



ENGAGING

HEAVEN'S COURTS



“If only I knew where to find God, I would go to his court. I would lay out my case and present my arguments. Then I would listen to his reply and understand what he says to me.” Job 23:3-5 NLT

God is a God of truth, justice and righteousness and one of the ways believers access His justice system is in the courtroom of heaven through the avenues of prayer and His word. The same way lawyers need to understand how to function in the legal system of their jurisdiction is the same way believers need to understand how to function in heaven’s courtroom.

As believers we play the role of a lawyer in presenting matters to God. However, many times what we present to God is a slew of complaints rather than a well laid out case before the Judge of all. To present successfully, lawyers must understand among other things who the main parties in a case are and their rights, the precedents and obligations of court and how to get victory over the plaintiff/accuser.

This series we’re looking at the system of heaven’s courtroom and how to navigate it successfully. We pray the Holy Spirit will use this series to open our eyes to the power and efficacy of prayer and God’s word and in gaining victory in life.



Day 1

The Judge

“Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: Mercy and truth shall go before thy face.” Psalm 89:14

When we approach the courts of heaven it's important we recognise who the critical participants are, starting with the Judge. One of the many attributes of God is His role as a judge. He's qualified to judge all matters because He lives in the place of holiness, righteousness and justice. Judgement in the context used above isn't that of a punitive being looking to punish people. Far from it, as the same scripture also tells us that mercy and truth go before Him. He's not a wicked judge looking to set people up. Rather He's very interested in people making a case so He can show mercy.

“So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.” Ezekiel 22:30

“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?” Genesis 18:25

God is Holy and holiness demands a justice system. However, His mercy system also immediately looks for someone to intercede on behalf of that situation so He can respond in mercy. Abraham understood God's mercy and so was able to intercede for Lot's family. Daniel interceded for Israel while they were in captivity. Many times our prompts by the Holy Spirit to pray may be a call to intercede for others or ourselves because a matter has come before God.

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” II Peter 3:9

God is always looking for someone to stand in the gap, but unfortunately, we're not always available. Where there's no lawyer present, then the case automatically goes in favour of the plaintiff/accuser. This is why our responsiveness to the Holy Spirit is critical because we may never fully understand what situations our prayers are resolving.

Prayer: Lord thank You for showing me that Your holiness and justice demand that a price be paid for wrongdoing, but Your mercy and love gives multiple opportunities to plead our case before You and You're more willing to forgive than we may realise.

Day 2

The Accuser

'... for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.' Revelation 12:10

Another key player in the courtroom is the accuser, who relentlessly and consistently accuses believers day and night. Remember in the spirit realm everything is open, so while we may think certain things are hidden – either in our hearts or in clandestine actions – all these things are clearly seen. So those “secret” thoughts or actions aren’t actually a secret and form the accusations brought against us.

'One day the members of the heavenly court came again to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. “Where have you come from?” the Lord asked Satan. Satan answered the Lord, “I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that’s going on.” Job 2:1-2 NLT

The Accuser puts suggestions in our minds and plays on our weaknesses, he may lie when trying to woo us to do what is wrong, but he is factual when presenting our fallings to God. Every action of the enemy is strategic and well thought out so that he will not be lying when making his case against us.

'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world...' I Peter 5:8-9

Interestingly the term used for ‘adversary’ also means an opponent in a suit of law, so we can re-phrase this verse as: “your opponent at law the accuser of the brethren”. This is why the Bible says we need to be watchful, sober, vigilant as we have an opponent looking to heap legal claims against us. Thankfully, God also creates opportunities for the enemy to fail at having claims to bring concerning us in the first place as we have the power to resist him and his agenda. This tells us that the fact that the accuser is looking for someone to devour means not everyone can be devoured. He needs to find willing prey and that prey doesn’t have to be you.

Prayer: Lord help me stay alert and vigilant so I don’t have to be a prey to the enemy, or be the object of his accusations.

Day 3

The Chief Advocate

“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1

An advocate is one who pleads another's cause before a judge, a counsel for defense. As our Advocate, Jesus is constantly interceding for us in the courts of heaven. While Satan constantly accuses us, Jesus is always defending us.

“But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:24-25

The enemy isn't lying when he presents our shortfalls but when Jesus died on the cross and shed His blood, He paid the price for sin and cleanses us with His blood. An illustration of what Jesus did for us on the cross is a scenario where someone is charged to court for a crime that person did actually commit. However when it came to sentencing rather than the person receive the sentence from the Judge, Jesus steps in and receives the sentencing on the person's behalf. So the person is discharged and acquitted while Jesus pays the price for the crime. This may not be a perfect illustration but hopefully it gives us a sense of what Jesus does for us by being our Advocate when Satan brings an accusation against us.

“And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail...” Luke 22:31-32

That we have an Advocate isn't license for us to continue in sin. Neither does it mean we don't have a role to play in the courtroom as well. While Jesus will always defend us, we also need to plead His blood to cleanse us of our sin AND partner with the Holy Spirit so that He can transform us to be like Jesus. It's this transformation that will ensure we don't fall prey to the enemy's devices or give him ammunition with which to constantly attack us.

Prayer: Thank You Jesus for being my advocate, for paying the price for me and for giving me the opportunity to be transformed so I'm not always falling prey to the enemy.

Day 4

The Assistant Advocate

“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” Luke 10:19

We’re not just spectators without any say as we also have an active role to play in heaven’s courtroom. Jesus is the Chief Advocate, while we are assistant advocates. Assistant because He has delegated authority to us so we can also plead to God both for ourselves and for others. Whenever the enemy shows up to accuse us, it means he has a legal right to do so based on actions/inactions on our part. Jesus is present to defend us based on His office as Chief Advocate, Great High Priest and the price He paid for us. We are also present to raise our strong arguments against what the enemy has said against us.

“I would lay out my case and present my arguments.” Job 23:4 NLT

“Present your case,” says the Lord. “Bring forth your strong reasons,” says the King of Jacob.” Isaiah 41:21

The only place to find these strong reasons is in the word of God. Thus whenever the enemy brings an accusation against us, the acceptable responses must be pulled out from God’s word as our arguments will largely be based on God’s promises, His character and what Jesus did for us on the cross. If we lack an understanding of these, our arguments are weakened. For example where we have sinned, and we are truly repentant, our argument may include reminding God that He’s a God of mercy (Ps 145:8-9) and He will not reject a broken and contrite heart (Ps 51:17) and plead the blood of Jesus to cleanse us from our sin (1John 1:7-9). Where there may have been a demonic contract entered into, we can declare our status as believers making us new creatures in Christ (2 Cor 5:17), renounce the contract and remind the enemy that Jesus has blotted out every evil requirement and nailed it to the cross (Col 2:14).

Knowing the word of God is a lifelong journey, but there must be commitment and consistency on our part to deepen our knowledge in partnership with the Holy Spirit.

Prayer: Lord help me fulfil my role in the courtroom effectively. Help me to constantly search Your word and hide it in my heart.

Day 5

Reasoning Together

“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord...” Isaiah 1:18

It’s interesting to note that the invitation to reason together came from God. Which means it’s something He expects us to do and we should know how to do so. Therefore we must understand the basis for pleading our case in prayer in order to be effective. Pleading our case isn’t about emotional outbursts or complaints, but a well articulated position that takes into account: what the Bible says regarding the matter and the associated conditions; God’s disposition based on His character; our own heart disposition; persistence in making our case.

“Then Moses pleaded with the Lord his God... Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self...” Exodus 32:11, 13

“in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books ... Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.” Daniel 9:2-3

Moses understood how to make his case for Israel when they built the golden calf based on the oath the Lord made to Abraham. He was also able to plead for his siblings when they ganged up against him (Num 12). Likewise Daniel also understood how to plead his case for Israel in exile based on God’s word. These men knew the word of God and how to approach Him and so must we.

“So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding.” Colossians 1:9 NLT

We need to be sensitive to what God’s will is concerning a specific matter. There may be a promise in the Bible concerning an area, but that may not be God’s specific will for us at that point in time. As we plead our case, it’s critical that we ask the Holy Spirit to guide us to align with God so we don’t end up praying against His will.

Prayer: Holy Spirit please teach me how to present my case effectively. Reveal God’s will to me as I search His word and point out anything in or around me that will impact my pleading.

Day 6 Persistence

“You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes...” Isaiah 62:7

“A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, saying, ‘Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy.’... this woman is driving me crazy. I’m going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!” Luke 18:3, 5 NLT

Courts remain in session until someone wins the case and even then appeals can be made. As such the scriptures above teach us that there are times persistence will be required on our part. There’s nothing wrong with presenting a case consistently until we see the desired outcome on the matter. It doesn’t mean a lack of faith on our part, rather we persist because we believe God will do what He’s said He will do.

‘Let us review the situation together, and you can present your case to prove your innocence.’ Isaiah 43:26

‘You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks of forgiveness ...’ Hebrews 12:24 NLT

God the Judge is on our side and actually wants us to be proven innocent and permits us to present our case as often as is necessary until any legal obligations on our part are fully satisfied. The most powerful argument we have in the courtroom is the blood of Jesus which cries out for mercy and forgiveness for us.

While we acknowledge the tremendous power in the blood of Jesus, we must remember, the enemy always brings facts when he accuses us, so some adjustments may be required on our part to ensure we win our case. For instance, we may be asking for judgement on our behalf on a matter meanwhile we may be dealing unjustly with someone else. We could be asking God to give us something but holding someone in unforgiveness or keeping malice. These things all count as we make our case before the court. As we persist in the place of prayer, one of the things we need to ask the Holy Spirit for is to highlight any areas of our lives that need to be addressed so the legal ground against us is broken.

Prayer: Lord I ask for tenacity and persistence in the place of prayer. I also ask for sensitivity to the Holy Spirit’s direction on whatever adjustments I may need to make

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