

## How to Use the Footnotes In the Recovery Version of the New Testament

### I. Understanding the holy writings by studying the translated and interpreted holy writings:

- A. During the time of the reformation, the Lord used Martin Luther to unlock the Bible with the recovery of the truth concerning justification by faith.
- B. During the time of the British Brethren, in the early part of the nineteenth century, the light came to them like a flood.
- C. The interpretation of the Bible advanced even more from the initiation of the Lord's Recovery among us until now. The interpretation which began from the Trinity and Christology and has been continuing until it has now reached the New Jerusalem.

### II. The purpose of the Recovery Version with the footnotes:

- A. To present the truth:
  1. The Holy Trinity—Matt. 28:19<sup>5</sup>; Heb. 1:8<sup>1</sup>; John 15:26<sup>1</sup>; John 1:2<sup>2</sup>.
  2. The work of Christ—Gal 3:13<sup>1</sup>; Rom. 4:25<sup>1</sup>; Rev. 11:15<sup>1,4</sup>; Rev. 21:2<sup>2</sup>, 1<sup>1</sup>.
  3. The Spirit—John 20:22<sup>1</sup>; Phil. 1:19<sup>2</sup>; John 7:39<sup>1</sup>; Rom. 8:9<sup>3,4</sup>; Gal. 3:14<sup>4</sup>.
  4. The all inclusive, consummated Spirit—Acts 1:8<sup>1</sup>; Acts 2:4<sup>2</sup>; Luke 24:49<sup>1,5</sup>; John 14:17<sup>1</sup>.
  5. The spirit of man—1 Thes. 5:23<sup>5</sup>; Heb. 4:12<sup>3</sup>; John 4:24<sup>2,4</sup>; 2 Tim. 4:22<sup>1</sup>.
  6. The Body of Christ—1 Cor. 6:13<sup>3</sup>, 14<sup>1</sup>, 19<sup>1</sup>, 20<sup>2</sup>; Rom. 6:6<sup>4,5</sup>.
  7. The kingdom of the heavens—Matt. 5:3<sup>4</sup>; Matt. 7:21<sup>1</sup>; Matt. 13:24<sup>1</sup>; Matt. 3:2<sup>2,3</sup>; Matt. 5:20<sup>3</sup>.
- B. To minister the life supply:
  1. The knowledge of life—1 John 1:1:2<sup>4,6</sup>; Rom. 5:17<sup>3</sup>; John 3:15<sup>1</sup>; John 3:16<sup>2</sup>.
  2. The dispensing of the divine life—1 Cor. 15:45<sup>1</sup>; Rom. 8:11<sup>5</sup>; John 20:22<sup>1</sup>; 1 John 4:9<sup>2</sup>.
  3. The growth and transformation of life—Col. 2:19<sup>7</sup>; 1 Pet. 2:2<sup>4</sup>; 2 Cor. 3:18<sup>7</sup>; Rom. 12:2<sup>4</sup>.
- C. To solve the common and hard problems in the New Testament:
  1. Matt. 10:34—Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.  
The Lord is the Prince of peace: why then did He say that He had not come to bring peace, but a sword? The answer is in note 1 of this verse.
  2. Matthew 7:6—Do not give that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the hogs, lest they trample them with their feet, and turn and tear you. Here what does 'that which is holy' and 'pearls' refer to? Why is it that they should not be given to the dogs or hogs? Please see the answer in notes 1 and 2.
  3. Colossians 1:15—Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation. Christ is God: why does this verse say that He is the Firstborn of all creation? The answer is in note 2 of this verse.
  4. Hebrews 9:3—And after the second veil, a tabernacle, which is called the Holy of Holies.  
Hebrews 9:4—Having a golden altar and the ark of the covenant covered about everywhere with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna and Aaron's rod that budded and the tablets of the covenant.  
In the Old Testament, it was recorded in Exodus 30:6 that the incense altar was put before the veil, i.e., outside the veil. But here it says that the Holy of Holies has the incense altar. Is there an error or misconception? Please see the answer in note 1 of verse 4.
  5. James 2:24—You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith only. The Book of Romans indicates that man is justified through faith (Rom. 3:30), not of works; (Rom. 4:1) but the Book of James says that man is justified by works. Is there a discrepancy between the two verses? The answer is in note 1 of this verse.
  6. 1 Peter 3:19—In which also He went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison. Where did Christ go after dying in the flesh? What did He do? According to this verse, who are the

‘spirits in prison’? The answer is in notes 2 and 3 of verse 19, and notes 1 and 3 of verse 20.

- D. To open up the books of the Bible:
1. The subject of Matthew—Matt. 1:1<sup>1</sup>.
  2. The subject of Romans—Rom. 1:1<sup>1</sup>.
  3. The subject of Ephesians—Eph. 1:1<sup>1</sup>.
  4. The subject of 1 and 2 Peter—2 Pet. 3:16<sup>2</sup>.
  5. The subject of Revelation—Rev. 1:1<sup>1</sup>.

### III. The schedule plan for using the Recovery Version of the Bible with the footnotes:

**Brother Nee in his book, *The Way to Read the Bible* (in Chinese), has listed twenty-eight plans for reading the Bible. Below are some of the examples, explaining how to use the footnotes in the Recovery Version to read the Bible.**

- A. The main characters:
1. Adam—Rom. 5:14<sup>3,4</sup>; 1 Cor. 15:45<sup>1</sup>.
  2. Abel—Heb. 11:4; 12:24<sup>3</sup>.
  3. Abraham—Gal. 3:8<sup>1</sup>; Gal. 3:14<sup>1,4</sup>.
  4. Moses—Heb. 3:1<sup>4</sup>; Heb. 3:3<sup>2</sup>.
  5. David—Rev. 5:5<sup>2</sup>; Matt. 1:6<sup>1,2,4</sup>; Matt. 12:3<sup>1</sup>.
- B. Types (using the various feasts as examples):
1. The Passover—Matt. 26:2<sup>1</sup>; Mark 12:37<sup>1</sup>; Mark 14:12<sup>2</sup>.
  2. The Pentecost—Acts 2:1<sup>1</sup>.
  3. The Feast of Tabernacle—John 7:2<sup>1</sup>.
- C. Prophecies:
1. The Lord Jesus’ prophecies concerning this age—Matt. 24-25, and all the footnotes.
  2. The Apostle Paul’s prophecies concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus—2 Thes. 2:1<sup>2</sup>.
  3. The Apostle John’s prophecies concerning the seven stages of the church and its progression—Rev. 2—3 and all the footnotes.
  4. The Apostle John’s prophecy concerning the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:9—22:5, and all the footnotes.
- D. The dispensations:
1. The dispensation of the fathers—Rom. 5:14<sup>2</sup>.
  2. The dispensation of law—Gal. 3:23<sup>3</sup>.
  3. The dispensation of grace—Gal. 4:4-5, all the footnotes; Rev. 12:10<sup>1</sup>.
  4. The dispensation of the kingdom—Rev. 11:15<sup>2-4</sup>; Rev. 12:10<sup>1</sup>.
- E. The subjects:
1. Chosen—Acts 5:31<sup>3</sup>; Rom. 9:15<sup>1</sup>; Rom. 9:6<sup>2</sup>; Rom. 9:21<sup>1</sup>; 1 Cor. 1:27<sup>1</sup>; Eph. 1:4<sup>2</sup>; 2 Thes. 2:13<sup>1,2</sup>; 1 Pet. 1:2<sup>2</sup>.
  2. Salvation—Rom. 1:1<sup>1</sup>; 1 Cor. 3:14<sup>2</sup>; Phil. 1:19<sup>4</sup>; Phil. 2:12<sup>4,5</sup>; 1 Thes. 5:8<sup>2</sup>, 9<sup>1</sup>; Heb. 1:14<sup>1</sup>; 2:3<sup>1</sup>; 6:9<sup>2</sup>.
- F. Numbers:
1. 1—1 Cor. 8:6<sup>2,5</sup>; Eph. 4:4<sup>1</sup>.
  2. 2—Rev. 11:3<sup>2</sup>.
- G. Parables:
1. Unfulfilled cloth—Matt. 9:16<sup>1</sup>.
  2. The good Samaritan—Luke 10:30-37 and all the footnotes.

**Reference Books:** *The World Situation and the Direction of the Lord’s Move; Elders’ Training, Book 3; The Recovery Version of the New Testament.*

**Excerpts from the Ministry:**

**Understanding of the Holy Writings  
By Studying the Translated and Interpreted Holy Writings**

The interpretation of the Bible advanced even more from the initiation of the Lord's recovery among us until now. Once Brother Nee told me that because Europe and America had been spoiled for the Lord's move, that forced the Lord to go to China. Brother Nee said that China at that time was "virgin soil" for the truth. However, the missionaries who had gone to China never helped the people there to be clear about the assurance of salvation. The assurance of salvation is clearly revealed in the New Testament, but because most of the missionaries did not know this truth, they had no way of teaching it. The Lord gave Brother Watchman Nee a clear vision of the assurance of salvation, and many were revived by his messages on this truth. The assurance of salvation was then made very clear to the Chinese believers.

In 1935 Brother Nee held a conference in my hometown, Chefoo, to cover the victorious, overcoming life of Christ. Before that time we were not so clear about this truth. In 1940 Brother Nee opened up the truth concerning the Body of Christ and the practical life of the church. He called this the blueprint of the practicality of the local church. I brought that blueprint back with me to northern China. As a result, there was a great revival in the church in Chefoo at the end of 1942. (*The World Situation and the Direction of the Lord's Move*, pp. 29-30.)

The Interpretation which Began From the Trinity and Christology  
and has been Continuing until it has Now Reached the New Jerusalem

In about the last thirty years, what the Lord has mainly shown to us is God's economy and God's dispensing, which consummate in the New Jerusalem. It is difficult to find anything in Christian bookstores on the truth concerning the New Jerusalem. Some wrongly believe that the New Jerusalem is a material city with real golden streets. It is difficult to find some who have a biblical view of the holy city as the wife of Christ, as the mingling of the processed Triune God with the transformed tripartite man. Many years ago, Tersteegen, a German writer, wrote something about the New Jerusalem in a proper way. About sixty years ago, Brother T. Austin-Sparks wrote something concerning the New Jerusalem. Beginning from about thirty years ago, we began to see more and more concerning the holy city.

We have published many messages concerning the New Jerusalem. In these messages we cover many detailed points concerning the holy city as the consummation of the divine economy and the divine dispensing. I have to give the credit to Brother Nee for what has been revealed to us. I heard him say that the New Jerusalem will be the consummation of the church. This gave me the basis for understanding the New Jerusalem. When the church is completely perfected and established, that will be the New Jerusalem. It will first appear in the thousand-year kingdom on a small scale. Then it will appear in the new heaven and new earth on the fullest scale as the consummation of God's saved people.

The interpretation of the Bible has been built up by the entire Body of Christ through the past nineteen centuries. We inherit all the interpretation of the past centuries and stand on the shoulders of the foregoing teachers. We have to thank the Lord for this. Furthermore, we have to thank the Lord that He has shown us more in the last few decades, such as the practical church life, the all-inclusive, life-giving, compound Spirit, even the seven Spirits, God's economy, God's dispensing, and the ultimate consummation of the church, that is, the New Jerusalem, the mingling of the processed Triune God with the transformed tripartite man for God's eternal manifestation and expression. (*The World Situation and the Direction of the Lord's Move*, pp. 30-31.)

## **The Purpose of the Recovery Version with the Notes**

### **To Present the Truth**

In 1974 I began to write the notes for the Recovery Version of the Bible. I have written these notes to expound the books of the Bible for a few purposes. The main purpose is to bring you into the truth. As of January of 1985, we had trainings over the entire twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Those of you who have been trainees in the trainings should have realized that the first purpose of the notes of the Recovery Version is to present the truth. I do not believe you can find as many basic truths in other books as you have found in the Recovery Version. Other expositions and commentaries, for example, do not correctly point out what the main truth in the book of Matthew is. The Recovery Version clearly points out that this is a book on the kingdom of the heavens and it gives you a proper definition of the truths concerning the kingdom of the heavens.

### **To Minister the Life Supply**

The first purpose of the notes is to present to you the truth, and the second purpose is to minister to you the life supply. Many of you can testify that you do not get as much nourishment from other expositions and commentaries as you can from the Recovery Version.

### **To Solve the Common and Hard Problems in the New Testament**

The third purpose of the notes is to help us to solve the common and hard problems in the New Testament. In nearly every book of the New Testament there are some questions which are hard to answer and some problems and points which are hard to understand. The notes in the Recovery Version are also an attempt to solve the hard problems in the Bible to help the readers get through them. I have had much experience as a young man studying the Bible. I came to a certain point in the Bible that I could not understand and I became stuck on that point. For instance, 2 Peter 2:4 refers to the gloomy pits to which the angels who sinned were delivered. When I read this in the Chinese version as a young man I got stuck on this point. I did not know what the Chinese meant by a gloomy pit. In the Recovery Version, however, there are adequate notes to help on problems such as these (see note 2 in 2 Peter 2:4 and note 3 in 1 Peter 3:19). For problems such as these in the Bible, I spend much time to go to the original Greek, to the lexicons, to the concordances, and to others' expositions in order to get a proper understanding. By the Lord's mercy, I believe and thank the Lord that I received such an understanding. Therefore, for each of these problems I have given you a proper interpretation to help you to understand them properly. This means to remove all the obstacles on your "driveway" that you may have a clear route and highway for a drive in your Bible study. Today we have a Recovery Version of the New Testament with nearly no obstacles on the driving way. You can drive your "study car" through any book of the New Testament without stops. If you have a problem you can refer to the notes for help.

### **To Open Up the Books of the Bible**

The fourth purpose of the Recovery Version with the notes is to open up the books of the Bible. After the Recovery Version of a book had been published, that particular book of the Bible was opened to us. Because we have a Recovery Version of the entire New Testament, we must testify that the books of the New Testament have been opened to us. We have an open book. Some teachers of the Bible admit that Revelation is a closed book and that it is too deep. Also, a number of believers were told not to touch Revelation and to stay away

from it. To most believers Revelation is a closed book, but when you get the Recovery Version of Revelation you cannot say that it is a closed book. It is an open book. The Recovery Version of Revelation gives you a very brief and concise interpretation of the book.

I have made an attempt to open every book of the New Testament to you, but I have left the further digging to you. I have only “opened up the mine” and I have not dug that much. The foundation which Brother Watchman Nee laid in China helped me greatly. During his time, however, he told me that the Lord had not permitted him to write any expositions. Through the messages I heard personally and directly from him, through the publications put out by him and through many direct talks with him for over at least eighteen years, I received a very solid foundational word to build on. As a result, I picked up the burden to write the expository notes for the Recovery Version to open each book of the New Testament to the seeking saints. Both Brother Nee and I did not have that much time to dig further. I want to dig further and I am still digging, but I do not believe that I can do that much. Therefore, I leave this further digging matter to you. (*Elders' Training*, Book 3, pp. 90-93.)

**Questions:**

1. Please explain why the New Testament Recovery Version is recognized as the Bible that has been opened.
2. Please explain briefly the purpose of the footnotes in the Recovery Version.
3. How would we recommend the Recovery Version to others? Please use some of the footnotes as examples.
4. Try and schedule a personal plan for reading the Recovery Version by using the footnotes.