



Intercession

Spiritual Ponderings...



- What is Intercession?
- Do we really need intercessors?
- Do we really need to intercede?
- Why don't we pray directly to Jesus? ... Why do we need others to pray for us?
 - The difference between the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the intercessions of the saints
- Wait a sec... can those in heaven actually hear us?
- Will God listen to the Saints more than he will listen to us?
- The spirituality of asking for the prayers of the saints

What is Intercession?

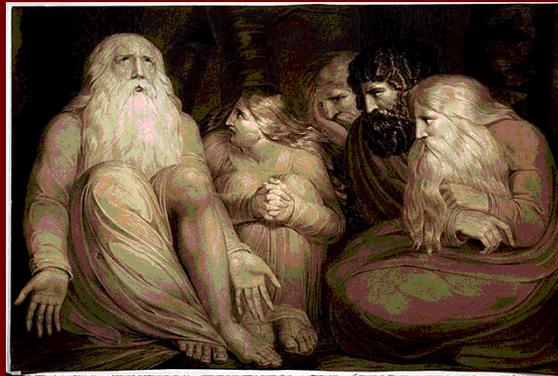
- What does it mean to “Intercede”?
 - To act between two parties with a view to reconcile differences – Webster dictionary
 - Intercession is an action by those who are more able than we, to plead on our behalf.



Do we really need Intercessors?

Do we really need to Intercede?

- **God requests people to ask the intercession of the righteous**
 - The story of our father Abraham and king Abimelech in Geneses 20. “But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him... Now therefore, restore the man’s wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live” (Gen 20:3, 7)
 - The story of Job and his three friends in Job 42. “...the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, ‘My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; *and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him,* lest I deal with you according to your folly” (Job 42:7,8)



Do we really need Intercessors?

Do we really need to Intercede?

■ Examples of the intercessions of the righteous

- God willed to destroy the Israelites because they worshipped the golden calf. Moses said to Him “Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel; Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self”. Then the Bible says: “So the Lord relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people” (Ex.32: 7-14)
- St Mary interceding at Cana: “And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, They have no wine. Jesus said to her, Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come. His mother said to the servants, Whatever He says to you, do it.” (John 2:3-5)



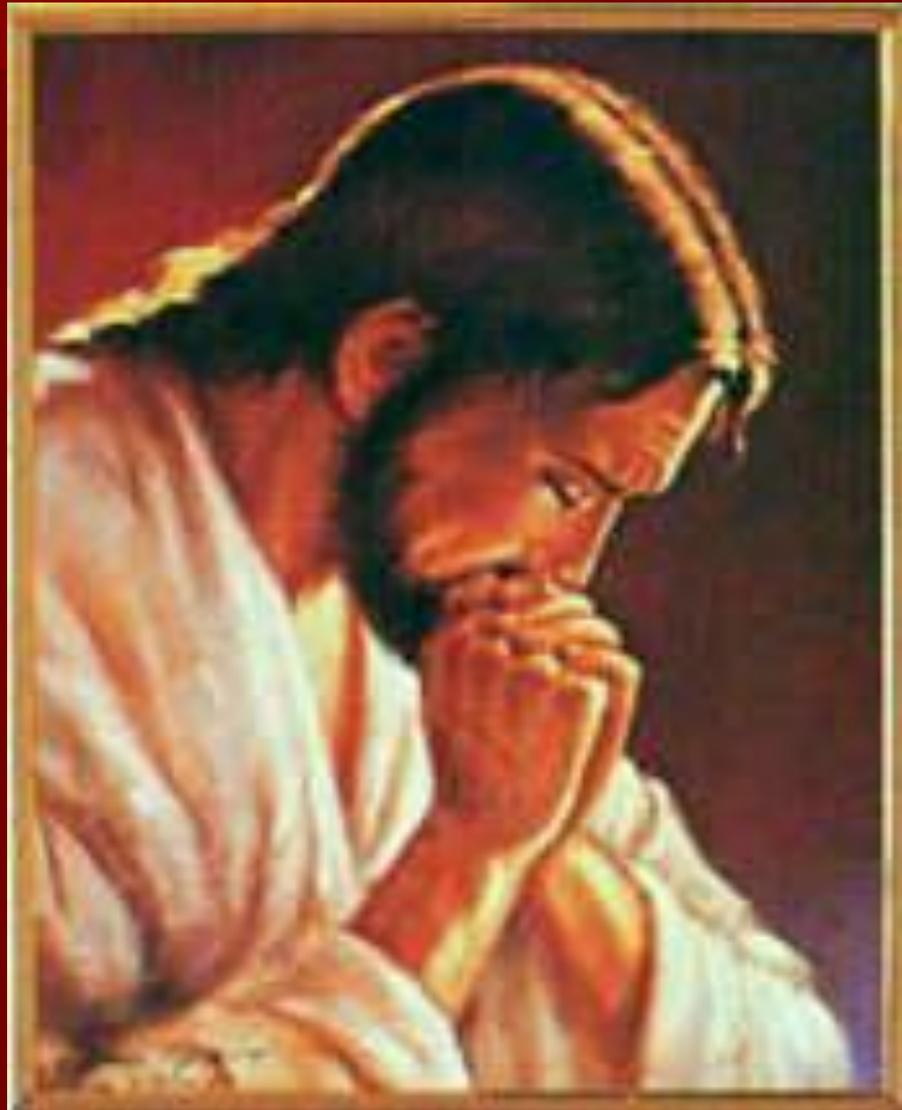
Do we really need Intercessors?

Do we really need to Intercede?

- **The Bible demands that we pray for Each other**
 - pray for one another... The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. (James 5:16)
- **The Saints ask us to pray for them**
 - Pray for us (Heb 13:18) – *St Paul*
 - Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, 2 and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. (2 Thes 3:1-2) – *St Paul*
- **... and they pray for us...**
 - Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling (2 Thes 1:11) – *St Paul*
- **Not Praying for others is a sin?**
 - Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you (1 Sam 12:23)



Why don't we pray directly to God? ...
Why do we need others to pray for us?



Why don't we pray directly to Jesus? ... Why do we need others to pray for us?

■ **Jesus' Intercessory Prayer (John 17)**

– **Prayer for the Apostles**

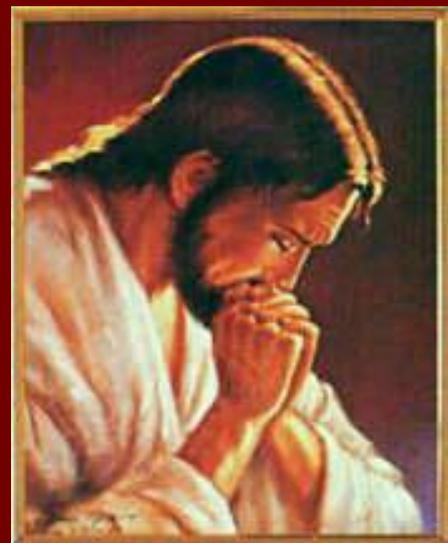
- 9 I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.
- 11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.
- 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

– **Prayer for the Church**

- 20 I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

– **Prayer for All**

- 24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.



Why don't we pray directly to Jesus? ... Why do we need others to pray for us?

■ The difference between the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Intercessions of the saints

- The people who deny the intercession of the Saints depend on the words of St. John "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)
- They also refer to St. Paul when he said "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5)

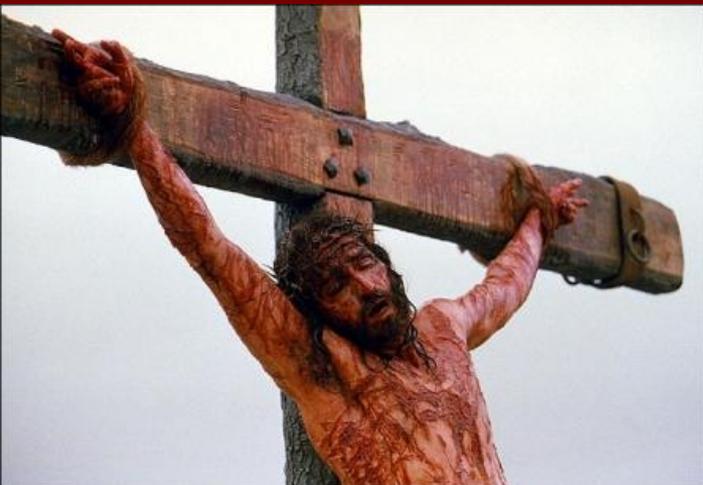
THE BEGINNING

MAN

GOD

Why don't we pray directly to Jesus? ... Why do we need others to pray for us?

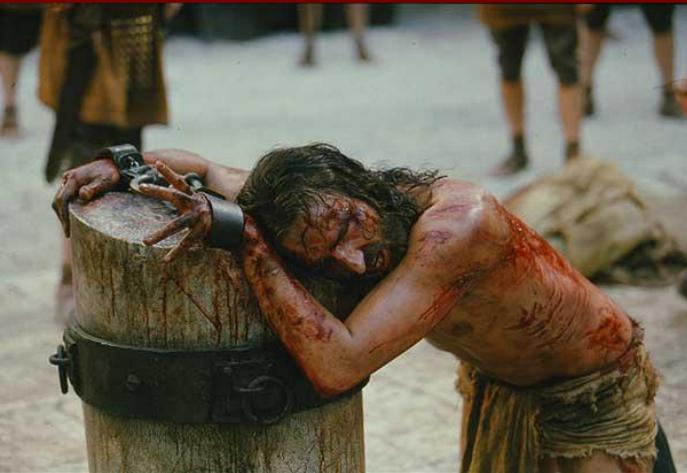
- **The difference between the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Intercessions of the saints**
 - The mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ is an atonement, which means that He mediates for the forgiveness of our sins, being the Atoner who paid our debts.
 - His mediation means that He says to the Father “Do not count their transgressions because I have carried their iniquity” (Is.53:6)
 - Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Is 53:4-6)



Why don't we pray directly to Jesus? ... Why do we need others to pray for us?

■ The difference between the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Intercessions of the saints

- The Lord Jesus Christ stands as the **only** Mediator between God and man; hence He can mediate for us through His blood which was shed for us.
- That's what St. Paul meant when he said "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, **who gave Himself a ransom for all**" (1Tim2:5,6)



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■ **The difference between the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Intercessions of the saints**

- This type of mediation is utterly unquestionable. It is attributed to Christ only, whereas the intercession of the saint has no connection with atonement or redemption.
- The intercession of the saints for us is merely praying for us; it is pleading intercession different from Christ's atoning mediation.



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- **The difference between the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Intercessions of the saints**

- Since we have only one Mediator then every intercessory prayer is unacceptable and if every intercessory prayer is unacceptable then every person's prayer for the sake of another is also unacceptable!
- But the Bible says, "pray for one another" (James 5:16) !



Wait a sec... can those in heaven actually hear us?

- St. Peter the Apostle knew what Ananias and Saphira did in secret.
- St. Paul knew that after his death, savage wolves would come in among the Ephesians and would not spare the flock (Acts 20:29)
- If the Apostles knew that much while they were still in the flesh, how much more would the Lord reveal to them in heaven



Wait a sec... can those in heaven actually hear us?



- There is no doubt that knowledge in heaven is greater than that on earth. St. Paul says "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known" (1 Cor.13:12)
- So, in the next world our knowledge will increase and many secrets will be disclosed to us when we take off this body which binds the soul.
- If the Apostles knew that much while they were still in the flesh, how much more would the Lord reveal to them in heaven
- Also, the knowledge of the angels is shown clearly in the Lord's words: "...there will be *more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents* than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7)
- The angels know our prayers because they carry them to God's throne. "Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. And he was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. *And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of all the saints, ascended before God* from the angel's hand" (Rev.8:3,4)

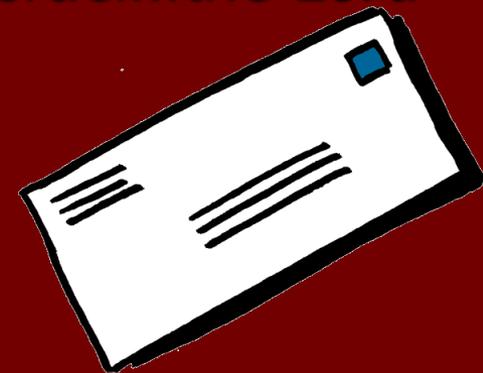
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- The story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16) tells us that Abraham knew about Lazarus suffering and the life of the rich man as well. He also knew about Moses who came hundreds of years after him.
 - But Abraham said, `Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. (Luke 16:25)
- The Lord also said about Abraham that he saw His day "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad" (Jn 8:56)



Wait a sec... can those in heaven actually hear us?

- The amazing story about the Prophet Elijah (2Chronicle 21). It is written about king Jehoram that he killed all his brothers, walked in the ways of king Ahab, built high places on the hills of Judah, and led Judah astray.
- Then he received a letter from the prophet Elijah who had departed from earth and ascended to heaven many years before!
- The letter read: "Thus says the Lord God of your father David: Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, but have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel...the Lord will strike your people" (2 Chr21:12-14)



Wait a sec... can those in heaven actually hear us?

■ The Heavenly Jerusalem

- Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us (Heb 12:1)
- 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. (Heb 12:22-24)



Will God listen to the Saints more than He will listen to us?

- **The saints who departed are still living and they have great favour with God.**



- The saints who departed has great favor with God to the extent that He has mercy on people for their sake even without the praying.
- When king Solomon sinned, God decided to tear his kingdom away from him, but He said: "...but I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David" (1 Kin 11:12,13)
- In one chapter (1kings 11) the Lord repeats the phrase "for the sake of My servant David" three times. If David has such favor with God, how much more has the Virgin Mary, the angels, or John the Baptist who is the greatest born of women.

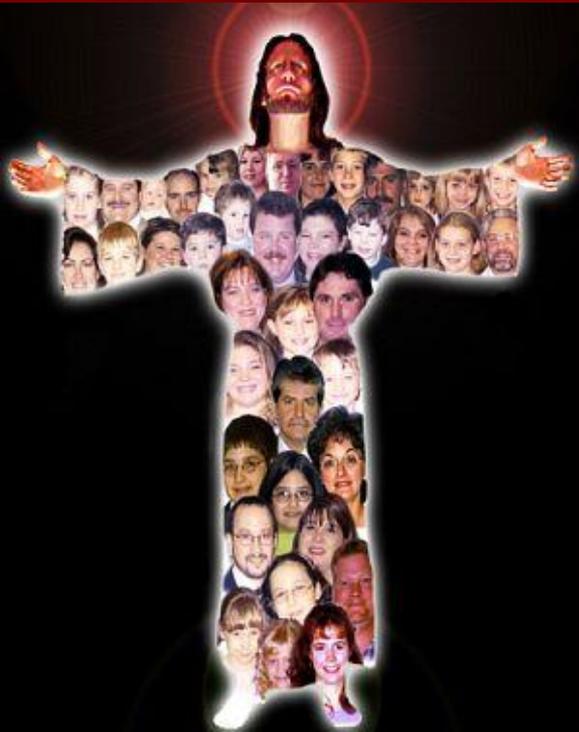
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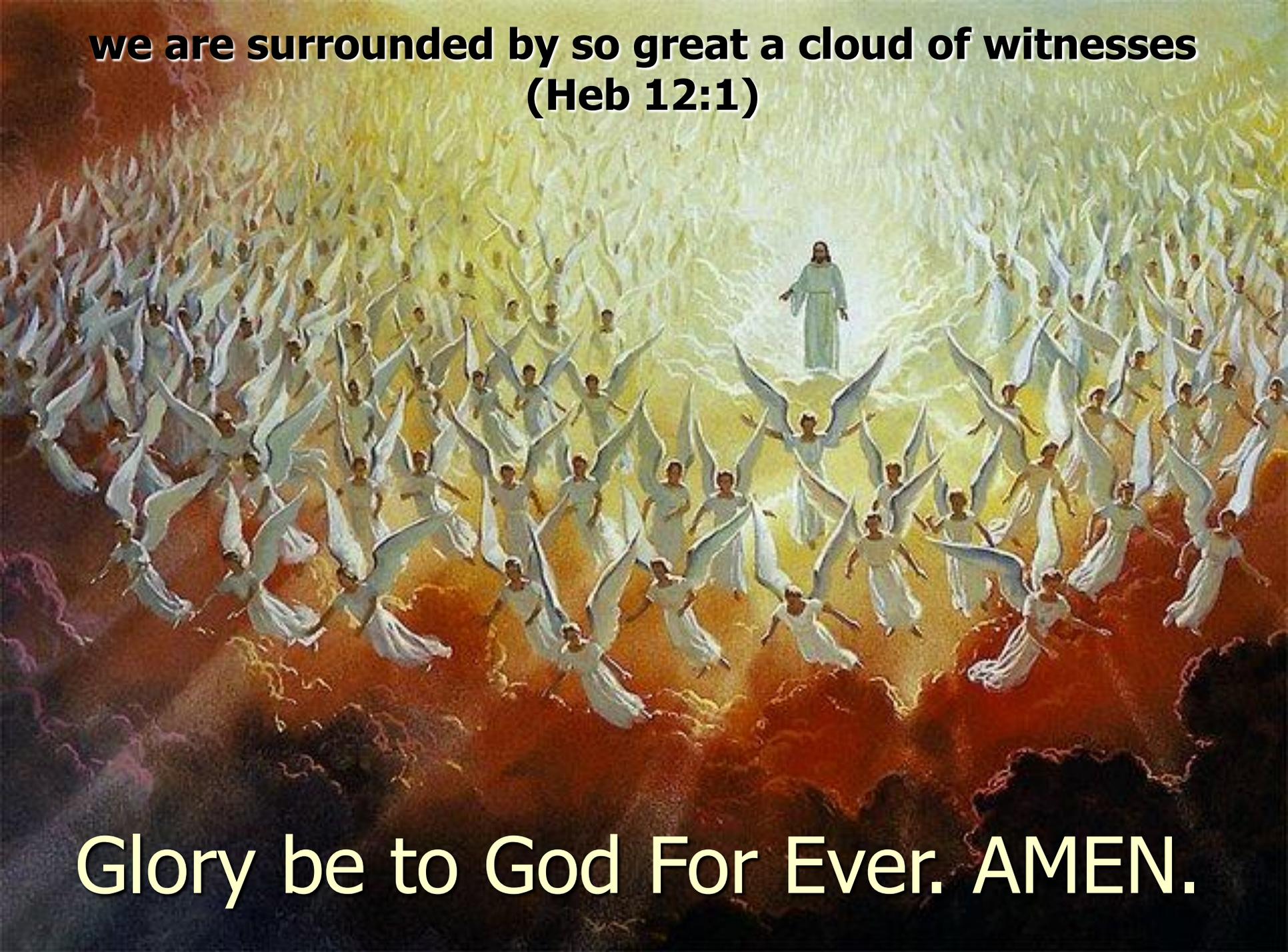
- The bones of the prophet Elisha were capable of performing a miracle. They were a blessing and brought a dead person back to life by mere contact, without prayer. They were only bones with no life in them (2Kings 13:21). How much more effect would Elisha's soul have in heaven?
- If the handkerchiefs and aprons which touched Paul's body had the power to heal the sick and driving demons out, How much more effect would Paul's soul have in heaven? - Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. (Acts 19:11-12)

The spirituality of asking for the prayers of the saints



- Intercession is a fellowship of love between the members of the One Body. We plead for the departed in our prayers and they intercede for us through their prayers; it is an inseparable relationship.
- Those who believe in intercession benefit from the mere connection with the souls of those who departed. They add to their own prayers the more profound and powerful prayers of those abiding in the next world, without any loss on their part.
- Intercession also entails meekness and humbleness of heart. Those who believe in intercession are not conceited about their relationship with God, but takes the position of the sinner who requests the intercession of others for his sake. The reverse is also true about those who ask "What is the difference between me and those saints?"!!!

**we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses
(Heb 12:1)**



Glory be to God For Ever. AMEN.