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The Lord Your God Proveth You

“The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul”—Deut. 13:3.

The words of this text were uttered to Natural Israel, but they are certainly applicable to spiritual Israel—to all of God’s people. The thought is manifest that the Lord’s children are all under testing, that the Lord is proving our devotion. It is not sufficient that God should have called us with a Heavenly Calling, that He should have sent a message through His Son, speaking peace and declaring that He will forgive the sins of those who surrender themselves to Him. It is not sufficient that we should be informed as to how we may gain these blessings through a full consecration to God through the Saviour. It is not sufficient even that we should accept these to do the will of God. Something more is necessary.

The making of the consecration, according to the Scriptures, would mean the giving up of our lives to do the will of God. “Present your bodies a living sacrifice”, as the Apostle Paul expresses it—Rom.12:1. We have seen this privilege. We have accepted the terms. We have given our little all to God, through the Lord Jesus Christ. We rejoice that He has received our little offering through our great Redeemer, who has imputed of His merit to cover our blemishes, thus making us acceptable to God. We have now been received into the family of God in the highest sense and are New Creatures in Christ, members of the Anointed company, sons of God, called to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to the great inheritance of glory, honour, immortality and the Divine nature—2 Cor.5:17; 1 Cor.12:12; John 1:12; Rom.8:17.

It is not enough that God has accepted our consecration. He purposes to prove us, to see whether we mean all that we said. Consecration is more easily made than fulfilled. Having made the surrender to God, we received an

enlightenment. As the Apostle says, we were “illuminated”—Heb.10:32. This illumination came to us as it came to our Saviour, through the holy spirit and through the Word of God, enabling us to see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths, and to know the love of God, helping us to appreciate what we have done, what it means to us now, and what it will mean to us hereafter.

All these things become clearer day by day; and we realize more and more the glorious things which our God has in reservation for His faithful children—things which “eye hath not seen nor ear heard”, but which the Lord has “revealed unto us by his spirit”—1 Cor.2:9,10. While all this work is going on within us, there is a testing, a proving, a disciplinary training.

Every day we are receiving added blessings. God’s mercies are indeed “new every morning and fresh every evening.” His providences are shaping all our affairs. How are we responding to all these blessings coming from the Lord? This is the question. God has indeed entered into a covenant with us, as He says—“Gather together my saints unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice”—Psa.50:5. You agreed to give up yourself, your own will, all your own preference in every matter, not only in word and action, but in thought. It was on this same condition that you and I were received. It was on this same condition that our Lord Jesus was accepted and became the Head of the Church.

Jesus was our Guarantor. Therefore the Father entered into this contract with us and gave us the holy spirit, the first fruits of our inheritance. This He would not give without a definite contract; for it is the advance payment, the earnest of the glory to come. So we see that the blessing which has come to us from God through Christ is only a foretaste of what is in store for us. Our Father waits to give us all the riches of His grace, of His loving

kindness, through our Lord Jesus, in the coming Age and in the Ages to follow. In these future ages of glory He will continue to show to the Church the glorious riches of His grace and of His love—Eph.2:7.

“The Lord your God proveth you.” The Lord does not wish to disprove us. Our Heavenly Father has great love for all His children, and He has exceeding great blessings in store for them when their loyalty has been demonstrated. The word Love has in it the thought of honouring the one who is loved. “Surely we are not worthy of God’s love!” you say. Very true; but we remember that our Lord Jesus said—“The Father himself loveth you”—John 16:27. The Word tells us about God’s deep interest in those who have become His children. It tells us that the Church are as dear to Him as the apple of His eye—Zech.2:8. What tender love and care is here expressed. All things permitted by the Lord to come to any of this class are for their good, for their preparation for the Kingdom, that they may be to the glory of God, members of the Divine family.

According to the Bible, our Heavenly Father alone had originally this great thing, the Divine nature, with its quality of immortality, incorruptibility. He has given it to His First-begotten Son since His resurrection from the dead, that He might have this same nature, this inherent life; and through the Son the Father has offered it to the Bride class that they also might inherit the same glory as our Lord, though He will always remain the Head of His Church—John 5:26; 1 Tim.6:16; 2 Pet.1:4. This is the sum total, as we understand the Word—that nevermore will any others attain the Divine nature—only the Father, the Son and “the Bride, the Lamb’s wife”—no more.

Then will come the other natures on the spirit plane—cherubim, seraphim, those who will constitute “the great multitude”, and then the lower order of angels. We do not know how wonderful some of these orders may be; but none will be so great as those on the Divine plane. Then, to complete the picture, we shall have mankind restored to perfection—“a little lower than the angels”—Psa.8:5; Heb.2:6-8.

This is the glorious outlook before us. Those of the Divine nature will reign over all others. Theirs will be “the glory that excelleth.” The Father loves us and wishes us to attain this glory. If we fail, it will not be because of His unfaithfulness. “Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it”—1 Thes.5:24. The whole responsibility is with us. No one can take our responsibility. Each must stand for himself. We cannot go into the Kingdom by classes. There is no other way to get into the Kingdom except as individuals, personally related to the Lord Jesus. Therefore it is for each of us to

“make our calling and election sure.”

“Is God proving my imperfect flesh to see whether I will use it perfectly?” some one may inquire. No. Long ago God knew that we could not do perfect works. He would not try our fallen flesh. In the Bible He tells us that all mankind are imperfect, fallen—Rom. 3:10,20. He is proving what your spirit is of, your mind, your will. What kind of mind ought we to have? The Lord tells us—“Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus”—Phil.2:5. “But”, you say, “I have not the same body that Jesus had.” Very true; but you can have the same mind, disposition, will, that He had. You can WILL for truth, for righteousness, for faithfulness to your covenant with God. You are to come as nearly to the line as you are able. God looks to see how you rule your mortal body, to what extent you crucify the flesh and its desires—Gal.5:24.

You are the one in charge now. The Lord says, “I will let you work with that poor body which you have; and if I see you doing your best with that body, in due time I will give you a perfect body. If you prove your loyalty of heart now, with all your imperfections, I will cover those imperfections with the merit of Jesus. I know that if you are faithful in this blemished body, you will be entirely satisfactory in the glorious body I will give you by and by.”

This is a very reasonable proposition; and everything about God’s Plan, when we come to understand it, is so beautiful, so reasonable, that we could not ask Him to change even one feature. How would it be if we could get glory, honour and immortality without living up to our promises, while another who did not promise would do better. We would say that the one who did not promise would be better than the one who promised and did not fulfil his promise, that the one who did not promise would be more deserving of the reward. If the Lord sees that you mean all that you said in consecration, no matter how poor the body you have, the blood of Jesus Christ will cover all your defects; and you will be acceptable to God and will thus be counted worthy.

The Bible says, “Worthy is the Lamb”, and His Bride will be worthy too. You say, “We know that Jesus is worthy.” Yes; and those who have His spirit have a measure of worthiness also. There must be character if we are approved of God. Unless we develop the necessary character we shall never reach the Kingdom. If you have something to do with developing that character, it will be counted real worth in God’s sight, and Jesus’ righteousness will make up the rest. If you are found wholly loyal to Him, then you will be accounted worthy.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne", declared the Master—Rev.3:21. If we do not overcome, we shall not be seated there. "But there are special tests, are there not?" asks some one; "Is one test how to keep the Sabbath day?" Not especially, we reply. Such a test would be but a poor proof of character. If you thought that God wished you to keep a certain day as the Sabbath day, you would be injuring your conscience if you did not keep it. It is not keeping a Sabbath day or wearing clothes of a certain style, or having your hair cut in a special way that proves character such as God requires.

What are God's conditions? For what is He especially looking? First, God is looking for faith—faith in Him. This is an important requisite. "Without faith it is impossible to please him"—Heb.11:6. If you have not faith in God, you might just as well stop where you are. The Lord has a glorious arrangement for those who cannot exercise faith, but He is not calling them during this Age. He will deal with them by and by. But He requires faith of those who would have His favour now. Only such can be of the Bride of Christ.

There is a great difference between faith and credulity. We have learned this lesson from the experiences of the Dark Ages. There was comparatively little faith then. We are not to have faith in things that nobody can understand. That is not God's plan. It may be the creeds of men, but it is not the Word of God. He expects us to have faith in what He has declared; and He says—"Come now, let us reason together"—Isa.1:18. Today all over the world, you will find people saying, "I believe in the Trinity, but I cannot understand it." There is no credit in believing what you cannot understand. "I thought that if I did not believe in the Trinity, I would go to eternal torment", says one. My dear brother, there is nothing about the Trinity in the Bible. The Bible is all straight and reasonable.

What the Bible says is this—"Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD"—Jehovah—Deut.6:4; 1 Cor.8:6. Have faith in what the Bible says. Attend to what God has declared—"To us there is one God, the Father." Have faith in this Scriptural statement. We are to believe what the Word of God declares, and not what men have said that is not in the Bible.

Another thing which God requires of us is loyalty. We are to stand for all that God stands for, and to be opposed to all that God opposes. God is opposed to everything dishonourable, evil and false. There are only two sides. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." You cannot serve Truth and error. Watch where you are standing. There is great danger of being deceived. Thousands of people are standing

today where they should not stand, and would not, if their eyes were not blinded—2 Cor.4:4. "His servants ye are to whom ye render service."

Whom are you serving? Are you serving Christ or the system? We must know what we are serving. Only as we are faithful in serving God and in turning our talents to use in His service shall we be acceptable to Him. He is not looking for those who are loyal to sects or systems. This is a part of the test upon us.

"The Lord your God proveth you"—your faith, your loyalty, your meekness, your love of the brethren. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"—1 John 4:20. If any man or woman has made a covenant of consecration to the Lord, and has been begotten of His spirit; that fact is a notice from the Lord that He has accepted that one. Suppose I say, "He is not my style", would that be loyalty to God? If we were in an earthly army, there might be some next to whom we would prefer not to march; but we would say, "He is my comrade; he is loyal to my government." So it is with the army of the Lord. We are fighting "the good fight of faith"; and all who are on our side are our brethren, no matter how ungainly or unattractive they may be according to the flesh. The fact that they belong to our King settles it. If He accepts them, I accept them; if He rejects them, I reject them.

This is the cue which the Lord gives me as to the ones for whom I shall lay down my life. He is looking on with loving eyes to see how you and I are carrying out our covenant as to loyalty in faith, word, act and thought.

With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Out of the heart are the issues of life. If our hearts are right, then loyalty will be manifest by our doing the best we know how for the brethren and in doing our duty towards all. It is not sufficient, however, to love the Lord with part of your heart and to say, "Next to my wife (or my husband) I love the Lord." God must have the first place. It is GOD FIRST, the Lord Jesus second, and everything else after them.

It is all a matter of the heart. It is not mere Law, although it may begin as such. I may say, "I have accepted God's terms. It is now a law to me to do His will." But as I progress and come into fuller sympathy with God, then comes a love for the principles for which He stands. It is my heart that is to serve God. This is the highest attainment of a Christian—that with his whole heart he should love and serve the Lord.

PEOPLES PAPER

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Ransom and Sin Offering

There has been some misunderstanding of the thoughts presented in the "Peoples Paper" of October-November issue of last year in the article—"Study in Hebrews 10." The failure to see the important difference between the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus as the Ransom for all mankind and the teaching of the Sin Offering causes this misunderstanding.

The difference between the Ransom and Sin Offering is well defined when we keep in mind that the Ransom is the price Jesus provided by His sacrifice alone, once for all mankind. The teaching of the Sin Offering reveals the way in which this ransom price is made applicable to cancel the sins of the world of mankind.

When the Apostle Paul wrote in Hebrews 9:24—"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands. . . .but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us"—he revealed that Christ's appearance before God at that time was on behalf of His own true followers, the "us" class, and not for the world. This agrees with our Lord's prayer in John 17:9—"I pray for them (His own selected disciples): I pray not for the world"—at that time.

At the time the Apostle Paul (who was then called Saul) was apprehended on the Damascus road, when on his mission of persecuting Christ's followers, we have the words of Jesus to him in Acts 9:4—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Our Lord was then in heavenly glory, and could not be persecuted personally, but our risen Lord counted His true followers, the "us" class, as part of Himself, in their sufferings for His cause. Thus they "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the church"—Col.1:24. So doing, they are the secondary part of the Sin Offering, because their sacrifice is "holy, acceptable to God" (Rom.12:1), by God accepting their sacrifice through the perfection and merit of Christ. In other words, God accepts the sacrifices of all who are truly "in Christ" as members of Christ.

In our Memorial Service we have the clear teaching of the Sin Offering revealed when we truly grasp the depth of what the Memorial means. Those who take the Memorial only in

memory of Jesus' sacrifice are apparently not able to appreciate the deeper meaning, and the Lord no doubt accepts their faith and love that far. From the study—"The New Creation"—from page 465, under the heading—"We, being many, are one loaf"—and text, 1 Cor.10:16,17, the following is presented as being most helpful on this subject.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread (loaf), and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread"—1 Cor.10:16,17.

The Apostle, under the guidance of the holy spirit, here sets before us an additional thought respecting this Memorial instituted by our Lord. He does not deny, but affirms, that primarily the bread represents our Lord's broken body, sacrificed on our behalf, and that the cup represents His blood, which seals our pardon. But now, in addition, he shows that we, as members of the **Ecclesia**, members of the body of Christ, the prospective Firstborn, the New Creation, become participators with our Lord in His death, sharers in His sacrifice; and, as he has elsewhere stated, it is a part of our covenant to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"—Col.1:24. The thought here is the same as that expressed by the words—"We are baptized into **his death**." Thus, while our Lord's flesh was the loaf broken for the world, the believers of this Gospel Age, the faithful, the elect, the New Creation, are counted in as parts of that one loaf, "members of the body of Christ"; and hence, in the breaking of the loaf, after recognizing it as the sacrifice of our Lord on our behalf, we are to recognize it, further, as the breaking or sacrificing of the whole Church, of all those consecrated to be dead with Him, to be broken with Him, to share His sufferings.

This is the exact thought contained in the word "communion"—common-union, common-participation. Hence, with every annual celebration of this Memorial we not only recognize the foundation of all our hopes as resting in the dear Redeemer's sacrifice for our sins, but we revive and renew our own consecration to "be dead with him, that we may also live with him"—to "suffer with him, that we may also reign with him." How grandly comprehensive is the meaning of this divinely instituted celebration! We are not putting the symbols instead of the reality; nothing surely could be further from our Lord's intention, nor further from propriety on our part. The heart-communion with Him, the heart-feeding upon Him, the heart-communion with the fellow-members of the Body, and the heart-realization

of the meaning of our covenant of sacrifice, is the real communion, which, if we are faithful, we will carry out day by day throughout the year—being daily broken with our Lord, and continually feeding upon His merit, growing strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. What a blessing comes to us with the celebration of this Memorial! What a burning of heart for further appreciation and growth in grace and knowledge, and for further participation in the privileges of the service to which we are called, not only as respects the present but also as respects the future!

It will be noticed that the Apostle includes the cup for which we praise God. "Is it not the communion (common-union, common-participation) of the blood of Christ!" Oh, what a thought—that the truly consecrated, faithful "little flock" of the New Creation throughout this Gospel Age, has been Christ in the flesh; and that the suffering and trials and ignominy and death of these whom the Lord has accepted and recognized as "members of his body" in the flesh, are all counted in as parts of His sacrifice, because associated with, and under Him who is our Head, our Chief Priest!

Convention News

The Convention in Melbourne, held over the Christmas period for four days, was a very helpful and refreshing season of fellowship for all able to attend. We are very thankful to our Heavenly Father for His blessings received throughout the gatherings. The attendance was good each day, with visiting brethren being gladly welcomed from South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland. Our Polish Australian brethren also joined in the gatherings, some serving helpfully on the program.

During the four days two Bible Studies were conducted, 16 addresses were given by the brethren, also there were Fellowship and Testimony Meetings, a Hymn Session and informal fellowship throughout the gatherings.

Following the opening praise and prayer, and a brief address of welcome, the first Bible Study on 1 John 1:1-7 proved very helpful indeed. This passage from the Apostle John was seen as beautifully expressing the true fellowship in the spirit which exists between consecrated Christians and their Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ, all down the Gospel Age to our day. The words of verse 7 seemed to sum up the whole lesson of the passage to us—"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us (continually) from all sin."

On the last day of Convention, the Scripture passage in Revelation 3:14-22 was studied. This message from our risen Lord—"the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God"—was given through the Apostle John to the church of the Laodiceans, early in the Gospel Age. It was seen to have a three-fold application—firstly, to the local church at Laodicea, then, historically to the seventh or last period of the Gospel Age church, and finally to Christians individually. Verses 15 to 17 were seen as describing the terribly fallen condition of nominal Christianity at this end of the Gospel Age, and the complete casting off from the Lord's favour of all ecclesiastical systems—"because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

From verse 18 in this study we saw how the Lord appeals to sincere Christians in this Laodicean period to respond as individuals to "buy of Him gold tried in the fire, that they might be truly rich in Him, and anoint their eyes with eyesalve that they may see His truths." For "as many as I (the Lord) love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Those who truly repent of the sad condition in the Laodicean church, and respond to the words of Rev.18:4—"come out of her, my people"—the Lord promises to "come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"—verse 20. The "knock" of the Lord to the individuals He loves, brings the promised blessings of truth to heart and mind for all who "open the door." Further, the Lord "standing at the door" indicates a true sign of His presence in this seventh period of the church's history. At the close of the sixth church period, to Philadelphia—Rev.3:11—the Lord's message was—"Behold, I come quickly"—but to Laodicea—"Behold, I stand at the door." Verses 21 and 22 in our study revealed the glorious inheritance to all the faithful "overcomers"—to those who, by the Lord's grace, have an ear to hear, and respond to "what the spirit saith unto the churches."

During the Bible Studies and for other meetings as required, the use of a roving microphone was of very great help in conveying the thoughts of each contributor to the assembly. The supplying of the loud speaker equipment was also much appreciated. The selected subjects chosen by the brethren for their addresses proved very helpful, and were as follows—"Obedience"; "Daniel, the Great Man of God"; "Righteousness and Loyalty"; "Waiting for the Sonship"; "Our Building of God"; "Faith, Hope, Love, These Three"; "Last Times"; "Sunrise"; "The Prophecy of the Prophet Habakkuk"; "God's Spirit of Love is Based upon Fixed Principles"; "Blessed are the

Eyes"; "The Day of Atonement"; "Fellowship One with Another"; "Visiting Brethren Overseas" and "The Father Himself Loveth You."

Many kindly greetings with Christian love and assurance of prayers upon the assembly were received and greatly appreciated from Classes and brethren throughout Australia and from overseas. To all who thus remembered us, and to brethren everywhere, the Christian love from the Convention brethren with the Scriptural message in 1 John 1:3,7, is gladly sent along to all.

The Praise and Testimony Meeting gave opportunity for expressions of thanksgiving to God for all His blessings and overruling providences in our lives. Most enjoyable again was the Hymns We Love session, with the music contributed by the Sisters on piano, violin and 'cello being most uplifting in service of the Lord, as well as for the hymns throughout the Convention. The labours of the Sisters in providing refreshments each day was also greatly appreciated, as service unto the Lord.

The final session with the Love Feast, and singing of the lovely hymns—"Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love" and "God be with you till we meet again"—followed by a prayer of thanksgiving to God for all His many blessings, and request for His continued overruling and spiritual care of all His dear people, brought to a close the helpful Melbourne Convention.

Bible Translations

For some years past the attention of Christians has been directed to a considerable number of translations of the Bible, some of which the majority of the Lord's people have perhaps been unable to examine. Sometimes, over the radio, a Bible reading is heard in modern language from the translation of one or another of these more recent publications, and often the expressions, while perhaps plain, seem quite out of place to record the sacred information contained in God's Word.

Those of the Lord's people who have become acquainted with the language of the Authorized Version, perhaps from childhood, seem to find in its general expression a flow of majestic language which adds beauty and blessing to the message from the Lord and His servants of both the Old and New Testaments. As an illustration, we quote the opening words of Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews—"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Could there be more beautiful language to present such an amount

of truth respecting God's Plan of the Ages and His methods of communication to those who had, and have, ears to be "spoken unto" throughout the ages of the past and present? We know of no other rendering to compare with this translation of the opening words of the Apostle Paul to the Hebrews, and the same can be said, in a general way, for the language of the Authorized Version as a whole.

This does not mean, of course, that the Authorized Version is sufficient for students of God's Word. The Lord has permitted and directed many valuable manuscripts to be found since the Authorized Version was translated in 1611. All sincere students of God's Word do well to appreciate and use the additional helps available, especially those which are based on the oldest MSS. From these oldest manuscripts it is found that many statements in the Authorized Version of the Bible are not really Scriptural. This comes as a shock to some sincere people, but when it is understood that mistakes have crept into the sacred text through copyists' errors, and this can be proved by comparing Scripture with Scripture, then all who love the Lord's true Word only, will surely give thanks to God that He has overruled that these mistakes are revealed to all who are sufficiently alert and interested enough to detect them by means of the additional helps now available. However, for Bible Study classes, where practically all members have the Authorized Version before them, it seems this Version is the most helpful for general reading. Where occasion requires, a variation can be quoted as giving a clearer presentation of the truth on any particular subject. To hear verses read from other translations, when there may be no real necessity, seems to take away some of the blessing in which all may share when all are following the same words from the Authorized Version.

Amongst the numerous translations of the New Testament there can be no doubt that the Emphatic Diaglott is one of the most valuable for comparative study, and for those who have Tischendorf's Notes (based on the three oldest manuscripts, including the Sinaitic; but now, unfortunately, out of print) much additional help is available. For the complete Bible the Revised Version has served very well over many years, and now the Revised Standard Version of both the Old and New Testaments is undoubtedly most helpful for the Bible student. As an illustration of the clarity of the R.S. Version we quote Genesis 4:7, being the Lord's words to Cain—"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin is crouching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it." Compare the Authorized Version, and note the improvement

of the R.S.Version.

A note of warning is offered against accepting any translation of the Bible as being absolutely correct without careful examination. It is necessary to prove and compare expressions in translations, as indicated by the following from one of our brethren:—"A copy of the Epistles by J.B. Phillips in modern version has been sent to me, and I now regard it as one of the poorest of all for doctrinal teaching, for he does not abide by the original words, but brings his sectarian creed into it so many times. For instance, in 1 Cor.15:51—"We shall not all sleep"—he puts 'We shall not all die.' One can trace the sectarian view in many important passages. In portions not relating to doctrine I think it is perhaps a good translation, but to a student is very mischievous, leading away from the truth. . . . I see that Moffatt, too, puts the same text—"Not all of us are to die", which seems to show that these men have expressed their own views instead of what the Lord intended to teach through the Apostle Paul. Again in 1 Thess.4:15-17, Phillips says—"One word of command, one shout from the archangel, one blast from the trumpet of God, and God in person will come down from heaven." It gives quite the wrong thought, don't you think?"

There can be no doubt that the translations above quoted are very misleading, and it is necessary for all the Lord's people to thoroughly test all that they receive as truth. To this end the Bible Concordances, especially Strong's and Young's are most helpful in determining the meanings of the Hebrew and Greek words; indeed, one or other of these concordances is essential for helpful Bible study.

Then, along with all the careful study given to determine correct translations, it is most essential that the spirit of the Lord be the guiding power to bless the truths of His Word to the hearts and lives of God's people, that the truth may have the sanctifying effect, to the Lord's praise. Thus, may sincere Christians grow both in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

News Item

The following appeared in the Melbourne "Age" under their "Odd Spot" recently:—"A Norwegian fisherman says he found the earring his wife lost while fishing, in the stomach of a fish he caught a week later. His wife backs the story."

This story at once reminds us of our Lord's instruction to Peter in supplying the tribute money. The passage of Scripture reads—"When they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said,

Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him (spoke up first), saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take and give unto them for me and thee"—Matt.17:24-27.

It has been suggested and is probably true, that fish are attracted by bright objects in the water and swallow them quite readily. The great difference between the Norwegian fisherman's story and Peter finding the tribute money in the mouth of the fish is, of course, our Lord's wonderful miracle in knowing of the money being in the mouth of the particular fish He sent Peter to catch.

What a great impression that miracle must have made on the Apostle Peter and all the other disciples, as well as the numerous miracles Jesus performed by the power of His Heavenly Father. We also should exercise full faith and confidence in the love and power of our Heavenly Father to carry out every feature of His Plan. As the Apostle Paul declared in Rom.8:31—"If God be for us, who can be against us?" And God is for us!

The Power of God

"Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high"—Luke 24:49.

Power is one of the attributes of our Heavenly Father, all of which are equally essential in the carrying out of His great Plan of Redemption.

Without Power to act, Wisdom would fail to accomplish its designs, Justice could not be enforced, and Love would be helpless.

There appears to be two words in the New Testament, both of which are rendered by our word "power." The one refers to power in the sense of rule or authority; the other speaks of ability, strength of will, power of character. It is the latter of these two words which is used in this passage. "Ye shall receive power, the holy spirit coming upon you." Thus we see the connection between the baptism of the holy spirit and the promised power.

The Apostles had been with Christ, had seen His work, His miracles, and had been taught by Him. They had seen Him in His passion, His death, and resurrection, and were yet to

witness His ascension. Yet with all this experience the Master said—"Wait until ye be endued with power."

Our Lord had said—"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the holy spirit will not come unto you"—John 16:7.

Thus they were to tarry for the promise of the Father. They did not wait in vain. They were gathered together, a body of men, like ourselves, no doubt, in great expectation, wondering what was going to happen. There was the sound of a rushing, mighty wind—Acts 2:1-3—and these fishermen and others received the holy spirit—the power of God. They went forth endued with power, as the Apostles of Christ, and faced the world with courage. How useless it would be to start out in Christian work, or as a follower of Christ, without the power of the holy spirit. Jesus Himself did not begin His ministry until He had received this promise of the Father.

"I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me"—Phil. 4:13—said the Apostle Paul.

"I cannot do it alone;
I change with the changing sky;
Today, so glad and bright,
Tomorrow, too weak to try;
But He never gives in,
So we two shall win,
Jesus and I."

This gift of the holy spirit of power—2 Tim. 1:7—is a constant one—John 14:16,17. Like the disciples we shall find that by tarrying together and waiting on God and in the study of His Word we shall be renewed in spirit and in power, and enabled to keep clear of the world and its snares.

Having received this power, Acts 1:8 informs us as to the use to be made of it, from the Apostles' day down throughout the Gospel Age—"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." So each one who comes under the same anointing of our Lord Jesus Christ has a responsibility to witness to the truth according to opportunity.

"We wait, O Lord, Thy power to know,
Before we forth to service go,
Or else we serve in vain.
We trust not human thought or might,
Our souls are helpless for the fight,
Until that power we gain.

"The Fire that cleanseth through and through,
Inspiring every nerve anew,
With energy Divine;
The Fire that burns, its conquering way,
Within, without, and every day,
Doth keep us wholly Thine."

Bible Students' Gathering

The Adelaide Class has decided to hold special meetings at Easter 1985. These are to be held over three days as were the more recent of the annual Conventions held until 1982. However, they are to differ from the Conventions in giving special emphasis to Bible Studies and additional time for informal fellowship.

Provision for three studies and the extra fellowship time, would not permit addresses from all brethren able to contribute. Rather than accept some speakers and reject others it was decided not to include addresses at all.

Instead, the Class hopes to arrange for some films both for spiritual profit and as discussion points for the informal fellowship. Hymns we Love and Why and some provision for more formal fellowship will be included in the new format.

The meetings are to be at the usual meeting place of the Class, Manchester Unity Building, 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide, from 11 am to 4 pm on Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday, April 5th, 6th and 7th, 1985.

The studies chosen are—**James 2:18-24; Isaiah 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 1:26-31.**

A warm invitation is extended to all who are able to attend, to participate in the worship and rejoicing and in the building up known to come, by the grace of God, with assembling together.

Passover Memorial, 1985

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 4th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

On account of special circumstances this year the following have been arranged:—

Melbourne—Sunday, 31st March, at 2.30 pm., at Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd. Camberwell.

Adelaide—Sunday, 31st March, at 2.30 pm., at M.U. Hall, (2nd Floor) 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Submission

"O! teach me, Lord, the art
With Wisdom to remove
The errors that deceive the heart
And Truth to clearly prove.

"O! arm me with the mind,
Meek Lamb, that was in Thee:
And let my fervent zeal be joined
With grace and charity."