

DISPENSATIONS (part 2)

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 **Dispensations (parts 1)** that human history can be viewed through four periods of time within which God interacts uniquely with both believer and unbeliever, specifically during the Gentile Age and the Jewish Age..

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.”

<p>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.</p>
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1. In our second part of this study we will highlight the following two dispensations from the Advent of the Holy Spirit to the end of human history.

The Church Age dispensation covers a period from Pentecost (Acts 1-2) to the Rapture of the Church from the world (1 Thess.4:13-18; Acts –Rev.5)

- The divine agency is the mystical body of believers in the world (Rom.11:17-25; 1 Cor.4:1; Gal.3:26-28; 1 Cor.12:13; 1 Pet.2:5, 9)
- It is part of the Postdiluvian civilization of mankind.
- The Church Age is characterized by the following **9 highlights**:

- The Advent of The Holy Spirit (John 14:17; Acts 2:17, 33)
 - Eternal life decreed to every believer (John 3:16; 10:28-30)
 - The Apostolic period
 - The establishment of the New Covenant (1 Cor.11:25)
 - The execution of the 5th cycle of divine discipline upon Israel (Rom.9-11)
 - World evangelism (Acts 1:8)
 - The planting of Christian churches throughout the known world
 - The New Testament is Canonized
 - The Rapture
 - The Resurrection of all Church Age Believers (CAB) (1 Thess.4:13-18)
- **Salvation** is by the historical gospel of Jesus Christ, His death, burial, and resurrection. (1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9; 2 Cor.5:17).

The Millennium Age dispensation covers a period of 1000 years (the only one with pre-determined number of years) following the seven years of Tribulation and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the end of the human history (Rev.20; Isa.65:20-25; 2 Sam.7:12-16).

- The divine agency will be Jesus Christ and church and Jewish age believers in resurrection bodies.
- The Millennium will be the third biblical civilization of mankind.
- The millennium will be characterized by the following **8 highlights**:
 - A Perfect environment because the curse of Adam's Original Sin (AOS) will be removed from the earth (Rom.8:18-25)
 - Satan and his demons will be imprisoned for the 1000 years
 - Israel and Jerusalem will be restored to their national glory
 - Universal peace
 - In its final days Satan and his demons will be released to corrupt the world
 - A final war called Gog and Magog will take place
 - The Resurrection of all GAB and MAB (1 Cor.15:20-23; John 5:24-28)
 - The Great White Throne Judgment of Satan, fallen angels, anti-christ and all unbelievers (Rev.20:11-15; Matt.25:41)
- **Salvation** will be by the historical gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:21; Rom.10:13-17).

NOTE: The Book of Acts covers the transition of dispensations (the Jewish age to the Church age), of covenants (Old to New), of Divine Agencies (Priest-nation to Church), the institution of a special set of divine revelation (the mystery doctrines of Church), of priesthood (Levitical to royal) [1 Pet.2:5, 9], the completion of the entire Bible Canon with completion of the NT canon, and from shadow Christology to historical Christology.

QUESTION: Does God deal with mankind differently during different periods of human history? I believe that an understanding of **Dispensations** will help us understand this biblical principle from a divine viewpoint.

EXAMPLE: Should the church build temples, offer animal sacrifices, honor the seven national holidays of the priest-nation of Israel, and obey Levitical dispensational laws like the dietary or tithing today?

Peter faced this struggle during the transition period of dispensations, recorded in the book of Acts. This struggle was brought in the Cornelius experience and the first church council. (Acts 10:9-17, 28-29, 34-35, 44-48; 15:1-2, 5-11).