

If my people, then thy God

Prayer Day

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Bible Text: 2 Chronicles 7:14
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Congregation, the text for tonight's sermon is from 2 Chronicles 7:14. There are two parts in verse 14, it begins with, "If," and then it will continue the second part with, "then." So if/then. Let's read the verse, 2 Chronicles 7:14.

14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall 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.

So far.

So, "If my people, then I their God." If my people, then I their God. So you see the two thoughts in that. Four times, "If my people," and three times, "then thy God." Four times because we see humble, they shall humble themselves, and secondly, pray, and third, see thy face, and fourth, turn from their wicked ways. And then three in the last part, then will I hear from heaven, I will forgive their sins, I will heal their land.

Well, congregation, Solomon had finished the building of the temple. It was quite something. They always had a tabernacle during the time of David and now there was a temple built, and the ark was moved to the most holy place. And in those chapters we are reading there is a dedication, a dedication of the temple so the temple will be really God's house. And Solomon, the king, has built a scaffold in the court, he is standing on it and he is kind of a priest as well today. He's king, also priest, uniting that like the Lord Jesus was prophet, priest and king. And so King Solomon feels a little bit of a priest and he prays out loud for the whole congregation of Israel, thousands and thousands of people, and he prays, and after that prayer, fire comes down from heaven and consumes the burnt offering that's on the altar. There's nothing left. All the meat and the bones are gone, only some smoke you still see. And there's also a cloud, the cloud, a special cloud of God's glory filling the temple so that the priest could not even enter into the holy place, had to stay outside, they couldn't see, it was too dangerous. They could not enter and the people watching this were shocked and impressed, deeply impressed and they all fell on their knees on the pavement of the temple, in front of the temple, with their foreheads down and they praised the Lord for his goodness and mercy enduring forever, verse 3. You see that in verse 3, "And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the

glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever."

Then Solomon invites more sacrifice to be burned for the Lord and the amount is astounding, 22,000 oxen. I do not know how many cattle trucks is that. I have no idea how many cows and oxen you can have in a cattle truck. Fifty? Maybe that's too much. But if that's true, 50, 440 trucks with oxen, or it is only 25 of them, 880. Of course, they didn't have trucks but they were all brought. And 120,000 sheep. Can you have 100 sheep in a truck? I have no idea, 1,200 trucks if that's the case. A huge amount.

How can they do that? How can they possibly sacrifice all those animals? Well, normally a sacrifice was done just as a one time thing but now it was a whole week. A whole week. And not only on the burnt offering altar, also besides it. The whole court was dedicated to be a huge altar and this kept going and they kept going, all those animals were slaughtered. So Solomon also must have been very rich, very affluent in order to give all those animals from his own personal belongings. When they are standing there and the trumpets are blowing and all instruments, all types of instruments are playing, and the seventh day was a special song gathering again, and after that he sent the people away in verse 10, "And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people."

So it's over now. People are going home and now an official temple and they may come a couple of times a year to the temple. It was a very special time. The people were happy because they're merry and there's peace in their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the Lord had shown unto David and Solomon. But you know, something was missing yet. Solomon had prayed as well, chapter 6, he had prayed for the people, right, and asked the Lord for his blessings and there was no answer yet. No God. So Solomon had finished the house of the Lord and the king's house and all that came into Solomon's heart to make it the house of the Lord, he did it, and he prospered, and then in verse 12, then the Lord appeared to Solomon by night when all the people are home after the dedication of the temple. Solomon was at night in bed and he received a vision at night, "the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice." Yes, that's encouraging. Now verse 13 is a key verse as well, "If," also an "if" verse, "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people." Those are three things, not only in our text but three "ifs" as well. If I make it so dry there's no rain, so no harvesting. Or if I call on the locust to devour everything like right now in Northern Africa, the locusts are also eating everything away, quite a disaster right now. Or if I send pestilence on my people, a contagious disease. Well, that's kind of strange. What does it say, that the Lord is doing that? "If I," the Lord speaking, "If I shut the heavens." That's the devil doing that, that's not the Lord or is he? "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to..." So the Lord is commanding the locusts, the Lord is saying, "Go there. I command you to go to that country." "Or if I send pestilence." Really? "If I send the

viruses and the bacteria and the diseases and the COVID-19 viruses," right? "If I command, if I send pestilence among my people, what then?"

Let's pause here. Would God do that? Is he behind that? Is the Lord behind the tsunamis and the earthquakes and the SARS and the viruses and the pneumonia and the miscarriages and the mental diseases? Is the Lord all behind that? Is he sending that? Is he commanding those locusts? Is he sending those viruses? "If I send pestilence among my people," among his beloved Israel, his chosen people, is the Lord doing that? That's a hard question, isn't it, because the Lord is good and gracious and longsuffering, but he's also in charge. So, yes, we can't say anything else and we prove it from the Bible itself. But suppose that the Lord couldn't help that? Suppose if the Lord would not be sending those locusts but the devil. So who do we pray to, then, the devil? What's the sense in praying to God if the devil is doing it? If the devil has things in his power, if the Lord does not? No, it's all in his power, in his will, not per se according to his moral will but his will of decree.

So I give you four texts for you to understand this and to absorb this, that the Lord is doing those things and that we today feel dependent upon the Lord who can do anything with us. He can do anything.

Amos 3, "Shall a trumpet be blown," you know, the trumpet is the sign of war, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid?" Of course they are. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?" Not even in the sense of sin but the consequence of sin, there will be evil things happening in the city and the Lord has not done it? He did in his sovereignty, in his freedom, in his wisdom, in his justice, in his love.

Or Isaiah 14:24, "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." The Lord says, "I have my will. If I will something, if I have thought something, so shall it come to pass and not any different." You can agree or not agree, it won't help. "So shall it come to pass as I have purposed so shall it stand."

Or Isaiah 14:27, "For the LORD of hosts," the Lord of armies, think of angels, the power, the army of the Lord. "For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" You see, the Lord of hosts has purposed who shall disannul and who shall be saved. You're going to destroy this. You're going to fight this. And when the Lord is doing something, you can't fight it. When the Lord has stretched out his arm, you can't make the Lord draw his arm back. Of course, we may use means and we may pray and may be wise, but the Lord is in charge.

And the last verse of the four, Isaiah 45:7, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil," I make peace and create evil, "I the LORD do all these things." Can you agree tonight, "I the LORD do all these things. If I send the drought, no rain, if I command the locusts to come, if I send pestilences." It may have been a long time ago that we experienced such disasters but who are we?

And our verse in this context, "If my people, which are called by my name," that's the address, "If my people." So the Lord is talking to the people of Israel, to the Hebrews, his chosen people, they were chosen to be God's blessed people, to spend so much on, to privilege them in such a special way. Jewish people are still, in a sense, God's blessed people and God's choice is a choice that he will not repent of. That's similar to what our form says for baptism where parents are asked to answer in a positive way the question, "Are your children sanctified in Christ?" And at baptism parents say, "Yes." So they affirm their children are sanctified in Christ which is not saving but yet a blessing and special.

So the Lord says, "If my people," I spend so much on that blessed people and, "my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves," humble themselves, if they humble themselves, "and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways," that will make all the difference in those difficult times, those difficult times of no rain and locusts and pestilences or whatever else it will be, it will make all the different if they at least would humble themselves instead of raise their fist up to God and rebel. Humble themselves, that is, contrition, right? A contrite heart, a broken heart and a contrite spirit, that's very essential because we are not so humble. We are proud. We know it all. We know what's right and what's wrong and we are willing to tell God what to do. We may think it is right as well and rebuke God like Asaph did who could not agree with the Lord, but then the Lord sees that humility that makes all the difference.

I read in 2 Chronicles 12, a few chapters further, in verse 7, "And when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem." So the Lord says humble yourself. It's essential for prayer day, to have a day of penitence, a day of contrition, a day of humility, a day of brokenness, a day of confessing our sins, a day of expressing to the Lord that we have no rights, expressing to God that we are not wise, we are dumb, that we have nothing to say that we follow, and nobody can stay his hand. To be humble, so I'm not saying ask for humility only, or you should be humble, but also what we read in 1 Peter 5:6, "Humble yourselves therefore," tonight, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." You know, when the Lord sees that brokenness and then the presumption is gone, and we are unworthy of the least of his blessings, it makes a difference.

"Therefore they humble themselves, therefore I will not destroy them." So it is a new season including the corona virus threat, it's on our mind and we talk about it a lot, there is constantly news about it, but think about this, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves," that we don't think, per se, of Canada and the world, we think about the church. About the church. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves." It's the church. We don't have to point fingers and say those are the judgments of God coming over us because of all the evil things our government is doing. No, my people, we are doing that. We need to repent. We need to come on our knees. We need to take that low place at his feet. You know, without that humility, there

is no prayer. One of the marks of a true prayer is to be really humbled and broken to the dust with empty hands, being a beggar.

Four "ifs" right? "If my people shall humble themselves and," secondly, "pray." Now there are a few words in the Bible in Hebrew and in Greek for prayer. They all have a different flavor, a different angle, and this word is to supplicate, to ask. Not such a pleading but the emphasis on dependence, expressing, "I cannot do it myself. I can't. I'm utterly dependent upon him," to ask the Lord for his sustaining power in all things. "Lord, help me." It's an expression of helplessness, of asking, that is the word "pray" here, of supplication. "Lord, I'm powerless myself."

So we are encouraged to pray. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray," not only in church, not only in the family, also privately. To ask, "Lord, it is a new day. I have plans for today but nothing will come out of it without thy help. I depend upon thee, O Lord, for every step I take. I depend upon thee." Do it. Make work of that. Take your time to do that in the morning before you go to work, before you continue, expressing to the Lord that you have no power yourself.

And it's probably the best to schedule that. I talked about that this morning as well. You know, if you don't schedule prayer, there's always something that comes in between, you're a goner. It's not going to help. We are so weak. I am. There are so many things on our minds, you're so busy, you have so many responsibilities. If we are not consistent and say, "Those times I'm going to use to pray and to read and to seek his face," if you don't do that, it's not going to work. Schedule it.

You say, "Well, why would I pray? Would it make any difference?" Or you say, "I've sinned too much." But the Lord has invited us and we may have the highest expectations of God. I read in Romans 10, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Those are quite beautiful verses. Or Jeremiah 29, "And ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Of course, that ask is not trivial but desperate asking. It is a real asking of the heart and that's what the Lord is asking, "If my people truly humble themselves and asks depending upon me, then I will. Therefore I say unto you what things whatsoever you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them and ye shall have them," the Lord says to his disciples. So ask him. Ask and he will give.

So, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves," we talked about that, "and pray," we had it as well, "and seek my face." Ask and also seek my face, that's the same. No, it's not. It's overlap, I agree with that. To seek someone's face is much more personal. Then it's not only about giving something and receiving something but having contact with someone. To seek someone's face, "and pray and seek my face, if they visit me in prayer, and they come to me and desire me, not only pray for things and help, depending upon me but also seek me." A seeking people, seeking closeness to God, coming before his face and realizing that you're in his presence and asking for his favor, and desiring to be close to him.

His face, a face is the most personal part, right? We make contact with our face, the expression of our face, that means everything. You can see it just a little bit if emotion is different, there are minimal differences and you see it in someone's face. If they're tired or unhappy or depressed, you can see it. So to see God's face and to hope for a smile, to hope for contact, and to hope for an expression of love.

So who is God's face? "What are you saying? You mean what is God's face." No, who is God's face? Do you know who God's face is? Nobody has ever seen God but the only begotten Son has revealed him unto us. He's the face of God, the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus is God's face, and in the Lord Jesus you see his real attributes, that he is just and holy and does not see sin through the fingers. But also his kindness and his willingness to save people from their sins. Oh, that's the face of God, Christ is. So we're asking for his face to shine upon us and to lift up his countenance to us because if the Lord looks down, you say, "Lord, look up. Look up, Lord. Lift up thy countenance over us and, Lord, do not look so dark, Lord, shine with thy face upon me." To seek his face means to seek his friendship, to seek his love, to seek God himself, his favor, forgiveness.

So when you are concerned about the COVID-19 virus and what's going to happen and all the flights canceled and you name it, all the worries about things, if you have it a little bit now or maybe worse a week from now, may you be able to think back on this sermon and say, "You know, the text said, 'If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn.' Seek my face. You know, who knows? Maybe someone has to be in quarantine next week or so. That's possible, one or two, their families, and then being for two weeks by yourself in your room in the house and not having any personal contact with anyone, that would be hard. Oh, there's a telephone and so forth, I know, and you can keep yourself busy but think of this text, "and seek my face." It could be a blessed time, a very blessed time of seeking God's face instead of being behind a computer and doing things and you have time.

You know, some inmates have been in solitary confinement and suppose what that means, you know, you're going to your cell and there's absolutely nothing else but a Bible. But they're going through the whole day without anything else, what do you do? So I just go flipping through the Bible and there are people that were touched by the word of God because there was nothing else. And I have heard people say, "I had to be in prison for this reason, to read the Bible." So maybe your concerns and your fears and your problems in this life are also for that purpose, that you finally seek his face because in Christ God shows his face, his presence.

So there are four things, right, four "ifs." If they humble, if they pray, if they seek my face, if they turn from their wicked ways. If they turn from their wicked ways. So not only humbling yourself and praying and seeking and also turning. Turning? You know, we have turned away from God and turned our backs to him and said farewell to God. So we are making the distance bigger and bigger walking away from God and we need to be turning to God, coming back to God. "Turn ye, turn ye, why would ye die?"

So practically that means turning away from evil, turning away from sin, to repent and to say, "I'm quitting that. I don't want to do it anymore." I just begin to resist it and we need that choice, to make that choice and to turn away from those wicked ways and turn away from the wicked ways. You can say, "Well, that's hard," and you can say, "Now what if you're addicted," and you can say, "It's not easy and I fall back into that and I need a new heart for that." Wait a moment. The Lord says, "Stop it. Seek my face. If you know that something is sinful and you continue, you're a hypocrite." So you have to stop it and some of us may feel hypocritical tonight, say, "I can talk quite smoothly and piously about the Lord and doctrine and the Bible, but I have secret sins I'm holding onto."

And the Lord knows that and I challenge you tonight, choose ye today who we will serve, and if you don't, the consequences are for you. You can't hide behind anything. You can't defend yourself and say, "I am addicted to something." You cannot do that. That's invalid. And the Lord has said, "If I shut up heaven, there is no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn, then." But if not, there's no hope.

Turning to God. What else is more important than God's favor and having a heavy conscience and no peace, and no contact with God? Compare it to chapter 6, verses 37-38, that's the prayer of Solomon. It's the prayer of Solomon in chapter 6, kind of comes back in the verses we are talking about tonight. "Yet if they bethink themselves," if they bethink themselves, that's an old word but I like it, "if they bethink themselves in the land," come to their senses, "if yet they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly; If they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, I will remember them, that city thou hast chosen." So enough about that.

Seeking, praying, humbling, turning, especially when you think of all the consequences of sin and being alienated from God, but then there's the first part of the text, all those "if," then the second part, "then," three times "then." "Then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." That's a promise, a conditional promise. If, if, if, four times if, then I will, I promise, a conditional promise and the Lord says, "I will hear you. If you seek me and pray to me and humble yourselves and seek my face and turn from your evil ways, I will hear you." That's not maybe, that's certain. I will. I promise.

So hearing, that's not only just I heard you, but hearing is also to answer, to really hear and to respond. The Lord promises when people come in this way to him that he's going to respond. That's the conditional promise, I said. Compare it to the most, one of the most famous verses in the Bible, John 3:16, "whosoever believeth in him." That's also a conditional promise, "believeth in him should not perish," they would not perish, "but have everlasting life."

So I read in 2 Samuel 22, "In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears." He heard. Is there something you're looking for? Then God hears you. Not only in difficulties in this life, also when things are going very well. But then you crave him, that he would hear you, the Lord would be so honored and so delighted if we have a desire, that he would hear us because that would mean that we have a deep interest in God and are really seeking his face. If we really truly seek his face, we will see his face. "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save." You need his ear heavy that it cannot hear. You know, some people are heavy in that sense, their ear is heavy. It's an old expression. They're deaf. The Lord says, "I'm not deaf. I hear." I remember as a child one of the ministers said to us as children on an evening or so, he said and he cupped with his hands his ear and said, "The Lord is doing this. Do I hear them? I want to hear them?" And so the Lord, children, is listening if he hears you. The Lord is really listening precisely, "What do I hear from that young mouth, from that boy or that girl?" Because he wants to hear.

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Do evil not only in gross sins, also in petty sins and just in worldly sins and living for this time and idolizing our circumstances and our wealth and just having a good time on earth without God. That's also doing evil.

So "if they, then I will hear them." And you know, some of you know what that means personally, that you cried and he heard. He heard you and answered your prayers. In daily life, things you looked up against and the Lord helped you out, but also in spiritual things. Not only in miraculous faith, also in a saving way the Lord heard your cry and opened his word and you saw something of his grace, and of forgiveness, "then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin." Will forgive their sin, also it's forgive has different flavors in the Bible just depending on the original word. And here a word is used that can be translated as "gentle." He's gentle and he is merciful. He's not harsh, not a hard God, not a tyrant, not a dictator. He is a kind God and he is willing to deal with sins in a most kind and friendly way. That's the word here.

"Then I will hear from heaven," from my throne on high, "and will forgive their sins," and be gentle with them, and pardon their sins. You know, some words refer to atonement and to payment and to blotting it out, and this is what the gentleness of God and the gentleness of God in Christ. He is such a forgiving God. He is so merciful. There's lovingkindness in him. Lovingkindness. And you know an example, right, of the servant of Ben-Hadad. Ben-Hadad was fleeing from one house to the other and he was afraid to be captured by the Israeli king and his servant, his Syrian servant said, "Those kings of Israel are merciful kings," same word, merciful kings, "so why don't you approach them and just ask for forgiveness and put that rope around your neck and say, 'This is what I deserve'?" That's how you can make some headway with that type of people, by confessing.

The same word is used for God, merciful God, a gentle God. If you come on your knees and humble yourself, that's God's gift, I know that's what you need to be humble and pray and seek his face and turn from your evil ways, he will be gentle and will deal with you very gently. I hope you look forward to that. I hope you would like to meet with a gentle and forgiving God who says, "I will not deal with you after your sins, and not reward you after iniquities, but I am merciful and I am good." A good God. That's the God you have sinned against. So why is that? Because there is such a tendency to not humble ourselves, and to not pray, and not seek his face. It's our foolishness, it's our state of death by nature, the unwillingness of the flesh. It's so unreasonable and real sinful to sin against such a God who is so inviting and so kind also receiving us again.

And he says, "There is forgiveness with me." There is. You know, Acts 13, I think it's a verse spoken to Gentiles. Yes, I think so, "It be known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." It was to the Pharisees and the scribes. "Therefore, men and brethren, through this man," that's the only way, "through this man is preached unto you," preached unto you, "the forgiveness of sins." It doesn't say offered. That's kind of what it means, is preached unto you, is presented unto you, is shown unto you, the Lord holding it out to you, forgiveness of sins. "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousnesses." And in case you think that's only those are texts for God's people, no, no, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return to the Lord and he will have mercy upon him and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

And the beautiful thing is the Lord delights in that, the Lord loves to forgive. Not reluctantly, not indifferently, but with delight. "Who is a God like unto him that pardoneth iniquity and passes by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever because he delighteth in mercy." The Lord loves to forgive. He loves to hear your voice, loves to see that you're humbling yourself, loves to see that you seek his face and turn away from your evil ways and seek him, and that you say, "Lord, I can't seek thee. I can't make myself honest. I can't myself sincere. I am not genuine. I am a hypocrite to say it. I rest at the throne of grace." And may the Lord give you those lowest thoughts of self and the best thoughts of God.

So, "then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." Will heal their land. A healing God. You know what's meant with healing literally or spiritually or both? Heal their land? He is a healing God. He healeth the diseases and forgiveth the iniquities. It's certainly also spiritual but as well literal. Think of Psalm 73, that's from Asaph, right? He couldn't handle it, the trials in his life and the sicknesses and the plagues, and we would say, the epidemic. "For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning," he could not agree but later on he says in verse 26, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." So Asaph in Psalm 73 was probably sick, plagued every morning in my heart and my flesh faileth, literally, and the Lord comforted him so he could say, "Although my heart and my flesh faileth, God is my portion." Is that not healing? That's spiritual health.

"For I will restore health unto thee and I will heal thee of thy wounds saith the Lord, because they called me an outcast saying, This Zion whom no man seeketh after," Jeremiah 30. A healing God. He heals the wounds. He soothes people. He mollifies the problems. He is kind to his people and the Lord may give literally healing or make it more bearable, and certainly it will not last forever for his people because in heaven or on earth, there will be no more pain, no more handicaps, no more sicknesses. It will all be over.

So this is a text not only for unconverted ones, also God's people, right? "And will heal them." The Lord wants to give healing to his people. And I found a text connecting prayer to endurance. Endurance, God's people are called to endure, right, to persist, to persevere, to continue on, to fight on, to not slack off. And they cannot persevere on strength yet they are called to persevere. Jude 1:20, "But ye, beloved," God's people, "building up yourselves," that doesn't sound good, does it? Yeah, it's in the Bible. "But ye, beloved, build up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude 1:20, just read it tonight, read it 10 times, memorize it if you want to. "But ye, beloved," God's people, "building up yourselves on your most holy faith," like that abide in me, believe in me, keep going, keep yourselves in the love, don't stray. That's how the Lord keeps his people close to him by saying those things. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Tense days we're living in. Stock market crashing. Travel restrictions. Quarantines. We don't know what's going to happen. I don't think we need to be too concerned. If you humble yourself and pray, to seek his face, and turn from your evil ways, he will hear. He will forgive your sins and heal the land. That's the context, right? So seek him and live. "If my people, which are called by my name," that's quite a privilege, "shall humble themselves," do that, "and pray, and seek my face," personally, "and turn from their wicked ways," whatever those ways are, "then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin," be gentle to them, "and will heal their land." Amen.