

Pray and Seek God's Face

Key Verse: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."
—II Chronicles 7:14

Selected Scripture:
II Chronicles 7:12-22

established if he obeyed God's commands. However, if unfaithful, the nation would go into exile and even the glorious Temple could be destroyed by its enemies.—vss. 17-22

During the early portion of Solomon's reign, he had many impressive achievements which resulted in his personal fame and a relative peace with Israel's neighbors. His immense wealth and great wisdom were legendary, causing other rulers from afar such as the

GOD RESPONDED TO SOLOMON'S prayer of dedication by indicating that he had accepted the Temple by choosing it for worship and to offer sacrifices. He would also hear their prayers for forgiveness made at this place when they repented from wickedness and transgressions.—II Chron. 7:12-16

Our Key Verse emphasizes the necessity for humility and prayer in order for the people of Israel to be restored to God's favor. As part of a stern warning, the Lord informed Solomon that his kingdom would be fully

Queen of Sheba to pay him homage. It might have been supposed that his love for God and faithfulness would cause his kingdom to prosper indefinitely, but such proved not to be the case. During later years, Solomon's loss of reverence for God ultimately led to his monarchy becoming divided after his death.

"For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father."—I Kings 11:4-6

Many years later, in a vision, the Prophet Ezekiel saw God's glory depart from the Temple when the Babylonians took Judah into captivity. (Ezek. 10:18,19) However, the promise of Israel's future restoration during a time of peace was also prophesied.—Ezek. 43:2-5

Of special significance to us is the fact that Christians are pictured as part of a temple class. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."—I Cor. 3:16,17

Solomon's Temple was established as a place of meeting between God and Israel through its priesthood. The grander application of this illustration will be fulfilled as God will bless the human family through the royal priesthood, consisting of our glorified Lord and his faithful church.—I Pet. 2:9

If we are faithful to our calling we will be empowered to help eradicate death, sorrow, crying and pain. (Rev. 21:3,4) At that time the entire human family will receive God's favor during a kingdom of peace established by the "greater than Solomon," the Christ, Head and Body.

