

2 Chronicles 7v14 If my people...shall humble themselves...

I. Introduction

- E A. It's much easier to see things on a bigger scale than on a smaller scale (e.g. nat. bankruptcy / Israel)
- L 1. This is a large-scale picture of disease/death to teach about personal disease and death
- L 2. Let's learn from this national situation of disease and death (13) what to do in very personal situation of dis/death
- N B. Lord addresses those who are called by His name = cov community of possessors/professors (but true for all sinners)
- W1. ~~Winnie's~~ wall-text: It tells us much about ~~Winnie~~, and as we shall see, it also tells us much about God.
- T2. This verse teaches us a time of disease and death are (1) a time of humbling and (2) a time of hoping.

II. A time for humbling

A. Humble yourselves

- H G 1. Life good = self-confidence and self-reliance (don't need/want God) but also life not good – self-confidence, etc.
- I 2. "If (not when 13) my people shall humble themselves" – Not automatic that sick > humble
- B 3. There's a big "if" over everyone in this congregation today. "If you will humble yourselves...."
- a. Humble = I am not the best at everything (anything)
- b. Humble = You think about your own weakness, frailty, vulnerability, and death
- c. Humble = You confess that you too deserve to die because of your sin

B. Pray (greatest mark of humility)

- P D 1. When we don't pray, we are saying we can do just fine by ourselves - enough strength, wisdom, and talent w/o help
- C 2. Prayer = "I cannot do life myself....I cannot deal with sin myself... I cannot face death myself...I need outside help."
- A 3. Who may pray? This was to be a house of prayer for all people (v. 12).

C. Seek my face (Nothing tells us more about a person than their face)

- S S 1. But God is spirit; God is invisible. How can we seek his face?
- T 2. In the OT God showed his face through the Temple: materials, furniture, festivals, esp sacrifices. *- Solomon's prayer directed Israel to Temple.*
- J 3. OT shows us God's face in shadow, in pictures, NT shows us God's face in sunlight, in the real person of Jesus
- a. In the NT God showed his face through Jesus – Heb 1:3, Jn. 1:8, Jn. 14:9

D. Turn from your wicked ways

- T F 1. No matter how far and how long we've strayed, God calls us to turn back. He does not give up on us.
- O 2. Notice the order: God's face turns us back to God's ways (not clean up my act then face God)
- C 3. No, seeing the face of God in Jesus Christ will clean up your act.

III. A time for hoping

A. I will hear

- H B 1. Take this promise to the bank and cash it. And unlike other checks, you can cash this every day (see v. 15,16)
- C 2. We are called to the place of God's face, Jesus, through whom God looks upon us and by whom God listens to us.
- E 3. He is God's eyes, and ears towards us.

B. I will forgive

- F I 1. Implies that God has been listening to confession, not excuses, not defenses, not blame-shifting.
- R 2. Someone has taken responsibility for their sin, admitted it, acknowledged it, begged for mercy, sought pardon.
- I 3. So many biblical images of forgiveness:
- D a. I feel so dirty: I will make you whiter than snow
- F b. I can't forget: Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more
- F c. Sin follows me: I will remove sin so far as east is distant from the west

C. I will heal

- H R 1. Remember the national and the physical is there to give us a picture of the personal and the spiritual.
- P 2. Try to picture a land full of disease and death being renewed and rebuilt.
- J 3. That's the vision held in front of us here. Just as Israel never saw this in its fullness on this earth, neither do we.
- a. Stage 1 of this healing begins here with inner healing of the soul (Winnie able to speak of this)
- b. Stage 2 was completed the exact same moment she breathed her last – made perfect in holiness.
- c. Stage 3 is still future – when her perfect body will be reunited with her perfect soul.

IV. Conclusion

- A. Many have hope without being humbled = False hope.
- B. Many want the healing...but are not willing to go through the God ordained way of getting it...through humbling.