

The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

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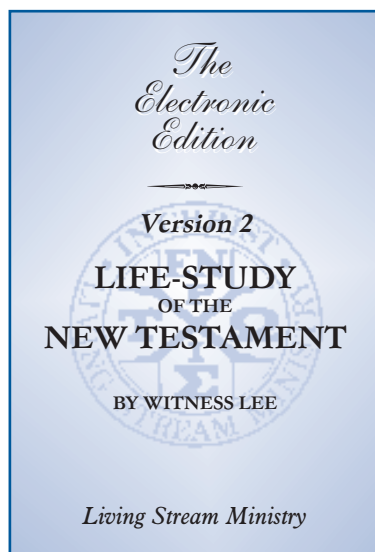
“He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?” Galatians 3:5

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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 administrating 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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