

INTRODUCTION

This edition of the Bible had its origin in the increasing conviction of the Editor through thirty years' study and use of the Scriptures as pastor, teacher, writer, and lecturer upon biblical themes, that all of the many excellent and useful editions of the Word of God left much to be desired. Gradually the elements which must combine to facilitate the study and intelligent use of the Bible became clear to his mind. These he has, with the invaluable collaboration of a wide circle of spiritual and experienced Bible students and teachers, in England and the United States, endeavoured, with what measure of success others must now judge, to embody in the present work. The distinctive features are as follows:

I. It was felt that the old system of references, based solely upon the accident of the English words, was unscientific and often misleading. In the present edition, by a new system of connected topical references, all the greater truths of the divine revelation are so traced through the entire Bible, from the place of first mention to the last, that the reader may for himself follow the gradual unfolding of these, by many inspired writers through many ages, to their culmination in Jesus Christ and the New Testament Scriptures. This method imparts to Bible study an interest and vital reality which are wholly lacking in fragmentary and disconnected study.

II. The last fifty years have witnessed an intensity and breadth of interest in Bible study unprecedented in the history of the Christian Church. Never before have so many reverent, learned, and spiritual men brought to the study of the Scriptures minds so free from merely controversial motive. A new and vast exegetical and expository literature has been created, inaccessible for bulk, cost, and time to the average reader. The winnowed and attested results of this half-century of Bible study are embodied in the notes, summaries, and definitions of this edition. Expository novelties, and merely personal views and interpretations, have been rejected.

III. Helps have been provided, available for instant reference, on the very page where help is needed. For example, at every mention of a Hebrew month, weight, coin, or measure, the English equivalent is given in the margin. Obscure and difficult passages, alleged discrepancies or contradictions, and every important type or symbol are elucidated by new references, or made the subject of an explanatory footnote on the same page.

IV. All of the connected topical lines of reference end in analytic summaries of the whole teaching of Scripture on that subject, thus guarding the reader against hasty generalizations from a few passages or proof texts. The saying that "anything may be proved by the Bible" is both true and false—true if isolated passages are used; utterly false if the whole divine revelation is in view.

V. The great words of Scripture, as adoption, advocacy, assurance, atonement, church, conversion, death, election, eternal life, eternal punishment, faith, flesh, forgiveness, grace, hell (whether *sheol*, *hades*, or *gehenna*), imputation, justification, kingdom, propitiation, reconciliation, redemption, repentance, righteousness, salvation, sanctification, sin, world (in its four meanings), etc., etc., are defined in simple, non-technical terms. These definitions have been submitted to, and approved by, a very large number of eminent students and teachers of all the evangelical bodies.

VI. Each of the sixty-six books of the Bible is provided with an introduction and analysis, the latter so carried out in the text by appropriate sub-heads as greatly to facilitate the study and comprehension of the book.

VII. The entire Bible has been divided into paragraphs by italicized sub-heads while preserving the chapter and verse division which gives the Authorized Version, among many other superiorities, its unrivalled pre-eminence.

VIII. The remarkable results of the modern study of the Prophets, in recovering to the church not only a clear and coherent harmony of the predictive portions, but also great treasures of ethical truth, are indicated in expository notes. This portion of the Bible, nearly one-fourth of the whole, has been closed to the average reader by fanciful and allegorical schemes of interpretation. The method followed gives ready access also to the amazing literary riches of the Prophetic Books.

IX. The greater covenants of God which absolutely condition human life and the divine redemption, and about which the whole Bible gathers, are analyzed, and their relation to each other and to Christ made clear.

X. The Dispensations are distinguished, exhibiting the majestic, progressive order of the divine dealings of God with humanity, "the increasing purpose" which runs through and links together the ages, from the beginning of the life of man to the end in eternity. Augustine said: "Distinguish the ages, and the Scriptures harmonize."

XI. After mature reflection it was determined to use the Authorized Version. None of the many Revisions have commended themselves to the people at large. The Revised Version, which has now been before the public for twenty-seven years gives no indication of becoming in any general sense the people's Bible of the English-speaking world. The discovery of the Sinaitic MS. and the labours in the field of textual criticism of such scholars as Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Winer, Alford, and Westcott and Hort, have cleared the Greek *textus receptus* of minor inaccuracies, while confirming in a remarkable degree the general accuracy of the Authorized Version of that text. Such emendations of the text as scholarship demands have been placed in the margins of this edition, which therefore combines the dignity, the high religious value, the tender associations of the past, the literary beauty and remarkable general accuracy of the Authorized Version, with the results of the best textual scholarship.

The Editor disclaims originality. Other men have laboured, he has but entered into their labours. The results of the study of God's Word by learned and spiritual men, in every division of the church and in every land, during the last fifty years, under the advantage of a perfected text, already form a vast literature, inaccessible to most Christian workers. The Editor has proposed to himself the modest if laborious task of summarizing, arranging, and condensing this mass of material.

That he has been able to accomplish this task at all is due in very large measure to the valuable suggestions and co-operation of the Consulting Editors, who have freely given of their time and the treasures of their scholarship to

this work. It is due to them to say that the Editor alone is responsible for the final form of notes and definitions. The Editor's acknowledgments are also due to a very wide circle of learned and spiritual brethren in Europe and America to whose labours he is indebted for suggestions of inestimable value. It may not be invidious to mention among these Professor James Barrellet, of the Theological Faculty of Lausanne, Professors Sayce and Margoliouth, of Oxford, Mr. Walter Scott, the eminent Bible teacher, and Professor C. R. Erdman, of Princeton.

Finally, grateful thanks are due to those whose generous material assistance has made possible the preparation of a work involving years of time, and repeated journeys to the centres of biblical learning abroad.

The completed work is now dedicated to the service amongst men of that Loving and Holy God, whose marvellous grace in Christ Jesus it seeks to exalt.

C. I. SCOFIELD.

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