

**Russell Kelfer**

# **If My People...**

**# 964-B**

**Series: God's Living Legends II**

**dtm** DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.  
INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • [www.dtm.org](http://www.dtm.org) • [dtm@dtm.org](mailto:dtm@dtm.org)

# If My People...

What a platform this guy would have to run on for re-election. From man's perspective, he would be a shoo-in. Can't you just hear them chanting at the nominating convention? Four more years! Four more years! And can't you just see the posters all over Israel? Wouldn't you like to run on this record?

- \_\_\_\_\_ National deficit ..... 0%
- \_\_\_\_\_ Unemployment ..... 0%
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inflation rate ..... 0%
- \_\_\_\_\_ Balance of trade? ... Perfect!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard of Living? Beyond human understanding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ International reputation? The nations are in awe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Foreign Policy? War has become a thing of the past!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Percentage of administration's objectives met? 100%

The temple has been completed. The palace has been completed. The nations are at peace. The economy is off the charts. Not only would we re-elect Solomon, we would put his picture on all the bills, his image on all the coins, and his statue in every park. There would be no way he could *keep* from being re-elected.

You see, from the world's perspective, here was the perfect man. His personal wisdom was an international item. Kings and princes, as well as queens, laden with gifts from afar, traveled to Israel just to bask in the fallout of his incredible mind. Not only that, but now his religious convictions, once seemingly narrow and unbending to the masses, had been "broadened" to reflect the mood of the nation (and his many wives). No doubt, he had been acclaimed man of the year by the National Council of Pagan Religions for his *broad-minded* inclusion of non-Jewish shrines and altars in the religious scheme of things.

You say, "This guy will rule forever." Wrong.

If My People...

This guy's days are numbered.

You ask, "But why?"

Because Israel is a theocracy, not a democracy. It is a peculiar people, a holy nation, a nation called out from among the nations to be different...a nation called out to *be God's!* And though Solomon was riding the crest of man's success, according to God's Gallup Poll, he has just lost the next election. Not only that, but his successor would reap a harvest of defeats just because of the compromises our man of the hour has made.

You see, Solomon had decided to be all things to all people; though God had called him to be one thing to all people—God's man, obeying God's Word, energized by God's power, period. When Solomon did that, he was invincible. When he ceased doing that, Jehovah God in Heaven closed the book on his administration, and withdrew the hedge he had built about his people, a hedge that had kept the enemies of Israel encased in the armor of God's resistance.

In our last study, we saw the fruits of Solomon's compromises. They were not political in nature; they were spiritual in nature. And a Holy God took them personally, as well He should have. Now the axe is about to fall and the nation is about to feel the crushing onslaught of enemy armies once again. Only this time, they will experience the cries of defeat, a sound not heard in Israel since a man named Saul won the "Hypocrite of the Year" award while pretending to be God's man.

"As Solomon grew old,"<sup>1</sup> he turned his heart after other gods, the Scriptures tell us, and he broke the heart of the One True God in the process. Now history proceeds, and the Scripture proceeds to paint for us the fruits of rebellion as a dynasty crumbles under the weight of idolatry.

It seems to me that before we can close the book on this chapter of Israel's history, however, and seal the Legend of Solomon with the binding of understanding, we must take one last look at Solomon's walk with God and Solomon's final talk with God, and search for at least a clue to a way of escape. We will search for a solution, both personally and nationally, to the crushing dilemma of living in defeat as a result of wrong choices of the past.

---

<sup>1</sup> I Kings 11:4

## I- THE FACTS

In the last lesson, our objective was to see the sad results of God's man taking five steps to spiritual suicide, taking a whole nation down the road to ruin as he went. The facts are simple: Solomon sold out to the enemy at the very height of his success story. While the plaudits of men were still ringing in his ears, the respect of the nations still evident at every turn, and the project he so longed to see completed was coming to its grand conclusion, Solomon subtly sold out to Satan.

He multiplied silver and gold, allowing his whole perspective of life to be altered by a temporal value system. He multiplied horses and chariots, allowing his attitude of total dependence on Jehovah to be transferred to an attitude of trusting in the flesh. He multiplied to himself wives, foreign wives, the wives of those nations roundabout, about whom God had warned, "thou shalt not intermarry with them," allowing his heart to be drawn away from his God. Finally, he multiplied gods to himself, daring to add the gods of this world to the one true God, until he *actually found himself worshipping in the enemy camp*. Of course, God had no choice but to do what he had promised He would do. He prepared to remove the mantle of authority from Solomon's shoulders, and remove the barrier of godly protection from His people, allowing the enemy to invade their homes and destroy their freedoms.

As Solomon grew old, the Scripture says, his heart was not perfect towards his God, and he began to worship the gods of this world.<sup>2</sup> Those are the facts. God was angry, God was grieved, and God had no choice but to discipline his king and his nation.

But we mustn't leave Solomon with such a haunting symphony of hopelessness ringing in our ears. God has judged His man and His people, and the consequences of disobedience loom on the horizon in the form of storm clouds so dark we wonder if ever the light will shine again. Satan would have us lose sight of *the way of escape* that a loving God has *always left to lead us back into the brilliance of His perfect will*.<sup>3</sup>

The nation was about to be under judgment. But a gracious God still would be waiting to open the heavens with showers of mercy the moment His children came to their senses. God wants to be sure that His people understand that there is a way of

---

<sup>2</sup> I Kings 11:4

<sup>3</sup> II Chronicles 7:14; I Corinthians 10:13

## If My People...

escape, so He appeared to Solomon one night and gave Him a message to give to His chosen ones, a message you and I would do well to listen carefully to in our generation.

### II- THE FORMULA

The conversation is recorded in II Chronicles, chapter 7, beginning in verse 12. Never has God more clearly described the issues and the answers to national and personal rebellion than here. It was as though He were saying to Solomon; “I have given you a choice; you are going to make the wrong choice, and you are going to suffer the consequences. Let me assure you, however, *there is a way of escape.*” We will divide this look at God’s marvelous road back into two parts. Part one will be the trauma. Part two will be the triumph.

#### A- The Trauma

The trauma is described in verses 12 and 13. The background of the passage ought to be familiar to you. Solomon has just finished the temple, has had his moving prayer of dedication, and God has responded by making His presence known. Verse one of chapter seven begins this way:

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 temple.

And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD’S house.

When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying: “For He is good, For His mercy endures forever.”  
(II Chronicles 7:1-3 NKJV)

At this point in time, Solomon and all the people sacrificed to the Lord and celebrated until the eighth day, when they all returned to their homes filled with joy and gladness. This takes us back to where we were, and it is at this point where God makes His final visit to Solomon. Verse 12 says this:

Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: “I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice.” (II Chronicles 7:12 NKJV)

He is about to repeat the limited conditions of His covenant once again, but first He makes this amazing statement to Solomon:

## If My People...

When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command  
the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My  
people, (II Chronicles 7:13 NKJV)

God suddenly takes the paintbrush of stark reality and with one great sweep of His mighty hand, He portrays with seemingly gruesome honesty, the background for the three great kinds of traumas that can infest a person or a nation.

- 1- He says what “If I shut up heaven that there be no rain”?
- 2- He asks what “If I command the locusts to invade the land”?
- 3- He asks what “If I send pestilence among my people”?

Those are three haunting questions. And as always in Scripture, neither the sequence nor the conditions themselves are without importance. God is here describing three distinct kinds of tragedies that can overtake an individual or a group of people or a nation that will cause them to realize they are under the judgment of God and seek reconciliation. He lists three different situations, similar sounding on the surface, but decidedly distinct in both their cause and their manifestation.

First of all, God asks the question, “What if I shut up heaven so that there is no rain?” That’s a question Elijah had to reckon with; and that’s a question Joseph had to reckon with. God is saying, “What if I choose to withhold blessings you construe to be natural? What if your expectations of life turn out sour because what you consider to be a blessing that I owe all of My creation, *I am actually withholding from you?* What if something as commonplace as rain ceases to be? What will you do?”

Then, before He even approaches the answer, He asks another question just as devastating. He says, “What if I command the locusts to devour the land? What if I allow the presence of visible affliction to destroy that which is all around you? What if the ‘things’ you hold so dear begin to crumble? What if the source of your income disintegrates? What if God takes away from you as an individual, as a church, as a people, as a nation, *the very things you have construed to be signs of His blessings?* What would you do then?”

In rapid-fire order now, God adds another theoretical blow to Solomon’s mind. “What if I send pestilence among my people?” In other words: “What if I not only withhold blessings you construe to

## If My People...

be deserved, and I not only allow the things you cling to to perish as you watch, what if I go one step further? What if I actually allow my judgment to *touch you*? What if I send a destructive blow that destroys you or your people, and possibly ends in death? What then?" In other words, Solomon, take the three logical steps to judgment. The first would be not getting what you think you deserve. The second would be losing that which you have come to enjoy. But the third is the most awesome of all. That would be actually experiencing that which would touch your own body, your own life, even that which would cause you to lose your life.

Three ugly thoughts...yet God had a reason for printing such a bleak picture in such indelible ink. Israel was to experience all three. And all three would be the result of the idolatry and rebellion of Solomon and his people. Now several thoughts clamor for our attention as we embark on this study. One is that obviously not all such occasions are the result of sin. Some are occasions to glorify God. Sometimes, as with Elijah, *God actually withheld natural blessings in order to demonstrate supernatural power*. Sometimes, as with Paul, God will actually take away all that you are accustomed to enjoying, *in order to magnify the spiritual in relation to the physical*. And sometimes God will even touch the body and take the body, as in the case of Stephen, *to glorify His power and magnify His grace in situations the world cannot handle*. No, God was not saying all withholding of blessings, or all destruction of things, or all sickness or death was the result of sin. What He was saying, however, as we shall see, is that when it is sin, and you will know when it is, God has a marvelous solution.

Secondly, it is clear, that while these conditions and these solutions have obvious personal applications, this portrait and these consequences are basically national in nature. It was, as we shall see, not a series of promises made only to Israel, though many Old Testament promises are. This was a corporate problem with a corporate solution that could only be invoked by a particular group of people. In this case, those people were God's people.

Thirdly, It ought to be clear that nothing can come into our lives without God's permissive will. God's message to Solomon was: "What if I...?" or better still, "What if, I in order to get your attention, I...?"

## B- The Triumph

Now that we have seen the scenario, must we not ask 'Is there no solution?' Now that we have seen the trauma, must we not seek to uncover the triumph? Is this desperate plight of God's people a permanent condition? Is there no way of escape? What about the children of Israel in years to come when they finally would recognize that their plight was the result of their rebellion? Could they return from whence they came? Could they enter again into the will of God?

The next verse gives the answer to that question. A loving God has only described the disease so He can prescribe the cure. God has said, *if* these things happen and *then if*:

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. (II Chronicles 7:14 NKJV)

So the three-fold problem has a five-fold solution that offers a three-fold blessing. Now remember, *nothing God says is inconsequential*. Nothing. Therefore, *each part of this promise is vital*. And remember, the fact that this passage is familiar to you does not mean that you can take it lightly. It is familiar because it is often quoted. It is often quoted because it is of uncompromising importance.

We will take it one phrase at a time, one step at a time.

First of all, God says, suppose as a nation or as a body you find yourself suffering from one or more of the trials described in verse 13, and you know those trials are the result of disobedience. What can you do?

There will be five requirements that you must meet in verse 14. Then there will be three things that God will do. Let's take them one at a time.

### Requirement 1- If My people who are called by My name...

First you must be a qualified prayer. "Solomon", God was saying, "here is the first prerequisite. You must be one of My people who are called by My name...". Perhaps one of the most interesting truths found in Scripture is the truth that the God of eternity, Creator of heaven and earth, the One who spoke the worlds into being, at a specified time in history, called out a people unto Himself. That is, He selected *one nation* from among



## If My People...

all the nations, and literally adopted them into His eternal family, making them a peculiar, distinct, set-apart spiritual entity, each individual distinctly His anointed, and the nation corporate, His called-out body, to represent Himself to the world.

“If my people...” Of all the people on the earth, only the Jews are called by God “My people”. Jehovah Himself again and again referred to Israel as “My people”. In Exodus 3:7 God spoke and said, “I have seen the affliction of *My people*.” In Exodus 5:1, 7:16, 8:1, 8:20, 10:4, 9:17, 12:31, over and over Jehovah commanded Pharaoh to let *My people* go. In the Book of Isaiah alone, over 24 times Jehovah refers to the Israelites as *My people*.

Isaiah 40:1 records,

“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God. (NKJV)

Isaiah 47:6a quotes God saying,

“I was angry with My people;” (NKJV)

In Jeremiah 2:13b He laments,

“My people have forgotten Me,” (NKJV)

Jeremiah 24:7 adds,

“Then I will give them a heart to know Me...and they shall be My people...” (NKJV)

Jeremiah 31:1 repeats God’s promise,

“I will be the God of all the families of Israel and they shall be My people.” (NKJV)

So this message is a message for God’s people, the Jews. Now you cannot simply take every Old Testament promise made to the Jew and apply it to the church. Many Old Testament promises were made specifically to the Jews and ended there. Some were made to the Jewish nation in the latter days; some to only a certain generation of Jews that lived at the time the promise was spoken.

Many promises, however, were written specifically to the “people of God”, the elect of the family of God, and were meant to be claimed by the Jews until the time of the Gentiles was at hand; and once the age of the church was ushered in, these promises were obviously given to each believer, or in some cases to all believers.

In the case of *this promise*, we know both from its context

## If My People...

and its application that it was written to whatever group could be accurately, according to Scripture at any given time, referred to as the people of God.

In Romans 9, Paul builds the bridge for us that allows the church to walk into the sunlight of the promises written for God's people. Listen to Paul, speaking of the opening of the family of God to the Gentiles who trust in Christ:

What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?

And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory.

Even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.

As He says also in Hosea. "I will call those who were not my people, 'my people', and her who was not beloved,

And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'you are not my people' there they shall be called sons of the Living God."  
(Romans 9:22-26 NASB77)

God is saying: "Now I have a new definition of who 'my people' are. My people are all people who name the name of Jesus." Paul writing about the church in II Corinthians 6 added these words:

"...I will dwell in them and walk in them. I will be their God, and they shall be my people."  
(II Corinthians 6:16 NKJV)

So you and I who have been born again into the family of God constitute those who are his people who are called by His name; the name that is above every name, the name before which one day every knee will bow.

The promise was for Israel, and the promise is for us. But the promise is conditional—oh, is it conditional. God is saying, when a nation or a people travel that long, low road to idolatry until they literally vote God out of their national conscience, until they begin to literally worship the gods of this world, trusting in things, trusting in man's ability to save, trusting in treasure and pleasure as their deliverers from the realities of sin and compromise—when that happens, *if God's people* (those called ones who bear His name, even the name of His only begotten Son), *if God's people* or *when God's people* meet four basic requirements, heaven will touch earth!

## If My People...

That national horizon, so darkened by the clouds of judgment that hover over a rebellious people, will experience an eternal glow as the Glory of God breaks through the haze of disobedience and floods a people once again with light and life and hope. *If God's people...*How can we not hang on every word that follows?

If You Are God's People (requirement 1) and you—

### Requirement 2- Humble yourselves

And it is time once again in history for God's people to humble themselves. Now hear me out. To humble yourself does not mean to disregard who you are and move about apologetically as though being one of God's people were a passport to anonymity. No! No! No! God's people have *power*. God's people have *hope*. God's people have *deliverance*! We are the salt of the earth!<sup>4</sup> Dare we apologize for that? We are the light of the world!<sup>5</sup> Dare we hide that light in embarrassment? No! That is not humility.

The Hebrew word translated "humble" in this passage has a literal meaning that affords a better picture of what it is God has in mind. It means to be subdued, to be brought low, to come under the subjection of another. It denotes the bringing a proud or recalcitrant people or spirit into subjection. It is often used in the military sense, of one being brought under the dominion or control of another. It is a word that denotes one coming to the end of self and throwing himself in reckless abandon at the feet of his God. It is an attitude of deep remorse over sin; an attitude of deep regret over self-exaltation; an attitude that cries out to God, "We are not the ones who can; we only belong to the God who can." It is the same word used in II Chronicles 34 where God is speaking lovingly to His children.

Because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you," says the LORD.

(II Chronicles 34:27 NKJV)

Their heart was tender when they heard God's words. It was so tender that at the mention of God's Holiness they perceived their wickedness and tore their clothes and wept to be in the very presence of the Creator God of Eternity. That's humility.

---

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 5:13

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 5:14

## If My People...

Humility is absolute acknowledgment *that apart from God you can do nothing.*<sup>6</sup>

The church in nearly every generation has reached a “Solomon” stage, a stage at which true humility has been replaced by religious activity and self-serving religious competition. We begin to be impressed with our contribution to the kingdom. We begin to be awed by how many people we have, by how much money we have, by how much power we have. Subtly, “things” begin to mean more to us than they ought to...even in the church. Subtly, we begin to put our confidence in what we can do for God, rather than in what God can do for us. Subtly, we begin to build altars to the gods of this world. Buildings, programs, people are exalted until they are enshrined, until those who would seek to know the King find men begging for money to build more shrines, promising things they cannot do to make God palatable. The church becomes arrogant, self-satisfied, self-seeking, self-serving...and all in the name of Jesus.

Beloved, history has proved that the church, like Solomon, simply cannot stand prosperity. As soon as God blesses His people (which He delights in doing), they begin to wallow in their own importance and lose their power, a power that is fueled and ignited by an incredibly rare but valuable spark called “humility”. It is time for us as God’s own to humble ourselves. It’s time for the church to fall on its knees in absolute awe at who God is until it sees itself as it is...absolutely nothing apart from Him. It is time for the Body of Christ to be reminded once again that so long as we remain arrogant or self-sufficient, *God can do nothing for us, and nothing with us!*

Ah, but humbling ourselves is but the adoption of an attitude that precedes an activity. For the activity to be acceptable, the attitude must be acceptable. The attitude is humility.... abandonment at the feet of a Holy God by a sinful people. The activity, once that attitude has been assumed, is requirement #3.

### Requirement 3- Pray

If My people, who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray...

The word translated “pray” here is a Hebrew word that is used 84 times in the Old Testament, and can literally be rendered in any of the following ways:

---

<sup>6</sup> John 15:5

## If My People...

- 1- To invoke God as judge
- 2- To break oneself; to be contrite (before God)
- 3- To settle an account; to act as a mediator
- 4- To seek a proper assessment of a matter

So we might summarize the definition this way:

### To Pray:

Attitude: Broken

Position: Before God

Purpose: To invoke God as Judge

Expectation: To seek the answer to a problem, and seek to settle an issue by intercession.

Humility, then, is removing yourself from the bench as judge or from the throne as king, falling on your face, helpless in the presence of the *one who is the King and the Judge*.

Prayer is the act of consciously appearing before the True Judge in that condition of dependence, broken in spirit, acknowledging that He and He alone is Lord, and *in that spirit to ask Him to settle an issue or solve a problem*.

Using that definition, we don't pray much.

Using that definition, there isn't much corporate prayer.

Using that definition, there isn't much national prayer.

Prayer then is not sinful man instructing a Holy God as to the state of His universe and giving Him direction as to the best way to handle it. Prayer is not man bringing God into harmony with man's will. Prayer is not the church ordering God to do certain things, *even if those things seem to be in harmony with what God can or should do*. Prayer is the church on its knees before God in a spirit of deep contrition, seeking to determine what the mind of God is so that we, the church, can come into harmony with *His will*.

When we as believers, individually and corporately, recognize that we have strayed from the absolute course of discipleship God outlined for us in Scripture; when we come to see that we, like Solomon, have sold out to the gods of this world, and in a state of deep grief over having missed the mark, fall on our faces before a Holy God and plead to be supernaturally cleansed and restored to that place of absolute harmony with His purposes, seeking not to conform Him to our will, but us to His, Beloved,

then, we will have prayed.

Requirement 4- Seek My face

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face...

The word “seek” used here means “the earnest searching after something one believes to exist. It denotes fervent, intense, diligent investigation. It is something that would carry the highest priority, not to seek in the sense of casually glancing around to see if something or someone was there. It means to seek as one would seek for hidden treasure, or search for a lost child. It is a self-abandoning search for someone or something so precious and priceless nothing must prevent finding it.

The word used for “face” is a word the root of which is used 2100 times in the Old Testament. It is that which identifies someone as distinct by reflecting the character or the heart of that person. It also carries with it the connotation of a face-to-face encounter, or a heart-to-heart meeting, as opposed to a casual conversation. The Scripture tells us in Psalm 4:6 that God’s face “shines”. We read in Jeremiah 3:12 that God’s face “falls in anger”. We read in Psalm 13:1 of an occasion where God “hides his face”. God’s face is that which reflects his character to man, even as your face is the billboard that advertises to the world you meet who you really are.

So to seek God’s face is to remain before Him in absolute awe until you discern more of His character than you knew before, so that you can respond by reflecting that character in ever increasing splendor<sup>7</sup>. It is so desiring to do His will that you will stay before His face in absolute surrender until you know *without a doubt* what His will is. It is staying in your garden of Gethsemane as long as need be until your face reflects His face, and thus your character is but a reflection of His. *It is knowing God*. And nothing short of that level of encounter with the King will ultimately change our lives or change the course of history. Beloved, knowing God has not become the grand priority of the church in this generation. While we have more technology, more psychology, and more theology than any generation before us, we seem to lack one thing above all else. As a people, we simply do not know God. Therefore, our technology is sterile, our psychology is humanistic, and our theology is confused. No wonder we are

---

<sup>7</sup> II Corinthians 3:18 (Amplified Bible)

## If My People...

seeing such an influx of the world's mentality into the church.

### Requirement 5- Turn from their wicked ways...

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and [here is the clincher] turn from their wicked ways, then...

The word "turn" or "return" used here is the 12th most frequently used verb in the Old Testament. It is used over 1,000 times, over 100 in the book of Jeremiah alone. It is basically the act of consciously altering one's direction so that whatever course they might have been on that was repugnant to God is *immediately* rejected, and the course of that life instead becomes a path that leads *directly into the arms of God*. To turn from evil is to stop practicing it. To turn from evil is to renounce it. To turn from evil is to see it as God sees it, and thus not be able to look upon it and God at the same time. So here are God's prerequisites:

"If my people, those who are my called apart ones, those who bear my precious Son's name, shall see themselves for who they are: wretched, desperate, needful, helpless apart from me," God says, "and in that state of subjection shall call to me...not instructing me, but rather beseeching me to give them my plan for their lives, and if, as they beseech my will they behold my face...they reflect upon who I am until they become *as I am*, and if, as they see me for who I am, they begin to see sin as it is...and repudiate it, become repulsed by it, and flee from it to me...if that happens, God is saying, true revival will (not may, but will) take place.

### III- THE FUTURE

...then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

What is true revival? It is characterized by three things, 1) He will hear from heaven, 2) forgive their sins, and 3) heal their land. The church will have the ear of God. The church will have the Holiness of God. The church will have the blessings of God. There will be such answered prayer that a whole nation, yea a whole world, will begin to respond to the things of the Spirit because the Spirit of God will have taken control of the Body of God. God will hear from heaven and heaven and earth will tremble.

Secondly, there will be such a return to holiness the church

## If My People...

will stand apart once again as forgiven sinners rather than as self-righteous do-gooders. Once again we will begin to see sin for what it is; we will begin to see sin as God sees it; and we will hate it in us, in the church, and in the world. But we will have power, for we will be forgiven and know it. A moral cleansing in the midst of an immoral world. Clean lights in a world that is covered by a haze of filth and characterized by a standard of morality so degenerate we cannot even stand to look upon it, much less enjoy it.

Thirdly, there will be a healing of our land. Physically, morally, spiritually, emotionally, the disease of sin will be arrested by the powerful penicillin of righteousness, *and those things which have come about as a result of that sin will be eradicated, leaving a wholeness and a holiness not experienced for generations.*

The soft, sweet smell of the rain of God's mercy will overcome us and overtake us once again. The locusts of satanic control that have so eaten into the fiber of our very being will be swept in one magnetic motion into the incinerator of God's blazing power. The pestilence that has corrupted and infected the Body of God's people will be driven from us by the powerful antibiotic of Holiness, and once again the world will be able to look at us and...*see Him!*

The church will return to its place at the center of life, making history rather than responding to it. Christians will once again be characterized by the godliness of their lives rather than by the peculiarity of their theology. The church will become known once more for what it *gives away* rather than for what it is *asking for*. We will no longer be holding on to the ropes that surround the ship of life fearing, lest we fall into the raging deep, it will be said of us, as it was said of our spiritual ancestors, "these are those who have turned the world upside down."

That's the message God gave to Solomon that darkened night just after He had so astounded the nation with His presence at the dedication of the temple. The message was: "Solomon you have a choice, and thus the nation has a choice. You are going to choose wrongly. You already have, and the nation you serve will suffer with you. But Solomon, there is a way of escape!" For

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



## If My People...

God is saying: “Any time my people come back into harmony with my plan and my purposes, and thus become, once again infused with my power, *at any time that happens*, heaven will touch earth again. God will be exalted again. Sin will be judged again. Lives will come aglow again, and the whole world will stand in awe again, as the Shekinah Glory of God in the form of His Holy Spirit flows through lives and floods this weary, sin-torn world again with light again.”

When that happens, the church won't have to advertise for visitors. The church won't have to spend its millions building buildings to attract the world. The church will simply have to be the light it has become. And like a lighthouse rotating its lifesaving beams to any and all who might be perishing in a sea of darkness, it will draw men and women who are seeking; and it will seek men and women who are dying. That is the nature of light.

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ was never meant to be a self-contained “comfort zone” to which its elite, select membership escape to avoid the realities of the world. The church was meant to be a dynamic explosive, placed in the midst of that world to be the channel through which that world sees God. When the church is on its knees, humbled before God, seeking His face, penitent over sin, pleading for renewal, its power makes the nuclear bomb likened to a cap pistol.

To say that we live in a world where heaven is shut up and the locusts are invading the land, and pestilence is infecting mankind, is a gross understatement to be sure. We live in Solomon's day. And even in the church there is ringing from the belfries of the very citadels of our hope the sound of futility and fear rather than anthems of victory and triumph.

I believe God is saying to us; “Wake up Christians, you are not here to reflect the mood of the world, you are here to restore my mind to the world. Yes, mankind is drowning in its own sin.” But...

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

That's what I will do (says God, looking at us).

If My People...

IF MY PEOPLE

If my people, those who are mine  
Tenderly God says, will only resign  
Their spirits to yielding wholly to me  
Totally trusting, oh, what they'll see.

If only they'll learn yet humbly to pray  
Seeking my heart, oh, what a new day  
Will dawn as they rise and turn from their sin  
Filled with new power, cleansed from within.

In heaven I'll hear them; new life I will give  
I'll flood them with mercy; I long to forgive!  
They'll feel once again the might of my hand  
With tender compassion I'll heal all their land.

If only my people, says God once again  
Would turn unto me and repent of their sin  
I will love them and heal them; I mean what I say  
If only...if only...My people will pray.

If My People...

For Additional Study

1- Do a study of the times in Israel's history when God allowed the heavens to dry up as that there was no rain.

What similarities do you find? What do you think are the key reasons God allows "natural blessings" to cease flowing into the life of an individual or a nation?

2- Take a concordance and look up the words "humble" and "humility". Using the context in which they are found, and the definitions in this study, do a topical study of this vital character quality. Here are some keys:

- A- Find Biblical characters who exhibited this quality. What did they all have in common? What did their ministries have in common?
- B- Find Biblical characters who did not exhibit this quality. Look for common causes and effects. Remember: "These things were written for our admonition."
- C- Look for synonyms for "humility" and add those verses to your list.
- D- List the Biblical commands concerning humility.
- E- Do a check list on your own life, seeking confirming counsel from others concerning how humble you really are. Set a goal to learn to approach God with humility.

3- Go back and review what is meant by "seeking God's face". How much of your life has been spent studying the character of God and beholding his face?

4- Take one quality of God's character (such as His omnipotence, or His omniscience, or His perfect love) and take that quality for one month as a project, both to learn about and worship Him for. Make it a topic of discussion and praise in your family.

5- Begin praying for national and international revival. Ask God to make you willing to meet the requirements of II Chronicles 7.

If My People...

Additional Verses to Study

My People

II Samuel 7:8  
Psalm 68:22

Psalms 81:13  
Jeremiah 18:13-17

Called By My Name

I Kings 8:16-17  
Jeremiah 7:12

Isaiah 42:8  
Isaiah 48:9

Humility

Micah 6:8  
Matthew 11:29  
Psalm 34:2  
Psalm 9:12

Luke 14:11  
Proverbs 15:33  
I Peter 5:5

Prayer

Luke 22:32  
I Timothy 2:1,2  
II Corinthians 1:11  
Psalm 122:6  
Matthew 15:22

Matthew 5:44  
Isaiah 55:6  
Matthew 7:7  
Philippians 4:6

Seeking God's Face

Psalm 27:8  
Psalm 105:4

God's Forgiveness

II Chronicles 6:21,30  
Psalm 86:5

Jeremiah 31:33,34  
I John 1:9

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230  
210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778  
www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer