

The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 3, JULY 1998

"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

In THIS ISSUE

- 1 Letter from Living Stream Ministry Radio
- 1 What is God's Thought concerning Reward and Punishment?
- 2 Hymn 837
- 2 New Stations
- 3 Letters from Listeners
- 4 The Testimony of Witness Lee in His Own Words
- 4 Highlights from the Life-study of Hebrews

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

GENESIS

Unit 1
Growth in Life

God Created • Satan Corrupted
Man Fell • Jehovah Promised to Save

For detailed information please check the appropriate box on the enclosed reply card.

Dear Listeners,

Thank you for your encouraging comments. We have received many reply cards from our first mailing of *The Hearing of Faith* and will include some of these comments in "Letters from Listeners." Although our service here at the Living Stream Ministry broadcast section is unto the Lord, we like hearing from you, the listeners, about your appreciation or questions.

Some listeners have asked us about the hymn we play at the beginning of each *Life-study* program. The words of this hymn were written by Witness Lee in the early 1960s. The tune was composed by Lowell Mason and may be familiar to many. We have included this hymn in its entirety in this issue of *The Hearing of Faith*.

When Witness Lee came to the United States in 1962, he read through many of the hymnals available in Christianity and selected what he considered to be the top hymns. It may surprise many of you to know that Living Stream Ministry has published a hymnal (*Hymns*) consisting of 1080 hymns, including two hundred and forty-four by Witness Lee, thirty-one translations from the Chinese, many of which are by Watchman Nee, and over eight hundred classics of our Christian heritage.*

Toward the end of August we will finish broadcasting the *Life-study of Hebrews*. Since Hebrews speaks much concerning the believers' incentive to pursue the Lord, we have decided to include in the July and August issues an article entitled "What Is God's Thought concerning Reward and Punishment?" We hope the many Scripture references will cause you to dive further into this enlightening truth. Feel free to write us concerning this or any other matter that would help you in your pursuit of the Lord.

* For further information see the chapter "Knowing the Hymns" in *Speaking Christ for the Building Up of the Body of Christ*.

Living Stream Ministry Radio

WHAT IS GOD'S THOUGHT CONCERNING REWARD & PUNISHMENT? PART 1

Toward the very end of the book of Revelation the Lord Jesus speaks a word that should really capture our attention: "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me to render to each one as his work is" (Rev. 22:12). This is the final speaking in the New Testament, a speaking from the Lord Himself concerning His rewarding the believers.

There are numerous instances in the New Testament where the Lord Himself speaks or His representatives, the apostles, speak to us concerning reward (Matt. 25:21, 23; 1 Cor. 3:8; 2 Tim. 4:8;

(continued on page 2)

REWARD & PUNISHMENT

(continued from page 1)

Heb. 10:35). For example, in 1 Corinthians 3 Paul charges us to take heed how we build upon Christ as the unique foundation laid by the apostles for God's building. He said that we may build with wood, grass, or stubble, or with gold, silver, and precious stone. Then he went on to say that the fire will try everyone's work as to what sort it is, and if one's work remains, that one will receive a reward (vv. 10-15).

There are two particular matters here. First, reward is different from the gift of eternal salvation. Salvation is absolutely by grace through faith (Eph. 2:5, 8-9). There is nothing we can do to merit it. We simply believe into the Lord Jesus, receive the Lord into us, and we have eternal life and God's salvation (John 1:12). That is secure and settled eternally. Reward, however, is something in addition to salvation. How do we live our Christian life? Are we faithful to the end? What is the nature of our work (1 Cor. 3:12)? Do we build up or do we mar the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:17)? Have we finished our course? Have we kept the faith (2 Tim. 4:7)? Questions such as these are related to the matter of reward. The Lord is very interested in how we live and how we serve or work as believers. If our living and our work, having been tested, are approved by Him, we will receive a reward (1 Cor. 3:14). This reward is related to enjoying the Lord and reigning with Him during the millennial kingdom (Matt. 26:21, 23; Rev. 20:4). The first matter to note is that reward is different from salvation.

The second matter (which is surprising to most Christians) is that along with a positive reward there is also the matter of discipline or punishment. Just as parents may administer proper discipline to their children when they disobey, so God the Father does to His children. If we are careless and loose in our living and if we are slothful or lawless in our work, we face a twofold dilemma at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). First, there may be no reward for us in a positive sense. Second, there may be discipline applied during the millennial kingdom.

According to the Scripture, then, our salvation is eternally secure. Whether we will be rewarded or disciplined by our loving Father during the millennial kingdom depends upon how we live and work today.

Please be sure to read Part 2 of "What Is God's Thought concerning Reward and Punishment?" in next month's newsletter. Also, for further reading on this subject see Witness Lee's footnotes for the above referenced verses in the New Testament Recovery Version.

At the beginning and end of each broadcast of *Life-study of the Bible with Witness Lee* the first verse of the following hymn is played. The words of this hymn on the church and her building were written by Witness Lee in the 1960s and is included as Hymn # 837 in *Hymns* published by Living Stream Ministry.

8. 8. 8. 8.

- 2 Though in Thine image made by Thee
And given Thine authority,
Yet we are only made of clay
Without a trace of divinity.
- 5 But, Lord, we fully realize
These are not wrought men's praise to rouse,
But as material to be built
Together for Thy glorious house.
- 3 When we receive Thee as our life,
Thy nature we thru grace possess;
Mingled together, we with Thee
One Body glorious will express.
- 6 Here, Lord, we give ourselves to Thee;
Receive us into Thy wise hands;
Bend, break, and build together in Thee
To be the house to meet Thy demands.
- 4 When flows Thy life thru all our souls,
Filling, renewing every part,
We will be pearls and precious stones,
Changed to Thine image, as Thou art.
- 7 Break all the natural life for us,
Deal Thou with each peculiar way,
That we no more independent be
But with all saints are one for aye.

8 Then we shall be Thy Bride beloved,
Together in Thy chamber abide,
Enjoy the fulness of Thy love.
How Thou wilt then be satisfied!

Life-Study of the Bible

W e l c o m e s

Memphis, TN	WREC	600 AM	9:00 am	Sunday
Memphis, TN	WKRA	92.7 FM	10:30pm	Mon - Sat
	WKRA	92.7 FM	8:30 am	Sunday
Jacksonville, FL	WJGR	1320 AM	9:00 am	Sunday
Anchorage, AK	KATB	89.3 FM	5:00 pm	Sunday

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 am in a great struggle, battle-worn and weary. Your newsletter brought hope to me that I might be a transformed Jacob empowered for service to Almighty God. I am raising a standard in the midst of a flood, and you give me wonderful comfort.

V.B.

I was driving on a Monday morning early in December to Houston. It was a seven to eight mile drive to work, and I started looking through the Christian radio stations. I began to hear the middle of a teaching from Witness Lee. It touched my heart so much. I became immediately glued to the radio and started taking notes in heavy Houston traffic. Witness Lee was speaking about our being the wine or the drink offering that we could pour out to the Lord for His refreshment. It was so meaningful to me. I had been going through a period of great suffering. It was a fiery trial that I'd been in, really for the Lord's sake. Then suddenly all of this made sense to me and I was so tremendously encouraged.

I called the 800-number at the end of the day when I got back home. I received a copy of the outline that was being given that day, which was absolutely meaningful and I treasured it. I ordered a [New Testament] Recovery Version, and since I got the Recovery Version I can't put it down. I find myself carrying it from room to room, from kitchen to bedroom to bathroom to my car to my office and

back. I'm losing sleep, wanting to take it all in, reading, and studying. I have always studied the Bible but the notes opened up so much more for me. . . . I did read The Tree of Life first, then The Economy of God, and I'm just finishing The All-inclusive Christ. These studies have opened up very wonderful explanations for a lot of things I've been experiencing but did not have a label for. . . . I had been


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enjoying the Lord previously but now the understanding of these spiritual concepts has compounded my enjoyment of the Lord and the fellowship with the saints. I am thrilled. I can't say this in the words that I truly feel, but I just cannot put my Bible down. I appreciate so much the ministry over there at Living Stream.

B.C.

I can see more and more that what I most need is to open to the Lord! He is my need! He is my Redeemer, my Washer (through His speaking), my Sanctifier, Transformer, Conformer, and Glorifier in the church, which is His Body. This newsletter as well as the radio program is

CERTAINLY a very valuable part of this good work. My prayers and rejoicing are with you.

C.H.

I have lived forty-nine years without having a real understanding of God's purpose for me or in me. I was raised in a Pentecostal family with a heavy emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

However, I never really understood how God was truly connected to us. The teaching that Witness Lee gave us on the grafted life made my heart sing and my mind rejoice with understanding of God's dispensation for and towards us. God looked at the world and saw vessels of His image and likeness which He loved. He looked past the cosmos to the vessels of His heart's desire created for His purpose according to His will in Genesis 1:26. This teaching in

Romans was a very lovely revelation worthy of a God whose mercy and grace purposed a plan to reclaim the vessels of His desire. Christ was cut in order that we, the objects of His desire, might be grafted into His divine life. He took on our human life and made a way to receive the objects of His heart's desire. By the killing power of the divine life the grafted branch (us) will be conformed as the vine (divine).

So in closing I would like to thank our God and Father for the precious Lamb of God, who has loved us with a love that passeth understanding.

A brother in Christ

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.

After I got saved, I loved the Lord, and I liked to preach the gospel. No one charged me to preach the gospel, but I spontaneously did it. I even wrote a long gospel tract. I must honestly confess, however, that I did not know how to preach the gospel at that time. Eventually, someone did perfect me to preach the gospel. I was taught the truths concerning God's salvation, and I was also taught how to discern people. We need to discern people and preach the gospel to them according to the kind of person that they are. If someone is a lover of money, we need to preach the gospel to him in a particular way according to the kind of person he is. Acts 24 records that Paul preached the gospel to a Roman governor. This governor was a man of lust and corruption, so Paul preached the gospel, reasoning with him concerning righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment (v. 25). As a result, this Roman governor became afraid. We should not preach the gospel to a banker in the same way that we would to a fisherman. We cannot preach the gospel properly if we do not discern the people to whom we are preaching. This is why we need to be perfected to preach the gospel.

D.L. Moody, the great evangelist, was speaking to a certain lady after his preaching of the gospel to a large audience. At a certain critical point in D.L. Moody's talk with her, there was a distracting disturbance. That critical point of time was the right time for her to pray. After that disturbance, however, she would not pray to receive the Lord. From this story I was perfected to realize that when we are preaching the gospel to someone, we must be exercised to discern the right time to bring this person into prayer. (*The Advance of the Lord's Recovery Today*, pp. 85-86)

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

FROM THE LIFE-STUDY OF HEBREWS

The book of Hebrews is marvelous in both its content and its composition. . . .After covering so many items in the first two chapters, the writer concludes this section by revealing that the Son of Man is a merciful and faithful High Priest ministering to us. . . .

Why does the writer of Hebrews use the words *merciful* and *faithful* to describe this High Priest? . . .The answer is that in the first two chapters of this book the writer has mainly covered two points—that Christ is the Son of God, God Himself, and the Son of Man, man Himself. *Merciful* corresponds with His being a man, and *faithful* corresponds with His being God. In order to be faithful we not only need virtue but also ability. Suppose I have spoken a word to you as a promise. Although my virtue may be good, I may not have the ability to keep my word. . . .Eventually I am forced into not being faithful. But this High Priest is not merely an honest man; He is the faithful God. God is faithful (10:23). He is able to fulfill whatever He says. God never lies (6:18). Whatever He has spoken He is able to fulfill. He has every means to fulfill what He has spoken. Only God can be fully faithful. . . .What can frustrate God from fulfilling His word? Nothing. Jesus can be a faithful High Priest because He is the very Almighty God. Since He, as the Son of God, is God Himself, He is able to be faithful. . . .

Being merciful corresponds to the point of Christ's being a man. He became a man and lived on earth as a man passing through all the human sufferings. As a result, He is fully qualified to be merciful to us. He knows how to be merciful to man. He is a man with the experiences of human life, with the experiences of human suffering.

How is Christ able to be a merciful and faithful High Priest? Because He is the Son of Man with the human nature and the Son of God with the divine nature. He is fully qualified.

Life-study of Hebrews, by Witness Lee, Msg. 13, pp. 141-142