

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn how to build up the Christian Church. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one resource of the God of the Bible. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme.

In this twelfth series, the Bible teaches five truths about God's resources. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: GOD'S HEALING. We will meditate a new Bible passage, memorise a new Bible verse and then review the previously memorised verses together.

(S) **POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is 2 Chronicles 7:14. We will meditate the truths in the Bible together. Please read 2 Chronicles 7:11-22 for yourself.

The memorisation verse is: God's healing. 2 Chronicles 7:14. "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 will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land". 2 Chronicles 7:14.

(T) **First. God's blessing on Israel for conversion.**

In 2 Chronicles 7:11-22 God sets before Israel and its leaders a choice between receiving his blessing or his curse.

One. The special responsibilities of the leaders of Israel.

2 Chronicles 7:17-20 teaches that the God who revealed himself through the prophets in the Old Testament desired Israel to be a theocracy, that is, a country in which God himself is the King and his commandments are carried out voluntarily. The kings as political leaders of Israel had to realise that they did not have the highest position in the country. The religious leaders and teachers had to acknowledge that they did not have absolute authority in the country. God desired to be the King of all the people in Israel and the Israelites had to obey God voluntarily. The prophets, priests and kings in Israel were not the leaders in the country. Only the God of the Bible was the Great Leader. The prophets, priests and kings had no right or authority to enforce God's laws onto the people and they had no authority to put themselves into the place of God ruling the country. The responsibility of the prophets was to explain God's words in the Bible to people. The responsibility of the priests was to motivate the people to seek the God of the Bible and to worship him. The responsibility of the kings was to maintain righteousness and justice in the country. And the responsibility of all the people in Israel was to love the God of the Bible with all their hearts and to love their neighbour as themselves. No one in Israel had the right or authority to take the place of God and turn the country into a religious-political state in which the authoritarian leaders exercised their authority over the people. The leaders had no social authority over the personal lives of people and tell them how they should dress. They leaders had no religious authority over the spiritual lives of the people and tell them how and when they should worship. The leaders had no right to motivate the people to hatred, to religious fanaticism, to holy wars and to acts of terrorism. In short, the leaders of God's people during the Old Testament times should be the servants of God and God's people.

Jesus Christ said the same to Israel during the New Testament period. He said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave. - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mt 20:25-28).

(S) Two. The sin of king Solomon.

When God appeared to king Solomon the first time, Solomon asked God for *wisdom* to lead and govern Israel. Because he had not asked for wealth or honour or for the death of his enemies or for a long life for himself, God gave him not only wisdom, but also wealth, honour and power (ch 1). When Solomon dedicated the temple, he prayed and showed his absolute dependence on God (ch 6). Thus, during the first half of his reign, Solomon was completely dependent on the Lord.

But during the second half of his reign, when he became wealthy, powerful and famous, he became an *independent absolute monarch*! The norm of all his actions was no longer the Bible and the moral law of God, but *the interests of the state* of Israel. King Solomon had become completely independent from God. At the beginning of this period, during the 24th year of his reign, the Lord appeared to him for a second time. This time God appeared to him to warn him and to give him an opportunity to repent and change. God set before king Solomon a choice between the blessing and the curse. If the king and Israel would remain obedient and faithful to the God of the Bible, then he would bless them.

However, if the king and Israel would backslide and reject the God of the Bible, then he would judge them severely. God gave Solomon and Israel a chance to return to their *first love* (Rev 2:4-5).

(T) Three. God's prerequisite for restoration and healing.

In 2 Chronicles 6:14 God said, "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 will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land". God has three prerequisites for restoration and healing of his people: people should humble themselves, pray and seek God's face and turn from their wicked ways. To humble yourself means, to let go of your arrogant attitude of independence and to bend, yield and submit yourself to God. To pray means, to consciously and actively seek God's presence and to make every effort to make contact with God again in order to receive forgiveness and wise counsel from God. To turn from their wicked ways means, to turn away from their independence and arrogant self-assertion and to turn back to God, to God's Word in the Bible and to God's way of living. God promises to do three things to people who humble themselves: he will hear their prayer from heaven, he will forgive their sin and he will heal their land. Although God knows what all non-Christians and arrogant people pray, he will only hear the prayers of people who humble themselves. The God of the Bible only answers the prayers and acts on behalf of people who fulfil his prerequisites.

(S) Second. God's curse on Israel for rejection of the Lord.

One. Israel as God's people lost its right to exist.

In 2 Chronicles 6:20 God warned that if Israel turned away from the God of the Bible, forsook the Bible and turned to another god, the God of the Bible himself would uproot them from the land. God called the land "my land". The land never belonged to Israel or to any other nation; it always belonged to God! God wanted people to serve him in that land and Acts 17:24-27 teaches that God wanted all the people of all the nations in the world to serve him.

However, if Israel failed God's purpose and broke God's covenant with them, then God would pull them up from the land as one pulls up a plant and throw them away as worthless. God would take away Israel's right to exist as a nation.

(T) Two. Israel's temple lost its meaning.

In 2 Chronicles 6, when Solomon dedicated the temple, he prayed and showed his absolute dependence on God. The temple is a 'type' or 'illustration' in the Old Testament of the dwelling place of God. The temple was the place where God's Name dwelt, that is, where his revelation was understood and where his power was experienced. The temple was the place God promised to meet his people, hear their prayers and where he helped them and acted on their behalf.

However, if Israel turned away from God, forsook God's Word and turned to another god, then God himself would turn the temple into a ruin. The temple which was formerly praised among all people would become a song of ridicule (byword) and an object of abusive speech. In history it is known that foreign nations often destroyed the temples of *other* nations to prove the superior strength of their gods, but the nations never destroyed their *own* temples! But in the case of Israel, the God of Israel himself would destroy his own temple (21), because his own people forsook him and embraced other gods.

(S) Three. Israel and its leaders suffered.

In 2 Chronicles 6:19 God uses the plural and therefore he is speaking to both the king and the people of Israel. He warns that if the leaders or the people turned away from the Living God and forsook the Bible and turn towards another god, then God himself would uproot Israel from the land of Palestine and he would reject the temple in Jerusalem! It does not matter whether the political and religious leaders first sin or whether the people first sin. They would both be uprooted from the land. In the Bible, there is *solidarity of guilt and suffering*. It is not true that every person suffers only for his own sins. Many people suffer, because of the sin of others. 2 Chronicles 6:13 describes some of the suffering God would cause them to suffer. God would shut the heavens so that there would be no rain, but only drought. God would send calamities like locusts to devour the land, or earthquakes, or floods. God would send plagues among the people, diseases that no man could prevent or stop.

Why is there suffering on earth? The Bible teaches that there is suffering on earth, because people had broken their relationship with the God who had revealed himself in the prophets of the Bible and finally in Jesus Christ. All people in the world have sinned. All people in the world suffer and share in one another's suffering. Therefore, all people in the world need God's healing!

(T) Third. God is the Source of all healing.

One. All healing is divine healing.

God is the Creator of everything. He only is able to heal or restore anything or anybody who is sick. Healing is not limited to physical illness. God heals *the body* from all kinds of sicknesses, handicaps or weaknesses. God heals *the soul or inward being* of man from all kinds of emotional and psychological illnesses and defects. God heals *the mind* of

man from all kinds of mental illnesses, handicaps and weaknesses. God heals *the spirit or heart* of man from all kinds of spiritual illnesses and weaknesses. In short, *God heals the whole man!*

Sometimes God heals through the means of doctors, nurses and other professional helpers. Sometimes God heals through the means of rest, good food and exercise. Sometimes God heals through the means of prayer. But *all healing is still divine healing*. It is not people, medicines or methods that heal people. It is the God of the Bible who sovereignly decides to heal one person through any method he chooses. And 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 also teaches that it is God who sovereignly decides not to heal another person for another higher reason.

(S) Two. Jesus Christ merited all healing.

In 1 Peter 2:24 is written, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed”. Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins, for our sick bodies and souls, and for our broken and meaningless lives! Everyone who believes in Jesus Christ, may *experience* forgiveness of sins now, restoration of body and soul now, and meaning in life now. The extent of healing he may experience now is determined by the sovereign purpose of God. But the believer will definitely experience *complete healing of body and soul on the new earth!*

(T) Three. The purpose of the healing ministry of Jesus Christ.

In Matthew 4:23 we read, “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people”. The purpose of the healing ministry of Jesus Christ is to be ‘a sign’ (Jn 6:14; 9:16; 11:47). *The healing miracles of Jesus Christ point to the One who does the miracles. Miracles point to Jesus himself.* The healing miracles proof that he has divine authority and majesty. To the hungry, the miracles of Jesus show that he is *the Bread of Life*. To the blind, the miracles of Jesus show that he is *the Light of the world*. To the dead, the miracles of Jesus show that he is *the resurrection and the Life*. The purpose of the healing miracles is to strengthen the faith of Christians (Jn 20:30-31).

(S) Fourth. Practical steps to God’s healing.

What should a person do when he desires God’s healing?

One. Healing takes place in the sphere of penitence.

A sick person should confess his sin. In James 5:16 we read, “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed”. This passage does not teach that Christians should hold meetings in which they tell one another their sins. It does not say, “Confess your sins to God in the presence of other people”. This passage teaches that Christians should confess their sins only to the persons against whom they have sinned! When we have sinned against God alone, we should secretly confess that sin to him alone. When we have sinned against an individual, then we should confess that sin to him alone! Only when we have sinned against a whole group of people, should we confess that sin to that group only.

Two. Healing takes place in the sphere of reconciliation.

After the confession of sin, you should ask the individual against whom you have sinned, to pray together, so that God may bring healing. When a brother or sister has sinned against us and comes to confess his sin to us, we must be prompt and unhesitating in our welcome of this person. We should immediately and wholeheartedly forgive him.

Three. Healing takes place in the sphere of prayer.

In prayer, both parties acknowledge that they need God’s forgiveness and that God has forgiven them. In prayer, both parties express their concern for one another. In prayer the hurt feelings and bruised spirits, which are the result of the wrong the one has done to the other, is healed. God’s healing does not necessarily consist only of the healing of the body. God may heal the body or the soul, or he may heal the broken relationship with him or the broken relationship with the other person.

(T) Four. Healing takes place in the sphere of transformation.

After confession of sin, reconciliation of relationships and prayer, people should be willing to change their lives and let God transform their way of life. In Luke 5:31-32 Jesus says, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (G: metanoia)”. People who think that they are not sinners, who regard themselves as righteous, also do not think that they need Jesus Christ and his forgiveness and healing. Jesus Christ has come into the world to save people from the guilt and shame of their sins and from the power of sin over their lives. But these people must ‘repent’. They must acknowledge that they are sinners, that they need forgiveness and that they want to change. They must not only feel sorry and sad for what they have done. They must be willing to turn away from their former evil way of life. They must turn towards the God of the Bible. In the Christian faith, ‘conversion’ means a radical change of life! Jesus promises to heal all those who not only repent, but convert their lives!

Five. Healing takes place in the sphere of faith. If you desire to be healed, then you must put your faith in Jesus Christ. In Mark 10:52 Jesus says to a blind man, “Go, your faith has healed you”. This *faith* is not simply the faith that is needed for miracles to happen, but is the faith that saves. The man was not only healed of his blindness, he was also healed of his separation from God. From that time on, he followed Jesus! Faith is always a gift of God, whether it is faith that performs miracles (1 Cor 12:11) or whether it is faith that saves (Eph 2:8). What Jesus praises, is not that he *produced* faith by himself, but that he *exercised* the faith that God gave to him! (Also in Mt 9:22; Lk 7:50; 17:19).

(S) POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE

(T+S) God’s healing. 2 Chronicles 7:14. 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 will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14.

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(S) POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSES YOU HAVE MEMORISED

(T) God is all-powerful. Jeremiah 32:17. “Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you”. Jeremiah 32:17.

(S) God’s presence. Hebrews 13:5-6. Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you”. So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” Hebrews 13:5-6.

(T) God’s Word. Psalm 119:105. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105.

(S) God’s strength. Isaiah 41:10. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10.

(T) God’s wisdom. James 1:5. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. James 1:5.

(S) POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK.

First. Daily review the last five memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks “Go and build Christ’s Church” and Internet on www.dota.net.

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to “Discipleship training on the air”.