

The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

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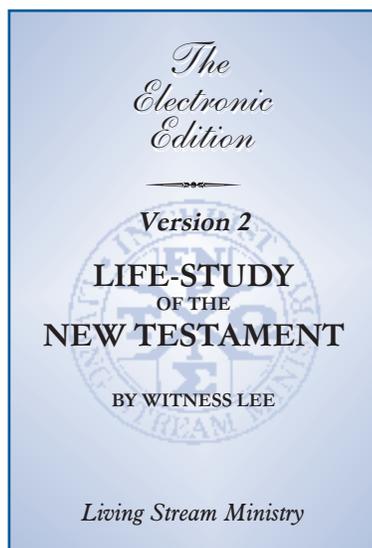
“He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?” Galatians 3:5

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To place an order for *The Electronic Edition of the LIFE-STUDY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT* on CD, or any of our books, please call 1-800-549-5164.

Dear Listeners,

This month we will conclude an excellent life-study of a deep book, Hebrews. We hope you have seen what it means to be a river crosser and have been exhorted to run the race that is set before us. What an incentive for our pursuit of Christ in this age to know that there is a reward in the next age!

On August 18 we will begin broadcasting *Life-study of Acts*. The book of Acts may be considered the “backbone” of the New Testament, standing between the four Gospels and the Epistles with the book of Revelation. The subject of this book is “the propagation of the resurrected Christ in His ascension, by the Spirit, through the disciples, for the producing of the churches—the kingdom of God” (*Life-study of Acts*, Msg. 2, p. 9)

We began broadcasting *Life-study of the Bible with Witness Lee* on September 1, 1996. The first life-study we broadcast was *Life-study of the Gospel of John*. We saw there what a wonderful Savior we have, whose life meets the need of every man's case. Jesus Christ is the complete God and, mysteriously, at the same time, He is also a perfect man. As we went through the Gospel of John, we saw how the Lord Jesus went through the process of death and resurrection for His multiplication.

After rising victoriously for our salvation, however, the Lord has not ceased to work in His ascension. As we shall see in *Life-study of Acts*, this ascended Christ is not passively sitting on the throne, observing the pitiful situation on the earth and feeling disappointed about it. No, in His ascension Christ is active in a very positive way, doing many things to carry out His purpose.

Have you ever seen that the Christ who is exalted and on the throne in the heavens is also living in our spirit? Please stay tuned for our broadcast on Acts. We believe you will hear and see something fresh and new of the resurrected and ascended Christ for your experience of this wonderful One!

Living Stream Ministry Radio

WHAT IS GOD'S THOUGHT CONCERNING REWARD & PUNISHMENT? PART 2

Our Father is very wise. On the one hand, motivated by His love, we are saved by grace through faith. On the other hand, the Father understands us and knows our fallen nature. He realizes that many of us will not be serious with Him for our whole life on earth. He knows that many of us will not obediently follow the divine revelation in the New Testament. This means that although we are saved, our lives may amount to nothing with respect to the carrying out of God's economy. Knowing this, the Father has taken a portion of time, the millennial kingdom of a thousand years, and makes that either a reward or a time of punishment to all the believers in Christ. This is done to serve as an incentive to us. Without such an incentive, the vast majority of believers

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REWARD & PUNISHMENT

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would not pursue the Lord sufficiently, and as a result, God's purpose would not be fulfilled through them. So although we are saved eternally by grace through faith (Eph. 2:5, 8-9), God Himself in His government has set up a system of reward and punishment for His children. Both reward and punishment are focused on the coming kingdom age (Matt. 25:21-30; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 20:4, 6).

We present this truth for your consideration. We urge you to examine the Scriptures again in this light. We uncompromisingly testify that eternal salvation is a gift (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8). But we also uncompromisingly bear witness to the fact that reward or punishment are related to how we live our Christian life and how we serve the Lord during the entire course of our Christian life (Matt. 16:27; 1 Cor. 3:8-15; 4:5; Rev. 22:12).

An obvious fact must impress us deeply: we are not in charge here. We are not the One on the throne setting up the principles by which we are to live. There is One on the throne administering on behalf of God's interests. Our Lord is the One who establishes the principles by which we must live and serve (2 Tim. 4:8). We may try to avoid this unpopular truth, but there is no way to avoid it permanently. Sooner or later what is written in the Word of God will be applied to us as we give an account to the Lord (Rom. 14:10, 12).

Please soberly and prayerfully consider those words in Matthew, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, Revelation, and elsewhere in the New Testament concerning reward and punishment. It is a fact that at the judgment seat of Christ every child of God will hear an explicit word from the Lord Jesus, not concerning eternal salvation but concerning dispensational reward or punishment (2 Cor. 5:10). If we realize this and if we mean business with the Lord, surely we will want to live and serve in such a way that when we meet Him the Lord Jesus will say, "Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master" (Matt. 25:21, 23).

Please be sure to read Part 1 of "What Is God's Thought concerning Reward and Punishment?" in last month's newsletter. For further reading on this subject, see Witness Lee's footnotes for the above referenced verses in the New Testament Recovery Version.

Bookends

TO H E B R E W S

On August 17 we will complete the broadcast of Life-study of Hebrews. As a conclusion, we offer below two "bookends" to this wonderful life-study: an excerpt from the first message of the Life-study of Hebrews and a footnote on the last verse of Hebrews taken from the New Testament Recovery Version.

This book [Hebrews], with the concept of all positive things being heavenly, points us to the very Christ who is in the heavens. In the gospels is the Christ who lived on the earth and died on the cross for the accomplishment of redemption. In the Acts is the resurrected and ascended Christ propagated and ministered to man. In Romans is the Christ who is our righteousness for justification and our life for sanctification, transformation, conformation, glorification, and building up. In Galatians is the Christ for our living versus the law, religion, tradition, and forms. In Philippians is the Christ lived out of His members. In Ephesians and Colossians is the Christ who is the life, the content, and the head of the Body, the church. In Corinthians is the Christ who is everything in the practical church life. In Thessalonians is the Christ who is our holiness for His coming back. In Timothy and Titus is the Christ who is God's economy for us to behave ourselves in the house of God. In the epistles of Peter is the Christ who is for us to take God's governmental dealings through sufferings. In John's epistles is the Christ who is the life and fellowship of the children of God in God's family. In Revelation is the Christ who is walking among the churches in this age, ruling over the world in the kingdom in the coming age, and expressed in full glory for eternity. In Hebrews is the present Christ who is now in the heavens as our Minister (8:2) and our High Priest (4:14-15; 7:26), ministering to us the heavenly life, grace, authority, and power, and sustaining us to live a heavenly life on earth. He is the Christ now, the Christ today, and the Christ on the throne who is our daily salvation and moment by moment supply. This is the Christ revealed in Hebrews. I love this description of Christ. I would do my best to influence you, impress you, and even compel you to love Him.

From Life-study of Hebrews, by Witness Lee, Msg. 1, pp. 12-13.

"Grace be with you all. Amen." Heb. 13:25

To realize and participate in all the things unveiled in this book, we need grace. To have grace (12:28) we need to come forward to the throne of grace that we may find grace for timely help (4:16). It is when we touch the throne of grace in the Holy of Holies through the exercise of our spirit that we enjoy the Spirit of grace (10:29) and that our heart is confirmed by grace (v. 9). By such an enjoyment of grace we run the race set before us (12:1) that we may reach the goal of God's economy.

From Heb. 13:25, note 1, New Testament Recovery Version.

Highlights

FROM THE LIFE-STUDY OF ACTS

Below is an excerpt from Life-study of Acts. We will begin our broadcasts from this book on August 18, 1998.

The almighty God, the eternal Jehovah, the Creator of the universe, was conceived in the womb of a virgin and was born of that virgin to be a Person with two natures—the divine nature and the human nature. This means that He was born as the God-man, the One who is both the complete God and a perfect man. . . .

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LETTERS *from* LISTENERS

The following are responses from listeners of the broadcast of *Life-study of the Bible with Witness Lee*. We invite you to write to us to share your comments with us and other listeners that we all may be encouraged in the Lord. All letters are subject to editing for the sake of space, content, and clarity.

I first listened to this broadcast in November 1997. At that time it was on Life-study of Genesis. I still enjoy this broadcast, which is now on Life-study of Hebrews. Sometimes I miss the broadcast, but I really enjoy it. According to 1 Tim. 2:4, God desires all men to have the knowledge of the truth. This ministry is such a big help for me to understand the Bible. I thank you very much for it and I will continue listening. Praise the Lord!

A.S., Lakewood, CA

I always feel so fortunate to be in the car when the life-study messages are on the radio. There have been so many times when I have been saved out of myself, my emotions and concerns, into my spirit. Thank you for your labor.

L.L., Arlington, TX

I'm a prisoner who happened to tune into your program this past Sunday night. . . I caught the end of your program and I found it to be very interesting. The speaker was teaching out of the book of Hebrews. I'm hoping that you could please send the book that you offered at the end of the program. . . I have a zeal for the Word of God and I'm trying to learn all I could possibly learn so I may teach others. Please send any literature that would help me in my walk with Jesus. May God continue to bless your ministry. My prayers are with you.

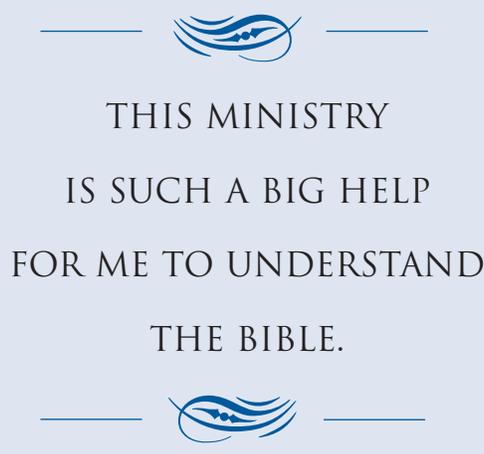
A brother in Christ, New Iberia, LA

I am a nursing supervisor. I work an 11:00 P.M. to 7:30 A.M. shift, Monday

through Friday, so I get to listen to your program every night on my way to work. What a blessing! I thank God for Brother Lee and this ministry. You are God sent for such a time as this! Thank you and God bless you.

G.J., Buena Park, CA

Each time I tune in to the Life-study of the Bible program I am refreshed and recalibrated. When I do get the opportunity to listen, I am struck that this ministry which opens the Word to us is



unparalleled. I used to tune in to other programs on Christian radio while commuting to school, but soon became disappointed in what was offered. What a help to be saved from our old, selfish, and religious way of seeking the Lord. Each time I have listened, I am saved into God's view.

M.R., Anaheim, CA

I went to a friend's house this morning to pick up some signs for a garage sale and at 10:20 I realized I was twenty minutes late in turning the broadcast

on. I asked my friend if I could turn on his radio so we listened to the last ten minutes of the broadcast together. It was regarding our Melchisedec, who is ministering the bread and wine to us, enabling us to live a heavenly life on this wicked earth. I was, as always, strengthened, supplied, encouraged, and fed, and I believe my friend was as well. I feel a big lack in my day when I miss hearing the broadcast. Even by missing the first twenty minutes, I felt cheated, but just a taste of this brings in life and light and ushers us a little bit more into the kingdom.

The Lord meets our needs so that we can meet His need. Thank you for being channels for the Lord to feed His hungry believers such as me. Once you've tasted this ministry, it's difficult to eat anything else. Christ is so rich and so sweet and I'm so glad to know and experience Him more and more as the eatable and drinkable One!!!

Without this ministry I would never have known that I could eat Him and drink Him and experience Him as everything. He is our real bread and true drink. Only He can satisfy and meet all of man's needs. Thank you for richly feeding me at 10:00 A.M. every morning, Monday through Friday (as well as on the weekends) here in Seattle through the radio broadcast. God richly bless you all for your diligent labor in blessing us with the high truths of God's rich Word.

E.C., Seattle, WA

The TESTIMONY OF WITNESS LEE

In His Own Words

The following is an ongoing series relating the testimony of Witness Lee, author of Life-Study of the Bible, gathered from his published ministry.

I have been serving the Lord in the line of His New Testament economy for many years. During this time we have studied and investigated the different practices of Christianity. Especially since the Reformation, many different practices have been raised up, such as the practice of baptism and of the presbytery. When we were young, we were the modern young people of China. During our youth there was a great turn among the conservative Chinese. Our fathers were very conservative, but we were raised up as young people in a new era. We all became quite modern, and we decided to learn the real situation in the world and in history. Almost sixty years ago, I came to know the world situation quite well. All the unequal treaties made by the foreign powers with China were so familiar to us. The leaders of the two main political parties in China today, the nationalist party and the communist party, are my age. We were taught in the same schools as they were. At that time there was a great tide sweeping over all of China to catch the young people. Either one was caught by the nationalist party, or later on he would be caught by the communist party. But we were caught by the “Jesus party.” I was glad that I was born in that period of time. When I graduated from the English speaking college established by the American Presbyterians, my graduation paper was on imperialism, a subject selected by me. . . .

I mention this to you so that you could see that we were not foolish, old fashioned young people. We were not raised up by the Lord in a blind way. We scientifically studied Christianity. We investigated the situation. Since the first year I was saved, I studied the Bible and made a resolution to know the Bible word by word. I read a number of articles by Watchman Nee, and those articles really caught me. I admired his writing and had the highest regard for the truth he presented. I wrote to him and asked him to tell me the best book to help me to understand the Bible. He responded saying that, according to his knowledge, the best book to help me to know the Bible was John Nelson Darby’s *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*. Eventually he gave me a set as a gift. I tell you this to give you an indication of where we were and from where we came. We two young people in China, considered as “natives” by the missionaries, were seeking to know the Bible by means of Darby’s synopsis.

Fellowship concerning the Lord’s Up-to-Date Move, pp. 60-61.

THE HEARING OF FAITH

is a publication of Living Stream Ministry. All subscriptions are free. In addition to portions of ministry, this newsletter features broadcast updates and other items of interest. We hope that this newsletter will not only inform you of current news but will also nourish and refresh your spirit. Please be sure to read our reply card and feel free to use it to make comments or ask questions.

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According to the revelation of the Scripture, we believe that any ministry that comes from God should trust in God for all its needs. Therefore, we have made it our policy not to solicit donations or contributions. However, if any one of our listeners is led by the Lord to give, we will accept offerings as from the Lord and will use them for the furtherance of His truth.

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Highlights *(continued from page 2)*

. . . He lived on earth a life that was the mingling of God with man. After accomplishing eternal redemption, He came forth out of death, and in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit. In His resurrection He breathed Himself into His disciples essentially. Then economically He ascended into the heavens. Therefore, economically the Lord Jesus is now in the heavens as the glorified One, and essentially He is in His disciples as their life. Hallelujah for the One who is both within His disciples essentially and on the throne in the heavens economically! May we all have such a view of our wonderful Savior. . . .

. . . This is the revelation that precedes the book of Acts.

We need to see this revelation as we come to Acts. This means that as we study Acts we need to have the view of the Lord Jesus as the One who is on the throne economically and within us essentially.

Following Acts we have the Epistles. If we would understand the Epistles, we must have a thorough study of the book of Acts. If we do not have the proper understanding of Acts, we shall not be able to understand the Epistles adequately. Many readers of the New Testament do not have the right understanding of the Epistles, because they do not have a clear vision concerning Acts. Therefore, we do look to the Lord to open this book to us and give us a clear view of what is revealed in it.

Life-study of Acts, Msg. 1, pp. 5, 7-8