



We're walking through a series on "breakthroughs"—when God intervenes in our lives, stepping into time to give us an outcome beyond anything we could have achieved through our own intellect, strength, and intended efforts. Truthfully, we need breakthroughs because we cannot fulfill God's intended purpose for our lives without His intervention. The Bible is filled with examples of breakthroughs, from Moses at the burning bush to Paul on the road to Damascus. Often, breakthrough moments are not presented to us to simply alleviate pain, reverse a diagnosis, or give us a substantive advantage. **God intends them to open our lives more fully and completely to His purposes and change the trajectory of our existence—helping us realign our values, goals, and perspectives.** You see, our lives have been progressively plundered and diminished through spiritual "looting," and we are seeing this in America. It's really a form of God's judgment. But as we better understand the components of God's breakthroughs, we can cooperate with them more fully in our lives and begin to see an interruption of the looting in our lives and in our nation. Church, we desperately *need* a breakthrough.

I. PLUNDERING/LOOTING GOD'S PEOPLE

A. Frequent Occurrence

Judges 4:1–3 *After Ehud died, the Israelites once again did evil in the eyes of the Lord. ² So **the Lord sold them into the hands of Jabin**, a king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth Haggoyim. ³ Because he had nine hundred iron chariots and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the Lord for help.*

Judges 6:1–5 *Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and for seven years **he gave them into the hands of the Midianites**. ² Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds. ³ Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country. ⁴ They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. ⁵ They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels; **they invaded the land to ravage it.***

1 Kings 14:25–27 *In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem. ²⁶ He carried off the treasures of the temple of the Lord and the treasures of the royal palace. He took everything, including all the gold shields Solomon had made. ²⁷ So King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace them and assigned these to the commanders of the guard on duty at the entrance to the royal palace.*

2 Kings 23:35 *Jehoiakim paid Pharaoh Neco the silver and gold he demanded. In order to do so, he taxed the land and exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land according to their assessments.*

****God can allow defeat, oppression, and destruction as an expression of His discipline. Where do you see looting in America—physically, politically, and spiritually? Do you think this looting is a consequence of our disobedience to God? Why or why not?**

B. God Gave Them Over

Romans 1:24–26 *Therefore **God gave them over** in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie . . .*

²⁶ *Because of this, **God gave them over** to shameful lusts.*

Acts 7:39–42 *"But our fathers refused to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. ⁴⁰ They told Aaron, 'Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt—we don't know what has happened to him!' ⁴¹ That was the time they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought sacrifices to it and held a celebration in honor of what their hands had made. ⁴² But **God turned away and gave them over to the worship** of the heavenly bodies.*

****Share a situation where you felt like someone was "given over" to their desires. What lessons did you learn from it?**

C. The Outcome of "Looting"

John 10:10 ***The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.***

II. CURRENT EVENTS — THE LOOTING OF AMERICA

Ultimate Outcome

- ❖ Collapse of Character
- ❖ Failure of Churches
- ❖ Financially Bankrupt
- ❖ Lawless
- ❖ Widespread Violence
- ❖ Children Preyed Upon & Poorly Educated — Unprepared for the Future
- ❖ Healthcare Collapse

****America's heritage emerged from an agreed-upon set of values and a worldview based on Scripture. In what ways can Christians respond to what Satan has tried to kill, steal, and destroy? (i.e. family, marriage, law, justice, honesty)**

III. OUR RESPONSE

Isaiah 1:18–20 *“Come now, let us reason together,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. ¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; ²⁰ but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.” For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”*

James 4:4–10 *You adulterous people, **don't you know** that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely? ⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”*

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

- A. Submit yourselves to God — Verse 7
- B. Resist the Devil — Verse 7
 - ❖ Useless if not submitted to God
- C. Come near to God — Verse 8
 - ❖ Wash your hands — Verse 8
 - ❖ Purify your hearts (from double mindedness) — Verse 8
 - ❖ Change laughter to mourning and joy to gloom — Verse 9
- D. Humble yourselves — Verse 10

Outcome: God will lift you up — Verse 10

****What are the biggest obstacles that prevent nonbelievers from becoming Christians? What are some ways Christians can address those obstacles?**

****Self-reflection: Is the Lord calling you to submit your time, energy, or resources to Him differently?**

PRAYER

Father, we are grateful You are involved in the affairs of men and women in the earth today. You've not only called us out of darkness and welcomed us into Your Kingdom, but You make the journey with us through time. Forgive us for where we've been distracted, looking away from what we knew displeased You. We yield our hearts, calendars, resources, and our futures to You. Give us the wisdom and ability to resist the Devil in our hearts, homes, community, and wherever You send us. Lord, we want to draw near to You, enter Your gates with thanksgiving and Your courts with praise, and dwell amid Your glory.

Holy Spirit, show us where we need to make changes so our hands might be clean and our hearts pure. We choose to humble ourselves as an offering. Here we are—send us and help us. We ask You to do what we cannot do. Bring a breakthrough, and may Your intervention grow, be multiplied, and expanded. May the truth once again be told. May integrity once again be celebrated. May moral uprightness be seen as a virtue and not a weakness. Thank You that our children can once again be taught in the truth and prepared for a future. We thank You for it, and give You glory that we will see You move in our midst. Father, we praise You today that You are well able. In Jesus' name, amen.