

Seizing the Opportunity

We hope to have the third round of 24-hour global watchman's prayer on March 31

Recently the epidemic is spreading on the whole earth. We believe the Lord listened to our prayer, so the epidemic has receded in China. However, at the present time, we need to continue the watchman's prayer. "You who remind Jehovah, / Do not be dumb; / And do not give Him quiet." (Isa. 62:6-7)

Jumping up and kneeling down to pray upon seeing the sign.

Luke 21 speaks of the signs of the Lord's coming. One of the signs is the return of Jerusalem to the Jews (v. 24); other signs include pestilence (v. 11) and anguish of nations on the earth (v. 25). The first sign has been fulfilled, and the latter two are being fulfilled. At this time, the believers should not just watch the situation passively; rather, we should "stand erect and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (v. 28). At this juncture, the Lord's commandment is: "Be watchful at every time, beseeching that you would prevail to escape all these things which are about to happen and stand before the Son of Man" (v. 36). In 1967 when Jerusalem was returned to the Jews, Brother Lee's first response was to jump out of his hospital bed and grab the hand of a young brother nearby to kneel down and pray. **Now facing the unprecedented global crisis, should we not have the same response?**

These days are not only the days of pestilence but also the days for seizing the opportunities.

What days are these days? These days are not only the days of pestilence and the days of anguish, but also the evil days and "ill, diseased"¹ days (Eph. 5:16). During these days we not only should not be foolish, but even more should seize the opportunities. Ephesians 5:16 says, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Brother Watchman Nee said:

"There are several Greek words for the word time, as it is translated in the two verses we just read. In both these passages, the Greek word is not *chronos*, but *kairos*. This word does not merely refer to time. There are many passages which use this Greek word in conjunction with other words, and in those instances it is translated opportunity...These words from the Bible show us the Lord's thought about opportunity. The Lord considers opportunity to be something very important...I do not know how much you understand the word opportunity. I always wonder how many opportunities I have missed. In many matters, on the negative side, we do not know how many opportunities we have missed. Many things which we can do are all too easily missed by us. Many people which we can save are all too easily neglected by us...When we face the Lord in the future, we will truly have much regret to face! We are confused and unclear about everything, and we do not know how many opportunities we have missed!

If we do not know what the Lord is doing today or what is going to happen today, we are missing the opportunity.

One who is learning to serve should not do the same thing today as he did yesterday. If he is the same today as yesterday, he has squandered his opportunities. If we do not know what the Lord is doing today or what is going to happen today, we are missing the opportunity.

If we can seize every opportunity God gives us, the increase of the work will be according to God's expectation.

¹ Thayer's Greek Lexicon: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G4190&t=NKJV>

We do not know what great things the Lord wants to do. Among the 470 million people in China, there are only a few hundred thousand Christians. We do not know how many opportunities we have already lost! I believe that God has given more opportunities than we can imagine. If we can seize every opportunity God gives us, the increase of the work will be according to God's expectation.

Those whom God can use never miss the opportunities He has provided.

Why does the Bible translate time as opportunity? Because "opportunity" is something that is found in time. Every day the Lord gives us opportunities... Those whom God can use never miss the opportunities He has provided... As we finish one matter, another will come our way. When the second matter is finished, the third, and then the fourth will come. Things happen continually, and we do not know how great any one of them will be. This is like throwing a stone into the water; the circles keep expanding until the ripples touch the shore. If we are faithful to follow up every event, we will not miss any opportunity, and we will reap colossal benefit. But if we miss any opportunity, the rippling may stop at any point, and our reluctance may result in no further widening of the circles.

If we do not miss the opportunities, the Lord will make tremendous gains.

I beg you to discover every opportunity God has given you every day. We hope we can discover the opportunities today instead of being reminded of them in the future...Redeeming the time means seeing what the Lord has arranged for us. If we do not miss the opportunities, the Lord will make tremendous gains, and the work will make immense progress.

We must not be dull to any direction from the Head; we have to be desperate for this and grasp whatever opportunity we have.

In order to not miss the opportunities, we need...spiritual sensitivity. If we are spiritually sensitive, we will sense the opportunity. 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. We should grasp whatever opportunity we have.

I do not know how many opportunities are missed because of our digging a hole to bury our gold.

It is a terrible mistake and a great loss to the church to bury the one talented ones in the ground, thinking that they are useless and unqualified for the service, not giving them the opportunity to produce. We must put out the capital before we will have the chance to earn money. If we bury the one talented ones in the ground, we take away the opportunity for such spiritual gifts to be employed and we stop their function. We will never be able to grasp the opportunity. This is called digging a hole to bury our gold. This is foolishness. I do not know how many opportunities are missed because of this.

The Lord could do a work ten times greater than is now among us.

My feeling is that the Lord could do a work ten times greater than is now among us...But today we cannot do it...Brothers, we must wake up. We do not know how great the opportunity ahead of us will be. It is possible for us to increase according to God's desire. We must bring God's children into His ordained way. Day by day we must take the opportunity to go on and to do the work before us.

I think the responsible brothers need to be fully conscious of the need to seize all opportunities. We should be filled with an awareness of all God-given opportunities. Every time we make a decision, we must be accurate. Whenever we make a decision, we should not just look at the present. Instead we should check whether our decision matches the opportunity given us by God.

Time is constant, but opportunities are not.

Before the coming of that day, I pray we will all learn to put ourselves into the Lord's hands...Opportunities come and go as the days pass; they are not constant. Time is constant, but opportunities are not. Opportunities appear in time. Time is continuous, but opportunities come and go. Therefore, we must grasp the opportunities. We must sense the opportunities whenever they come and make the most of them.

God has blessed Brother Witness's work; his strong point is that he does not allow any opportunity to slip by.

Today the problem is not that the Lord does not give us opportunities, but that we miss the opportunities. Every one of us must rise up. The responsible brothers of the church must rise up. We do not want to let the opportunities from God go by. 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. If we let the opportunity go, we will limit God's work.

If we can identify the opportunities, we can identify God's will; those who know God will never act in a habitual way.

More than half of God's will is found in His opportunity. One day when we stand before God, we will see that most of God's will lies in the opportunities He has given us. If we can identify the opportunities, we can identify God's will. This is a very serious matter. Daniel 11:32 says, "The people who know their God will...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. Anyone who hesitates is living in a habitual way. Those who know God will never act in a habitual way.

Once God moves, we should move.

The brothers should be strong to take action. Once God moves, we should move. We should not give up any opportunity.

When an opportunity comes, we find money coming as well; souls are saved, and the work advances. If we just afford these opportunities a little opening, they rush in. The problem, however, is that opportunities do not wait for us. When God opens the way for us to do something, we must do it. Once time moves on, the opportunity is gone. If we wait until tomorrow to do something, we will miss the opportunity. It may be useful to talk to a brother today. However, if we wait until tomorrow, it may no longer be useful because the opportunity is gone. We must have spiritual insight, and we must have spiritual senses. We must ask God to preserve each opportunity He has given us.

Recently, I experienced a great change in my feeling.

Recently, I experienced a great change in my feeling. I believe the Lord wants our senses to be sharpened. If we make any mistakes now, we will lose the God-given opportunities, and once these opportunities are gone, we may have to wait a few decades before they will come again...I believe we should find a way to reach out to the groups that love the Lord and are amicable to us...We should establish fellowship with them and bring them to the church...I think the Lord will want us to fellowship with such a spiritual group...All the brothers must be mobilized to go out and reach these ones. We did not do this in the past; we must do it now. We must pray much. Everyone must consider before the Lord to see if these feelings will grow within us. On the one hand, we must emphasize the gospel. On the other hand, we must pay attention to the spiritual groups...This is the opportunity of opportunities. We do not want to miss it; we want to take advantage of it.

I hope that from now on, we will be able to gain a few more steps along the way.

I hope that from now on, no opportunity will escape our feelings and our eyes. If we take the way of opportunities, perhaps we will be able to gain a few more steps along the way.” (Watchman Nee, July 19, 1950, Shanghai)

Esther was reminded that her existence was “for such a time as this” (Esth. 4:14).

The word of Daniel 11:32 was spoken at a time when antichrist was rampaging. **And it was during that time, Daniel said, “The people who know their God will show strength and take action” (11:32).** The time of Esther was a time when the lives of God’s people were threatened. She was reminded that her existence was “for such a time as this” (Esth. 4:14). **In the face of a trial unrepresented in human history, may God remind His children to “stand erect” (Luke 21:28), “redeeming the time” (Eph. 5:16), “show strength and take action” (Dan. 11:32), and rise up to pray!**

May God’s kingdom come and God’s will be done on earth as in heaven.

The prayer the Lord taught us is: “Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth” (Matt. 6:10). “Prayer does not change what God has ordained. Prayer never changes anything. Prayer only accomplishes what God has ordained. On the contrary, the lack of prayer and the absence of prayer changes things. When God’s people do not work together with God, He will allow many of the things ordained by Him to be delayed and not be fulfilled” (CWWN, Vol. 8: The Present Testimony (1) Issue No. 1).

Our prayer cannot stop; hopefully those who have practiced watchman’s prayers (i.e., set-time prayers) can continue steadfastly.

Our prayer should not be less than three times and thus suffer defeat (2 King 13:18-19). The Lord wants us to always pray and not lose heart as the widow did (Luke 18:1), because this is what He wants to find when He comes (v. 8). Our prayer cannot stop. Hopefully those who have practiced watchman’s prayers can continue steadfastly.

We hope to have the third round of 24-hour global watchman’s prayer on March 31.

“The petition of a righteous man avails much in its working²” (James 5:16). We hope to have the third round of 24-hour global watchman’s prayer on March 31 to release more positive energy, which will be manifested not only in the ones prayed for but also in the praying ones. We should not only pray for one country but also for all the countries, and not only pray for the Lord to save lives but even more for all the nations to turn to Christ to end this age and bring the Lord back. Amen.

² “Working” in the original language is *energeo*, which is the root of the English word *energy*. So this verse can also be translated as: “The petition of a righteous man avails much in its energy.”