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# A PERSUASIVE PRAYER FOR THE BACKSLIDDEN

EXODUS 32:1-14



How should we pray when we hear that a Christian has committed a terrible sin? It happens doesn't it. A Christian we know and love falls into a gross sin or even a pattern of immorality. We get angry with them and decide to stop praying for them. They let the side down and therefore we let them go and turn our attention to others more faithful and godly. That's the right thing to do, isn't it?

Well, I think Moses would have a thing or two to say to us about that. While Moses was meeting with God on Sinai, Aaron had led God's people into worshipping a golden calf. God saw what was happening and in Exodus 32 told Moses of his intention to judge them: **"I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. 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"** (9-10). Moses's response provides us with a model prayer for backslidden Christians.

## LEARNING

### REMIND GOD OF HIS SALVATION

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?"** (11). He reminded God of his past salvation to ensure Israel's present salvation.

GOD'S PAST SALVATION GUARANTEES  
PRESENT AND FUTURE SALVATION

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## REMIND GOD OF HIS COVENANT

Twice Moses reminded God of his covenant relationship to Israel. Twice he says they are “your people.” It’s a bold argument to make. “You can’t do this, because they are yours.”

A BOLD PRAYER IS  
A PERSUASIVE PRAYER

## REMIND GOD OF HIS ENEMIES

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’? (12). Moses cared for Israel, but he cared even more for the glory of God. He could not bear the thought of God’s reputation being tarnished and trashed by God’s enemies.

TURN THE UNGODLY’S WORDS  
INTO GODLY PRAYERS

## REMIND GOD OF HIS PROMISES

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’” (13). Moses pled that God had made great promises, public promises, and repeated promises to Israel.

GOD’S PROMISES  
ARE OUR PRAYERS.

LOVING

I love this prayer of Moses, don’t you? It’s full of tenderness and full of truth. His heart is full with compassion and his mouth is full of arguments. He pleads his case and begs God to “**Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people**” (14). And wonderfully, “**the Lord relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people**” (14). This doesn’t mean that God changed his mind or corrected a mistake. It simply means that to encourage prayer, God allows himself to be seen as persuadable and responsive to prayers that are full of love and full of logic.

This prayer of Moses the mediator and its powerful effect is an audible example of the inaudible prayers of Christ our mediator as he also pleads for each of us when we sin and stumble along the way. Jesus’s love-filled heart and logic-filled lips remind God of his salvation, his covenant, his enemies, and his promises. And, thank God, he always persuades and prevails.

LIVING

Count the number of times Christ has prayed for you when backslidden to encourage you in prayers for yourself and others who are in a similar situation.

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