

The Eternal Plan of God

Dispensations - Covenant Promises - Salvation



Don T. Phillips

“The Eternal Plan of God: Dispensations - Covenant Promises - Salvation,” by Don T. Phillips. ISBN 978-1-62137-871-6 (casebound).

Published 2016 by Virtualbookworm.com Publishing Inc., P.O. Box 9949, College Station, TX 77845, US. ©2016 Don T. Phillips. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Don T. Phillips.

The Eternal Plan of God

Dispensations-Covenants-Salvation

By

Dr. Don T. Phillips



PREFACE

The average Western World Christian spends little time studying and trying to understand the Old Testament and how it fits into the framework and spiritual truths of the New Testament. This is very unfortunate, because God has chosen to show us things in the Old Testament which reinforces and underscores many of the teachings in the New Testament. The New Testament gospels and epistles quote the Old Testament a total of 855 times.

New Testament Book	Old Testament Quotations
The Gospel of Matthew	96
The Gospel of Matthew	34
The Gospel of Matthew	58
The Gospel of Matthew	40
The Book of Acts	57
Romans	74
I Corinthians	41
II Corinthians	13
Galatians	16
Ephesians	11
Philippians	3
Colossians	3
I Thessalonians	2
II Thessalonians	2
I Timothy	6
II Timothy	2
Hebrews	86
James	16
I Peter	20
II Peter	10
I John	6
Revelation	249

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/pnt/pnt08.cfm>

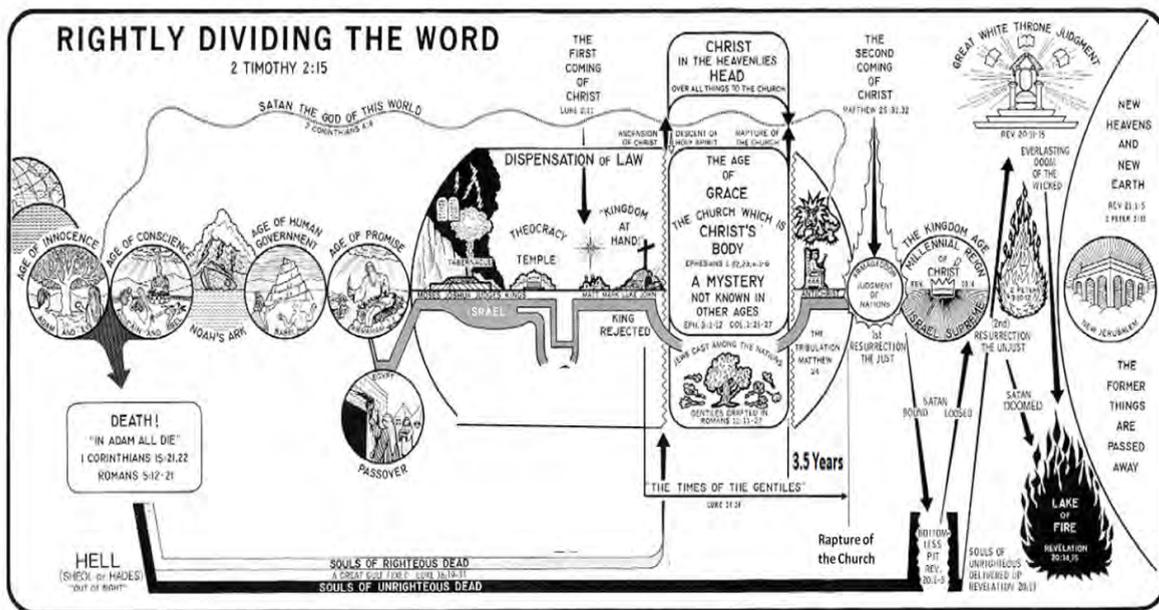
Jesus Christ the Messiah quoted 49 different Old Testament verses (not including the repeats of the same verses throughout the different books) from 27 books of the Old Testament. The Old Testament was and still is the Word of God which was sent to us by divine revelation. The entire counsel of scripture is intended to give us wisdom and strengthen our faith.

We are saved by *faith*, and faith comes by *hearing*; and hearing by the *word of God*.

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Romans 10:17

God has revealed Jesus Christ by *Progressive Revelation* that starts in the Book of Genesis and continues all the way through the Book of Revelation. It is important that we rightly *divide the word of God* as it has been given to us by prophets chosen by God to reveal His divine nature. The following diagram was first constructed by Clarence Larkin almost 150 years ago. Larkin divided the scope of human history into 7 different periods of time.



Clarence Larkin (1850-1924)

In this book we will also divide the entire Biblical Record into seven different, mutually exclusive, epochs of time which will be called *dispensations*. A Biblical Dispensation is a fixed period of time in which God relates to man in a distinct and preordained manner.

Just as God has dealt with His creation, and continues to deal with mankind, there is another way to characterize the divine nature of YAWH other than the seven different dispositions of recorded time. This is by a *Covenant Relationships* that

God has established with man. In this book we will define and scripturally characterize eight different covenants that God has "cut" or made with mankind. Each covenant that God has made with man promises to bless or punish mankind based upon whether a covenant (promise) is *conditional* or *unconditional*. If God makes an unconditional covenant promise, He will honor that promise regardless of what man may or may not do. If God and man engage in conditional promises, God is not obligated to fulfill His promises to man if they violate the conditions of the covenant. We will study each of eight major covenants established between God and man to determine which were made null and void by man, and which are still in effect today.

As God dealt with mankind through recorded time, He established several *signs* of His omnipotent and omnipresent nature. We will define and study 11 distinct signs; eight have already been put into place and three are still future. The seven different *Dispensations*, the eight different *covenants*, and the eleven distinct *signs*, taken both individually and collectively, can be understood as biblical truths that if carefully studied relate to and define the *Eternal Plan of God*. The Eternal Plan of God has always been only one thing; to bring mankind into a personal relationship with God by accepting His Son Jesus Christ as the Savior of the World, and be granted salvation and eternal life by *faith*. By *faith*, one believes that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God who died for the sins of the world and was resurrected from the dead. He was the *firstfruit* of many sons and daughters who would be saved by His sacrificial death on the cross of Calvary.

It is hoped that this study will edify the body of Christ, clearly establish the plan of salvation, and bring someone into an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. For both born-again Christians and all those who seek a better understanding of the Holy Scriptures, it is hoped that this book will fulfill expectations. May God bless us by studying His Holy Word.

Dr. Don T. Phillips
August 1, 2016
College Station, Texas

Acknowledgements

This book is dedicated to those biblical scholars who have pioneered the study of dispensations and covenants and how they have identified and characterized the events which have occurred throughout biblical recorded history. There are many individuals who have unified and characterized these important concepts. There are several individuals that have been particularly influential to me as this book was compiled.

Dr. Charles Ryrie

Dr. Clarence Larkin

Dr. John G. Hall

Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost

Dr. John F. Walvoord

Shonnie Scott

Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum

In the course of compiling this book, a number of outstanding posts on the internet have contributed to the fundamental understanding of covenants and dispensations as they occurred throughout the Bible. In some cases, the source of material used was either unclear or unavailable. To those fellow Christians who have spent considerable time in composing biblical interpretation and meaning of the scriptures, I can only thank you for your wisdom and outstanding explanations of difficult concepts. You will know who you are and so will God.

I also wish to thank Alton Rogers of Aldersgate United Methodist Church in College Station, Texas for his encouragements, and several edits and helpful comments.

Special Thanks are Reserved For:

Candyce J. Phillips

Who proofed, edited and corrected the final draft of this manuscript

I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

II Timothy 1:12-13

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Part I: Overview of Dispensations and Covenants	3
Dispensations	3
The 7 Dispensations	5
Dispensation of Innocence.....	5
Dispensation of Conscience.....	6
Dispensation of Man's Rule.....	6
Dispensation of New Beginnings	6
The Age of Promise	6
The Age of Bondage.....	7
Dispensation of the Law.....	7
Dispensation of Grace	7
The Millennial Dispensation.....	7
Covenants	8
Conditional Covenants	9
Unconditional Covenants	9
The Eight Covenants Between God and Man.....	11
The Edenic Covenant	11
The Adamic Covenant.....	11

The Noahidic Covenant.....	12
The Abrahamic Covenant	12
The Mosaic Covenant	12
The Davidic Covenant	12
The New Covenant	13
The Millennial Covenant.....	13
Part II: The 7 Dispensations of Recorded Time	15
The Dispensation of Innocence.....	15
The Dispensation of Conscience	21
The Dispensation of Man's Rule	26
The Dispensation of New Beginnings.....	29
The Age of Promise	30
Abram and Lot Separate.....	32
Melchizedek.....	32
Ishmael is Born	34
Sodom and Gomorrah	35
The Age of Bondage	36
The Dispensation of the Law	36
The Dispensation of Grace	39
The Millennial Dispensation	42

Part III: The Covenants	43
The Edenic Covenant	44
The Adamic Covenant.....	47
The Noahidic Covenant.....	52
The Abrahamic Covenant	54
The Mosaic Covenant	60
The Davidic Covenant	64
The New Covenant	66
The Millennial Covenant.....	70
Part IV: Signs and Wonders.....	73
Lights in the Heavenly Realm	73
Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil	74
Thorns and Thistles.....	74
The Rainbow.....	75
Circumcision	76
The Sabbath Day.....	78
Baptism	82
The Cross	84
War in the Heavenlies.....	84
Peace in the Animal Kingdom	86
The New Jerusalem.....	87

Part V: The Eternal Plan of Salvation..... 89
Summary and Conclusions 107
Bibliography..... 111



The Eternal Plan of God

Dispensations-Covenants-Salvation

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. II Timothy 2:15

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Matthew 7:7

Introduction

The Authorized *King James Bible* consists of 66 different books, 1189 chapters and 31,102 verses. The Holy Scriptures are divided into two major sections: One called the *Old Testament* and the other called the *New Testament*. The Old Testament contains 39 books and the New Testament 27 books.



God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Hebrews 1:1-2

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: II Timothy 3:16

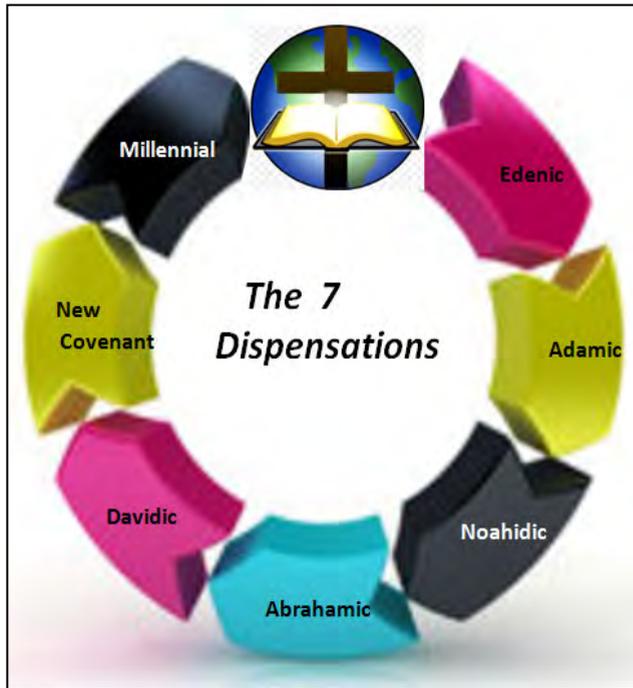
Every Christian is well-aware that the Holy Bible is divided into two main sections but sadly few fully understand the importance of the Old Testament. Most simply dismiss the Old Testament as irrelevant to the New Covenant Christian, or believe that it was a body of knowledge written to the Jews. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Jesus Christ quoted from the Old Testament 78 times. Almost every page of the Old Testament contains a prophecy, reference or type of Jesus Christ. It is impossible to fully understand all of the New Testament writings, particularly the books of Romans, Hebrews and Revelation, without understanding the Old Testament. The Apostle Paul, who wrote most of the New Testament, was well versed in Jewish customs and theology having studied under Rabbi Gamaliel I; who was perhaps the finest teacher of Old Testament Scriptures and Jewish Customs in the 1st century AD. The epistles of Paul are full of references to the Old Testament.

The Holy Scriptures contain both spiritual truths and a historical record of mankind from when the world was created (Genesis 1:1) to when the present world as we know it will end (Revelation 21:1). The Bible is often perceived as a scattered collection of stories, laws, promises, people, and guidelines for living. In reality, the entire body of scripture from Genesis to Revelation is a *progressive* and sequential record of how God has created, interacted, molded and dealt with mankind over a period of about 6,000 years. In 5 BC God sent His only begotten Son to this world to redeem all of mankind. The final act of redemption was played out on the cross of Calvary when Jesus Christ suffered, died and shed His precious blood to forgive the sins of the world in 30 AD. The opportunity for man to receive eternal life and permanent forgiveness of sins is now based upon believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, died on the cross of Calvary for our sins, and offers eternal life by faith and not by works. This *Dispensation of Grace* will terminate when the *ecclesia* or the *chosen ones* will be resurrected or raptured to meet Jesus Christ in the air. The work of redemption has been going on for about 2,000 years, and will continue until Jesus Christ returns again at His second advent. This study will examine almost 6000 years of recorded time and is divided into five different parts..

- Part I: Overview of Dispensations and Covenants
- Part II: The 7 Dispensations
- Part III: The 8 Covenants
- Part IV: Signs and Wonders
- Part V: God's Eternal Plan of Salvation

Part I: Overview of Dispensations and Covenants

Dispensations



A *dispensation* is defined as a certain *period of time* during which God deals with people in a particular way. The Greek word for dispensation is *oikonomia*, and in the Bible it is used to mean a *manner, method, or particular arrangement of dealing with a group of people that God has chosen*, not the time period itself. Calling a dispensation primarily a period of time will not bear up under close scrutiny of the scriptures. Usually the length of time is not emphasized or even mentioned; it is the manner in which God is dealing with mankind over a particular period time which distinguishes one dispensation from another. The word **dispensation** is found four times in the scriptures, all in the New Testament writings of Paul (1 Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 1:10, 3:2; Colossians 1:25). Each passage makes it clear that God is operating according to a specific promise, command, relationship or law. In Ephesians 3:2, God is redeeming man by *grace* and not by *works*. **Grace** is defined to operate not over a specific period of time but across all time. It is not a work-based doctrine but a principle. God revealed to all men that salvation was a free gift to all men, Jews and Gentiles alike. The appropriation of grace

has always been based upon *faith* in His Son, Jesus Christ, and is a free gift. The Old Testament saints from Adam to the advent of Jesus Christ only knew that forgiveness of sins and redemption would someday come by a prophesied redeemer; New Covenant saints now know that the *anointed* or appointed one was Jesus Christ the Son of God. Salvation by faith has *always* been the only way that mankind could be redeemed from sin. In reality, it was not free at all but the price was paid for all mankind on the cross of Calvary.

The *Dispensation of Grace* can be contrasted with the *Dispensation of the Law*, where the relationship between man and God was based upon observing God's written laws and the Levitical sacrificial system. Under the Law, obedience was not an option but demanded. Obey the laws and live; break them and die (Galatians 3:10-13). The opposite of death is life, and Jesus Christ came not to abolish the law but to give life, both temporal and eternal. In the *Dispensation of Grace*, the law is still good because it was given to man by God, who is pure and good.

And he (Christ) said unto him (the man who came to Him), Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. Matthew 19:17

Here Jesus is speaking to a Jewish man who recognizes that Jesus is the Son of God but does not understand how to achieve eternal life. Jesus answered unto him, *keep the commandments*. Christ is not telling the man that the only way to win eternal life is to *keep the commandments*; the man understood that this was impossible to do.

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all
James 2:10

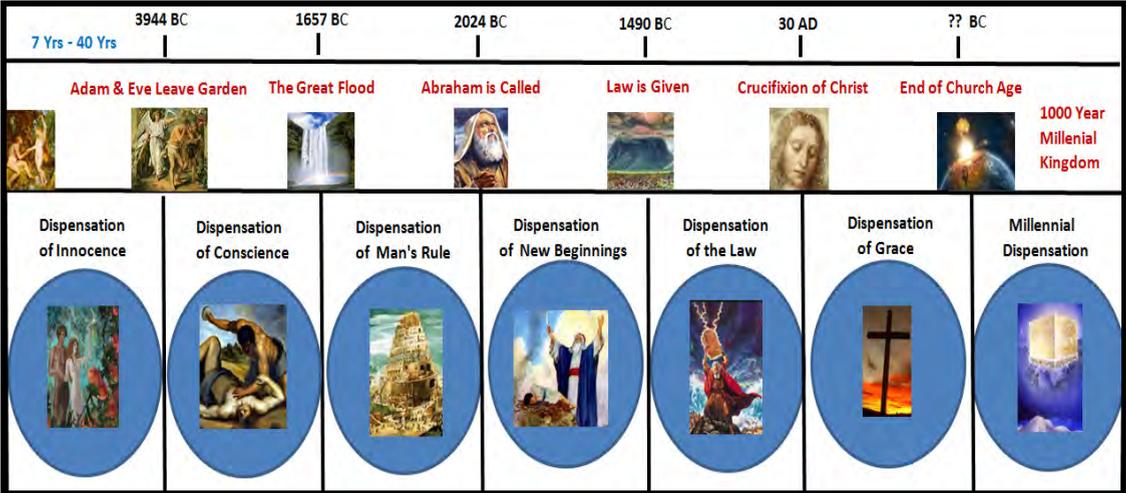
For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God Romans 3:23

It is not that the Law was unjust and not good: salvation by grace did not supersede the law, but made it possible for all who believe in Jesus Christ as their savior to live and not die under eternal condemnation.

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. Hebrews 10:1

We will have more to say about this later, but for now understand that God uses dispensations to deal with man in different ways, under different circumstances; to teach and reveal Himself and His eternal plans. When God reveals himself to man, the revelation may be at a specific point in time, but because it is the nature and character of God that is being revealed it is nether bound to that particular point in time or necessarily limited to the dispensation in which it is revealed.

The 7 Dispensations



The history of man can be divided into seven different distinct periods of called *Dispensations*. The previous graphic provides an overview of the seven different dispensations that will be discussed in this book.

The study of dispensations is a method of interpreting history that divides God’s work and purpose toward mankind into distinctly different periods of time. Different biblical scholars in different studies have identified between six and eight dispensations. In this book, we will examine seven different non-overlapping dispensations which can be clearly identified in the Biblical records. The seven different dispensations will be briefly described as follows. Each will be discussed in greater detail in Part II.

Dispensation of Innocence

The *Disposition of Innocence* began with the creation of Adam and Eve and continued until they sinned against God and were cast out of the Garden of Eden. The duration of this period of time is unknown. It has been proposed as

one week, less than one year, seven years and even 40 years long by various biblical scholars.

Disposition of Conscience

The *Dispensation of Conscience* lasted about 1,656 years from the time that Adam and Eve were evicted from the Garden of Eden until the Great Flood (Genesis 3:8–8:22). This dispensation of time had no laws and the behavior of man was dictated by his own will and conscience. This dispensation demonstrates what mankind will do if left to his own will and conscience which have been corrupted by the inherited sin nature.

Dispensation of Man's Rule

The *Dispensation of Man's Rule* has also been called the *Dispensation of Human Government*. It lasted about 425 years and began when Noah and his family left the Ark after God had brought a great flood upon the whole earth. God looked at His creation and found that only Noah, his three sons and all their wives were worthy of saving; eight people in all. It is true that all mankind sprang from Adam and Eve, but it is equally true that people on the earth today also sprang from Noah and his family. Man was once again to repopulate the earth, and they ruled themselves without any written laws. They were ruled by their heart and their own conscience. When man was left to follow his conscience after Adam and Eve was expelled from the Garden of Eden, they failed miserably. The Dispensation of Man's Rule ended when Abraham was called out of The Land of Chaldeans.

Dispensation of New Beginnings

The *Dispensation of New Beginnings* was 430 years long, and it was divided into two distinct periods of time: (1) *The Age of Promise*, and (2) *The Age of Bondage*.

The Age of Promise lasted exactly 215 years. It began when God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, and ended when the Nation of Israel was berthed from Abraham's loins and became God's chosen people. The Nation of Israel grew and prospered, and they lived in the Land of Canaan until they left for Egypt during a great famine. During this period of time, God dealt with Israel as a *theocracy*; He was the divine ruler who directly communicated with man to reveal His sovereign will.

The Age of Bondage also lasted exactly 215 years. Because of unbelief and failure to accept God as their theocratic ruler in Canaan, the Children of Israel became a slave nation in Egypt. Israel spent 215 years in Egypt in slavery under several Egyptian Pharaohs. Finally, God in His mercy heard their cries and sent His servant, *Moses*, to lead them out of bondage. The Dispensation of Bondage ended after the Nation of Israel crossed over the Red Sea and was given the Law at Mt. Sinai.

Dispensation of The Law

The *Dispensation of the Law* lasted approximately 1520 years. It began at Mt. Sinai in 1490 BC when Moses was given the 10 Commandments, and ended when Christ suffered and died on the Cross of Calvary in 30AD. The Dispensation of the Law is often called the *Old Covenant*. When it ended, it was superseded and replaced by the *New Covenant*. The New Covenant ushered in a new period of time called the *Dispensation of Grace*. The Dispensation of Grace is still in effect today, and will continue until the 2nd advent of Christ.

Dispensation of Grace

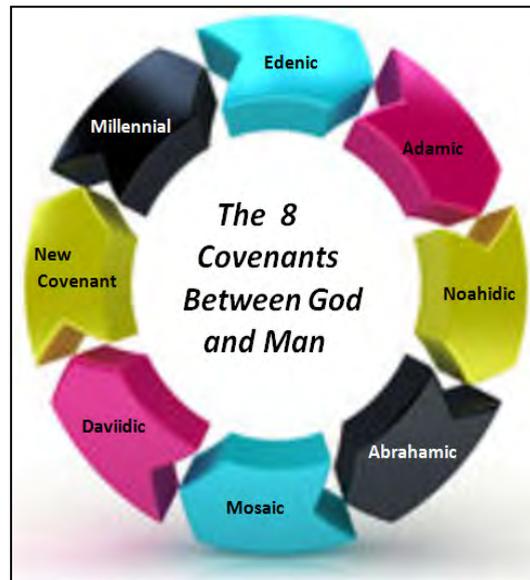
The Dispensation of the Law had one major feature: God gave Israel a set of 10 commandments to live by and 613 other commandments to govern their social, dietary and religious life. The Law could never save anyone; it was a *taskmaster* which brought man to the full realization that sin resulted in death and condemnation. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came not to destroy the Law but to fulfill the law. His sacrificial death as the perfect Lamb of God on the Cross of Calvary ended the Dispensation of the Law. Redemption from sin, salvation, and eternal life was now based upon faith and appropriated by grace. Salvation by faith and grace began what we now call the *New Covenant*. The Dispensation of Grace started in 30AD and will continue until Jesus Christ returns as a conquering king at His 2nd advent.

The Millennial Disposition

The seventh and final *Millennial Dispensation* will follow the Rapture of all living saints and the resurrection of those who have died in Christ. This will be accomplished at the second advent of Jesus Christ, and will be immediately followed by the Wrath of God culminating in the final great Battle of

Armageddon. The Millennial Dispensation will last 1,000 years and is commonly referred to as the *Millennial Kingdom*. The end of the 1,000-year millennial kingdom will culminate in the creation of new heavens and a new earth. This earth as we now know it will be purged by fire and restored to an Edenic state; eternity will then begin.

Covenants



The seven Dispensations divide the full council of God’s word into seven distinct periods of time. The seven Dispensations are not of the same duration, and they do not overlap with one another. Each Dispensation starts with a distinct event in which God will deal with man in a particular way. Equally important is the concept of a *Covenant Relationship* between God and mankind. **A covenant is a sacred agreement between God and a person or a set of people.** The Greek word for covenant can also mean *promise*. In this study we will examine 8 important covenants that God made with man.

When God makes a covenant agreement with mankind, there are always specific conditions and promises between the two parties. Man’s relationship to God is always based upon one or more covenantal promises. The study of *Biblical Covenants* is central to understanding how God has dealt with man and the sin issue throughout the first six dispensations. Different dispensations always operate under specific covenant relationships with God, but not all dispensations are defined by covenants. Covenants between God and man can start and end *anywhere* across the spectrum of the seven

dispensations which we will explain and discuss. Understanding the way covenants operate within and between the seven different dispensations will reveal to man how to *rightly divide the word of God*. Covenants between God and man fall into two mutually exclusive and independent categories. They are either (1) *Conditional*, or (2) *Unconditional*.

Conditional Covenants

A *conditional covenant* usually depends on the faithfulness of one or more parties, and the covenant is invalidated should one or both break the conditions of the covenant. Whenever a conditional covenant is made between God and man, if the covenant promises are made null and void the trespass is always made by man and not God. This is sometimes misunderstood; God will never invalidate or change the conditions of a conditional covenant, but He is justified in annulling the covenant if man fails to keep the conditions of the covenant.

Unconditional Covenants

An *unconditional covenant* is one that is not dependent on the faithfulness of either party, but remains valid from its point of initiation.

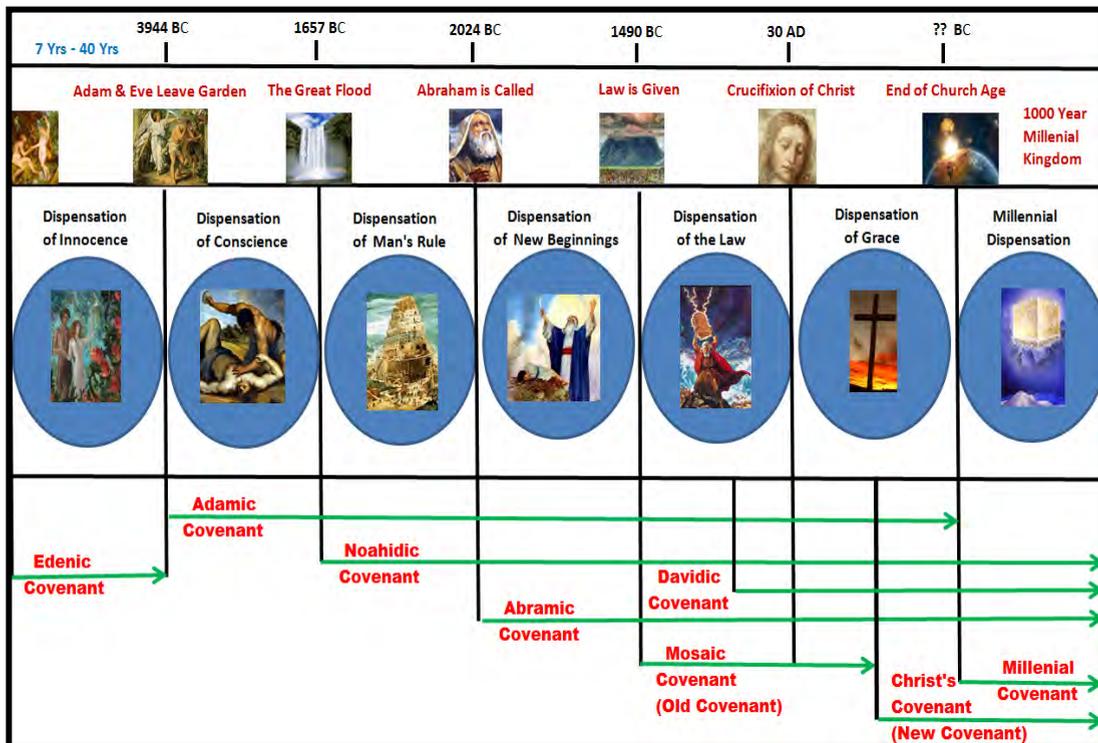
Unconditional covenants are essentially unilateral between God and man. The interesting thing about an unconditional covenant between God and men is that no matter how unfaithful or disbelieving that man might be, the covenanting (promise) will always be fulfilled because God is faithful and true and cannot lie. What God promises He will fulfill. We will see that unconditional covenants initiated by God continue to be in effect from the moment God states His promises until the promises come true no matter how much time elapses. There may or may not be conditions to be met by man when God makes an unconditional covenant. Violation of those conditions may delay the fulfillment of the promise(s), but will not cancel the promise(s) of God.



All covenants in the Bible between God and man are originated by God and are an act of His holiness and grace. Since God is faithful and true (Jeremiah 42:5), He cannot lie and cannot sin. Therefore, *conditional covenants* between God and man always terminate because of the unfaithfulness and the sinful nature of man. There were eight main covenants made between God and man throughout Biblical history.

- The Edenic Covenant
- The Adamic Covenant
- The Noahidic Covenant
- The Abrahamic Covenant
- The Mosaic or Old Covenant
- The Davidic Covenant
- The Covenant of Grace or the New Covenant
- The Millennial or Kingdom Covenant

The following diagram illustrates the timing and relationship between each of the seven different dispensations and the eight covenants which we will study. The key event which triggers each dispensation is also given, along with the approximate date that each of the seven dispensations begin and end. Except for the Davidic Covenant, the year in which each covenant is given corresponds to a dispensation start date. However, the duration of each covenant might span one or more dispensations if the covenant is unconditional.



The Eight Covenants Between God and Man

The Edenic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3)

God created the heavens and the earth in Genesis 1:1-31, and when He finished His creative work he said: *It was very good* (Genesis 1:31). The Lord then made man out of the dust of the earth; He called him Adam and then He created a beautiful place for him to live called the *Garden of Eden*. God decided that it was *not good for Adam to be alone*, so He made a woman called Eve starting with a rib from Adam. Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden with all manner of animals; *And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil* (Genesis 2:9). God made the *Edenic Covenant* with Adam and Eve. He promised them that he would care for them, watch over them and keep them eternally young by providing a Tree of Life . Everything in the Garden of Eden was theirs to enjoy and use except for one thing: They were not to eat of the fruit of the tree of Knowledge which stood in the midst of the Garden. This was the first covenant ever made between God and man, and it was conditional upon Adam and Eve obeying His only command to them. We know that both Adam and Eve disobeyed God and was cast out of the Garden of Eden. Hence, the first sin committed by man against God resulted in man tasting death and toiling by the sweat of his brow to live.

Adamic Covenant (Genesis 1:26-30, 2:16-17)

The *Adamic Covenant* was similar to the Edenic Covenant in that the word covenant is not actually used in the Genesis record. The Hebrew word for covenant means *promise*, and the Adamic covenant involved several promises between God and Adam & Eve. The Adamic Covenant was a set of conditions that God established for Adam, Eve and their offspring now that they were not living in the Garden of Eden. Man was cursed because they disobeyed God, and from that point on the ground would need to be cultivated and tilled. Thistles and thorns would also effect crop production. Eve was to experience pain in child-berth. The most severe penalty was that Satan would constantly be at *enmity* with mankind, bringing sickness and punishment upon mankind. How sad that Adam and Eve disobeyed and committed the first sin against God. Their act of disobedience continues to pit man against Satan today.

Noahidic Covenant (Genesis 9:11)

The first use of the word covenant in the scriptures occurs in Genesis 6:18. The actual covenant was given in Genesis 9:11. The *Noahidic Covenant* was spoken to Noah following the departure of Noah, his family, and all of the animals from the ark: *I (will) establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.* This covenant included a sign of God's faithfulness to keep His word; a rainbow would appear in the sky when it rained. This covenant was *unconditional* and did not depend upon the faithfulness of either Noah or his descendants.

Abrahamic Covenant (II Samuel 11:7-16, II Chronicles 17:10-14)

The Abrahamic Covenant was first made between God and Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, and it was reinforced and expanded from Genesis 12 to Genesis 22. It was an extensive and far-reaching covenant between Abram (Abraham) and all of his offspring. We will discuss this later in much detail, but it contained four fundamental promises: (1) God pronounced a blessing upon Abraham, to make his name great and to make his seed into a great nation, (2) The covenant promised that Abraham's blessing would be extended to many people and nations. A blessing would fall upon all those who blessed Abraham and a curse would fall upon those who cursed him, (3) God vowed to bless the entire world through Abraham's seed; the fulfillment of this part of the covenant is through Jesus Christ, who was of Abraham's family line, (4) The fourth basic covenant was that Abraham's seed would be given what is now called the land of Canaan as a perpetual inheritance. This was an unconditional covenant.

The Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 20-Deuteronomy 28)

The *Mosaic Covenant* is sometimes called the *Old Covenant*. This was a *conditional* covenant found scattered between Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 28. It promised the Israelites a blessing for obedience and a curse for disobedience. Much of the Old Testament chronicles the fulfillment of cycles of judgment for sin and blessings when God's people lost faith, repented and returned to God.

The Davidic Covenant (II Samuel 7:8-16).

The *Davidic Covenant* is actually a reassurance and expansion of the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenant. This *unconditional covenant* was given to King David, and reinforced the land Covenant given to Abraham and his seed. This is sometimes called the Palestinian Covenant or the land Covenant. Neither is quite correct since the Davidic

Covenant involved more than just the land of Palestine, and the original land Covenant was given to Abraham. Included in this covenant promise was the revelation that due to disobedience and unbelief, God would scatter Israel if they disobeyed God, but that they would eventually be restored to all the land of promise. This covenant will not be fulfilled until after the Jews, as a nation, turn to Jesus Christ as their promised Messiah until after the great tribulation period described by the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation.

The New Covenant (Jer. 31: 31-34, Mat 26:28)

The *New Covenant* was made by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, at the Lord's Last Supper (Luke 22:20). The next day, he would be sacrificed on the cross of Calvary and through his sacrificial death He would take away the sins of the whole world (I John 2:2). The death of Christ confirmed the unilateral covenant promise that He made to Adam after Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15), and it fulfilled the words of Jeremiah the prophet (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Justification by forgiveness of sin was settled on the cross, and salvation was offered to the Jews by grace, and then to the Gentiles (Acts 14:44-52). The promise was first made to Israel then extended to everyone who comes to Jesus Christ in faith (Hebrews 9:15).

The Millennial Covenant

The *Millennial Covenant* is sometimes called the Kingdom Covenant. The Millennial covenant was actually spoken through a set of promises that occur throughout all of scripture, that prophesies of a 1,000-year dispensation that will immediately follow the Tribulation Period described in the Book of Revelation. The Kingdom covenant promises are found in many Old Testament and New Testament books. We discuss these promises as a separate covenant because of its significance in God's eternal plan for mankind.

Note: Do not confuse Holy covenants made between God and man with prophetic statements throughout the scriptures. Prophetic statements are made to individuals throughout the scriptures which reveal certain things which will take place. Covenants are broader in scope and time. We will distinguish between prophetic statements and covenants in Part III.

In Part II we will discuss some key events which took place in each of the seven Dispensations. A complete historical and Biblical treatment of the seven Dispensations in detail would require hundreds of pages and a discussion of the entire Bible. We have only presented some of the more important events through recorded time in the order in which they appear in the Holy Scriptures.

In Part III each of eight different covenants that God made with mankind are discussed within the context that they were put into place. It is certainly true that some individual might consider a command from God to mankind or a promise to punish man if they choose disobedience or sinful alternatives to the commands of God to be a Holy covenant. The eight covenants considered in this book have historically been considered a set of far reaching and significant promises to man.

In Part IV of this book we consider a set of nine visible and enduring signs and wonders which God has ordained for remembrance or temporal proof that He is both *omniscient* and *omnipotent*. Again, one could argue that there are more or less than eight signs to remind making that an important, sometimes cosmically significant, event has taken place.

The correct understanding of both Dispensations and Covenants as the history of man unfolds is crucial to understanding how God's purpose and plan was revealed throughout the ages. Once both have been clearly defined and discussed, in Part V of this book we will address the most important issue in man's plan for humanity: How each person is redeemed and saved throughout recorded time in each dispensation? This will be followed by answering a second intriguing question: What happened to every person that died in the Old Testament ?

