

BIBLICAL DISPENSATIONS - PART I -

The Outworking Of God's Plan For The Ages

BRIEF REVIEW/SUMMARY

The term dispensation refers to a particular way of God's administering His rule over the world as He progressively works out His purpose for world history.

The basic concept of a dispensation is that of a stewardship, where one with authority delegates duties to a subordinate, who must carry them out.

Essential Characteristics Of Each Dispensation

1. A particular way of God's administering His rule.

Each dispensation is characterized by a unique ruling factor or combination of ruling factors.

2. It must involve a particular responsibility for man. Each dispensation makes man responsible to obey God in accordance with its unique ruling factor or combination of factors.

3. It must be characterized by divine revelation which had not been given before.

Secondary Characteristics Of Each Dispensation

1. Each dispensation applies a test to man. The nature of the test is whether or not man will perfectly obey God's rule by fulfilling the responsibility which is characteristic of that dispensation.

2. Each dispensation demonstrates the failure of man to obey the particular rule of God which characterizes that dispensation.

3. Each dispensation involves divine judgment because of man's failure.

What are the Biblical Dispensations?

1. Favorable Disposition (Innocence)
2. Conscience
3. Human Government
4. Promise
5. Mosaic Law
6. Grace
7. Righteous Reign & Rule Of Christ (Millennium)

1. The Dispensation Of Favorable Disposition

Began with the creation of man and ended with the fall of man. The Scripture portion which covers this dispensation is **Genesis 1:26-3:24**.

THE RULING FACTOR: Favorable Disposition

MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY: To obey God on the basis of his favorable disposition toward Him.

SPECIAL REVELATION: Genesis 1:28-29; 2:15-17,24.

THE TEST: Would man obey God on the basis of his favorable disposition?

THE FAILURE: Adam & Eve ate the forbidden fruit. Satan entered the garden and confronted him with an alternative to being favorably disposed toward God. The alternative was for man to reject God's rule over him and assert his own self-rule -- *just as God is His own Self-Ruler.* (Genesis 3:1-13)

THE JUDGMENT:

1. Adam & Even died spiritually resulting in separation from God and eventual physical death (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:19)
2. Favorable disposition toward God was replaced with enmity toward God (Eph. 2:18-14; Rom. 8:7; James 4:4)
3. Women experience sorrow and pain in childbearing as well as struggle with submitting to their husband (Gen. 3:16)

4. Ground cursed, making it much more difficult to work and live in this world (Gen. 3:17-19; Rom. 8:19-22)
5. Driven from the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:22-24)
6. The combination of the above brought in sickness, disease, deformities, injuries, murder, war, etc.

GOD'S PLAN TO DEAL WITH MAN'S FAILURE

In **Genesis 3:15**, while cursing the serpent, God pronounced the first promise of the Redeemer who would be born of a woman during the course of history.

As God progressively worked out His purpose for history, two of the great things which He would accomplish through the Redeemer would be the provision of redemption for fallen man and the defeat of Satan.

WE ARE BROUGHT BACK INTO FAVORABLE
DISPOSITION WITH GOD THROUGH THE PERSON
AND WORK OF CHRIST!

Romans 5:1-2; 8-11; 12; 18-19

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Will we choose to obey God based upon our
favorable disposition with Him as a believer in
Christ?

Are we helping others find favorable disposition
with the Lord through Christ?

Christ bore the judgment of God upon Adam at the cross, reversing the results and creating many links between the two:

Link #1 – A Tree (Gen. 3:6; 1 Peter 2:24; Gal. 3:10-13)

Link # 2 – A Temptation (Gen. 3:6; Matt. 26:39-46; 4:1)

Link # 3 – A Thief (Gen. 3:6; Matt. 27:38; Luke 23:39-43)

Link # 4 – Nakedness (Gen. 3:7,10; John 19:23)

Link # 5 – A Garden (Gen. 3:8; John 18:26; 19:41-42)

Link # 6 – A Question (Gen. 3:9-10; Matt. 27:46)

Link # 7 – Blame (Gen. 3:12-13; Luke 23:34)

Link # 8 – Sorrow (Gen. 3:16; Matt. 26:36-38; Isa. 53:3)

Line # 9 – Pain (Gen. 3:16-17; Matt. 27:26)

Link # 10 – Thorns (Gen. 3:18; Matt. 27:29)

Link # 11 – Sweat (Gen. 3:19; Luke 22:44)

Link # 12 – An Angel (Gen. 3:24; Matt. 28:2-5)