



JUDGES

THE BLESSED AND THE BROKEN

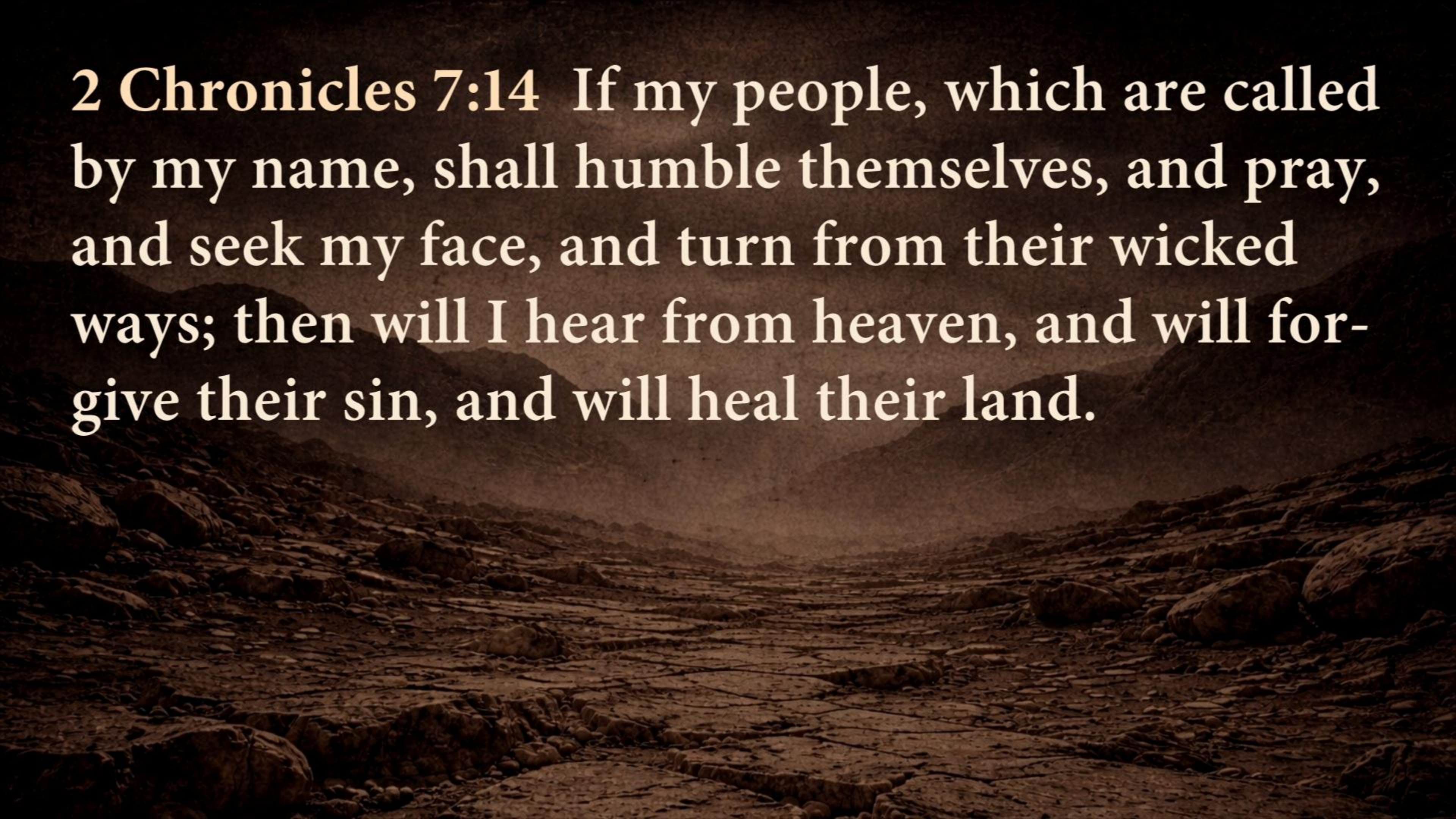
— THE PROLOGUE —

Judges 2:18 And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. ¹⁹ And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

Judges 17:6; 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Judges 2:18 And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge...

2 Chronicles 7:14 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.

A dark, atmospheric landscape with a path leading through a valley towards distant mountains. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, brownish-gold glow emanating from the background, possibly representing a sunset or sunrise. The foreground shows a rough, rocky path winding through a valley. The mountains in the distance are silhouetted against the lighter sky.

Judges 1:4 Then Judah went up, and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; and they killed ten thousand men at Bezek.

⁵ And they found Adoni-Bezek in Bezek, and fought against him; and they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. ⁶ Then Adoni-Bezek fled, and they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and big toes.

Judges 1:7 And Adoni-Bezek said, “Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to gather scraps under my table; as I have done, so God has repaid me.” Then they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

Judges 1:18 Also Judah took Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory.¹⁹ So the LORD was with Judah. And they drove out the mountaineers, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the lowland, because they had chariots of iron.

Judges 2:1 Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: “I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, ‘I will never break My covenant with you. ² And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.’ But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? ³ Therefore I also said, ‘I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.’”

—EVERY SIN IS A FAITH FAILURE—

Judges 2:2 “And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.’ But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this?”

—EVERY SIN IS A FAITH FAILURE—

Numbers 14:11 Then the LORD said to Moses: “How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them?”

Numbers 20:12 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

—FORGETTING BRINGS DISOBEDIENCE—

Judges 2:10 When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. ¹¹ Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD...

—DISOBEDIENCE YIELDS DISASTER—

Judges 2:11 Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; ¹² and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. ¹³ They forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.

—DISOBEDIENCE YIELDS DISASTER—

Judges 2:14 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. ¹⁵ Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed.