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Visions and Revelations

Message 2: The Change of the Age

Dear brothers, I'm happy we have the opportunity to come to the second message. This series of messages will cover visions and revelations. But we are not talking about the truth, what are they according to the divine revelation, according to the speaking of the apostles. We are actually testifying or telling you the stories about it. So, there is a story, number one the story of Joseph. Then backing up, accompanying the story of Joseph, there are other stories. Every story is related to a vision. The major figure in the story saw a vision. Then a lot happen afterward. How many incidents mentioned in the Bible, there should be around 20. So, we may need a half year, five months, 4-5 months to finish all these stories and they are very practical. Every one can be applied, can be appreciated, can be challenged by ourselves and ask: are we part of it? Do we see something according to it? Do we really enjoy, able to enjoy what was in the story? In our heart, there is a response. We can say, Lord, somewhat I also have seen the same thing. Visions is a big thing. That's I shared last time. You have a vision you see something. When you see something, it's a big picture appear before you. like you see a baby. A baby become a vision. The vision including what he has, how beautiful he is, what can be developed. Eventually, you even have the according a kind of thinking, oh 10 years later, what will he be? Twenty years later, what will he be? All together this can be a vision. Then in this vision, there are many revelations. Just also like you go to a garden. You are so attracted, so many beautiful things. The trees, the flowers, the birds, the grass – all things together. Then you go one by one. Now I see a rose. Now I see a daffodil. I see something, one after another become a revelation: how beautiful, how rich, how good is the smiling, how they present themselves with dignity, even they are just a piece of flower. You know brothers, we need the visions and revelations. Concerning Jesus' coming, you have to realize this is a transition.

In the first vision Bible record, that is Matthew 1, chapter 1, the vision of Joseph. Accompanying with this vision, there are other visions at the same or about the same time. There's another vision seen by Zachariah, that a priest. And another vision, that is related to Mary. And there is another vision that is related to all the shepherds. And another vision related to the wise men who saw one star. That star, particular star. You know, this is very interesting. After all this, Jesus was born. A new age seemingly began. Because he was not yet grown up. Not yet going through death. Not yet in resurrection. But, somewhat the New Testament coming into being. So all these visions, from Joseph and Zachariah and Mary and the shepherds and these wise men is a transition or a change. Denotes a change from the Old Testament to the New Testament. From something according to law to a new age according to grace. It is very, very interesting. In these two big governmental ages, or dispensations, in between there are these 5 visions that bring us from old to the new. Give us ability to see something of the old to something that is new.

So, we come to the second message, that is the vision and revelations. Second message is The Change of Age. What is that? What does that mean? From the age of old to the age of new. From

dispensation of old to dispensation of new. From something outward to something inward. From something demand of man to something according to the life dispensation of God. This is a marvelous change! If you are soberly considering the whole Bible you can see that overall there are seven dispensations. In the Old Testament there are five. The first one, the dispensation of innocence. The second one, the dispensation of conscience. The third one, dispensation of man; man's government. The fourth is the dispensation of promise. After all this, that is 2000 years, some 2000 or 500 years. That come to Moses. That is the concluding of all the previous dispensations that the dispensation of law. So, if you come to the outline, here I did say, God's economy has seven dispensations in different ages. They are the age of innocence, the age of conscience, the age of human government, the age of promise and the age of law. Age of law concludes the Old Testament. In other words, God says, if I can ask of man, this is the most I can ask. I give the law, I give the things related to law. So, they have the tabernacle. They have the priesthood. They have the sacrifices. And they have the festivals. Their life should be marvelous IF, there have to be IF, if they do this. Because they do My law, they will live according to law. What happened in the 1500 years? Failure after failure. Failure after failure. It's interesting. When you come to the most prevailing king, that is David, then come to the most prevailing ruling, that is Solomon. Do you realize how corrupted these 2 rulers are? David is more than terrible. Solomon even much more than terrible compared with David. You can see God still have to say, David is after My heart. That means, in the Old Testament, what can I do to get man exactly according to what I want? I see someone terrible, not good. Yet good enough to satisfy Me, is better than all of others. Why? At least in his heart he is for Me. That is Old Testament. Old Testament is the 1500 years of failures. Failures upon failures upon failures. Exposing upon exposing upon exposing. This is why, eventually, you come to the end, Malachi, to the end of the Old Testament.

You should put down the Bible and sigh. We are hopeless. We really are hopeless. You can boast about Abraham, but we are hopeless. You can boast about Isaac and Jacob, be we are hopeless. You can boast about Joseph or Joshua, but we are hopeless. You can boast about David and Solomon, but we are hopeless. You have a strong feeling, WOE UNTO MAN! WHAT A HOPELESS SITUATION! This man, we man are in. terrible upon terrible. So the dispensation must have change. The era must be different. That is why you come to sixth dispensation, the dispensation of grace. The dispensation of new covenant. The dispensation, the content of this dispensation, is Christ. And Christ as life. And Christ as life supply. In this you have everything inside to uphold you, to carry you, to live with you, to support you, to bear you. So that you are able to be a person really after God's heart and not just intentionally like David. Not just intention like David. Rather, in living like Paul. What a marvelous situation! But how hard is this changing? All of a sudden, everything changed. So with these 7, let me finish this, with these 7 dispensations, eventually you have the age of law, which concludes the Old Testament.

Now when the Lord Jesus came he brought forth a new age, a new covenant, which is of life. I will give you new age, I will make a new covenant with you. And this covenant is of life which

is the Age of Grace when the Lord returns he will initiate the Age of Kingdom (Millennium). So the Old Testament concludes with the Age of Law, New Testament concludes or lead us to Jerusalem. Maybe we should say New Testament lead us to New Jerusalem. I think if you have a view of God's overall operating, don't consider today, don't consider we are now bothered by the coronavirus, then we begin to fight, "This from China, this from US..." Of course something become childish that how can this be from whatever country, but eventually did you realize we argue, we fight, we debate, we are very bothered. To come out of it is really something, we don't know. Today even many scientists predict this sickness will be with us, with human race, it's hard to believe. But anyway we are in a chaotic situation. This with us in the 21st century in human living everything according to us is modern, is scientific, their provision is more the marvelous but whole situation is terrible. So in the Old Testament provision is marvelous, but situation is terrible. It's very hard for us even to say all I supposed about Old Testament, no we can't. Then here, this why I see a word, the Old Testament law compared with the New Testament life. Old Testament, what is compose Old Testament? Law. God spoke to Moses, "You shall only have me as your God". Right? No don't make any idols. And these four items related to God himself. Then one item, honor your parents, which belong to the first tablets. Remember? Two tablets have the Ten Commandments, first five are related to the source. The source is God. So living should be according to God. Divinely, God is there. Humanely, parents are there. So honor your parents, right? That's related to source. Another five related to living, but whether related to source, related to living, human being can try their best to say, "I want to have it, I want to be that godly, I want to have no other God but Jehovah Himself." Which you can be a very godly man, but do you have Jehovah as your reality? When you say don't worship anything else, anyone else, except Jehovah, don't you unconsciously could have idols? Idol can be a house at that time, idol can be food at that time, idol can be a good family at that time. Today of course idol can be much, much more. Unconsciously we can see we are in the Old Testament time, so here I tell you write a simple outline here, points here to tell you there is differences between the Old Testament law to the New Testament and the New Testament life. A testimony that is according to law. Another covenant, testament is covenant, another covenant that is according to life. If I read this to you, the Old Testament law is in the requirement stemming from God's own being. In other word why God give you law? God says do you know who I am? If you don't know me, read the Ten Commandments, you will know who I am. I'm the unique one. I'm the real substance. No idols could give it to you. I'm the real blessed one. Then with me, I don't know anything that is unholy, anything that is unrighteous, anything that is improper, because I'm the unique God, the unique perfect one. So I am such a one that according to my being I will ask you to do something because I am such a person. What's going to happen resulting in the judgment of man? So eventually all man would begin to say wow I can't have, I can't do it. I can't have it. The New Testament brings in all-sufficient supply from God. God is sufficient supply. All sufficient supply from God. From God's redemption and salvation, resulting in the satisfaction of both God and man. Old Testament God says, "I'm here, do this!". New Testament says, "No, no, no. I'm the grace. I

like to be in you. I like to be one with you. I like to abide in you. I like to be growing in you. I eventually like you to testify of me". Old Testament condemns, New Testament provides, provides life for us to grow in life. This is so marvelous. Then point two. What is the contrast between the Old Testament and New Testament? The former is an outward God. What is Old Testament? God is outward. I know God, but God is outward. I know there is God, but God is outward. Remember when Paul was in Athens, they have all kind of idols, gods, then they have one monument says, "We worship the god we don't yet even know". Paul used that give a message. God will not abide in a house, in a building that you build because he is a creator of the universe, of the earth, of everything on this earth. So here shows that Athens just like many Chinese make many races all over the globe, whether they are educated, cultured, civilized, or not, in every tribe, every race, every nation, there is a feeling I want to respect God, honor God, satisfy God, to make God a blessing to me. Do you realize this basic thought matches the Old Testament. So Old Testament says I am God, I am the God, right? No. Worship me, honor me, do things that's why I am according to my desire. This Old Testament, but New Testament is an inward Lord. Do you know the difference? If you see a Jew, you honor them, because they're God's chosen people, you respect them because basically Jew is a respectable race, because they have Jehovah, God. But at the same time they worship Him, they honor Him, they keep Sabbath, they do everything try to please him. Christians are very different. Christian can say we're in the New Covenant. Where is God? In my spirit. Where is he living? In my spirit. What he is doing? Operating in my spirit. What's desire? Growing in my spirit and the many Christians' spirit, together we have an inward Christ, inward life-giving Lord. In the Old Testament outside, in the New Testament inside. Then the former, secondly, the former was what? Was the man striving. The latter, that's the New Testament, is a divine supply of life. You know if you still live in the Old Testament like many priests, godly Israelites at that time they tried everything so they can please God, at least a number of them would try everything that they can please God. They strive to the point their striving, even to not show striving, this just become our living. We will eat only the food that is clean, we will eat only the unleavened bread. We will do a certain thing in a certain way. We strive so that God can be happy with us. Can God really be happy if in principle they have the services, the sacrifices, these kind of sacrifice, sin offering, trespass offering, meal offering, peace offering. You have all these offerings, a burnt offering. You have these five kinds of offerings, shows I will do everything to make God happy. But what does the New Testament? I don't need to do a thing. The only thing I did was for some reason, I saw a revelation of Christ. In this revelation, I saw I'm a sinner, I need Jesus Christ. Through that, I become saved. And after I'm saved, I don't live outward, I live according to inward. You know what is that? When I call "O Lord!" I'm very happy. When I read the Bible, the Lord's presence. I'm with the saints, I'm joyful. When I sing hymns, I feel I can be in the heavenlies. There's not a strength, there's just a desire. Just like you have breakfast, well, you have a breakfast, right? So you ate already! But for some reason, you need a lunch. But lunch is not from outside, but inside. And for some reason, later, you need a supper. You slept last night. For some reason, you still want to sleep tonight. This is the nature of life, the life's desire. This is not a demand. With this,

you have a desire to say, "I enjoy the Lord's presence, the Lord can grow in me, and the Lord," here it says, "He is the life supply." When I have the Lord Jesus as breakfast, for some reason I want to read a verse. Then I begin to have a divine supply of lunch. For some reason, I'd like to see some brothers. Then I have a divine supply of supper. You know, brother, it's not outward. But it's a life demand. Don't look down at this life demand. Now, you cannot be with each other that easy. Do you miss your brothers? I do. Do you miss meetings? I do. Do you miss the time that we can sing a hymn together? I do. Used to be seems common. But now, it manifested, "Lord, in my life, there is such a need." Then at the same time, with this need, there is a supply. The Lord is always with you. The Lord says, "I am the Bread of Life. I am the Water of Life. Right? I am the Light of Life. I am everything, I am ready to meet all of your need as your supply." Don't do things outwardly--"I want to...!" No. But rather, according to the nature of life, the law of life, I have a need. And the more strong, the more I eat. So when you grow up somewhat healthy, to about eighteen, twenty, we Americans have this kind of funny statement: "I am so hungry, I could eat a horse!" I heard this, usually I laugh. Who can eat a horse? I'll get a horse for you, eat it! But this expression is very good. In the Old Testament, where's the horse? In the New Testament, yes, Lord Jesus is in you. He is so rich, He is the life store, He is the storage house. He can give you all the riches as supply as you need. There is nothing you need to worry and think about.

And more than that, the former is the old man's improvement. The latter is the new man's transformation. Not only that I want to strive to please the Lord, I want to change myself. I want to make myself very good. Right? That not only to man I dress properly, I do everything properly, but within me before God, I'd like to say, "God, please look at me, how much I want me, this man, be satisfied to You." I don't want to lose my temper. I don't want to have an evil thought. I don't want to have any greediness. I want to be somewhat so healthy that, "Lord, when You look at me, you see I am happy, Your marvelous boy!" Is that true? No. You can strive for improvement. But improvement will bring you things more need to be improved. I was very ill tempered. I got saved. Praise the Lord for that. From my temper. You know what's happened? I need another improvement--improvement of my ability of overcoming temper. Because it's still me! So I don't lose my temper, "Look, God, how holy I am!" God says, "No no no. That's still you. That's your improvement. Your improvement is from outward wickedness, which is ill temper. Now, to the inward weaknesses, which is your pride." I have overcome temper. I have overcome money. I have overcome--no. Whatever. The Lord says, "No." But New Testament is new man's transformation. God says, "Now, I just change you. How do I change you? Sometimes you don't even know it." Christians can say, "I love the Lord. I take in His supply. I don't know what's happened. After a period of time, people see me, they tell me, 'Hey, you are so different!' I don't even know I'm different!" What is that? A change of life. Then it issues in a change of living. That issues in a change of being. Then I'm different. After you love the Lord many years, you have a kind of maturity, you can say, "Lord, thank You. I am so much like You. I don't even think about it. I just want to enjoy Your rich supply and enjoy Your transformation."

More than that, the former is unto perfection from expectation of man. “Eventually, I’ll be such a spiritual man, or a holy man, a man of God. I have these kinds of dreams. One day, people see me, people can smell something. This is my human perfection.” But the latter is conformation from the will of God. I want myself to be so perfect. I have expectations. I wish while I walk into the hall, people can see a man of God is walking in. I wish when I’m with friends, people can say “Here’s a Christian, he’s unique, he’s special.” No. But eventually God says, “I don’t just transform you. I even conform you.” What does conform mean? Means to live Christ. “I want you to live as Christ. Live with the life of Christ. Live expressing Christ. Live, be one with Christ. Your living testifies Christ is not only in you as your Savior, also live out through you.” You are conformed in totality.

In the Old Testament, everything related to doing, doing something, doing something. The latter is a living according to supply of life. This is a portrayal of your whole Christian life. Your whole Christian life is a matter of enjoying the divine supply of life. Who? Christ. Where Christ is? In our spirit. There is a supply of life, brothers. There is a supply of life. Remember, there IS the supply of life that is in your spirit. Enjoy Him. Be with Him. Partake of Him. Testify Him. And tell the Lord, “Lord, save me from anything that is of the Old Testament. I know I am in the New Testament era. But for some reason, I still live an Old Testament life. Bring me back to You, to the New Testament. Let me enjoy redemption. Let me enjoy salvation. Let me enjoy you are the bountiful supply of life. Let me enjoy that with You, there is nothing short. I’d like to live out Christ--just who You are.” Remember there’s a song, “Oh to be like You.” Like You in everything. Like You in everything. But even that, still is a desire. Here it says, no, not just a desire. You can be transformed. You can even be conformed. Transformed so your inward spirit becomes strong and mature and rich. Conformed means now, you can say, “I live, and my life is Christ.”

You know, brothers, sorry, in this message, I cannot give you any story, because we don’t have time for it. Next week, sorry you have to wait for a week, we come together, we will come to the story of Zechariah, how he has a vision, eventually a revelation, eventually he brings in John, the forerunner. What “John” means? “John” means “God is gracious, God gives grace.” Means not only he is loved, but he is in grace. Love in grace, live in grace, express grace, his labor is in grace. This grace brings us, brings in the coming of Jesus, and brings in the new era, New Testament age.

May the Lord be with us. The Lord bless you. Amen.