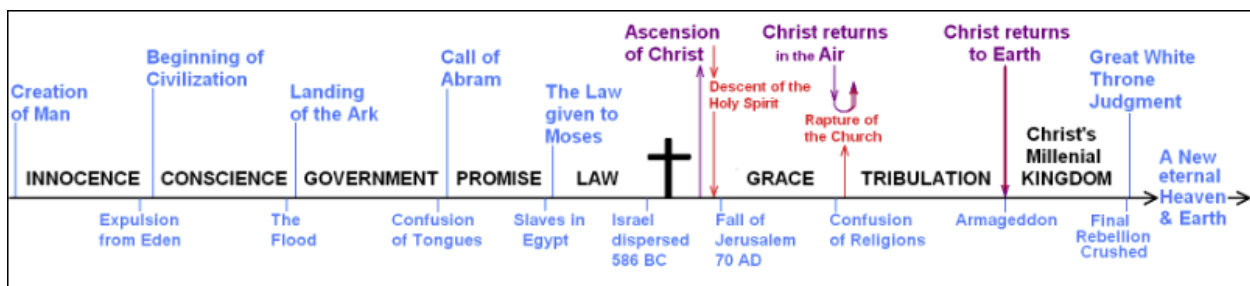


Part 1. Man and Theology

Lesson 4: Dispensationalism and Theology

Lesson Summary

Dispensationalism is a theological framework that explains how God has related to humanity through distinct administrations or stewardships across history. It is rooted in a literal, historical-grammatical interpretation of Scripture (2 Tim. 2:15) and emphasizes the distinction between Israel and the Church (Eph. 3:1–6). While salvation has always been by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8–9), dispensationalism shows how God progressively revealed His redemptive plan. It shapes doctrines of the Church, salvation, prophecy, and covenants, supporting a pretribulational, premillennial view of Christ's return (Rev. 20:4–6). The traditional seven dispensations—Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, Promise, Law, Grace, and the Millennial Kingdom—provide a structured way to understand God's unfolding plan from Genesis to Revelation. This framework not only clarifies biblical interpretation but also reinforces God's faithfulness and sovereignty in history.



Key Takeaways

- A **dispensation** is a divinely ordained period in which God governs humanity in specific ways (Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:25).
- **Literal interpretation** is central—prophecy and promises, especially to Israel, are taken at face value (Dan. 9:24–27; Rev. 20:4–6).
- Salvation is always by **grace through faith**, though revealed progressively (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6–9).
- Israel and the Church remain **distinct** in God's plan—no replacement theology (Rom. 11:25–26).
- The **seven dispensations**: Innocence (Gen. 1–3), Conscience (Gen. 3–8), Human Government (Gen. 8–11), Promise (Gen. 12–Ex. 19), Law (Ex. 20–Acts 2), Grace (Acts 2–Rev. 20), and the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:4–6).
- Dispensationalism supports a **pretribulational, premillennial return of Christ**, with a literal 1,000-year reign.

Questions & Answers

1. **Q:** What is a dispensation?
A: A divinely ordained period in which God governs humanity in specific ways, revealing His redemptive plan (Eph. 1:10).
2. **Q:** How does dispensationalism affect biblical interpretation?
A: It uses a literal, historical-grammatical approach, especially in prophecy and promises (2 Tim. 2:15).

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3. **Q:** Has salvation always been the same across dispensations?

A: Yes—always by grace through faith, though progressively revealed (Eph. 2:8–9; Rom. 4:3).

4. **Q:** What distinction does dispensationalism emphasize?

A: The difference between Israel and the Church, rejecting replacement theology (Rom. 11:25–26).

5. **Q:** What are the seven dispensations?

A: Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, Promise, Law, Grace, and the Millennial Kingdom.

6. **Q:** What is the dispensational view of Christ's return?

A: A pretribulational rapture of the Church and Christ's premillennial reign for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4–6).

“Dispensationalism provides a clear lens to see God’s unfolding plan—showing His faithfulness through every age, and His promise of Christ’s return to reign in righteousness.”