

## **“God Bless America” II Chronicles 7:14**

“God Bless America!” During the current 2008 election year campaign, the candidates for office use this phrase over and over again. I do not want to question their motives but sometimes I wonder if they are using this phrase as a sincere prayer or for some degree of political gain. At least they are using the phrase!

After listening to one of their speeches the other night and hearing the speech end with a resounding “God Bless America,” I started to reflect on the truth that in God’s Word we have a clear formula which, if followed, will assure God’s blessings on our great land. This formula is found in II Chronicles 7:14 which says:

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 their cry, and forgive their sins, and will heal their land.

This divine formula has two major parts:

1. First, theirs is a conditional phrase, which clearly sets forth some responsibilities of God’s people.
  - “SHALL HUMBLE THEMSELVES . . .”

In the face of God’s greatness we must see ourselves as part of His creation. He made us, not to be little gods, but capable of having fellowship with Him. When we acknowledge who God is and who we are, the attitude of humility will come to us.
  - “AND PRAY . . .”

Prayer is two way communication with God. We speak to Him and He speaks to us. I believe it is through prayer that we seek the knowledge to know and the courage to do God’s will. If, during our praying, God’s will calls for action on our part, we can be assured that prayer will strengthen us for tasks which must be done.
  - “AND SEEK MY FACE . . .”

I am sure that Bible scholars can tell us a lot about the meaning of this phrase. But to me it simply means that I have such a close personal relationship with God that I can look into His face. That’s how close I need to be to Him!
  - “AND TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS . . .”

This is the Biblical concept of repentance. When we repent we turn around. We turn away from sin to God and a right relationship with

God is restored. The Divine Creator and the created being become one.

2. Second, there are sure and certain promises. “Then” refers back to the conditional phrase. When God’s people use their divine freedom of choice, to fulfill their responsibilities, it is “then” that God will act and fulfill certain promises set forth in the second part of II Chronicles 7:14. “Then . . .

- “WILL I HEAR THEIR CRY . . .”  
What a comforting thought to know that Almighty God hears us when we pray. Face to face I can meet God, cry out to Him, and He will hear me! It just cannot get any better than that!
- “AND FORGIVE THEIR SIN . . .”  
Divine forgiveness is available. We do not have to live in guilt. We do not have to live separated from God. He forgives us!
- “AND WILL HEAL THEIR LAND.”  
God sees all the turmoil in our world today. He knows that the land needs a lot of healing. He wants our land – His creation – to be made whole.

“What am I to do?” you may ask. I am only one in the midst of millions. You can make it personal. You cannot control whether or not other people hear and heed God’s call and claim God’s promise found in our text. You can encourage and witness to them. You can do your part. Here is my personal commitment: I will hear and heed God’s call, fulfill my responsibilities, and claim God’s promises for my life and my country. Will you join me? GOD BLESS AMERICA! AMEN! AMEN!

Reverend Phillip R. Morrow Sr.