

a sermon from II CHRONICLES 7:14:

LET US RETURN TO THE LORD, THAT WE MAY BE HEALED!

אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר אֵלֶּהּ הָיוּ אֲדֹנָי הַמַּלְאָכִים יִשׁוּעַ

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I. AN OPENING PRAYER

O GOD, open Thou our eyes to “The heart of The Gospel message... [Who is our blessed Lord JESUS CHRIST], Who is everyone’s peace and reconciliation. May His countenance shine upon the path of humanity. May His justice and his peace become a gift for all, without distinction! Then shall the wilderness... [of sin become] fertile land and fertile land [of righteousness] become forests [of CHRIST’s peace and reconciliation]. In the wilderness justice will come to live, and integrity in the fertile land; integrity will bring peace, justice give everlasting security...!”<sup>1</sup> In The Name of GOD The Father, and The Son and The Holy Ghost. AMEN.

II. A PROPOSITION – LET US RETURN UNTO THE LORD

אַשְׁרֵי הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר אֱלֹהָיו אֲדֹנָי נִי הַמָּשִׁיחַ יֵשׁוּעַ

- ‘ASHREY HAGGOY ‘ASHER ‘ELOHAYV<sup>2</sup> ‘ADONAY<sup>3</sup> HAMMASHIYACH YESHU”A!<sup>4 5</sup> - Blessed [is] the nation whose GOD [is] The Lord The Messiah JESUS! Therefore, “Let us return unto The Lord, that we may be healed!”

III. A SCRIPTURE – II CHRONICLES 7:14 – IF MY PEOPLE

“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.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1, Catholic Family Prayer Book, Pope John II’s Message of Peace, p 157.

<sup>2</sup> 2, Hebrew Old Testament, PSALM 33:12a, minus The Hebrew Word for JEHOVAH. <http://www.mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2633.htm> “Happy is the nation whose GOD is The

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<sup>3</sup> 3, Hebrew New Testament, MATTHEW 15:22, word for “Lord” in reference to JESUS CHRIST. [http://dvar-adonai.org/hnt/He\\_hnt/Matthew011-015.htm](http://dvar-adonai.org/hnt/He_hnt/Matthew011-015.htm)

“...Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David...” חַנּוּנֵי אֲדֹנָי נִי בֶן-דָּוִד

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“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת יֵשׁוּעַ בֶּן-דָּוִד בֶּן-אַבְרָהָם:

<sup>5</sup> In my transliteration of the Hebrew into English, I represent aleph as ‘ and ayin as “.

<sup>6</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

#### IV. INTRODUCTION – BLESSED IS THE NATION

My friends, has not our nation today drifted far from The LORD GOD? And do we as a people today suffer so as a direct result? And is there not a Divine prescription for the healing of our sin-sick society even now? For if it is true that, as PSALM 33:12 declares – “Blessed is the nation whose GOD is The LORD...” – then the fearful opposite must be just as true! America’s Founding Fathers, though imperfect men, were yet devout and fervent Christian men of piety and honor. And so they were constantly calling the nation to fidelity to GOD in CHRIST, and constantly beseeching the guidance and blessings of Divine Providence. So it should not surprise us to find one of these men – Thomas Jefferson - when he became President of the United States of America, following the example of the first President George Washington in issuing official proclamations of prayer for GOD’s blessing over the nation. One such official Presidential decree of Jefferson was his “National Prayer For Peace,” which he issued on March 4, 1805 AD. Let us consider that prayer together.

#### V. PRESIDENT THOMAS JEFFERSON’S “NATIONAL PRAYER FOR PEACE”

Consider the text of Thomas Jefferson’s 1805 AD Presidential proclamation - “A National Prayer For Peace:”

"Almighty GOD, Who has given us this good land for our heritage; We humbly beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will. Bless our land with honorable ministry, sound learning, and pure manners.

Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitude brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues.

Endow with Thy Spirit of wisdom those to whom in Thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that through obedience to Thy Law, we may show forth Thy praise among the nations of the earth.

In time of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in Thee to fail; all of which we ask through JESUS CHRIST our Lord, Amen." <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 5, Federer, “America’s GOD and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations,” p 327-328. President Thomas Jefferson’s “A National Prayer For Peace” proclamation on 3/04/1805 AD.

Recall from II CHRONICLES 7:14 the response by GOD to King Solomon's prayer of dedication at the ancient Temple in Jerusalem: "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."<sup>8</sup> Here we have the Biblical call to all men in all times and all places, "Let us return unto The Lord, that we may be healed!" It is my intent that we look at Jefferson's "National Prayer For Peace" in light of King Solomon's prayer for wisdom and guidance to GOD for the same Divine Providence.

#### VI. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO GOD'S ANSWER TO SOLOMON'S PRAYER

Ancient Israel was to be an instrument of GOD for reaching the lost world of men with His Truth, righteousness and glory. But the ancient Israelites were mere men and they often failed to live up to GOD's purposes for their existence. Since then, many nations have at times professed their faith in GOD and been blessed. But these same nations - like ancient Israel - always fall into sin and depart from The Living GOD - sometimes for a time, sometimes forever.

The promise The LORD gave to King Solomon in II CHRONICLES 7:14 can be seen in the Old Testament history of ancient Israel: when the nation departed from love and worship of The Almighty and His Laws, Divine blessing and protection was lifted and Divine judgment and punishment came down upon their heads. When the people groaned in suffering long enough to turn their hearts back to GOD in national repentance, that Divine judgment and punishment was lifted and Divine blessing and protection were restored to them.

"GOD encouraged Solomon by the promise that if His judgment... should fall on the nation for their sin, they need only turn to The LORD in earnest humility and repentance and they would find forgiveness and restoration..." We see in "The LORD's declaration that if Solomon [and the nation] would obey Him..., [they] could be assured of GOD's reciprocal blessing... Conversely, if Solomon and the nation should fall away

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<sup>8</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

from The LORD and serve other gods...," Divine judgment and punishment would fall upon the nation.<sup>9</sup> So we see the Biblical call to ancient Israel, "Let us return unto The Lord, that we may be healed!"

#### VII. HOW IS II CHRONICLES 7:14 APPLICABLE FOR TODAY?

This pattern may be seen in the histories of all nations in human history who at one time professed faith in The LORD and His Laws, but then fell away. When Christian France rebelled against GOD in their infamous Revolution, terrible suffering and evil came upon that nation and all of Europe. But when the nation returned to The LORD, that suffering was reversed. When Christian Germany rebelled against GOD and voluntarily embraced Nazi rule, their nation and people were decimated in World War II. But when they returned to The LORD, their nation was blessed again by Heaven and greatly healed.

So also this Biblical pattern apply to our own nation in this time and place. Has there ever been a Christian nation so blessed with the bounty of a loving Providence in the history of the world as the United States? That America of our fathers and grandfathers - though certainly not perfect in many ways - was a people where The One True Faith of Christianity ruled supreme throughout the land - in the hearts of our people; in the laws of our land; in the ministry of our institutions; in the dictates of our leaders.

Today we see in our nation however the lamentable drift from righteousness and traditional Christian faith into profound wickedness and all manner of apostasy. Our nation is scarred with the wreck of urban poverty. The blood of tens of millions of slaughtered unborn babies cries out from the very land. Perversions of witchcraft, sodomy, atheism, violence and sloth abound.

Marriages dissolve at a mere whim of convenience. Armies of children grow up without fathers to mothers without husbands. Our children are corrupted by our heathen public schools. The idolatry of wealth and worldly comforts infect the souls of all of us.

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<sup>9</sup> 6, Bible Knowledge Commentary, II CHRONICLES 7:13-22, p 626.

And each generation waxes worse and worse in evil. The resulting suffering - by our own hands, by our enemies and by the wrath of Heaven - are manifest for any to see who will but open their eyes.

And yet there is GOD's promise to King Solomon to heal the nation of ancient Israel from sin-caused suffering if the people will but repent and turn back to Him. So this promise of GOD's never-failing love and righteousness will speak to us today in this time and place, if we but listen! Repentance must begin in our land in The Church and in the hearts of those who call themselves after The Name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. For as The Church goes, so goes a nation before The Supreme Judge of The Universe!

"GOD's requirement for national blessing, whether in Solomon's land, in Ezra's, or in our own" is that righteousness and worship of Him alone reign in the lives of a people. "Those who believe must forsake their sins, turn from the life that is centered in self, and yield to GOD's Word and will. Then, and only then, will Heaven send [national] revival," protection and blessing upon the people that worship Him at The Cross of our Lord JESUS CHRIST in holiness and in truth.<sup>10</sup> This same Biblical call then applies to all nations in all times - most particularly to America, "Let us return unto The Lord, that we may be healed!"

#### VIII. THE 8 STEPS OF GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR NATIONAL HEALING

GOD provides an 8-step prescription for national healing for His people in II CHRONICLES 7:14. Recall again that This Text is The Creator's response to King Solomon's prayer of dedication at the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, which He spoke to Solomon. It was at the time given to ancient Israel, but is a prescription for national healing for any nation that, having been called by His Name but then having rebelled against GOD, has found itself under Divine chastisement for national sin: "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

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<sup>10</sup> 7, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, II CHRONICLES 7:14, p 397.

will heal their land.”<sup>11</sup>

First, "If My people, which are called by My Name:"<sup>12</sup> Saint Peter declares in I PETER 4:17-18, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of GOD: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of GOD? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"<sup>13</sup> We who are called Christians bear the name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST before GOD and men. The lives we lead in this life must be honoring to The One Who Came to save us. If we are truly GOD's people, we must consider if we walk in righteousness or wickedness. For we The Church on earth will be judged by whether or not we are faithful to The blessed Gospel!

Second, "shall humble themselves:"<sup>14</sup> Saint James writes in JAMES 4:7-10, "Submit yourselves therefore to GOD. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to GOD, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded... Humble yourselves in the sight of The Lord, and He shall lift you up!"<sup>15</sup> Let us submit with humble hearts, confessing mouths and turned lives to The Almighty again. For when sinners cry out to The Throne of Grace in earnest penitence, lamenting in sackcloth and ashes for they offenses to The LORD, we shall be cleansed. For then we shall be lifted up, and He shall wipe away every tear!

Third, "and pray:"<sup>16</sup> King David calls upon The Name of The LORD in PSALM 5:2-3, "Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my GOD: for unto Thee will I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up!"<sup>17</sup> GOD knows our hearts and is listening for our prayers. For when the righteous lift up their voices to His Throne, The LORD is open to

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<sup>11</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

<sup>12</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

<sup>13</sup> 4, KJV, I PETER 4:17-18.

<sup>14</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

<sup>15</sup> 4, KJV, JAMES 4:7-10.

<sup>16</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

<sup>17</sup> 4, KJV, PSALM 5:1-3.



their cry. Our every petition to Him Who created us and all things are lovingly recorded in Heaven. We may rejoice in praise and song for His loving kindness, for The LORD our rock and shield will direct us when we pray to Him!

Fourth, "and seek My face:"<sup>18</sup> The prophet Isaiah issues forth a call for repentance in ISAIAH 55:6-7, "Seek ye The LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto The LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our GOD, for He will abundantly pardon!"<sup>19</sup> Let us seek the face of our Maker, that we may be healed. Let us call upon CHRIST JESUS our Deliverer for His mercy. For when we turn from sin and resort to His abundant grace, GOD shall reveal His face to us in our very hearts!

Fifth, "and turn from their wicked ways:"<sup>20</sup> The prophet Ezekiel declares The Word of The LORD in EZELIEL 33:10-11, "...If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? ...As I live, saith The Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"<sup>21</sup> GOD takes no joy in seeing men suffer and die in their trespasses. He gives us His holy Laws to protect us and bless us because He loves us. Let us listen to the call of our precious Savior beaoning us to repent of our iniquity at the foot of The Cross. For then shall our souls live and not perish in darkness and damnation!

Sixth, "then will I hear from Heaven:"<sup>22</sup> Baruch, the faithful scribe and servant of the prophet Jeremiah, writes in BARUCH 2:14-15, "That all the earth may know that Thou art The Lord our GOD, because Israel and His posterity is called by Thy Name. O Lord, look down from Thine holy house, and consider us: bow down Thine ear, O Lord,

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<sup>18</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

<sup>19</sup> 4, KJV, ISAIAH 55:6-7.

<sup>20</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

<sup>21</sup> 4, KJV, EZELIEL 33:10-11.

<sup>22</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

to hear us!”<sup>23</sup> The Creator awaits our earnest prayers and petitions, that He may answer them according to His will and glorify His Name before angels and men. We The Church are His posterity who bear The Name of The very Son of GOD. For when we His people turn from our sins and cry out to His grace, let us have no doubt that He will hear us from Heaven!

Seventh, "and will forgive their sin:"<sup>24</sup> The prophet Amos issues a call to repentance before The Almighty, that His people might be healed, in AMOS 6:1,3: "Come, and let us return unto The LORD: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know The LORD: ...He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth!"<sup>25</sup> If we return to again place CHRIST JESUS on the throne of our hearts, casting down all the false idols of our lives back into the dust from which they arose, then His deliverance shall fall upon us as a torrent of refreshing streams of Living Water!

Saint John proclaims the same Truth to us in I JOHN 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!"<sup>26</sup> Let us then not deceive ourselves before GOD and men. Every man is a sinner and every nation has transgressed the Laws of The LORD. Let our hearts be convicted of the truth that we as mere men are fallen sinners in need of humble confession. For without confession of sin before The Lamb of GOD, there can never be forgiveness!

Eighth, "and will heal their land:"<sup>27</sup> Moses, the very friend of GOD, declares from The Torah in LEVITICUS 25:9-10, "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound... in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. ...and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you...!"<sup>28</sup> May there come a day again when atonement for our

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<sup>23</sup> 8, KJV-Apocrypha, BARUCH 2:14-16.

<sup>24</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

<sup>25</sup> 4, KJV, AMOS 6:1,3.

<sup>26</sup> 4, KJV, I JOHN 1:8-9.

<sup>27</sup> 4, KJV, II CHRONICLES 7:14.

<sup>28</sup> 4, KJV, LEVITICUS 25:9-10.

iniquities is sounded throughout this and all nations of men. Let it come as a jubilee of joy and thanksgiving to The LORD of Hosts. Where there is sorrow, suffering, disease and death in body, mind and soul because of our wicked ways in this land, let men resort again to the precious blood of our Redeemer JESUS CHRIST!

Of this same peace and liberty that comes from healing only in The Lord, Saint Paul writes in II CORINTHIANS 3:17, “Now The Lord is that Spirit: and where The Spirit of The Lord is, there is liberty!”<sup>29</sup> May true liberty from earthly sorrows and spiritual death be wiped away from our hearts, our homes, our Churches and our land by The very Spirit of The Almighty. May CHRIST JESUS alone reign in our souls. May His Word flow like waves of righteousness again among our people. May the liberty of His grace, which alone can free us from sin and death, be again be sought after in our nation beyond any and all other riches - now and forever!

#### IX. THE “IF, THEN” NATURE OF GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR NATIONAL HEALING

We began with Thomas Jefferson's 1805 Presidential proclamation of "A National Prayer For Peace." In that prayer we may discern the prayer for our own nation - as did King Solomon at the dedication of The Temple in II CHRONICLES 7:14 - for the protection and blessing of The Almighty. It is not enough for a people to merely go through the motions of uttering a few prayers to GOD and feigning regret for their national sins! No! GOD's medicine for national healing is only applied to those patients who truly and with heartfelt conviction humble themselves before The Throne of The King of The Universe and earnestly seek the healing hand of The Eternal Physician Above! The healing of The Lord upon any people is an “IF, THEN” proposition: IF we return to The Lord, ONLY THEN may we be healed!

IF we His people, “who are called by His Name” repent, only then may we be healed! Our nation must again confess true faith as a Christian people in Almighty GOD and His work upon The Cross to redeem the world and mankind. O LORD, may we again confess that is You alone “Who has given us this good land for our heritage!”

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<sup>29</sup> 4, KJV, II CORINTHIANS 3:17.

IF we "shall humble ourselves, and pray, and seek His face," only then may we be healed! In personal and national humility we must confess that GOD alone is sovereign, that we have transgressed His Laws, blasphemed against His holiness and rebelled against His will. O LORD, may we "humbly beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will!"

IF we "turn from our wicked ways," only then may we be healed! Prayer for Divine deliverance alone is not enough. We must cast down the idols in our hearts, our homes, our Churches, our institutions and society. We can not merely confess CHRIST as Lord, but must also cease to call evil good and good evil. We must take our hands away from what is wicked and seek what is righteous. O LORD, may we turn from all "violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way!"

ONLY THEN "will The Almighty hear from Heaven!" Only if our nation repents and returns to GOD will He answer our peoples' prayers for national deliverance! For only then may we dare to cry out, O LORD, "defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people [under faith in our Lord JESUS CHRIST] the multitude brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues!"

ONLY THEN "will GOD forgive us our sins!" Only with repentance and renewal of our Christian faith across our land - beginning in The Church - will The Creator again "endow with His Spirit of wisdom those to whom in His Name we entrust the authority of government." For only then may we dare to petition Him, O LORD, "bless again our land with honorable ministry, sound learning, and pure manners!"

ONLY THEN "will our Maker heal our land!" Only if our people return to the path of righteousness - humbly seeking Divine pardon for our apostasy, idolatry, blasphemy, abominations and lukewarm faith in our Lord JESUS CHRIST - will The Creator heal our sin ravaged people! For only then may we dare to hope, O LORD, send again "justice and peace upon our homes. [That] "through obedience to Thy Law, may we again show forth Thy praise among the nations of the earth!"

ONLY THEN will the light of liberty and blessing under The holy Cross of our Lord JESUS CHRIST flow through the lives of our people and our nation. For only then may we hope to see this prayer fulfilled: O LORD, “In time of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in Thee to fail; all of which we ask through JESUS CHRIST our Lord!”

#### X. IN CONCLUSION

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, our nation today has drifted far from The LORD GOD! And we do as a people today suffer so as a direct result! But praise be to GOD, there is a Divine prescription for the healing of our sin-sick society even now! And so, let us then end here as we began:

אַשְׁרֵי הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר אֵלֵּהּ הָיוּ אֲדֹנָי נִי הַמָּשִׁיחַ יֵשׁוּעַ

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<sup>30</sup> 2, Hebrew Old Testament, PSALM 33:12a, minus The Hebrew Word for JEHOVAH. <http://www.mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2633.htm> “Happy is the nation whose GOD is The

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<sup>31</sup> 3, Hebrew New Testament, MATTHEW 15:22, word for “Lord” in reference to JESUS CHRIST. <http://dvar-adonai.org/hnt/He.htm/Matthew011-015.htm>

“...Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David...” חַנּוּנֵי אֲדֹנָי נִי בֶן-דָּוִד

<sup>32</sup> 3, Hebrew New Testament, MATTHEW 1:1, words for “The Messiah” and “JESUS.” <http://dvar-adonai.org/hnt/He.htm/Matthew001-005.htm>

“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ יֵשׁוּעַ בֶּן-דָּוִד בֶּן-אַבְרָהָם:

<sup>33</sup> In my transliteration of the Hebrew into English, I represent aleph as ‘ and ayin as “.

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