



SUNDAY MORNING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: God's Deliverance

Passage: Ezra 1:1-11

Speaker: Associate Pastor David Wood

Introduction: We are living in uncertain and rapidly changing times as global tensions rise, political division deepens, financial instability grows, and technology advances faster than many of us can process. It can feel like no one is steering the ship and everything is drifting toward danger. Yet in the middle of all this chaos, God is moving in powerful ways. People are seeking truth, churches are filling, and hearts are being stirred like we have not seen in years. God is not finished. He is willing and able to give a fresh start to our nation, our homes, and our lives. Scripture reminds us that although God offers renewal, we only experience it when we take steps of faith.

I. The King's Decree (Verse 1-4)

King Cyrus stands out in history because God worked in his heart in a remarkable way, prompting him to release the Israelites from long captivity and allow them to return home to rebuild the Temple. This fulfilled a prophecy given many years earlier and revealed the mercy of God toward a people who had wandered far from Him. Although they did not deserve it, God offered them a fresh start, and Cyrus responded to God's prompting in a way that opened the door for renewal and restoration.

A. He gave God all the credit.

Years prior to Cyrus becoming king, Daniel reprimanded king Belshazzar and reminded him that God holds our very breath in His hands,



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"But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified?" (Daniel 5:23)

Cyrus was not going to make this same mistake. In fact he is about to restore the very vessels that king Belshazzar defiled.

B. He called out the people.

This call to faith, action, and to godliness has echoed throughout the Bible!

"Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him." (Exodus 32:26)

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15)

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." (1 Kings 18:21)

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." (Isaiah 55:6)

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." (James 4:8)

C. He asked others to help.

Cyrus wanted everyone to help them on their journey. When God is doing something in your life... it's only natural to ask others to join in.



II. The People's Decision (Verse 5)

God stirred Cyrus but now we see God stirring His people. A fresh start always requires God's initiation but it also requires our participation.

A. The leaders led.

The leaders of the people were the first to respond, and their courage set the direction for everyone else. God often uses willing leaders to establish the spiritual tone and inspire others to follow. Whether in a home, a church, a school, or a community, renewal usually begins with one person who chooses to step out in faith. God does not require position or prominence, only a heart that is willing to obey.

B. The followers followed.

Once the leaders responded, others found the courage to follow. A single step of obedience often inspires many more, because people gain confidence when they see faith lived out in front of them. Our actions influence those around us, and when we choose to follow God, we encourage others to take their own steps of faith.

C. They united around God's mission.

The people united around the work God had called them to do, choosing His mission over their own comfort or personal plans. True unity emerges when God's people put His priorities first, and this shared purpose is what enabled them to succeed. In the same way today, renewal and revival come when believers join together with a common commitment to God's work.

III. The Lord's Deliverance (Verses 6-11)

When God's people took steps of obedience, something incredible happened, God provided everything they needed, often from the most unexpected places.

A. Help was there exactly when they needed it.



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As the people obeyed, God moved others to supply everything they needed for the work ahead. Scripture consistently shows that God's provision comes after His people take steps of faith, arriving exactly when it is needed. When we obey first, God meets us in that obedience and provides what we could never secure on our own.

B. God restored the most precious things.

The sacred items that symbolized God's presence and glory were fully restored, showing that God does not allow what is truly precious to be lost. Even when the enemy damages what matters most to us, God is able to renew and rebuild what was taken. He is a God who restores the valuable things we once believed were gone beyond repair.

C. There was an abundance.

The detailed list of restored items shows that God did far more than simply meet the basic needs of His people. He provided in abundance, which is always the character of His grace. Scripture teaches that God blesses in ways that overflow, going beyond what we ask or imagine. When He grants a fresh start, He does so with generosity and fullness rather than with scarcity.

Conclusion: This passage shows the pattern of God's work. He begins with mercy and grace, doing what we could never accomplish on our own, and then invites us to respond in faith. When we follow His leading, we experience His provision and deliverance. God still offers a fresh start to anyone who seeks Him, and He is ready to bring hope, healing, and renewal to every heart that turns to Him.

