

## **GOD WANTS US BROKEN TOGETHER**

II Chronicles 7: 11- 22, especially verses 13-14 -- Pastor Richard P. Carlson

These words of God to king Solomon are His mighty call for His people to be broken together. Each of us have, at least in part, broken hearts. We each have unsaved loved ones; broken relationships, deep disappointments, traumas over which we have not found lasting victory, strong hopes and dreams that once were vibrant, but now are dim; fears that grip us and hold us in chains, memories we cannot release that often torment and oppress us with guilt and shame, and the lists go on. These actual words of God to the king make it clear that God is the God of the broken. The Word of God speaks often of God using circumstances, trials, disciplines, famines, judgments, pestilences, and the deep conviction of His Holy Spirit to break us, so that we become usable vessels, to break us, so He can heal us, and to break us, not just individually, but together. We often resist anything God wants us to do unitedly or together. If we know we need broken, we want it in our own time, when we decide, and not before. Some of us respond quickly to God's commands and others of us respond more slowly, but God wants us to be broken together. God has designs for us as His church family, His own Bride, to respond to the conviction of His Holy Spirit, and to let Him break us as married couples, as families, and as a church, to break us together. God's call to be broken bread and poured out wine before the Lord in our text today is not only a call to husbands and wives, parents, and children, but to the whole nation of Judah, and to America.

God's desires for us to be broken together, may not be what we prefer, but following God's direction is always best. Paul addressed the whole church in Galatia in Galatians 5: 25, saying, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." Before telling us what the fruit of the Spirit is in Galatians 5: 22, 23, Paul gave us a smattering of ideas as to what the fruits of the flesh are in Galatians 5: 19-21. Listen and notice some of these sins sound awful, but some of these works of the flesh, we justify ourselves and say, "Everybody does this." Listen! "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery (first 5—Amen, we say) enmity/bitterness, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, (Are these 8 fruits of the flesh on our radar—as just as bad as the first five?) then drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." Paul names 7 awful sins, and 8 often justified sins." But be certain—God wants to break us of all 15 sins in our day every bit as much as He wanted to break Judah of her idolatry in Solomon's day 3000 years ago. Are these 8 notes of discord and disharmony causing conflict in our marriages and in our homes? Are we keeping in step with the Spirit? That was a problem in Solomon's day, 400 years later in Jeremiah's day, and 3000 years later in our day? John who leaned on Jesus' bosom, wrote in I John 1: 6-10 to the

body of Christ—calling us, “my little children.” He wrote about the need to be broken not just as me, but broken together as we. Listen and count the “we’s! “If **we** say **we** have fellowship with Him, while **we** walk in darkness, **we** lie, and do not practice the truth. But if **we** walk in the light, as He is in the light, **we** have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say **we** have no sin, **we** deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If **we** confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If **we** say we have not sinned, **we** make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” (we—11x, us—5x, our, ourselves—3x, and one another-1x. Twenty times in 5 verses—the need to repent and be broken together is paramount. In James 5: 16, God is after confession and brokenness together for healing to occur. If we debate God’s word, we are out of step with the Holy Spirit. James 5: 16 is clear. “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.” The Word is making clear God’s will is: that we be broken together.

What is brokenness before God? The Hebrew word David used in Psalm 51: 8 was **dakah**, saying, “Let the bones that You have broken rejoice.” Dakah means to crumble, to humble, to crush, to make contrite, to bruise, or to bring discipline into our lives. Then later in this same Psalm 51:17, twice David speaks of God’s design to use a broken spirit or a broken heart, saying, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.” This word for broken is **shabar**, meaning broken hearted, a broken vessel, picturing a shattered breaking of our hearts before God. In Psalm 147: 3, the psalmist says, “God heals the broken-hearted, **shabar**, and binds up their wounds.” David states in Psalm 34: 18, “The Lord is near to the **shabar**, the broken-hearted and saves the **dakka**—the crushed in spirit. Isaiah uses another word for broken, **nakeh** when he writes in Isaiah 66: 2, “But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble/poor in spirit, and contrite in spirit, and (who) trembles at My word.” **Nakeh**, means contrite after discipline. Isaiah’s word for humble is **awnee**. It means depressed in mind or circumstances, physically or spiritually oppressed, feeling defenseless.

God is truly the God of the broken and broken hearted. He is the God who wants us broken together. The setting of our text in II Chronicles 7: 13-14 is following the dedication of Solomon’s temple around 1004 BC. After Solomon’s dedicatory prayer, the Lord appeared to Solomon in the night and spoke His heart about being broken together. God said, “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land or send pestilence among My people...” God’s conditional promise in II Chronicles 7: 14 came after God told of His judgment on sin-drought, discipline-commanding locusts to devour the harvest, and a God-sent pestilence among His people. God’s word for **pestilence** is **deber**. **Deber** means **a plague** that quickly reduces the population of a country or the

world—a pandemic. **God’s pestilence—Covid 19** that is a disaster like the bubonic plague reducing the world’s population. My message to us today is that God wants again to bring revival, to bring another great awakening to our country, and to our world. He wants revival, but it will require our brokenness together. My question to us is: If God wants brokenness, contriteness, humility in spirit, and a return to Him, what would that look like in our marriage, our home, our church, our state, our country and our world? It can only start as a great awakening in my heart, in my marriage, in my home, as well as in your heart, your marriage, your family, and then in our church, our state, our country, and in our world? Only God Himself sends revival, but here in His Word, are **4 descriptions of what God is looking** for in our hearts together, His longing for our entire world. These are conditional clauses (IF)—meaning we as God’s people have a choice in this pandemic. Will we choose what God is seeking? Ask yourself these 4 questions?

**WILL WE BE CALLED BY GOD’S NAME? THEN GOD WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN, FORGIVE OUR SIN AND HEAL OUR LAND.** (I.) These words are God calling for collective brokenness. God says, “If My people who are called by My name.” These words followed King Solomon’s awesome plea for God’s own people collectively by king Solomon. Go back to II Chronicles 6: 36-39, this is an earnest prayer of the king for his own people as a nation, called by God’s Name—Israel. Let me read it to you. Israel means “to struggle or to prevail with God”—to pray through with God. The people of Israel get their root name from Jacob who wrestled all night with God. God’s people called by His name have an active relationship, with dialogue and even, questioning confrontation with God. As born again Gentiles, called in Galatians 6: 16, “the Israel of God,” we join our born again Jewish brothers and sisters in being believers, not passively or blindly obeying, but being each of us, dialoguing brothers and sisters in Jesus, who listen to God’s Word, and who submit to His promptings by His Holy Spirit.

Are we too people, called Christians—Christ’s ones, the Israel of God, are we willing to be called God’s servants? Are we unashamed of His Name, willing to suffer for His sake, believing His name is the name, Acts 4: 12, and proclaiming by our lives and our lips that “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other Name under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved.” Are we true followers of Jesus? Paul writes in Philippians 2: 10-11, “At the Name of Jesus, every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” If we are people called by God’s name, yes, we will dialogue with Him and even struggle with issues when God calls us outside our comfort zone, but ultimately, as with Jacob, God wins, but we win too by surrendering to His will, as people of the Name. We don’t have to fear or worry, for we are God’s people who pray, “Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on

earth as it is in heaven...” People that God knows are His own, know that “if My people who are called by My Name,” means we serve the Lord who in every debate and struggle and even wrestling all night, we are God’s “My people” who know Jesus will, must, and will ever have the last word in our lives. Secondly,

**WILL WE HUMBLE OURSELVES? THEN GOD WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN, WILL FORGIVE OUR SIN AND HEAL OUR LAND.** (II.)

As God spoke to Solomon, He said, “humble themselves” – which means to do so together as God’s people—to be broken together. God used another Hebrew word besides **dakah** for humble. The Hebrew word here is **kawnah**. Kawnah means to be subdued, brought under discipline or correction, and this kind of humbling either comes by us actively humbling ourselves or God making us humble, humbling us by correction and discipline that He ordains in our lives. The literal meaning of kawnah is to bend the knee. There are times in our lives when those who are “God’s people” whom He calls “My people” know that it is knee time, and we bend our will but also our knees before God. This pandemic is time for more and more knee time with God. 120 years ago, in 1900 Mrs. C. H. Morris wrote a mighty hymn called “Sweet Will of God, as well as wrote the tune.” This hymn is the poetic definition of humbling ourselves in the sight of the Lord. Her words are powerful. (1) “My stubborn will at last has yielded. I would be Thine and Thine alone; and this the prayer my lips are bringing, “Lord, let in me Thy will be done.” (2) I’m tired of sin, footsore and weary. The darksome path has dreary grown; But now a light has ris’n to cheer me: I find in Thee, my Star, my Sun. “Sweet will of God, still fold me closer, Till I am wholly lost in Thee; Sweet will of God, still fold me closer, Till I am wholly lost in Thee.” (3) Thy precious will, O conquering Savior, does now embrace and compass me; all discords hushed, my peace a river, My soul a prisoned bird set free. (4) Shut in with Thee, O Lord forever, My wayward feet no more to roam; What power from Thee, my soul can sever? The center of God’s will, my home.” Chorus: The marvel of this humbling is when God unites husbands and wives until we are lost in His will, when parents and children are lost in His will, when pastors and people in church are lost in God’s will, and when, and if our nation would become lost in doing God’s will. Thirdly,

**WILL WE PRAY AND SEEK GOD’S FACE? THEN GOD WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN, FORGIVE OUR SIN AND HEAL OUR LAND.** (III.)

There are two strong verbs here that God used. We read, “and pray and seek My face...” First the Hebrew word for pray is **palal**. Palal means to intercede and intreat the Lord in supplication, and it also means for God’s people to stand between an evil nation and God and attempt to cry out to God for our nation. We see this kind of praying of Abraham for Lot’s family in Sodom, this kind of prayer of Moses for Israel on the Exodus for God to deliver them from the fiery serpents. Beloved, this is prayer that lays hold of the horns of the altar and beseeches God’s face to spare

this evil nation from our own ruin and our own pride. The second verb is to seek God's face. This is the Hebrew word **baqash**. It means to search out, to strive after, to seek information and wisdom from God, but it also means a state of mind that we seek to hold on and hold up in a time of pestilence, judgment, or plague as we are facing with this coronavirus. This seeking of God's face and resting by looking in faith to Jesus, makes us learn to do what Moses did in Hebrews 11: 27 which speaks of Moses not fearing the anger of the king, "because by faith, he endured as seeing Him who is invisible." Dr. V. Raymond Edman, wrote in his book, "In Quietness and Confidence," gave his resolve in facing a terrible trial. After quietly interceding with the Lord, he sought God's face and wrote these words for himself. "First, God brought me here, it is by His will I am in this difficult place: in that fact I will rest. Next, He will keep me here in His love, and give me grace to behave as His child. Then, He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me the lessons He intends me to learn, and working in me the grace He means to bestow. Last, in His time He will bring me out again—how and when He knows." Fourthly, and lastly,

### **WILL WE TURN FROM OUR WICKED WAYS? THEN GOD WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN, FORGIVE OUR SIN AND HEAL OUR LAND.**

(IV.) The 4th and last divine condition of "if" is: "And turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." Everything in this last picture turns on the word turn, about face. This isn't a rare word, but it is God's precious used over and over word for repent. The Hebrew word is **shuwb**. In the Old Testament, it is used 1066 times. It is translated into Greek with the New Testament word repent—**metanoeo** that is used 34 times. So this turning from sin is used 1100 times in the Bible. Shuwb means to turn back to God, to go back to the starting point, to retreat from sin and be restored to the right path. This returning to God is to be a brokenness together. Probably one of the greatest repentance songs is written and sung by Mark Hall and Casting Crowns, called "Broken Together." "What do you think about when you look at me, I know we're not the fairy tale you dreamed we'd be, You wore the veil, you walked the aisle, you took my hand, And we dove into a mystery. How I wish we could go back to simpler times, Before all our scars and all our secrets were in the light, Now on this hallowed ground, we've drawn the battle lines, Will we make it through the night? It's going to take much more than promises this time. Only God can change our minds. Maybe you and I were never meant to be complete. Could we just be broken together? If you can bring your shattered dreams and I'll bring mine Could healing still be spoken and save us The only way we'll last forever is broken together. How it must have been so lonely by my side We were building kingdoms and chasing dreams and left love behind. I'm praying God will help our broken hearts align, And we won't give up the fight. It's going to take much more than promises this time, Only God can change our minds. Chorus, (2X) 1, 2, 3, 4. Let's be broken together and God's promise is to sweep our world with revival.