

Thy Kingdom Come (Day 1) Thursday 21st May 2020

Why 2 Chronicles 7:14?

Today is Ascension, which is the 40th day since Jesus resurrection. The disciples are standing on the Mt Olives with Jesus as He gives them the Great Commission to go into all the world with the gospel and make disciples of all nations. Jesus having commissioned the disciples Jesus ascends to heaven before their very eyes.

This is a significant day in the history of the world and especially for the church, however for many it will pass by without much attention being paid to. We need to rediscover the significance of this major day and celebrate it again. Why? Because it's the Coronation of our King who triumphed over evil in the world, conquering sin, defeating death and on the day of Ascension, returned to His Heavenly kingdom to reclaim His glory, taking His place at the right hand of God. Consider the major celebration taking place in heaven right now? I will speak more about the Ascension in Rev. Ken's Sunday Sermon.

Pray for 5

Thy Kingdom Come is an international wave of prayer which many Christians will be participating in over the next 10 days (Ascension to Pentecost), committing to pray for 5 people each day that they will have a spiritual awakening and turn to the Lord and be saved. I have attached daily reflections to cover the 10 days to assist us in our prayers and using 2 Chronicles 7:14 as we pray for healing of the land.

Today I will begin with an overview of 2 Chronicles 7:14 to set it in its context, and then each day I will focus on a word from this passage as a reflection.

The context for this reading takes us back to the completion of the temple that Solomon was commissioned to build to honour God after Israel's greatest king, David had died. As Solomon dedicated the temple, the Lord appeared to him at night and said, 'I have heard your prayers and have chosen this place for myself...'

God offers Solomon words of comfort and of challenge which seem very appropriate for the us today. God says, "When I will 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 7:13-14)

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, worshipping and serving them—that is why he brought all this disaster on them.'"

The context of this passage is specific to Israel, relating to the Covenant God made with them, concerning prosperity, temple worship and the land. God was reminding Solomon

that He will bless the people for their commitment to His laws and decrees, but if they turn away and worship other gods then this will bring curses. We see this frequently played out in the OT in the book of Judges. Each time the people cried out to God He was faithful and true and raised up a deliverer, for example Gideon, Ehud, Samson etc. In this passage from 2 Chronicles the Lord simply reminds Solomon of the previous agreement. If Israel obeys, they will be blessed. If they disobey, they will be judged.

Out of context

Some may say, this passage is specific to Israel and their Covenant with God. This is true however, God doesn't change and His ways of holiness remain and we are called to be faithful to Him. God specifically says, "If my people will humble themselves and pray..."

There are two reasons why I sense this is important for today. Firstly we are God's people, therefore it seems appropriate for us to pray for repentance and for the healing of the land. Secondly, it is not only Covid 19 which is having an impact on the world at this time of but also locusts! So it seems more than appropriate to consider these words from 2 Chronicles 7:14 as our theme over the next 10 days for God's hand to intervene in the world and bring healing.

Locusts and Pestilence

As the world faces significant challenges brought about by Covid 19, with nations in lockdown, there is another crisis shaking the nations which will undoubtedly further impact the world's economy and food provision.

Back in April this year the United Nations (UN) warned of 'alarming and unprecedented threat' to food security and livelihoods in the African regions as wave of locusts had devastated large portions of crops in the region. They were bracing themselves for a second wave which was due to coincide with the new crop planting. The UN reported that a swarm of locusts more than a 1/3 of a square mile can eat the same amount of food in one day as 35,000 people. Once these locusts descend they devour anything green, destroying crops and vegetation. These voracious insects can travel a remarkable 90 miles in a day!

According to the UN agriculture and food agency, who reported 3 days ago, (at the time of writing this), the locusts threat has now extended to East Africa (Northern Kenya to Southern Ethiopia), Arabia (Oman to Yemen), South West Asia (Iran, Pakistan and India), and parts of West Africa.

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(2 Chronicles 7:13-14)

Will you commit to praying with Christians across the nations for Thy Kingdom Come?

Write your 5 names you want to pray for below