



Text: 2 Chronicles 12:1-14

v.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 by the hand of Shishak.

There is a phrase tucked away in this chapter that demands our attention. After Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah humble themselves before the Lord, God speaks through the prophet Shemaiah and says:

"I will grant them some deliverance."

Not complete deliverance. Not total freedom. Not full restoration. Simply **some deliverance**.

The question is why.

Why would God, who possesses all power, grant only some deliverance? Was His power diminished? Was Egypt somehow stronger than God's promises? Of course not.

The answer is not found in God's ability. The answer is found in the condition of Judah's heart.

The chapter opens by telling us that after Rehoboam had established the kingdom and strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the Lord.

What a sobering progression.

While he was building, he depended on God.
While he was vulnerable, he leaned on God.
While he needed direction, he sought God.

But once the kingdom became established,
dependence slowly gave way to self-reliance, and
self-reliance eventually became spiritual drift.

**Can I remind somebody that success has ruined
more people spiritually than adversity ever has?**

We know how to pray when we are desperate.
We know how to seek God when we are broken.
We know how to cry out when we have nowhere
else to turn. But the true test of a heart is not
whether it seeks God in weakness.

The true test is whether it still seeks Him after
the prayer has been answered and the blessing
has arrived.

Because Judah forsook the Lord, God allowed
Shishak, king of Egypt, to invade the land.

Suddenly the nation that felt secure no longer felt secure. The consequences of compromise had arrived. What comfort had concealed, pressure now revealed.

And isn't it amazing how often God uses pressure to expose what has been happening beneath the surface?

Sometimes the pressure is not the problem. Sometimes the pressure is the revelation.

It reveals where our trust has shifted, where our dependence has weakened, and where our pursuit of God has quietly diminished.

Yet in the midst of that pressure, something remarkable happened. The leaders humbled themselves and confessed, "**The Lord is righteous.**"

Their humility was real.
Their repentance was genuine.

God saw it and immediately responded.

Even after Judah had drifted, even after they had forsaken Him, God was still willing to move toward them when they humbled themselves before Him. Mercy met them in the middle of their failure.

That ought to encourage every believer in the room. No matter how far you have drifted, humility still gets God's attention. Brokenness still moves the heart of God.

The enemy may tell you that you have gone too far, but this text reminds us that God still responds to those who humble themselves before Him.

Yet God's response was not complete deliverance. **It was partial deliverance.**

Jerusalem would not be destroyed, but Judah would still become servants. The kingdom would survive, but consequences would remain.

God's mercy would preserve them, but His mercy would not remove every effect of their previous decisions.

As I have reflected on this passage, I am convinced the danger is not that they received some deliverance.

Some **deliverance** is still **mercy**.

Some **deliverance** is still **grace**.

Some **deliverance** is still **evidence of God's compassion**.

The danger is what happens when people become satisfied with partial deliverance and never pursue the deeper relationship God intended all along.

Because many believers know exactly what this feels like. **They survived the crisis, but never conquered the issue.** The marriage survived, but never healed. **The addiction loosened its grip, but never fully broke.** The fear did not destroy them, but it still controls their decisions.

They are preserved, but not free.

Protected, but still restricted.

And here is where the text becomes uncomfortable. Many of us rejoice when destruction is avoided, but seldom ask whether we are walking in the fullness of freedom God intended. **We celebrate survival while quietly settling for limitation.**

The chapter closes with a statement that explains everything that came before it:

"He did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD." (2 Chronicles 12:14)

There is the issue.

The issue was never Egypt.

The issue was never Shishak.

The issue was never God's willingness to help.

The issue was that Judah knew how to humble themselves under pressure, but they had never learned how to seek God apart from pressure.

There is a difference between a heart that cries out in trouble and a heart that pursues God daily. One seeks Him because it needs relief. The other seeks Him because it has fallen in love with His presence.

Humility can happen in a moment.

Seeking God is a lifestyle.

Humility can happen because circumstances force us to our knees. Seeking God continues long after the circumstances have changed.

Humility can emerge during a crisis. Seeking God remains when there is no crisis at all.

What becomes apparent in this text is that Judah sought God because they needed relief, but they never cultivated a heart that sought God simply because He was worthy to be sought.

How often does that same temptation confront us?

It is not difficult to pray when Egypt is at the gate. It is not difficult to seek God when the diagnosis arrives, when the finances are struggling, or when the future feels uncertain.

Pressure has a way of producing prayer.

ALTAR CALL:

The greater challenge is continuing to pursue Him after the prayer is answered.

The greater challenge is continuing to seek Him after the crisis passes.

The greater challenge is loving His presence as much as we loved His intervention.

God never intended your prayer life to be sustained by emergencies.

God never intended your worship life to be fueled only by hardship.

At some point maturity must move us from seeking His hand to seeking His heart.

The mature believer eventually discovers that the greatest gift God offers is not merely what He can do for us, but who He is to us.

His blessings are wonderful.

His miracles are powerful.

His provision is indispensable.

But relationship remains the ultimate prize.

Perhaps that is the greatest lesson hidden within this chapter. God's mercy preserved Judah, but His mercy was meant to draw them into deeper pursuit.

The deliverance was never intended to be the destination. It was an invitation.

An invitation to seek Him while the kingdom was strong.

An invitation to seek Him while life was peaceful.

An invitation to seek Him when there was no enemy at the gate and no crisis demanding their attention.

An invitation to become seekers rather than survivors.

I believe God still extends that invitation today. Many of us can point to moments where God preserved us.

He carried us through situations that should have destroyed us.

He restored things we had damaged.
He protected us from consequences we deserved.
Every one of us who has experienced
His mercy should thank Him for it.

But let us never mistake preservation
for His final intention.

Church, hear me.

God did not save your marriage
merely so it could survive.

He did not preserve your faith merely
so you could barely make it.

He did not restore your life merely so
you could live beneath His promises.

He preserved you because He still
desires relationship with you.

He preserved you because He still
has purpose for you.

He preserved you because mercy was never supposed to become your destination.

Mercy was the invitation.

The invitation to know Him more deeply.

The invitation to seek Him more passionately.

The invitation to walk with Him more faithfully.

So do not wait for another Egypt before you pray.
Do not wait for another crisis before you worship.
Do not wait for another painful season before you seek His face.

Seek Him while the kingdom is strong.

Seek Him while life is peaceful.

Seek Him while the prayers are answered.

Seek Him while the blessings are flowing.

Because the believer who only seeks God in trouble may experience some deliverance, but the believer who learns to seek God in every season discovers the freedom that God intended all along.

For while a moment of humility may stop destruction, a life devoted to seeking God produces lasting freedom.