

IF MY PEOPLE...

*God's Conditional Promise to Israel
Regarding an Unconditional Covenant*

By Arlen L. Chirwood

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.

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;

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, THEN will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (II Chron. 7:12-14).

Solomon's prayer, appearing in II Chron. 6:12-42, follows the completion of the building of the Temple, the Glory filling the Temple, and a succinct reiteration of Israel's history up to this time, with an emphasis on the completed Temple (II Chron. 5:1-6:11).

Solomon's prayer was followed by sacrifices, praises, and keeping a seven-day feast, all having to do with the dedication of the Temple (II Chron. 7:1-11).

And these things which followed Solomon's prayer were then followed by God's response to the whole of the matter (II Chron. 7:12-22).

Only the first three verses from God's response have been quoted from the eleven verses comprising His complete response. God's complete response following this quoted opening part has to do centrally with what He will do in two opposite instances, previously seen detailed in God's Word given through Moses in Leviticus chapter twenty-

six and Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight.

This response has to do with what God will do *if the people obey His voice*, or what He will, in turn, *do if the people, instead, disobey His voice* (obeying or disobeying the Covenant given through Moses at Sinai, inseparably associated with the Abrahamic Covenant, first mentioned 430 years prior to the Covenant given at Sinai).

(Note that the Covenant made with Abraham, having to do with a seed [the Jewish people] and a land [the land of Israel] is *unconditional*. *Israel can never do anything to void the terms of this Covenant* [Gen. 12:1-3; 15:17-21].

The Covenant made through Moses at Sinai though, having to do with God acting in regard to the Abrahamic Covenant, is *conditional*. It is conditioned upon *the obedience of the Jewish people to God's Law* [the Magna Charta for the Kingdom, the rules and regulations governing the people of God within the theocracy (Ex. 19:5, 6; 20:1ff; Gal 3:16-18)].

And, the very nature of these two inseparable Covenants, *NECESSITATES, DEMANDS* that Israel one day be brought to the place of "repentance" — *allowing the unconditional promises in the Abrahamic Covenant to be fully realized* — which is what this section in II Chronicles is really all about.)

And II Chron. 7:14, often removed from its context, misquoted, partly quoted, etc., has not only served to add to *the existing confusion about Israel* but, as well, to an existing confusion relative to *the Church and the Gentile nations when well-meaning individuals commit mayhem through removing this verse from its context and misusing it different ways*.

About the Verse

II Chronicles 7:14, contextually, has to do with *Israel, the land of Israel, the city of Jerusalem, and the Temple*. It has to do with a people who have broken a 3,500-year-old Covenant (the Mosaic Covenant); and, as previously seen, this broken Covenant is inseparably connected with a 4,000-year-old Covenant (the Abrahamic Covenant).

II Chronicles 7:14 has *nothing* to do with the Church or the Gentile nations, for the Covenants, made with Israel and inseparably connected with this verse, have *nothing* to do with either. Covenants are not made with the Church or the Gentile nations; they are made with *Israel alone*.

Then, relative to a Temple and the healing of a land, the Church has no Temple (aside from the individual Christian himself [I Cor. 3:16; 6:19, 20]) or a land to be healed (unless one looks out ahead toward that heavenly land, in which Christians will one day realize an inheritance, a land presently occupied by Satan and his angels, with the land needing to be cleansed, healed [cf. Job 15:15; 25:5; Eph. 3:9, 10; 6:12; Rev. 12:7-9]).

And, though the Gentile nations possess lands, these lands are *always* seen in Scripture as lands separate and distinct from the land in the Abrahamic Covenant.

One could possibly use II Chron. 7:14 in a *secondary sense relative to the Church today*; but because of that which would invariably result from doing this, apart from some type explanation (obscuring and/or destroying a correct understanding of the verse within context), it would undoubtedly be best to not do this.

And to use the verse relative to any Gentile nation and its land (sometimes used by politically minded Christians relative to a governmental system and land in which Christians presently dwell, with the government and land seen as being healed) is, from a Biblical perspective a stretch beyond stretches, little more than pure nonsense.

More Specific, Current Misuse of This Verse

As this is being written, a number of large wildfires are destroying sections of forested lands in Israel, lands which will require years for the vegetation, trees, and wildlife to return after some semblance approximating that existing before the fires. And some, perhaps many, individuals in Israel and elsewhere are praying not only about the current situation but *that God will subsequently heal this fire-ravaged land, claiming His promise in II Chron. 7:14 to do so*.

One question relative to the preceding would be, “Will God, based on His promise in II Chron. 7:14, honor their prayers and subsequently heal the fire-ravaged land?”

A better question though would be, “How can God, based on this verse, possibly honor their prayers and subsequently heal the fire-ravaged land?”

Then, another question would be, “Will God, based on this verse, even hear or respond to such a prayer?”

God has certain conditions in II Chron. 7:14 which *MUST BE MET* before He will act relative to healing any part of the land of Israel — fire ravaged parts or any other parts — and prayer forms only *one* of these conditions.

Read the verse again!

Relative to the overall matter, note:

“He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law [the Covenant associated with II Chron. 7:14; cf. v. 17], even his prayer shall be an abomination” (Prov. 28:9).

“They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words: and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

Therefore thus saith the Lord, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them” (Jer. 11:10, 11).

Why would people in Israel, or anyplace else, claim II Chron. 7:14 and think that God would act in accordance with His promise in the verse if only one of His conditions in the verse has been met?

This is how slipshod the Word is often being handled these days. And the sad truth of the matter is that though these people mean well they really don’t know any better, which often emanates from and is somewhat part and parcel with things being taught by the majority of today’s Bible teachers that deal with different things pertaining to some 6,000,000 Jewish people back in the land today, forming the current Nation of Israel.

It is often taught that the current Jewish nation in the Middle East, dating back to the founding of the nation May 14, 1948, has to do with *God progressively restoring The Jewish people to their land in accordance with His numerous Old Testament promises to do so*. And many of the same individuals teaching the preceding also teach that *God, as well, is progressively healing the land, also in accordance with His numerous promises to do so*.

Some Bible teachers seeing a problem with the preceding — for a non-repentant and unbelieving people are being restored — follow a somewhat milder form of the matter. They see God restoring the Jewish people in their current state in order to later deal with them relative to repentance and belief.

But the latter is as far removed from what Scripture teaches as the former. On either of the preceding, it’s still back to II Chron. 7:14. God simply will not act relative to that in view *UNTIL...*

And II Chron. 7:14 is only one of numerous sections of Scripture on the subject which are being misused, abused, ignored, etc.

And this *should not be taken lightly*. If one is misled concerning God’s dealings with Israel at this point, he may never get straightened out. Erroneous information in this realm will negatively impact numerous things about God’s present and future dealings with Israel.

(For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author’s article, “Seventy Years, Four Hundred Ninety Years.”

This article not only deals with the subject throughout but provides numerous references to other related subjects different places in the article.)

Correct Use of the Verse

There are four separate conditions in II Chron. 7:14 which must be met by the Jewish people before God will act in accordance with His promise in the verse. And these conditions have to do with the Jewish people in relation to God’s Covenants, incorporating promised blessings and curses.

- 1) They *MUST* humble themselves.
- 2) They *MUST* pray.
- 3) They *MUST* seek the Lord’s face.
- 4) They *MUST* turn from their wicked ways.

After the people and the land have been healed, *matters will be nothing like that which exists in the Middle East today*. The Lord, in that day, will have a believing, redeemed, and restored people (all of the Jews worldwide, not just part) *whose focus will be completely and only upon Him*. They will, in that day, *recognize and receive the Messiah Whom they rejected and crucified 2,000 years ago*.

And, in turn, God will have a people, a kingdom of priests, *who will not only carry the message of the one true and living God to the nations but a people through whom He can bless the nations as well — yes, even the Iranians and all other nations echoing or about to echo*:

“Come and let us cut them off from being a nation: that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance” (Ps. 83:4).

Conditions seen or brought to light in II Chronicles chapters five through seven will mark that day. *A greater than Solomon will be present, and a restored people will dwell in a restored land with a rebuilt Temple housing the Glory of God*.

The people of God, the Jewish people, will have *humbled themselves, prayed, sought the Lord’s face, and turned from their wicked ways*.

In turn, *the Lord will have heard from heaven, forgiven their sins, and healed their land*.

Until that day, *curses will prevail; in that day, blessings will prevail*.

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee” (Ps. 122:6).

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