

Who Will Stand in the Breach?

Abraham, Moses & Jesus

Gen. 18:20-33

Chase Fluhart

Sunday, April 14, 2024

I. “Who Will Stand in the Breach?” (Ezekiel 22:29-30)

What is the role of the prophet? Is the role of the prophet simply to predict the future? Is he caught up in visions of future blessing? or, of impending doom? Is his sole responsibility to bring the Word of God to the people, saying, “Thus says the Lord”? These are no doubt important aspects of the prophetic ministry. They are the familiar features we generally think of when we hear the word *prophet*. But the picture is incomplete. There is more to the role of the prophet as we find him in Scripture. Take, for instance, what the Lord says to Ezekiel.

After bringing charge after charge against Israel and their wicked rules, the Lord takes up the image of a city with walls around it. Israel is like that city, but her walls are torn down because of her sin. And then the Lord says this: “The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery. They have oppressed the poor and needy, and have extorted from the sojourner without justice. *And I sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the _____ before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none*” (Ezek. 22:29-30, ESV). The Lord sought a man to stand in the breach between Him and Israel, but no man was found. *This* work was the work of a *prophet*. The prophet is supposed to throw himself between the Lord and those who are before Him; the prophet is to argue their case, sue for peace and for mercy—for God to turn His _____ away.

II. Abraham & the Justice of God (Gen. 18:16-33)

As the visiting angels turn away from Abraham and head off down to Sodom, Abraham stood before the Lord (v. 22). He blocked His way. Here is the first man to assume the posture of a prophet before the Lord. He stands in the breach before the Lord for the land, and he begins to _____ with the Lord. Abraham comes near, and says, “Would you also destroy the righteous with the wicked?” (v. 23). In other words, “Suppose the city was not completely far gone, suppose there were fifty righteous within it—would you still destroy it then, and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?” Abraham continues to press his question upon the Lord with _____: “Far be it from you to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked—far be it from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do *right*?” (v. 25).

Abraham knows that God punishes iniquity. He is not pleading on behalf of the *guilty*. He is pleading for the righteous, for the _____. Shall the Lord in executing judgment be unjust, slaying the righteous with the wicked, the innocent with the guilty? This is his argument. After steadfastly pressing the Lord with his plea, Abraham the prophet _____. Abraham stood in the breach, and the Lord showed Himself as the Judge of all the earth to be *just*, not only in remembering the guilty, but also *just* in preserving the innocent. While Sodom and Gomorrah got what they deserved, He did not sweep away the righteous with the guilty. The Lord remembered Abraham, and spared Lot.

III. Moses & the Faithfulness of God (Exo. 32:1-14)

With Moses, we have a prophet, who like Abraham stood in the breach before the Lord, but one whose 'clients' were _____. This led Moses to be still _____ in his argument. As we read in v. 11, "Moses pleaded with the Lord his God." Moses stood like Abraham in the breach before the Lord on behalf of the people so that the Lord would not destroy them. He took up the position of the prophet. But this time, they are not the innocent that Abraham sought to save. They are _____ of breaking covenant with the Lord. Turn to Exo. 32:11-13.

In Moses' first argument, he flips the Lord's words. They are not *Moses's* people. *Moses* didn't bring them up out of Egypt. They are _____ people whom _____, O Lord, have brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand. And now will You destroy them? Moses does not wait for the Lord to respond, but continues to lay out arguments before Him, saving for last his strongest argument. Moses pleads the _____ of the Lord that He cut with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He reminds the Lord what He has promised, swearing by Himself. Moses calls on the Lord to remember this, and turn and relent.

What is the result of this prophetic intercession? v. 14, "So the LORD _____ from the harm which He said He would do to His people." The Lord turned from His hot anger, and did not destroy His people. He disciplined them, but He did not forsake His people. Why? Because He was bound to them by the everlasting covenant He had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which He swore by Himself.

IV. Jesus & the Love of God (Isa. 59:15-17)

The Lord sought a man to stand in the breach, but found none—and so what did He do? The Lord _____ stood in the breach. The Lord Himself argued His case, and He turned back the wrath of God. For His argument, He argued _____.

The Lord Jesus Christ stood where Abraham and Moses stood. He stood in the breach, and since His case was even worse than Moses's, for He pled not only for God's guilty and transgressing people, but for the _____ that does not know Him—the world which was without God and without hope—and so, His argument was very bold indeed. Jesus stepped into the intersection of where our sin meets God's wrath, and He died there for our sake. His own _____ was His argument.

The Cross is God's full glory made manifest, and it is the revelation of the _____ of God. As we read in, 1 John 4:9-11:

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

V. Conclusion