

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 law or out of the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:5

In

T H I S

I S S U E

- 1 LETTER FROM LIVING STREAM MINISTRY
- 1 WHAT IS THE DIVINE ROMANCE?
- 2 HIGHLIGHTS FROM LIFE AND BUILDING AS PORTRAYED IN SONG OF SONGS
- 2 VERSE AND FOOTNOTE FROM THE RECOVERY VERSION
- 4 THE PATH OF LIFE—FOLLOW AFTER LOVE

Dear Life-study Listener,

We are glad to announce that after ten years of labor, the recent completion of the book Song of Songs makes the entire Bible available now as *Life-study of the Bible* radio programs. Comprising this "abridged" life-study are 1,784 radio programs, which correspond to the 1,984 printed messages contained in Witness Lee's book-by-book commentary of the Bible. The complete radio program archive is available to be downloaded as individual programs or as a podcast, which is an automated daily download of each day's life-study broadcast. Both of these options can be found at www.lsmradio.org.

For some of you the radio program has been your main contact with Living Stream Ministry. We are thankful for that, but want to let you know of other resources available for your enjoyment of Christ and ongoing pursuit of Him. The original spoken and recorded version of Witness Lee's life-study is also available online at www.lsmwebcast.com. Most of the radio programs have less than ten minutes of Witness Lee's actual speaking. The original life-studies, however, which are the basis for the printed messages, usually had more than one hour of Witness Lee's speaking. Although the radio programs are available as MP3 files for free download, the webcast requires a nominal fee to either view the videos or listen to the audio archives. We hope this could become a source of supply to more of the Lord's lovers and seekers.

Living Stream Ministry

Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.

Jeremiah 31:3

WHAT IS THE DIVINE ROMANCE?

Throughout the centuries, God has had a romance with man. God created man with the purpose of having a counterpart (Gen. 1:26). His intention in creating man was not mainly to have servants. If we read the Bible in a pure way, without any preoccupations, we shall realize that God's purpose in creating man was to gain a counterpart. God is not a fighter; He is a lover. He created man in the image of Himself as a lover. This means that He created man so that man would love Him. In eternity God was alone; we may even say that He was lonely. His desire for love could not be fulfilled

(continued on page 3)

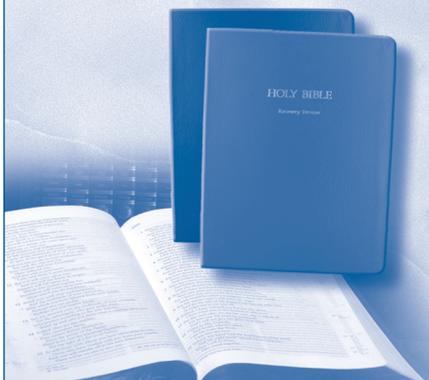
VERSE *and* FOOTNOTE

FROM THE HOLY BIBLE
RECOVERY VERSION

SONG OF SONGS 1:4

Song of Songs 1:4 Draw me; we will run after you—The king has brought me into his chambers—We will be glad and rejoice in you; We will extol your love more than wine. Rightly do they love you.

4¹ In her pursuing of Christ for satisfaction, the lover of Christ asks Him to draw her that she and her companions (“we”) may run after Him. For the accomplishing of His eternal economy, God created man in His own image so that man may express Him (Gen. 1:26). He also created man with a spirit so that man may receive Him and contain Him (Gen. 2:7; Zech. 12:1), and with a heart that seeks God Himself so that God can be man's satisfaction (Eccl. 3:11). Although man fell away from God, and sin through Satan came in to frustrate man from receiving God for his satisfaction, the desire for God, the seeking for God, still remains in man's heart. This book tells us the unique way to be properly satisfied with God—to pursue and gain Christ (Phil. 3:7-14), who as the very embodiment and reality of God (Col. 2:9; John 1:18) came to earth that man might receive Him for satisfaction. Cf. Eccl. 1:2 and note 2.



Highlights

FROM LIFE AND BUILDING AS PORTRAYED IN THE SONG OF SONGS

SEEKING AND FINDING THE LORD

“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. Because of the savor of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee: the King hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee” (S. S. 1:2-4).

Here is one who has begun to seek after the Lord. Surely, before the seeking, there was the attracting. Since the Lord has attracted this one to Himself, she is seeking after Him. So she says, “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.” She must have received a revelation of the Lord's beauty. Our love does not depend so much upon our ability to love the Lord as it depends upon His loveliness. If something is ugly and dirty, we cannot love it. But something so sweet and precious can attract us, even if we have no intention of loving it. Therefore, it is not a matter of our being able to love the Lord, but a matter of His being altogether lovely! We cannot love the Lord without seeing His beauty. But once we see His beauty, we cannot help loving Him. He is the most attractive and attracting One. No one can resist the Lord's beauty. When we are attracted to Him, we have to say with this seeking one, “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.”

After the seeking comes the finding. This one found the one whom she was seeking. The King brought her into his chamber. So in these three verses there are the seeking and the finding.

THE APPRECIATION AND ENJOYMENT

Then in verses 13 and 14 is the appreciation. “A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me...My beloved is unto me as a cluster of henna flowers in the vineyards of Engedi.” How she appreciates the Lord! He is just like a bundle of myrrh, so sweet inside; and outside He is like a cluster of henna flowers, an Old-World plant with which Jewish girls beautified themselves. She simply appreciates His sweetness and His beauty.

Following the appreciation is the enjoyment: “As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love” (2:3-4). Now her beloved is not only like a bundle of myrrh and a cluster of henna flowers, but He is also like an apple tree with sweet and rich fruit. She is sitting under His shadow enjoying the rest, and she is feeding on His sweet fruit for satisfaction. She is really in the enjoyment.

Do you see the progression in this chapter? It begins with seeking and continues with finding. After finding comes appreciation. Following appreciation is rich enjoyment. It is really wonderful! And the enjoyment is to the fullest, because she not only enjoys Him under the apple tree with all the fruits, but she is also brought into the banqueting house, and His banner over her is love. This is enjoyment to the uttermost.

Life and Building as Portrayed in the Song of Songs, pp. 29-30, by Witness Lee

DIVINE ROMANCE (continued from page 1)

by angels. Therefore, God created man according to His own being. God is loving, and He wants man to love Him. In this way there will be a mutual relationship of love between God and mankind, those created to be His counterpart.

The goal of regeneration is to produce and prepare the bride for the Bridegroom.

The Old Testament indicates clearly that God came in to choose Israel to be His spouse. In Jeremiah 31:3 the Lord says, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." When God appeared to His people, He "dated" them and later even courted them. According to Ezekiel 16, God loved Israel when He saw her in the wilderness. Verse 8 describes this love: "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." By entering into a covenant with Israel, God betrothed her to Himself....

When the Lord Jesus came, He came as the Bridegroom for the bride. Many Christians are familiar with John the Baptist's declaration: "Behold, the Lamb of God" (John 1:29). However, not so many realize that John also referred to the Lord Jesus as the Bridegroom. In John 3:29 he says, "He who has the bride is the bridegroom." This word is included in a chapter on regeneration (John 3:3-6). The goal of regeneration is to produce and prepare the bride for the Bridegroom. Since Christ is the One who will have the bride, He is the Bridegroom. As God incarnate, Christ came not only to be our Redeemer and Savior; He also came to be our Bridegroom....

The Lord Jesus regenerates the church so that the church may be His bride (John 3:3, 5, 29-30). The Lord is the Bridegroom with the divine life and the divine nature. If we would become His bride, we must also have the divine life and

the divine nature. For this, regeneration is necessary. Apart from possessing this life and nature, we could never become Christ's counterpart. In John 3 we see that regeneration qualifies us to be Christ's bride. Only after we have been regenerated with the divine life and have thereby received the divine nature can we, sinners, be taken by Christ to be His love....

At the end of this age, Christ will come to marry His redeemed and to take her as His wife (Rev. 19:7). The present age is an age of "dating," courtship, and engagement between God and His people. At the end of this dispensation, there will be a glorious wedding day, at which time Christ will marry His redeemed ones. This revelation of the marriage between Christ and His redeemed ones is a major revelation in the Bible.

At the very end of the Bible we see that God will enjoy a married life with His people in eternity and for eternity. For eternity in the new heaven and new earth, the New Jerusalem will be the wife of the Lamb (Rev. 21:9). This is the fulfillment of God's romance revealed in the Scriptures.

From Life-study of Exodus, Message 55, pp. 645-648.

For further reading on this subject, please see Life-study of Romans, Message 1; Life-study of Song of Songs; and Crystallization-study of Song of Songs, published by Living Stream Ministry.

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*Life-Study of the Bible
with Witness Lee*

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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.

FOLLOW AFTER LOVE

Give yourself to love the Lord. No other way is so prevailing, and no other way is so safe, so rich, and so full of enjoyment. Just love Him. Do not care for anything else. Teachings, doctrines, gifts, and power do not mean much. We must continually tell the Lord, "Lord, keep me in Your love! Attract me with Yourself! Keep me all the time in Your

Song of Songs 1:4 says, "Draw me, we will run after thee." We must ask the Lord to draw us, and then others will run after Him with us.

loving presence!" If we will pray in this way, we will see what love we will have toward the Lord and what kind of life we will live. We will simply live by the Lord Himself. As long as we love Him from the deepest part of our being, everything will be all right. If we need wisdom, He will be the wisdom to us. If we need power, He will be the power. If we need the proper and adequate knowledge, He will even be that to us. Whatever we need, He is. Do not try to get anything else; just look to Him that He would reveal His love to you. Song of Songs

1:4 says, "Draw me, we will run after thee." We must ask the Lord to draw us, and then others will run after Him with us. To take Him as our life, we must love Him in such a way.

We must learn to love the Lord Jesus. If we would have such a burning love toward the Lord Jesus, we will enjoy all that He is.

In Revelation 2 the degradation of the church began with the loss of the first love toward the Lord Jesus. The church in Ephesus had many good works and was even strong in faith, but the Lord rebuked her by saying, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." They had lost the fresh and best love toward the Lord. This started the degradation of the churches. When we lose our love for the Lord, we start to backslide. We must go to the Lord and make a deal with Him: "Lord, be merciful to me! I do not need anything or anyone else but Your loving Self. Simply show me Yourself! Draw me that we may run after You. O Lord, show me Your love that I might be constrained by Your love! I do not want to do anything for You, Lord. I just want to love You. I just want to take You as my Person. I want Your personality as my personality, Your will as my will, Your desires as my desires. I want Your

everything as my everything."

Thus, we see that it is not simply a matter of believing, but also a matter of loving. We must learn to love the Lord Jesus. If we would have such a burning love toward the Lord Jesus, we will enjoy all that He is. Therefore, I do not encourage you to seek anything else. Go to the Lord and ask Him to draw you that you may run after Him. You must realize that the "zoe-life" is such a loving, wonderful Person and that love is the way to deal with Him.

Life and Bulding as Portrayed in the Song of Songs. pp. 23-25, 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.

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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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