

# Understanding DISPENSATIONS

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## Session 7: The Dispensation of Promise

### A Quick Review

- > A dispensation begins when a fundamentally new revelation is given by God which changes mankind's responsibility to God and man.
- > Neither a richer understanding nor a fulfillment of prophecy constitutes the beginning of a dispensation.
- > A failure to recognize the fundamental change is the most common error in Biblical interpretation, leading to painful and drastic consequences of Christian thought and practice.

### The Dispensation of Promise

- > Why is it called the dispensation of Promise?
  - > Because of the promise given by God which is the fundamental revelation of this dispensation.
- > Where do we find this dispensation in the Bible?
  - > Genesis 12 - Exodus 19:8
  - > A period of 635 years from Abram to Moses.
  - > 2126BC - 1491BC (Usher)
- > What is the fundamentally new revelation?
  - > The command for Abram to move "unto a land that I will shew thee" (Genesis 12:1) is not a revelation that fundamentally changes man's relationship to God, thus is only an introduction to the dispensation.
  - > The revelation that God would make of Abram a great and blessed nation would eventually change man's relationship with God, but in Genesis 12:2 is only further introduction to the dispensation. Man's relationship with God is still not fundamentally changed.
  - > The fundamental change that initiates the revelation comes in Genesis 12:3, the promised blessing and curse through Abram, and the ultimate blessing of the families of the earth through Abram.
  - > The gift of land to Abram's offspring. This is part of the fundamental revelation of the dispensation of Promise. No person could be in right

- relationship with God without faith in this promise. See Genesis 13:15 and 17:8.
- > The Abrahamic Covenant was to be symbolized in circumcision of the Jew. Genesis 17:10-14.
  - > What is fundamentally or by revelation true for all time? (What carries over?)
    - > The Genesis 12:3 promise of blessing and curses.
      - > Is Genesis 12:3 only for Abram...who is long dead?
      - > This promise is carried on to all of Israel in Gen. 27:29, and Num. 24:9.
    - > Circumcision for the Jew.
      - > Circumcision is a sign of the Abrahamic covenant, which is still in effect.
      - > Until the New Covenant is fulfilled, Circumcision is a requirement for the Jewish people.
    - > The land promise does not belong to Ishmael - Genesis 17:19-21
  - > What has changed since this dispensation? (What doesn't carry over?)
    - > Salvation through belief in the promises to Israel. Genesis 15:6
  - > Conflicts, revealed in this dispensation, with today's society
    - > Israel has a Biblical right to the land
    - > Ethnicity should be valued rather than erased
      - > I am convinced that a great degree of the removal of ethnic identity is rooted in satanic antisemitism.
      - > The existence of the *ethnos* is God's work to keep us from a repeat of the Tower of Babel.
      - > The church should value ethnic identity as a gift from God, not eradicate it.
      - > This is far from prejudice, it honors the ethnicities, and recognizes God's election of the Jewish nation for a primary role in His plan.
  - > Conflicts if you remove this dispensation
    - > You end up with replacement theology on the light side and a Jewish pogrom in the worst-case scenario.
    - > You have the workings of a one-world government.
  - > How was man saved in the dispensation of innocence?
    - > Like the previous dispensation, those who died were not given any immediate promise of Heaven or individual promise of eternal life.
    - > Genesis 15:6 and 17:14 would have to be taken into consideration for being in a right-standing with God.
    - > As in the previous dispensation, each person was required, in faith, to follow his conscience and align with what was known about God through revelation, looking for the day when the Promised One would provide defeat of Satan.
      - > Now the further understanding was given that the Promised One would come through Abraham, and that Abraham's decedents were to be honored.