

A reflection on Psalm 126

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I pray that we will have a good start of the day by being encouraged by the Psalm of Ascent. In Your Name, Amen.

Psalm: 126:1-2a

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;

As suggested from the title, this psalm is about restoration of fortune of Israelite. Many people relate this to the return of Israelite as mentioned in Ezra, after Babylon had invaded Jerusalem. To illustrate how devastating the invasion was, let us look at the following verses.

Bible Verse: 2 Kings 24:13-14

...and carried off all the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of the Lord, which Solomon king of Israel had made, as the Lord had foretold. He carried away all Jerusalem and all the officials and all the mighty men of valor, 10,000 captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. **None remained, except the poorest people of the land.**

Of course, the return of Israelite was again massive:

Bible Verse: Ezra 2:68-69

Some of the heads of families, when they came to the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, made freewill offerings for the house of God, to erect it on its site. According to their ability they gave to the treasury of the work 61,000 darics of gold, 5,000 minas of silver, and 100 priests' garments.

Remark. How much had Babylonian taken away from Israelite? How much had Israelite got when returning back to homeland? When you figure out, you will understand how glad the Israelite were, and you would praise the Lord

Prayer Invitation 1. Let's praise the power of God, and give thanks to the restoration done by God. Without God, everything would be as unrealistic as dream...

Psalm: 126:2b-4

then they said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
The Lord has done great things for us;
we are glad.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like streams in the Negeb!

The psalmer suggested that the fortune had not been restored (note the 'when' in verse 1). Nevertheless, the psalmer was really glad, declaring that, in fact, 'The Lord has done great things for us'.

What restorations were needed after virus? It may be restoration of peace, since we were afraid of being affected by the virus. It may be restoration of relationship among countries, as well as economy and normal lifestyle.

Before we pray, let us be reminded of the greatest restoration God had made in the history, by looking at one verse I had recently studied:

Bible Verse: 1 Timothy 2:5-6

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

Jesus had come, sacrificed for our sin and resurrected. As a result, we had victory over death, and the relationship between God and us had been restored.

Prayer Invitation 2. Let's give thanks to the greatest restoration God had made. Moreover, come up with things needed to be restored after and virus, and pray for God's restoration.

Finally, let us focus on last two verses.

Psalm: 126:5-6

Those who sow in tears
shall reap with shouts of joy!
He who goes out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.

God appreciated our effort of sowing seeds and weeping for others. As a reminder, the blessing God would give upon mourning people was comfort from God himself.

Bible Verse: Matthew 5:4

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

As we mentioned the action of 'sowing seeds', I cannot help but to relate the verses to sharing gospel. I am sure that everyone had encountered challenges when sharing the good news of restoration, and God did appreciate our effort.

■ *Remark.* And the most valuable player of gospel spreading is, obviously, God.

■ *Prayer Invitation 3.* Let us share one difficulty encountered when sharing gospel with your friend, and then pray for it. Also give thanks to God that he comforts us whenever we were sad.

■ *Prayer Invitation 4.* Also appreciate the encouragements as posted on CU group chats, and pray for any personal concern.