

DISPENSATIONS (part 1)

We are currently studying a series entitled, **Teleiology** (A study of spiritual growth maturity).

We are studying twelve meat doctrines of the church age that are essential for spiritual growth maturity.

(Heb.5:14) “But solid food (he stereos trophe) is (eimi/ p.a.ind.3ps) for the mature (**teleios**), who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good from evil.”

We learned from our first study on **Grace Orientation (parts 1-4)** that GRACE is the unmerited favor of God meeting the needs of man completely (100%), totally based upon the character of God (Essence of God) and the Word of God.

(Acts 20:32) “And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

Now, in our second study, in our series of twelve meat doctrines will cover the doctrine of Dispensations. The English word for **dispensation** is derived from the Latin word dispensare. We will begin by looking at five different definitions of dispensation.

- **The American College Dictionary** defines dispensation as “the divine ordering of the affairs of the world, an appointment or arrangement as by God, a divinely appointed order or system; the old, Mosaic, or Jewish dispensations; the new, gospel, or Christian dispensation.” (pg.349)
- **The Scofield Reference Bible** defines it as “a period of time during which man is tested in respect to some specific revelation of the will of God.” (pg.5)
- **Chafer Systematic Theology** defines it as “a time measurement, a dispensation is a period which is identified by its relation to some particular purpose of God – a purpose to be accomplished within that period. The earlier dispensation, being so far removed in point of time from the present, are not as clearly defined, as are the later dispensations. For this reason, bible expositors are not always agreed regarding the precise features of the more remote period.” (pg.40)
- **The Unger Bible Dictionary** defines it as “a dispensation is an era of time during some definite revelation of God’s will.” (pg.269)
- **A General pastoral definition** is “a dispensation is a definite age or period of human history viewed from divine viewpoint. It is a defined period of divine history in which a divine agency functions by a special set of divine revelation as the custodian of God’s word and evangelism.”

This lesson will study two aspects of Dispensations in order to orient Church Age Believer (CAB) to their time in human history from divine viewpoint.

1. **In our first part of this study we will highlight the following two dispensations from the fall of Adam until the end of the Jewish Age.**

The Gentile Age dispensation (GA) covers a period from fall of Adam through the Tower of Babel period (Gen.3-11; 4:3).

- Two divine agencies were the families of Seth and Shem (Gen.5)

- It was the only dispensation of both the Antediluvian and Postdiluvian civilizations of fallen mankind
- The Gentile age is characterized by the following **5 highlights**:
 - The fall of Adam (AOS; Rom.5:12-21; 1 Cor.15:22)
 - The establishment of five divine institutions
 - § Freedom
 - § Employment
 - § Marriage
 - § Family
 - § Nationalism
 - The Noahic flood destroyed the Antediluvian civilization except Noah's family (Gen.6-9; 1 Pet.3:20)
 - The establishment of the Postdiluvian civilization
 - Notable preachers of this dispensation were Enoch (Gen.5:22-24; Heb.11:5; Jude 14-15) and Noah (Gen.6:9-12; Heb.11:7; 2 Pet.2:5).
- **Salvation** was by faith in the prophetic gospel of shadow Christology (Gen.3:15, 21; 4:4-7; Heb.11:4; 1 Cor.15:45; Luke 3:23-38). We refer to these believers as Gentile age believers (GAB).

The Jewish Age dispensation (JA) covers a period from Abraham [last Shemite and first Hebrew and covenant seed of Christ] (Matt.1:17; Gal.3:16) to the First Coming of Christ, minus the Church age to the seven years of Tribulation (Gen.12 - NT Gospels – Rev.6-19).

- The divine agency was the priest-nation of Israel (Ex.19:6)
- It was part of the Postdiluvian biblical civilization of mankind
- The Jewish age is characterized by the following **10 highlights**:
 - The Patriarchs
 - The establishment of the Mosaic Law
 - The period of the Judges
 - The first Monarchy
 - The 5th cycle of divine discipline (North and South)
 - The establishment of the Old Testament Canon
 - The First Advent, Coming of Christ – followed by His ascension and the Gift of Pentecost
 - The interruption of Jewish age by the mystery of the Church Age, to be followed by the last 7 years of Jewish Age known as the Tribulation (Dan.9:24-27)
 - The resurrection of all Jewish Age Believers (JAB) at end of the Tribulation (1 Cor.15:20-23).
- **Salvation** was by faith in the prophetic gospel of shadow Christology (Gal.3:8; Matt.1:1-17).