

**WARM-UP**

- What is one possession you valued when you were younger? How did you take care of it?
- Who is someone you would describe as faithful? Tell us what he or she has done.
- What is one promise you made that you had difficulty fulfilling? What happened?

**WORD**

*<sup>13</sup>When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, <sup>14</sup>if 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 and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*

**2 CHRONICLES 7:13,14**

(Read also **2 CHRONICLES 7:11-16.**)

God spoke these words to King Solomon after the dedication of God's temple in Jerusalem. Solomon had built the temple so that God could have a permanent place in Jerusalem, just as his father, King David, had desired (2 Chronicles 6:8,9). During the dedication of the temple, Solomon uttered a prayer. He acknowledged that God always keeps His covenant and shows steadfast love to His people—those who walk before Him with all their heart. Let's look at God's response to Solomon's prayer and what it means for us today.

## 1 | God is calling His people to walk in His ways.

*" . . . if my people who are called by my name . . . "* **2 CHRONICLES 7:14**

The Israelites were God's chosen people. Throughout history, God had been guiding them, protecting them, and providing for them. God chose them not because of their merit or wealth as a people. He initiated a covenant relationship with them because He is loving and faithful. The Israelites built the temple so that they could continue in their relationship with Him and walk in His righteousness as His covenant people. What does it mean for us to walk in His righteousness today?

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## 2 | God set conditions for His people to return to Him.

*" . . . if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways . . . "*  
**2 CHRONICLES 7:14**

Solomon acknowledged the limitations of the Israelites. He knew they wouldn't be able to match God's faithfulness. So in his prayer, he made an elaborate appeal for God to show His mercy and forgive them (2 Chronicles 6:22-42). God replied that should trouble come on the land, they could come to Him in humility, pray and seek His face, and turn to walk righteously before Him, and He would hear their prayers. God, in His steadfast love, will always call His people to come to Him and continue to be in a relationship with Him. According to Joel 2:13, why should we return to God?

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### 3 | God shows His faithfulness to His people.

*“... if 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 and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”* **2 CHRONICLES 7:14**

In spite of the Israelites' unfaithfulness, God assured Solomon that He is and will continue to be faithful to fulfill His covenant—promise—to His people. In the same way, through Jesus Christ, God is assuring His people today that He remains faithful. It is through Jesus that we, who are not originally part of God's people, can now have a relationship with Him. As we humbly pray in Jesus' name, God's promise is that He will show His faithfulness. He will hear our prayers, forgive our sins, and heal our land. In what way do you need to see God's faithfulness in your life today? What do you think He is telling you to do?

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#### APPLICATION

- God is calling people to have a relationship with Him. Have you accepted His invitation? Pray with someone who can help you walk with God starting today.
- Is there anything in your life that you need to turn away from so that you can turn to God? What are you planning to do about it? Talk to someone you trust about this and ask God for His grace to help you walk in righteousness.
- Who can you encourage and remind about God's faithfulness? Set aside time to call them and pray for them this week.

