

Restoration and Prosperity

Restoration in every dimension of human experience is at the heart of the gospel. It is woven through both OT and NT Scriptures and should be kept at the forefront of the things we communicate. The restoration we have been examining lately is the return of the church (the bride of Christ), to the majesty and glory God intended for her. To fully accomplish this, God has begun to release His awesome power without measure 'to' and 'through' His church. Restoration is taking place, and His Spirit is being poured out on all flesh!

According to the dictionary, *"to restore"* means *"to bring back to former or original condition."* However, when something is restored according to God's Word, it is always increased, multiplied or improved so that its latter state is significantly better than its original state.

Joel 2:25-26 confirms this, *"I will restore to you the years the locusts have eaten... You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the Lord your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will My people be shamed."* God always does more than is necessary, and He supplies abundantly whenever He restores.

Therefore, in this fresh move of restoration, God is not simply restoring the church to the glory it displayed in New Testament times, He is seeking to restore it to a state more powerful, more majestic, and more glorious than anything the world has yet seen!

God wants to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we may ask, think or imagine! Hence, for today's church, restoration means more than merely becoming a reproduction of the early church. It means becoming all God originally intended it to be.

Besides restoring power and authority in the church (through the Holy Spirit), God wants to restore the prosperity that's necessary to meet the needs of mankind. Referring to Jesus, in Isaiah 49:7-8, this is what the Lord says – *"Kings will see You and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen You. In the time of My favour I will answer You, and in the day of salvation I will help You; I will keep You and will make You to be a covenant for the people, to restore the land."* Restoring the land symbolises the restoration of our prosperity!

But for the church to be restored to the level of prosperity originally intended for it, each individual member must be restored to a place of prosperity first. In Jeremiah 27:22 the Lord says, *"I will bring them back and restore them to this place."* There is a special place God wants to bring you back to; a place where every promise is *yes* and *amen* a joyful place that you can abide in and prosper. This particular place is where you will be able to live the superabundant life Jesus promised. 3 John 2 literally says, *"Concerning all matters of life, I pray that you may prosper and be in good health, even as your soul prospers."*

John was praying for prosperity to materialise in three specific areas - materially, physically and spiritually. Prosperity is God's will for you. True prosperity is the ability to use God's power and resources to meet the needs of others, regardless of what those needs might be. It is the capacity to draw on God's abundance in order to overcome poverty or lack. God has sent us the Holy Spirit to teach us how to live exactly the way He lives. Divine prosperity is available to anyone who is prepared to receive the Word and then act upon it. God's word enables you to prosper!

Deuteronomy 8:18, *“But remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to obtain wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.”* Notice, wealth already exists; otherwise you could never obtain it! God has given you the ability to acquire wealth – He has gifted you to get hold of money. Material prosperity, in the secular sense, is limited to what man can do without God. However, when you operate in the Word you remove the world’s limitations from your life, and as a result, you prosper according to the limitless ability of God. The standard of living that God enjoys is beyond anything that the natural mind could imagine. And this is what He desires for you and me – to live according to His divine standards.

Proverbs 10:22 says, *“The blessings of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.”* Literally, *“When God prospers you He also makes you happy.”* But remember, happiness is something that exists naturally in the absence of fears, doubts, and negative emotions. And one of the factors that most deprives you of true happiness is worry about money. Your antidote for worrying about money is to take possession, and then act, on a promise of God that relates to your financial situation. To activate prosperity in your life, you must have complete trust in the faithfulness of God. You must believe that God is faithful to perform His word and then respond accordingly.

But restoration during times of renewal and revival has nothing to do with you; it has to do with God. So when it comes to restoring prosperity, it is always a sovereign move of His Spirit manifesting favour and fortune to His people. Seven times in the Book of Jeremiah, the Lord declares that He will restore the fortunes of His people. I am fully persuaded that this fresh move of God has to do with two things - the Lord restoring (a) His favour and (b) the fortunes of His people.

Without favour you can never attain the victory because God’s presence is not with you. Favour always brings God’s presence into your situation! Moses said, *“If I’ve found favour in your sight, then Your presence will go with us”* (Exodus 34:9). You can find the phrase *“favour in Your sight”* mentioned twenty one times in the OT. Somehow they knew the importance of having favour with God. *“Favour with God – favour with man!”*

Favour and fortune go hand in hand, because without restored fortunes we will never prosper.

God wants to restore the fortunes of His people. Annie Priest told me of a word that was recently given to a minister in a dream. It was the word *“replevin”* and he had no idea what it meant or even if it was a real word. But when he enquired he was handed this definition; *“a decree by a judge that all that has been stolen or taken from a person has to be restored.”* This legal command could not be ignored and it could never be rescinded. It was fully binding and absolute!

When God restores the fortunes of His people the same principle applies. The Judge and Ruler of the Universe executes a decree that everything that was stolen from His people should now be restored. And as a result of this decree complete restoration must take place. But remember, God never restores anything by bringing it back to its former or original condition.

When He restores, it is always increased, multiplied or improved so that its latter state is significantly better than its original state. God’s restoration involves moving from glory to glory! And it also means that you get more than you expect. 2 Kings 8:6 says, the king asked the woman about it, and she told him. Then he

assigned an official to her case and said to him, *“Give back everything that belonged to her, including all the income from her land from the day she left the country until now.”*

Numerically, the multiplication of what was lost or stolen depends entirely on the conditions attached to its loss. The Levitical law insists on paying back anything from double to seven times what was originally lost or stolen. Therefore, can you imagine the multiplication that is applied under the New Covenant? What have you lost, or was stolen from you?

Whatever this is, I have good news for you. It is the season of restored fortunes! The prosperity of God’s people is being activated in His church right now! Yet, it’s even more than this. The number ‘8’ in ancient Jewish culture depicts ‘new beginnings’. So not only are you going to have your fortunes restored in 2008, you are going to be given a brand new start. Hallelujah! God is doing a *“new thing”* – His bride is being restored to the glory and majesty she deserves.

Isaiah 42:9, *“Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.”*