THE KINGDOM OF GOD: HAS IT BEEN POSTPONED? – Chapter 5

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM – With an Examination of DISPENSATIONALISM and the "Scofield Bible"

by [Philip Mauro]: 1928

INCREASINGLY conviction presses upon me that "the word of THE KINGDOM is God's special message for these—the last days of our era—even as it was His special message for the first days thereof. We recall that when, at the beginning of our era the Sower went forth to sow, what He sowed in His field was the word of THE KINGDOM" and moreover, we have His promise for it that "the end shall come" when "this gospel of THE KINGDOM" shall have been preached "for a witness to all nations." Then will "the harvest" from His sowing be gathered (Mat. 24:14; Rev. 14:15). Therefore my conviction is that, in preaching "the good news of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David" (Rom. 1:1-3), prominence should be given to the revealed truth of Scripture concerning "the Kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:13). In so doing we would be following the example of the apostles, notably that of Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:33-36). For that truth is what gave the gospel its note of authority and its unique "power" at the beginning (Rom. 1:16). It was the exaltation of Jesus, and His enthronement on high as "both Lord and Christ," that was preached by the apostles "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" (Acts 2:36; 1 Pet. 1:12).

Likewise in the gospel as preached by Paul, emphasis was placed upon the fact that Jesus Christ was "of the seed of David" (the royal line); and that in Him are fulfilled all the prophecies and promises concerning the glorious reign of Messiah and "the sure mercies of David" (Rom. 1:3; Acts 13:34; 2 Tim. 2:8). Paul preached the Kingdom of God and of Christ as

a then present reality, into which every believer of the gospel was instantly translated; having been first delivered by the mighty power of God out of the kingdom of sin and darkness (Col. 1:12,13).

Never was there from the lips or pen of that apostle a hint or suggestion to the effect that the reign of Jesus Christ, which God had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, had been postponed to another era. Indeed, one cannot attentively study the elements of the gospel as preached and taught by "the apostle of the Gentiles" (except under the blinding influence of some doctrine of men) without perceiving that, apart from the word of the Kingdom there is no gospel and no salvation for perishing men. And let it not be forgotten in this connection, that it is through this same apostle, and with reference to this self same heresy of one gospel for Jews and a different gospel for Gentiles, that the curse of God is decreed upon those—be they apostles of Christ or angels from heaven—who preach any other gospel. For there is but "one gospel" for all the world, and for all the ages of time; and whether it were Paul or one of the twelve, they all preached the same. gospel of the Kingdom (1 Cor. 15 :11; Acts 20:24, 25).

If then (as often is mournfully admitted today) the gospel is lacking in power, it would be appropriate to ask, "Is there not a cause?" (1 Sam. 17:29). Certainly there is a cause; and the apostle of the Gentiles points us to it when he says: "For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor. 4:20).AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING

It is beyond dispute that Christ Himself and His immediate disciples preached a Kingdom. And not only so, but the word, "Kingdom," conveyed to those who heard the preaching, the very essence of the "good news" which our Lord in person announced publicly, and which He exhorted and commanded His hearers to "believe" (Mk. 1:14,15). And most important is it to observe that He coupled with His announcement the plain statement that

“the time” for the long expected Kingdom of God, was then “fulfilled.”

Furthermore, our Lord’s earliest teaching (given while John was yet baptizing in Jordan) had for its theme the Kingdom of God, and the one and only way of entering into it—by the new birth of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-16). This best known passage in the Bible links the Kingdom of God directly with the death of Christ upon the cross, whereby God;s great love for the perishing world was to be revealed, and the ground of the salvation of men was eternally established. The passage shows clearly moreover, what the term, “Kingdom of God,” meant in the days of John the Baptist (vv. 23, 24). How then can any one, viewing the subject of the Kingdom in the light of this great passage, suppose for a moment (except he be under the spell of a strong delusion) that our Lord and His forerunner were at that very time offering to the Jews, and by the preaching of the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of earthly pomp and grandeur, such as their false teachers—those “bind leaders of the blind”—had taught them to expect?

Our Lord’s subject after His resurrection was precisely the same. For He remained on earth forty days, appearing frequently to His disciples, and “speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3).

A little later, when the word was carried into Samaria by Philip (fulfilling Christ’s command, recorded in Acts 1:8), what he preached was “the things concerning the Kingdom of God” (Acts 8:12). And l still later, when Paul carried into Europe the message that “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6,7), he came to Corinth, and spake in the synagogue, “disputing and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8). For of course, there was strong opposition from the Jews to Paul’s proclamation of a spiritual Kingdom, embracing all believers, and ruled by a “King invisible” (1 Tim. I :17), seeing they had received as unquestioned truth the false rabbinical teaching of an earthly kingdom

exclusively Jewish. But how astounding, that the same ruinous doctrine has now, in these last days, found wide acceptance among orthodox Christian teachers!

It will not be necessary to follow in detail the record of Paul's journeyings with the gospel. It is enough to point out that to the very end of his days he continued "preaching the Kingdom of God" (Acts 28:31).HOW THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM WAS SET ASIDE

I have already pointed out, but it is needful to keep the fact in mind, that in the latter part of the nineteenth century an extraordinary change took place in the teaching of certain groups of orthodox Christians. It was a radical change. Indeed, "revolutionary" is not too strong a term to apply to it: for the literature of the Christian centuries will be searched in vain for a trace of the new doctrine, which then suddenly sprang up, and soon spread far and wide. That new doctrine was a system of "dispensational" teaching, characterized chiefly by a wholesale and indiscriminate futurism. Every promise and prophecy was relegated to the future that could by any possibility be dealt with in that way: and thus the era of grace and the gospel of grace were stripped of what properly belonged to them—specially the blessed and glorious truth of the Kingdom—the gospel of God was robbed of its power, and grievous damage was done to the people of God, and indeed to all men.

What is central in this novel system of "dispensationalism" is the doctrine, theretofore unheard of, that Christ and His forerunner, when they announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand, were thereby "offering" to the Jews the earthly kingdom of their grossly carnal expectations; that (astonishing to relate) the Jews refused what they most eagerly looked for, when it was thus proffered to them; and that thereupon God withdrew the offer and "postponed" the Kingdom to another "dispensation."

The Scriptures, however, contain not a word about this offer of an earthly, Jewish kingdom, or about the refusal thereof by that generation of Jews, or about its postponement to another dispensation. Nevertheless it is claimed on behalf of this novel doctrine that it is newly discovered truth, which has been brought to light by a recently invented process of "rightly dividing the word of truth."

Thus the matter stands at the present time; and while there have been of late some encouraging indications of a healthy reaction against this mischievous postponement heresy, there is yet need of earnest, prayerful effort, on the part of all who have been enlightened as to its real character and consequences, to the end that the sadly neglected and truly vital truth of the Kingdom of God may be restored to its rightful and central position in "the gospel of God concerning His Son."

And whatever the reader's convictions as to the doctrine that the Kingdom which Christ announced as at hand has been postponed, the truth involved is so vital, and the postponement doctrine is so startlingly novel, that it is the duty of all who belong to Christ to examine, and to re-examine, the whole subject with the utmost care; and to give an attentive hearing to anyone who asks their consideration of evidence from the word of God. That is what I am now asking. And as a reason why a fair hearing should be given me, I solemnly declare my deep conviction that so closely is the Kingdom of God identified with the Salvation of God, that if this be not the era of the former, then it is not the era of the latter. Proof of this I present in this chapter.

For example, in Isaiah 49:5-9 is a glorious prophecy concerning Christ, God's "Servant," His "Holy One," Who was to raise up the tribes of Jacob and restore the preserved of Israel; and Who was also to be for "a light to the Gentiles, that He might be "My salvation unto the end of the earth." Now as to the time when this should be, read in verse 8 the

familiar words: “Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee.”

If therefore “to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel” means the restitution of the earthly nation to its place of eminence in the world, as the dispensationalists hold and teach, then certainly the fulfilment of this prophecy must be yet in the future. But the apostle Paul refutes that idea completely when, writing to a Gentile church, he says and with the strong emphasis of repetition: “Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2). Manifestly, if now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation, it is impossible that there should be any other “accepted time,” or any other “day of salvation”; and doubly impossible that what God promises in this particular prophecy to be for “Israel” and for “the tribes of Jacob” could be accomplished in a different and later “dispensation.”

It is appropriate here to point out that one of the glaring errors of “dispensational teaching” is the failure to recognize what the New Testament plainly reveals, namely that names which God temporarily gave to the shadowy and typical things of the Old Covenant, belong properly and eternally to the corresponding realities of the New Covenant. Thus we are given the proper meaning of “Jew” (Rom. 2:28,29;) “Israel” (Rom. 9:6; Gal. 6:16); “Jerusalem” (Gal. 4:26); “Seed of Abraham” (Gal. 3:29); “Sion” (1 Pet. 2:6; Heb. 12:22; Rom. 9:33). Likewise it is made known that according to the new covenant meaning, “the tribes of Jacob” are those who are Jews inwardly, that is to say, the entire household of faith (James 1:1; Acts 26:7).

And then that the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of salvation are one and the same thing;—seeing that the responsibility of a king is to save his people, this is clearly indicated by the word of the Lord to Israel through

Hosea: “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thy help. I will be thy King; where is any other that may save thee?” (Hos. 13:9). So here is a distinct promise to Israel that the Lord would come as King to save; and this is but one of many passages which associate salvation with the Kingdom of God. Then in verse 14 the nature of the salvation that is promised here through Christ the King of Israel is unmistakably indicated by the familiar words: “l will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: 0 death, I will be thy plagues; 0 grave, I will be thy destruction.”

The meaning and the significance of this are plain enough to the unsophisticated; but let it be noted additionally that, in the passage where this is quoted in the N. T., the great resurrection chapter (I Cor. 15: 54, 55) Paul declares in the immediate context the vital truth that “flesh and blood CANNOT inherit the Kingdom of God” (v. 50). This is proof positive and conclusive, first, that the Kingdom of God is the inheritance of those who are saved by the gospel (vv. 1-4); and second, that the Kingdom of God is not the restoration of the earthly Jewish nationality and Kingdom.

And not only so, but I challenge anyone to deny, that when the 139 texts of the N. T. that mention the Kingdom of God (or of heaven) are taken in their natural sense, which is the sense in which they have been understood by every Bible teacher and Bible reader for nineteen centuries, they are all found to be in perfect harmony with the prophecy we are now considering, and which is quoted and applied by Paul. Whereas, on the other hand, it is utterly impossible (as I propose, now to show) by any torturing and twisting of the language employed, to make a number of the plainest of those 139 texts do anything but conflict palpably with the teachings of modern dispensationalism.

How then, it will be asked, does the “Scofield Bible” maintain its doctrine concerning God’s Kingdom? How does it deal with

those 139 references thereto in the N. T.? This brings us to one of the most astonishing features of the strange affair we are now examining.

In the introductory pages of the "Scofield Bible" the promise is given that by:

"A new system of topical references all the greater truths of the divine revelation are traced through the entire Bible from the first mention to the last"; and also that its "summaries" are analytic of "the whole teaching of Scripture."

We are now about to inquire how this fair promise has been carried out with respect to one of the very greatest of "the greater truths of the divine revelation" —that concerning the Kingdom of God. And briefly the distressing fact in this regard is that (as pointed out by Mr. Thomas Bolton of Australia, in a leaflet on The Kingdom of God) whereas the Kingdom is mentioned in seventeen of the Books of the N. T., the "Scofield Bible" cites only five of those Books: and whereas the Kingdom is mentioned 139 times by name, only 21 of the verses are cited in the "Scofield Bible," the other 118 being totally ignored!

It would be quite in order, doubtless, to ask if this is dealing fairly and keeping faith with the thousands who have purchased this new "Bible." But without pressing that inquiry, I hasten to direct the reader's attention to a few of the 118 references to the Kingdom that are found in God's Bible, but which are passed over in silence by the "Scofield Bible," despite the promise that it would be "traced through the entire Bible, from the first mention to the last." And I leave it to the intelligent reader to say whether under the circumstances of the case, those particular texts could have been ignored by editor and co-editors for any other reason than that they manifestly cannot be made to agree with, or do anything but flatly to contradict, the new postponement theory.

To begin with let us refer to Matt. 18:3; 19:I4; Mark 10:14,15; Luke 18:16,17. Here is teaching concerning the Kingdom from the lips of Christ Himself, teaching which is so important that it is given in three of the Gospels. And this is the substance of it:

> *"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Mat. 18: 3).*
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> *Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such is the Kingdom of heaven" (id. 19:14). "But when Jesus saw it He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14).*
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> *Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein" (Luke 18:17).*

These passages plainly declare the vital truth that, in order to be saved, one must "be converted," and become as a little child: that is to say, he must become a new creature in Christ Jesus. And the parallel expressions in the context "enter into life" (Mat. 18:8,9) show that to enter into the Kingdom of God, and into life, are the same thing. Moreover, when, in the same chapter of Mark, Christ said "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (v. 25), it is recorded that "They were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED" (v. 26). And the next verse shows they were right in their understanding that to enter into the Kingdom meant to be saved; for it is written: "And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible" (v. 27).

Beyond question then, in the light of these Scriptures, the Kingdom of God, referred to scores of times in our Lords

preaching and teaching, and which indeed is far the most prominent subject thereof, is not the earthly Kingdom of Jewish hopes, but that heavenly realm that is entered only upon individual repentance and faith, and only by the door of the new birth.

By a comparison of the above texts, and of many other passages that are common to the three synoptic Gospels, it will be clearly seen that the phrases, “Kingdom of heaven” and “Kingdom of God” are used interchangeably.

Furthermore it should be noted in connection with these particular texts that they flatly contradict the teaching of the Scofield Bible to the effect that the offer of the Kingdom had been “morally rejected” by the Jews at the time of the events recorded in Matt. Xl (note on Mat. 11:20); and that at that point began “the new message of Jesus—not the Kingdom, but rest and service.” But the truth in this connection is that the subject of the Kingdom occupied the same place of prominence in our Lord’s public teaching down to the day of His death: and that after His resurrection He remained forty days on earth, being seen of His disciples, “and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Act 1:3).

Matthew 23:13 is a specially illuminating scripture, one that is decisive as to whether the Kingdom of God had been withdrawn and postponed or not. It is fatal to editor Scofield’s theory, and it is ignored in his treatment of the subject.

The occasion was our Lord’s last public discourse; and it is worthy of note that, as His first public discourse, the Sermon on the Mount began with seven beatitudes pronounced upon His disciples, so the last began with seven woes pronounced upon the scribes and Pharisees. Let us compare the first of each series:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit. for theirs is the Kingdom of

> *heaven" (Matt. 5: 3).*
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> *"But woe unto you. scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the Kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves. neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matt. 23: 13).*

There is much and valuable truth to be learned from the last quoted text, but I am now citing it because of the transparently clear testimony it bears to the fact that the Kingdom of heaven, of which Christ had spoken in His Sermon on the Mount, and which had been the main subject of His teaching, had not been postponed, as the Scofield Bible unequivocally states. For here our Lord addresses the scribes and Pharisees, pronouncing a woe upon them because they were at that very time shutting up the Kingdom of heaven against men; they were not entering in themselves, and they suffered not them that were entering to go in. Beyond all question therefore, the Kingdom was then present, for some were actually "entering in."

But why were the Jewish leaders refusing to go in themselves? and how were they hindering others from entering? By their doctrine. For the corner stone of their creed was the very same doctrine that has lately been dug up out of the pit of false Judaism and has been made the cornerstone of modern dispensationalism. They were not going in themselves, and they were preventing others from entering, because they held and taught that the Kingdom of heaven, the reign of Messiah which the prophets of Israel had foretold, was a Jewish and an earthly affair, not a spiritual and a heavenly kingdom.

Seeing then the disastrous effect of that doctrine upon the learned rabbis, the leaders of the most orthodox sect of the Jews, have we not the gravest reason to be fearful of the consequences, now that the same doctrine is held and zealously propagated by learned leaders of the most orthodox party in

Christendom in our time? For it was not the Sadducees—the materialists and modernists of those days— who taught the deadly error, but the Pharisees, the "fundamentalists" of that period.

And how does it work now? If to be saved is to be in the Kingdom of God, as we have just shown by our Lord's own teaching, and as Paul also plainly taught(Col. 1:13), and if there be now no Kingdom of God for men to enter, how shall they be saved? Is there anything in "modernism" that is worse than this? And can the "Fundamentalists" of our time expect to prevail in their conflict with the "Modernists," so long as they harbor, and are even zealous for, a brand of modernism that certainly is more modern, and in some respects more pernicious, than that they are combating? Hearken, my Fundamentalist brethren; you must do some thorough house-cleaning on your own premises before you can undertake, with any prospect of success, to put the large Christian household in order.

Attention has already been called to the statement of Christ, recorded in Luke 16:16. "The law and the prophets were until John, since that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

Those who have no theory to defend, but who sincerely desire to know by the Word of the Lord just when the change in God's dealings took place (or, to use the modern phraseology, when the change of dispensation occurred) could ask nothing more to the point or more satisfactory than this. For here we have Christ's own word for it that the new era began with the preaching and baptism of John; and further that what properly characterizes that new era is the preaching of the Kingdom of God. This text shows also that the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom had not ceased at the time those words were spoken. For the Lord's statement was that "since that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

So here is another text that is sufficient in itself to prove that the Kingdom had not at that time been postponed. Is it not a significant fact then that this particularly illuminating Scripture also was ignored by editor Scofield in the process of tracing the subject of the Kingdom of God "through the entire Bible, from the first mention to the last?"

Passing on to the next chapter of Luke we come to another text which surely has a strong claim upon the attention of those who are seeking the teaching of the Word of God upon the subject of His Kingdom. Our Lord was then on His way to Jerusalem to die there. "And when He was demanded of the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 20, 21).

This is illuminating indeed. First, our Lord was answering what was in the hearts of those (the Pharisees) who put the question to Him; their doctrine being that the Kingdom of God would come (when it did come) with the accompaniment of outward displays of Divine power, whereby the enemies of the Jews would be miraculously overwhelmed, and they themselves be swept triumphantly into, and securely established in, the coveted place of world supremacy. So he corrected their error by saying that the Kingdom of God came not with ocular evidence, which is the literal meaning of the word rendered "observation :" in other words it was not the sort of kingdom they were expecting. And the verb He used was in the present tense, "cometh"; which makes it plain that He was speaking of the manner in which the Kingdom of God was coming at that time. This is what we are specially seeking to determine just now. And He proceeded to emphasize these facts by adding that there would be nothing of a startling or sensational character, such as would cause the spectators to say "Look here! Look yonder!" "For" —and now, being about to say

something He wished specially to impress upon them, He uses an impressive word-“behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” Some prefer the marginal reading “among you” but the sense is the same. The Kingdom was in existence at that time. It “is.” But it was a spiritual Kingdom, such as could not be discerned by the natural eye. This agrees with what Paul afterwards said about it; that its sphere of being was “in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17).

The Kingdom of God is mentioned three times in the Gospel of John; and the statements of Christ there recorded concerning it are of supreme importance; yet they are all ignored in the Scofield Bible. Why?

The third chapter of John is the best known chapter, and the sixteenth verse thereof is the best known verse, in the Bible. But is it not commonly overlooked in reading it, that the subject of the chapter is the Kingdom of God? The whole land had been aroused by the preaching of John the Baptist, and all were in a state of keenest expectation because of his proclamation that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Therefore, whatever teaching was given by the Lord at that period (before the commencement of His own preaching, which did not begin until after John had been cast into prison, Mark 1:14) has special value for the purpose of our present inquiry, since it tells us what the phrase, “Kingdom of God,” meant in the preaching of John. How significant, therefore, that the Holy Spirit has made note of the fact that, at the time of our Lord’s conversation with Nicodemus, John was baptizing,’ and that He adds, “For John was not yet cast into prison” (vv. 23,24)!

And it is of the utmost significance that the very first words of our Lord to that “teacher of Israel” strike directly at the cardinal error of rabbinism the doctrine that the Kingdom of God is of earthly and Jewish character. For He said, and with all the tremendous emphasis of His double Amen, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot

see the Kingdom of God" (v. 3); and "Verily, verily, 1 say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (v. 5).

Here is truly "fundamental" truth concerning the Kingdom of God, truth that was delivered along with the very first preaching of that Kingdom. Natural descent from Abraham does not insure entrance into the Kingdom of God, as erroneously taught by the rabbis then and by the dispensationalists now. To enter into that Kingdom a man must be born of the Spirit. And the next words of Christ emphasize this fundamental truth: "that which is born of the fiesh"—whether of Abraham or any other man- "is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (v. 6). John also in his teaching gave prominence to this truth; for he warned the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism, saying: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that (God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Mat. 3: 9). For the natural descendants of Abraham came from the dust of the ground, as did all the children of Adam; but none can enter the Kingdom of God without "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit. 3:5).

Further our Lord's word to Nicodemus declared plainly that God had sent His Son into the world (not to set up, or even to offer, a Jewish Kingdom, but) to save "THE WORLD" (v. 17). He revealed to him that, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever" – whether Jew or Gentile—"believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (v. 15): and that He had come—not in fulfillment of some supposed promise to give national glory to the Jews, but—because "God so loved The WORLD, that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (v. 16).

These verses clearly reveal, and all Scripture is in perfect agreement (of course), that the Kingdom of God is (and was

then, and ever will be) that spiritual realm in which the authority of God's "King eternal" (1 Tim. 1:17) Jesus Christ risen from the dead, is acknowledged., and His law "obeyed from the heart" (Rom. 6:17) by a people who have believed on His name, have been washed in His blood, and have been regenerated by the Holy Ghost.

These are the first two references to the Kingdom in John's Gospel. The third mention thereof is also of the utmost significance; and it likewise furnishes a complete refutation of what was taught by the rabbis then and by the dispensationalists now. It is found in Christ's testimony on His own behalf before Pilate. The words are plain enough; but in order to get their full force, and to perceive their direct bearing upon the question we are examining, it is needful to have in mind that the crime of which the Lord was accused before Pilate, the local representative of Caesar, was sedition, and specifically that He was proposing to set up another kin(gdom, in opposition to that of Caesar: "Saying that He Himself is Christ a King" (Luke 23:1; John 19: 12,15). As to this accusation, our Lord when asked by Pilate the direct question, "art thou the King of the Jews?" replied, "Thou sayest it" (Mark 15:2), which is an emphatic "Yes." But, as John's record shows, He testified nevertheless that He had not been guilty of sedition against Caesar, because the Kingdom He had proclaimed was one that did not conflict with Caesar's. In fact it did not even belong to this world. These are His words:

> *"Jesus answered, My Kingdom is not not this world; if My Kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my Kingdom not from hence." (John 18: 36).*

Think what the teaching of the Scofield Bible does by implication to this simple, plain and all-important word of Christ, which it passes by in silence! For, by that teaching,

this testimony of our Lord, given in open court when on trial for His life, was not true. According to that teaching the Kingdom He had been proclaiming both in person and also by the lips of His disciples throughout the length and breadth of the land, was of this world; and its establishment would necessarily have involved the overthrow of Caesar's dominion, and the subjugation of the whole world to the Jewish nation. How then can we account for it that this text is ignored in the notes of the Scofield Bible? And let it be remembered in this connection that when the Pharisees had previously attempted to entrap the Lord into some utterance which they could use against Him as savoring of sedition again Caesar. He perceived their hypocrisy and expressly commanded them to "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. and unto God, the things that are God's" (Mat. 22:17-21). For the Kingdom of God is not in anywise antagonistic to the kingdoms and rulers of this world. On the contrary, the law of Christ commands loyalty to them, because "the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1); and it requires of all the citizens of His Kingdom that they submit themselves "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" (I Pet. 2:13).

The last verses of Acts give a parting view of the apostle Paul. They tell us that he dwelt two whole years in his own hired house (in Rome), where he "received all that came in unto him, preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28: 30,31). Evidently Paul had not heard that the preaching of the Kingdom of God did not belong to this "dispensation." For in those days there was no "Scofield Bible" to enlighten him. On the other hand, we are not informed as to how this passage can be reconciled with modern dispensationalism, for the Scofield Bible ignores it.

Romans 14:17, which I have already quoted, merits special attention; for it is the text that gives God's own definition of His Kingdom; and for that reason it is the very last verse

we should expect to find omitted from any summary that purports to give the teaching of the Scriptures on the subject of that Kingdom. This is the passage:

> *"For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink" (more literally, not eating and drinking) "but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."*

The Kingdom is here defined both negatively and positively. We are told first what it is not, and then what it is; and hence the text is the more enlightening for our present purpose. For a contrast is here presented between the Kingdom of God and the historical Kingdom of David, which the rabbinists supposed (as the dispensationalists do now) were one and the same. Concerning the kingdom of David it is recorded that they who came to make him king "were with David three days, eating and drinking"; and that those who lived in the territory of the other Tribes, even unto lssachar, and Zebulon and Naphthali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen; also meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen and sheep abundantly; for there was joy in Israel" (I Chr. 12: 39,40). Also it is written that David in those days "dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine." (Id.16:3).

But the Kingdom of God is not like that. Everyone in that Kingdom has (1) the righteousness of God, has (2) peace with God, and has (3) joy in the Holy Ghost. And it is worthy of note that Paul is here summarizing the blessings of the Gospel as he had already stated then in chapter 5. For there is declared the fundamental doctrine that (1) being justified (made righteous) by faith, we have (2) peace with God through our Lord Jesus" …and not only so, but (3) "we also joy in God" (Rom 5:1,11). The blessings of the Kingdom of God are not the fruits of the land of Canaan, but the fruits of the Holy Spirit; and the "joy" that was in Israel because of the good

things to eat and drink, is replaced by “joy in the Holy Ghost.” This is “the Gospel of the Kingdom,” as preached and taught by Paul.

It is a cause for profound astonishment that, in what purports to be a complete setting forth of the teaching of Scripture as to the Kingdom of God, this particular text (Rom. 14:17) should have been ignored; since it has the unique distinction of giving the Holy Spirit’s own definition of that Kingdom.

I come now to what I regard as the strongest of all the testimonies concerning the Kingdom of God that we have by the pen of the apostle Paul. It is found in the first chapter of Colossians; and it is ignored in the Scofield Bible; Paul is here speaking of “the word of the truth of the gospel” (v. 5) and of the fruit it brought forth in them and others; mention being made of their “faith in Christ Jesus,” of “the hope” laid up for them in heaven, and of their “love to all the saints.” Here are faith, hope, and love; these three. And he goes on to exhort them as to “Giving thanks to the Father, Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (vv. I2-I4).

Here is proof positive that, not only did the Kingdom of God’s dear Son exist in Paul’s day, and had not been postponed, but that it is something that is vital to our salvation. Clearly, if there be no Kingdom of God there is no gospel, and no salvation. The passage agrees in all essential points with the teaching that Christ gave to Nicodemus. For it reveals redemption for all “the world” as the purpose for which God sent forth His Son, and the bringing into existence of the Kingdom of Christ, in which those who enter by faith in Him are born of God and know Him as “Father” (the Spirit being mentioned in verse 8).

This passage in Colossians also throws light upon the words quoted in an earlier chapter from Mark's Gospel: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God"; … "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:1,15). This tells us that "the gospel" is that of "Jesus Christ the Son of God"; and Paul in Colossians declares the word of the truth of the gospel to be that God the Father hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

We might pursue this branch of our inquiry much further, and with profit. But enough has been said to indicate what the reader might expect to find in the way of valuable instruction concerning the Kingdom by examination of the more than a hundred other references in the N. T. to that subject which, like those briefly examined above, are ignored in the Scofield Bible.