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# The New Scofield Reference Bible

RAYMOND F. SURBURG

ON APRIL 13, 1967, fifty years from the date of the last edition, *The New Scofield Reference Bible*<sup>1</sup> appeared. E. Schuyler English claims that this Bible has far outsold all other annotated editions of Scriptures anywhere published.<sup>2</sup> Oxford University Press has been printing this Bible since 1909 and over 2,000,000 copies had already been sold by 1943. No book published by Oxford University Press has come anywhere near matching the great numerical sale of this annotated version of the Authorized King James text. For nearly six decades *The Scofield Reference Bible* has been a mighty force for holding aloft the banner of fundamentalism. It has also been responsible for introducing many Christians to dispensationalism.

The first edition of this world-famous annotated Bible was published in 1909. Its author, Cyrus Ingerson Scofield, was born in Lenawee County, Michigan on August 19, 1843.<sup>3</sup> His parents were believing members of the Episcopal Church, strongly Puritan in background. While Scofield was still young, his family left Michigan and settled in central Tennessee before the outbreak of the Civil War. When the war between the north and south began, he enlisted at once in the Confederate army and served in the Army of Northern Virginia under General Lee, receiving the Confederate Cross of Honor. Before his twentieth birthday, Scofield had participated in a number of bloody battles and minor skirmishes. At the end of the Civil War he went to St. Louis where he decided to prepare for the legal profession. Some years later he went to Kansas where at the age of twenty-six he applied for admission to the Kansas bar. Shortly after his admission, the citizens of Kansas elected him to the state legislature. President Grant appointed C. I. Scofield as United States attorney to the Kansas and Indian territory when he was only thirty years old. After two years he resigned and went back to St. Louis in order to practice law.

In 1879, in his thirty-sixth year, he was converted and it meant the turning point of his life. Thomas McPheeters and Walter C. Douglas were instruments God used to convert Scofield. His conversion freed him from the excessive drink habit to which he had been addicted for some time. In St. Louis Dr. Scofield came into contact with Dr. Brookes, then pastor of the Washington Avenue and Compton Street Presbyterian Church. Dr. Brookes was noted as a great preacher, an able scholar, and editor of *The Truth*. He was an ardent premillennialist and an exponent of biblical prophecy. Being instructed by Dr. Brookes in Bible study, Dr. Scofield acquired a Biblical knowledge such, as Arno C. Gaebelein claimed, he would not have received at a theological seminary.<sup>4</sup> From Dr. Brookes, Scofield learned what was to become an important part of his hermeneutics, namely, the high point of

Biblical prophecy as related to the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God. Later on Scofield set forth the interpretative principles learned from Dr. Brookes in a pamphlet *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, which according to Ehlert was produced in the summer of 1888.<sup>4</sup> This booklet has gone through many editions by different publishers.<sup>5</sup> After his conversion, Scofield joined the First Congregational Church of St. Louis, whose pastor was Dr. C. L. Goodell, a friend of Dr. Brookes.

In midsummer of 1882, Scofield reached Dallas and preached his first sermon in the First Congregational Church, now known as the Scofield Memorial Church. Later in the presence of a large number of Congregational ministers he was ordained into the holy ministry. In 1895 he left Texas and became pastor of the Congregational Church of Northfield, Massachusetts, and president of the Northfield Bible Training School. He was a great personal friend of the evangelist Dwight L. Moody. In 1902 he returned to Dallas, Texas, where between 1902 and 1909 he served as pastor of the First Church.

In the later years of his life, Dr. Scofield devoted his time to the Scofield Correspondence School and to conducting lecture tours in Europe and America. He was the author of *The Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, 3 volumes (1907),<sup>6</sup> *Addresses on Prophecy* (1906); *Lectures on Galatians* (1907), *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (1906); and *Bible of 1911* (1911).

Probably the greatest achievement of Scofield's ministry was his writing and publication of *The Scofield Reference Bible*, on which he worked from 1902-1909. In 1909 Oxford University Press of New York published the first edition of his annotated Bible which Dr. Scofield revised in 1917. Consulting editors of *The Scofield Reference Bible* were Henry G. Weston, president of Crozer Theological Seminary, James M. Gray, president of The Moody Bible Institute, William J. Eerdman, author of a number of Biblical commentaries, Arthur T. Pierson, author, editor and teacher, W. G. Moorehead, president of Xenia (U.P.) Theological Seminary, Elmore Harris, president of Toronto Bible Institute, Arno C. Gaebelien, editor of *Our Hope*, and William L. Pettingill. These men were well known in fundamentalistic circles and exercised a great influence on American Christianity.

It is the contention of Russel Hitt, editor of *Eternity*, that it would be difficult to estimate the world-wide influence *The Scofield Reference Bible* had in shaping the theological thinking of thousands of Christians. Thus he wrote:

When Protestant leadership was abandoning the faith right and left for a watered down caricature of Christian truth, fundamentalists clung to their Scofield Bibles and sought to defend what they believed was the core of the apostolic faith. Some critics of fundamentalism and the Scofield Bible forget the enormous battle that was then raging within the church.

Too many key Protestant leaders were all ready to jettison the classical Christian truth of God's sovereign, supernatural and redemptive power and man's sinful nature and to substitute an inspired modernism that elevated man and dethroned God.

In this context the Scofield Bible was the book that stood defensively for truth against the onslaughts of the ravening wolves. It is no wonder the fundamentalists became defensive; no wonder so many called the existing structures 'apostate.'<sup>7</sup>

*The Scofield Reference Bible* was the Bible which many fundamentalists used as they founded independent missionary agencies for the propagation of Christianity and established Bible institutes and Bible conference grounds. Whether one is or is not sympathetic to *The Scofield Reference Bible*, there can be no question about the importance of its influence upon American Christianity in the twentieth century.

In 1954 Oxford University Press decided that a revision of *The Scofield Reference Bible* would be advisable. A nine-man committee of well known scholars sympathetic to and favoring dispensationalism was appointed. They were: E. Schuyler English, chairman; Frank E. Gaebelain, headmaster emeritus, The Stoney Brook School, vice-chairman; William Culbertson, president of The Moody Bible Institute; Charles L. Feinberg, dean, Talbot Theological Seminary; Allen A. McCrea, president, Faith Theological Seminary; Clarence E. Mason, Jr., dean, Philadelphia College of the Bible; Alva J. McClain, president emeritus, Grace Theological Seminary; Wilbur M. Smith, editor, *Peloubet Select Notes*; and John F. Walvoord, president, Dallas Theological Seminary.

At no time, so Dr. Schuyler English states, did Oxford University Press or any member of the revision committee plan to introduce changes into the theological position or make revisions in the system of interpretation that controlled the introductions and explanatory notes.<sup>8</sup> The plenary inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, the premillennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth, the pretribulation rapture of the Church, and that God dealt with men in different ways during different dispensations in which man has been responsible as to his obedience to Him were convictions held by Scofield and the revision committee. Reasons advanced for the revision were: discoveries in the field of archaeology, new light on the grammar and lexicography of the Biblical languages, Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, changes in the English language, and developments of world-wide significance in the area of prophecy.

The editorial committee convened as a group over a period of nine years, holding sessions that lasted from three to four days, with Dr. Wilbur D. Ruggles, vice-president of Oxford University Press in attendance. Recordings were kept of all sessions and were made available to all committee members for purposes of reference. The transcriptions of all sessions cover 3,353 pages. The final

meetings of the editorial board were held in November, 1961. It met subsequently on November 22, 1963 to consider publication plans and goals.<sup>9</sup>

### *The Text of The New Scofield Bible*

The text of *The Scofield Reference Bible* (hereafter referred to as Scofield I) was the authorized King James Version. The text of 1611 was kept, but certain changes were made in the text of *The New Scofield Reference Bible* (hereafter referred to as Scofield II). The title page states that the new edition was making such changes as will help the reader. The new version has replaced antiquated words with up-to-date ones. Hundreds of words were changed and such changes were indicated by vertical lines. For example, "Replenish the earth" (Gen. 1:28) has become "fill the earth," which therefore rules out this text in support of those who claimed that the earth was restored after having been made "without form and void." In Gen 39:11 the new version has "Joseph went into the house to do his work" instead of "Joseph went into the house to do his business." "Let it forth" (Luke 20:9) has become "leased it"; the "householders" was changed to "tenants"; "Publicans" (Luke 18:11) has become "tax collectors"; "prevent" (1 Thess. 4:15) was rendered "precede."

The principles adopted by the committee were to change (1) obsolete and archaic words; (2) words that have altered their meaning; (3) indelicate words and expressions; (4) relative pronouns that refer to persons, e.g., *which* to *who*; (5) proper nouns to conform with late spellings of them, and New Testament counterparts, e.g., changing *Elias* in the New Testament to *Elijah*, as in the Old Testament; and (6) in some few instances an incorrect or obscure translation has been clarified.

Approximately six hundred changes in names have been made (mostly spellings) which the reader can find indexed. The changes effected in the text pertain not to the original languages but to the English of the Authorized Version.

The notes contain references on the validity of the text used by the King James translators, who lived at a time when the science of textual criticism was in its infancy. Thus the footnote on Matt. 6:13 calls attention to the fact that the doxology of the Lord's Prayer is not found in the oldest MSS.; concerning the close of Mark's Gospel the note on p. 1074 states that verses 9-20 are not found in the two most ancient MSS., the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, while other MSS. have them with partial omissions and variations; concerning John 7:53-8:11 the note recognizes that the pericope of the adulterous woman is not found in some ancient MSS. However, the note nevertheless asserts that this pericope is a genuine part of the Gospel. In John 5:4 where the angel troubles the water, usually considered textually dubious, there is no note at all; Acts 8:37 considered spurious has no comment either. I John 5:7, the comma Johanneum, is recognized in the notes as unauthentic.

### *Chronology*

Scofield I accepted Ussher's chronology, which placed the creation at 4004 B.C.; the Exodus at 1491 B.C., the call of Abraham at 2126 B.C., the entrance into Canaan in 1451 B.C. Scofield II has abandoned the Ussherian chronology. Before the time of Abraham, Genesis 11, no dates are found and those between 2,000 and 1,000 B.C. are given as approximate. The new dates place the call of Abram from Ur of the Chaldees at c. 1950 B.C.; the time of the oppression at 1550 B.C. and the Exodus at 1447 B.C.; the entry into Canaan c. 1407 B.C.; the period of the Judges from c. 1400-1100 B.C.; the birth of Samuel c. 1100 B.C.

### *Self-pronunciation*

A simplified system of helps for pronunciation has been added, indicating how difficult proper names are to be pronounced, which was lacking in Scofield I. Many of the suggested pronunciations will sound strange to American ears: Zebulun rather than Zébulun, Aristobulus for Aristóbulus. Here we would underline the suggestion of Harold Lindsell that it would be advisable for Bible publishers to get together and adopt a uniform system of pronunciation for proper names and to employ the same diacritical marks for proper names.<sup>10</sup>

### *Subheadings*

About 450 additional subheads have been supplied to assist the reader. This means that a more detailed analysis has been provided. However, while these are supposed to reflect the text, they do incorporate interpretations which amillennialists would not consider as being found in the text, but rather as the result of interpretations consonant with the hermeneutical system espoused by Dr. Scofield.

### *Margins*

The new edition has a vastly expanded marginal cross reference system. According to E. Schuyler English 15,000 new marginal entries have been made.<sup>11</sup> For the Old Testament the references are in a center column, while for the New Testament two side columns were employed to record the references. An important feature of Scofield I was the chain references dealing with about sixty major topics. In his original plan sent to the first group of consulting editors, Dr. Scofield proposed to give definitions of all the great pivotal words of Scripture such as atonement, justification, sanctification, world, glory, kingdom, church, sin, sacrifice, predestination, worship, etc., some sixty in all. These notes have been expanded in Scofield II to show all references in the Bible to the subject. Both first and last references to a topic or doctrine are shown with the location of the summary note for each doctrine. Lindsell claims that the topic of divorce, a contemporary problem of great importance is not mentioned in the footnotes. Dr. Scofield himself was divorced.<sup>12</sup>

### Old Testament Isagogical Material

The introductions to the books of the Old and New Testaments have been reworked and seem to represent a distinct improvement. In contrast to *The Westminster Study Bible*, *The Oxford Annotated Bible* and *The Jerusalem Bible*, Scofield II espouses the traditional conservative position on isagogical matters. The dates for the writing of the Pentateuch are given as about 1450-1410 (pp. 1, 71, 127, 166, 217). A defense of the Mosaic authorship is found on pages xvi, 87 and 253.

Joshua, Judges, I & II Samuel, I & II Kings, I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther are regarded as historical books, which report reliable historical events. Scofield II does not regard Genesis 1-11 as containing legends or sagas as do critical scholars today. Scofield II does not rate the Books of Kings as superior in their historical value to the materials of Chronicles. Ruth and Esther are not considered fictional as other current annotated Bibles do. Scofield II does not ascribe Joshua, Judges, Kings to the so-called Deuteronomistic school of writers as is common today. The following are the dates of composition of the former prophets: Joshua: 14th century B.C.; Judges: the 11th century; I & II Samuel: 10th century; I & II Kings: the 6th century.

The authorship of Job is uncertain as is the time of composition. The events of Job are historical and are assigned to the patriarchal period. The psalm titles are accepted as genuine, which means that David is the author of at least 73 psalms. There is no allusion whatever to the psalm classification introduced by Gunkel, Mowinckel, Schmidt, Weiser, Hans Joachim Kraus or Westermann. The date of writing for the Psalter is given as 10th century B.C. and later. In the introduction to the Psalms it is stated that the Psalms "include a vast body of Messianic prophecy" (p. 601). The Book of Proverbs and the Song of Solomon were authored by Solomon and consequently were composed in the 10th century B.C. Most of the Book of Proverbs is assigned to Solomon.

On page 712 there is given a chronological order of the prophets. The following is the chronology of the 16 prophetic books:

#### I. The Pre-Exilic Prophets

Joel	c. 850-c. 700 B.C.
Jonah	c. 800 B.C.
Amos	c. 780-755 B.C.
Hosea	c. 760-710 B.C.
Micah	c. 740 B.C.
Isaiah	c. 740-680 B.C.
Nahum	c. 700-615 B.C.
Zephaniah	c. 630-620 B.C.
Habakkuk	c. 627-586 B.C.
Jeremiah	c. 626-580 B.C.

## II. The Exilic Prophets

Daniel	c. 604-535 B.C.
Ezekiel	c. 593-570 B.C.
Obadiah	c. 585 B.C.

## III. The Post-Exilic Prophets

Haggai	520 B.C.
Zechariah	520-518 B.C.
Malachi	c. 450-400 B.C.

Each of the sixteen prophetic writings was written by the prophet whose name the respective book bears. Scofield II follows the tradition of the LXX making Jeremiah the author of Lamentations.

The unity of Isaiah and Zechariah are held to in Scofield II. The book of Jonah is historical and not to be interpreted allegorically, typically or in any other way to circumvent the historical character of the experiences of Jonah. The Old Testament canon is assumed to be in existence by the end of the 5th century B.C.

Pages 983-984 contain a brief summary of historical events between Malachi and St. Matthew.

*New Testament Isagogical Material*

The introductions to the various New Testament writings and statements in the notes show that the committee espoused the position held by historic conservative Protestantism and Roman Catholicism on New Testament isagogical problems, in vogue before the adoption of the views of higher criticism. The apostle Matthew wrote the first gospel; St. Mark the second gospel; St. Luke the third as well as the Book of Acts. Paul definitely wrote the thirteen epistles which the text ascribes to him. John, the Apostle, was used by the Holy Spirit to pen five books: The Gospel, the Three Epistles and the Book of Revelation.

According to the introductory material for each book, the following is the suggested chronological order of the New Testament writings:

James	c. 45-50 A.D.
Galatians	c. 49 or 52 A.D.
Matthew	c. 50 A.D.
I Thess.	c. 51 A.D.
II Thess.	c. 51 A.D.
Romans	c. 56 A.D.
I Cor.	c. 56 A.D.
II Cor.	c. 57 A.D.
Luke	c. 60 A.D.
Acts	c. 60 A.D.
Ephesians	c. 60 A.D.



Philippians	c. 60 A.D.
Colossians	c. 60 A.D.
Philemon	c. 60 A.D.
I Timothy	c. 64 A.D.
Titus	c. 65 A.D.
I Peter	c. 65 A.D.
II Peter	c. 66 A.D.
II Timothy	c. 67 A.D.
Hebrews	c. 68 A.D.
Mark	c. 68 A.D.
Jude	c. 68 A.D.
I John	c. 85 A.D.
II John	c. 85 A.D.
III John	c. 85 A.D.
John	c. 90 A.D.
Revelation	c. 98 A.D.

The critical approach to the New Testament which employs form criticism, *Sachkritik*, documentary analysis and other hypothetical methods is rejected.

#### *The Hermeneutical Approach*

The outstanding characteristic of Scofield I was its dispensationalism. This hermeneutical system is also continued in Scofield II. The committee entrusted with the revision was instructed not to abandon or modify Scofield's system and an examination of the new explanatory notes and what was retained from Scofield I indicates clearly that the committee was faithful to its assignment. The system set forth in Dr. Scofield's *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* is still followed. In this system of interpretation a great deal of emphasis is placed upon the concepts of "covenant" and "dispensation." It was held by Dr. Scofield that there were two testaments. History from the creation of Adam to the final Second Coming of Christ was divided into seven dispensations. In Scofield I (p.5) a dispensation was defined as follows: "A dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some *specific* revelation of the will of God." *The New Scofield Reference Bible* retains the original statement, but then in succeeding paragraphs states that (1) three concepts are implied in the definition, (a) a deposit of divine revelation, (b) man's stewardship of this divine revelation, and (c) a time period during which man is tested in regard to his obedience to God. (2) The different dispensations do not lead to different ways of salvation in each of them, since man is reconciled to God in only one way, whatever the time period, i.e., by God's grace through Christ's atoning work on the cross; (3) the continuing requirement on man's part, what-

ever the dispensation, is obedience to the revealed will of God; and (4) the purpose of each dispensation is to place man under a specific rule of conduct (p. 3).

Dr. Scofield, on page 5 of Scofield I, as most dispensationalists do, distinguished seven different dispensations; Innocency (Gen. 1:28-2:13); Conscience (Gen. 3:23); Human Government (Gen. 8:20); Promise (Gen. 12:1); Law (Ex. 19:8); Grace (John 1:17) and Kingdom (Eph. 1:10). Scofield II (p. 3) has listed the seven dispensations as follows: Innocence (Gen. 1:28); Conscience or Moral Responsibility (Gen. 3:7); Human Government (Gen. 8:15); Promise (Gen. 12:1); Law (Ex. 19:1); Church (Acts 2:1) and Kingdom (Rev. 20:4). There are thus still seven dispensations in the revision although the name of the sixth has been altered from *Grace* to *Church*. *The New Scofield Reference Bible* claims that "the dispensations are progressive and connected revelations of God's dealing with man, given sometimes to the whole race and at other times to a particular people, Israel. These different dispensations are not separate ways of salvation. During each of them man is reconciled to God in only one way, *i.e.*, by God's grace through the work of Christ that was accomplished on the cross and vindicated in His resurrection. Before the cross man was saved in prospect of Christ's agonizing sacrifice, through believing the revelation thus far given him. Since the cross man has been saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ in whom revelation and redemption are consummated" (p. 3). On page 258 of Scofield II there is a precise outline of the development of Old Testament history from Abraham till the close of the millennium.

There are eight major covenants of special significance in explaining the outworking of God's purpose with mankind (Scofield I, p. 6). These are: the Edenic (Gen. 2:16), the Adamic (Gen. 3:15), the Noahic (Gen. 9:16), the Abrahamic (Gen. 15:18), the Mosaic (Ex. 19:25), the Palestinian (Deut. 30:3), the Davidic (2 Sam. 7:16), and the New Covenant (Heb. 8:8).

### *Prophetic and Eschatological*

Dr. Scofield followed a pre-tribulational and premillennial approach in prophecy. Scofield II has not altered this stance. The prophecy of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel (9:25-27) plays an important role in the interpretation of Messianic prophecy. For Dr. Scofield it provides the scheme for the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth, and is said also to furnish a key to its interpretation (p. 913). According to Scofield I and II the parenthesis is to take place between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. Hence, during the interim between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks there must lie the whole period of the Church set forth in the New Testament but not revealed in the Old Testament. The interpretation which assigns the last of the seventy weeks to the

end of the age is found in the Church Fathers (p. 913). The secret any-moment rapture of the Church will take place after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Scofield I made a rigid distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven (Scofield I, p. 1003). Scofield II, however, in the footnote on Matthew 3:2 states that these terms are often employed synonymously. However, in Matthew 6:33 *The New Scofield Reference Bible* again maintains the same distinction as set forth in Scofield I.

The millennium is defined in a note on Revelation 20:4. "The millennium is that period of time during which Christ will reign upon earth, as a time of universal peace, prosperity, long life, and prevailing righteousness" (p. 1373). The following Old Testament passages are said to speak of this period of time: Ps. 72:1-20; Is. 9:6-7; 11:1-9; 24:22-23; 30:15-33; 35:1-10; 44:1-28; 49:1-26; 65:17-25; Jer. 23:5-6, 33:15; Micah 4:1; Mt. 25:31-32; I Cor. 15:24-28.

Scofield I claimed that Acts 15:13 was dispensationally speaking the most important passage in the New Testament (p. 1169). James' statement is said to set forth "the divine purpose for this age, and for the beginning of the next." In Scofield II the note limits the expanse of time by asserting that "it shows God's program for this age."

Scofield II maintains the basic distinction between the Jew, the Gentile and the Church of God. The Old Testament has no knowledge of the Church. Scofield I had a damaging note on Zechariah 9:10: "Except in verse 9, this present age is not seen in Zechariah," this has been deleted in Scofield II. The Christian Church did not exist in Christ's day, because, it is alleged that in Matthew 16:18 Christ does not say I am building, have built, but "will build my Church." Before Acts 2 it is wrong to speak of the Christian Church. Beginning with Pentecost and continuing until the Second Coming we are now in the Church dispensation. The Old Testament deals with Israel and does not predict the days of our Lord. The Gospels must be interpreted with care because the teachings in the Four Evangelists are not a part of the Church Age dispensation.

Many readers of Scofield I were convinced that there was excessive typologizing in the explanatory notes. One critic called Scofield's typological applications "artificial and extravagant." Both Scofield I (p. 4) and Scofield II (p. 6) correctly define what a Biblical type is. Scofield II adds two warnings and advises its readers that "(1) nothing may be insisted upon as a type without explicit New Testament authority; and (2) all types not so authenticated must recognize as having only the authority of analogy, of spiritual congruity" (p. 6). Both Scofield I and Scofield II claim that most Old Testament types are found in the Pentateuch, but are used sparingly elsewhere. It would seem to the writer that

there is a difference of interpretation as to what constitutes the correspondence between type and antitype. Scofield II still finds more types than many Christian scholars believe are warranted.

#### *The Doctrinal Content of The New Scofield Reference Bible*

On such great fundamental issues of the Christian religion, as the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the atonement, justification by faith, regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the body and a life everlasting, Scofield II is in agreement with the teachings of the ecumenical creeds of Christendom. Scofield I had a summary note on inspiration at the *words* in Revelation 22:19. However, inasmuch as the verbal inspiration is under attack in our time, the committee believed that the original statement needed strengthening. In Scofield II an expanded statement is found at the word "inspiration" in II Timothy 3:16. While repudiating by implication mechanical inspiration, the paragraph dealing with the topic of inspiration clearly asserts the accuracy and inerrancy of Scriptures.

#### *Predicted Reactions to The New Scofield Reference Bible*

One does not need to be a prophet nor the son of a prophet to predict that the reception that will be given Scofield II will be varied; both friendly and unfriendly. Large segments of Christendom will respond favorably. This will be the official Bible of many Bible Institutes or Bible Colleges in the United States and Canada. It will also be used in certain theological seminaries. Thus Professor J. D. Pentecost of Dallas Theological Seminary made this recent evaluation:

It is the conviction of the reviewer that this work, which in its previous form, contributed so much to an understanding of the Scriptures to untold multitudes of Bible students, will, in its enlarged and revised form, contribute even more than its predecessor. For years to come it will be the Bible student's invaluable aid.<sup>13</sup>

In its advertisement of The New Scofield Reference Bible the Oxford University Press quoted Billy Graham as follows: "I heartily recommend THE NEW SCOFIELD REFERENCE BIBLE and urge Christians everywhere both to read and study it."<sup>14</sup> The same advertisement also gave the following evaluation by Calvin D. Linton, Dean, The George Washington University: "It is hard to imagine a more important event to scholars, or even casual readers of the Bible than a new, updated edition of the Scofield Bible . . . Every device of format and editing has been used to facilitate the most effective use of the resources included."<sup>15</sup>

Russel T. Hitt, closed his review of Scofield II with these appreciative words:

The new edition of the Scofield Bible possesses all the

advantages of the older book and many commendable improvements. It would be difficult to envision a better reference Bible for Christians without theological knowledge. Most serious students will want this book for their libraries.<sup>16</sup>

Those who have been devotees of the Scofieldian system of interpretation will undoubtedly highly prize the revision and advocate its use for sound Biblical study.

Modern critical scholars, both of the Protestant and Roman Catholic variety, will no doubt ignore the appearance of Scofield II, but if they do take cognizance of it, the likelihood is that their evaluation of the isagogics and hermeneutics will be anything but complimentary. With the availability of the Revised Standard Version considered to be a more accurate translation because its translators utilized better original texts together with its rendition in twentieth century language, modern critical scholarship will question the advisability of basing Biblical annotations on a textually inferior text. A number of scholars in sympathy with the hermeneutics and theology of Scofield II would have preferred employment of the R.S.V. text.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, the rejection and ignoring by Scofield II of the conclusions of critical scholarship will also be another cause for its unacceptability by modern critical scholars.

Dr. Dale Moody of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, has reacted very unfavorably to Scofield II. He has seriously questioned the dates adopted for the time of the patriarchs, the time of Moses, the exodus and the conquest, claiming that they do not agree with those proposed by modern critical scholarship. He ended his book review of Scofield II with these uncomplimentary words:

It is too bad that good men and a great publisher will keep these ideas in circulation. When one compares these notes on the King James Version **with notes on the R.S.V.** in the *Oxford Annotated Bible* (yes, the same Oxford University Press), it is no wonder that people are confused as to the historical meaning of the Bible.<sup>18</sup>

The reaction of the third group will be mixed. Conservative Lutherans, Christian Reformed, Orthodox Presbyterians as well as Christians belonging to groups associated with The National Association of Evangelicals will find aspects of Scofield II praiseworthy. They will appreciate its defense of the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible, the insistence on its inerrancy, its propagation of the great fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures, the acceptance of the miracles of both Testaments, and its advocacy of the Trinity. Conservatives will find themselves in sympathy with many of the isagogical positions enunciated in Scofield II. They will also appreciate the rejection of theories that question the clear statements of the New Testament about the authorship of Old Testament books

and psalms and that do not believe in direct predictive prophecies of the coming and ministry of Christ in the Old Testament.

Despite much good that can be said about Scofield II, there are, however, serious drawbacks that will prompt Lutherans, Christian Reformed, Orthodox Presbyterians and other Christian groups not to recommend this annotated Bible for its laity and Sunday School teachers.<sup>19</sup> Especially because of its millennialism, the dispensationalism, the extreme literalistic view of prophecy and eschatology that characterize Scofield II, one must agree with a critique of Scofield I made in 1938:

Its circulation is no aid to sound Bible study and true Scriptural knowledge, but rather to the contrary. Its use should be quietly and tactfully, but persistently and vigilantly opposed; and our congregations should be diligently instructed in a better interpretation of the Word of God.<sup>20</sup>

Millennialism has been rejected by Lutherans, Reformed and other Christian groups for the following reasons:

1. Modern studies have shown that the distinction made by Scofield and millennialists between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Christ is not valid.<sup>21</sup>

2. The view that the Church of Christ will enjoy a period of splendor is not in harmony with the gospels which teach that the church will be a suffering church unto the end. Millennialism tends to render the Christian hope earthly and carnal and is at variance with those statements of Christ that declare that the church will be "a little flock."

3. The concept of the millennium rests upon a literal interpretation of Revelation 20:1-10. To take the word *chilia* (occurring six times in Revelation 20) literally is to ignore the symbolic use of numbers in the Apocalypse. A proper interpretation of the expression "the thousand years" requires this number to be understood as symbolical of the idea of fullness and completeness. W. W. Milligan wrote:

The thousand years mentioned in the passage express no period of time. They are not a figure for the whole Christian era, now extending to nearly nineteen hundred years, nor do they denote a certain space of time . . . at the close of the present dispensation . . . They embody an idea; and that idea, whether applied to the subjugation of Satan or to the triumph of the saints is the idea of completeness or perfection. Satan is bound for a thousand years; that is, they are introduced into a state of perfect and glorious victory.<sup>22</sup>

In Revelation 20 Jesus states that the devil, or Satan "is judged," not that he first will be judged at the end of the thousand years.

In John 16:11 Jesus stated that the Holy Ghost shall convict the world of judgment, "because the prince of this world is judged." The "thousand years" during which Satan is bound is the period of the New Testament time, from the coming of Christ to His Second Coming. The binding of the devil is coeval with the history of the church on earth since the establishment of the church by Christ. Graebner wrote concerning the number one thousand: "A thousand years taken literally means ten centuries, and ten is expressive of completeness. To understand the thousand years in this sense may seem to be leaving its meaning indefinite. But that is not out of harmony with our Lord's own statements. Was it not Jesus' intention to leave the period of the church's earthly existence indefinite as far as our knowledge is concerned in order that we may always watch and pray because we "know not the hour when the Son of Man cometh?"<sup>23</sup>

Verse 3 of Revelation 20 states that Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up, and a seal set upon him, that he should not deceive the nations anymore, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season. The casting of Satan into the bottomless pit, and his being shut up, mean that his power to hurt the Christian church has been checked even though he is still active as a roaring lion seeking whom he might devour. At the end there will be a brief period when Satan's power will be manifested in startling ways, and world conditions will be as in the time of Noah when the Son of Man will find little faith upon earth.

4. The coming of Christ is a coming to Judgment, I. Thess. 4:15-18, and this second coming will be sudden as that of a thief in the night. There is no hint in I Thess. 4 that Christ is coming to establish an earthly kingdom.

5. The New Testament knows of only one resurrection, when both the righteous and the wicked will be raised simultaneously, the former to eternal life and the latter to eternal condemnation. This is clearly enunciated in John 5:28, 29; Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 24:15.

6. Chiliasm makes the scope of the New Testament millenarian. In Mark 1:15 Christ indeed announced that the kingdom of God is at hand, but He does not speak of any provisory kingdom to be founded by Him. His coming again is identical with the Last Judgment. Until then the wheat and the tares will grow together. In marshalling Scriptural arguments against chiliasm the *Concordia Cyclopedia* asserted:

The renewal of the world in Matthew 19:28 is connected with the final judgment. Especially at the Last Supper, Christ tried to make the supernatural character of His Future Kingdom clear to His disciples, Mark 14:25. In accord with the teachings of Christ, Paul pictures the Church as enjoying the

fruition of its faith, not upon the earth, but in heaven, Phil. 3:20. Also in other epistles the trend of the teaching is not an earthly hope, but hope of consummated joy in heaven, I Cor. 15 sqq.<sup>24</sup>

7. Millennialism depicts Christ in the state of exaltation as fighting against the forces of evil in physical battle array. This portrayal is not consonant with Christ in the state of exaltation.

8. The conversion of Israel which will enable Israel to attain her greatest glory and exaltation is based on a faulty interpretation of Romans 11:25, 26.

In the age of the Reformation, millenarianism was rejected by Article XVII of the Augsburg Confession as well as by Article XI of the Helvetic Confession of the Reformed Church.

Not all millennialists are advocates of dispensationalism. However, both Scofield I and Scofield II employ the hermeneutics of dispensationalism. This system of hermeneutics affects the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy, the relationship of many prophecies in the Old Testament to the New Testament era (i.e., the time of Christ and His apostles), the Sermon on the Mount, the parables and many statements in the Gospels, the Epistles and apocalyptic sections of both the Old and New Testaments.

Moody believes that Dr. Scofield was influenced in his theological views by J. N. Darby, who was responsible for introducing the so-called pretribulation rapture.<sup>25</sup> Historical premillennialism had no knowledge of this eschatological idea.

Antidispensationalists among Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestants reject dispensationalism as a hermeneutical methodology for the following reasons:

1. Dispensationalism presupposes a philosophy of history that makes Israel and not the Church the center of world history. In the Holy Scriptures the Cross of Christ is the focal point of history, but dispensationalism has centered its attention on the establishment of the Abrahamic promise, with Palestine as the focal point of the world.<sup>26</sup>

2. Dispensationalism claims to be a method of "rightly dividing the word of truth" in relation to dispensations. In each of the seven dispensations men always fail to meet the requirements set forth by God. Along with the seven periods of testing are eight covenants. Why their number does not correspond Scofield has never explained. Chamberlain is correct when he asserted about these testings:

Whenever it makes the final test of man his failure or success in keeping God's requirements, dispensationalism is dangerously close to a new form of righteousness by works.<sup>27</sup>



3. Wick Bowman has pointed out that the translation of the New Testament Greek word *oikonomia* by the term "dispensation" is erroneous. Thus *oikonomia* "never means nor does it have any reference to a period of time as such, as Scofield's definition demands."<sup>28</sup> This statement applies, "not only to biblical Greek, but to the whole history of the Greek language as well." More appropriately it should be rendered by "stewardship," "arrangement," "the office of steward," and by like terms, however without a temporal significance. That each dispensation is characterized by a threefold form seems to be highly artificial. Each dispensation is supposed to assume (a) that God's primary relationship to man is that of a Judge, (b) that each dispensation is conditioned by its own distinctive manner of testing which differed from that discoverable in other dispensations, and (c) that God deals with man accordingly in different periods under differing conditions of the world's history. This is a pattern which is foisted on the Biblical data, which cannot be demonstrated to be hermeneutically sound.

4. Antidispensationalists believe that Ephesians 2:11-22; Gal. 3:27-29, and the Epistle to the Hebrews do not support the view that the Old Testament cultus will be re-established in the days of the millennium. The Old Testament sacrifices were only a shadow of things to come and have been forever abolished by Christ's redemptive work.

5. Because the Gospel is portrayed as an "interim" revelation Engelder and Mayer believe that dispensationalism is guilty of disparaging the Gospel.<sup>29</sup>

The reception that Scofield II will receive by various groups of readers has been well stated by Harold Lindsell:

Those who have no use for the dispensationalism of Scofield I are not likely to view Scofield II with any great enthusiasm; those who revered Scofield I may decide to argue with Scofield II but cannot ignore it; and those who appreciated Scofield I but viewed it with a critical eye will be pleased with improvements in Scofield II and the more irenic, less dogmatic, and certainly more sophisticated notes and other material it contains.<sup>30</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

1. *The New Scofield Reference Bible*. C. I. Scofield, editor. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967). xvi + 1392 pp. + 192 pp. + maps.
2. E. Schuyler English, "The New Scofield Reference Bible," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 124:125, April-June, 1967.
3. The biographical material for Scofield's life and ministry used in this article is based upon: *Who Was Who in America* (Chicago: The A. N. Marquis Company, Fourth Printing, 1960), I, p. 1093 and Arno C. Gaebelien, *The History of the Scofield Reference Bible* (New York:

- Loizeaux Brothers, Bible Truth Depot, 1943), pp. 9-27; Raymond W. Albright, "Scofield, Cyrus Ingerson," Lefferts A. Loetscher, editor-in-Chief, *Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955), II, 1003-1004. Arnold D. Ehlert, *A Bibliographic History of Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965), pp. 82-83.
4. Ehlert, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
  5. Dr. C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (2 Tim. 2:15). BEING TEN OUTLINE STUDIES OF THE MORE IMPORTANT DIVISIONS OF SCRIPTURE (Findlay, Ohio: Fundamental Truth Publishers, no date), 64 pp. On the inside cover the publishers state that this book was published over forty years ago and that it has been published in many editions by various publishers. In some of these editions there are important changes in the text, made without the author's knowledge. This edition is exactly the way Dr. Scofield wrote it. Another edition is presently available from Fleming H. Revell Company, Westwood, New Jersey, 64 pp. On the content page of this edition there occurs the statement: First edition; January, 1896.
  6. Cf. *The Scofield Bible Correspondence Course* (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, no date). 3 volumes.
  7. Russel Hitt, "Review of the New Scofield Reference Bible," *Eternity*, 18:41, May, 1967.
  8. E. Schuyler English, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
  9. *Ibid.*, p. 127.
  10. Harold Lindsell, "Changes in the Scofield Reference Bible," *Christianity Today*, 11:712, April 4, 1967.
  11. E. Schuyler English, *op. cit.*, p. 129.
  12. Lindsell, *op. cit.*, p. 712
  13. J. D. Pentecost, "Book Review of the New Scofield Reference Bible," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 124:170, April-June, 1967.
  14. *Eternity*, 18:1, May, 1967.
  15. *Ibid.*
  16. Russel T. Hitt, "Book Review of The New Scofield Reference Bible," *Eternity*, 18:42, May, 1967.
  17. Lindsell, *op. cit.*, p. 712. Hitt, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
  18. Dale Moody, "Book Review of The New Scofield Reference Bible," *Review and Expositor*, 64:547, Fall, 1967.
  19. Cf. Albertus Pieters, *A Candid Examination of the Scofield Reference Bible* (Swengel, Pa.: Bible Truth Depot, 1938). Oswald Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1945). F. E. Mayer, *The Religious Bodies of America*. (Second edition; St. Louis Concordia Publishing House 1956), pp. 421-429. John Bowman, "Dispensationalism," *Interpretation*, 10:170-187. W. D. Chamberlain, "Dispensationalism," in Arnold Black Rhodes, editor, *The Church Faces the Isms* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), pp. 95-110.
  20. As quoted from Gaebelein, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
  21. Cf. G. Kittel, *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933), I, pp. 581ff.
  22. W. W. Milligan, "The Book of Revelation," in *The Expositor's Bible* (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1903), p. 337.
  23. Theodore Graebner, *A Dictionary of Bible Topics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1943), p. 45.

24. "Millennium," *The Concordia Cyclopedia* (St. Louis Concordia Publishing House, 1927), p. 472.
25. Moody, *op cit.*, p. 547.
26. Mayer, *op. cit.*, p. 428.
27. Chamberlain, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
28. Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
29. Theodore Engelder, "Dispensationalism Disparaging the Gospel," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 8:649-666, September, 1937. Mayer, *op. cit.*, p. 428.
30. Lindsell, *op. cit.*, p. 712.