

## Dispensational Ages

Time is divided into 'Dispensations' or ages. It is like Chapters of a book, each chapter deals with a certain topic or part of the story. In Godly terms, eternity cannot be measured by time but by milestones or events in history.

It is commonly held that there are 8 Dispensations in which God is dealing with mankind and creation. There are various names for each Dispensation, here are the most commonly used;

**EDENIC** - Innocence (*Adam & Eve before the Fall*)  
**ANTE-DILUVIAN** - Conscience (*Before the Flood*)  
**POST-DILUVIAN** - Self Government (*After the Flood*)  
**PATRIARCHAL** - The Family (*Abraham leads his people*)  
**LEGAL** - The Law (*Moses receives God's Law*)  
**ECCLESIASTICAL** - Grace (*The time of the Gentiles*)  
**MESSIANIC** - The Millennium (*The 1000yr reign of Christ*)  
**FULLNESS OF TIMES** - Righteousness (*All things are made anew*)

The first six relate to the days of the week (Sun to Fri) or the period in which the world was created. We are currently in the 6th Dispensation the day of Grace or the 'Time of the Gentiles'. The 7th day when God rested is represented by the Messianic dispensation or the Millennium reign of Christ, which is when the world will have the curse removed and the Devil will be bound in the pit for the duration of the 1000yrs. This is the 'rest day'.

The 8th dispensation is the 'new beginning', when all will be made a new, a new heaven and a new earth. Eight being the number of 'new beginnings', 'regeneration'. It will be the beginning of the 'ages of ages' or eternity.

## Why are there dispensations?

God is the God of order and not confusion, everything is done for a reason and although some reasons are beyond us, more often than not common sense plays a major part. If you look at the dispensations above you can see that each is characterised by a group of people differing from the next or previous. In each dispensation God is dealing with man in a different way. The dispensations do not cross over and God does not deal with man in a juggling fashion.

We are now in the 'Time of the Gentiles' or 'Period of grace' where God is calling out a church, at the close of which we will have the rapture and then God will turn once more back to the Jews and finish off the promise He made to them. This will usher in the next dispensation.

There is nothing magical about dispensations, they are merely chapters in the story of this earth. If you look in Revelation you will see another form of dispensationalism with the advent of trumpets and seals, the introduction of each denoting a new judgement or calamity on the earth. Many people do not hold with dispensations but I cannot see why or how they detract from God in any way, and if you look at scripture the dispensations or grand chapters stand out for themselves.

Rather than restrict or departmentalise God they show the wonder and perfect planning of a God who knows the beginning from the end and who deals the salvation of man in deliberate and co-ordinated stages, in order to give man no room for doubt that God's ways are the best and man had every chance to right itself, but couldn't.

If you look at the dispensations you will see that each is a different age where man was given a certain path to attain salvation but failed. The last or 7th dispensation is where Christ himself will rule the earth with a rod of iron, but as we know from Revelation at the close of the millennial reign, when Satan is released, he manages to gather an army from the people of earth to make way against the Saints.

So the circle is concluded from God walking with man in Eden to His Son ruling on earth, man has and will reject God at every turn in favour of his own will.

On the day when God will judge man for all he has done, no one will be able to say 'if only you had let us do it this way God' because He will be able to say 'I did, and you still turned away from me'.