

A TIMELY WORD CONCERNING THE WORLD SITUATION

AND THE LORD'S RECOVERY

#5: Aansweing God's Call to Be His Dispensational Instrument, His Overcomers, to Turn the Age (8/17-23)

OL Summary:

I. Every time God wants to make a dispensational move, an age-turning move, He must obtain His dispensational instrument; we must be those who have dispensational value to God: **A.** We need to consider what we are doing to bring in the next age; this is a special time, so there is the need of special Christians to do a special work. **B.** The principle of the Lord's recovery is seen with Daniel ("God is my judge"), Hananiah ("Jah has graciously give," or "favored of Jah"), Mishael ("Who is what God is?"), and Azariah ("Jah has helped"); "Daniel and his companions" were absolutely one with God in their victory over Satan's people to the age of their return to the land of Immanuel for the building of God's house and God's city for God's expression and authority: In God's sight, an overcomer is a "man of preciousness," even "preciousness itself," a person whom God can use to turn the age. /The unique Overcomer dwells in our spirit to make us His overcomers. **C.** The Lord needs to raise up men who turn the age for the recovery of God's expression and authority; among fallen mankind God's expression is torn down and His authority is denied; Daniel and his companions truly allowed God to be expressed through them and were truly under God's authority.

II. Daniel had companions with whom he was absolutely consecrated to God and separated unto God from an age that follows Satan: **A.** All those who are used by God to turn the age must be Nazarites—voluntarily consecrated ones who are sanctified absolutely and ultimately to God. **B.** Although Daniel and his companions were still very young, they stood up as an anti-testimony.

III. Daniel joined himself to God's desire through God's Word: **A.** Daniel was not only a person who read God's Word regularly but also a person who was joined to God's Word: When Daniel read from the book of Jeremiah that God had ordained seventy years of captivity for the Israelites and that after seventy years God would turn back to bless them, he immediately fasted and prayed. **B.** We must read God's Word in a spirit and atmosphere of prayer and touch God's desire from His Word; then we must immediately join ourselves to that desire; the Bible should affect our living, and we should be joined to the Bible.

IV. Daniel was a man of prayer with an excellent spirit, a man living under God's rule in the reality of the kingdom of the heavens, the ruling of the heavens: **A.** The center of Daniel 6 is man's prayer for the carrying out of God's economy; man's prayers are like the rails that pave the way for God's move to go on; there is no other way to bring God's economy into fullness and into fulfillment except by prayer; this is the inner secret of this chapter. **B.** The highest expression of a man who cooperates with God is in prayer; God carries out His economy on the earth through His faithful channels of prayer. **C.** Prayer is the lifeline in

the Lord's recovery; the more Satan tries to frustrate our prayer, the more we should pray: He depended on prayer to understand what man could not understand. /Daniel prayed, "Now hear, O our God, the prayer of Your servant and his supplications, and cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that has been desolated, for the Lord's sake".

V. Daniel was a self-sacrificing person with the spirit of martyrdom: **A.** Daniel's companions had a true spirit of martyrdom; they stood for the Lord as the unique God and against idol worship at the cost of their lives, being thrown at the command of Nebuchadnezzar into a blazing furnace. **B.** Daniel prayed at the risk of his life; the intention of the chief ministers and satraps was to destroy Daniel, but the intention of Satan, who was behind them, was to cut off the channel of prayer that God was using for the carrying out of His economy. **C.** Everyone whom God uses to turn the age is afraid of only one thing, that is, of offending God and losing His presence.

VI. In order to be today's overcomers as God's dispensational instrument who turn the age, we must redeem the time; Colossians 4:5 says, "Redeeming the time," and Ephesians 5:16 says, "Redeeming the time": **A.** One could translate the word time in these passages as redeeming the "opportunity"; we who are learning to serve the Lord must not let the Head have a sense that we are dull to His direction and numb to His leading; we need to allow the Lord to train our spiritual sense and our spiritual sight to sense the opportunities whenever they come and make the most of them. **B.** Of the days that the Lord has ordained for us, perhaps yesterday should have been the greatest day of our life, but we may have lived yesterday in an ordinary way; this is what it means to miss the opportunity; there is never a day without God's arrangement for us. **C.** Perhaps the Lord gave us a thought that we should seek out a certain person who could potentially be very useful to the Lord, but on that day we did not go, because we were afraid the weather was too hot, and we were too lazy. **D.** One day we will face the Lord; perhaps we will regret the things in our life that now provide us with satisfaction; many times we have come short of God's will and have acted foolishly; we have not been faithful to live Christ, to grow Christ, to express Christ, and to propagate Christ in every respect for the building up of His Body. **E.** Daniel 11:32b says, "The people who know their God will show strength and take action"; this means that the people of God will open up new horizons; the more we know God's will, the more we will seize the opportunities; those who know God will never live in habitual way day after day. **F.** "We have seen how God has blessed Brother Witness's work. His strong point is that he does not allow any opportunity to slip by. It is hard to find him missing an opportunity. Once the opportunity arises, he takes advantage of it". **G.** If our service is according to God's will, one day will equal many days, but the days spent outside the will of God are not counted; outside the kingdom of God, no human beings are employed by God; Nebuchadnezzar was satisfied with

his own work—this is the principle of Babylon. **H.** However, thank the Lord for His word of comfort, the words of Joel 2:25—the years that the locust has eaten will be restored to us; if we waste our days, ten years may be equal to one day, but if we redeem the time, one day may equal ten years. **I.** Psalm 90:12 says, “Teach us then to number our day / That we may gain a heart of wisdom,” and 84:10 says, “A day in Your courts is better than a thousand”; the days in heaven are not counted by a cycle of twenty-four hours; God has a different way of counting days.

VII. Today the way to become vitalized is to answer the Lord’s call to be an overcomer; an overcomer is a vital person, and a vital person (one who is living and active) is a praying person: **A.** Our intention in forming the new groups is to have groups of overcomers; this is the reason that the groups are called the “vital groups”; the full-time training is also for the producing of the overcomers, those who are desperate to conquer the deadness of Sardis, the lukewarmness of Laodicea, and the barrenness dealt with by the Lord in John 15 concerning the vine and the branches. **B.** If we are going to be vitalized, we need to have close, intimate, and thorough fellowship with the Lord and with the seeking saints; we need the Lord to lead us to some companions, with whom we can labor, just as Daniel had three companions. **C.** With today’s church life (typified by Jerusalem), we must be the Lord’s overcomers (typified by Zion); this is to be in the age of the overcomers according to the Lord’s calling; it is one thing to be in the church life, but it is another thing to be an overcomer in the church life. **D.** We have to make a resolution to be the overcomers, the vitalized ones; an overcomer is one who overcomes anything that is replacing Christ or that is against Christ.

VIII. As today’s overcomers, we should be like the children of Issachar, “men who understood the times that they might know what Israel should do”; see Brother Lee’s applicable experience on the next page. On the eve of the revival in Chefoo, when the Japanese had invaded China and had made life in China, which was hard enough, to be even harder, Brother Lee wrote the following in his personal notes in Chefoo, on the night of December 4, 1942: People on earth are suffering calamities, and the churches are in hardship; this is not the age of God’s heart’s desire but the age of God’s procedures. God is using His procedures to fulfill His heart’s desire. To turn from the age of procedures to the age of God’s heart’s desire, man must pray the age-turning prayer. Daniel was such a man. The earth is suffering calamities because people on the earth do not want God and do not care for God’s affairs. Therefore, if the saints are to pray to end the time of calamities, they must answer God’s demands and care for God and His needs. Oh! These many calamities today should wake us up to no longer live to the earth! Oh! Today we should truly consecrate ourselves to answer God’s demands on behalf of the church so that God may have a way to come in and to turn this age of procedures into the age of His heart’s desire.

CP1: Daniel voluntarily consecrated and rejected to be defiled by the food that had been given to idols. Renew consecration, become today’s Daniel, and have an age-turning prayer

Dan. 1:8 But Daniel set his heart not to defile himself with the king’s choice provision and with the wine that the king drank, so he requested of the leader of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

OL1: Every time God wants to make a dispensational move, an age-turning move, He must obtain His dispensational instrument; we must be those who have dispensational value to God. **OL2:** In God’s sight, an overcomer is a “man of preciousness,” even “preciousness itself,” a person whom God can use to turn the age. **OL3:** Daniel had companions with whom he was absolutely consecrated to God and separated unto God from an age that follows Satan. **OL4:** All those who are used by God to turn the age must be Nazarites. **OL5:** Although Daniel and his companions were still very young, they stood up as an anti-testimony.

Daniel refused everything that men enjoyed and boasted of. He refused everything that would offer him some position in the world. He was a voluntarily consecrated one. A little spiritual pursuit or a little godly living before the Lord is not enough to be used by the Lord to turn the age. All those who are used by the Lord to turn the age must be Nazarites; they must be voluntarily consecrated ones.... [Voluntary consecration] means that when everyone else on earth seeks after the world and enjoys the world, I separate myself from it.... The Bible records that in those days the king of Babylon chose a group of young men from different races to stand before him. The opportunity of being chosen was something beyond one’s dream because the king would give them good food and drink for three years so that they would be fair and fat in the flesh to stand before him in the palace.... Yet Daniel and his three companions vowed, saying, “We forsake such opportunity. We will not enjoy the food and drink here. We cannot be the same as other people. We must take another stand. Other people do not have God and are not for God, but we are for God.” They expressed God this way because they submitted themselves to His authority. While the whole earth denied God’s authority, they acknowledged God’s authority.

Application: Business person/ Graduate student

The youth is the vessel that God uses to turn the age. In those days the king of Babylon chose a group of young men from different races to stand before him. The opportunity of being chosen was something beyond one’s dream. However, Daniel and his three friends did not consider this opportunity valuable and abandoned it. However, Daniel was eventually put in the highest position by the king. **Dan.6:1** It pleased Darius to set up over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps, who would be throughout the whole kingdom; **2** And over them, three chief ministers — of whom Daniel was one — so that these satraps might give account to them and the king might not suffer loss. **3** Then this Daniel distinguished himself among the chief

ministers and satraps because in him there was an excellent spirit, and the king considered setting him over the whole kingdom....28 And this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

You need to consecrate your future to the economy of God and cut off the future of the world. Such a person is honored by God. Because God can use you as an age-turning vessel. Then you will be lifted as high as Daniel. This does not necessarily mean that you will be promoted in the company, but you will be lifted in the way the Lord has set for you.

For example, you love the world and you think that if you do not participate in relationships such as overtime work and drinking parties, you will not be used by company, so you eagerly take every opportunity to participate. This means that you don't trust in God, but trust in people like your boss. In these cases, your protection is not the Lord, and the Lord cannot lift you up. But if you trust in the Lord and take Him as your own protection and say, "If I can't get a promotion because of a bad social relationship, then I choose to attend the meetings rather than promotion", Lord can take care of you. May these things help you not to be deceitful and to be honest to the Lord! May you determine while you are young to consecrate yourself to Him, and live in Him, with Him, by Him, for Him.

Prayer: "Oh, Lord Jesus, may I be like Daniel to reject the things that the people of this world are proud of, and consecrate myself to the Lord. I don't trust myself or others, but trust the Lord. I thank the Lord for protecting me in business and research. I pray with partners for the voluntary consecration of the Nazirites and pray for turning of age, which is the return of the Lord. Amen!"

C2: Have a keen spiritual sense and read the Word and pray by linking the Word to seize on a chance

Dan. 9:2-3 In the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by means of the Scriptures the number of the years, which came as the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah the prophet, for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, that is, seventy years. So I set my face toward the Lord God to seek Him in prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. **Eph. 5:15-16** Look therefore carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. **Col. 4:5** Walk in wisdom toward those who are without, redeeming the time. **OL1:** Daniel joined himself to God's desire through God's Word. **OL2:** Prayer is the lifeline in the Lord's recovery. The more Satan tries to frustrate our prayer, the more we should pray. **OL3:** Daniel was a person living before God; he depended on prayer to do what man could not do, and he depended on prayer to understand what man could not understand. **OL4:** Everyone whom God uses to turn the age is afraid of only one thing, that is, of offending God and losing His presence. **OL5:** In order to be today's overcomers as God's dispensational instrument who turn the age, we must redeem the time.

[The second characteristic of] Daniel was [that he was] not only a person who read God's Word regularly but a person

who was joined to God's Word.... When he read from the book of Jeremiah that God had ordained seventy years of captivity for the Israelites and that after seventy years God would turn back to bless them, he immediately fasted and prayed.... After he read the book of Leviticus, he could no longer eat the unclean food. After he read the book of Jeremiah, he could not help but fast and pray for the restoration of God's people.

In order to not miss the opportunities, we need spiritual training. We also need spiritual sensitivity....With spiritual training, we can identify opportunities when they come our way. We cannot allow opportunities to go away. We must not be dull to any direction from the Head. We must not let the Head have a sense that we are numb to His leading. We have to be desperate for this.

One day we will face the Lord. Perhaps we will regret the things in our life that now provide us with satisfaction. We have come short of God's will. We have not been faithful. We have acted foolishly. The Lord may have put ten opportunities before us, but we have not even touched one.

Application: to new ones, Youth/College students

Japanese young people have a tendency to consider the Bible just as a new doctrine or teaching which are different from their native tradition unconsciously. If you consider the Bible as a book of mere doctrine, the Bible would not affect you even if you read it. You may be saved many years ago, but you still live in the life style of the old man.

Daniel rejected to be defiled by eating the defiled food which was devoted to the idols while he read the book of Leviticus. He opened himself to the Bible, linked the Word with his own living, pray over the Word and practiced the Word in his living. To redeem the time means pray reading the Word, enjoying Christ and practicing the Word. Daniel knew that the period of captivity of Israel was 70 years from the book of Jeremiah. He did not consider the difficulty of the return to Jerusalem by the people of Israel and the rebuilding of the temple, he just believed the Word of the Lord.

Please don't consider how difficult for Japanese to be saved and remain in the church life to be the remaining fruit. Just believe in the Word and preach the gospel of kingdom. In human eyes, the return of the people of Israel and the rebuilding of the temple were 120% of impossibility, but it happened.

Ezra 1:1 Now in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia; and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying, **2** Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

For example, the brothers and sisters who are student may feel difficult to testify the Lord and preach the gospel because the believers are so few and they may fall into unbelief. In such time, read the testimonies of Daniel and three friends in the book of Daniel and link yourself and pray. Then you will be strengthened and be able to preach the gospel.

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, the Bible is God breathed and it is not a book of doctrine, it transmits truth, reality. Daniel could redeem time to turn the age by pray over the Word and linked it with living after he read the Word. I also redeem time and read the Word, mixing it with faith and apply it in my student life. I would not be afraid of opposition, pioneering the new age of student life which testifies the Lord".

CP3: Be desperate in praying to become an overcomer and a vital person who is living and active to answer the Lord's call.

OL1: Dan. 11:32 "The people who know their God will show strength and take action."; this means that the people of God will open up new horizons; the more we know God's will, the more we will seize the opportunities; those who know God will never live in a habitual way day after day. **OL2:** The years that the locust has eaten will be restored to us; if we waste our days, ten years may be equal to one day, but if we redeem the time, one day may equal ten years. Psa. 84:10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. **OL3:** Today the way to become vitalized is to answer the Lord's call to be an overcomer; an overcomer is a vital person, and a vital person (one who is living and active) is a praying person.

Every time I think of [lost days], I become sorrowful and find the thought unbearable. However, I still thank the Lord who gives me comfort in my despair. In Joel 2:25 He said, "I will restore to you the years / That the swarming locust has eaten." Thank the Lord that He still has a way.

We must carry out the practice of the vital groups in desperation. We should pray desperately for the Lord to give us some fruit and remove our barrenness. This should be a matter of life or death with us. If we are desperate, I believe that the fish will come to us. The Lord will send them to us. But if we are indifferent, no fish will come to us.

There are two ways before us today. We can either choose to be vitalized or choose not to be vitalized.... Which way will we take? Are we going to be vitalized or not? We have to make a resolution. In Judges 5:15 Deborah said, "Among the divisions of Reuben / There were great resolutions in heart." We have to make a resolution to be the overcomers, the vitalized ones.

People on earth are suffering calamities, and the churches are in hardship; this is not the age of God's heart's desire, but the age of God's procedures.... To turn from the age of procedures to the age of God's heart's desire, man must pray the age-turning prayer. Daniel was such a man. ... Therefore, if the saints are to pray to end the time of calamities, they must answer God's demands and care for God and His needs. Oh! These many calamities today should wake us up to no longer live to the earth!

Application to the serving ones

Learn to seize the opportunity as a New Testament priest of Gospel (serving one). Living by the habits of the old man can make you sick of visiting people or going out to preach on the street. It also makes us not able to respond to the urgent needs or sudden changes. For example, due to the economic impact of the coronavirus, the United States saw a 32.9% decline in

Q2, the EU had a 40.0% decline, and Japan had a 13.8% decline. At present, Japan has less than half the impact of Europe and the United States, but the impact of Europe and the United States, which are major consumer countries, will further damage the Japanese economy like a body blow. This is a sharp slowdown in the world economy due to the effects of the coronavirus. This will reduce the average income by about 10-20% from the end of the year to the next year.

Many good companies are taking the opportunity to identify what is intrinsically important and what is important, but secondary. You should have a good spirit like Daniel, to identify crucial points and secondary points and be prepared to respond to any sudden change.

The crucial points of your life, an essential need, is the church life. Without a church life, there is no divine history in your human history. Your life can be blessed and kept in the church life and in the divine history.

Testimony of a sister: After the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011, I was sent from Taiwan full-time training at the end of March and came to Kobe to participate in the Gospel Preaching for two months. Many Japanese have been saved. I enjoyed the gospel preaching and fellowship with the brothers and sisters so much that the Lord gave me the burden of coming to Kobe after my training and took care of the new ones who got saved. I graduated from training in June and came to Japan in July without knowing anything with a three-month tourist visa. When I came to Japan, I planned to go to graduate school to get a visa, but in fact, I couldn't speak Japanese at all. The only thing that had been decided was the church life in Kobe, the gospel and nourishing, and nothing else. When I think about it now, nothing was decided, but the most important thing, the church life, was decided, so I think the Lord guided me. In an interview with a professor to apply for a research student at KIC Graduate School, I couldn't speak in Japanese at all, so I had one sister (my mother-in-law now) interpret it for me. Normally, this is impossible, but the Lord granted me favor of the professor, so this thing was done, and eventually I was accepted as a research student. About a year later, I passed the examination and was able to get an excellent scholarship with a very high competitive rate. Every year, this scholarship is obtained by international students from Kobe University School of Medicine and other faculties, as well as foreign students at Kwansai Gakuin University. KIC has no precedent, so KIC teachers were very surprised and pleased. Later the career and marriage were also guided by the Lord. The Lord has led me in church life and all things in my divine history. Hallelujah! Thank the Lord!

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, even in difficult circumstances and rapid changes, the crucial point of my life is the church life. In today's situation I will make a resolution to be a vital person in the Lord to answer God's demands and care for God and His needs. Lord Jesus, please wake me up. For God's economy, we pray and labor to build the Body of Christ and bring forth the return of the Lord. Amen!"