

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

In

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Dear Life-study Listener,

None of us will soon forget the unprecedented tragedy of September 11. This edition of the *Hearing of Faith* is our first opportunity to respond.

On page two is an excerpt from *Life-study of Lamentations* concerning Jeremiah's word when the capital of Israel was destroyed and their territory occupied. At such a sad time, the prophet acknowledged in prayer, "It is Jehovah's lovingkindness that we are not consumed, / For His compassions do not fail; / They are new every morning; / Great is Your faithfulness. / Jehovah is my portion, says my soul; / Therefore I hope in Him. / Jehovah is good to those who wait on Him, / To the soul that seeks Him." (Lam. 3:22-25). May these words comfort us and strengthen us.

Life-study of Ephesians starts on November 5. We had already planned earlier to write our regular "What Is" column on the meaning of God's blessing, since Ephesians is full of God's spiritual blessings to His people. The timing of this article could not have been better planned as there is such a cry today for God to bless America. We agree with this, and we pray that God will bless America. We hope, however, you tune into *Life-study of Ephesians* to see more specifically what God's thought is concerning His blessing.

During this crucial time, we echo the apostle Paul's exhortation to Timothy that we pray first for our leaders that "we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all godliness and gravity" (1 Tim. 2:2).

Living Stream Ministry

Life-Study of the Bible

W E L C O M E S

KANSAS CITY, MO
KCWJ 1030 AM
NOON MON-FRI

WHAT IS GOD'S BLESSING?

"God bless America." In these past weeks and months, we've heard, spoken, written, and prayed this well-known phrase so often. As we consider the great tragedy and loss, the upheaval and change, inflicted on this country on September 11, we surely feel the need for God to bless us, both individually and as a people. But we need to ask, in what way does God want to bless us? What

(continued on page 3)

RESPONSE *from* LISTENERS

We invite you to share your comments with us and other listeners so we all may be encouraged in the Lord. Responses should be addressed to *The Hearing of Faith*, "Response from Listeners," 2431 W. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92801 or radio@lsm.org. Responses are subject to editing for the sake of space and clarity.

I just started listening to your program the other day because although I am Jewish, I have had some experiences of Jesus. I went with a friend of mine to the [radio] conference in San Jose. I started listening to the radio show, which was announced on 770 AM, after I heard about it at the conference. I appreciate it and really like it. It was difficult to listen to Witness Lee at first, but I enjoyed today's program so much. I was pleased. I felt quickened in my spirit to hear about the tabernacle and the show bread being on enjoying the supply of life. I am very excited about it. I would appreciate receiving the tape of today and yesterday. I would also like to receive the diagram of the tabernacle and the different stages of going on and the Life-study of Hebrews that goes along with this. I enjoy the various levels of the conversation on the radio show with Chris and the other fellow discussing what Witness Lee spoke about. I think the format is very yummy, very nutritious, very good. Thank you so much. I am glad I found this, especially being a Jewish person. It is so helpful to hear the book of Hebrews. I feel like I am still on the banks of the Jordan, and I haven't crossed all the way, but hopefully God will save me. I am looking forward to receiving the material.

San Rafael, CA

Praise the Lord! I am so thankful for the radio broadcast and the ministry. I enjoyed very much Life-study of Luke. I was most touched with the last message regarding the Man-Savior's ascension. My mother-in-law went to be with the Lord the night before this message aired. It was such a comforting word. How sovereign our Lord is, and how He cares for us! Lord Jesus, I love you and thank You.

Bellevue, WA

Excerpt from

LIFE-STUDY OF LAMENTATIONS

BY WITNESS LEE

Lamentations 3:22 and 23 say, "It is Jehovah's lovingkindness that we are not consumed, / For His compassions do not fail; / They are new every morning. / Great is Your faithfulness." I believe that this word came to Jeremiah as he was contacting the Lord in the morning, reviewing all the

*We need to realize
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afflictions of his people. While Jeremiah was reviewing these afflictions, he must have regretted the sinfulness of Israel. At this juncture the word of Jehovah came to him, that no matter how much He had punished Israel, He had not utterly consumed them.

Jeremiah and many others remained. This was God's lovingkindness. Realizing that he and all the others who remained with him were under God's compassions, Jeremiah praised, saying, "For His compassions do not fail" (v. 22b). The people of Israel had failed, but God's compassions did not fail. His compassions had preserved the remnant of Israel....

In verse 23b Jeremiah declared, "Great is Your faithfulness." God's compassions do not fail, because He is the faithful One. The faithfulness of God refers to His word. His faithfulness is also related to His covenant. Because He had made a covenant with Abraham and confirmed it with Isaac and Jacob, God had to be faithful to keep His word. God had spoken to Israel's forefathers, and He was faithful to keep His word.

In verses 24 and 25 Jeremiah continued, saying from the depths of his being, "Jehovah is my portion, says my soul; / Therefore I hope in Him. / Jehovah is good to those who wait on Him, / To the soul that seeks Him." This word about Jehovah being our portion and about hoping in Him surely has a New Testament flavor. This indicates that as Jeremiah was writing verses 22 through 25, he was in the New Testament economy.

Jeremiah enjoyed Jehovah as his portion, and he put his hope not in himself nor in the people nor in anything else but only in Jehovah. On the one hand, Jeremiah realized that God is a God of lovingkindness, that He is compassionate, and that His word is faithful. On the other hand, Jeremiah realized that we still need to contact the Lord every morning, put our entire hope in Him, and wait on Him.

In Jeremiah's time, the situation of the people of Israel was not good. It did not seem that God was so loving, kind, compassionate, and faithful. Rather, it looked just the opposite. When we are in a similar situation, what should we do? Like Jeremiah, we need to realize that God is still our portion and that we should hope in Him, wait on Him, and call upon His name (v. 55).

Life-study of Lamentations, pp. 6-8

GOD'S BLESSING

(continued from page 1)

is the significance of God's blessing according to the New Testament?

In the Greek language, the word *blessing* means good speech, fine speaking, good utterance. Whenever we read the words "blessed be" in the Bible, that is God's well speaking of us, His good, fine speaking to us. When God speaks to us, He blesses us. Furthermore, Ephesians 1 tells us specifically what these blessings of God are.

Ephesians 1:3 says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ." If we read on in chapter one, we find that verses 4-14 speak of these very blessings: God *chose* us in Christ (v.4); He *predestinated* us unto sonship (v. 5); He *redeemed* us through Christ's blood (v.7); He *designated* us as God's inheritance (v. 11); He *sealed* us with the Holy Spirit who is the pledge, a guarantee of God as our inheritance (vv. 13-14)! These things may not fit into our traditional understanding of blessing. However, this is what the New Testament reveals as God's blessing.

According to verse 3, all the blessings in verses 4-14 are spiritual, in the heavenlies, and in Christ. In the Old Testament, God blessed His people, the children of Israel, with many physical and earthly blessings. Today we may ask God to bless us with riches, health, wisdom, or a peaceful living situation, for which Paul told us to pray (1 Tim 2:1-3). We may also think that God's blessing America would mean that we would have a strengthened

economy, security against opposition, and love for our fellow man. These are not bad things, and God may give us these things. However, the New Testament shows us that this is not God's main focus. Today in the New Testament age, God wants to bless us not merely with outward physical blessings. Our Father God wants to bless us with blessings that are in the heavenlies, that is, *heavenly* in nature, and *spiritual*, all of which are *in Christ*. Hallelujah, in eternity He chose us, He predestinated us, He redeemed us, He designated us, He sealed us, and gave us His Spirit as our pledge.

Why does God desire to bless us? God is a God of purpose (v. 9), and

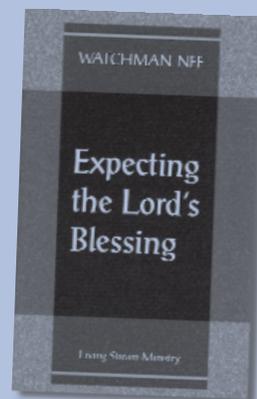
When God blesses us, it is for His praise and His glory.

He blesses us with the purpose of His heart in view. If we read to the end of chapter one, we see the issue of all God's blessings to us is that we become the church, Christ's Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all (vv. 22-23), for the expression of our Triune God in this universe. This is to the praise of His glory (v. 14). When God blesses us, it is for His praise and His glory. What a mercy that we are truly under God's blessing! May God bless America and the entire earth with these heavenly and spiritual blessings in Christ.

For further reading, please see the footnotes for the above referenced verses in the New Testament Recovery Version, published by Living Stream Ministry.

We at Living Stream Ministry mourn the tragedy of September 11 and pray for the families of all the victims.

BOOKLET BY WATCHMAN NEE



Many times we do not have the capacity to do something. The outward environment is difficult, even impossible. If our eyes are fixed on the circumstances, we will not have any way to deal with them. However, the Lord repeatedly brings us through. These times are the Lord's blessing. When we have blessing, everything goes well and nothing is difficult. Without the Lord's blessing, everything goes wrong and nothing is easy.

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The PATH OF Life

Below are excerpts focused on matters and practices of the spiritual life as revealed in God's Word. May the Lord show us "the path of life" (Psa. 16:11) that we may have a daily living of enjoying, experiencing, and gaining Christ.

A CHRISTIAN HAVING CHRIST

First, a person who is a Christian must have Christ. After having Christ, we must always inquire of the Lord, seeking His approval in whatever we do in our daily living. This is because when we have Christ, we represent Him in everything we do. His pleasure and approval are absolutely important and necessary. Please remember that the Lord within us is our great protection and immense wisdom. Real Christians can all testify that many times while they are inquiring of the Lord, they

Only those who have Christ are blessed.

have the inner wisdom, inner enlightenment, and inner presence of the Lord. Many foolish people do foolish things because they neglect the Lord who lives in them and care only for their own preferences and desires. A person is foolish if he acts independently of the Lord and apart from the Lord. A person will obtain wisdom, however, if he is willing to put himself aside and ask the Lord, "Do You want me to do this? Will You be happy if I do not do it?"

In the present crooked generation and during this time when the situation of the church is so dark, a person who desires to properly serve God finds it truly difficult to make a decision whenever he encounters a problem. It seems that almost every day he finds himself at a crossroads or in a dilemma. His only salvation is to pray unceasingly and ask, "Lord, which way do You prefer? Lord, is this what pleases You?" I can testify that sometimes for the whole night, even

though I was lying in bed, my heart was before the Lord. In order to deal with a troublesome situation I was before the Lord all night, asking, "Lord, will You be pleased with this decision? Will You be pleased with a different decision?" Many times the Lord would say, "I am not pleased," but at other times He would say, "I am pleased."

Many people find it difficult to believe that God exists, but for us it is even more difficult to believe otherwise. These past few days, a brother who is a bricklayer has been repairing my house. One day I asked him, "You have been working like this every day. Is this what you want?" He sighed and said, "I work because I am poor. How blessed it would be if I were rich." I told him, "You really do not know Christ. Money is not necessarily a blessing. Being wealthy does not necessarily mean being blessed. We are Christians. Only those who have Christ are blessed." Unfortunately, many people are indeed Christians and have Christ within them, but because they do not have enough of Him, they are just like those who are without Christ. They do not bring any of their problems to the Lord. It is as if there is no difference whether or not they have the Lord.

...They do whatever they like, completely ignoring Christ's existence. Although they have Christ in them, they disregard Him. They say things as they like, they play politics as they desire, and they treat others as they wish; they do not care a bit how Christ feels. The only difference between them and the unbelievers is that the unbelievers behave recklessly

in a manifest way, while they as Christians care for their faces and thus behave recklessly in a hidden way. However, please remember that we who have Christ should take Christ instead of morality as our standard, because the standard of Christ is higher than that of morality. Many times what morality allows, Christ disallows. Therefore, I hope that we will all learn to inquire of the Lord. Even in choosing what clothes to wear, we should learn to ask the Lord. This is the reality of allowing Christ to reign in us.

The Pursuit of a Christian, pp. 19-21,
by Witness Lee

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 of our listeners are 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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