

LEMONADE

It's Prayer Time! 2 Chronicles 7:12-14

The Temple Dedication

- 2 Chronicles 7 opens with Solomon praying at the dedication of the Temple of God
- When Solomon finished his prayer, God sent fire from heaven and consumed the burnt offerings and sacrifices, and the glory of God filled the Temple
- The fire from heaven and the glory of God in the Temple was a sign of God's acceptance of the Temple as place He could dwell
- Seeing the flash of fire come down and the blazing, blinding glory of God surround the temple, the people fell to the pavement with their faces to the ground.
- With hearts full of praise and thanksgiving for His great salvation and acceptance of the temple, they chanted in unison over and over, "For He is good; for His mercy endures forever."
- The celebration lasted for eight days and Solomon sent the people of Israel to their homes

God's Response to Solomon

2 Chronicles 7:12-13 (KJV) And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. [13] If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;

- After the celebration, Solomon returned to his palace and went to bed still reflecting on the power and manifest presence of God at the dedication of the Temple
- God appeared to Solomon that night and said He heard and accepted his prayer and that He has chosen the Temple as a place of sacrifice and a place of worship
- God then made a promise to Solomon; If I allow droughts, crop failures, or plagues and disease to come on you, then you will remember to pray for restoration

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- Sometimes God allows things to happen in our lives to get our attention
- We're in the midst of a worldwide wake-up call for us to return to God
- This pandemic is the modern-day equivalent of drought, crop failure and pestilence
- It's prayer time!
- God promises to forgive sin and heal the land if *His people* will pray

If My People...

[14] If my people, which are called by my name,

- In times like these, the people that are to be praying are the people of God
- There is something that we as individual believers are to do; and that's pray
- *If my people* – The Israelites were God's chosen, His favorites, His covenant people, the people that bear His name
 - Because of our covenant relationship with Jesus Christ, we are His people, we bear His name
- We are the people that have made a commitment to live for Him, love Him, obey Him, serve Him ***John 1:12 (KJV) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:***

God's Requirements

"...shall humble themselves,"

- This word has the idea of being "***under another***".
- When the fire and glory of God swept through the Temple, all the people fell on their faces in humble submission to God
- When we humble ourselves, we bow down, we lay prostrate, we fall to the ground

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- We need to return praying on our knees to remind us we are submitting ourselves to God
- Humbling ourselves also means we have renounced the spirit of pride
- When we humble ourselves to the Lord, we are acknowledging His Lordship and headship in our lives.
- Humility also suggests *dependency*, realizing that without God, there is nothing we can do **John 15:5 (KJV) I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.**
- Jesus is our example of humility
- He is God, yet He humbled Himself on the Cross, so that we could have relationship with Him

"...and pray,"

- Prayer is our means of communication and conversation with God
- Prayer is spending time with God
- The praying person sees his own *inability* and recognizes God's *ability*.
- Prayer is not only a conversation with God; it's a summons from God
- God is *calling a meeting* with you
- God wants to spend time with you, not just in the difficult times, but every day
- God will sometimes use situations like a worldwide health emergency as the summons for us believers to pray
- God calls us in for prayer because He wants to spend time with you, He wants to hear from you
- What keeps us from answering God's call to prayer?
 - Unconfessed sin will keep you from praying
 - Pride; There's no need to pray, I'm alright
 - God has the power to change our lives and situations, if you will return to prayer

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"...and seek my face,"

- Seeking the face of God is to long for His presence in your life
- This idea here is that we come to the place where God is the number one priority and desire of our heart!
- God wants us to have a hunger and thirst for Him
- God wants us to have an appetite for Him ***again Psalm 42:1 (KJV) As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.***
- Notice the text doesn't say "seek His Hand"
- We only desire God for what He can do for us, how He can bless us
- Don't seek God for what He can do for you; Seek God!

"...and turn from their wicked ways;"

- God is calling for us to change the *direction* of our lives
- God calling us to repentance
- Repentance is the moral and spiritual act of getting right with God
- We are to examine our lives, identify anything that does not please the Lord or line up with His Bible, and we are to eliminate that from our lives!
- The word repentance literally means to "change one's mind"
- You've changed your mind when you *confess* your sins ***1 John 1:9 (KJV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***
- Repentance is a *change of mind* that call for a *change of behavior*
- It's been said that true repentance has "double vision"; It looks upon things *past* with a weeping eye and upon things future with a *watchful* eye!
- If we want God to *show His face* to us, we must *turn toward Him in repentance*

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God's Promise to Answer Prayer

"...then will I hear from heaven,..."

- God will *hear* our prayers **1 John 3:22 (KJV) And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.**
- God is listening and ready to answer our prayers **Isaiah 65:24 (KJV) And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.**

"...and will forgive their sin,..."

- God will forgive
- God will pardon
- God will spare

"...and will heal their land."

- God will answer with healing
- Healing throughout the scripture is mixtures of spiritual and physical applications
- God will bring healing to the nation because *His people* have returned to Him
- The blessings to come to you from turning back to God will then overflow into our homes, schools, relationships, workplaces, our government, our nation, and our world