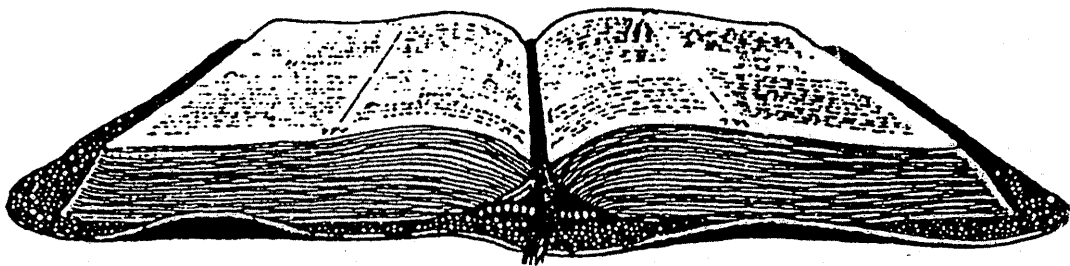


DISPENSATIONALISM

Key

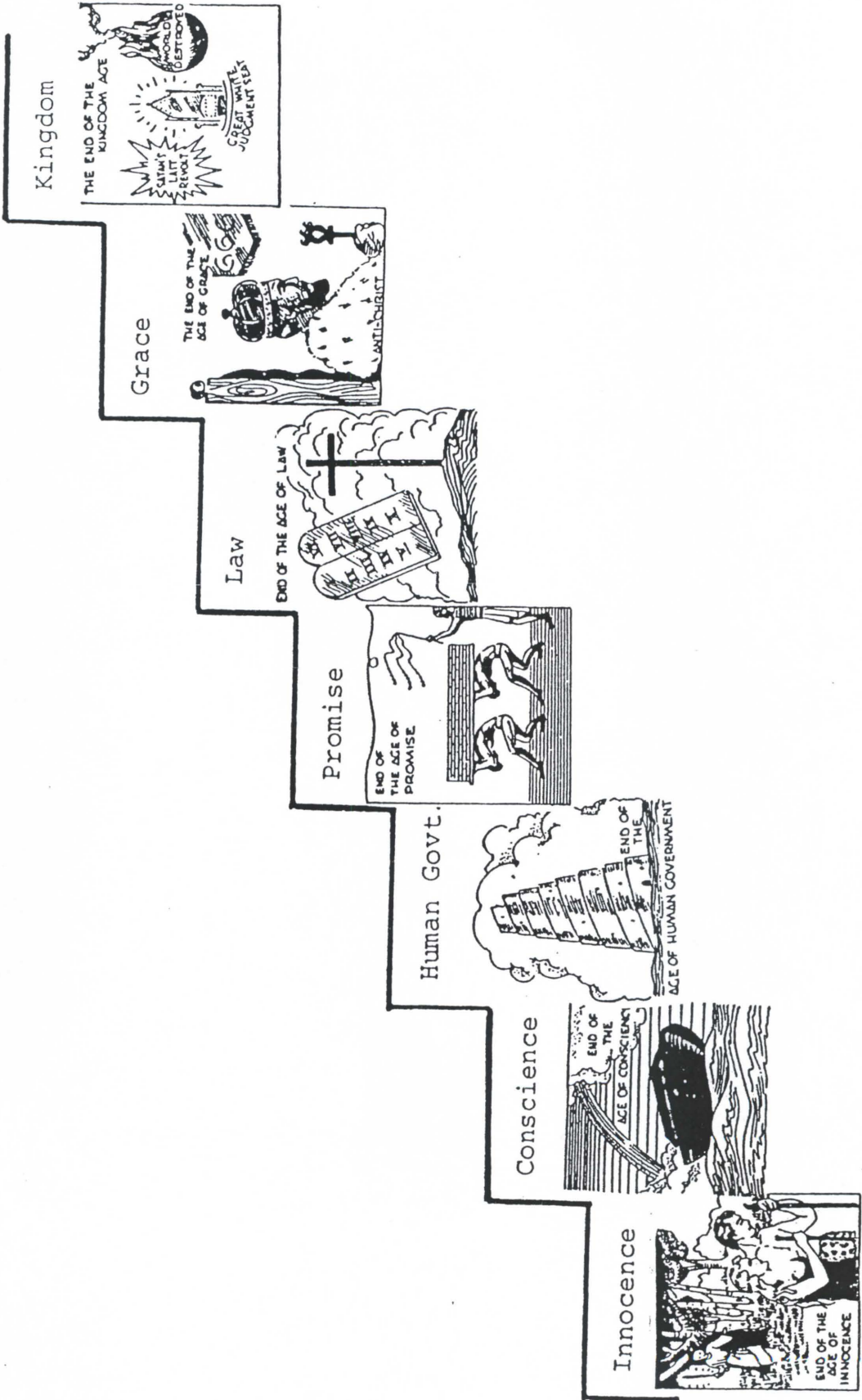
to the

Scriptures

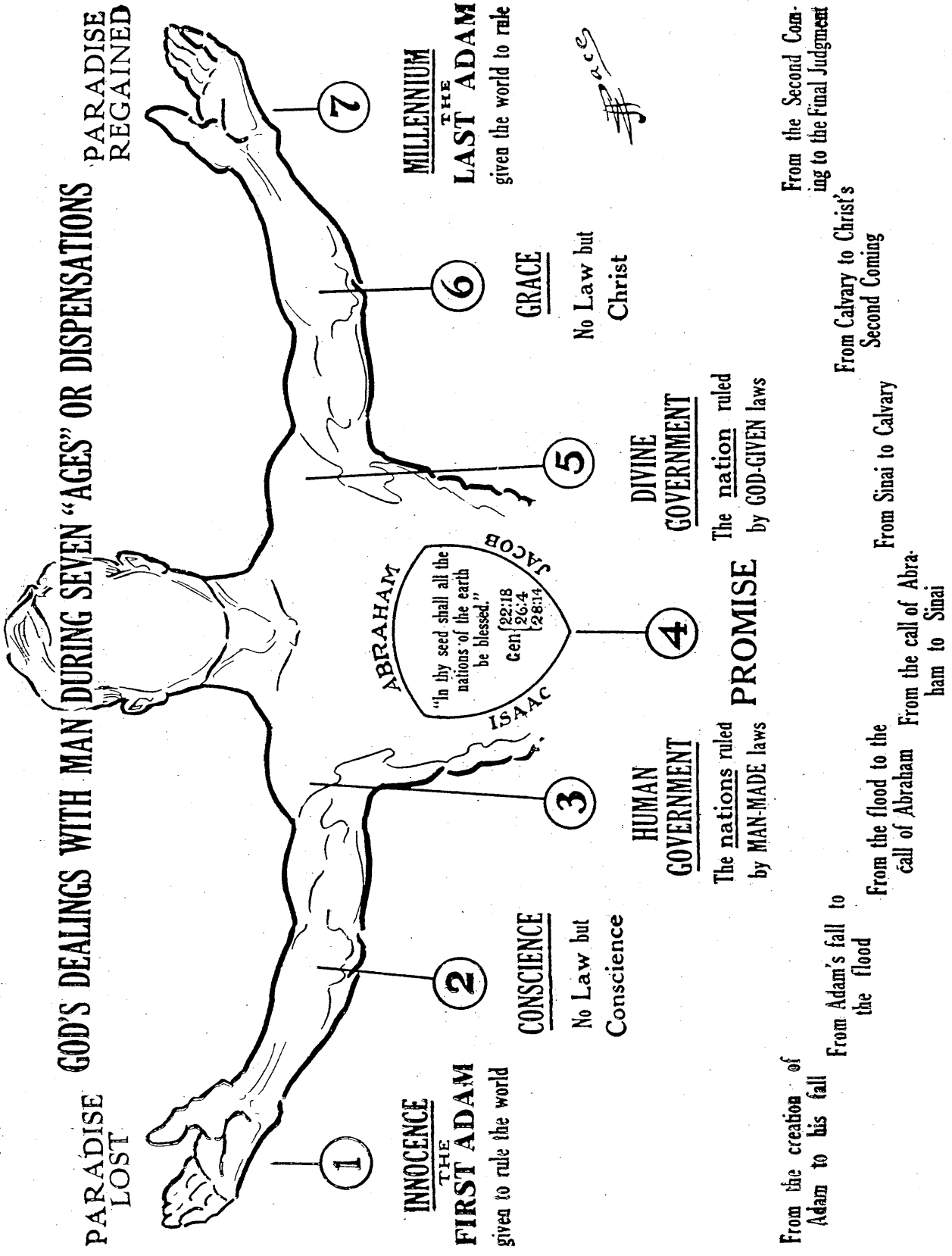


Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

THE DISPENSATIONS



GOD'S DEALINGS WITH MAN DURING SEVEN "AGES" OR DISPENSATIONS



PARADISE LOST

PARADISE REGAINED

INNOCE

THE FIRST ADAM

given to rule the world

MILLENNIUM

THE LAST ADAM

given the world to rule

CONSCIENCE

No Law but
Conscience

GRACE

No Law but
Christ

HUMAN GOVERNMENT

The nations ruled
by MAN-MADE laws

DIVINE GOVERNMENT

The nation ruled
by GOD-GIVEN laws

PROMISE

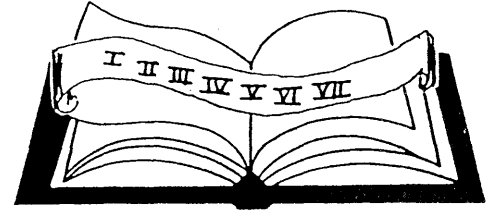
From the creation of Adam to his fall
From Adam's fall to the flood
From the flood to the call of Abraham
From the call of Abraham to Sinai

From the Second Coming to the Final Judgment
From Calvary to Christ's Second Coming
From Sinai to Calvary

acc

God's Plan for the Ages or

DISPENSATIONALISM



1A. THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISPENSATIONALISM

1b. The opposition:

1c. Dispensationalism is recent:

Since the study of dispensationalism was popularized only within the last 100 years, it cannot possibly be true.

2c. Dispensationalism is heretical:

Daniel Fuller reached the conclusion that dispensationalism is "internally inconsistent and unable to harmonize itself with the Biblical data. . ." ("The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism," unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Chicago, 1957, p. 386.)

3c. Dispensationalism is dangerous:

Dispensationalism sees the future establishment of a literal kingdom, a suggestion that is branded as a devilish doctrine. One California group is very outspoken in its hatred for those who subscribe to the dispensation of the kingdom:

"Those human devils who are teaching that Christ will set up an earthly utopia or Communistic heaven on earth are promoting Communism under the masquerade of the Christian faith. When they are confronted with this issue they only maintain a surly silence and keep right on with their subversion and subterfuge. They desecrate the faith and the American flag with their premillennial Communism. They who hold the faith in unrighteousness are gravediggers." (Christians Awake, Summer 1972, p. 2)

4c. Dispensationalism is man-made:

Men like John Nelson Darby, the "pope of the Plymouth Brethren" movement is said to have invented it. Since the system is a human innovation, it must be wrong.

5c. Dispensationalism is erroneous:

1d. Dispensationalism is accused of teaching two ways of salvation. Old Testament saints were saved by offering sacrifices; New Testament saints are saved by trusting in Christ.

2d. Dispensationalism is accused of totally disregarding the Sermon on the Mount, relegating it to the Kingdom Age.

2b. The origin of dispensationalism:

1c. Bible schools

2c. The Scofield Bible

3c. John Nelson Darby (1800-1882)

4c. Pierre Poiret (1647-1719)
The Divine Economy, 6 vols., 1713 (orig. 1687)

2A. THE DEFINITION OF DISPENSATIONALISM

1b. The definition of "dispensation":

"A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose." (Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today, p. 29).

2b. The etymology of the word:

1c. Dispensatio, the Latin term

"To weigh or dispense"

2c. Oikonomia, the Greek term

Oikos=house Nomos=law

The Greek term, oikonomia, means "the managing of a household"

3b. The usage of Scripture:

1c. The general usage:

1d. The usage of the word dispensation:

The various forms of the word *dispensation* are used in the New Testament twenty times. The verb *oikonomeo* is used once in Luke 16:2 where it is translated "to be a steward." The noun *oikonomos* is used ten times (Luke 12:42; 16:1, 3, 8; Rom. 16:23; I Cor. 4:1, 2; Gal. 4:2; Titus 1:7; I Pet. 4:10), and in all instances it is translated "steward" except "chamberlain" in Romans 16:23. The noun *oikonomia* is used nine times (Luke 16:2, 3, 4; I Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10; 3:2, 9; Col. 1:25; I Tim. 1:4). In these instances it is translated variously ("stewardship," "dispensation," "edifying"). The Authorized Version of Ephesians 3:9 has "fellowship" (*koinonia*), whereas the American Standard Version has "dispensation."

(Ryrie, p. 25)

2d. The Lucan passage, Luke 16:1ff

AND he said also unto his disciples, "There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

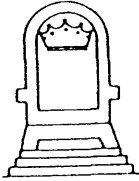
3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

3d. The inference from the usage:

- 1e. A stewardship involves two parties.
- 2e. A stewardship involves an obligation of one party to the other.
- 3e. A stewardship involves accountability.

2c. The specific usage of dispensation:

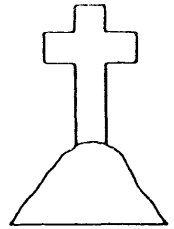
1d. Ephesians 1:10--"Dispensation of the fullness of time"



10 That in the ³dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him;

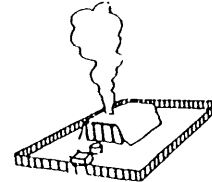
2d. Ephesians 3:2--"Dispensation of the grace of God."

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the 'grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

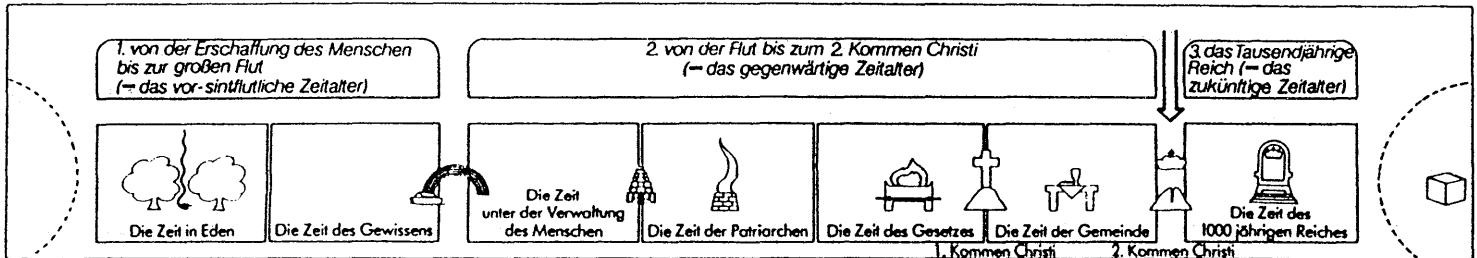


3d. Colossians 1:25-26--"I am . . . a minister, according to the dispensation of God."

25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to ²fulfil the word of God;
 26 *Even* the 'mystery which hath been hid from 'ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:



Die 3 Zeitalter



EPHESIANS 1

Kingdom

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.

EPHESIANS 3

Grace

3 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words;

COLOSSIANS 1

Law

25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

3A. THE DISTINCTIVES OF A DISPENSATION

1b. The characteristics of a dispensation:

1c. Primary characteristics:

1d. God's change in governmental relationship:

God initiates a new stewardship on earth.

2d. A new responsibility for man:

Man receives new obligations as steward.

3d. God's revelation to that end:

Before God can expect man to function under his new responsibility, added revelation is necessary.

2c. Secondary characteristics:

1d. Divine test:

Each dispensation is a test to see whether man under whatever circumstance can please God.

2d. Human failure:

Invariably man falls short of God's expectations.

3d. Eventual judgment:

Each dispensation concludes with a divine judgment.

4d. Divine Grace:

God's justice is tempered by His love and despite miserable human failure and inevitable judgment, God manifests His grace.

2b. The sine qua non of a dispensationalist:

1c. Negatively: A dispensationalist is not one who

1d. Uses the word "dispensation"

2d. Subscribes to a certain number of dispensations

3d. Believes in a premillennial return of Christ.

2c. Positively: A dispensationalist is one who

1d. Consistently distinguishes Israel and the Church.

A dispensationalist sees two eternal purposes of God, expressed in His dealings with Israel and the Church. Israel is always Israel; the Church is the Church, not spiritual Israel.

2d. Uses literal hermeneutics:

Dispensationalism practices consistent literal interpretation of the Bible.

3d. Sees the underlying purpose of God as His glory:

God's overall purpose in the universe is to manifest His glory through salvation and other means.

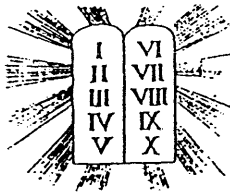
3b. The number of dispensations:

1c. The importance of the number:

The number and names of dispensations are of relatively minor importance. It is possible to have between 3 to 8 dispensations. Covenant theologians only see the Old and the New dispensation.

2c. The inference from Scripture:

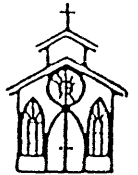
1d. The New Testament refers to three dispensations:



1e. The millennium: Eph. 1:10

2e. Grace: Eph. 3:2

3e. Law: Col. 1:25-26



These three dispensations, Law, Grace and Kingdom are the subject of extensive Scripture.

2d. The Old Testament implies five dispensations:

1e. A dispensation before the fall: Man's life under innocence.

2e. A dispensation after the fall: Man's life under conscience, offering sacrifices.

3e. A dispensation after the flood:

In Gen. 9:1-17, four new features for man's stewardship are introduced:

1f. The fear of man upon animals, v. 2.

2f. The eating of meat, v. 3.

3f. Capital punishment, v. 6.

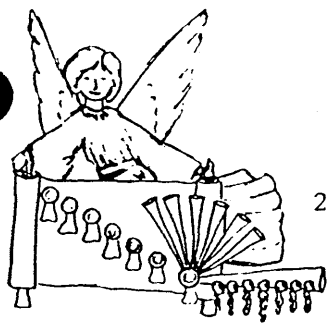
4f. A promise of never causing another flood, vv. 8-17.

4e. A dispensation beginning with Abraham, involving a covenant of promise.

5e. A dispensation commencing at Mt. Sinai with the giving of the Mosaic Law.

3c. The inconclusiveness on some periods:

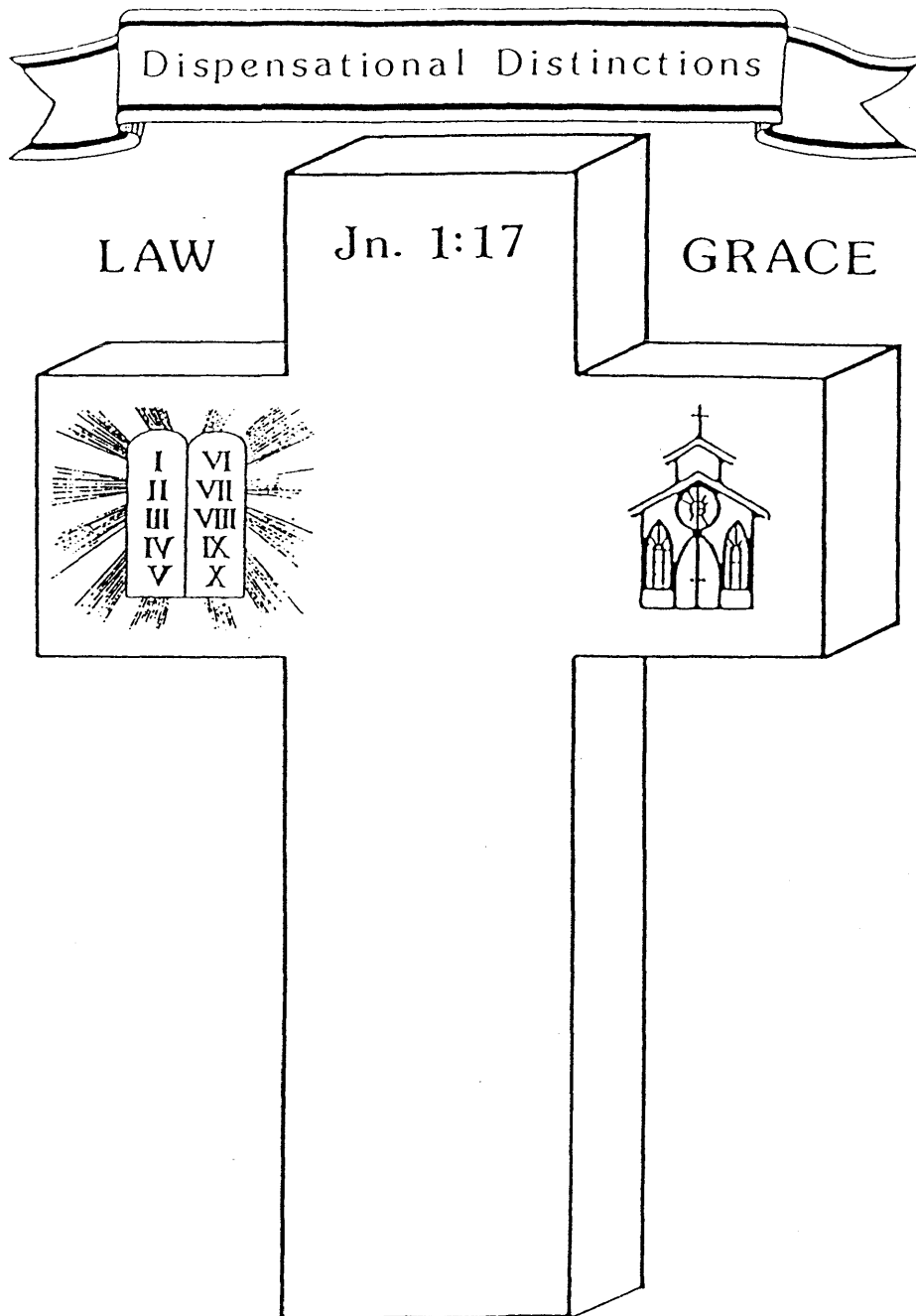
1d. Should the tribulation be a separate dispensation?



The tribulation period is not a separate dispensation, but the climatic judgment concluding grace. The 70 weeks of Daniel began about 1,000 years after the law was given and are completed during the tribulation, but are not necessarily the same as the dispensation of the Law.

2d. Should the eternal state be a separate dispensation?

When temporal history ends, so do God's stewardship arrangements with men.



GOD'S PLAN OF THE AGES

or

THE DISTINGUISHABLE

ECONOMIES

IN THE

OUTWORKING

OF GOD'S

PURPOSE

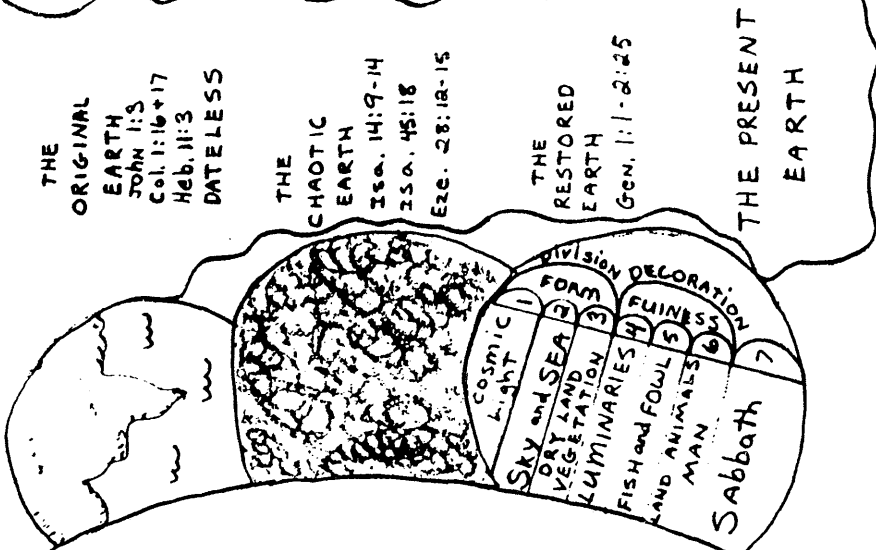
1. THE ETERNAL GOD (Deut. 33:27)

2. THE ETERNAL SON (John 1:1+2)

3. THE ETERNAL SPIRIT (Heb. 13:14)

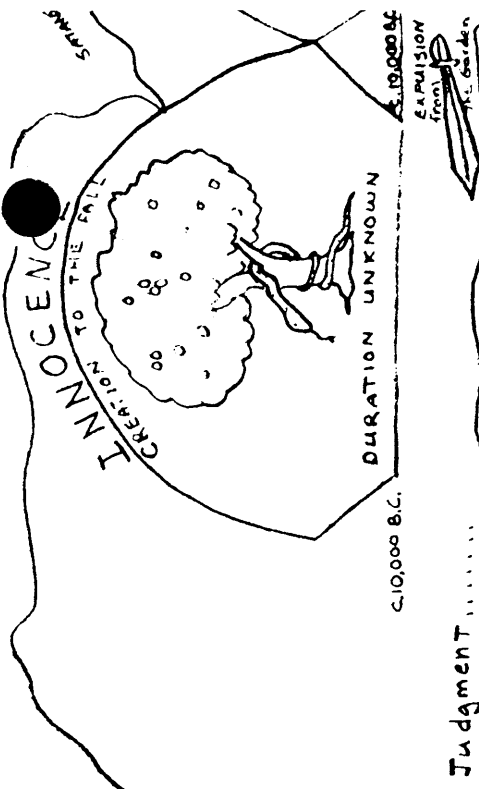
4. THE ETERNAL PURPOSE (Eph. 3:11)

ETERNITY



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.
Faith Baptist Bible College
Ankeny, Iowa

Reduced by Scott Felton



Judgment

SCRIPTURE

PERSONS

Responsibility

Failure

Grace

GEN 1:26-3:6

Adam, Eve

populate and subdue the earth. Dress and keep the garden. Resist from eating of the tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil.

They doubted GOD'S Word, goodness, judgment and motive and ate of the forbidden tree.

Promised Redeemer, Coats of skin, long life, Supply of needs, Separation of tree of Life.

EDENIC COVENANT
GEN. 1:28-30; 2:15-17



CONSCIENCE



ADAM to the Flood
DURATION 5,000 YEARS

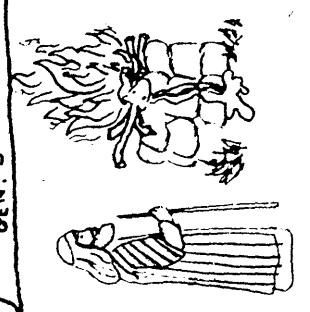
GEN. 3:7-8:19

ADAM, EVE, SETH, ENOCH, NOAH
Life under a curse.
Conscience as a rule of life
Blood sacrifices.

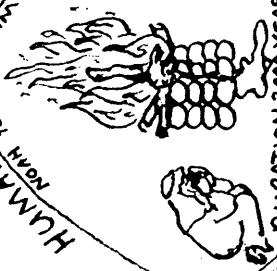
Failure to live up to
conscience.
Universal wickedness

Salvation of some.
Preservation of Noah.
Long suffering before judgment

ADAMIC COVENANT
GEN. 3:14-19



HUMAN GOVERNMENT



HUMAN TO ABRAHAM
DURATION 3,000 YEARS
C. 2000 B.C.

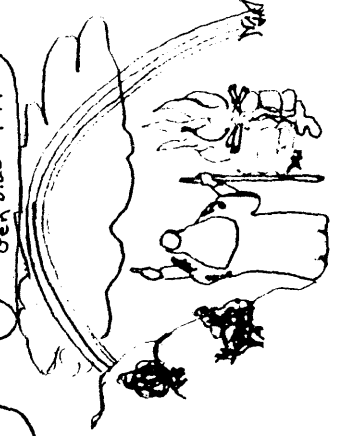
GEN 8:20-11:9

NOAH, SHEM, HAM, JAPETH
Renewed command to multiply and have dominion
Essence of government established involving organization and legislation.

Noah's drunkenness, Ham's irreverence
Failure of human government to curb sin.

the seed of the woman.
Preservation of a bodily remnant.

NOAHIC COVENANT
GEN 8:20-9:17



PROMISE



ABRAHAM to MOSES
DURATION 560 YEARS
Bondage in EGYPT

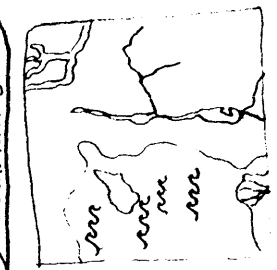
GEN 11:10-EX. 19:9

ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB, JOSEPH
Faith in the material, spiritual and social promises of God.

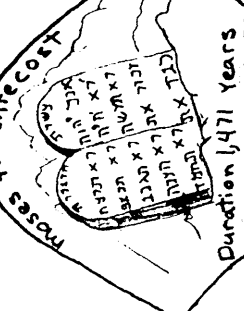
Abraham's delay, doubt and descent into Egypt. Isaac's doubt. Jacob's deceit. Israel's murmuring.

A deliverer was promised. Victory over enemies was given. Unconditional promises renewed.

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT
GEN. 12:1-3



LAW



MOSES to PENTECOST
DURATION 1,471 YEARS

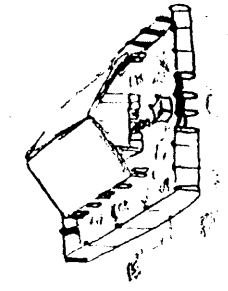
EX. 19:9 - JOHN 2:1-25

MOSES, JOSHUA, JUDGES, KINGS, PROPHETS.
Israel is to obey a detailed system of works comprised of 613 commandments.

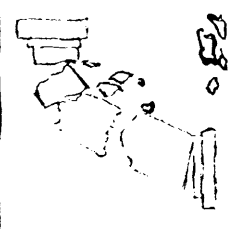
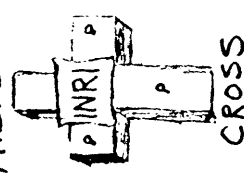
The entire Old Testament is a record of failure, culminating in the crucifixion.

Sacrifices provided a way of restoration. God raised up deliverers. The nation is preserved. Millennium promised.

MOSAIC COVENANT
EX. 19:5-31:18



A.D. 32



Jerusalem Destroyed
70 A.D.

GRACE
 Pentecost to Second Coming
 Duration 1,900+ Years

KINGDOM
 Second Coming to Great White Throne
 Duration 1,000 Years

TRIBULATION

Acts 1:1 - Rev. 3:22
 Apostles, Church Fathers, Christians.

Church's responsibility includes Salvation by Faith, Sanctification Through the Spirit, World Evangelism

Grace has not produced a world-wide acceptance of Christ or a triumphant church and ends with great apostasy.

The appearance of Christ. The rule of life, Deliverance from Judgment

NEW COVENANT
 Mat. 26:26-29; I Cor. 11:25

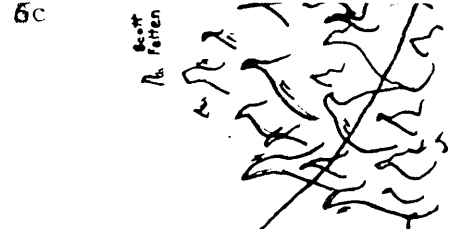
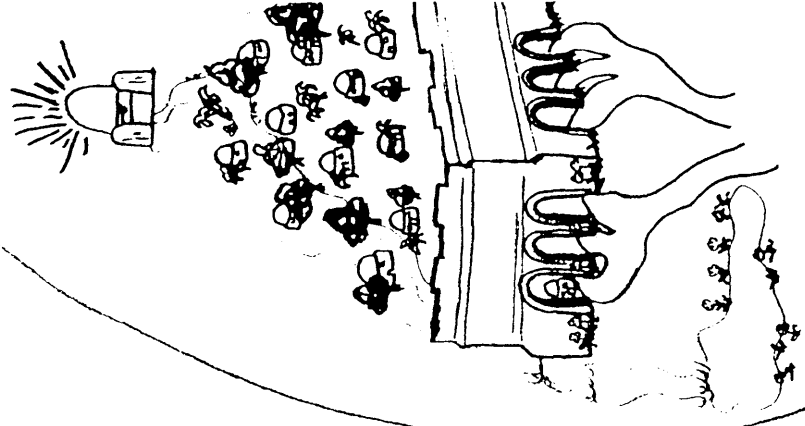
Rev. 20:1-15:21:9-22:5
 Tribulation saints who endured People born in the Millennium.

To obey the King.
 Outward sin.
 A climate rebellion.

Fulfillment of the Abrahamic, Palestinian and Davidic Covenants - Establishment of the New Covenant.
 Fruition of Nature.

NEW COVENANT
 Jer. 31:31-40

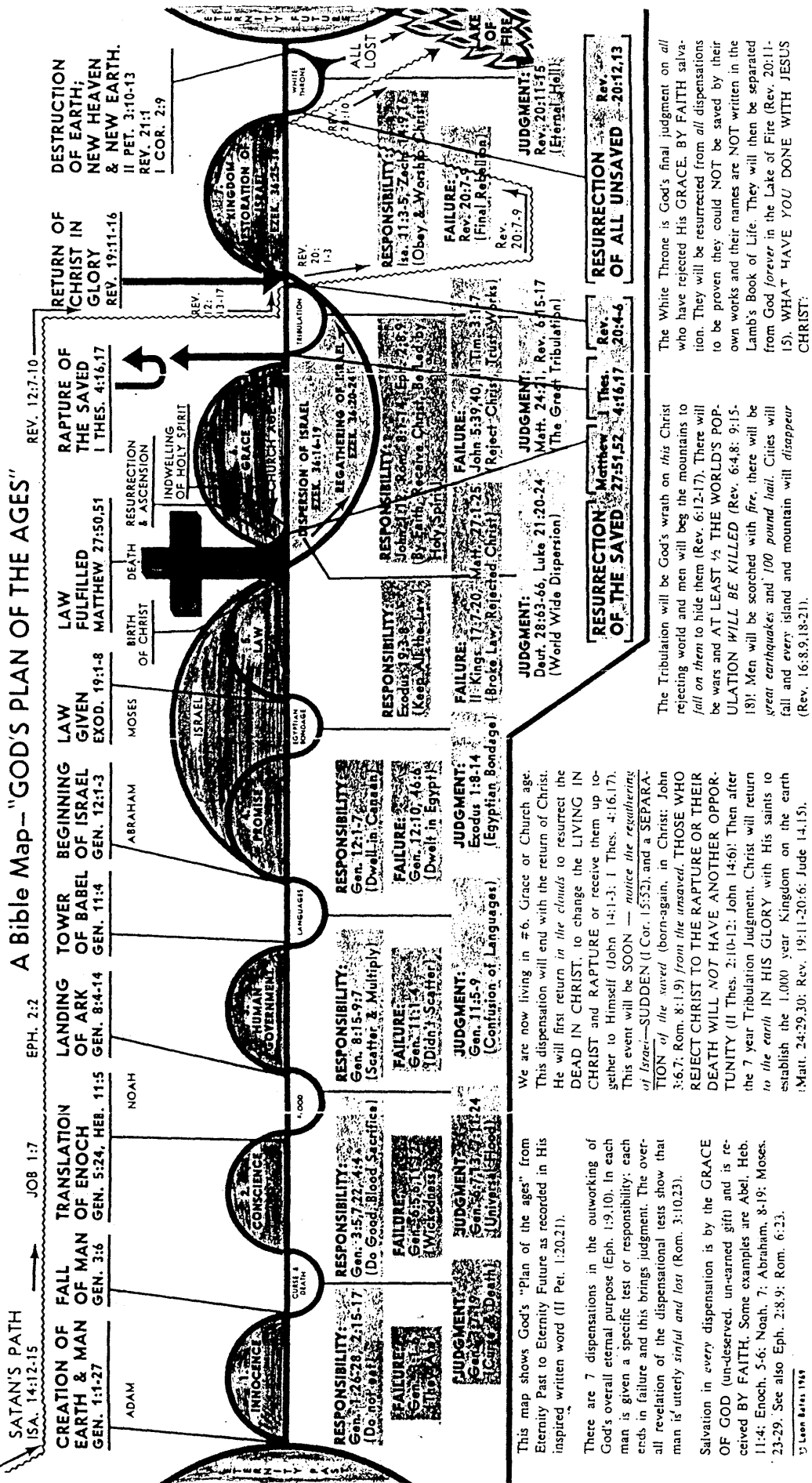
GREAT WHITE THRONE



Best
 to letter

50

A Bible Map - "GOD'S PLAN OF THE AGES"

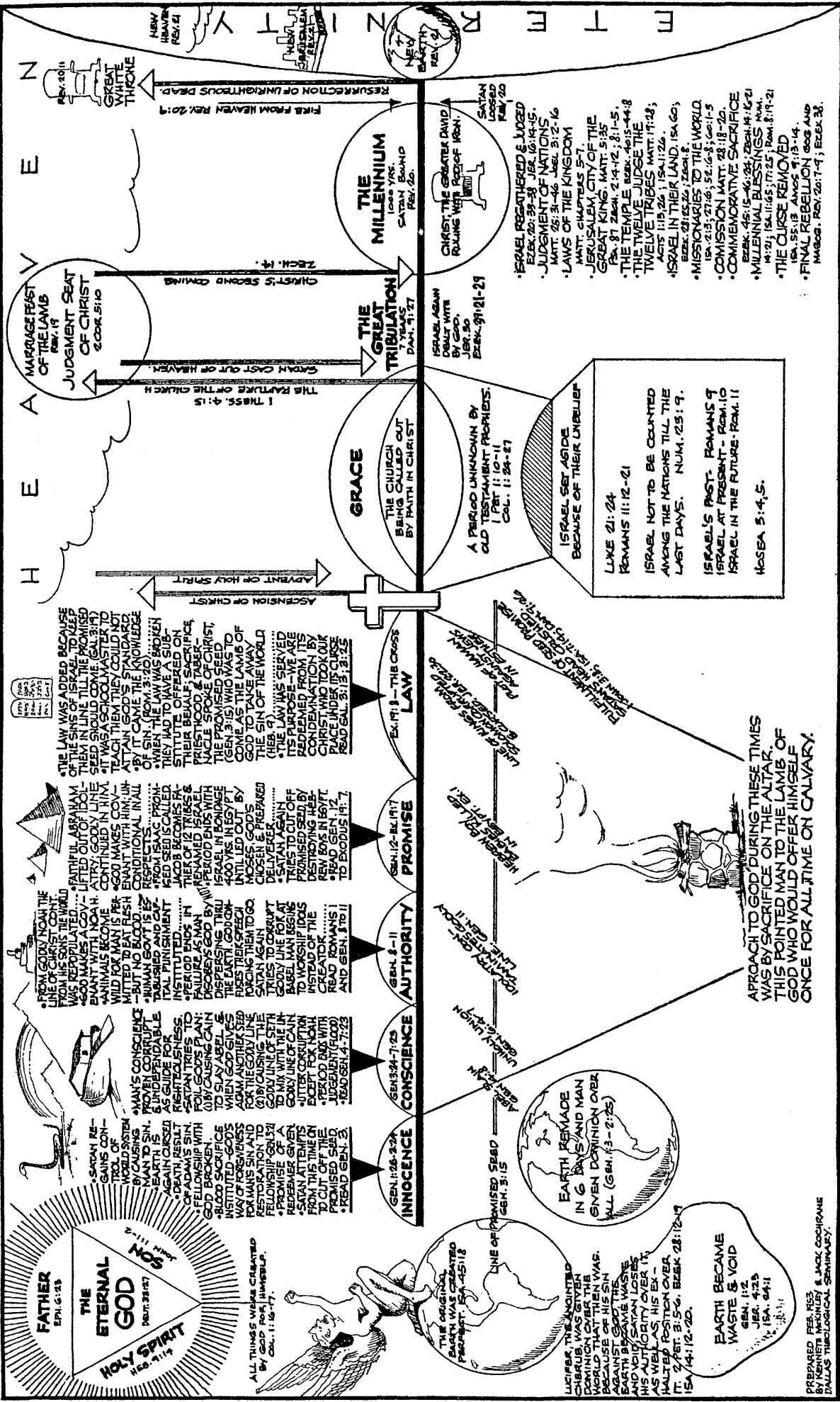


This map shows God's "Plan of the ages" from Eternity Past to Eternity Future as recorded in His inspired written word (II Pet. 1:20,21).

There are 7 dispensations in the outworking of God's overall eternal purpose (Eph. 1:9,10). In each man is given a specific test or responsibility; each ends in failure and this brings judgment. The overall revelation of the dispensational tests show that man is utterly *sinful and lost* (Rom. 3:10,23).

Salvation in every dispensation is by the GRACE OF GOD (un-deserved, un-earned gift) and is received BY FAITH. Some examples are Abel, Heb. 11:4; Enoch, 5-6; Noah, 7; Abraham, 8-19; Moses, 23-29. See also Eph. 2:8,9; Rom. 6:2,3.

© Leon Bates, 1955



4A. THE BENEFITS OF DISPENSATIONALISM:

1b. It answers the need for biblical distinction:

Everyone faces problems in practicing some kind of consistent interpretation. Every expositor needs to account for the differences between the Old Testament economy and this dispensation in areas such as:

1. The inheritance of the land.
2. The keeping of the Passover and Sabbath.
3. Animal sacrifices.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer said that one is a dispensationalist, whether he realizes it or not, if one does not claim or practice the above.

2b. It answers the need for a philosophy of history:

- 1c. Dispensationalism recognizes progressive revelation.
- 2c. Dispensationalism provides a unifying factor to history. Whatever God does is for His glory, that is, it serves a doxological purpose.
- 3c. Dispensationalism provides for a goal of human history, the millennium.

3b. It provides a consistent procedure in hermeneutics:

1c. The two Great Commissions: Matthew 10; Matthew 28

In Matthew 10, Christ demands the disciples not to preach to the Gentiles or Samaritans. In Matthew 28 He commands the same disciples to go and disciple all nations. Only a dispensational distinction will help solve the apparent discrepancy.

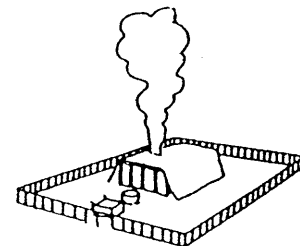
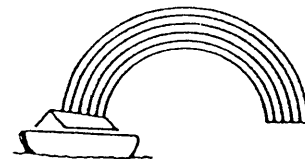
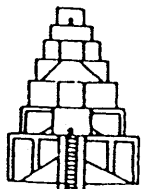
2c. The Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5-7

Certain commandments in this passage cannot possibly be practiced literally in the Church Age, such as turning the other cheek and giving to anyone who asks of us. Seeing that part of the Sermon on the Mount applies to the Kingdom Age relieves apparent hermeneutical tensions.

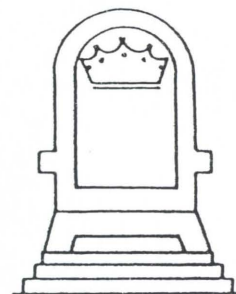
5A. THE DETAILING OF DISPENSATIONS:

1b. The listing of the dispensations:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1c. Innocence: | Creation to Fall |
| 2c. Conscience: | Fall to Flood |
| 3c. Human Government: | Flood to the call of Abraham |
| 4c. Promise: | Call of Abraham to Mount Sinai |
| 5c. Law: | Mount Sinai to the Cross |



- 6c. Grace: Pentecost to Rapture
- 7c. Kingdom: Second Advent to Great White Throne
- 2b. The exposition:
- 1c. The beginning:
 - 2c. Related Scriptures:
 - 3c. The state of man:
 - 4c. Human responsibility:
 - 5c. Human failure:
 - 6c. Divine judgment:
 - 7c. Divine grace:
 - 8c. Divine covenant:
- 3b. Concluding general observations:
- 1c. Innocence has devoted only 37 verses to it.
 - 2c. Law and grace have the most Scripture relating to them.
 - 3c. It is best to see 7 dispensations:
 - 4c. Our GARBC fellowship is the largest dispensational group in the USA.



XVIII. Israel

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ. Gen. 13:14-17; Rom. 11:1-32; Ezek. 37.

(General Association of Regular Baptist Churches 1988 Church Directory, p. 16, pages 13-16 "Articles of Faith")

XIX. Rapture and Subsequent Events

We believe in the premillennial return of Christ, an event which can occur at any moment, and that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seven years of the Tribulation. 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:42-44, 51-54; Phil. 3:20, 21; Rev. 3:10.

We believe that the Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial kingdom. Dan. 9:25-27; Matt. 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isa. 9:6, 7; 11:1-9; Acts 2:29, 30; Rev. 20:1-4, 6.

FBBC'S Statement of Faith

Dispensations

We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation, which has always been by grace through faith, but are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on earth through man under varying responsibilities; that changes in dispensational dealings depend upon changed situations in which man is found in relation to God due to man's failures and God's judgments; that, though several dispensations cover the entire history of mankind, only three of these are the subject of extended revelation in Scripture; that these three (Mosaic law, grace and millennial kingdom) are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused.



4A. THE DISPENSATION OF PROMISE: ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

- 1b. The beginning: The call of Abraham, Gen. 11:10
- 2b. The Scripture: Gen. 11:10 through Ex. 19:2, the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai (approximately 600 yrs.).
- 3b. The state of man:
 - 1c. A chosen portion of the race became recipients of wonderful and gracious promises.
 - 2c. God turned from the world to one man and his seed.
- 4b. The human responsibility:
 - 1c. Faith in the material, spiritual and social promises of God.
 God's promises were restated to Isaac: Gen. 26:1-4
 - 2c. The content of that faith is expressed in the Abrahamic Covenant.
 - 1d. The promises are national: Gen. 12:2 "a great nation"
 - 1e. A land: Gen. 12:1; 13:14, 15, 17; 15:7; 17:8; 18:21
 - 2e. Great numbers: Gen. 13:16; 15:5
 - 3e. Riches: Gen. 15:4; Ex. 12:25-36
 - 2d. The promises are personal, to Abraham:
 - 1e. He would be blessed: Gen. 12:2
 - 2e. He would have a great name: Gen. 12:2
 Abraham is honored by Jews, Christians and Mohammedans.
 - 3e. He would be a blessing: Gen. 12:3
 - 4e. He would be very fruitful: Gen. 13:16; 17:6
 - 3d. The promises are universal:
 - 1e. God would bless them that bless Abraham: Gen. 12:3
 - 2e. God would curse them that curse Abraham: Gen. 12:3
 - 3e. In Abraham would all the families of the earth be blessed: Gen. 12:3



- 4d. The promises are unconditional:
- 1e. They were given in pure grace: Gen. 12:1 (at age 75)
 - 2e. They were confirmed by a sacrifice: Gen. 15:17 (at age 95)
 - 3e. They were sealed with God's oath: Gen. 22:16-18; (at age 145)
 - 4e. They were declared to be everlasting: Gen. 17:7, 13, 19; Neh. 9:5-12; I Chron. 16:16-17; Ps. 105:3-15
- 5d. The promises are accompanied by a sign, circumcision: Gen. 17:13-14, 17, 19. Ps. 105:10

5b. Human failure:

1c. Abraham's failure:

- 1d. Delay of going to the promised land: Gen. 11:31
- 2d. Abraham becomes the father of Ishmael: Gen. 16:1-16
- 3d. Abraham goes down into Egypt: Gen. 12:10-13:1
- 4d. Abraham does not return to Egypt but gets in trouble when he comes close to Egypt: Gen. 20:1-18-- the deception concerning Sarah
- 5d. Abraham was nevertheless grateful and worshipful. He had a human responsibility:

- 1e. He built altars at: Moreh: Gen. 12:6,7
Bethel: Gen. 12:8 cf. 13:3-4
Mamre: Gen. 13:8
Moriah: Gen. 22:9

2e. His life was characterized by deep piety:

- 1f. Gen. 13:8 "I pray thee. . . let there be no strife"
- 2f. Gen. 14:22-23 "I will not take a thread nor a shoelatchet"
- 3f. Gen. 17:3 "Abraham fell on his face"
- 4f. Gen. 18:2-5 "Bowed himself to the ground"
- 5f. Gen. 18:17-19 "He commanded his children" (In Hebrews 11:8-12 four verses are devoted to Abraham and Sarah, as many as to Moses in Heb. 11:23-27)



- 2c. Isaac's failure: like his father he becomes a dweller near the Egyptian border. He is forbidden to go to Egypt, yet he lives as near as he can at Gerar (Gen. 26: 6-16 cf. 20:1-18)

3c. Jacob's failure:

- 1d. Unbelief in the promise made to his mother at his birth: Gen. 25:23; 28:13-15, 20).

- 2d. Jacob is guilty of lying, deceit, bargaining:
Gen. 27:1-29.
- 3d. Unbelief as to God's care and provision leads to bargaining with God in the face of the promises:
Gen. 28:13-15; 28:20-21
- 4d. The whole family moved, under the leadership of Jacob, into Egypt, despite the specific warning to Isaac against such a move.



Gen. 26: 1-5 the directive will of God--Isaac not to go to Egypt
 Gen. 46:1-4 the permissive will of God--Jacob told to go
 Gen. 15:12-14 the over-ruling will of God--God predicted Israel to be in Egypt 400 yrs.

4c. Israel's failure:

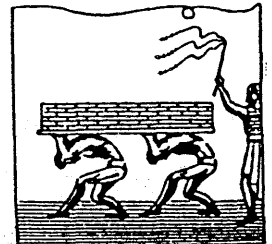
- 1d. In Egypt: her complaining, lack of faith (Ex. 2:23; 4:1,10; 5:21; 14:10-12; 15:24; etc.)
- 2d. Failure of Israel in their journeys: desire to go back to Egypt (Ex. 14:11-12)
- 3d. Israel's constant murmurings: Ex. 15:24; 16:2; Nu. 14:2; 16:11; 16:41; Josh. 9:18
- 4d. Failure at the time of the giving of the Law (Ex. 19)

Although Israel was right in pledging obedience to the Law (cf. Deut. 5:27-28) they foolishly assumed that they had the power to fulfill their pledge.

- 5d. Failure to trust the promises at Kadesh-Barnea:
Nu. 14

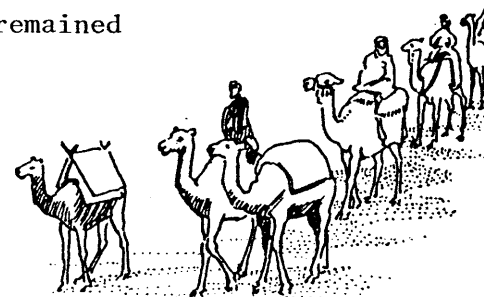
6b. Divine judgment: Bondage in Egypt

The descent into Egypt was a judgment and a punishment as well as a failure. Through it God worked out His sublime will and purpose. Sorrow and slavery and threatened extinction resulted. The experience was exceeding bitter: Ex. 1:14 ("they made their lives bitter")



7b. Divine grace:

- 1c. Though the blessings were lost, the promises remained sure.
- 2c. Israel was preserved in the furnace.
- 3c. Moses, a deliverer, was provided: Ex. 3:6-10



4c. The Passover protection was provided for the guilty:
Ex. 12

5c. God's care from Egypt to Canaan:

Egypt's bounty: Ex. 12:35-36

The Red Sea: Ex. 14

Marah: Ex. 15

Manna: Ex. 16

Amalek: Ex. 17

Borne on eagles' wing: Ex. 19:4

6c. God's power wrought deliverance to Israel (Ex. 14:15)
and death to the oppressor: (Ex. 14:28)

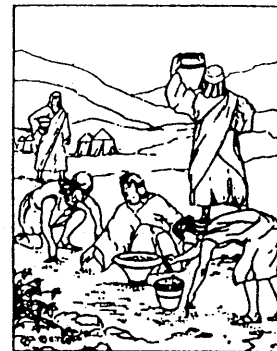
8b. The end of the dispensation:

1c. In one sense the dispensation of promise ends at the giving of the Law (Ex. 19), but only as testing and responsibility.

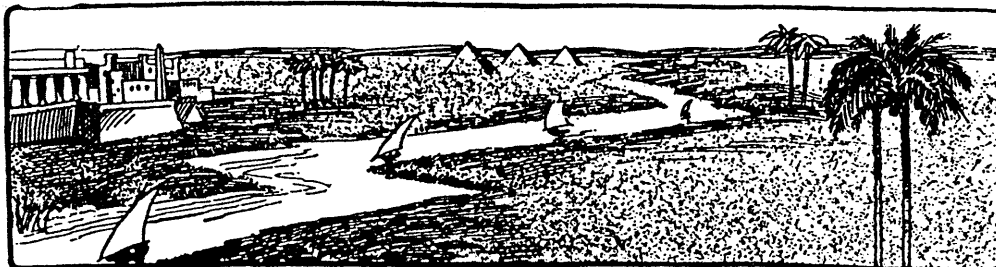
2c. In another sense the dispensation of promise continues to the end of history: its promises are still in force as an object of faith and hope. Abraham and his descendants have never possessed the land promised to them (Gen. 15:18).

SUMMARY:

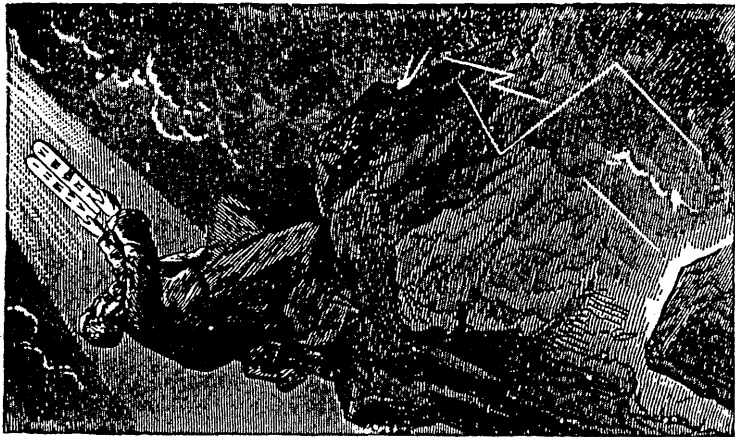
1. The dispensation of promise established clearly the principle of divine sovereignty.
2. It provided a channel of special divine revelation through the nation of Israel.
3. It continues to provide the line of redemption and channel of blessing.
4. It revealed the grace of God and provided a witness to the world.
5. Like the other dispensations, the dispensation of promise ended in failure and the Law had to be introduced as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ (Gal. 3:24).



ISRAELITES GATHERING THE
BREAD FROM HEAVEN, MANNA



THE DISPENSATION OF PROMISE



- 1. THE BEGINNING:
- 2. RELATED SCRIPTURE:
- 3. STATE OF MAN:
- 4. HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY:
- 5. HUMAN FAILURE:
- 6. DIVINE JUDGMENT:
- 7. DIVINE GRACE:

5A. THE DISPENSATION OF THE LAW:

- 1b. The beginning of the dispensation: Exodus 19:9
- 2b. Scripture: Exodus 19:9 to the end of the gospel of John; or Sinai to Calvary.

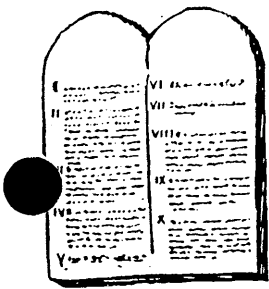


3b. The state of man:

- 1c. Law limits man to himself and requires complete obedience.
- 2c. "Not of faith," only "doing" its commands will be of value to man: Gal. 3:12
- 3c. Law could not give life: Gal. 3:21
- 4c. There were certain definite rewards: Luke 10:27-28
- 5c. The curse was no less definite: Gal. 3:10

4b. Human responsibility:

- 1c. The Law is directed to Israel alone. The heathen nations are never judged by it. In Exodus 19 only Israel was represented at the foot of Mt. Sinai.
- 2c. The Law is the Mosaic Covenant and contains a detailed system of works, encompassing a total of 613 commandments, of which 365 are negative and 248 are positive.



- 1d. The commandments--the expressed will of God: Exodus 20:1-26; Deut:5
 - 2d. The judgments--social and civic life of Israel: Exodus 21:1-24+ 11.
 - 3d. The ordinances--religious life of Israel: Exodus 24:12-31;18
- 3c. The government was basically a theocracy, governed by God who worked through prophets, priests and later kings.

4c. It was an ad interim covenant:

- 1d. It was a temporary covenant: until Christ should come (Gal. 3:24-25)
- 2d. Most of the promises of this covenant are dependent upon obedience and works--"if ye will obey my voice indeed" (Ex. 19:5)

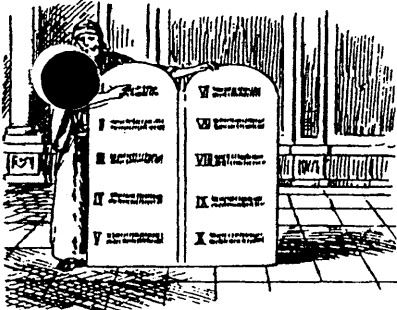
5c. For the first time in history, a complete and detailed religious system is revealed:
(Chafer, Systematic Theology, IV, 14-26).

- 1d. An acceptable standing before God.
- 2d. A manner of life--rule of moral life.
- 3d. A system of service for God to be recognized by reward.
- 4d. A righteous ground for forgiveness.
- 5d. A provision for cleansing and forgiveness, conditioned on meeting requirements.
- 6d. A program of worship and prayer.
- 7d. A future hope.

6c. The test: "Whether man, limited to his own efforts; with detailed regulations governing his conduct in relation to God and his fellowman, covering his moral, social and religious activities, is able to satisfy God's righteousness and to lead a holy life."
(H.C. Thiessen)

5b. Human failure:

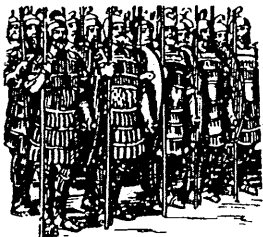
- 1c. The entire O.T. is a record of failure to keep the Law.
 - 1d. The period of the judges--the worst in Israel's history. (Judges 21:25)
 - 2d. The period leading up to the captivities: David, Sol., kings of Israel, and the kings of Judah.
 - 3d. The captivities and post-captivity period: Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.



2c. The N.T. continues the record of failure culminating in the crucifixion of Christ who perfectly kept the Law: Acts 2:22-23.

6b. Divine judgment:

1c. Judgments during the dispensation of Law: Deut. 28:1-30:20.



1d. Judgments during the period of the Book of Judges.

2d. Judgments during the divided kingdom.

3d. The Assyrian Captivity: 2 Kings 17-18. 10 tribes

4d. The Babylonian Captivity: 2 Kings 25:1-11. 2 tribes

5d. The persecution of the Syrians during the period of Antiochus Epiphanes (cf. Dan. 11:21-35)

6d. The Roman domination and dispersion.

2c. Judgments on Israel after the close of the dispensation:



1d. The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

2d. The world-wide dispersion of Israel: Mt. 23:37-39.

1e. They took responsibility for Christ's death: Mt. 27:25

2e. Christ prophesied of Gentile dominion: Lk. 21:24

3d. The future time of Jacob's trouble: Jer. 30:1-11:
The Great Tribulation: Dan. 12:1; Mt. 24

7b. Divine grace:

1c. The sacrificial system: provision of a way of restoration for sinning Israel.

2c. The longsuffering of God in raising up deliverers:

1d. Joshua pleaded for Israel.

2d. The judges were raised up to rescue Israel.

3d. The kings were helped in battle by God.

4d. The prophets warned again and again of impending judgment.

3c. The preservation of the nation: (especially seen in the Book of Esther).

4c. The acceptance of genuine repentance: Moses' intercession (Ex. 32:30-35), Daniel's intercession (Dan.9)

5c. The writing of the O.T. with its specific revelation of God.

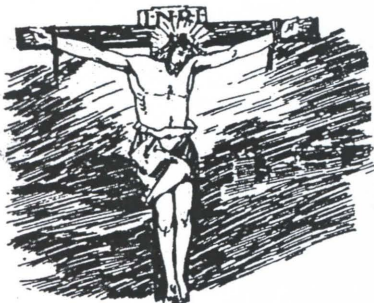
6c. The coming of Christ as the Messiah of Israel.

7c. The giving of many promises of ultimate deliverance in the millennium.

8b. The end of the dispensation:

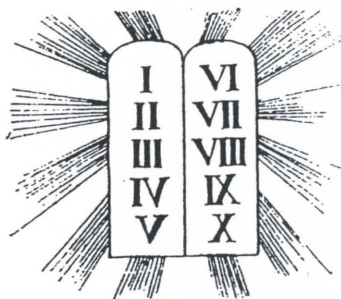
1c. The dispensation ended at the cross:

- 1d. Rom. 10:4: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."
- 2d. Gal. 3:19: "Till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."
- 3d. Gal. 3:25: "But after faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."
- 4d. II Cor. 3:11-14: "That which is done away--that which is abolished"--and this includes the ten commandments as well, for v. 7 says that it was written and engraven in stone, namely the Ten Commandments or the Moral Law.
- 5d. Heb. 7:11-12: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." v. 12



2c. Five propositions of the Mosaic Law.

- 1d. It was given as a union and not divided as commandments, ordinances, judgments.
- 1e. All parts are equally important: Ex. 20; 21; 25
- 2e. Breaking the law in one point means the breaking of all: James 2:10
- 3e. Penalties are equally severe:
- 1f. Commandments: breaking the Sabbath: death: Nu. 15:32.
- 2f. Ordinances: Nadab and Abihu offering strange fires: death: Lev. 10:1-7.
- 3f. Judgments: Ex. 21-24: death: Jer. 25:11
The land rest was not kept for 490 years, therefore, God gave the land rest during the Babylonian captivity with ensuing death for many.
- 2d. It was given to Israel, not to Gentiles.
- 1e. O.T. proof: Lev. 26:43 between God and the children of Israel.
- 2e. N.T. proof: Rom. 2:14 Gentiles which have not the Law.
Rom. 9:4 to Israel is the giving of the Law
Eph. 2:12 the Gentiles are strangers to the Law
- 3d. All of the Law is done away: All 613 commandments.
- 1e. The Ten Commandments are especially mentioned: 2 Cor. 3:6, 7-11.
- 2e. A different priesthood necessitates a different law: Heb. 7:11-12.
- 4d. In spite of this, the Law has a right use: to show a standard from God, to demonstrate His righteous demands.



- 1e. The Law is useful for the unsaved: I Tim. 1:9.
The Law was made for the unrighteous; it was to point the ungodly to Christ, Gal. 3:19-25.
- 2e. The Law is useful for the saved: to show what God thinks about things. As all Scripture is profitable, so is the Law.

5d. The Law has a real abuse:

- 1e. When it is used as a means of salvation:

1f. Rom. 3:20 by deeds of law no flesh will be justified.

2f. Acts 13:39 man could not be justified by the Law of Moses.

- 2e. When used as a means of sanctification:

The Law stired up Paul, did not lead to a sanctified life: Rom. 7.

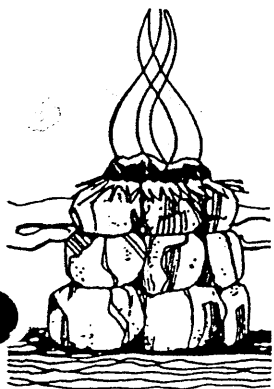
We still have laws, but they are not the same as the Mosaic Law. Some of God's standards are repeated in the N.T., but they are a part of a new code of law. We are under a new priesthood, therefore have a new code. The old law, including the Ten Commandments has been abrogated and is not for the church age believer.

- 3e. It would be sinful to obey some of the laws today, such as the putting to death of anyone who did not observe the Sabbath day.



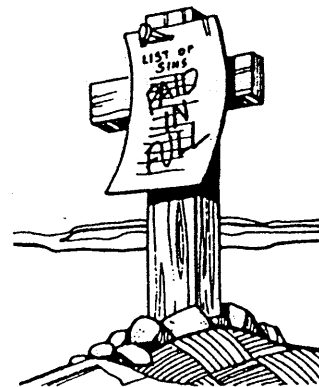
SUMMARY:

1. The purpose of the dispensation of the Law was to provide a righteous rule of life and to bring sin into condemnation--it demonstrated that moral, civil and religious law cannot save or sanctify.
2. The Law was not intended for man's salvation under the dispensation of the Law or later.
3. The weakness of the Law:
 - a. The Law could not justify: Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16
 - b. The Law could not sanctify or perfect: Heb. 7:18-19

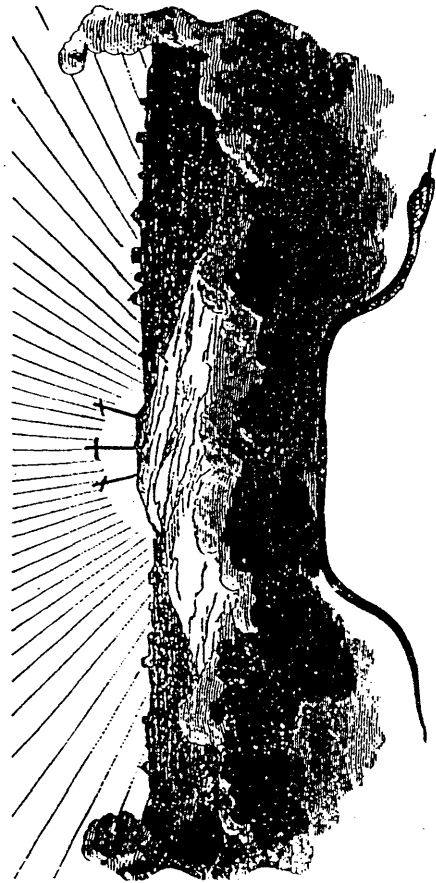


Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
 With all thy Heart
 and With all thy Soul
 and With all thy Mind
 and With all thy Strength.

this is the first
 commandment.



THE DISPENSATION OF THE LAW



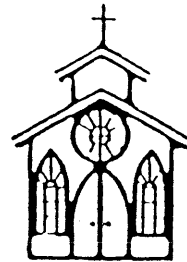
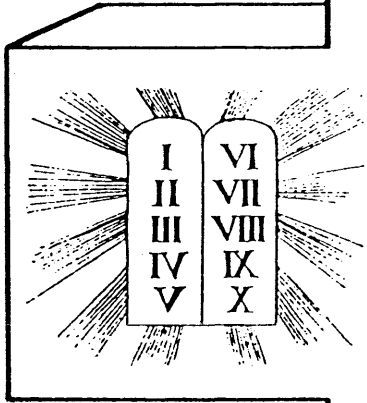
1. THE BEGINNING:
2. RELATED SCRIPTURE:
3. STATE OF MAN:
4. HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY:
5. HUMAN FAILURE:
6. DIVINE JUDGMENT:
7. DIVINE GRACE:

Dispensational Distinctions

LAW

Jn. 1:17

GRACE



1500 YEARS
 ISRAEL
 THEOCRATIC NATION
 WIFE OF JEHOVAH
 LAW OF MOSES
 LEGALISM
 OBEDIENCE FOR BLESSING
 EX. 19 - JN. 21
 MT. SINAI
 HOLY LAND
 EARTHLY

Duration
 Companies
 Organism
 Relationship
 Code of Law
 Character
 Spirit
 Content
 Focus
 Destiny
 Rewards

1900+ YEARS
 CHURCH
 ROYAL PRIESTHOOD
 BRIDE OF CHRIST
 LAW OF CHRIST
 LIBERTY
 OBEDIENCE BECAUSE OF BLESSING
 ACTS 1 - REV. 22
 MT. CALVARY
 HEAVENLY CITY
 HEAVENLY

MK



6A. THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE:

1b. The beginning: Day of Pentecost:

Some teachings concerning the dispensation of grace are introduced earlier in the Gospels, such as Christ's discourse (John 13-17). In some respects, John is the bridge between Law and Grace.

2b. Scripture: Acts 1 through Rev. 3.
(The Church is nowhere found after Rev. 3)

3b. The state of man:

1c. This age has no specific covenant for man.

1d. Proof that there are no covenants for us:

- 1e. The Gentiles are strangers from the covenants of promise: Eph. 2:12
- 2e. The covenants pertain to Israel: Rom. 9:4

2d. Two covenants have specific, indirect relation to this age:

1e. The Abrahamic Covenant:



- 1f. It promises a blessing to all the families of the earth through the gospel which is based upon the seed, Christ: Gen. 12:4; Gal. 3:13-16.
- 2f. It was of grace, unconditional: Rom. 4:1-5.
- 3f. The imputation of righteousness is effected in all who believe in Jesus Christ: Rom. 4:24-25; Gal. 3:6-9; 22, 2 Cor. 5:21.
- 4f. The unconditional covenant becomes a pattern for today. Abraham simply believed, so this saving grace is given to us: Rom. 4:23-24; Gal. 3:13-19, cf. Gen. 15:6
- 5f. Today is to be declared the period of the gospel of His grace: Tit. 2:11

2e. The New Covenant:



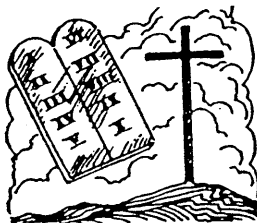
- 1f. It is promised to the nation Israel: Jer. 31:31-40
- 2f. This covenant announced in the 7th century B.C., is still in the future as far as Israel is concerned: Rom. 11:25-33.
- 3f. This is an unconditional, gracious covenant.
- 4f. The basis of the New Covenant is the sacrifice of our Savior and the Church participates in the blessings of this new covenant: Matt. 26:26-30 "My blood of the new covenant."

2c. This age sees the ultimate display of God's grace:

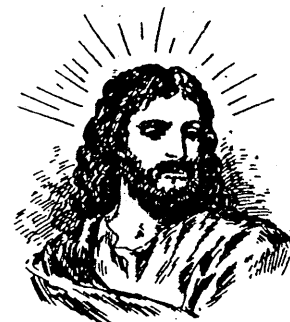
- 1d. This is not to say there was no grace in the O.T. under Law. The principal ways in which His grace was revealed are the following:

- 1e. He revealed Himself as the faithful and sufficient God, as the object of faith unto salvation. Any revelation of God is pure grace.
- 2e. He initiated fellowship between Himself and man by means of covenants.
- 3e. He made provision for man's eternal salvation.
- 4e. He bestowed temporal favors on men.

2d. Christ brought a new period of grace: John 1:17



17 For the law was given by Moses, but ^agrace and ^btruth came by Jesus Christ.



- 1e. Grace came in Christ's person.
- 2e. Our standing is in grace:
Rom. 5:2 "wherein we stand"
I Peter 5:12 "this is the true grace of God "
- 3e. Ours is called the "dispensation of the grace of God"
Eph. 3:2

3c. This age has three groups of people in view: 1 Cor. 10:32

32 ^dGive none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the ^eGentiles, nor to ^fthe church of God:

1d. The Jews (nationally):

- 1e. They are not cast away: Rom. 11:1
- 2e. Blindness in part till the fulness of the Gentiles has come: Rom. 11:23-27
- 3e. The Jews do not believe now but will obtain mercy: Rom. 11:28-31

2d. The Gentiles: Eph. 2:11-13

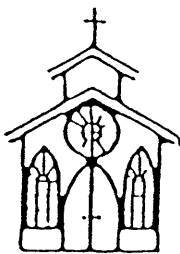
- 1e. Without Christ
- 2e. Aliens from Israel
- 3e. Strangers from the covenants
- 4e. Have no hope
- 5e. Are without God

II Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called ^athe Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 ^bThat at that time ye were without Christ, ^cbeing aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from ^dthe covenants of promise, ^ehaving no hope, ^fand without God in the world:

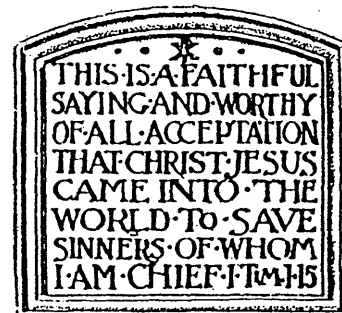
13 ^hBut now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were ⁱfar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

3d. The Church:



- 1e. The Jews and Gentiles are on the same terms:
Rom. 10:12--"neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, circumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian"--
Gal. 3:28:
Col. 3:11:
- 2e. In contrast to the condition of the Gentiles, the believer sustains a special relationship: Eph. 2:13-22

is made nigh by the blood, v. 13
 is one new man, v. 15
 is in one body, v. 16
 has access by the Spirit, v. 18
 is a fellow citizen, v. 19
 belongs to the household of God, v. 19
 and is God's building, v. 21



4c. This age goes far beyond the requirements of the Law:

- 1d. II Cor. 10:5 "casting down imaginations"
- 2d. I Pet. 2:9 "show forth the virtues"
- 3d. Eph. 5:20 "giving thanks always for all things"
- 4d. I John 1:7 "walk in light"
- 5d. Eph. 4:1-2 "walk worthy"
- 6d. Eph. 5:2 "walk in love"
- 7d. Gal. 5:16-23 "walk in the Spirit"
- 8d. Eph. 4:17-32 "grieve not the Spirit"
- 9d. I Thess. 5:19 "quench not the Spirit"
- 10d. Col. 3:1-17
- 11d. Phil. 2:5 "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"

5c. This age has laws but not the Law:

- 1d. The names of this system of laws:
 - 1e. "the perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25)
 - 2e. "the royal law" (Jas. 2:8)
 - 3e. "the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2)
 - 4e. "the law of the spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2)
- 2d. The nature of these laws:

The Law of Christ is a definite code containing hundreds of specific commandments. Freedom from the Mosaic Law is not lawlessness or license. The Apostle Paul wrote, "being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ" (I Cor. 9:21).

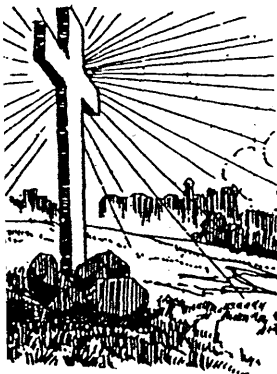
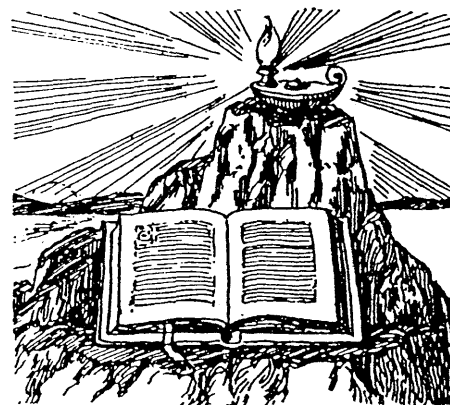
1e. Its precepts:

1f. Positive commandments: (I Thess. 5:16-18).

- 16 *Rejoice evermore.
- 17 ¹Pray without ceasing.
- 18 "In every thing give thanks: for this is ^othe will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

2f. Negative commands: (Rom. 12:2).

² And ^abe not conformed ^vto this world: but be ye transformed by ^vthe renewing of your mind, that ye may ^aprove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, ^bwill of God.



3f. Principles:

- 1g. Is it a weight? Heb. 12:1 "lay aside every weight"
 - 2g. Is it a habit? I Cor. 6:12 "not be brought under the power of any"
 - 3g. Is it a stumbling stone? I Cor. 8, esp. v. 13
 - 4g. Is it winsome? Col. 4:5 "walk in wisdom toward them that are without"
- Give no offense to unsaved I Cor. 10:32

4f. Rules:

In some areas there are neither principles nor precepts given. In this area it is necessary to have special rulings. God has made provision for this by giving leaders to His church who rule in these matters (Eph. 4:11-12, I Tim. 3:5). These leaders are given authority to rule in spiritual matters (Heb. 13:7,17). If there are rulers, it is obvious that there are those ruled who must obey these rules. (Heb. 13:17). Examples of this type of leadership would be the local church, a Christian camp, rules at school, such as dress, dating, conduct.

2e. Its power:

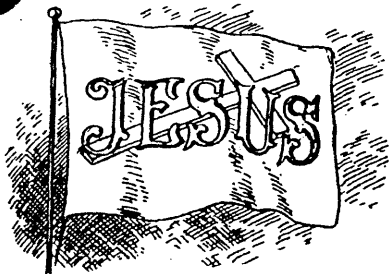
- 1f. The Spirit indwells permanently: John 14:17
- 2f. The Spirit indwells every believer: Rom. 8:9
1 Cor. 6:19--does not depend on spiritual maturity.
His presence is proof of salvation.

3e. Its purpose: Sanctification.

- 1f. A holy person resembles his heavenly Father: I Pet. 1:16
- 2f. We know what God is like through Christ: John 1:18

The person of Christ is our example for godly life;
the law of Christ is our exhortation to godly life.

- 3f. We are to bring glory to God: I Cor. 10:31.



4b. The human responsibility:

- 1c. It is directed to the Church alone.
- 2c. It is revealed especially in Acts, the Epistles, and Rev. 1-3.
- 3c. It includes the following:
 - 1d. Salvation by faith. More clearly than ever salvation is revealed to be by faith alone: Rom. 1:16; 3:22, 26; 4:16, 5:15-19
 - 2d. Sanctification through following the example of Christ and obedience to the law of Christ: Rom. 12:1-2
 - 3d. Evangelization of the world: Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8

5b. Human failure:

- 1c. Grace has not produced a world-wide acceptance of Christ.
- 2c. Grace has not produced a triumphant Church.

3c. Grace ends with almost universal apostasy:

1 Tim. 4:1-3
 2 Tim. 3:1-13
 2 Pet. 2-3
 Jude
 Rev.

6b. Divine judgment:

The tribulation: for the professing but unbelieving church
 for a Christ-rejecting world
 for unbelieving Israel

The Church will not be present as Noah was not in his dispensational judgment. Each dispensation thus far has ended with a climatic judgment. The tribulation is that judgment for the Church age: Rev. 4-19; II Thess. 2:3-12. While the Church will be in heaven at the judgment seat and the marriage of the Lamb, unprecedented tribulation will come to this earth.

7b. Divine grace:

1c. Grace came as a result of the appearance of Christ: John 1:17.

2c. Grace is seen in our salvation and standing before God: Rom. 3:24; 5:1-2; 15-21; Gal. 1:1-2:21; Eph. 2:4-10.

3c. Grace is evidenced as our rule of life: Gal. 3:1-5:26; Eph. 1:1-7
 (In contrast, Uzzah was killed for touching the ark, 2 Sam. 6:6)

4c. Grace is shown by removing the Church from the experience of judgment:
 Rev. 3:10

5c. The preservation of the race:

8b. The end of the dispensation:

1c. The rapture of the Church:

2c. The judgment upon the professing church, Rev. 17:16:
 The false church is destroyed by the world system.

SUMMARY:

1. The law dealt with Israel; grace deals with Jews and Gentiles equally.
2. Under grace the motivating principle is different. The Law said "do this" (Deut. 28-29); grace says, "I did this for you."
3. Conscience and human government continue: Rom. 2:15; 13:1 ff.
4. Grace is a by-product of the dispensation of promise.
5. Only law is cancelled completely.
6. Grace is preeminently manifested in the fulness of salvation and rule of life.

THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE



1. THE BEGINNING:
2. RELATED SCRIPTURE:
3. STATE OF MAN:
4. HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY:
5. HUMAN FAILURE:
6. DIVINE JUDGMENT:
7. DIVINE GRACE:

"YE ARE NOT UNDER LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE." ROM. 6:14

THE DIVINE PURPOSE

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

THE BOOK OF THE DISPENSATIONS

THE DISPENSATION OF <i>Sinai</i> LAW	THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE <i>Sion</i>
Dealing with ISRAEL , God's earthly people.	Dealing with the CHURCH , God's heavenly people.
The Seventh day of the week, or the Sabbath , commemorating a <i>finished creation</i> was made the seal of Israel's separation from all nations. <small>Ex: 31:13-17</small>	The First day of the week, or the Lord's Day , celebrating a <i>finished redemption</i> , became the symbol of the church's heavenly privileges.
A day of absolute bodily rest .	A day of spiritual activity .
A day of legal restrictions.	A day of voluntary worship.
Physical labor punished by death .	Spiritual labor a proof of life .
Prescribed the principle of one day's rest in seven.	Perpetuates the principle of one day's rest in seven.
Established in a covenant of works .	Grew up in a covenant of grace .
"He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second"	
<small>Heb. 10:9.</small>	

Note: It is passing strange, if the Spirit of God intended to make the Jewish Sabbath binding upon Gentile Christians, that no mention is made of it in that epochal 15th chapter of Acts, where the status of believers from among the Gentiles was finally settled.

"LET NO MAN THEREFORE JUDGE YOU--IN RESPECT OF THE SABBATH" Col. 2:16

"What doth the Lord REQUIRE of thee, but to

(a) **DO JUSTLY**, and to
 (b) **LOVE MERCY**, and to
 (c) **WALK HUMBLY** with thy God?"
Micah 6:8.

What doth the Lord BESTOW upon thee?

(a) **LOVE** ^{JOY} ^{PEACE}
 (b) **LONGSUFFERING** ^{GENTLENESS} ^{GOODNESS}
 (c) **FAITH** ^{MEEKNESS} ^{SELF-CONTROL}
Galatians 5:22,23.

GRACE
LAW
CE

= Atonement

WHERE LAW AND GRACE BLEND

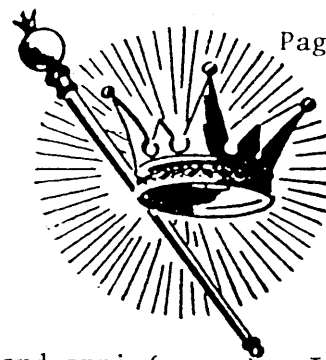
If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."
Rom. 10:9
R.V.

LAW
GRACE

do and thou shalt live.

done!
Romans 10:4
 Believe and live.

11:4:38



7A. THE DISPENSATION OF THE KINGDOM, OR MILLENNIUM

The name is derived from the Latin mille (thousand) and anni (years). In Rev. 20: 1-5, the expression 1000 yrs, is used six times. The Greek term for 1000 is chilia, therefore a belief in the millennium has been called chiliasm.

1b. The beginning: the Second Coming (Matt. 24; Rev. 19)

2b. The Scripture:

All passages on the future kingdom in the O.T. and N.T. Major Scriptures include: Ps. 72; Isa. 2:1-5; 9:6-7; 11; Jer. 33:14-17; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:9-14; 8:27-28; Hos. 3:4-5; Zech. 14:9; Lk 1:31-33; Rev. 19-20.

3b. The state of man:

1c. Universal salvation:

1d. All those who enter the kingdom will be saved people:

1e. The Jews: 1/3 of the nation shall be saved, Zech. 13:8ff

2e. The Gentiles: The goat Gentiles will be removed, the sheep Gentiles will remain on earth to enter the kingdom, Matt. 25:31-46.

2d. The Spirit of the Lord will be poured upon all flesh; Joel 2:28-32; Isa. 66:19-23.

3d. The majority of the earth's teeming multitudes shall know the Lord during these 1000 yrs.; Isa. 11:9; Ps. 98:2,3; Zeph. 3:9

2c. Unquestioning obedience to the King: Ps. 66:3

3 Say unto God, How ^aterrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies ^bsubmit themselves unto thee.

3c. Unprecedented justice and righteousness:

1d. Impartial: Ps. 72; Isa. 11:4; Isa. 32:1, 14-20

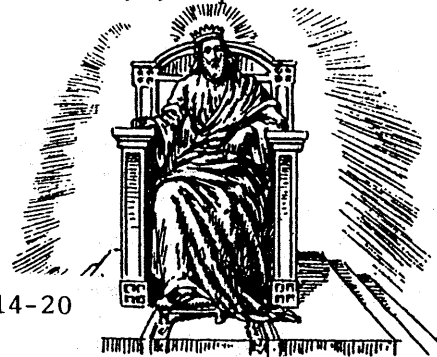
2d. Immediate: Mt. 13:41 the angels are sent out to gather the evil-doers

Isa:65:24 "it shall come to pass before they call and while they are yet speaking, I will hear"

4c. Unusual longevity: Is. 65:20 "the child shall die 100 yrs. old"

4b. The human responsibility: To obey the King.

1c. An absolute rulership, with rod of Iron: Isa 11:3-5; Rev. 19:15; Ps. 2:9



- 2c. A theocratic rulership: rule of God.
- 3c. A worshipful rulership: sacrificial system and priesthood; Is. 66:21-23; Ez. 40-48.
- 4c. An unopposed rulership: Satan will be bound: Rev. 20:3,7.
- 5b. Human failure:
 - 1c. Outward sin: Isa. 65:20; Zech. 14:14-16; Matt. 13:41
 - 2c. A climactic rebellion at the close of the kingdom. Man follows Satan when he is released: Rev. 20:7-9.
- 6b. Divine judgment:
 - 1c. The rebels are destroyed by fire: Rev. 20:9
 - 2c. The earth and the heavens are also destroyed by fire: Rev. 20:11; 21:1; II Pet. 3:6,12
- 7b. Divine grace:
 - 1c. The fulfillment of the covenant.



Premillennarians are the only ones who allow time for the fulfillment of the covenants.

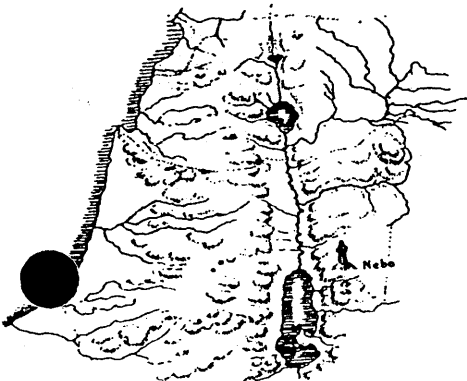
- 1d. The Palestinian covenant: Deut. 28-30
The enjoyment of the land has yet to be fulfilled.
- 2d. The Davidic covenant: 2 Sam. 7:4-17
1e. To David was promised the following:

- 1f. A house and family forever: vv. 11, 16
- 2f. A throne forever, v. 13
- 3f. A kingdom forever, v. 16



- 2e. It produces significant changes:

- 1f. Judah and Ephraim will be reunited and be made the head of the nations: Ez. 37; Rom. 11:26; Deut. 38:13.
- 2f. Commemorative sacrifices and feasts will be observed: Ez. 44-46.
- 3f. Universal peace will reign: Zech 14; Mic. 4:3; Is. 2:4; Hos. 2:18; Ps. 46:9
- 4f. Idolatry will be uprooted: Is. 2:18; Zech. 14:9, Mal. 1:11
- 5f. The twelve tribes will inherit the land from Egypt to the Euphrates (Gen. 15:18), divided into parallel sections (Ez. 48).
- 6f. Christ will reign: Jer. 23:5; Rev. 11:15; 19:6
- 7f. The center of government in the Millennium will be the earthly Jerusalem, nine square miles, 36 miles in circumference: Ez. 45:6



8f. Israel will be regathered: Is. 11:11-12; Jer. 30:1-11; Ez. 39: 25-29

3d. The New Covenant: Jer. 31:31 ff.

- 1e. Abundance of salvation: Is. 12
- 2e. Abundance of revelation: Jer. 31:33 ff.
- 3e. Forgiveness of sin: Jer. 31:34

2c. Fruition of nature:

1d. The curse is lifted: Is. 35:1, 6, 7; cf. 41:17-20

- 1e. From nature: Is. 55:12-13; Rom. 8:22 ff.
- 2e. From animals: Is. 65:25 (except for the serpent)

2d. Physical changes:

- 1e. Jerusalem exalted: Jer. 14:10
- 2e. A cleavage of the Mt. of Olives: Zech. 14:4
- 3e. A River of living water: Zech. 14:8; Ez. 47:1 ff; Joel 3:18; Ps. 65:9-10; Ps. 46:4

This is where the song "Joy to the World" fits in:

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King. . .

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns,
Let men their songs employ. . .

No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground.
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove. . ."



8b. The end of the dispensation:

1c. The destruction of the earth and the heavens by fire: Rev. 20:11; 21:1

2c. The beginning of the eternal state:

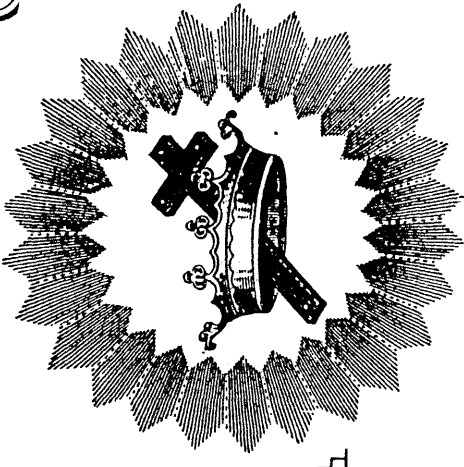
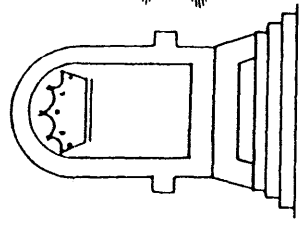
SUMMARY:

1. The dispensation of the Kingdom is different from preceding dispensations in that it is the final form of moral testing.
2. The advantages of this dispensation:
 - a) Perfect government.
 - b) Presence of Christ.
 - c) Universal knowledge of of God and terms of salvation.
 - d) Satan bound.

3. The dispensation of the Kingdom is climactic in many respects, revealing grace, law, kingdom and government.
4. The Kingdom dispensation brings to consummation every possible test of man. In each dispensation man failed most miserably, yet God manifested His grace abundantly.



THE DISPENSATION OF THE KINGDOM



- 1. THE BEGINNING:
- 2. RELATED SCRIPTURE:
- 3. STATE OF MAN:
- 4. HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY:
- 5. HUMAN FAILURE:
- 6. DIVINE JUDGMENT:
- 7. DIVINE GRACE:

4b. Defects of Ultra-Dispensationalism:

- 1c. There is no discernible difference between the church before and after Acts 9.
- 2c. Ultra-dispensationalism fails to understand the nature of a dispensation. It is "a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose."
- 3c. Ultra-dispensationalism fails to be obedient in evangelism and the church ordinances.

2A. COVENANT THEOLOGY:

1b. The definition of Covenant Theology:

"A system of Biblical interpretation expressed in terms of two or three covenants, of which dispensations are merely sub-categories."

2b. The distinctives of Covenant Theology:

1c. The biblical covenants:

1d. The Covenant of Redemption:

A bargain or agreement entered into by the persons of the Godhead before creation and existence of man, including for Christ a body for the incarnation, support during His life and the reward by exaltation and the giving of the elect to him.

2d. The Covenant of Works:

This covenant is made with Adam by God while Adam was innocent. It involved the offer of eternal life for the victorious test and threatened him with death if he failed the trial.

3d. The Covenant of Grace:

This covenant was made by God after the fall of man with Christ as the representative of the elect or with the elect. By it God "freely offers unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him, that they may be saved, and promising them the Holy Spirit."

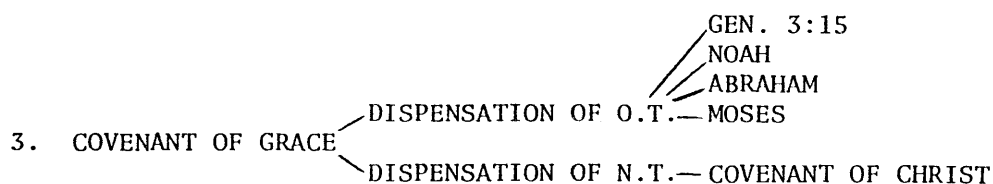
2c. The basic condition for Covenant Theology:

- 1d. Covenant Theology sees a single people of God, the elect.
- 2d. The Covenant of Grace is all encompassing, all inclusive, involving every scriptural dispensation.

- 3b. The development of Covenant of Theology:
 - 1c. Covenant Theology is mentioned neither by the early church nor by the primary leaders of the reformation. It is first mentioned in a church confession in 1647, the Westminster Confession.
 - 2c. Covenant Theology started as a protest to Reformed Theology: Coccius, 1648
Witsius, 1685
- 4b. The defects of Covenant Theology:
 - 1c. It sees covenants where they are not clearly expressed.
 - 2c. It makes the dispensations subservient to the covenant of grace.
 - 3c. It confuses the term "covenant" and "dispensation."
 - 4c. It is guilty of a reductive error: the attempt to make one aspect of God's purpose (salvation) the sole principle. God's over-all purpose is GLORY, all other purposes are subservient to that.
 - 5c. It has not led to a clear understanding of the Bible. Bible institutes were founded primarily by dispensationalists.
 - 6c. It reads the New Testament back into the Old Testament, spiritualizing, for instance, Abraham's promised land by making it equivalent to heaven.

COVENANT THEOLOGY

- 1. COVENANT OF REDEMPTION
- 2. COVENANT OF WORKS



1 COVENANT

2 DISPENSATIONS

5 COVENANTS

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Contrasts between the dispensational and the standard anti-dispensational view.

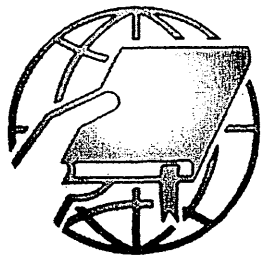
Dispensational

1. Holds to various tests of man or settings-forth of special responsibilities. However, these tests were not the effective cause of salvation, they ended in failure by man, evincing his utter sinfulness, and each terminated in judgement.
2. Holds to various phases of the "eternal purpose," i.e., the choosing of an elect nation, personal redemption, the calling out of the church, His earthly reign, etc.
3. Holds that, in accordance with declarations of Scripture, the "eternal purpose" as related to this age "was kept secret," "was hid in God," and "not known" in "ages and generations past," and is NOW in "The dispensation of the grace of God" made known to us.
4. Holds that Israel is a chosen nation, especially and eternally.
5. Holds that salvation is always by grace, though tests to prove man utterly depraved and hopeless have changed as the will of God has from time to time determined.
6. Holds to a literal and personal reign of Christ to be set up on this earth at His second coming.
7. Holds with Scripture that "law" and "grace" are contrasting and incompatible principles.
8. Holds that a dispensation is a distinctive responsibility for man in a given period of time ranging from man's creation onward, and that all the dispensations end in man's failure and a judgement from God.

Anti-dispensational

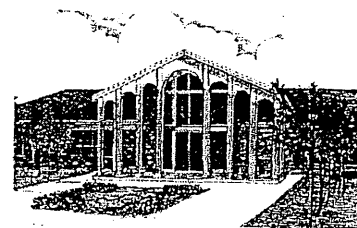
1. Holds to a single responsibility embodied in the Covenant of Grace which they say presents: "always the same promise, the same Redeemer, the same faith, and the same life" as truths fully understood by man before as well as after Christ's coming and death. (A.A.Hodge, p. 395: "faith was the condition of salvation before the advent of Christ in the same sense that it is now.")
2. Apparently interests itself almost wholly in the single purpose of personal redemption.
3. Holds that the so-called "eternal covenant" made as they say between the Persons of the Godhead was extended into time as "the Covenant of Grace," from the fall and ever afterwards, in fullness of purpose and without limitation or intermission.
4. Generally has held and now does hold that Israel has no abiding and distinctive national hope
5. Slyly, and without foundation or reason, accuses the dispensationalist of teaching more than one way of salvation.
6. Usually and originally denied a millennial reign on this earth and holds only to a spiritual kingdom now in existence and progress.
7. Holds that "law" and "grace" are auxiliary principles and that they always co-exist as principles of approach to God.
8. Holds that a dispensation is merely "a mode of administering" (whatever that meaningless phrase signifies) the Covenant of Grace in different epochs. It appears that nowhere in Scripture are men said to be administrators of a covenant.

9. Holds that there are a number of major covenants, each with a distinct purpose, and that they all refer to the nation Israel.
10. Holds that the terms: Israel, Palestine, Jerusalem, Zion throne of David, the kingdom on earth, etc., are literal and conclusive, and are limited in reference to the chosen nation Israel.
11. Holds that the literal coming of Christ to the earth is for the purpose of setting up a reign of righteousness for 1,000 years on this earth.
12. This view harmonizes with Biblical, apostolic, and age-long teaching of sane and devout Christian leaders and teachers.
13. Emphasizes a full prophetic program as it affects the nation Israel, the Church, the Gentile nations, Satan and his hosts, and is cataclysmic in fulfillment.
14. Holds that the purpose of this age and the ministry of the Spirit through the believer is "to call out an elect people by the preaching of the Gospel."
9. Holds that there is only one covenant operative since man's fall, that it is not specially related or limited to the nation Israel, and that the covenant idea is "a constitutive (essential) principle of theology."
10. Holds that these terms are to be spiritualized, that they are synonymous with the church, and that they are typical or symbolic of heavenly conditions.
11. Holds that the coming of Christ is centered upon a coming general judgement and ushers in eternal situations without an earthly reign.
12. Holds that the dispensational and premillennial interpretation is a perpetuation of "a crass Jewish view."
13. Holds to no prophetic program with Israel as a nation in an earthly kingdom and the Church associated with Christ in that kingdom.
14. It increasingly leans: (a) to a social gospel for the uplift of man in this life, or (b) to the building of a kingdom with the Lord now in heaven, as they say, on "David's throne."



Faith Pulpit

Faith Baptist Theological Seminary 1900 NW Fourth Street, Ankeny, IA 50021



Richard W. Houg, President

George G. Houghton, Th.D., Academic V.P.

Robert G. Delnay, Th.D., Seminary Dean

The Problematic Development of Progressive Dispensationalism

by Manfred Kober, Th.D.

(Part 1 of 2)

March 1997

In recent years major changes have occurred within dispensationalism. A new system, known as progressive dispensationalism, has caused major concern among traditional dispensationalists.

I. THE PERIODS OF DISPENSATIONALISM

Several periods of development within dispensationalism have been suggested.

1. The foundational period: 1885 -1920 (John Nelson Darby, 1800-1882).
2. The classical period : 1920-1950 (C.I. Scofield, 1843-1921, Lewis Sperry Chafer, 1871-1952).
3. The defining period: 1950-1990 (Alva J. McClain, John F. Walvoord, J. Dwight Pentecost, Charles C. Ryrie).
4. The progressive period: 1990 and on (Darrell L. Bock, Craig A. Blaising, Robert L. Saucy).

II. THE PRINCIPLES OF DISPENSATIONALISM

Dispensationalists see God's dealing with mankind in distinguishable stewardships to accomplish His sovereign purpose. The *sine qua non*, as succinctly delineated by Ryrie, is the following:

1. A clear distinction between Israel and the Church.
2. The consistent use of literal interpretation.
3. A concerted emphasis on the glory of God as the underlying purpose for His actions. (*Dispensationalism Today* [1965], 43-44).

Traditional dispensationalists have always clearly and consistently distinguished Israel and the Church and God's program for each. An explanation of traditional dispensationalism may be found in my colleague's article, "Progressive Dispensationalism: A Traditional Dispensational Critique" (Myron J. Houghton, *Faith Pulpit*, January 1995, 1).

III. THE PROPONENTS OF PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM

1. Craig A. Blaising, until recently at Dallas Theological Seminary (Systematic Theology), presently at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY.
2. Darrell Bock, at Dallas Theological Seminary, (New Testament).
3. Robert L. Saucy, Talbot Theological Seminary (Systematic Theology).

IV. THE PUBLICATIONS OF PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM

Besides the publication of numerous periodical articles, progressive dispensationalists have stated their views to date in three major works:

1. *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, 1992 (edited by Bock and Blaising)
2. *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 1993 (written by Bock and Blaising).
3. *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism*, 1993 (written by Saucy).

V. THE PURPOSE OF PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM:

The movement arose out of the Dispensational Study Group which first met on November 20, 1986, in connection with the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Atlanta, Georgia. Five years later, at the 1991 meeting, the actual label "progressive dispensationalism" was introduced. The purpose of the study group appears to be to clarify dispensational issues in order to bridge the gap between dispensationalism and covenant theology. Related to this effort of the rapprochement with a totally different theological approach was a rejection of the *sine qua non* of traditional dispensationalism, thus permitting a conscious movement toward covenant theology.

The new dispensationalists appear to desire the following:

1. To develop further the system of dispensationalism.

- A remaking of dispensationalism according to their theological presuppositions, in part adopted from European theologians.
2. To discover similarities between dispensationalism and covenant theology.
A rapprochement with a totally dissimilar system.
 3. To delineate the progressive fulfillment of God's plan in history.
A rejection of God's distinctive purposes for Israel and the church.

It is a sad commentary on the present situation that whereas premillennialism (out of which dispensationalism gradually emerged) arose in America primarily through early Bible conferences held in opposition to the postmillennialism and liberalism of the day, progressive dispensationalism, in following the ecumenical spirit of the times, is seeking common ground with amillennialism.

VI. THE PROPOSITIONS OF PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM:

Ryrie notes that in contrast to his listed *sine qua non* of dispensationalism, "progressive dispensationalism (1) teaches that Christ is already reigning on the throne of David in heaven, thus merging the church with a present phase of the already inaugurated Davidic covenant and kingdom; (2) this is based upon a complementary hermeneutic which allows the New Testament to introduce changes and additions to Old Testament revelation; and (3) the overall purpose of God is Christological; holistic redemption being the focus and goal of history" (*Dispensationalism*, 164).

Interestingly, to date the progressive dispensationalists have neither been successful in their attempt to define dispensationalism nor to state what its essential principles are. By highlighting the basic tenets of progressive dispensationalism, Ryrie shows how far this system, which he rightly labels, "revisionist dispensationalism," has departed from traditional or authentic dispensationalism:

- (1) The kingdom of God is the unifying theme of biblical history.
- (2) Within biblical history there are four dispensational eras.
- (3) Christ has already inaugurated the Davidic reign in heaven at the right hand of the Father which equals the throne of David, though not yet reigning as Davidic king on earth during the millennium.
- (4) Likewise the new covenant has already been inaugurated, though its blessings are not yet fully realized until the millennium.
- (5) The concept of the church as completely distinct from Israel and as a mystery unrevealed in the Old Testament needs revising, making the idea of two purposes and two peoples of God invalid.
- (6) A complementary hermeneutic must be used alongside a literal hermeneutic. This means that the New Testament makes complementary changes to Old Testament promises without jettisoning those original promises.

The one divine plan of holistic redemption encompasses all people and all areas of human life, personal, societal, cultural, and political (Ryrie, *ibid.*, 164 [emphasis in the original]).

VII. THE PROBLEMS OF PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM

1. Hermeneutical Problems.

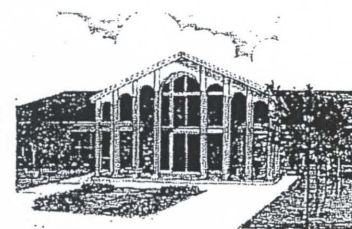
Progressive dispensationalism denies that consistent literal interpretation is a defining essential of dispensationalism. Craig Blaising maintains "that consistent literal exegesis is inadequate to describe the essential distinctive of dispensationalism" ("Development of Dispensationalism by Contemporary Dispensationalism," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145, No. 579 [July-September, 1988], 272). Progressive dispensationalism further introduces a new method of interpretation, called "complementary hermeneutics," by reading into Old Testament promises much more than they contain. Progressive dispensationalists teach that "the New Testament does introduce change and advance; it does not merely repeat Old Testament revelation. In making complementary additions, however, it does not jettison old promises. The enhancement is not at the expense of the original promise." (*Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, 392-93.) The Old Testament promises concerning Christ's rule relate to a future millennial kingdom when He would rule on the throne of David. Complementary hermeneutics insists that the New Testament revelation complements the Old Testament promise by revealing Christ presently ruling on the Davidic throne in heaven. The problem of this new method of interpretation is that its limits are not clearly spelled out. Furthermore, who determines how much New Testament truth should be read back into literal Old Testament promises? Does not this destroy the concept of literal interpretation? The apparent reason why the revisionists would like to see the kingdom established now is out of a desire to show their appreciation for this aspect of covenant theology; while at the same time they want to maintain a future fulfillment of the Old Testament promises in the Millennial Kingdom.

Robert L. Thomas, in his incisive study, "A Critique of Progressive Dispensational Hermeneutics," deplores the departure of progressive dispensationalism from traditional historical-grammatical interpretation. He notes that progressive dispensationalism practices "a selective use of passages seemingly in support of their system--avoiding others that do not." He cites ample illustrations of this method and concludes that "thorough-going grammatical-historical interpretation does not condone this kind of superficial treatment of text, particularly when they are critical to support a doctrine being propounded" (Ice and Demi, eds., *When the Trumpet Sounds*, 423-424).



Faith Pulpit

Faith Baptist Theological Seminary 1900 NW Fourth Street, Ankeny, IA 50021



Richard W. Houg, President

George G. Houghton, Th.D., Academic V.P.

Robert G. Delnay, Th.D., Seminary Dean

The Problematic Development of Progressive Dispensationalism

by Manfred Kober, Th.D.

(Part 2 of 2)

April 1997

2. Messianic Problems

Traditional dispensationalists have always understood that the Davidic rule of Christ would be in Jerusalem on the literal throne where his ancestor David ruled. Progressive dispensationalism believes this but also teaches that the Lord already rules on the throne of David in heaven, a rule which began at His ascension. This view ignores the clear scriptural distinction between Christ's present rule on the Father's throne in heaven (Hebrews 12:2) and His future rule on His throne on earth (Revelation 3:21). Traditional dispensationalists reject the notion that Christ's present rule in heaven constitutes an inaugural fulfillment of the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7:14. No wonder John F. Walvoord concludes with other classic dispensationalists "that progressive dispensationalism, as it is called, is built upon a foundation of sand and is lacking specific scriptural proof" (Willis and Masters, eds., *Issues in Dispensationalism*, 90). Progressive dispensationalists have manufactured out of thin air an artificial view that Christ's rule is present and yet future at the same time. This "already/not yet" dialectic is borrowed from George E. Ladd whose slippery slope of subjective hermeneutics led him from a premillennial to a modified covenant theology position. His form of realized eschatology, in turn, was borrowed from European theologians like C.H. Dodd.

3. Ecclesiastical Problems

By magnifying the continuity of various dispensations, revisionists are minimizing the distinctiveness of the church. Their mystery concept of the church is not that it was unrevealed in the Old Testament but it was unrealized. As a corollary, God has no separate program for the church. The church is simply a sub-category of the Kingdom. It is called a "sneak preview" of the Kingdom and a "functional outpost of God's Kingdom" (*Progressive Dispensationalism*, 257). The church is the Kingdom today. In fact, David Turner calls the church "the 'new Israel'" (Blaising and Bock, eds., *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, 288). It is not surprising, therefore, that Bruce Waltke observes that Turner's "position is closer to covenant theology than to dispensationalism" (*Ibid.*, 334). With their theological neutering of the church, the revisionists are clearly de-emphasizing the pretribulational rapture, God's distinct event involving the church.

4. Definitional Problems

Progressive dispensationalists are neither able to give a clear definition of a dispensation nor make a convincing case for their number of dispensations. They subscribe to four primary dispensations. The first is the patriarchal, beginning with creation and continuing to Sinai. It is strange that the revisionists do not see the pre-fall stewardship that God sustained with Adam and Eve as a separate dispensation. Ryrie correctly notes, "To lump pre-fall conditions, post-fall conditions and the Abrahamic covenant under common stewardship arrangement or dispensation is artificial, to say the least" (*Dispensationalism*, 166). The second dispensation is labeled the Mosaic (from Sinai to Christ's ascension). The third is called the Ecclesial (from the ascension to Christ's second coming). The fourth dispensation is the Zion which is divided into (1) the millennial kingdom and (2) the eternal state. The practical fusion of the millennium and the eternal state evidences a disregard for the uniqueness of the kingdom age, an emphasis which had always been an integral part of premillennial dispensationalism and which is now an area in which the revisionist dispensationalists have given ground in order to appeal to covenant theologians.

VIII. The Prospects for Progressive Dispensationalism

1. The infiltration of seminaries.

Several seminaries, which once stood forthrightly for traditional dispensational distinctions, have a certain number of faculty espousing the progressive position. Ernest Pickering rightly warns that the dissemination of deviant dispensational doctrines is "not compatible with historic dispensationalism. They move toward covenant theology which identifies the Church with Israel. It would not be surprising to see more and more former dispensationalists embracing the covenant system as some already have" (*Dispensations*, 15).

It is sad to observe what has occurred at Dallas Theological Seminary, the stronghold of dispensationalism, where many of the instructors here at FBBC&TS have studied. While a number of traditional dispensationalists still teach at DTS, their system has not just been modified but totally changed by Bock, Blaising and their followers. And yet, Donald Campbell, in a letter of May 28, 1992, to the alumni, tries to assure the graduates of DTS that all the faculty "are dispensationalists as defined by our Doctrinal Statement." But the progressives do not agree, it seems, with this aspect of the doctrinal statement, which they have signed: "The church which is the body and bride of Christ, which began at Pentecost...is completely distinct from Israel." (CATALOG 1995-1996, 140, italics added). Sadly, there is no sounding of an alarm over a method of biblical interpretation which, according to a former faculty member there, "shakes the very foundation of dispensational hermeneutics, which includes a consistent literalistic interpretation of the Old Testament" (Waltke in *Dispensationalism, Israel, and the Church*, 348). The new president of Dallas Theological Seminary, Chuck Swindoll, has not helped matters at all. In an interview in *Christianity Today* prior to his stepping into the presidency, he announced that he would no longer emphasize dispensationalism. "I think

dispensations is a scare word. I'm not sure we're going to make dispensationalism a part of our marquis as we talk about our school." When asked whether he thought the term dispensationalism would disappear, Swindoll replied, "It may and perhaps it should." (Oct. 25, 1993, 14, italics in the original). The very distinctive that has made Dallas Theological Seminary such a unique school is now de-emphasized. Who would have thought that Dallas Theological Seminary would ever downplay the system of theology that has made it distinct while at the same time giving encouragement to a group of scholars who take the school toward covenant theology?

Primarily through men trained at Dallas Theological Seminary other schools have adopted this radical departure from traditional dispensationalism. At these institutions whole generations of pastors will be moved away from literal interpretation toward confusing complementary hermeneutics. The students will be exposed to de-emphasis of church age truth and an unclear eschatological framework. Dispensational distinctions are giving way to an unwarranted and unnecessary accommodation with amillennialism.

As an example, in these schools where progressive dispensationalism has taken root, classic dispensationalists like Walvoord are charged with using "a 'hyperliteral' approach to apocalyptic imagery" (Turner, *Dispensationalism, Israel, and the Church*, 227). Walvoord's description of a literal New Jerusalem in Revelation 21-22 is countered by Turner with the observation that the gates of the city could not possibly be made from one pearl, neither could the streets be made of gold. "The absence of oysters large enough to produce such pearls and the absence of sufficient gold to pave such a city (viewed as literally 1380 miles square and high) is viewed as sufficient reason not to take these images fully literal!" (Ibid.).

2. The ignoring by laymen.

It must be said to the credit of traditional dispensationalism that in its simplicity it is understood by lay people and unlocks the Scriptures for them. Who knows how many millions of American believers have been blessed by the helpful notes of the Scofield Bible. In contrast to Ryrie's clear and concise writings, the progressive dispensationalists write in such a scholarly and technical style that their books are difficult to read and thus will only reach a limited group of scholars. One can appreciate Thomas Ice's frustration when he says that *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church* is "difficult [to] read because of its erudite technical style. . . It is sometimes hard to get a grip on what is precisely being said, even after reading a passage several times" ("A Critical Examination of 'Progressive Dispensationalism,'" *Biblical Perspectives*, Vol. V, No. 6, November-December, 1992, 1).

3. The surrender to covenant theology.

One wonders whether the revisionists really espouse a modified dispensationalism or whether they are not closer to a modified form of covenant theology. Thomas Ice's warning is well-placed that "these. . . men are in the process of destroying dispensationalism" (Ibid., 1). Eventually much of eschatology will give way to a vague anticipation of the future. According to Bock, progressive dispensationalism is "less land-centered and less future-centered" (*Christianity Today*, March 9, 1992, 50). The future blessings that are predicted for Israel in the millennial kingdom are suddenly reinterpreted. According to Carl Hoch, the privileges of ethnic Israel "were restricted to Israel before the death of Christ and the creation of the Church" (Blaising and Bock, eds., *Dispensationalism, etc.*, 125). It is difficult to see why there is a need for a Millennium. Revisionist dispensationalism, with its de-emphasis on the distinctiveness of the church and the uniqueness of the Millennium has not simply made slight corrections in dispensational theology but significant changes, so significant that it is doubtful whether they can be considered dispensationalists at all as they are more and more warmly embraced by their covenant friends. No wonder Walter E. Ellwell concludes, "The newer dispensationalism looks so much like nondispensationalist premillennialism that one struggles to see any real difference" ("Dispensationalism of the Third Kind," *Christianity Today*, September 12, 1994, 28). Ron Clutter reports on the general sentiment of the 1987 meeting of the Dispensational Study Group, chaired by Craig Blaising. There was common agreement that moderate dispensationalists and moderate covenant theologians are closer to each other than either to classic dispensationalists or classic covenant theologians. "It seems both are moving toward each other in rapprochement" ("Dispensational Study Group discussion," *Grace Theological Journal*, Vol. 10 No. 2, Fall 1989, 161).

It is true that each generation of theologians needs to apply biblical truth to the people of the day. However, in so doing they dare not surrender major areas of doctrine which the progressive dispensationalists are in danger of doing. The biblical injunction to rightly divide the Word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15) is important in the area of dispensational theology and especially in light of progressive dispensationalism which appears to be rapidly moving toward covenant theology. May God grant us His discernment in these difficult and challenging times.

The Faith Pulpit is published ten times per year by Faith Baptist Theological Seminary, 1900 NW Fourth Street, Ankeny, IA 50021 (515) 964-0601. Permission is hereby given to make copies of articles in full for non-commercial individual or church use. Any other use is prohibited without the express permission of the publisher. ©1997 FBBC&TS



Faith
 Baptist Bible College
 and Theological Seminary
 1900 NW Fourth Street, Ankeny, IA 50021

Progressive Dispensationalism: A Traditional Dispensational Critique

by Myron J. Houghton, Ph.D., Th.D.

Faith Pulpit, January 1995

An explanation of Traditional Dispensationalism

As understood by this author, the essence of dispensationalism is that Israel and the Church, as well as God's program for each, are clearly and consistently distinguished. The revelation concerning God's program for each is not dealing with ways of salvation but ways of managing one's life. The resultant features of dispensationalism understood in this way are these:

1. Salvation, in the mind of God, always has been based upon the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (I Peter 1:20). Salvation always has been unmerited as Old Testament animal sacrifices clearly illustrate. And salvation always has been through faith in God's provision, although the content of a believer's faith was determined by the extent to which the gospel had been revealed, as Romans 4:1-2 and Genesis 15:5-6 testify.
2. The Church which is Christ's Body did not begin until the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came to create this Body by Spirit baptism (I Cor. 12:13). The Church will be complete when Christ comes for Her (I Thess. 4:13-5:10). The Church which is Christ's Body will continue to exist throughout eternity as the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:25-27), the dominant, though not the exclusive, inhabitant of the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22-24; Rev. 19:6-8; 21:1-22:5).
3. The New Testament epistles possess the highest authority for a believer today. This does NOT mean that only the epistles are inspired or profitable, but it DOES mean truth for believers today found in other books of the Bible is recognized as such because it expresses a truth clearly taught in the epistles.
4. The message of the epistles concerning a believer's behavior is that he is "not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14; 7:4; Gal. 2:19; 4:4-7; I Tim. 2:8,9).
5. Included in this concept of grace is an emphasis on the eternal security of a true believer (John 10:27-29) rather than on a believer's responsibility to persevere. Directly related to this idea is the concept of carnality, i.e., believers are capable of yielding to sinful desires within themselves without loss of their salvation (Romans 6:12-13; I Cor. 3:1-9).
6. Finally, the premillennial return of Christ and the pretribulational rapture of the Church are resultant features.

An explanation of Progressive Dispensationalism

Blaising and Bock summarize the views expressed by various authors in the book which they edited: "Ware, Bock, Hoch, Saucy, and Burns all speak of the new state of things in which Gentiles are included with equal standing alongside the remnant of Israel. Both receive blessings from the inaugurated new covenant, blessings that are emphasized as new in biblical theology, being differentiated as an advance over the old covenant. Yet, as Hoch, Saucy, Glenn, Barker, and Ware point out, these blessings are coming in fulfillment of promises about Israel and Gentiles made during the previous dispensation, the dispensation of the Mosaic covenant.

Consequently, there is continuity from promises about Israel and Gentiles under the old covenant to the fulfillment of those promises upon Israel and Gentiles under the new covenant. It is continuity through progress [emphasis theirs]: the progress of promissory fulfillment." ("Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: Assessment and Dialogue," in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church* Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992, pp. 380-381.)

An evaluation of Progressive Dispensationalism

In this traditional dispensationalist's thinking, the most serious problem of progressive dispensationalism is the blurring of the distinction between Israel and the Church. This can be seen in the following areas:

A. The Church's Relationship to the New Covenant

Some, though not all, traditional dispensationalists have taught that the Church, along with Israel, shares in the new covenant (cf. Scofield Reference Bible at Hebrews 8:8), but they based this, NOT on the Church claiming a promise made to Israel, as Blaising does [cf. *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1993) p. 199], but on the new covenant being an amplification of the spiritual blessings promised to Abraham. These spiritual blessings were literally interpreted as being for "all families of the earth." (cf. Scofield Reference Bible at Gen. 15:18).

B. The Church's Relationship to Israel

One progressive dispensationalist describes this present relationship in the following way: "The believing remnant of Israel within the church share in promises that have Old Testament roots. Through the covenants, Messiah, and promises of Israel, they experience promised blessings in which Gentiles also participate." (Carl Hoch, "The New Man of Ephesians 2," in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, p. 126.) But what, in fact, does Ephesians 2 teach us? Note well the following facts:

1. Gentiles, who before Christ died were "far off," are now brought near by Christ's blood (v. 13);
2. by His death Christ broke down the law which was a wall that had divided Jews from Gentiles (v. 14-15);
3. by His death Christ created a new entity (v. 15) [I believe Lincoln is absolutely right when he states: "It must be underlined that the nature of Christ's accomplishment is described as a creation and its product as something new. In its newness it is not merely an amalgam of the old in which Gentiles have been combined with the best of Judaism." (A. Lincoln *The Church and Israel in Ephesians 2*, *The Best in Theology* Volume Three [Christianity Today, Inc., 1989], p. 66);
 (4) the "saints" of v. 19 are all believers who comprise the Church, as Eph. 1:1, 15, 18; 3:8; 4:12; 5:3 and 6:18 show; and
 (5) Ephesians 3:1-6 indicate the Church was unknown in the Old Testament (cf. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, p. 629.)

Conclusion

Walter Elwell is right when he comments: "The new dispensationalism looks so much like nondispensationalist premillennialism that one struggles to see any real difference." ("Dispensationalists of the Third Kind," in *Christianity Today*, September 22, 1994, p. 28.)