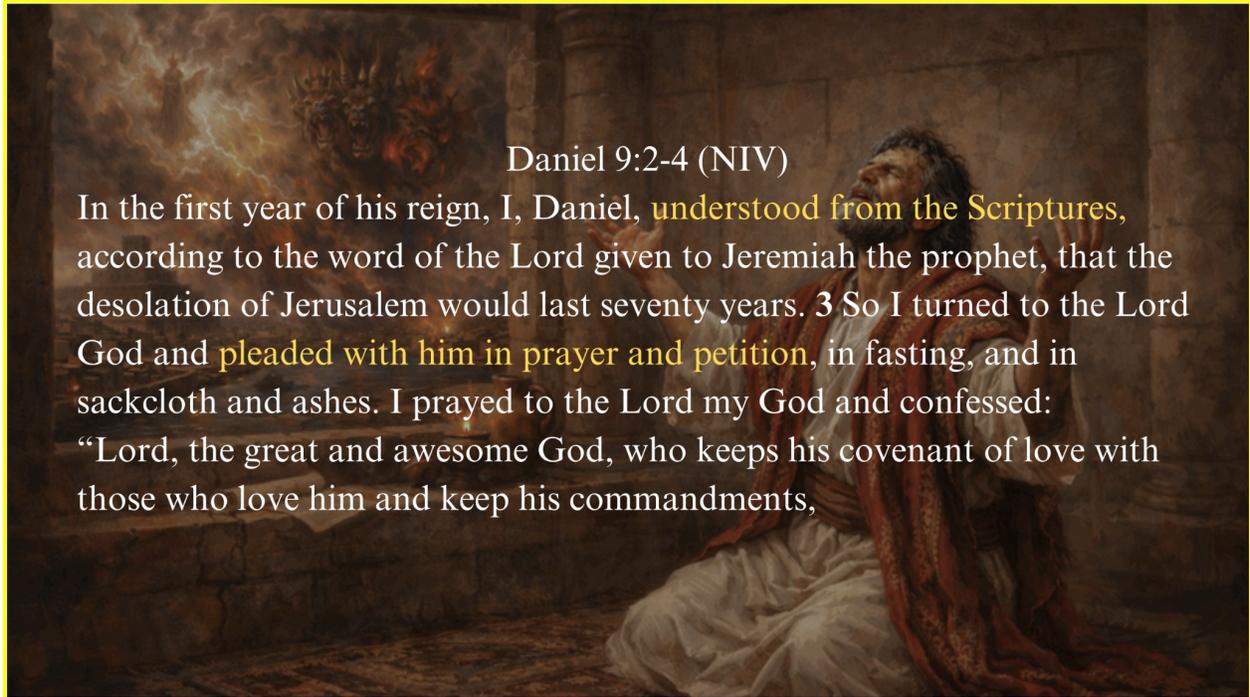
And this is exactly what we see in our next example. Nearly seventy years later, a man named **Daniel** reads the words of Jeremiah—and when he understands them, he responds in the same way: with repentance and intercession. Let us turn now to our third example.



Daniel is living in the very time of judgment that Jeremiah prophesied about in **Jeremiah 25**. Judah has been removed from the land, now living under the rule of a pagan empire and surrounded by a hostile culture. Yet Daniel stands firm in his convictions, refuses to assimilate and defile himself. Instead, he chooses to stand before God as an **intercessor for the sake of His name and for his people.**

Turn with us to **Daniel chapter 9, verse 2.**

**(READ SLIDE)**



Daniel 9:2-4 (NIV)

In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, **understood from the Scriptures**, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. **3** So I turned to the Lord God 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 those who love him and keep his commandments,

The connection between Jeremiah’s prophecy and Daniel’s time is clear. Daniel is living in the very judgment that Jeremiah foretold—the people are in exile, the land has been taken, and the nation is under the rule of foreign powers. Yet instead of becoming bitter or compromising in a foreign land, Daniel responds in a different way.

He humbles himself and pours himself out before the God of heaven. Rather than giving in to despair, or blaming others Daniel turns to the Lord in repentance and intercession on behalf of his people.

Lets look at verses 15 and 16 to see the contents of his prayers to God.

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Daniel 9:15-16 (NIV)

“Now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. 16 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 ancestors have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us.

Like Moses and Jeremiah before him, Daniel appeals to the plan and name of God. He asks God to turn His wrath from Jerusalem. He does not distance himself from the sin of the people, but rather lowers himself by saying, "we have sinned, we have done wrong."

Don't miss how clear this is! God has an overflowing cup of wrath for Jerusalem and Daniel stands as an intercessor who read Jeremiahs prophesy, and has the same desire to uphold the name and mission of God and bear the iniquity of his fellow man at his own expense.

And Daniel was met by God with divine visions and revelations concerning things in his future that brought him to the end of himself. Take a look at this slide. Each reference is a moment in which Daniel receives revelation from the Lord.

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## DANIELS RESPONSE

Daniel 7:15 Grieved and troubled

Daniel 7:28 Troubled, face turned pale

Daniel 8:27 Became sick, appalled, could not understand

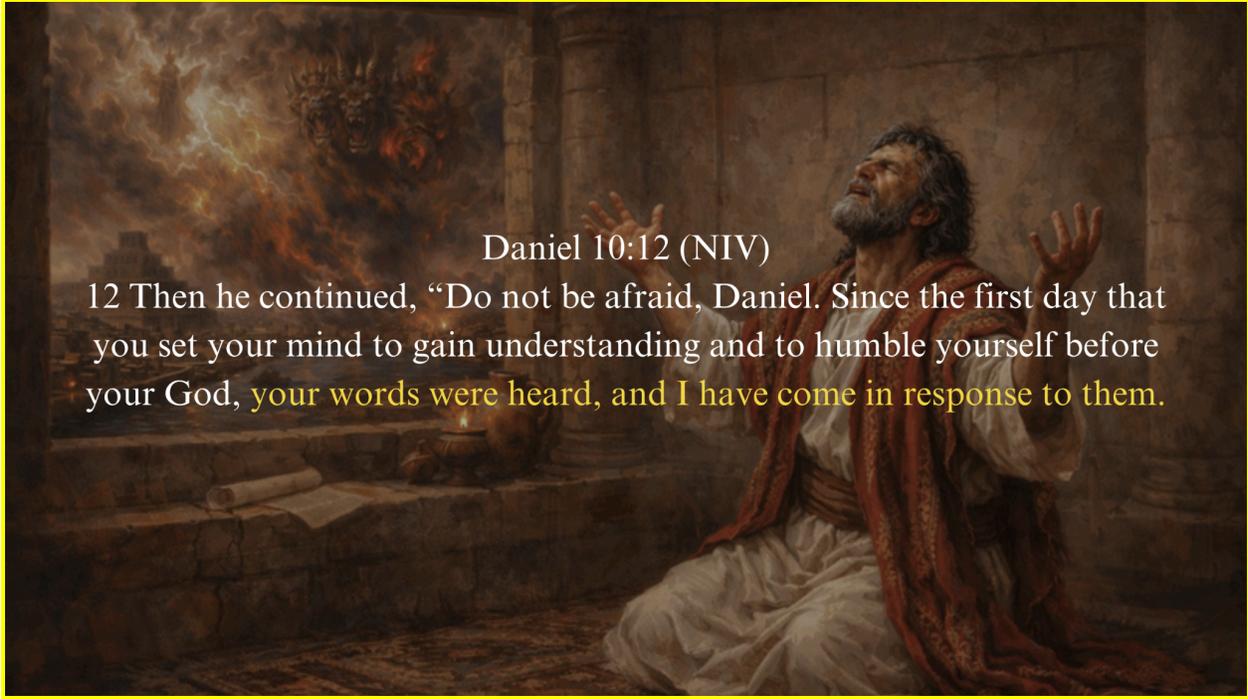
Daniel 10:8-17 No strength, fell on face, speechless

Daniel 10:18-19 Divinely strengthened

There are many of you in this room who can relate to having a difficult understanding the vision from the Lord that pertains to the future. Whether for your family, a ministry calling, or place you will go. The answer is be like Daniel who is fully reliant on divine support to bring him understanding. He does not despair or assume the interpretation, but remains faithful, turns to the word, and continues cry out for understanding.

We see when Daniel behaves this way, he is met with divine support in Chapter 10 verse 12

**(READ SLIDE)**



Daniel 10:12 (NIV)

12 Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

Daniel was divinely strengthened because of his intercession! Even a war in the heavens could not stop God aid to his servant Daniel.

Now we are going to move on, but before we do, lets bring up that slide of the three facets of an intercessor.

**(READ SLIDE)**



1. Upholds the name & mission of God above all
2. Bears the Iniquity of the people at their own expense
3. Fully reliant on divine support

We have now shown you these attributes in Moses, Jeremiah, and Daniel. Men who boldly upheld the name and mission of God above all else, associated with the sin of people that wasn't theirs to bear, and were fully reliant on divine support that would be the only thing to sustain them. All three are interceding through both prayer and action at a time in which the cup of Gods wrath is either full or presently being poured out.

Its clear by now that the cup in Gods hand is a cup of wrath. To clarify the intention of that cup lets turn to Psalm 75 verses 7 and 8.

**(READ SLIDE)**



Psalm 75:7-8 (ESV)

But it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another. For in the hand of the Lord there is a **cup with foaming wine, well mixed, and he pours out from it**, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.

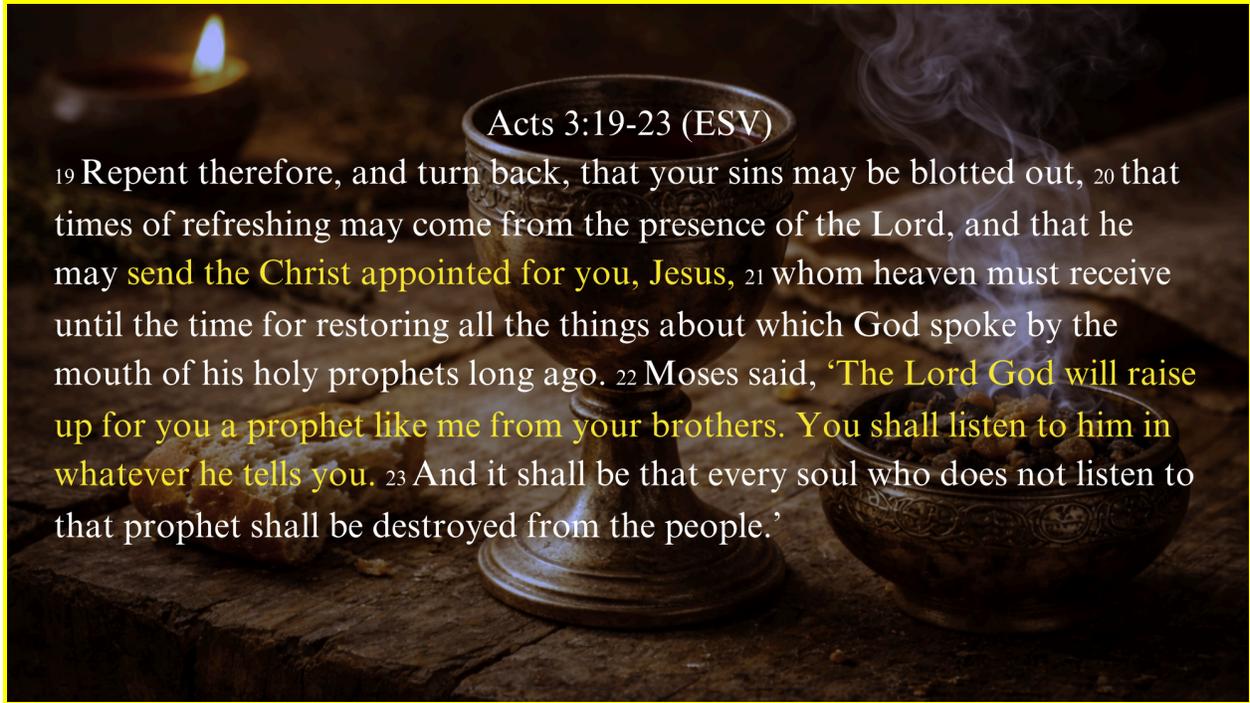
The wrath of God is certainly due to Israel in the times he pours it out, but that doesn't stop men like Moses from seeking to atone for the sin that God's wrath is aimed at. There is one who would come after Moses and have a different relationship with cup of wrath. Lets look again at Deuteronomy chapter 18.

- **Deuteronomy 18:15 (ESV)**

15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—

Peter hyperlinks this to Jesus in Acts 3:17-22

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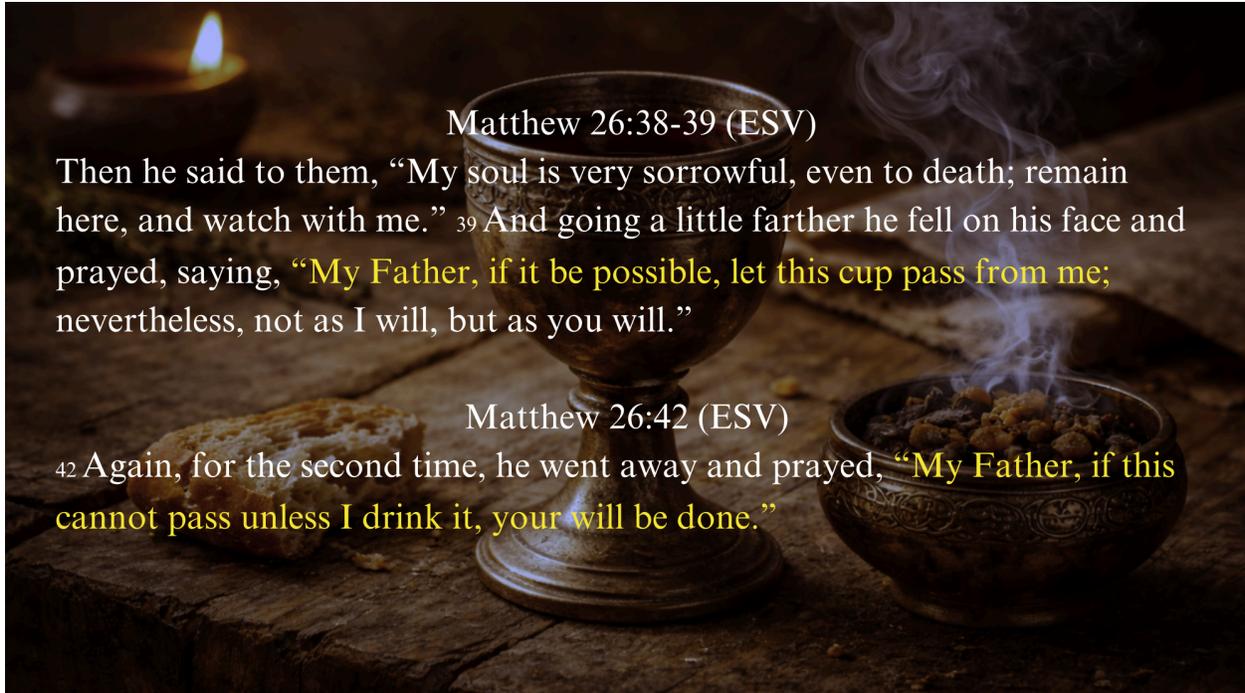


Acts 3:19-23 (ESV)

<sup>19</sup> Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, <sup>20</sup> that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, <sup>21</sup> whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. <sup>22</sup> Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. <sup>23</sup> And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.'

Now that we have walked through the Law, Prophets, and writings you will be able to better behold the Prophet who would come and be like Moses. The true intercessor himself Jesus Christ.

**(READ SLIDE)**



Many of us have grown to associate any aversion Jesus has to the cross as simply due to the physical reality of death by crucifixion. We are not making light of that gruesome means of death our sinless savior endured, rather we are proposing the primary difficulty is found in verses 39 and 42. "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." and again "if this cannot pass unless I drink it, you will be done." Jesus could not stand to suffer departing from the father for even a moment. He is however fully committed to upholding the name and mission of God above all else, bearing the iniquity of the people at his own expense, and relying on divine support. Jesus drank the cup that Moses, Jeremiah, and Daniel could not, that we may have life. As Hebrews Chapter 7 verse 25 says:

- **Hebrews 7:25 (ESV)**

25 Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

The word explicitly ties Jesus life to constant intercession resulting in the saving of those who draw near to God through him. Intercession that is

defined by sincere prayer resulting in selfless action marked the lives of many of the men of old we admire. Jesus **totally** and **completely** embodied it. And more than that, desires to raise up intercessors in the midst of impossible situations even today.

Lest you think Jesus did away with this intercessory role, let us consider the apostle Paul in Romans chapter 9 starting in verse 1.

- **Romans 9:1-3 (ESV)**

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Can you not hear the echo's of Moses from Exodus 32 saying, "blot me out of your book?" The cup has been drunk at this point by messiah, and it is clearly not Paul's to drink, but the attitude Paul has is, 'My aim is to go to the same length as my Christ on behalf of others' A life devoted to the glory of Gods name results in a radical love for others at ones own expense. Paul knows being cut off from Christ will not accomplish this aim. But it is his closest expression to the magnitude of care he has for his brothers, the Israelites. Let us also consider Philippians chapter 1 verse 21.

- **Philippians 1:21-25 (ESV)**

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. **My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.** 24 **But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.** 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,

This passage out of Philippians has taken on a whole new light to us. The love Paul has for Christ makes dying and being with him totally appealing.

The only thing holding Paul from this is the necessity of ministering to and interceding for those God has entrusted him with. What kind of freedom would a belief like this produce in your life? We believe it is exactly what we shared at the beginning of our message out of Acts chapter 20.

- **Acts 20:22-24 (NKJV)**

22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. **24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy,** and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.