**EXEGETICAL OUTLINE**

**EZRA 1:1-11**

**God Restores Israel After 70 Years**

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying:

2 "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

3 'Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem.

4 'Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.'"

5 Then the heads of fathers' households of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites arose, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.

6 All those about them encouraged them with articles of silver, with gold, with goods, with cattle and with valuables, aside from all that was given as a freewill offering.

7 Also King Cyrus brought out the articles of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and put in the house of his gods;

8 and Cyrus, king of Persia, had them brought out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and he counted them out to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.

9 Now this was their number: 30 gold dishes, 1,000 silver dishes, 29 duplicates;

10 30 gold bowls, 410 silver bowls of a second kind and 1,000 other articles.

11 All the articles of gold and silver numbered 5,400. Sheshbazzar brought them all up with the exiles who went up from Babylon to Jerusalem. (Ezr. 1:1-11 NAU)

**EXEGETICAL OUTLINE**

**Exegetical Idea:**

The way God restored Israel is by moving the heart of King Cyrus of Persia to allow the remnant to return to Judah and to rebuild His temple in Jerusalem.

**Exegetical Points:**

1. The way God restored Israel is by moving the heart of King Cyrus of Persia so as to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by prophet Jeremiah. (v1-2)
2. God has appointed King Cyrus which was part of His sovereign plan. (v1, v2)
3. God spoke to prophet Jeremiah and it was fulfilled. (v1)
4. The way God restored Israel is by allowing the remnant to return to Judah. (v3-4)
5. God moved King Cyrus to pass a decree to allow the remnant to return and rebuild His temple. (v3-4)
6. God moved King Cyrus to pass a decree for the surviving neighbors to support these remnants. (v4)
7. The way God restored Israel is by providing manpower support and material provision to return and rebuild His temple. (v5-11)
8. God moved the heart of some survivors to join the remnants. (v5)
9. God gave the remnants support from their neighbors and material provisions for the rebuilding of temple. (v6)
10. God has moved King Cyrus to return those articles that was carried off by the Babylon to Jerusalem. (v7-8)
11. God moved King Cyrus to appoint a trusted treasurer to account and handover all the articles to Sheshbazzar. (v10)
12. God appointed Sheshbazzar to lead the remnants from Babylon to Jerusalem. (v11)
13. God could use items either great or small for rebuilding of the temple. (v9-11)

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**Study Text (Step 1):**

1.1 Visualizing and Analyzing the Narrative

Part 1: Visualizing the Narrative

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **VER** | **TEXT** | **SETTING** | **PLOT** | **CHARACTERIZATION** |
| 1 | Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying: | The first year of King Cyrus in Persia. | The Lord stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus to send a proclamation throughout all his kingdom. | King Cyrus is a round character.  The Lord stirred the heart of King Cyrus.  The fulfillment of the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah (Jeremaih 29:10; Jeremiah 25:11-12) |
| 2 | *"Thus says Cyrus king of Persia,*  ***'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.*** |  |  | The Lord initiated this proclamation.  The Lord appointed King Cyrus to build his temple. |
| 3 | ***'Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem.*** |  |  | All may go up and rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. |
| 4 | ***'Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.'"*** |  |  | Every one to support one another with their possessions and also to provide freewill offering to God. |
| 5 | Then the heads of fathers' households of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites arose, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. | Scene shift to the reaction of the Jews after hearing this proclamation. | Certain Jews living throughout the kingdom responded to this proclamation.  Repeated phrase:  “God had stirred to go up…” (refer to v1:1 “the Lord stirred up…”) | Not every tribe responded to the return and rebuilding of the temple.  Some were unable to locate their ancestor’s line. (Ezra 2:62).  Repeated phrase imply an emphasis that this is God’s initiative. |
| 6 | All those about them encouraged them with articles of silver, with gold, with goods, with cattle and with valuables, aside from all that was given as a freewill offering. | Background of the neighbors of these Jews. | The gifts given to these Jews includes silver, gold, goods, cattle and valuables as freewill offering. | All neighbors obey the King’s decree rather than from a self-driven encouragement towards these Jews. |
| 7 | Also King Cyrus brought out the articles of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and put in the house of his gods; |  | King Cyrus also participated.  He brought out the stolen articles from the first temple. | Return back the stolen articles from the first temple. |
| 8 | and Cyrus, king of Persia, had them brought out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and he counted them out to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. |  | King Cyrus did not bring out the articles himself.  Mithredath, a treasurer was appointed by him to hand out these articles to Shesbazzar. | Mithredath – trusted individual.  Shesbazzar – Prince of Judah. |
| 9 | Now this was their number: 30 gold dishes, 1,000 silver dishes, 29 duplicates; |  | 30 gold dishes,  1000 silver dishes,  29 duplicates |  |
| 10 | 30 gold bowls, 410 silver bowls of a second kind and 1,000 other articles. |  | 30 gold bowls,  410 silver bowls of 2nd kind,  1000 other articles. |  |
| 11 | All the articles of gold and silver numbered 5,400. Sheshbazzar brought them all up with the exiles who went up from Babylon to Jerusalem. |  | Total of gold and silver articles: 5400.  Sheshbazzar brought them up with the Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem.  Narrative time ended for this passage. | Numbers of 5400 does not tally with the articles recorded in verses 9 and 10. |

Part 2: Analyzing the Narrative

Repeated words: LORD (6X)

Repeated phrase: Stirred (2x)

The six words of “the LORD” repeated in six verses out of elven verses, shows that the whole episode was initiated by God.

Also, that it was God who stirred the spirit of King Cyrus (in verse 1) and again it was God who stirred the spirit of those to go up to Jerusalem (in verse 5).

What is the relationship between the beginning, middle and end of the passage?

Beginning of passage: v1-4

The emphasis on the proclamation of King Cyrus.

Noteworthy that King Cyrus was stirred up by the Lord.

Middle of Passage: v5

Only certain groups of Jews went up and rebuild the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.

Note that God also stirred up some to go up to Jerusalem.

End of Passage: v6-11

The consolation of articles of gold, silver, goods, cattle and valuables were provided and even the stolen articles from the first temple were returned for rebuilding of temple and the appointment of Zerubbabel.

The passage begins with description of the proclamation of King Cyrus and the scene was then change to the reaction of the Jews and then end with consolidation of articles for the temple and the appointment of Zerubbabel. But, there was no celebration, joy or happiness narrated in this passage.

Round characters: King Cyrus and the Lord

Flat characters: Sheshbazzar (Zerubbabel) and Mithredath

This passage only narrated monologue which is the description of the proclamation.

All appointments of both round and flat characters were given by God who acted implicitly behind the scene to restore nation of Israel.

1.2 Important Word Study

* Mithredath

Mithredath is a Persian name, and the word for treasurer (גִּזְבָּר) is also Persian.

* Sheshbazzar

Three views about his identity are suggested:

1. Some feel that Sheshbazzar was a Persian name for Zerubbabel. Both are said to have laid the foundation of the temple (3:8-10; 5:16).
2. Zerubbabel, which means “begotten in Babel,” was a grandson of Jehoiachin (1 Chron. 3:17-19), who had been deported to Babylon but had been released from confinement (2 Kings 25:27-30). Zerubbabel’s relationship to Jehoiachin would explain the title “the prince of Judah.” However, it would seem strange that Zerubbabel would have a second pagan name rather than having one name that reflected Yahweh worship (Sheshbazzar being a pagan deity).
3. If Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar were two names of the same person, it is strange that he was never again referred to by the name Sheshbazzar except in Ezra 5:15-16.

**1.3 Study Question**

**1.3.1 Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?**

1. Ezra was a continuation of 2nd Chronicles.
2. Under King Zedekiah (Jehoiachin’s uncle) reign appointed by King Nebuchadnezzar, the priests and people became more and more unfaithful and defiled the temple of the Lord.
3. He even ignored the warning by Jeremiah the prophet (2 Chron 36:12).
4. God had pity on them and sent His messenger to remind the people of God, but they mocked at them.
5. Judah was exile to Babylon.
6. From the end of 2nd Chronicles 36:15-23 was about the fall of Jerusalem.
7. King Nebuchadnezzar had carried all the articles from the temple to Babylon.
8. Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 BC.
9. Remnant who escaped the sword became servants to King Nebuchadnezzar.
10. First proclamation Cyrus, King of Persia for the Jews to return to Jerusalem so as to rebuild the temple was repeated in Ezra 1:1-3 in 539 BC.

**1.3.2 Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?**

1. God showed His people the fulfillment of His word that was prophesized by Prophet Jeremiah.
2. God wanted the people to turn from their unfaithful ways, to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.
3. Restoring the worship of God in them.

**1.3.3 Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?**

1. King Cyrus of Persia although appointed by God had no interest in worshipping a Jewish God. His main purpose was to extend His territory.
2. After captivity in Babylon for seventy years, the defeat of Babylon and the return of the Jews to Jerusalem was a fulfillment of the word of the Lord prophesized by Prophet Jeremiah.
3. King Cyrus allowed any Jews to return and the total of Jews who returned was 49 897 led by Zerubbabel. (Ezra 2:64-67).
4. Three deportations of the Judah to Babylon begins in 605 BC, 597 BC and then 586 BC (which is the fall of Judah, the destruction of the first temple by the Babylonia).
5. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah narrated 3 returns from exile:

1st Return: Ezra 1-6 – Dated: 538 BC led by Zerubbabel and Joshua as priest.

2nd Return: Ezra 7-10 – Dated: 458 BC led by Ezra as priest.

3rd Return: Nehemiah 1-13 – Dated: 444 BC led by Nehemiah as governor.

**1.3.4 Questions:**

V1-4

Q1: What did Jeremiah prophesize? Why was King Cyrus appointed?

Referring to Jer 29:10 and Jer 25:11-12, the Jews will be in captivity of Babylon for 70 years. And after the 70 years, the Lord will punish the king of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar and bring His people back to Jerusalem.

Jer. 29:10    For thus says the LORD: Only after seventy years have elapsed for Babylon will I deal with you and fulfill for you my promise to bring you back to this place.

Jer. 25:11-12 This whole land shall be a ruin and a waste. Seventy years these nations shall serve the king of Babylon; 12 but when the seventy years have elapsed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation and the land of the Chaldeans for their guilt—oracle of the LORD. Their land I will turn into everlasting waste.

V5

Q1: Did every of the remnant left Babylon to rebuild the temple when the permission given by King Cyrus was for anyone?

No, only the heads of households of Judah, Benjamin, Levites, the priests and those whose heart was moved by God did. (Ezra 1:5; Ezra 2)

V6

Q1: Why were the neighbors encouraging these Jews?

They did out of obedience to the King Cyrus’ decree rather than self-driven motivation.

V9-11

Q1: Why 30 gold dishes, 1000 silver dishes, 29 duplicates?

Q2: Why 30 gold bowls, 410 silver bowls of a second kind and 1000 other articles?

Q3: Why the number of silver bowls and dishes do not tally in comparison with the gold dishes and bowls?

Q4: The listed articles do not add up to 5400, why?

In fact, only 2499.

It was suggested Ezra first listed some of the items, perhaps the bigger and more valuable ones (vv. 9-10), then referred to the total number of items both the larger and more valuable and the smaller and less significant (v. 11).

**Exegetical Outline**

**Prologue:**

Jeremiah prophesized that the Jews will be in captivity of Babylon for seventy years. After this period, God will punish the King of Babylon which is King Nebuchadnezzar and bring His people back to Jerusalem to rebuild His temple. It was fulfilled.

**Exegetical Idea (Step 3):** Refer to Page 1 Exegetical Idea in EXEGETICAL

OUTLINE section.

**Exegetical Points (Step 2):** Refer to Page 1 and 2 Exegetical Points in EXEGETICAL

OUTLINE section item I, II and III.

**SERMON OUTLINE**

God Restores Israel After 70 Years

EZRA 1:1-11 (Cyclical Inductive)

**Introduction:**

1. After 70 years of waiting, the Jews were finally rescued and freed from the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar who was defeated by King Cyrus of Persian in 539 BC.
2. King Cyrus in the first year of his reign had sent a proclamation throughout the land to allow the Jews to return to Judah and rebuild God’s temple in Jerusalem.
3. The Jews were really caught by surprise. Can this be true?
4. Let us look at Ezra 1:1-11 passage, and focus on what God is saying.

**Introduce Subject:** How did God bring about restoration in the nation of Israel and how will he bring restoration to us in a hopeless situation or even in church?

1. God puts people in positions to restore his people. (v1-2)
2. The nation of Israel was restored through King Cyrus and this was the fulfillment of the word of God spoken by prophet Jeremiah. (v1-2)
3. We need to trust that God restores us through our authority.
4. God restores by giving his people freedom at the right time. (v3-4)
5. Israel had experienced that God moved the heart of King Cyrus to pass a decree to allow the remnant to return to Judah, rebuild His temple and that the surviving neighbors should support these remnants. (v3-4)
6. We need to recognize that restoration is in God’s timing.
7. God restores by providing what his people need for restoration. (v5-11)
8. God moved the heart of some survivors to increase the manpower needed for rebuilding of His temple. (v5)
9. God moved their neighbors to obey the decree and support the rebuilding of His temple. (v6)
10. We need to believe that God will provide what we need for restoration.
11. God moved King Cyrus to return the articles that were carried off by the Babylon back to Jerusalem and also to appoint Shesbazzar as a trusted treasurer. (v7-8,10)
12. God appointed Sheshbazzar who was from the line of Judah to lead the remnants from Babylon to Jerusalem. (v11)
13. God could use any items regardless of its size to rebuild the temple. (v9-11)
14. Regardless of how we see a situation, God has His sovereign plan and that He is in control of our situation.

**Conclusion:**

1. In the midst of hopeless situation or perhaps when we are struggling with our assignments, workload and church commitment, God shows us that he answers when we pray and seek after him.
2. Where there are doubts or even having doubts in our calling, God shows us that he is still in control in all situation and that we need to be patient because what he had spoken will be fulfilled in his time.
3. Remember once again that God wants to restore you.

**Main Idea:** God wants to restore you.

**SERMON MANUSCRIPTS**

God Restores Israel After 70 Years

EZRA 1:1-11

(Cyclical Inductive)

Topic: God restores Israel after 70 years

Subject: The way God restored Israel

Complement: is by moving the heart of King Cyrus of Persia to allow the

remnant to return to Judah and to rebuild His temple in Jerusalem.

Purpose: The listeners will learn that God wants to restore them in church and in all situation.

**Introduction:**

A Jew was walking alone in a quiet street one day. And this is what he overheard.

Someone said, “You know, King Nebuchadnezzar is defeated! Babylon is no more!”

Another said, “Are you sure? He is most powerful king and everyone is afraid of him. How can he be defeated, so fast, so soon? By who? Is it King Cyrus?”

Just then, a man ran and shouted, “Let’s run! Run! We are going home! Going home!”

Suddenly, the mixed feeling in the street was broken immediately by a crowd of people who bashed through their silent. Everyone was running here and there. There was tension in the air as people were rushed back to their home. They were packing, repacking, gathering, regathering their family and rushing off.

To where? And where are these people going?

You see, after waiting for a long, long time, not 7 weeks, 7 months or even 7 years. It was 70 years of waiting, the Jews were finally rescued and freed from the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar who was defeated by King Cyrus of Persian in 539 BC.

King Cyrus in his first of his reign proclaimed that “whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem. Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver, gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.”

Is this really true, King Cyrus has allowed us to go back to our homeland?

The Jews were really caught by surprise. Dumbfounded they asked, “he does not even know our God, yet he is allowing us to not only go back but also to rebuild his temple? And to worship him?

Is this true?

Can we trust him?”

How did God bring about restoration in the nation of Israel?

And how will he bring restoration to us in a hopeless situation or even in church?

Today, we looking at Ezra chapter 1 verses 1 to 11. We must focus our attention in this passage, for in it, God is saying something significant that we do not want to miss.

1. God puts people in positions to restore you. (v1-2)

God wants to restore you.

We come across many people in our lives. Some have authority over us and some do not. Others may come under our authority. However, God does put people in positions to restore you. (v1-2)

Reading from Ezra 1:1-2

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying:

2 "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

1. The nation of Israel was restored through the fulfillment of the word of God spoken by prophet Jeremiah recorded in Jeremiah 29:10 and Jeremiah 25:11-12.

It says:

Jer. 29:10

For thus says the LORD: Only after seventy years have elapsed for Babylon will I deal with you and fulfill for you my promise to bring you back to this place.

Jer. 25:11-12

This whole land shall be a ruin and a waste. Seventy years these nations shall serve the king of Babylon; but when the seventy years have elapsed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation and the land of the Chaldeans for their guilt—oracle of the LORD. Their land I will turn into everlasting waste.

1. We need to trust that God restores us through our authority.

Our founding Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew according to the website “Remembering Mr Lee Kuan Yew” stated that “he fought for self-Government from our British colonial masters and later led Singapore into merger with Malaysia believing that this was the best option for Singapore’s future. When merger did not work out, he took Singapore out of Malaysia and built a nation from nothing during our most difficult years.”  
  
Also, that “he built up a strong defend capability to protect our sovereignty, a vibrant economy which created good jobs, a sound education system and excellent infrastructure, housing and environment. He has transformed Singapore from a Third World to First World country”.

Like King Cyrus, he might not have known our God. Yet, God has let this man to lead Singapore to what it has achieved today.

In the economic crisis, where many companies had been affected and many had chosen to lay off workers to reduce cost. The media market was not spared. It affected their advertising, activities and movies spending and revenue badly. However, one Media Corp CEO once told us in the seminar that unlike many companies, he did not choose to lay off the workers. The reason is because their family still needed money and lay off workers will be worst for the family. Instead, he proposed a strategy to shorten the working hours, flexible pairing or additional roles and a small percentage pay reduction across the organization to reduce cost and meet the economic crisis. He made a promise that once the economy is back to normal, he will gradually return and restore the pay difference to each employee. Majority of the employees agreed to his strategy. Indeed, by the grace of God the economy was back to normal and he payback the employees what he had promised. He was glad to announce that not a single employee was lay off during the economic crisis. God indeed had appointed this man for this crisis to save their jobs and family throughout the economic crisis.

What authority is in your life? Is God working in your authority too?

God wants to restore you.

We are living in an era where time is not in our disposition. Finding apportion of our time and even opportunity away from our piles of workload and duties to do what it most needed and urgent can be tough, very trying and at times troubling.

1. However, we need to know this truth that God helps and restores by giving his people freedom at the right time. (v3-4)

God wants to restore you.

In Ezra 1:3-4, it says:

3 'Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem…..”

4 'Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle….”

The phrase “whoever is among you” and “every survivor, at whatever place” implies a time of freedom to allow for anyone among them to go back to their homeland.

In the case of the Jews, they were not only freed from the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar. But, also freed from idolatry. An opportunity to turn away from idolatry, their disobedience towards God and worship him once again.

A brother in his late 40s once told us that he had the problem of smoking. Completing a pack of cigarettes or half of it was his daily consumption. After he became a Christian, he surrendered this bad habit to God. It was not easy. It took him about 2 to 3 years. God has helped him to overcome this habit. He even started learning guitar at the age of 50 and served in worship ministry. God has freed him from the bad habit of smoking.

Are there areas in our lives that we are still having problem?

Although we are in Bible school, are still living in bondage or struggling with sins that has controlled over life for many years?

God wants to restore you.

We have talked about how God helps and restores by giving his people freedom at the right time. But, what do I need to do to restore a situation. Or where must go to find restoration?

1. The good news is God restores by providing what his people really need for restoration. (v5-11)

God wants to restore you.

1. In verse 5, God moved the heart of some survivors to increase the manpower needed for rebuilding of His temple.

In verse 6, God moved their neighbors to obey the decree and support the rebuilding of His temple.

In verse 7-10, God moved King Cyrus to return the articles that was carried off by the Babylon back to Jerusalem and also to appoint Shesbazzar as a trusted treasurer. God could use any items regardless of its size to rebuild the temple.

Finally, in verse 11, God appointed Sheshbazzar who was from the line of Judah to lead the remnants from Babylon to Jerusalem.

1. Regardless of how we see a situation, we need to believe that God will provide what we need. God has His sovereign plan and that He is in control of our situation.

In September 1945, the Japanese occupation ended with bombing by US in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was tabulated that Japan had lost nearly 3 million war dead and a quarter of the national wealth. How did Japan recover and become the second largest economy in the world in 1980s?

With the aid of the American, a series of reform policies was driven to reconstruct and recover this devastated nation.

One of the major factor was the use of unique know-how technologies. The Japanese were among the best to innovate and created new technology, such as the low-cost mass production systems, by combining numerous technologies imported from abroad.

For instance, Japan’s steel industry successfully improved the quality of the special steel used in automobiles using scrap metals. As a result, the Japanese was able to manufacture lower cost automobile to compete in international markets for the first time.

God has restored the war torn country, Japan.

You know, brothers and sisters in Christ, we are already in April. Only left with last few weeks before we complete the whole semester. How many of us are still worry or perhaps drown by the assignments, quizzes and workload?

Some of us came to SBC with a specific calling while others came with other motivations. But one thing for sure (in Philippians 1:6) that

“being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus”.

What is your need, my dear brothers and sisters?

God wants to restore you.

**Conclusion:**

Studying in SBC is something new to me. But, I never thought I could have so many readings, assignments and workload. It was rather tough for me at times. Because I am a family man, I need to manage these stress with my children, wife, siblings and my parent. It is not easy.

Actually, each time when I feel stress, I will look towards God and pray. I do not have long prayer and sometime I may not know what to pray. But, each time I asked God to help me. He never fails.

What is your need, my dear brothers and sisters?

In Philippians 4:13 is says “I can do all things through him who gives me strength”. Philippians a letter of tremendous joy. It was written to encourage the church when we knew that Paul wrote it with joy from his imprisonment in Rome which was supposedly to be suffering and painful moment.

God wants to restore you.

In the mist of hopeless situation or perhaps when we are struggling with our assignments, workload and church commitment, God wants to show us that he answers when we pray and seek after him.

Where there are doubts or even having doubts in our calling, God wants to show us that he is still in control in all situation and that we need to be patient because what he had spoken will be fulfilled in his time.

**Main Idea:** God wants to restore you.

Let us pray.

Dear God,

Thank you God for the trials that comes our way in that way I can grow each day. We humbly come before you with our worries, our abilities and our uncertainties. Restore us and draw us nearer to you. Empower us with your Spirit, give us strength to drive through this process. May we see you're your grace, your mighty works in our lives, in the lives of others and in the world more and more each day.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen.