



Benoni House of Prayer

Welcome to September!



The well known promise of God Almighty hovers over us ... if my people ...

You have most likely heard this scripture, and have turned to it as a source of hope in times of great need. Someone once said: A text without a context is just a con.

Our Focus for the month of September, is to create a context for this well known scripture, which we will continue to study for the remainder of 2018.

The story of the temple...

God spoke these words recorded in 2 Chron 7 to Solomon, who had just come from The feast of 7 days (Sukkot), joyfully celebrating the dedication of the temple he had built, with the provisions that David provided.

God assures Solomon that his prayer was heard, and that He, the Almighty one will be attentive to prayers offered in the temple, PROVIDED that Israel remained wholeheartedly devoted. (2 Chron 7:15).

It is also interesting that God anticipates Israel's unfaithfulness, because He warns that a time of famine and pestilence will come. But in His mercy, He includes instructions for how to repent, restore the relationship and secure His blessing. He first wants Israel to understand that they are His people, called by His name, and therefore their behaviour, whether good or bad, is associated with the honour of His name.

Israel started out good, being enraptured by the display of God's glory (2 Chron 5, 6). For a time Solomon and his nation devoutly sought the Lord. But in 1 Kings 11 we read the tragic decline of Solomon's obedience and his subsequent idolatry due to unwise alliances.

Even though there might have been individuals in the assembly of Israelites that wanted to seek God, because their king failed in his individual walk with God, the whole nation was lead astray, and the fruit of their rebellion against God is seen as close to 40 years of peace is lost.

If Solomon had upheld an example of individual faithfulness, in humility, he would most likely have steered the Nation to seek God, as his father David had done, and the honour of God's name and His dwelling place would have been preserved.

The True temple ...

(Isaiah 66: 1-2) (1 Cor 3:16) (1 Cor 3:9-11)

Solomon in his prayer (1 Kings 8:27) asks: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee. How much less this temple which I have built?"

IN John 4:21-24, Jesus makes it clear that God does not intend to honour one building or geographical place of worship over another, because his relationship with man is about to change. All previous attempts at setting up a temple was flawed by fallen humanity becoming corrupt and not adhering to God's way.

Then Jesus comes and dwells on earth for 33 years, declaring that He is the temple of God, God's eternal resting place (Matt 12:6; Col 2:9, John 2:19-21). Because He had an insight into the Heavenly realities that were represented by the physical temple, He understood what He was busy doing, and what significance it held. (Heb 9:11-14)

He becomes the flesh and blood expression of God's dwelling place, and of the reconciliation between broken earthly things and Holy, heavenly things. (Col 1:19)

Building up the temple ...

It should be clear now that we are not able to create a dwelling place for God in a building. So to think of BHOP as a place where God dwells is not scriptural.

But much as David made the provision for building the temple, and Solomon had to execute it, Jesus made a way for us to become a dwelling place for God, as we die to ourselves and unite to His life. But we have to do the dying and the uniting. We have to take what was provided and build with it.

Paul writes that as we come to God, we can as Living Stones, be built into a habitation for the Lord (2 Pet 2:5) .

Paul writes that **we are** the temple of the living God, being built upon the foundation of Christ. (Eph 2:19-22)

Yet, only inasmuch as Christ dwells in us individually, are we collectively the temple of the Lord.

Now the invitation is clear:

In honour of the Truth that God now chooses to dwell in broken and contrite hearts, why don't we become living stones in the temple of our God?

As we uphold individual faithfulness in our daily devotional walk, to unite with Jesus, we honour God's temple, we build it up.

Setting out time to pray regularly is certainly the start of joining our hearts to Jesus, and a worthy way to build upon the foundation that has already been laid out.

We want to honour each person who has joined us in prayer during August, whether daily, weekly or occasionally. We trust that God will make Himself known to you.

If you are led by God's Spirit to persevere through September, we urge you to do so.

Let us, in unity, seek the Face of the Living God

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How can I be involved in the future?

1. Every month, by the 25th, Book a time in the BHOP chapel for the upcoming month. Please keep to that timeslot as others might want to come and pray with you.
2. You can see everyone's times on the monthly calendar, which is available on the HOTL app or as a paper copy in the church foyer by the 1st of every month.
3. Join up with someone in the chapel who prays regularly, as and when you can. OR Come and pray in open timeslots as and when you can.
4. If you are unable to come to the chapel physically, pray anywhere and everywhere at any time, joining your heart to the Chief Cornerstone, which is Christ, building up God's temple in this way.
5. For Security purposes, we want to know who is in the chapel at any given time. We also want to get an indication of how many hours we are filling up in reality. Therefore we request that you kindly contact Adéle if you intend to go and pray **outside** of a booked slot, and do sign the register kept in the front of the chapel on the podium, every time you go.

Thanks

BHOP TEAM