

The Golden Scepter

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The First Two Doctrines

“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.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

These words contain the answer God gave to Solomon’s prayer, which he made when he dedicated the temple. His prayer was that when they prayed on earth God would hear in heaven; and God promised in the words I have read to do all that Solomon asked. This promise contains three parts: First, that He would hear in heaven, which phrase denotes either His power, that He is able to bring to pass what He assents to do. Men are said to hear on earth because they can do little, but God hears in heaven. Or else it implies that though He seems to be far off from His people, yea, though in heaven, yet He will hear at last. The second part is that He will pardon their sins; and it is of all other mercies the greatest, for sin hinders all good things and opens a gap to all

evils. And therefore David said, "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven." Of all requests it is the greatest that we can make, and of all grants the greatest that God promises. Third, He will heal their land and remove their affliction. Now observe the order of this, in that before He does it He pardons their sin.

Now this promise is further set forth by two things.

First, the persons to whom it is made, the people of Israel and Judah, notified by two attributes: (1) They are His people. (2) They are called by His name, or on whom His name is called; as the name of the husband is called upon the wife, or of the father upon the sons; and as they in Antioch, and we, are called "Christians" from Christ.

Second, the conditions this promise is made upon, for it is the Lord's manner to put promises upon conditions. (1) If they are humbled, and humble themselves. (2) If that humiliation is not contained within the compass of their breasts only, but expressed by prayer and confession of sins. (3) If they "seek My face," seek to be reconciled, seek His presence as separated from all things else; not seeking corn, wine, or oil, but God Himself. (4) If they part with their sins in seeking, for they cannot maintain communion with Him otherwise; for God dwells in light, and he who walks in darkness can have no fellowship with Him (1 John 1:6, 7). And thus you have the