

2 Chronicles 7:13-14 (NIV)

¹³“When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people,
¹⁴if 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.”

14-07-01-Praying as Dual Citizens

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2 Chron 7:13-14

For our nation’s healing, we must confess national and personal sins.

INTRODUCTION:

–Jesus said in **Mark 12:17**, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” We have *dual duties* because we’re *dual citizens*: “our citizenship is in heaven” *and* on earth. That fact helps clarify for us **2 Chron 7:13-14**, “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, 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.”

–This was *God’s answer* to Solomon’s prayer for God to rescue those who strayed from Him, but it gives us a *principle* that transcends its OT context and applies to us today: **HOM.idea**. This is partially based on our *dual citizenship* but also on another divine principle:

I. The Corporate Nature of Humanity–**v.13**, “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people... [**Note:** nature is so much under God’s jurisdiction that He takes credit for its activities, and we can trust His control over what it brings to us – **Isa 45:7**, I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.]

A. But when God lets “disaster” fall, it affects us all. [**John Donne:** No man is an island... every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main... any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”]

B. *Humanity’s corporateness lays on us corporate responsibilities.* [**We see this** in the *repentant prayers* of two very godly individuals, *Daniel & Nehemiah*– **Dan 9:5**, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. – **Neh 1:6-7**, I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father’s house, have committed against you. We have acted very wickedly toward you.]

TRANS: While not *guilty* of what they *confessed*, they repented in solidarity with their sinful nation, praying for God to restore its health. Our *dual citizenship* calls us to this same kind of *corporate repentance*. **For our nation’s healing, we must confess our national sins. This is especially true of us** who are *followers of Christ*, because of...

- II. Our Duty as God's People**— v.14a, *if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways...* [God spoke this to Israel, but it speaks even more strongly to us.]
- A. God called Israel His people but didn't indwell their hearts as He does ours. (*God's Son they never knew; they weren't called by His name, as we are. That makes our duty even greater than theirs.*)
- B. Our identity as Christ's followers calls us to be people of the King Who *humbly* carried the guilt of sinners. (*To follow Jesus, we must seek His face in prayer* as He sought *His Father's face*; we must grieve over the sins of those we're connected with as He grieved over the *city of Jerusalem* and over the *lost sheep of Israel.*)
- C. But unlike Jesus, we still struggle with bad habits, poor attitudes, sinful behaviors inherited from our citizenship in this world.
- God isn't judging the lost till He's dealt with *His own people's* unconfessed sins— 1 Pet 4:17 says, “it is time for judgment to **begin** with the family of God.” (That makes this OT verse a clarion call to the NT church: “*if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways...*”)
 - We're to “*pray and seek* [Christ's] *face*,” asking the Holy Spirit to put His spotlight on what we need to “turn from”— Psa 139:23-24 (NKJ), Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is **any wicked way** in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

TRANS: As *dual citizens*, we must intercede for our wayward society. *But we must also acknowledge our connection with that sinful society, confessing “any wicked way” that is still operative in our lives. For our nation's healing, we must confess national and personal sins. Only then can we look expectantly for...*

- III. God's Healing Intervention**— v.14b, “*then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*” [That sounds like *spiritual revival!* But what would *revival* look like as a reversal of v.13?]
- A. “*the heavens [shut up] so that there is no rain*”— Zec 10:1, Ask the LORD for rain in the springtime.... He gives showers of rain to men, and plants of the field to everyone. (OT *spring rain has frequently been interpreted* as a symbol of *revival*. [There shall be showers of blessing: O, that today they might fall, Now as to God we're confessing, Now, as on Jesus we call!])
- B. “*locusts... devour[ing] the land*”— Joel 2:25a (ESV), I will restore to you the

- years that the swarming locust has eaten... (In the “years” of *our* lifetime, “swarming” secularism ate up our nation's Christian heritage. [In the early 1970s many disillusioned youth turned from drugs to Christ, as a *revival* called the *Jesus Movement* started in California and swept across the nation.]
- C. “*a plague among my people*”— 2 Sam 24:25b, David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the LORD answered prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped. (To end the plagues of *spiritual death among the lost* and *spiritual lethargy among the saved*, Jesus made a final, supreme sacrifice, so that *personal and corporate revival* can happen as both *sinners* and *saints* confess their sins at the foot of His Cross.)

CONCLUSION:

—**For our nation's healing, we must confess national and personal sins.** We're not to stand on the Kingdom side of our dual citizenship, pointing out *greater faults in the world* around us than we see in our own lives. 2 Chron 7:14 calls us to pray as *dual citizens*, asking for what the song “*Search Me, O God*” prayerfully asks:

Search me, O God, And know my heart today;
Try me, O Savior, Know my thoughts, I pray.
See if there be Some wicked way in me;
Cleanse me from every sin And set me free.

O Holy Ghost, Revival comes from Thee;
Send a revival, Start the work in me.
Thy Word declares Thou wilt supply our need;
For blessings now, O Lord, I humbly plead.