

February 25, 2024 – Sermon Notes

“Oh Say, Can You See? – Part 1” 2 Chronicles 7:12-14

Prel Rmks

Text ~ Title

It goes without saying ... grieved by what we see in our nation ... we mourn

This is Biblical for a true believer ~ born again ~ Spirit of God dwells in ...

Prophets

Isaiah

Jeremiah – “weeping prophet”

Habakkuk – broken man

Jesus – wept over Jerusalem ~ He didn’t just say ...

Something is not right with us if we see what is going on in our nation and we don’t grieve and mourn over it.

Steve Lawson: There’s a sense in which things that shocked us ten years ago, and five years ago, do not have the same impact upon us. And there’s a subtlety like the frog in the kettle with the boiling water – after a while it doesn’t even know that the water’s boiling. After a while, we don’t realize just how wicked our country is, just how wicked our government is, just how wicked all of these various movements are that dominate the cable news circuit ... We need to be kept in a place where we mourn like Jeremiah. And like Jesus who wept over Jerusalem. And not become calloused and hard and not still weep over sin, but most of all over our own sin. (2-8-24, Men’s Bible Study, Herb’s Coffee House, Dallas, Texas – “Sermon on the Mount”.)

(12) Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. **(13)** When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among **My people**, **(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 I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

INTRO

Does this passage apply in any way to the people of God in the United States of America?

Yes, but maybe not in the way we might think at first.

I want to show you what I mean.

Solomon had built the temple – the ark of the covenant was brought into it

Chapter 6 he dedicates the Temple – he prays a great prayer of dedication.

2 Chronicles 6:18-21 "But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! **(19)** Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You: **(20)** that Your eyes may be open toward this temple day and night, toward the place where *You* said *You would* put Your name, that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes toward this place. **(21)** And may You hear the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. **Hear from heaven** Your dwelling place, and when You hear, **forgive**.

“Hear from heaven” – 7 times: 6:21, 23, 25, 30, 33, 35, 39

Occasions when they might need to pray -

22 - If anyone sins ...

24 - If your people Israel are defeated in battle (sin)

26 - If there is a drought ... (sin)

28 - When there is famine, pestilence, blight, mildew, locusts, grasshoppers, enemies besiege, plague, sickness

32 - foreigner praying in the Temple

34 - when your people go out to battle

2 Chronicles 6:36-39 "When they sin against You (for *there is no one who does not sin*), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to a land far or near; **(37)** yet when they come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, 'We have sinned, we have done wrong, and have committed wickedness'; **(38)** and *when they return to*

You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they have been carried captive, and pray toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and toward the temple which I have built for Your name: **(39)** then **hear from heaven** Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive Your people who have sinned against You.

When we come to our text, God is answering Solomon's prayer / request:

2 Chronicles 7:12-14 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. **(13)** When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among **My people**, **(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 I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

So, the question arises: who are the "My people" mentioned in vv. 13 & 14?

2Ch 6:5 'Since the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel *in which* to build a house, that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man to be a ruler over **My people Israel**.

2Ch 6:6 Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there, and I have chosen David to be over **My people Israel**.'

2Ch 6:21 And may You hear the supplications of Your servant and of **Your people Israel**, when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and when You hear, forgive.

2Ch 6:24 "Or if **Your people Israel** are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and return and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this temple,

2Ch 6:25 then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of **Your people Israel**, and bring them back to the land which You gave to them and their fathers.

2Ch 6:27 then hear *in* heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, **Your people Israel**, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance.

2Ch 6:29 whatever prayer, whatever supplication is *made* by anyone, or by all **Your people Israel**, when each one knows his own burden and his own grief, and spreads out his hands to this temple:

2Ch 6:32 "Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of **Your people Israel**, but has come from a far country for the sake of Your

great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and pray in this temple;

2Ch 6:33 then hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as *do Your people Israel*, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name.

When God says “My people” in 2 Chronicles 6:5, 6 vv. 13, 14 of our text, He is clearly referring to the Jewish people, in the ancient nation Israel.

David had been there king. Now Solomon is their King.

It was a theocracy that God had established in which God was in covenant relationship with that nation and those people

We need to understand: God is not in a covenant relationship with the United States or any other nation-state on earth at the present time – that includes the modern nation-state of Israel ...

There are still some promises made to the Jewish people as descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that are yet to be fulfilled ... God has provided a place of protection for the Jewish people in the land of Israel today – so they will not be exterminated. So they will not fall victim to genocide.

But God is not in covenant relationship with the modern nation-state of Israel.

God’s answer to Solomon’s prayer in v. 12 certainly does not apply to us directly today.

2 Chronicles 7:12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: "*I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice.*"

So, we understand that this text does not apply to us directly in an exact correlation with the way it applied to ancient Israel.

So ... how DOES it apply to believers today here in the United States of America? – People like us who are waking up to the fact that we are in real peril as a nation. How does this famous verse here in 2 Chronicles 7 apply to us?

I want to give you 6 answers to that question:

(And you can say these things about any part of the Bible.)

It applies to us because:

1. It was placed in the Bible ... for us

1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our **admonition instruction** ~ **warning** ~ **to get our attention**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Romans 15:4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

2. It reveals God's character of God to us – there are principles here for us to learn about God's nature and character.

All of the Bible is like that! It's about God!

In this text we see:

He hears our prayers.

He is a God who is merciful and forgives.

Psalm 103:1-18

3. He does not change. (Of course He is unchanging – He is God!)

Malachi 3:6 "For I *am* the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

4. All Scriptures is ultimately about Jesus Christ – our Savior and Lord.

John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

Luke 24:44 Then He said to them, "**These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.**"

5. He, too, is unchanging.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever.

6. We, as New Testament believers, are God's people today.

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation, His own special people**, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **(10)** who once *were* not a people but *are now the people of God*, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

When God says "My people" today – He is talking about us!

Conclusion

So, let me review. Oh say, can you see? These verses do apply to us in our day:

They were recorded and placed in the Bible ... for us.

They reveal the nature and character of God to us.

God does not change.

They reveal Jesus Christ to us.

He does not change.

We are the people of God today.

{You can open your Bible to any point and place your finger down, and wherever your finger lands, it applies to you}

Even something like the civil law God gave to Israel in those first books of the Bible has application to our lives

We make a distinction between the ceremonial law, the civil law, and the moral law (dietary laws)

It doesn't mean that we should adopt those laws today in our nation and make them part of our civil law ...

But even those civil laws teach us something about the nature and character of our God – what He is like

So we ought to be able to say with the Psalmist:

Psalms 119:97 Oh, how I love Your law! ...

Psalms 119:165 Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble.

that's why we don't {skip over the hard parts} ... genealogies, etc.}

Next week: we'll actually get into this text and see how it relates to our lives today, and take an in-depth look at why much prayer is the urgent need of the hour!

**A Call for All Members of Grace Baptist Church
To Enter a Season of Earnest Prayer
Issued by the Elders of Grace Baptist Church
Grand Bay, Alabama
February 25, 2024**

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God gave His people Israel these conditions for deliverance from His judgment and healing from the consequences of His judgment:

“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 I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

The need for God’s people in our nation to seek Him in this way has never been greater. Our country is deeply divided spiritually, morally, ideologically, and politically. What we see happening at a spiritual level is that God, in His righteous judgment, has given our nation over to a “reprobate mind”, which means a useless mind (Romans 1:28). This explains the insane ideas currently being promoted and the dangerous and damaging policies currently being employed. Unless God in His wrath remembers mercy (Habakkuk 3:2), we are ultimately facing destruction. Jesus said, “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand” (Matthew 12:25). Unless God stays His hand of judgment, this will certainly be the fate of the United States.

Meanwhile, at the very time when our nation needs strong churches and believers to be salt and light, churches in America have never been weaker, more leavened with worldliness, and more “at ease in Zion” (Amos 6:1). 2 Chronicles 7:14 applied in our day is not a call for unbelievers to be converted. It is a call for God’s people to repent and seriously seek Him. It is a call for us to turn from our ignorance and apathy, see the spiritual condition and physical peril we are in, and turn earnestly to God for His help and healing. It is a call to end our contentment with our own ease and comfort, to be willing to discontinue “business as usual” in our lives, and to sacrificially set aside time to be before God, seeking His face and getting right with Him.

Accordingly, we, as Elders of this church, are praying that such a revival in our nation will begin with us at Grace Baptist Church. We, therefore, call on our fellow members to join us in an extended season of earnest and sacrificial time spent in prayer; a season that will involve sacrifice for each of us in our personal life, our family life, and our corporate life together as a church body. We call on each member of the church to immediately begin this season of prayer by arranging their personal schedules to give priority to daily time spent praying.

We may later expand this call to our brothers and sisters in Christ in other churches, but for now let it begin with us. In the words of the old hymn we used to sing, “Lord, send a revival, and let it begin in me.”

Your servants in Christ,
Eugene Conway
Fred Leonard
Craig McCarter
Paul Meredith