

# DOCTRINE OF DISPENSATIONS

- I. Definition: a dispensation is a period of human history expressed in terms of divine revelation (divine viewpoint of history). Dispensations are both a divine outline of history as well as a divine category of human history. (History is a segment taken out of eternity.) Dispensations are the divine interpretation of history.
- II. Vocabulary.
  - A. κρονός kronos: a succession of events.
  - B. καίρος, kairos: time units, seasons, segments of time.
  - C. αἰών, aion: age, dispensation.
  - D. οἰκονομία, oikonomia: an administrator, a custodian, dispensation.
- III. The first dispensation was the Age of the Gentiles, Gen.111.
  - A. It was a period of positive volition: Adam and Eve in the garden, Gen.2.
  - B. It was a period of negative volition: from Adam's fall to the flood, Gen.39.
  - C. It was a period of Divine Institution #4: from Noah to Abraham, Gen.10,11.
  - D. Characteristics.
    1. There was one race: the Gentiles.
    2. There was one language: unknown.
    3. There were two lines: Cain, reversionism; Seth, salvation.
    4. There were attacks on the Divine Institutions.
  - E. It extended from Adam to Abraham.
  - F. There was no written canon; Bible Doctrine was revealed by theophany.
- IV. The Age of Israel: all of the Old Testament (minus the Millennium), plus most of the gospels.
  - A. This was the period of patriarchs: from Abraham to Moses.
  - B. This was the period of the Law: from Moses to the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - C. This is the period of the Tribulation, Rev.619: from the Rapture to the Second Advent (7 years).
  - D. Characteristics.
    1. There were many languages.
    2. There were many races.
    3. Israel was (and is) unique in God's plan because of their relation to the conditional and unconditional covenants; Israel is the pupil of God's eye.
    4. The Old Testament was compiled from Moses to Malachi, and from Matthew to John.
    5. It was the period of the incarnation, life, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ.
    6. It was an interrupted dispensation.
    7. There was a specialized priesthood: the Levitical priesthood.
- V. The Church Age: from Pentecost (33AD) to the Rapture.
  - A. The pre-canon period: temporary spiritual gifts were given to fill in until the canon was complete, 3296AD.
  - B. The post-canon period: from 96AD to the Rapture. Permanent gifts are still given: Pastor-Teacher, evangelism, administration, etc.
  - C. Characteristics.
    1. Intercalation: an insertion into the Age of Israel, a parenthesis.
    2. It was not revealed in the Old Testament. It is the mystery of Rom.16:25; Eph.3:16; Col.1:25,26.
    3. It is the period of the completion of the canon, the mind of Christ.
    4. It is the period of the universal priesthood after Melchizedek.
    5. We are not under the Law.
    6. Believers have the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- VI. The Millennium: from the Second Advent until the end of 1,000 years, Isa.11:35,62,65; Ps.72; Rev.20.
  - A. Characteristics.

1. It lasts from the Second Advent to the Great White Throne, a little over 1,000 years.
2. Christ rules the nations from Jerusalem under perfect environment. All believers of all dispensations will be there.
3. There is universal peace, no war.
4. There is universal prosperity.
5. There is longevity.
6. There is a radical change in nature; the curse on the earth is lifted.
7. There is perfect environment.
8. All covenants to Israel are fulfilled.
9. All Divine Institutions are observed: marriage, families, volition, and nations.
10. There is capital punishment, law and order.
11. There is no religion.
12. There is universal knowledge of God.
13. There are old sin natures and negative volition.

VII. Salvation is the same in every dispensation.