

## Part 1. Humanity and Theology

### Lesson 4: Dispensationalism and Theology

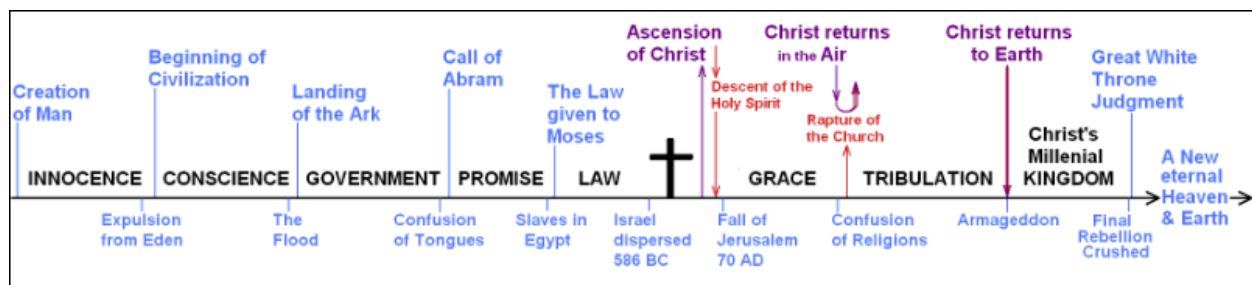
#### Lesson Summary

**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 through various periods of divine administration. 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 throughout history.

For men and women alike, understanding dispensational truth strengthens faith, deepens confidence in God's promises, and clarifies His plan of redemption through every age. For men called to spiritual leadership, it also provides a framework for teaching and leading others with accuracy and hope.



#### 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** has always been by grace through faith, though revealed progressively (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6–9).
- **Israel and the Church** remain distinct in God's plan—there is no replacement theology (Rom. 11:25–26).
- The **seven dispensations** are: 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.

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### 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).

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

A: Yes—salvation has always been by grace through faith, though the revelation of God’s plan has unfolded progressively (Eph. 2:8–9; Rom. 4:3).

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

A: The difference between Israel and the Church, affirming God’s unique covenant purposes for each and 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—revealing His faithfulness through every age and His promise of Christ’s return to reign in righteousness.***