

2 Chronicles 7 Commentary

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SECOND CHRONICLES The Kingdom of Israel From Splendor to Disaster				
Splendor			Disaster	
King Solomon of Judah 2 Chronicles 1-9			Successive Kings of Judah 2Chr 10-36	
Kingdom United			Kingdom Divided 2Chr 10:1-19	Rulers of the Southern Kingdom of Judah After the Split
Inaugural 2Chr 1:1-17	Solomon's Temple 2Chr 2:1- 7:22	Solomon's Glory 2Chr 8:1- 9:31	The Exile of Judah 2Chr 36:17-23	
Building of the Temple				
~40 Years			~393 Years	
Temple Destroyed				

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 Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
 Click [Chart from Charles Swindoll](#)

**TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF
SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES**

1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	
1 Chronicles 10		1 Chr 11-19		1 Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36		

Legend: B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.

NOTE: THESE COMMENTS ARE OFFERED IN AN "AS IS" FORMAT - IF I HAVE TIME IN THE FUTURE, THEY WILL BE UPDATED.

CLICK [2 CHRONICLES COMMENTARIES](#) FOR MULTIPLE SERMONS AND COMMENTARIES

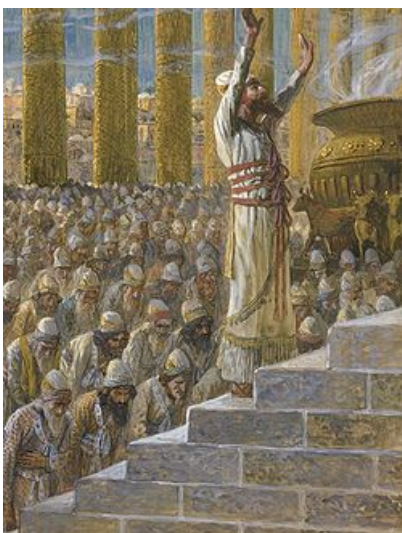
2 Chronicles 7:1 Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house.

- **when Solomon.** 1 Ki. 8:54, etc. Is. 65:24. Da. 9:20. Ac. 4:31; 16:25, 26.
- **the fire.** Ge. 15:17. Ex. 29:43. Le. 9:24. Judges. 6:21. 1 Ki. 18:24, 38. 1 Ch. 21:26. Mal. 3:1, 2.
- **the glory.** 2Chr 5:13, 14. Ex. 40:34, 35. Le. 9:23. 1 Ki. 8:10, 11. Is. 6:1-4. Eze. 10:3, 4; 43:5, 44:4. Hag. 2:7-9. Re. 21:23.
- See [BELOW FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR 1-2 CHRONICLES](#) - adapted from [Paul Apple's Bible Outlines](#)

Related:

Leviticus 9:22-24+ Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them, and he stepped down after making the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offerings. 23 Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting. When they came out and blessed the people, the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. 24 Then fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the portions of fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

1 Kings 8:54 When Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and supplication to the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread toward heaven.



King Solomon dedicates the Temple at Jerusalem. Painting by James Tissot or follower, c. 1896-1902

FIRE FROM HEAVEN

GOD SATISFIED

Andrew Hill: The circumstantial clause denoting the cause-and-effect relationship between Solomon's prayer and God's response clearly marks the beginning of a new section of the narrative. This portion of the Chronicler's story of Solomon's reign contains two major units: the dedication of the temple (2Ch 7:1–10) and the report of the Lord's appearance to Solomon (2Ch 7:11–22). Each section in 2Ch 7 begins with the name "Solomon" since he is credited as the builder of Yahweh's temple (2Ch 7:1, 5, 7, 8, 11). The chiasmic structure of the narrative recounting Solomon's reign (2Ch 1–9) is further enhanced by the inclusio formed by the repetition of the hymn of thanksgiving (2Ch 5:13 and 2Ch 7:3).

Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house - God lit the fire which was to burn continuously under the altar of burnt offering (cf Lev 6:8-13) symbolizing His continual presence. God also sent fire when inaugurating the Tabernacle (Leviticus 9:22-24) and the Davidic altar on Moriah (1 Chr 11:26).

John Trapp - This fire was kept alive till the captivity of Babylon: and after that, it was said to have been miraculously renewed [in the days of the Maccabees]."

Frederick Mabie: The appearance of fire from heaven at the completion of Solomon's prayer visually showcases God's power and signifies his approval of Solomon's dedicatory prayer and offering. Similarly, fire came down from heaven following a number of important events, including David's sacrifice at the threshing floor of Ornan (the future location of the Jerusalem temple; cf. 1Ch 21:26), the inauguration of priestly service at the Tent of Meeting at Mount Sinai (cf. Lev 9:23–24), and Elijah's showdown with the prophets of Baal (cf. 1Ki 18:16–39, esp. 38).

Raymond Dillard: This second report of the appearance of the fire and glory of Yahweh parallels the earlier account (2Ch 5:13–14) and probably refers to the same incident, narrated twice to achieve the literary balance of a chiasm. It should be compared with other appearances of fire from Yahweh showing approval of a sanctuary or sacrifice (1 Chr 21 // 2 Sam 24; Ex 40:34–38; 1 Kgs 18; Jdg 6:20–22). A second approach to the two passages construes them in chronological sequence rather than as a duplicate account for purposes of literary balance; in this case the initial appearance was confined to the priests inside (2Ch 5:13–14), while the latter incident was visible to all the people (2Ch 7:3).

Mark Boda: The final section of Solomon's prayer (2Ch 6:41-42) invites God to "enter your resting place," a request that is fulfilled immediately at the outset of chapter 7. Just before the glorious presence of the Lord fills the Temple, however, the Chronicler records that God sent down fire from heaven to burn up the sacrifices that had been prepared.

Believer's Study Bible - When David built the provisional altar on the threshing floor which he purchased from Ornan, the Lord responded to his sacrifices by "fire on the altar of burnt offering" (cf. 1 Chr. 21:18-30, especially v. 26). This is reminiscent of other occasions when the Lord sent fire from heaven (cf. Gen. 15:7-17; Lev. 9:24; Judg. 6:21-24; 1 Kin. 18:36-38).

Related:

- [Glory of God](#)
- [God's Plan for Jerusalem: Five Prophetic Mountain Peaks](#)

RON DANIEL - 2Chr 7:1-3 The People Bow To The Ground. When Solomon's prayer was over, the Lord demonstrated His acceptance of the burnt offering by sending fire from heaven to consume it. This must have been an amazing sight! The people's response is a little difficult to understand completely without some study. When the fire consumed the burnt offering, they bowed to the ground and said,

2Chr. 7:3 ..."Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."

You would think that they would say something like, "He is all-powerful," or "He is a God of wonders and consuming fire." Why would they focus on His lovingkindness at a time like that? The key is in understanding the purpose of the burnt offering. You see, our study of Leviticus chapter one revealed that, the purpose of the burnt offering was for a person to be accepted before the Lord, to have atonement made for his sin. In other words, it is the offering that covers a person's sin. The person would lay his hand on the head of the animal essentially transferring the guilt of his sin to the animal, and then it was killed. When God accepts a substitutionary sacrifice for sin, what can we point to more than God's lovingkindness, His mercy?

Paul reminded the Ephesians,

Eph. 2:4-7 ...God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us

up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

When atonement is made for your sins, what else can you say besides, "God's mercy, His lovingkindness, is everlasting. Truly the Lord is good."

Matthew Henry Notes: 2Chr 7

In this chapter we have God's answer to Solomon's prayer.

I. His public answer by fire from heaven, which consumed the sacrifices (2Chr 7:1), with which the priests and people were much affected (2Chr 7:2, 3). By that token of God's acceptance they were encouraged to continue the solemnities of the feast for fourteen days, and Solomon was encouraged to pursue all his designs for the honour of God (2Chr 7:4-11).

II. His private answer by word of mouth, in a dream or vision of the night (2Chr 7:12-22). Most of these things we had before, 1 Ki. 8 and 9.

2Chr 7:1-11

Here is, I. The gracious answer which God immediately made to Solomon's prayer: The fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice, v. 1. In this way God testified his acceptance of Moses (Lev. 9:24), of Gideon (Jdg. 6:21), of David (1 Chr. 21:26), of Elijah (1 Ki. 18:38); and, in general, to accept the burnt-sacrifice is, in the Hebrew phrase, to turn it to ashes, Ps. 20:3. The fire came down here, not upon the killing of the sacrifices, but the praying of the prayer.

1. This fire intimated that God was,

(1.) Glorious in himself; for our God is a consuming fire, terrible even in his holy places. This fire, breaking forth (as it is probable) out of the thick darkness, made it the more terrible, as on Mount Sinai, Ex. 24:16, 17. The sinners in Sion had reason to be afraid at that sight, and to say, Who among us shall dwell near this devouring fire? Isa. 33:14. And yet,

(2.) Gracious to Israel; for this fire, which might justly have consumed them, fastened upon the sacrifice which was offered in their stead, and consumed that, by which God signified to them that he accepted their offerings and that his anger was turned away from them.

2. Let us apply this,

(1.) To the suffering of Christ. When it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and put him to grief, in that he showed his good-will to men, having laid on him the iniquity of us all. His death was our life, and he was made sin and a curse that we might inherit righteousness and a blessing. That sacrifice was consumed that we might escape. Here am I, let these go their way.

(2.) To the sanctification of the Spirit, who descends like fire, burning up our lusts and corruptions, those beasts that must be sacrificed or we are undone, and kindling in our souls a holy fire of pious and devout affections, always to be kept burning on the altar of the heart. The surest evidence of God's acceptance of our prayers is the descent of the holy fire upon us. Did not our hearts burn within us? Lu. 24:32. As a further evidence that God accepted Solomon's prayer, still the glory of the Lord filled the house. The heart that is thus filled with a holy awe and reverence of the divine glory, the heart to which God manifests himself in his greatness, and (which is no less his glory) in his goodness, is thereby owned as a living temple.

F B Meyer - The Fire came down from Heaven, and consumed the Burnt-Offering.

It was a very gracious and immediate response to the prayer of King and people. If we make room for God, He always comes and fills. If we seek Him, He is instantly with us. Directly the soul confesses, it is forgiven; or consecrates itself, it is accepted; or claims deliverance from the power of sin, it is cleansed. Do you really want the Lord to come to you? His glory has even now begun to shine in on you, to grow and enlighten you forevermore.

The fire stands for the Divine Presence. Oh to have always a consciousness of it! Nothing would so soon arrest and destroy the impurity and evil within; as sunshine does fungus-growth. We are told that the fire was to be kept burning on the altar: it was never to go out. Thus, we should always perpetuate and practice the presence of God, feeding the fire with the fuel of prayer and meditation.

Fire also stands for the Divine Purity. As the Plague of London was stamped out by the Great Fire which destroyed the nests where

it had bred; and as the furnace rids the ore of dross— so the Holy Spirit in thy heart and mine is a guarantee of holiness and righteousness all our days.

Fire also stands for Divine Fellowship. It consumed that part of the offering which was placed on the altar; and it seemed as if the Divine nature was therefore feeding upon the sacrifice, whilst the remainder of it was consumed by the offerer. Thus, also, we have communion with God, as we eat the bread and drink the wine in the Lord's supper. We feed on Christ in adoration, faith, and identification. God feeds on the completeness of Christ's obedience, and the glory of His character. Thus we have fellowship with the Father and the Son, by the Holy Ghost.

2 Chronicles 7:2 The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD'S house.

- **the priests.** 2Chr 5:14. Ex. 24:17. Is. 6:5. Re. 15:8.

Related:

Revelation 15:8+ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

2 Chronicles 5:14 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD'S house.

2 Chronicles 7:3 All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD, saying, "Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."

- they bowed. Ex. 4:31. Le. 9:24. Nu. 14:5; 16:22. 1 Ki. 18:39. 1 Ch. 29:20. Ps. 95:6.
- For he is. 2Chr 5:13; 20:21. 1 Ch. 16:41. Ezz. 3:11. Ps. 103:17; 136:1, etc. Is. 63:7. Je. 33:11. He. 7:24, 25. Lu. 1:50.

All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD, saying, "Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."

Andrew Hill: The simultaneous events of fire from heaven falling on the bronze altar and the cloud of Yahweh's glory filling the temple prompt a predictable reaction from the people—prostration in worship (2Ch 7:3)

MATTHEW HENRY - II. The grateful return made to God for this gracious token of his favour.

1. The people worshipped and praised God, 2Ch 7:3. When they saw the fire of God come down from heaven thus they did not run away affrighted, but kept their ground in the courts of the Lord, and took occasion from it,

(1.) With reverence to adore the glory of God: They bowed their faces to the ground and worshipped, thus expressing their awful dread of the divine majesty, their cheerful submission to the divine authority, and the sense they had of their unworthiness to come into God's presence and their inability to stand before the power of his wrath.

(2.) With thankfulness to acknowledge the goodness of God; even when the fire of the Lord came down they praised him, saying, He is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. This is a song never out of season, and for which our hearts and tongues should be never out of tune. However it be, yet God is good. When he manifests himself as a consuming fire to sinners, his people can rejoice in him as their light. Nay, they had reason to say that in this God was good. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, but the sacrifice in our stead, for which we are bound to be very thankful."

The more Scriptural our hymns are the better. In fact there will never be found music which can excel old David's Psalms. Let us interpret them in an evangelical spirit, let us fill them full of the gospel of Christ, of which they are, indeed, already full in prophecy, and we shall sing the very words of the Spirit, and shall surely edify each other and glorify our God. If, then, our music has been scriptural, if our praise has been hearty, if our song has been unanimous, if we have sung of that mercy which endureth for ever, we have good cause to expect that God will manifest himself to us, and faith will perceive the cloud. That is a grand old Calvinistic Psalm, 'His mercy endureth for ever.' What Arminian can sing that? Well, he will sing it, I dare say; but if he be a thoroughgoing Arminian he really cannot enjoy it and believe it. You can fall from grace, can you? Then how does his mercy endure for ever? Christ bought with his blood some that will be lost in hell, did he? Then how did his mercy endure for ever? There are some who resist the offers of divine grace, despite all that the Spirit of God can do for them, yet disappoint the Spirit and defeat God, are there? How then does his mercy endure for ever? No, no, this is no hymn for you, this is the Calvinist's hymn. This is the hymn which you and I will sing as long as life shall last, and going through the dark valley of the shadow of death we will make the shades resound with the joyous strain—'For his mercies shall endure ever faithful, ever sure.'

2 Chronicles 7:4 Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the LORD.

- Then the king. They presented the victims to the priests, and they and the Levites slew them, and sprinkled the blood; or, perhaps, the people themselves slew them, and having caught the blood, collected the fat, etc., presented them to the priests to be offered as the law required.

Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the LORD.

MATTHEW HENRY - 2. The king and all the people offered sacrifices in abundance, 2Chr 7:4, 5. With these they feasted this holy fire, and bade it welcome to the altar. They had offered sacrifices before, but now they increased them. Note, The tokens of God's favour to us should enlarge our hearts in his service, and make us to abound therein more and more. The king's example stirred up the people. Good work is then likely to go on when the leaders of a people lead in it. The sacrifices were so numerous that the altar could not contain them all; but, rather than any of them should be turned back (though we may suppose the blood of them all was sprinkled upon the altar), the flesh of the burnt-offerings and the fat of the peace-offerings were burnt in the midst of the court (2Chr 7:7), which Solomon either hallowed for that service or hallowed by it. In case of necessity the pavement might be an altar.

3. The priests did their part; they waited on their offices, and the singers and musicians on theirs (2Chr 7:6), with the instruments that David made, and the hymn that David had put into their hand, as some think it may be read (meaning that 1 Chr. 16:7), or, as we read it, when David praised by their ministry. He employed, directed, and encouraged them in this work of praising God; and therefore their performances were accepted as his act, and he is said to praise by their ministry.

4. The whole congregation expressed the greatest joy and satisfaction imaginable. They kept the feast of the dedication of the altar seven days, from the second to the ninth; the tenth day was the day of atonement, when they were to afflict their souls for sin, and that was not unseasonable in the midst of their rejoicings; on the fifteenth day began the feast of tabernacles, which continued to the twenty-second, and they did not separate till the twenty-third. We must never grudge the time that we spend in the worship of God and communion with him, nor think it long, or grow weary of it.

RON DANIEL - 2Chr 7:4-7 Sacrifices And Music - God's glory has filled the place, and it is now the house of God. And so we see that in God's house, these two things should happen: offerings and musical worship. It is interesting to me that in this generation, many in the church are ashamed to publicly practice these two things. Many seeker-sensitive churches have moved away from worship music, replacing it with performances. They believe that if the church body is worshipping, it will alienate the seekers. But I say that the house of God is where God's people gather to worship!

And even many Biblically-based churches have in this generation become ashamed to receive offerings publicly. They say, "Receiving offerings is a stumbling block to unbelievers," and so they only have unobtrusive boxes in the lobby where people can give. But again, I say, "The house of God is where God's people gather to worship!" I agree that placing undue emphasis on money will alienate an unbeliever. But I also see that we are commanded to give our offerings to God publicly and worshipfully. I'm not going to take away our worship time because an unbeliever doesn't understand, or has a hangup about it. After all, don't unbelievers have problems and hangups with the Bible? Should we get rid of that too?

The musicians and singers praised publicly, and the offerings also were presented right there, in the middle of the court.

2 Chronicles 7:5 King Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. Thus the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

- a sacrifice. 2Chr 1:6; 5:6; 15:11; 29:32, 33; 30:24; 35:7–9. 1 Ki. 8:62, 63. 1 Ch. 29:21. Eze. 45:17. Mic 6:7.
- twenty and two. The number of sheep and oxen here mentioned has to some appeared incredibly large; but it must be considered that a prodigious number of persons was now at Jerusalem, and that this was the amount of all the victims that had been offered during the seven days of the feast of tabernacles, as well as the time the feast of the dedication lasted. 2Chr 2:4. Nu. 7:10. 1 Ki. 8:63. Eze. 45:17. Jn 10:22.

King Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. Thus the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

Ryrie - According to 1 Kings 8:63 these were peace offerings that provided food for the people during the two weeks of celebration (vv. 9-10).

2 Chronicles 7:6 The priests stood at their posts, and the Levites also, with the instruments of music to the LORD, which King David had made for giving praise to the LORD—“for His lovingkindness is everlasting”—whenever he gave praise by their means, while the priests on the other side blew trumpets; and all Israel was standing.

- the priests. 1 Ch. 16:39, 40; 24:1–3.
- the Levites. 2Chr 29:25. 1 Ch. 6:31, 32; 15:16–21; 16:4–6, 41, 42; 25:1–7. Ps. 87:7.
- which David. Am. 6:5.
- because his mercy. 2Chr 7:3. 1 Ch. 16:34. Ps. 106:1; 107:1; 118:1–4; 138:8.
- ministry. Heb. hand. Is. 52:6.
- the priests. 2Chr 5:12. Nu. 10:1–10. Jos. 6:4. 1 Ch. 13:8; 15:24; 16:6, 42.

2 Chronicles 7:7 Then Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD, for there he offered the burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings because the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to contain the burnt offering, the grain offering and the fat.

- **consecrated the middle.** 2Chr 36:14. Nu. 16:37, 38. 1 Ki. 8:64. Heb 13:10–12.
- **the brazen.** 2Chr 4:1.

Then Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD, for there he offered the burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings because the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to contain the burnt offering, the grain offering and the fat.

August Konkel: The third section provides details of the whole festal period (2 Chron 7:7–11). The two events of dedicating the altar and celebrating the Feast of Booths lasted for fifteen days (2Ch 7:9), double the usual length of the fall festival. The Festival of Booths began on the fifteenth day of the month and concluded on the twenty-second day (Lev 23:34–36). An eighth day, called (like the first day) a solemn assembly, concluded the celebration. The people were dismissed on the twenty-third day (2 Chron 7:10), after the conclusion of the eighth day. In the Chronicler's version of events, the dedication of the altar had begun seven days before the commencement of the festival. The Chronicler never makes mention of the Day of Atonement, which occurs on the tenth day of the seventh month (Lev 16:29–31) and would have been during the first week of festivities. This was not a usual circumstance. It would not have been possible to observe a customary Day of Atonement since the ark itself was being dedicated in its new location. The sacrifices served for the entire fifteen days of the two festivities. The large numbers correspond to the size of the assembly. Pilgrims to the festival came from the farthest reaches of the Davidic kingdom. . . The main function of these offerings was to provide food for the table. These sacrifices were meant to be joyous occasions of celebration (Milgrom 1991: 220–21). Worshipers and priests share the peace offerings, providing a bonding of the community and a celebration of the covenant (Lev 7:11–15, 30–36). The blood, fat, and entrails of the peace offering are all devoted to God.

Frederick Mabie: Solomon also consecrated the broader area of the temple complex with a great number of different types of offerings (fellowship, grain, and burnt; cf. Lev 1–3). The burning of the fat portion of the fellowship offering implies that the broader animal was used as part of the fifteen-day feast described in 2Ch 7:8–10 (cf. the stipulations in Lev 3).

J.A. Thompson: It was not possible to present all the offerings on the bronze altar that Solomon had made (2Ch 4:1), so he consecrated the middle part of the courtyard in front of the temple, and there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of the fellowship offerings (traditionally peace offerings). The details of this arrangement are not given.

Related:

- Burnt offering ([05930](#)) ['olah](#)
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- Grain offering ([04503](#)) [minchah](#)
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2 Chronicles 7:8 So Solomon observed the feast at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly who came from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of Egypt.

- kept. Le. 23:34–43. Nu. 29:12–38. De. 16:13–15. 1 Ki. 8:65. Ne. 8:13–18. Zec. 14:16–19. Jn 7:2, 37–39.
- a very great. 2Chr 30:13. from the entering. That is, from one extremity of the land to another; Hamath being situated on the north, and the river of Egypt on the south. Ge. 15:18. Nu. 34:5–8. Jos. 13:3–5. 1 Ki. 4:21–25. Am. 6:14.

FEAST OF BOOTHS CELEBRATED

So Solomon observed the feast at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly who came from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of Egypt - From tHamath to the brook of Egypt indicates from the extreme north to the extreme south of the land.

RON DANIEL - 2Chr 7:8-10 Time For Everything - The dedication and celebration lasted a good, long time. There was a time for everything: worship, sacrifice, celebration, being solemn, and rejoicing.

Norman Geisler - See [When Critics Ask](#)

2 CHRONICLES 7:8–10—Why did Solomon fail to keep the fast as the law commanded?

PROBLEM: Leviticus 16:30 commanded that a fast should be kept in connection with the Day of Atonement. However, Solomon did not observe a fast in connection with the Day of Atonement celebration that he held here in 2 Chronicles 7:8–10 (cf. also 1 Kings 8:65–66).

SOLUTION: First of all, it cannot be shown from the texts that Solomon failed to keep the fast as Leviticus had commanded. The text declares that Solomon celebrated for “fourteen days” (1 Kings 8:65). It is quite possible that on the actual Day of Atonement, which was the tenth day of the seventh month, that Solomon did keep the fast.

Furthermore, strictly speaking, the Leviticus passage does not use the word “fast.” It simply says they were to “afflict their souls” (Lev. 16:29). This could mean to keep the celebration with appropriate solemnity, not necessitating that no food be eaten. It does forbid that no work be done (v. 29), but it does not really say that no food could be eaten, although this has been the general understanding of the phrase throughout Jewish history.

Finally, even if it could be shown that Solomon did not keep the Law correctly, all this would prove is that Solomon erred in not keeping the fast. It would not show that the Bible erred in recording what Solomon in truth did.

QUESTION - [What is the Feast of Tabernacles / Booths / Sukkot?](#)

ANSWER - The Feast of Tabernacles, also known as the Feast of Booths and *Sukkot*, is the seventh and last feast that the Lord commanded Israel to observe and one of the three feasts that Jews were to observe each year by going to “appear before the Lord your God in the place which He shall choose” (Deuteronomy 16:16). The importance of the Feast of Tabernacles can be seen in how many places it is mentioned in Scripture. In the Bible we see many important events that took place at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. For one thing, it was at this time that [Solomon’s Temple](#) was dedicated to the Lord (1 Kings 8:2).

It was at the Feast of Tabernacles that the Israelites, who had returned to rebuild the temple, gathered to celebrate under the leadership of Joshua and Zerubbabel (Ezra 3). Later, the Jews heard Ezra read the Word of God to them during the Feast of Tabernacles (Nehemiah 8). Ezra's preaching resulted in a great revival as the Israelites confessed and repented of their sins. It was also during this Feast that Jesus said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37–39).

The Feast of Tabernacles takes place on the 15th of the Hebrew month Tishri. This was the seventh month on the [Hebrew calendar](#) and usually occurs in late September to mid-October. The feast begins five days after the Day of Atonement and at the time the fall harvest had just been completed. It was a time of joyous celebration as the Israelites celebrated God's continued provision for them in the current harvest and remembered His provision and protection during the 40 years in the wilderness.

As one of the three feasts that all "native born" male Jews were commanded to participate in, the Feast of Tabernacles is mentioned multiple times in Scripture, sometimes called the Feast of the Ingathering, the Feast to the Lord, or the Feast of Booths (Exodus 23:16; Deuteronomy 16:13). As one of the pilgrim feasts (when Jewish males were commanded to go to Jerusalem), it was also the time when they brought their tithes and offerings to the Temple (Deuteronomy 16:16). With the influx of people coming to Jerusalem at that time, we can only imagine what the scene must have been like. Thousands upon thousands of people coming together to remember and celebrate God's deliverance and His provision, all living in temporary shelters or booths as part of the requirements of the feast. During the eight-day period, so many sacrifices were made that it required all twenty-four divisions of priests to be present to assist in the sacrificial duties.

We find God's instructions for celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles in Leviticus 23, given at a point in history right after God had delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt. The feast was to be celebrated each year on "the fifteenth day of this seventh month" and was to run for seven days (Leviticus 23:34). Like all feasts, it begins with a "holy convocation" or Sabbath day when the Israelites were to stop working to set aside the day for worshiping God. On each day of the feast they were to offer an "offering made by fire to the Lord" and then after seven days of feasting, again the eighth day was to be "a holy convocation" when they were to cease from work and offer another sacrifice to God (Leviticus 23). Lasting eight days, the Feast of Tabernacles begins and ends with a Sabbath day of rest. During the eight days of the feast, the Israelites would dwell in booths or tabernacles that were made from the branches of trees (Leviticus 23:40–42).

The Feast of Tabernacles, like all the feasts, was instituted by God as a way of reminding Israelites in every generation of their deliverance by God from Egypt. Of course, the feasts are also significant in that they foreshadow the work and actions of the coming Messiah. Much of Jesus' public ministry took place in conjunction with the Holy Feasts set forth by God.

The three pilgrim feasts where all Jewish males were commanded to "appear before the Lord in the place he chooses" are each very important in regards to the life of Christ and His work of redemption. We know with certainty that the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are symbolic of Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross. Likewise, we know that Pentecost, which marked the beginning of the Feast of Weeks, was the time of Jesus' bodily ascension. And most scholars would agree that the Feast of Tabernacles is symbolic of Christ's [Second Coming](#) when He will establish His earthly kingdom.

There are also some who believe that it was likely during the Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus was born. While we celebrate Christ's birth on [December 25](#), most scholars acknowledge that this tradition was begun in the fourth century AD by the Roman Catholic Church and that the exact day of Jesus' birth is unknown. Some of the evidence that Jesus might have been born earlier in the year during the Feast of the Tabernacles includes the fact that it would be unlikely for shepherds to still be in the field with their sheep in December, which is in the middle of the winter, but it would have been likely they were in the fields tending sheep at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. The strong possibility that Jesus was born at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles is also seen in the words John wrote in John 1:14. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The word John chose to speak of Jesus "dwelling" among us is the word *tabernacle*, which simply means to "dwell in a tent."

Some believe it is very likely that John intentionally used this word to associate the first coming of Christ with the Feast of Tabernacles. Christ came in the flesh to dwell among us for a temporary time when He was born in the manger, and He is coming again to dwell among us as Lord of Lords. While it cannot be established with certainty that Jesus was born during the Feast of Tabernacles, some believe there is a strong possibility the Feast of Tabernacles not only looks forward to His second coming but also reflects back on His first coming.

The Feast of Tabernacles begins and ends with a special Sabbath day of rest. During the days of the feast all native Israelites were "to dwell in booths" to remind them that God delivered them out of the "land of Egypt" and to look forward to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, who would deliver His people from the bondage of sin. This feast, like all of the feasts of Israel, consistently reminded the Jews and should remind Christians as well that God has promised to deliver His people from the bondage of sin and deliver them

from their enemies. Part of God's deliverance for the Israelites was His provision and protection of them for the 40 years they wandered in the wilderness, cut off from the Promised Land. The same holds true for Christians today. God protects us and provides for us as we go through life in the wilderness of this world. While our hearts long for the Promised Land (heaven) and to be in the presence of God, He preserves us in this world as we await the world to come and the redemption that will come when Jesus Christ returns again to "tabernacle" or dwell among us in bodily form. GotQuestions.org

2 Chronicles 7:9 On the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, for the dedication of the altar they observed seven days and the feast seven days.

- solemn assembly. Heb. restraint. Le. 23:36. De. 16:8. Ne. 8:18. Joel 1:14.
- seven days. 2Chr 30:23. 1 Ki. 8:65.

A SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

On the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, for the dedication of the altar they observed seven days and the feast seven days.

Solemn Assembly ([06116](#)) [atsarah](#) from *atsar* = to restrain, retain) is a feminine noun that means assembly, and in most contexts has a religious connotation which is why it is most often translated as "solemn assembly." Solemn assemblies included those prescribed by God such as the Feast of Passover (Dt. 16:8) and the all-day gathering at the end of the Feast of Booths (Neh 8:18) Other assemblies were either for the worship of Baal (2 Ki 10:20) or were detestable to God because Israel's heart was not right before the LORD (Isa 1:13; Amos 5:21).

Lev. 23:36; Num. 29:35; Deut. 16:8; 2 Ki. 10:20; 2 Chr. 7:9; Neh. 8:18; Isa. 1:13; Jer. 9:2; Joel 1:14; Joel 2:15;
Amos 5:21

QUESTION - [What is a solemn assembly in the Bible?](#)

ANSWER - In the Bible, a solemn assembly is a gathering of the people of Israel for a sacred feast, festival, or holy occasion. A solemn assembly included a ritual of purification or observing a state of holiness in which all the people of the community were commanded to do no work. The solemn assembly is also called a "sacred assembly" and a "solemn meeting."

One Hebrew word translated "solemn assembly" means "a day of restraint"—primarily from work. Another Hebrew term rendered "solemn assembly" denotes a unique, appointed time set apart for the keeping of festivals. On these special worship occasions, the whole community gathered together for either a feast or a fast day.

Solemn assemblies played a role in Israel's annual feasts and festivals. As part of the observance of Passover, on the seventh day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, God called for a solemn assembly: "For six days eat unleavened bread and on the seventh day hold an assembly to the LORD your God and do no work" (Deuteronomy 16:8). On the eighth day of the Feast of Booths (or Feast of Tabernacles), Israel was to hold a solemn assembly: "For seven days present food offerings to the LORD, and on the eighth day hold a sacred assembly and present a food offering to the LORD. It is the closing special assembly; do no regular work" (Leviticus 23:36).

The dedication of [Solomon's temple](#) lasted seven days and closed with a solemn assembly on the eighth day, which was then followed by the Feast of Tabernacles: "On the eighth day they held an assembly, for they had celebrated the dedication of the altar for seven days and the festival for seven days more" (2 Chronicles 7:9).

An unusual solemn assembly took place during [King Jehu's](#) reign in Israel. Jehu devised a scheme to purge the land of Baal worship by ordering a solemn assembly of all the priests of Baal. After cunningly luring them into their own temple, Jehu had the entire assembly slaughtered, and then he burned and destroyed the temple of Baal (2 Kings 10:18–28).

During times of crisis, the people of Israel gathered in solemn assembly for special days of fasting. When a devastating plague of locusts brought drought and famine to Israel, the prophet Joel called the people to a solemn assembly: "Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD" (Joel 1:14; cf. Joel 2:15).

The prophets sometimes criticized and condemned the people's solemn assemblies because their gatherings were merely

hypocritical religious shows: "Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them" (Isaiah 1:13–14). The Lord despises outward rituals that serve only to hide inward rebellion. In their everyday lives, the people of Israel were failing to act justly. They weren't living up to the Lord's standard of righteousness, yet, with their solemn assemblies, the Israelites were continuing a public charade of piety. God saw right through the religious hypocrisy and would have none of it: "I hate, I despise your religious festivals; your assemblies are a stench to me" (Amos 5:21).

Today, some Protestant churches periodically hold meetings they call "solemn assemblies"; their purpose is usually to pray and hear the Word during a time of corporate soul-searching and self-examination. Typically, the congregation comes together during a solemn assembly for repentance, confession of sin, and fasting. GotQuestions.org

2 Chronicles 7:10 Then on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people to their tents, rejoicing and happy of heart because of the goodness that the LORD had shown to David and to Solomon and to His people Israel.

- three and twentieth. 1 Ki. 8:66.
- glad. 2Chr 29:36; 30:26. De. 12:7, 12, 18; 16:11, 14. Ne. 8:10. Ps. 32:11; 33:1; 92:4; 100:2; 105:3; 106:5. Ac. 2:46; 16:34. Phil 4:4.
- goodness. 2Chr 6:41. Ex. 18:1.

Then on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people to their tents, rejoicing and happy of heart because of the goodness that the LORD had shown to David and to Solomon and to His people Israel.

John Olley - David and Solomon are again joined together (2 Chron. 7:10), the Chronicler seeing their reigns as intertwined, with both kings being significant in the building of the temple and the settling of the ark in its place. While the Hebrew term tobah ("goodness") often includes a sense of "prosperity" (as ESV), it is likely that for the Chronicler this is a fulfillment of God's promise to David concerning both a son and the temple. After David received the Lord's message through Nathan, he prayed, "You have promised this good thing to your servant," referring specifically to the dynasty (1 Chron. 17:26), but for the Chronicler the most important task was the building of the temple. What was "good" to David has continued to be "good" to "Solomon and to Israel his people. A similar linking of God, king, people, and temple is seen in the later commendation of Jehoiada: "He had done good in Israel, and toward God and his house" (2 Chron. 24:16)

G Campbell Morgan - These words give an account of how the wonderful ceremonies of the dedication of the Temple ended. The ceremonies had created a profound consciousness of the goodness of God, and this filled the people with joy and gladness of heart. So they went back to their tents, filled with a sense, a true sense, of the greatness of their national life. It consisted wholly in the governance of God. Had the future of king and people only been true to the high altitude on which they stood that day, their history would have been a very different one. In this whole story there is a revelation of the true value of public recognition of God in national life. It serves to keep alive the consciousness of the matters of supreme importance in that life, which are always those of the government of God, and so of His goodness to His people. The method of such recognition may be in some senses difficult today, through the unhappy loss of the sense of the unity of the Spirit, which makes for schism, and therefore for ineffectiveness in the witness of the Church. Nevertheless it is the duty of the Church, the whole Church, to watch for and to seize every opportunity for public testimony to the goodness of God as manifested in His overruling of the affairs of the nation. As in the case of Solomon, such ceremonial occasions should open and close with sacrificial remembrance of the One Sacrifice, and have at their centre the holy exercises of praise and prayer. The methods may have changed, but the spiritual obligation abides.

2 Chronicles 7:11 Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's palace, and successfully completed all that he had planned on doing in the house of the LORD and in his palace.

- Solomon. 2Chr 2:1. 1 Ki. 9:1, etc.
- all that came. Ec. 2:4, 10, 11.

Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's palace, and successfully completed all that he had planned on doing in the house of the LORD and in his palace.

Mark Boda: Having depicted the joyous closing to the festival in 2Ch 7:10, the Chronicler brings the building and dedication account

to a close with a summary note in 2Ch 7:11, a technique that has been a regular feature in the Chronicler's account of Solomon (2Ch 1:1; 2:1; 3:1-2; 5:1; 7:11; 8:1, 16). This summary note joins with 2Ch 5:1 to form a bracket around the entire dedication account of 2Ch 5:1-7:11. A striking difference between this summary note and the one that began the section, however, is the reference to the completion of the Temple, as well as the royal palace, a feature that the Chronicler found in his source in 1 Kings 9:1 but repeated for emphasis in his rendition. Although the Chronicler left out the account of the construction of Solomon's palace from 1 Kings 7:1-12, it is interesting that in his recounting of the communication between Solomon and Hiram of Tyre in chapter 2, he inserted three extra references to the building of a palace not found in his source in 1 Kings 5:1-8, two concerning Solomon's palace (2Ch 2:1, 12) and one concerning David's palace (2Ch 2:3b). Although the focus of the Chronicler's attention is clearly on the Temple project, this may suggest that the Chronicler was concerned with the enduring role of the Davidic dynasty, the palace being representative of a minor interest in an enduring role for a royal court. The reference to the palace in 2Ch 7:11, thus, was important enough to retain from his source, as well as to repeat, because it appears in the transition from the dedication events to the concluding speech of the Lord to Solomon, which will focus on the endurance of both the Temple (2Ch 7:12-16) and the dynasty (2Ch 7:17-22).

MATTHEW HENRY - 5. Solomon went on in his work, and prosperously effected all he designed for the adorning both of God's house and his own, 2Ch 7:11. Those that begin with the service of God are likely to go on successfully in their own affairs. It was Solomon's praise that what he undertook he went through with, and it was by the grace of God that he prospered in it.

RON DANIEL - 2Ch 7:11-16 I Have Heard Your Prayer

God confirmed to Solomon that He had in fact consecrated this temple as a place where God would meet with His people. But there are some additional issues God wants to address...

2 Chronicles 7:12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice.

- the Lord. 2Ch 1:7. Ge. 17:1. 1 Ki. 9:2.
- I have heard. 2 Ki. 20:5. Ps. 10:17; 66:19. Lu. 1:13. Ac. 10:31. 1 Jn 5:14, 15.
- have chosen. 2Ch 7:16. De. 12:5, 11. Ps. 78:68, 69; 132:13, 14.
- an house of sacrifice. 2Ch 2:6. De. 12:6.

Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. This was the second great appearance of God to Solomon (1Ki 9:1-2), the first being in 1Ki 3:5-9

Andrew Hill: The Lord's speech to Solomon on the occasion of his second dream theophany may be outlined in three distinct parts:

- the Lord's acceptance of Solomon's prayer of dedication and his approval of the Jerusalem temple as the place for his Name to dwell (2Ch 7:12b),
- the Lord's promise to Solomon and the people he shepherds (2Ch 7:13-18), and
- the Lord's threat of punishment for disobedience (2Ch 7:19-22).

August Konkel: The second night vision at Gibeon occurs after Solomon completed all his building projects (2 Chron 7:11), which was twenty years after the previous assembly at Gibeon (2Ch 1:3). The first vision was before the seven years of temple building (1 Kings 6:37) and another thirteen years of building projects (2Ch 7:1; 9:10). If these building projects were in sequence, as seems to be the case in the Deuteronomistic presentation (cf. 2Ch 9:10), and if the ark installation took place immediately when the temple was completed, this vision is thirteen years after the festivities celebrating the ark.

Spurgeon - Brethren, we want renewed appearances, fresh manifestations, new visitations from on high; and I commend to those of you who are getting on in life, that while you thank God for the past, and look back with joy to his visits to you in your early days, you now seek and ask for a second visitation of the Most High."

MATTHEW HENRY - 2Chr 7:12-22

That God accepted Solomon's prayer appeared by the fire from heaven. But a prayer may be accepted and yet not answered in the letter of it; and therefore God appeared to him in the night, as he did once before (2Chr 1:7), and after a day of sacrifice too, as then, and gave him a peculiar answer to his prayer. We had the substance of it before, 1 Ki. 9:2-9.

I. He promised to own this house for a house of sacrifice to Israel and a house of prayer for all people(Isa. 56:7): My name shall be there for ever (2Ch 7:12, 16), that is, "There will I make myself known, and there will I be called upon."

II. He promised to answer the prayers of his people that should at any time be made in that place, 2Ch 7:13-15 National judgments are here supposed (2Ch 7:13), famine, and pestilence, and perhaps war, for by the locusts devouring the land meant enemies as greedy as locusts, and laying all waste. 2. National repentance, prayer, and reformation, are required, v. 14. God expects that his people who are called by his name, if they have dishonoured his name by their iniquity, should honour it by accepting the punishment of their iniquity. They must be humble themselves under his hand, must pray for the removal of the judgment, must seek the face and favour of God; and yet all this will not do unless they turn from their wicked ways, and return to the God from whom they have revolted. 3. National mercy is then promised, that God will forgive their sin, which brought the judgment upon them, and then heal their land, redress all their grievances. Pardoning mercy makes ways for healing mercy, Ps. 103:3; Mt. 9:2.

Norman Geisler - See [When Critics Ask](#)

2 CHRONICLES 7:12ff—Does God dwell in a chosen temple?

PROBLEM: God told Solomon, "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice" (v. 12), that "My name may be there forever" (v. 16). Yet, even Solomon in his dedicatory prayer acknowledged that God could not dwell in His temple, saying, "Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27). Other Scriptures likewise affirm that God does not "dwell in temples made with hands (Acts 17:24; cf. Isa. 66:1).

SOLUTION: It should be noted, first of all, that God did not actually promise Solomon that He would "dwell" in this temple. He only said He chose it as a "house of sacrifice" (2 Chron. 7:12), to which He would attach His "name" (v. 16).

Further, when the Bible speaks of God being "in" something, it does not mean that His infinite nature can be "contained" (1 Kings 8:27) by it, but simply that He is there in a special sense to bless it or manifest Himself to His people. Usually, this took the form of a theophany (Isa. 6:1), or shekinah cloud of glory (Ex. 40:34). But, there is no way that the transcendent God of Scripture can be encompassed by the walls of any human building (cf. Isa. 40:21–22).

2 Chronicles 7:13 "If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people,

- If I shut up heaven. 2Chr 6:26–28. De. 11:17. Job 11:10; 12:14. Ps. 107:34. Lu. 4:25. Re. 3:7; 11:6.
- I command. Ex. 10:4–6. Ps. 105:34. Joel 1:4–7; 2:25.
- I send. Nu. 14:12; 16:46, 47. 2 Sa. 24:13–15. Eze. 14:19–21.

If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people,

Frederick Mabie: This statement is situated within covenantal particulars related to the Deuteronomic covenant (cf. v.13), matters of temple theology (and the interwoven Israelite sacrificial system; cf. vv.15–16), and the Davidic covenant (cf. vv.17–22). Note that all these features are directly applicable to the nation of Israel located within the specific geographical area of the Promised Land featuring a functioning temple in the city of Jerusalem and having a Davidic king on the throne. . . . Notable examples of leaders described as humbling themselves or leading a time of national repentance include Rehoboam (12:6), Hezekiah (32:26), and especially the dramatic example of Manasseh (33:12). Such instances of repentance and humbling frequently accompany times of prayer and an earnest seeking of God.

Bob Gass - Revival in "A Fresh Word for Today"

If my people, who are called by my name, will 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. (2 Chronicles 7:13NIV)

What will it take to turn the heart of this nation back to God? The answer is revival! But what is revival? Dr. Armin Gesswein says, "The revival we need is simply a return to normal New Testament Christianity; where the churches are full of prayer, full of power, full of people, full of praise, and full of divine happenings all the time. We want something normal, not just 'special.' God's normal that is." God's "normal" is greater than all of our "specials" put together! Revival is not a process we can use to manipulate God. You can't

plan revival, you must seek it!

God gives us the pattern in 2 Chronicles 7:14. Here's how it works:

1. The people pray.
2. God comes.
3. The people repent.
4. God revives the people.
5. The people begin to minister and pour out their lives into others.
6. God equips and empowers them, making up the difference.

Anytime God is going to do something wonderful, He begins with a difficulty. When He is going to do something very wonderful, He begins with an impossibility. If you look around today, I think you will agree that this nation is in an impossible situation.

ONLY GOD CAN SAVE OUR CHURCHES, OUR FAMILIES, AND OUR NATION. AND HE WILL IF WE PRAY!
COME ON, CHILD OF GOD, IT'S TIME TO START!

Related:

- Spirit Filled Church

2 Chronicles 7:14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

- my people. Is. 63:19.
- which are called by my name. Heb. upon whom my name is called. humble. 2Chr 6:37–39; 33:12, 13, 18, 19. Le. 26:40, 41. De. 4:29, 30; 30:1–6. Eze. 33:11. Jas 4:9, 10.
- and pray. Ac. 9:11.
- seek my face. Is. 45:19. La. 3:40, 41.
- turn from. Pr. 28:13. Is. 55:6, 7; 59:20. Eze. 18:27–30.
- will I hear. 2Chr 6:27, 30, 39.
- heal their land. Ps. 60:2. Je. 8:22; 33:6; 51:9.

and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Andrew Hill: The activities of “humbling, praying, seeking, and turning” should be understood as four facets or aspects of the act (or even process) of biblical repentance (2Ch 7:14). Each of these words is theologically charged. The word “humble” (kn’) means to subdue one’s pride and submit in self-denying loyalty to God and his will (cf. Lev. 26:41). “Pray” (pll) in this context is a shameless acknowledgment of personal sin and a plea for God’s mercy, much like that of David’s prayer of repentance (cf. Ps. 51:1–2). “Seek” (bqš) is often used in desperate situations in which God is the only possible hope for deliverance (cf. Deut. 4:29–30). “Turn” (šwb) is the Old Testament term for repentance and signifies a complete change of direction away from sin and toward God (or an “about-face” in military parlance; cf. Ezek. 18:30, 32). 2Ch 7:14 is a theological digest of the rest of the Chronicler’s narrative. The history of the monarchy demonstrates how both the kings and the people “humble” themselves before God (e.g., Rehoboam, 2Ch 12:6–7), “pray” to God in repentance (e.g., Hezekiah, 32:20), “seek” God’s face for restoration (e.g., Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah, 2Ch 20:3–4), and “turn” from sin to obey God’s commands (e.g., Asa and the people, 2Ch 15:4). Such behavior will ensure that God’s “Name” or presence will remain associated with the Jerusalem temple (2Ch 7:16a).

Geoffrey Kirkland: What Does God Want?

1. To HUMBLE - to recognize sin and utter dependence on God; subdue pride; submit in self-denying loyalty to God!
2. To PRAY - a generic term that means calling on God for help in times of need; shameless acknowledgement of sin & desperation for God’s deliverance.
3. To SEEK - in relation to worship and pursuing God’s favor; to passionately, exclusively, resolutely, run after God with focus, tenacity, endurance & joy.

4. To TURN - a changed life, repentance // turning from sin; complete change U-turn in direction in life.

J Vernon McGee - Remember the old adage that “**all Scripture is written for us, but not all Scripture is written to us**” The interpretation of a verse of Scripture will teach what it means in its setting and context. It may not be written to us at all. We can think of many commands given in the Old Testament which are not commands given to us. However, the application of all of Scripture is for us. God has something to teach us throughout the entire Scripture. Now let’s go back to 2 Chronicles 7:14. The setting is at the dedication of David’s temple which Solomon had built. It is God’s Word to Solomon concerning that land in that day. At the dedication Solomon prayed this great prayer which we have seen. Now He remembers the prayers of His people, and He says to Solomon, “If my people, which are called by my name....” To whom is He talking? “My people, which are called by My name.” That is Israel. God is talking to Solomon about Israel. Now, if these will humble themselves, if they will pray, if they will seek His face, if they will turn from their wicked ways, then God promises three things to Israel: He will hear their prayer, He will forgive them, He will heal their land. These were definite conditions that God put down for Israel, and their history demonstrates the accuracy and literalness of these specifics.....Now there is an application. This verse has a message for me. I can’t toss it aside just because God did not direct it to me. It contains a formula for this hour. “My people”—God has a people which we call the church or the body of Christ, those who have accepted the Savior, “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). I guess one could say a lot of us are peculiar people, but this means a people for Himself. “Shall humble themselves”—the flesh is proud but we are admonished to be humble. “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love” (Eph. 4:1–2). We are told in Galatians 5:22–23 that longsuffering and meekness are fruits of the Spirit. Humbleness is commended for the believer today. “And pray”—certainly many, many times in the New Testament we are admonished to pray. The Lord Jesus told His disciples to watch and pray. The epistles contain numerous commands to pray. “And seek My face” is also a New Testament admonition: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3:1–2). “And turn from their wicked ways.” This also applies to us. God has a great deal to say about repentance for believers. “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Rev. 3:19). Repentance is for the child of God. Now how about God’s part? God had promised that He would hear. “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight” (1 John 3:22). He promised to forgive: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). “And will heal their land.” That does not apply to us. I can’t find anywhere in the New Testament where the Lord has promised to heal a piece of real estate. If God has blessed you in a business way, that is extra—a blessing that He has not promised. Nowhere does God promise material blessing to us. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. We were aliens, enemies of God, and now we have been made the sons of God. We have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and He forgives us our sins. Heaven is our home, and the New Jerusalem is our goal. We have been delivered from hell. These are our blessings. Nowhere are we promised a land or healing in our land. May I say to you that if you would wish to lift out verse 14 and apply the entire verse to your present situation, then you must take verse 15 along with it.

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of 2 Chronicles 7:14?](#) Does 2 Chronicles 7:14 apply to modern nations and/or nations other than Israel? [SEE VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - The key to understanding any verse of Scripture is [context](#). There is the immediate context—the verses before and after it, as well as the larger context of Scripture—how the verse fits into the overall story. There is also the historical and cultural context—how the verse was understood by its original audience in light of their history and culture. Because context is so important, a verse whose meaning and application seem straightforward when quoted in isolation may mean something significantly different when it is taken in context.

When approaching 2 Chronicles 7:14, one must first consider the immediate context. After Solomon dedicated the temple, the Lord appeared to him and gave him some warnings and reassurances. “The Lord appeared to him at night and said: ‘I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices.’ When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:12–14).

The immediate context of 2 Chronicles 7:14 shows that the verse is tied up with Israel and the temple and the fact that from time to time God might send judgment upon the land in the form of drought, locusts, or pestilence.

A few verses later God says this: “But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. I will make it a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. This temple will become a heap of rubble. All who pass by will be appalled and say, ‘Why has the Lord done such a thing to this land and to this temple?’ People will

answer, ‘Because they have forsaken the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who brought them out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—that is why he brought all this disaster on them’” (2 Chronicles 7:19–22).

No doubt Solomon would have recognized this warning as a reiteration of Deuteronomy 28. God had entered into [acovenant](#) with Israel and promised to take care of them and cause them to prosper as long as they obeyed Him. He also promised to bring curses upon them if they failed to obey. Because of the covenant relationship, there was a direct correspondence between their obedience and their prosperity, and their disobedience and their hardship. Deuteronomy 28 spells out the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience. Again, divine blessing and divine punishment on Israel were conditional on their obedience or disobedience.

We see this blessing and cursing under the Law play out in the [book of Judges](#). Judges chapter 2 is often referred to as “The Cycle of the Judges.” Israel would fall into sin. God would send another nation to judge them. Israel would repent and call upon the Lord. The Lord would raise up a judge to deliver them. They would serve the Lord for a while and then fall back into sin again. And the cycle would continue.

In [2 Chronicles 7](#), the Lord simply reminds Solomon of the previous agreement. If Israel obeys, they will be blessed. If they disobey, they will be judged. The judgment is meant to bring Israel to repentance, and God assures Solomon that, if they will be humble, pray, and repent, then God will deliver them from the judgment.

In context, 2 Chronicles 7:14 is a promise to ancient Israel (and perhaps even modern-day Israel) that, if they will repent and return to the Lord, He will rescue them. However, many Christians in the United States have taken this verse as a rallying cry for America. (Perhaps Christians in other countries have done so as well.) In this interpretation, Christians are the people who are called by God’s name. If *Christians* will humble themselves, pray, seek God’s face, and repent, then God will heal their land—often a moral and political healing is in view as well as economic healing. The question is whether or not this is a proper interpretation/application.

The first problem that the modern-day, “Westernized” interpretation encounters is that the United States does not have the same covenant relationship with God that ancient Israel enjoyed. The covenant with Israel was unique and exclusive. The terms that applied to Israel simply did not apply to any other nation, and it is improper for these terms to be co-opted and applied to a different nation.

Some might object that Christians are still called by God’s name and in some ways have inherited the covenant with Israel—and this may be true to some extent. Certainly, if a nation is in trouble, a prayerful and repentant response by Christians in that nation is always appropriate. However, there is another issue that is often overlooked.

When ancient Israel repented and sought the Lord, they were doing so *en masse*. The nation as a whole repented. Obviously, not every single Israelite repented and prayed, but still it was *national* repentance. There was never any indication that a small minority of the nation (a righteous remnant) could repent and pray and that the fate of the entire nation would change. God promised deliverance when the entire nation repented.

When 2 Chronicles 7:14 is applied to Christians in the U.S. or any other modern nation, it is usually with the understanding that the Christians in that nation—the true believers in Jesus Christ who have been born again by the Spirit of God—will comprise the righteous remnant. God never promised that if a righteous remnant repents and prays for their nation, that the nation will be saved. Perhaps if national repentance occurred, then God would spare a modern nation as He spared Nineveh at the preaching of Jonah (see Jonah 3)—but that is a different issue.

Having said that, it is never wrong to confess our sins and pray—in fact, it is our duty as believers to continuously confess and forsake our sins so that they will not hinder us (Hebrews 12:1) and to pray for our nation and those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1–2). It may be that God in His grace will bless our nation as a result—but there is no guarantee of national deliverance. Even if God did use our efforts to bring about national repentance and revival, there is no guarantee that the nation would be politically or economically saved. As believers, we are guaranteed personal salvation in Christ (Romans 8:1), and we are also guaranteed that God will use us to accomplish His purposes, whatever they may be. It is our duty as believers to live holy lives, seek God, pray, and share the gospel knowing that all who believe will be saved, but the Bible does not guarantee the political, cultural, or economic salvation of our nation. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Related:

- [What does it mean to seek God's face? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Rob Morgan - If My People

Shortly after the 1952 Republican Convention, General Dwight D. Eisenhower asked Billy Graham to meet him in Chicago to

suggest “a religious note” of some sort for some of his campaign speeches. Graham told the general he would be glad to help privately. Accordingly, Graham and Eisenhower met shortly thereafter at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, and Graham shared Bible verses appropriate to the needs of the United States.

The evangelist also took the opportunity to give the general a red leather Bible and to urge him to personally consider the gospel of Jesus Christ. Eisenhower listened respectfully.

Later, five days before his inauguration, Eisenhower invited Graham to the Commodore Hotel in New York. “I’d like to quote one or two passages from the Bible in my inaugural speech,” he said. Gazing out the window, Eisenhower told Graham that he felt one of the reasons he was elected was to help set the moral and spiritual climate of America. Graham suggested several verses, among them Psalm 33:12 and 2 Chronicles 7:14.

Over the next several days, Eisenhower prepared a speech that opened in prayer and that spoke repeatedly of spiritual things. “In the swift rush of great events,” he scribbled in his final draft, “we find ourselves groping to know the full meaning of these times in which we live. In our quest for understanding, we beseech God’s guidance.”

On Tuesday, January 30, 1953, Dwight D. Eisenhower was sworn into office as his hand rested on two Bibles, both opened to 2 Chronicles 7:14: “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (BORROW [From this verse : 365 inspiring stories about the power of God's word](#))

C H Spurgeon - CALLED by the name of the Lord, we are nevertheless erring men and women. What a mercy it is that our God is ready to forgive! Whenever we sin let us hasten to the mercy-seat of our God, seeking pardon.

We are to humble ourselves. Should we not be humbled by the fact that after receiving so much love we yet transgress? O Lord, we bow before thee in the dust, and own our grievous ingratitude. Oh the infamy of sin! Oh the sevenfold infamy of it in persons so favoured as we have been!

Next, we are to pray for mercy, for cleansing, for deliverance from the power of sin. O Lord, hear us and shut not out our cry.

In this prayer we are to seek the Lord’s face. He has left us because of our faults, and we must entreat him to return. O Lord, look on us in thy Son Jesus, and smile upon thy servants.

With this must go our own turning from evil. God cannot turn to us unless we turn from sin.

Then comes the triple promise of hearing, pardon, and healing. Our Father, grant us these at once, for our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake. (Faith’s Checkbook)

Kenneth Osbeck - BORROW - [Amazing grace](#)

GOD OF OUR FATHERS

Daniel C. Roberts, 1841–1907

If my people, who are called by My name, will 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. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

After what I owe to God, nothing should be more dear or more sacred to me than the love and respect I owe my country.

—Jacques Auguste de Thou

We need to be reminded that a nation can receive God’s blessing only when He is recognized as ruler and Lord. Christian people in every land have an awesome responsibility—to be models of God’s righteousness—“salt” and “light” for a sinful and hurting society. The moral strength of a nation rests upon the knees of God’s people.

“God of Our Fathers” also reminds us that concerned citizens of the heavenly kingdom should also be involved citizens of their earthly kingdom. The hymn text was written in 1876, the year that America was preparing to celebrate its 100th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Daniel Crane Roberts, a 35-year-old rector of a small Episcopal church in Brandon, Vermont, felt that the country should have a new national hymn for the occasion. His new song was sung for the first time by the parishioners of the Brandon village church for their worship service on July 4th, 1876.

Later, at the time of the actual National Centennial Observance commemorating the adoption of the Constitution, Roberts’ hymn text was chosen as the official hymn for that event. These words remind us well that the God who has so richly blessed our land in the

past is the One still needed to be “our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay.”

God of our fathers, whose almighty hand leads forth in beauty all the starry band; of shining worlds in splendor thru the skies, our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.

Thy love divine hath led us in the past, in this free land by Thee our lot is cast; be thou our ruler, guardian, guide and stay, Thy word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.

From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence, be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense; Thy true religion in our hearts increase; Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh Thy people on their toilsome way. Lead us from night to never ending day; fill all our lives with love and grace divine, and glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.

God's Wake-Up Call By Dr. Stephen Olford

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

Introduction: Revival is the work of God in God's people primarily, spilling over a dynamic and redemptive witness to the world outside. I want to speak to you today on the subject of the reality of revival, now.

1. The Problem That Hinders Revival. “If My people ... will turn from their wicked ways.” Notice how many times the word “My” is used in this verse. If you ask the question, “Who hinders revival?” God answers “My people.” The hindrance to revival in America today is the church. What is the problem? Why is heaven shut up? Glance at 2 Chronicles 6:26 to find out why the heavens have shut up and there is no rain; the answer is, “they have sinned.” Deuteronomy 11:13–14 tells us that obedience to God's commandments brings rain from heaven, and that sin is failure to hear God, to love God, to serve God. Let me be practical about this: have you had your quiet time this morning? Have you heard from God today through His Word? A lack of obedience is a lack of love for God. If there's one word missing today in our evangelical circles, it's “obedience.” Serving involves doing fervently and faithfully what God has commanded. Every one of us should be finding, following, and finishing God's work for our lives at every stage whether in school, seminary, shop, or in the farm.

2. The Process That Hastens Revival (v. 14). “If My people ... will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways.” Have you ever analyzed the process of repentance? It's a movement characterized by four steps:

A. Brokenness. “Humble themselves.” When the writer here says we should “humble” ourselves, he's using a Hebrew word found in Judges 8:28 where we read that Midian, when she was subdued under Gideon, could no more lift their heads. This is the type of brokenness we need before God and in our nation. We know that God respects the heart broken over sin (Ps. 51:17). God relieves the broken heart and saves such as have a contrite spirit. Are you living out the concept of repentance day by day as a lifestyle? That's brokenness. Husbands and wives, parents and children, pastors and deacons, do you have a willingness to admit sin and get right?

B. Prayerfulness. “Pray.” Of the twelve words used in the Old Testament for prayer, the word used here literally carries the connotation of self-judgment. So often we pray, “Lord send a great revival. Begin in me that I may be known as a Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, etc.” Our motives are wrong. We so often pull out our hair because prayer is out of the government, prayer is out of school, but what bothers me is that prayer is out of the church!

C. Earnestness. “Seek My face.” This reminds us of Jacob's wrestling match with God. After he was broken, he continued to cling to God until He blessed him. Andrew Murray in South Africa prayed for 30 years for revival, and then it came, the greatest revival South Africa has ever known. More preachers went out from South Africa than in any other time before or since.

D. Holiness. “Turn from their wicked ways.” Are we translating the praises we sing today into everyday life? One of the biggest challenges we face is to be holy in a day of moral decay and degradation.

3. The Promise That Heralds Revival. “Then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” Here we have a threefold statement of God's response:

A. Divine Visitation. “I will hear from heaven.”

B. Forgiveness. “And will forgive their sin.”

C. Restoration. “And heal their land.”

Conclusion: Are you prepared to obey these principles that determine revival? Brothers and sisters, in this holy place, in this sacred

moment, will you acknowledge the problem that hinders revival in your life? Will you accept the process that hastens revival in your life? Will you affirm the promise that heralds revival in your life, now?

2 Chronicles 7:12-18 LOOK AT ME

"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face,...then I will...forgive their sin." - 2 Chronicles 7:14

It was one of those split-second exchanges between a 16-year-old girl and her father, but it spoke volumes. While he was out of town, she had broken her curfew and stayed out too late with her boyfriend. Now she had to talk to Dad about it. Embarrassed and afraid, she sat quietly looking down at her hands in her lap while the discussion went on. She apologized and they decided on a suitable discipline.

"Look at me," Dad said. She didn't want to, but she did. Instead of a hard look of displeasure, she saw tears and a look of deep love. She threw her arms around him, and they both knew that everything would be all right between them.

To keep everything right between us and our heavenly Father, we have to seek His face (Ps. 27:8). We may feel guilt, disappointment, anger, or hurt toward God. But that is when we must respond to His invitation to look at Him -- especially if fellowship has been broken.

Our greatest concern should be the fear of losing a close relationship with Him. Our greatest delight should be seeing His face in the Word and through the wonderful privilege of prayer. That way we will have the assurance that everything is all right between us.- D C Egener (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

The more we go to God in prayer,
Intent to seek His face,
The more we'll want to be with Him
Before the throne of grace.-
- Sper

The heart of prayer is prayer from the heart.

Our Moral Compass

If My people . . . turn from their wicked ways, then I will . . . forgive their sin and heal their land. —2 Chronicles 7:14

When Abraham Lincoln was introduced to author Harriet Beecher Stowe, he reportedly said that she was "the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war."

Although President Lincoln's comment wasn't entirely serious, Stowe's novel Uncle Tom's Cabin was instrumental in abolishing slavery in the US. Its graphic depiction of racism and the injustice of slavery helped lead to the start of civil war. Ultimately, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation declared that all slaves "shall be free." Thus, Stowe's novel helped to change a nation's moral compass.

Centuries earlier, King Solomon was told about what would change the moral compass of God's people Israel. It was to start with humility and confession. The Lord told Solomon: "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14).

As a Christian community, we should first take an inventory of our own personal lives. As we humbly seek God in prayer and repentance of sin, changes begin in our lives. God may then use us to change a nation's moral compass. — by Dennis Fisher (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Revive us again,
Fill each heart with Thy love;
May each soul be rekindled
With fire from above.
—Mackay

Nothing is politically right which is morally wrong. —O'Connell

2 Chronicles 7:15 “Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place.

- mine eyes. 2Chr 6:20, 40. De. 11:12. Ne. 1:6. Ps. 65:2; 130:2. 1 Pe. 3:12.
- that is made in this place. Heb. of this place. 2Chr 6:40.

Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place

McGee - I don't know why folk will lift out of context one verse of Scripture and claim it for themselves. It was never intended that way. This promise was given to Israel at the dedication of the temple. Although it has application for us, it is better to go to the New Testament and find God's promises to us directly.

2 Chronicles 7:16 “For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.

- have I chosen. De. 12:21; 16:11. 1 Ki. 8:16, 44, 48. Ps. 132:14. Zec. 3:2.
- my name. See on 2Chr 6:5, 6, 20; 33:4–7. 1 Ki. 8:35; 9:3. 2 Ki. 21:4, 7, 8.
- eyes. See on 2Chr 7:15. Mat. 3:17. Jn 2:19–21. Col. 2:9.

For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually

Andrew Hill: The reference to the “eyes” and the “heart” of Yahweh being connected to the temple (2Ch 7:16b) is an unusual expression for the idea of the divine presence in the Old Testament. The eyes and heart of God symbolize his concerned watch-care for humanity in that he sees people in distress and has a compassionate heart for their plight, and he has the power to intervene and deliver his people. One cannot reflect on the association of the “eyes and heart” of God with the Jerusalem temple and not have inklings about the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Mark Boda: The reason why this Temple receives heightened attention from the Lord is because it is both “chosen” and “sacred” (NLT, “set apart . . . to be holy”). These two characteristics are essential to the Temple's status. It must be a place that God has chosen, but in order for him to dwell there it must be consecrated for his use.

2 Chronicles 7:17 “As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, even to do according to all that I have commanded you, and will keep My statutes and My ordinances,

- if thou wilt. De. 28:1, etc. 1 Ki. 2:3; 3:14; 8:25; 9:4, etc.; 11:38. 1 Ch. 28:9. Zec. 3:7.
- observe. De. 4:40. Ps. 105:45. Eze. 36:27. Jn 14:21; 15:10.

As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, even to do according to all that I have commanded you, and will keep My statutes and My ordinances

Raymond Dillard: But how was the post-exilic community to view the eternity of the Davidic covenant when they were without a king and subject to foreign domination? The second modification the Chronicler has made at this point may address the needs of the post-exilic community: for the “you shall never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel” in 1 Kgs 9:5, the Chronicler has substituted “you shall never fail to have a man to rule over Israel,” language parallel to Mic 5:1. The author gives expression to his messianic or royalist hopes: though the throne of Israel is vacant, the continuity of the Davidic dynasty remains. The dynastic promise has not lost its validity even with the loss of the throne.

MATTHEW HENRY - 2Chr 7:12-22

III. He promised to perpetuate Solomon's kingdom, upon condition that he persevered in his duty, 2Ch 7:17, 18. If he hoped for the benefit of God's covenant with David, he must imitate the example of David. But he set before him death as well as life, the curse as well as the blessing.

1. He supposed it possible that though they had this temple built to the honour of God, yet they might be drawn aside to worship other gods, 2Ch 7:19. He knew their proneness to backslide into that sin.

2. He threatened it as certain that, if they did so, it would certainly be the ruin of both church and state.

(1.) It would be the ruin of their state, 2Ch 7:20. "Though they have taken deep root, and taken root long, in this good land, yet I will pluck them up by the roots, extirpate the whole nation, pluck them up as men pluck up weeds out of their garden, which are thrown to the dunghill."

(2.) It would be the ruin of their church. This sanctuary would be no sanctuary to them, to protect them from the judgment of God, as they imagined, saying, The temple of the Lord are we, Jer. 7:4. "This house which is high, not only for the magnificence of its structure, but for the designed ends and uses of it, shall be an astonishment, it shall come down wonderfully (Lam. 1:9), to the amazement of all the neighbours."

RON DANIEL - 2Chr 7:7:17-22 A Warning From God

God will not allow His presence to be taken for granted. He warns Solomon individually and the nation corporately that they must not turn away from God. If they do, God will abandon the temple, and future generations will ask, "What happened?"

As discouraging as it is to end on this note, this is exactly what happened. The people began to take God for granted, assuming that even though they fell away from Him, that He was obligated to stay. Isaiah and Micah tell us of the presumption of Israel:

Mic. 3:11 Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe, her priests instruct for a price and her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD saying, "Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us."

Is. 48:1 "Hear this ... who swear by the name of the LORD and invoke the God of Israel, but not in truth nor in righteousness. For they call themselves after the holy city and lean on the God of Israel..."

This behavior would not be tolerated by the Lord. Ultimately, Ezekiel describes for us the departure of the glory of God in Ezekiel 9, 10, and 11.

Saints, we must never forget this principle that

Gal. 6:7 ...God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

He has not promised to dwell with us in this building perpetually, regardless of our behavior. But He has promised to reveal His glory to us continually as we continually get out of the way, empty ourselves of pride and desire for attention, as we sacrifice and sing with right hearts.

2 Chronicles 7:18 then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David, saying, 'You shall not lack a man to be ruler in Israel.'

- stablish. 2 Sa. 7:13–16.
- as I have. Ps. 89:28–40; 132:11, 12.
- shall not. 1 Ki. 9:5. Je. 33:20, 21, 25, 26.
- fail thee. Heb. be cut off to thee. 2Chr 6:16.

Related:

2 Samuel 7:13-16 "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 "I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.""

then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David, saying, 'You shall not lack a man to be ruler in Israel.'

McGee - God has promised that in the Davidic line there would not be a time when there would not be a ruler. There is no ruler around on this earth today who can claim to be in David's line. But there is One sitting at God's right hand who is in David's line, and He has been told, "... Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps. 110:1; see also Heb. 10:12–13).

2 Chronicles 7:19 "But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them,

- if ye turn away. Le. 26:14, 33, etc. De. 28:15, 36, 37, etc. 1 Sa. 12:25. 1 Ch. 28:9.
- shall go. See on De. 4:23–27. Jos. 23:15, 16. 1 Ki. 9:6, 7; 11:4–8.

Related:

1 Kings 11:4-8 For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. 6 Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father had done. 7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon. 8 Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

But (term of contrast) - Marks a change of direction. In Solomon's case it marked the change in the entire nation! One is reminded of a similar "term of contrast" in the life of his father David in 2Sa 11:1+ "Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. **BUT** (term of contrast) David stayed at Jerusalem." He let his eyes wander and as they say "the rest is history," for the sword never departed from his family (2Sa 12:10+) after his sin with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband Uriah. Sin is deceptive (Heb 3:13+) and promises and delivers on passing pleasure (Heb 11:25+), but neglects to tell you of the pain that will follow because of God's unchanging law of sowing and reaping (Gal 6:7-8+). Sadly it would turn out like father, like son, for Solomon's eyes began to wander far and wide (1Ki 11:1-12)!

if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them - Sadly this contrasting behavior would prove to be true in the heart of the "wisest" man in the world! Wisdom normally is the right use of knowledge, but Solomon broke this "definition" in spades and as a result his kingdom was broken as promised in the next verse. Note the pattern is first turn away (that implies a conscious choice and speaks of presumptive sins) and closely connected with turning away is out and out forsaking of God's Law.

THOUGHT- What's the solution/protection/antidote? Don't turn away. In fact keep the Word in front of you daily, so that you can look at it like you look in a mirror and you can see what kind of (sinful) man you are and instead of turning from God's Law (Jas 1:22-25+), you become a "doer" of the Word and you turn from the sin against God (Ge 39:9). Psalm 119:9, 11+ asks and then answers "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You." Corollary - Memorize God's Word, so you can carry the sword of the Spirit with you wherever you go and can use it to kill the sin that would seek to entangle you!

J.A. Thompson: If they turned away and forsook God's laws to serve and worship other gods, there would be dire consequences. They would be separated from their land (exiled), the temple would be rejected, and they would become an object of ridicule among all peoples. The temple itself would become the object of taunting (Deut 28:37; Jer 24:9). This was to happen in the destruction brought about by Nebuchadnezzar. The Chronicler and the Israel of his day worshiped in a new temple. But though the temple had once been destroyed, God's choice of Jerusalem was still valid; and though no descendant of David sat on David's throne, the Davidic line had not failed (2Ch 7:18).

Raymond Dillard: Having spoken to Solomon, God now speaks to the people; note the shift to 2d person plural in 2Ch 7:19. At the dedication of the temple in all its magnificence, there is the reminder of what it could and did become: an object of ridicule, the butt of a joke, the point of a proverb (Deut 28:37; Jer 24:9).

2 Chronicles 7:20 then I will uproot you from My land which I have given you, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

- I pluck. 2 Ki. 17:20. Ps. 52:5. Je. 12:17; 18:7; 31:28; 45:4. Jude 12.
- a proverb. De. 28:37. 1 Ki. 9:7. Ne. 4:1–4. Ps. 44:14. Je. 24:9. La. 2:15, 16.

**A PROPHETIC PROMISE
OF DESTRUCTION**

Then - This is one of those dreadful "if-then" conditional sentences.

I will uproot you from My land which I have given you, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

David Guzik: Under the Old Covenant, God promised to use Israel to exalt Himself among the nations one way or another. If Israel obeyed, He would bless them so much that others had to recognize the hand of God upon Israel. If Israel disobeyed, He would chastise them so severely that the nations would be astonished at the judgment of God among His disobedient people, and they would know that the LORD has brought all this calamity on them.

2 Chronicles 7:21 “As for this house, which was exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’

- this house. 1 Ki. 9:8.
- astonishment. 2Chr 29:8. Je. 19:8; 49:17; 50:13.
- Why. De. 29:24–28. 1 Ki. 9:8, 9. Je. 5:19; 13:22; 16:10–12; 22:8, 9, 28.

As for this house, which was exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house

2 Chronicles 7:22 “And they will say, ‘Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers who brought them from the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this adversity on them.’”

- **Because they forsook.** Ju. 2:12, 13. Je. 1:16. La. 2:16, 17; 4:13–15. Eze. 14:23; 36:17–20.
- therefore. 2Chr 36:17. Da. 9:12.

And they will say - Notice that they will be able to answer their own question.

‘Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers who brought them from the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this adversity on them - Note again the progression of forsaking God (His Word), and substituting idols (which are no gods), because with idols they would not have to obey. The idols are manmade and any rules they have are manmade and are not going to be constricting. The progression continues in worship of something that does not exist and even serving it. The result would be adversity and destruction of the Temple which occurred in 586 BC at the hands of the idolatrous nation of Babylon.

Adam Clarke - “The manner in which these disobedient people have been destroyed is truly astonishing: no nation was every so highly favoured, and none ever so severely and signally punished.”

PAUL APPLE - DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Do we get numb to God’s spectacular miracles such as sending fire down from heaven to consume the sacrifice on the altar?
- 2) In what way can the glory of the Lord fill us as the temple of God?
- 3) How has verse 14 been misused or misapplied?
- 4) How can we tell which disasters are unleashed by the Lord as direct retribution for wickedness?

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Andrew Hill: King Solomon’s construction and dedication of the Jerusalem temple highlight several important theological continuities between the Old and New Testaments: the appropriate understanding of God’s holiness and the liturgical use of “sacred space,” the role of sacred space in mediating God’s immanence and transcendence, the centrality of prayer in worship, the significance of “pilgrimage” in the life of faith, the relationship between the sacred place and religious instruction, and the idea that sacred space (and worship) brings order out of chaos. Second Chronicles 5:2–7:22, recounting the dedication of the Jerusalem temple, points toward the contemporary significance of the larger literary unit (2Ch 1–9) by emphasizing the priority of intercessory prayer. The account of the glory of God entering the temple furthers the topic of “sacred space” that mediates God’s immanence and transcendence and ultimately foreshadows the incarnation of Jesus Christ (John 1:14).

Raymond Dillard: Solomon's prayer and God's response form the center of the author's Solomon narrative; the Chronicler will remain through the rest of his history concerned to show that God did indeed keep his promise to Solomon to answer with favor the prayers and repentance of his people. It is particularly in his addition of 2Ch 7:13–15 to God's response that the Chronicler articulates most clearly the theological perspective supporting his historiographical goals. In his accounts of the reigns of the kings of Judah the Chronicler tirelessly exhibits the validity of his retributive convictions; he proceeds by taking details from the accounts as he found them in Kings, but by adding supporting and inciting incidents to provide the rationale for reward or punishment. The basic theological questions of the restoration community revolved around its relationship to the Israel of the past—what validity did the promises of God regarding the temple and the house of David have for a community that had no king, was under foreign domination, and had only in recent history rebuilt the former temple that had been destroyed? Solomon's prayer presumably had liturgical use through much of the first temple period and was probably recited regularly in the liturgy of the post-exilic temple. The Chronicler was seeking to demonstrate the validity of those petitions and God's response through history, and by implication for his own generation as well. Though the temple had once been destroyed, God's choice of Jerusalem was still valid; though no descendant of David sat on a throne, the Davidic line had not failed (2Ch 7:18). One would yet come whose origins are of old, from ancient times, to be ruler over Israel (Mic 5:2).

John Olley - The message of God's forgiveness and "healing of the land" is one of hope for a world in which the effects of human sin are all too evident. Here is encouragement to pray. For the Chronicler, "the land" referred to the area that "I have given you [my people]." In Christ, this can be extended to the whole earth, for indeed "the whole creation has been groaning" for his redemption (Rom. 8:22). The hardships in this passage that lead to prayer are all community wide, seen as God's punishment for sin by the people as a whole. While the Scriptures themselves warn against equating disasters with specific sins, personal or communal (e.g., Job; Luke 13:1–5; John 9:1–7), there are countless ways in which even "natural disasters" are more horrendous in their results due to human wrongdoing (corruption and maladministration, greed and selfishness, war and civil strife, ethnic rivalry, effects of slavery and injustice, failure to share resources, environmental exploitation). This passage perhaps speaks particularly to the individualism of Western Christianity that so often overlooks the corporate dimension of sin. At the same time, communal response requires personal commitment. God's word to Solomon is "If my people pray"; Paul urges Christians to pray for "all people, for kings and all who are in high positions . . . [because God] desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:2–4).

Martin Selman: Chapter 7 is not only central to the message of Chronicles, but it is also one of the most important chapters in the Old Testament. It offers hope to any who call on the name of the Lord, even if they have incurred God's wrath, because God's desire is for full reconciliation. The over-all theme is encapsulated in a passage most of which is unique to Chronicles (2Ch 7:12-16), and which contains one of the best-known verses in Chronicles (2Ch 7:14). The chapter is in two parallel sections, both of which are about answered prayer. The genuineness of God's promise about forgiveness and healing (2Ch 7:11-22) is confirmed and preceded by a very public and dramatic reply to Solomon's prayer (2Ch 7:1-10; cf. 2Ch 6:14-42). The wider context is also important, however, 2Ch 7:12b-22 are in the form of a direct message from God which must be read alongside God's earlier promise about David's dynasty and the temple (1 Ch. 17:3-15). Together, they form the foundation for the Chronicler's entire work, with the earlier passage providing a secure basis for God's invitation here. The account of the Divided Monarchy which follows (2Ch 10-36) then demonstrated by actual examples how God answered prayer on the principles of 2Ch 7:12-16 (e.g. 2 Ch. 20:1-30; 33:10-23). The significance of such a message would have been easily understood in post-exile Israel. By presenting the temple as a place where right sacrifice and prayer could be accepted, an opening was being provided to exchange Israel's present bleak circumstances for a more positive future. It offered an opportunity to change the course of Israel's history. Sadly, the story of the post-exilic and intertestamental periods shows that this opportunity was largely ignored, despite the few who continued to look for the consolation of Israel (Lk. 2:25).

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