

Intro: Looking back on 2017... For many of God's people, even during trials and struggles, you experienced miracles and much answered prayer. Looking ahead to 2018, If we trust God and call on Him, He has promised to answer Prayer.

God's desire for His people has always been for us to become a House of Prayer!

Text: Isaiah 56: 6, 7 2 Chronicles 5-7 John 2:13-21 Ephesians 2:22

I. God's Heart for His House – To be a House of Prayer

Vs 7 *"...For my house will be called a house of prayer for All Nations."* NIV

God could have said... My House will be a House of... Serving – Singing – Fellowship – Preaching – Missions etc... (All these are vital, yet not how God described His House)

God described His House this way because He desires Intimacy with His People

Jesus rebuked the Lukewarm Church of Laodicea because they left their Intimacy with Him

Rev 3:20 *Jesus promised intimacy with those who would repent and come back to Him*

II. The O.T. Model: God's House of Prayer – A Physical Temple at Jerusalem

2 Chronicles 5:2-7, 20

The Place where the **Ark of the Covenant** Rested

The Place where the **Sacrificial Blood** was applied

The Place where **God's Shekinah Glory** came down to meet with the Priests

Under the Old Covenant, God Provided for the Needs of His People – IF they would Repent of Sin and walk in His Covenant

- 1) **Forgiveness/Right standing** - 2 Chronicles 6:21
- 2) **Justification** – vs 22
- 3) **Restoration from Captivity** – vs 24
- 4) **Training in Godliness** – vs 27
- 5) **Provision for Physical Needs** – vs 27
- 6) **Acceptance for Foreigners** – vs 32
- 7) **Victory in Warfare** – vs 36

If His people would **Repent** and **Call on Him**, **He promised** to hear from heaven, forgive their sin, answer them and heal their land!

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.”*

*Sadly, the Israelites eventually forsook God’s Covenant. As a result, they were overwhelmed by their enemies their Temple was destroyed and they were placed in Captivity.

III. Jesus Emphasized His House must be a House of Prayer

Matthew 21:13 *“It is written,” He said to them, “My House WILL BE called a House of Prayer, but you are making it a ‘den of robbers.’”*

During the time of Jesus, even the rebuilt Temple had been corrupted!

It was exploited for Religious, Political and Material gain.

Jesus was pointing people back to the Heart of the Father for His House of Prayer!

IV. Jesus Inaugurated the New Covenant for God's House of Prayer

John 2:13-21 " vs 19...*destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days.*"

vs 21 "*But the temple He had spoken of was His body.*"

God Himself was NOW in the Body of Jesus! He is the Temple of God!

Hebrews 10:5 "*Therefore, when Christ came into the world, He said; "sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but **a body** you prepared for me;"*

By the Sacrifice of Jesus' Body on the Cross – He opened a New Way for ANYONE who repents, to come to Him in His House of Prayer!

When Jesus died on the cross the VEIL of the Temple was TORN in two from Top to Bottom!

Hebrews 10:19, 20 "*Therefore brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by **a new and living way** opened for us through the curtain, that is, **His body...**"*

Colossians 1:22 "*But now He has reconciled you by **Christ's physical body** through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation,"*

V. We are a Living Temple – Called to be His House of Prayer – 24 x 7 NOW we are grafted into Christ and are Becoming His Temple – His House of Prayer!

1 Cor 3:16 "*Don't you know that **you yourselves** are **God's temple** and that God's Spirit lives in you?"*

Ephesians 2:12,13, 22 “...you were excluded from citizenship in Israel...and foreigners to the covenants of promise vs 13...but now brought near by the blood of Christ.”

Vs 22 “you too are being built together to **become a dwelling** in which God lives by His Spirit.”

John 4:21, 23 “ vs 21 “a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on **this mountain nor in Jerusalem**. Vs 23 “Yet **a time is coming** and has **now come** when the true worshipers will **worship the Father in spirit and truth** for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.”

Conclusion: How do we Become a House of Prayer?

Repentance – Turning away from Unbelief and all Idols

Faith – Lay hold of His Promises

Call on the Lord in Prayer Daily – From the Heart

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