

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one characteristic of a disciple of Jesus Christ and then memorise it together. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. In this third series God teaches that there are 5 things that are important in the gospel message: understanding the nature of sin, knowing that judgement is a punishment for sin, believing that sin must be atoned, realising that salvation is God's gift and personally receiving Jesus into one's life. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: A DISCIPLE KNOWS THAT JUDGEMENT IS A PUNISHMENT FOR SIN.

(S) **POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is Ecclesiastes 12:14. We will ask one another questions in order to help us to meditate on the truths written in the Bible. Let me read Ecclesiastes 12:14 in its context Ecclesiastes 12:1,5-7,13-14.

Ecclesiastes 12:1,5-7,13-14. "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them' ... Then man goes to his eternal home ... Remember him before the silver cord is severed, ... and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. ... Here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."

The memorisation verse is: Punishment of sin. Ecclesiastes 12:14, "For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil." Ecclesiastes 12:14.

(T) **God has built his present judgements into his creation.**

'Judgement' in the Bible refers to two distinct kinds of judgements, namely, the present judgements of God and the future final judgement of God. The present judgements of God are also two kinds. God has built some of his present judgements into his creation. And God brings some of his present judgements into our history. How has God built some of his present judgements into his creation? In Galatians 6:7-8 we read, "God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life." God has built certain definite laws into his creation. Some of these laws are physics laws and some of them are spiritual and moral laws. All people must obey these laws and thus acknowledge that the God of the Bible is the true and living God. If these laws are transgressed, they bring punishment with them. For example, the physics law of gravity. You have the freedom to ignore God's physics law, but you do not have the freedom to decide the outcome of your disobedience! If you ignore the physics law of gravity and jump of a high building, you will be terribly maimed or even die. Likewise, God has built his spiritual and moral laws into his creation. Consider some consequences of transgressing God's spiritual and moral laws. One. God's law is that people must care for his creation. When people do not care for the earth and its nature, God allows the air and water and soil to get polluted, which results in all kinds of diseases. Two. God's law is that people must work for their living. When people are lazy and do not work, then God allows them to become poor and hungry. Three. God's law is that people must love one another. When people hate one another and fight against one another, then God allows them to destroy one another. Four. God's law is that people must be honest and fair. When people are corrupt in the areas of industry and commerce, then God eventually allows their businesses and society to collapse. Five. God's law is that leaders must serve their people. When leaders become tyrants and oppress their subjects, then God allows their country to get destroyed by civil war. The transgression of God's laws is called 'sin'. *When people sow sins, God causes them to reap the consequences or results of their sins.* When people sow disobedience to God's laws, God causes them to reap his present judgements. Nobody can transgress God's laws and get away with it. At some time, God will allow his judgement to catch up with the sins of every man!

(S) **God brings his present judgements into our history.**

How does God bring some of his present judgements into our history? In Amos 4:6-8 God says, "I gave you empty stomachs in every city and lack of bread in every town, *yet you have not returned to me.*" declares the Lord. "I also withheld rain from you when the harvest was still three months away. I sent rain on one town, but withheld it from another. One field had rain; another had none and dried up. People staggered from town to town for water but did not get enough to drink, *yet you have not returned to me,*" declares the Lord." Because people turned their backs on God or devised their own gods in the place of the God of the Bible, the living God of the

Bible brought his judgements upon these people. Some of God's dreadful present judgements in our history are wars, drought and famine, earthquakes, floods and tornados, epidemics and accidents (cf. Ezekiel 14:21).

(T) The necessity of God's present judgements.

Why does God bring his present judgements into his creation and into our history? God built some of his present judgements into his creation and brings some of his present judgements into our history in order *to warn us for his coming future final judgement* and in order *to save us from that future final judgement!* In the history of the Bible we read that in times when people disobeyed God or when they broke their relationship with God, God caused his present judgements to fall on them and the people suffered. God still causes his present judgements to fall on this earth and in our history. Sometimes we plant much, but harvest little. Sometimes we eat, but never have enough. Sometimes we put on clothes, but can't get warm. Sometimes we earn wages, only to put them into a purse with holes in them. Sometimes we expect much, but it all turns out to be little. Sometimes God blows all our high expectations of life away (cf. Haggai 1:3-11). Likewise God uses all kinds of disasters like earthquakes, floods, and especially droughts and famines throughout history to show his displeasure against sin and *to warn people to repent and turn back to him.*

(S) God warns that his future final judgement of non-Christians is definitely coming.

How will God judge the non-Christians in the future? Hebrews 9:27 says. "Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgement." And in Matthew 25:31-34 Jesus says, "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left." The Bible says that death is not the end! After death there will be God's final judgement! At the end of human history in this world, Jesus Christ will return to this earth and judge all the people that ever lived. This day is called the Day of Judgement. Jesus Christ will separate the Christians from the non-Christians.

First. The non-Christians will be judged *for all the shortcomings in their life.* In Matthew 25:41-46 Jesus says, "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me. ... Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.'" When non-Christians have failed to do what Jesus Christ expected them to do, he will judge them.

Second. The non-Christians will be judged *for the evil things they have done*, whether they were visible or whether they were hidden! This is written in our memorisation verse. Ecclesiastes 12:14. "For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."

Third. The non-Christians will be judged *for their unbelief and their rejection of Jesus Christ.* John 3:18-19,36 says, "Whoever believes in Jesus Christ is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ... Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

Fourth. The non-Christians will be judged *for their ignorance of God or their disobedience to the gospel.*

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 says, "The Lord Jesus Christ will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord."

What will God's future final judgement be like?

First. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 says that the non-Christians *will be shut out from the presence of the living God.* They will never experience the goodness and mercy of God, but only his wrath. They will be punished with everlasting destruction.

Second. Matthew 25:46 says that the punishment of non-Christians will be everlasting. And because their punishment *will be everlasting, they will never have a second chance to be saved!*

Third. Luke 16:23-26 says that the non-Christian *will be in hell, a place of torment, fire and agony.* A great chasm will separate him or her from all the people that believed in Jesus Christ. The non-Christians will never be able to cross over to heaven anymore. There will be no second chance to get saved!

(T) God warns that his future final judgement of Christians is also definitely coming.

Why will God also judge the Christians? On the future final judgement day, all Christians will also stand before God's judgement throne. Jesus Christ will publicly pronounce their justification and invite them into his eternal kingdom. In Matthew 25:34 Jesus says to all the people on his right, "Come you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world."

First. *True Christians will not be condemned to eternal punishment in hell*, because Christ has made atonement for their sins. In stead, they receive eternal life on the basis of their faith in Jesus Christ. In John 5:24,28-29 Jesus

says, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. ... The time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out - those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned." Every person in every nation, who believes that Jesus Christ made atonement for his or her sins, will not be condemned, but will inherit eternal life and remain in God's presence forever.

Second. Although Christians will not be condemned to hell, they *will be judged for how they have lived on earth as Christians!* 2 Corinthians 5:10 says, "For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." Christians will be judged for the things they have done while living on earth, whether good or bad. If they have lived for the glory of God and have given their lives for the eternal things, they will even receive rewards by God's grace. Because Christians will also be judged, it is very important how Christians behave themselves now on earth!

(S) The necessity of God's future final judgement.

Why is it necessary for God to judge the world in a future final judgement?

Life is manifestly unjust! The good suffer, the unselfish are exploited, the meek are terrorised, and the poor are deprived. On the other hand, the evil flourish, the selfish make fortunes, the brutal oppress the meek and the rich get richer. Tyrants die peacefully in their beds while saints are tortured to death. If, as we are assuming, there is a God who is all-powerful and good, how can he possibly allow the injustices in the world to continue? If he does nothing about all the injustice in the world, either now or after this life, then he is either not all-powerful or he is not good! If he does not *redress such gross injustice and put down such rampant evil*, then he is either weak or unrighteous! However, the Bible teaches very clearly that God is all-powerful and good. Justice on a cosmic scale will be done and all the people who ever lived on earth will be present at this final future judgement! That is why God must judge the world and will judge the world! He will redress all injustice that was ever committed. He will put down all evil in human history. He will destroy every haughty tyrant, every corrupt businessman, every sexual immoral person and everyone who did not believe in the atonement of sin on the cross of Jesus Christ.

(T) POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE

Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. Write topic at the top. The topic today is "Punishment of sin". Beneath that, write the Bible reference of the verse. The Bible reference today is Ecclesiastes 12:14. And beneath that, write the whole verse.

(S) Let us memorise the Bible verse together. Then let us take turns to say that part of the verse alone without looking at the Bible or notebook.

(T+S) Punishment of sin. Ecclesiastes 12:14. "For God will bring every deed into judgement.

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(T) POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSES YOU HAVE MEMORISED

Let us review the last 5 Bible verses that we have memorised without looking at our notebooks.

Series "The new life in Christ", verses 2-5, and series "The gospel", verse 1.

(S) Word. Matthew 4:4. Jesus answered. "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4.

(T) Prayer. John 15:7. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. John 15:7.

(S) Fellowship. 1 John 1:7. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 1 John 1:7.

(T) Witnessing. Matthew 10:32. "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven." Matthew 10:32.

(S) Nature of sin. Romans 3:23. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23.

(T) POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Daily review the last five memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www etc.

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to "Discipleship training on the air".