1. **Dispensation of Innocence** Gen. 1:1-3:24

God created man perfect and in His own image. God deals with man as a perfect infant—untested, but perfect still the same. Sin has not yet entered the world and so man is for the first and last time initially innocent.

1. **Dispensation of Conscience** Gen. 4:1-10:32

**con•science** *n* **:** consciousness of the moral right and wrong of one's own acts or motives (c)2000 Zane Publishing, Inc. and Merriam-Webster, Incorporated. All rights reserved.

God deals with man in the Dispensation of Conscience by his conscience. Everyone is born with a conscience which is not a curse but the providence of God at work. God has placed within man the awareness of what is right or wrong, and God holds man responsible to his conscience.

1. **Dispensation of Human Government** Gen. 10:33-12:1

Man left to himself will self destruct, because of his carnal nature he is very heavily driven by his flesh and emotions, and so for a guiding force, God instituted human government. This did not replace man’s responsibility to God, but was to serve as a lower court of sorts. Man is ultimately responsible to God.

1. **Dispensation of Promise** Gen. 12:2-Ex. 12:10

In God’s dealing with man we see a new method, not replacing any before this point, but a step higher and closer to an intimate relationship being restored between God and man. God, Who owes no one anything, but in Him all things have their existence and by Him ALL things are made, The Lord is the One making covenants and promises with believers.

1. **Dispensation of Law** Ex. 19:1-Matt. 1:1-25

The Dispensation of Law is clearly as vital to the perfect plan of God as the others, and yet the law is most often despised. The Law is rigid and unbending, and this is the narrow picture most have of God. The law though was not the full plan of God, but was as aTutor “School Master” (Galatians 3:24) to teach man what God is expecting of man. Here in this dispensation we have the “What”( to know) but in the dispensation of Grace, God gives man the “How”(the enablement). (Romans 8:3)

1. **Dispensation of Grace** Matt. 28:1-10 Eph:2:8; 4:13; I John 3:2; Rev. 4:1-4

Man is incapable of equaling the balances with the character and nature of Christ without the Holy Ghost. Eph. 3:11; It is God’s Eternal Purpose to have a people that would see from God’s point of view and act, think and be like God’s Son. Heb.2:10; 2Cor. 3:18 “are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” I Pt. 5:10; God has given man Grace—God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense—to do the work in man. God is working the change in man by his grace, and if man should fall, by God’s grace he can have peace with God restored through faith. (Romans 5:1)

1. **Dispensation of Righteousness**  Rev. 22:1-21

Here is where the final purpose in the plan of God is fulfilled, where righteousness reigns in man and not sin. God is going to work a complete work in us. The New Heaven and New Earth is only the backdrop to the goal and heart of God—fellowship completely restored. God is a holy God and cannot and will not fellowship with sin, but God in his infinite love and knowledge has made a way for us to enter into a place of unrestricted communion with Him separate from sin.

The Seven Tests of the Dispensations

Test – Failure -Judgment

1. The First dispensation,( Gen.1:1-3:24) of **innocence** was with one specific test; do not touch the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

a. 1:28- Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion--- Rule over all creatures and the earth. b. 1:29 “every herb bearing seed… to you it shall be for meat”. c. 2:15 God put Adam in the “garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it”. d. 2:16 Man may eat of all trees in the Garden - (but one). e. 2:17 Man MUST NOT eat of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. f. 2:24-25 Man and wife must work together as one.

2. The Second dispensation,( Gen. 4:1-8:20) of **Conscience** was with the added test to obey your conscience. The specific test which all had to pass was two-fold.

a. Must obey your conscience of right and wrong, good and evil. b. An acceptable blood sacrifice had to be offered by faith for true worship.

3. The Third Dispensation, ( Gen. 8:20-11:32) of **Human Government** was with the test be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and he failed by getting drunk.

God’s rule demonstrated that mankind would not obey God on a threefold basis

1. The human conscience
2. Restraint of lawlessness by the Holy Ghost striving against sin.
   1. Abraham’s prayer and witnessing
   2. God’s Judgment on sinful people and cities
3. Human government, man would not be able to judge himself properly..

4. The fourth dispensation, (Gen. 12:1- 18:27) of **Promise** is with a test to believe for the Promised Son.

God’s special dealings with Abraham is made evident in Gal.3:15-22 and Heb. 6:13-15.

A principle is a ruling factor if it makes a difference in the way people live.

God intended His promises to Abraham and his seed to make a difference in the way that they would live.

Hebrews 11:8-30 demonstrates the fact that God’s promises did make a difference in the lives of Abraham and his seed.

1. The human conscience
2. The restraint of lawlessness through the Holy Ghost striving once again against sin.
3. Human government
4. Plus the Promises of God to Abraham

The fourth dispensation is distinct from the third by adding the promises to Abraham’s conscience.

1. The special revelation God gave to Abraham and his seed in the fourth dispensation is in Genesis 12:2-3; 13:14-17; 15; 17:1-22; 22:16-18.
2. God made personal promises to Abraham. He would bless him, make

his name great, give him many physical descendants, make him the father of many nations, give him the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and bless those who would bless him and curse those who would curse him .

2. God made national promises concerning Israel. He would bring Israel into existence as a nation and make it great, give Israel the land of Canaan forever, and establish the Abrahamic Covenant with the nation as an everlasting covenant.

3.`God also made a universal promise. He would give blessing to all families of the earth through Abraham’s seed. (Messiah-Redeemer- The Promised Seed)

1. The responsibility of Abraham and his seed in the fourth dispensation was a test to obey God on a fourfold basis of the human conscience,

Abram and his descendants failed the test; they disobeyed God as the result of lapses of faith concerning the fulfillment of His promises. Abram fathered Ishmael through Hagar, because he failed to believe God’s promise to give him a son through Sarah, his wife. Twice he lied concerning his wife. Isaac lied concerning Rebekah, his wife. Jacob was a great deceiver.

The Jews did not return from Egypt to Canaan after the famine of Joseph’s time ended.

They forgot their destiny was related to the promised land of Canaan rather than Egypt.

This failure brought divine judgment to the Jews they have continued to have problems with Ishmael’s descendants. Through time they were subjected to slavery and threatened with extinction in Egypt.

**5. The fifth dispensation** of Law (Ex.19:1; Mt.27:56, Mk.15:41; Lk.23:49; Jn.19:30) extended from the giving of the Mosaic Law at Mount Sinai to the death of Jesus Christ on the cross at Mount Calvary and rent veil.

The fifth dispensation had five ruling factors which God used to governed Israel:

* 1. The Human conscience
  2. The restraint of lawlessness by the Holy Spirit,
  3. Human government,
  4. The Promises of God
  5. plus the Mosaic Law.

The central core of the Mosaic Law (the ten commandments) was

written on tables of stone. The Law inflicted external penalties upon those who broke its

precepts. The Mosaic Law was a totally external way of God administering His rule

over Israel (it should be noted that God gave the Mosaic Law exclusively to Israel, not to

the Gentiles—see Romans 2:14 and 9:4). Thus, the Apostle Paul declared that the Mosaic Law functioned as a (an external moral restrainer, Galatians 3:23-25).

The special revelation that God gave to Israel for the fifth dispensation is recorded in Exodus 20 through Deuteronomy. It consisted of the Mosaic Law with its 613 commandments. These gave in detail God’s will for the moral, civil, and ceremonial aspects of Israel’s life.

**The** test would be for them to obey God on a fivefold basis.

The people of Israel failed the test of the fifth dispensation.

They broke the Mosaic Law repeatedly Jer. 31:32; Ez 16. God told them that they

had a heart of stone (Ezekiel 36:26; Zechariah 7:12).

This failure brought God’s judgment upon Israel. The nation suffered many judgments during the fifth dispensation. Among the worst were the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, the Greek and Roman oppressions, Israel’s temporary removal from its place of blessing (Romans 11), and its worldwide dispersion as the result of its rejection of Christ. Ex 19:1-8; 2K 17:1-18; 25:1-11; Ac 2:22-23;7:51-52; Ro3:19-20;10:5; Gal3:10

6. The Sixth Dispensation is of, **Grace** is from the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ to the work of Righteousness in the day of the Lord.

The testing under grace will be with Judgment

Luke 17:26-30

Luke 17:30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

Luke 18:8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

2Thess. 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Rev. 3:15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

The first three and half years of tribulation

Mt 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Dan. 12:11 And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Rev. 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

Dan. 12:7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

Jer 30:7 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. Micah 5:3,4

1Thess. 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

"the great tribulation." Zeph. 1:15-18; Mat.24:21-22; Rev.7:14

**The Day of Grace** began the day Jesus Christ arose from the dead and He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is well documented for the entire world to know.

Acts 1:3—*To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:*

Mat. 28:2—*And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.*

Mark 16:9*—Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.*

Luke 24:1-31*—And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.*

John 20:1-17*—Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*

20*—And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.*

*27—Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

*28—And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God*

Acts 2:30*—Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;* 31*—He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.*

32*—This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.* 4:33*—And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*

Romans 1:3*—Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;* 4*—And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:*

1Cor. 15:3*—For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*4*—And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

1Peter 1:3*—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*

**The Day of Grace has included the Day of Pentecost.**

Joel 2:23—*Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.*

28*—And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:*  29*—And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.* 30*—And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.* 31*—The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.* 32*—And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.*

Acts 2:17*—And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:* 18*—And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:* 19*—And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:*  20*—The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:*

21*—And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

4:8*—Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,*

10*—Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.* 10:40*—Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;* 44*—While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.* 45*—And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

The Spirit of Grace

Zech. 12:10-14

Zech. 12:10*—And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem,* ***the spirit of grace*** *and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

I. A Great Blessing - vs. 10 "I will pour upon the house of David...the Spirit of grace and of supplications"

1. An Act of God - "I will pour" Implies abundance - Joel 2:28 2. Results of The Outpouring -

(1) To the sinner - John 16:8-11 (2) To the believer - John 16:13-15

3. The Contents of The Outpouring -

(1) "The Spirit of grace" Leads to salvation - (2) "The Spirit of supplications" Leads to repentance and prayer -

II. A Great Revelation - vs. 10 "They shall look upon Me when they have pierced"

Almost 2,000 years ago, they despised and rejected Him - they said, "we will not have this man to reign over us." They cried for His crucifixion.

1. They shall look to Him - "In that day" - The day He returns.

Acts 1:11 "This same Jesus." He shall appear bearing the marks of the Cross in His hands.

Zech.13:6 "And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in thine hands."

These wounds are the marks of His identity -

He still bears those wounds - John 20:20 The wounds will remain through all eternity - as a witness to His triumphant resurrection over death.

2. To look implies three things -

(1) Revelation - Psa. 34:5 (2) Salvation - Isa. 45:22 (3) Faith - Heb. 12:2

III. A Great Revival - vs. 10-12

They shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem."

1. Their mourning compared to two things -

(1) The loss of an only son - (2) The loss of a firstborn son -

Their blindness and unbelief have been great; now they have discovered their awful guilt in crucifying their long looked for Messiah.

2. The mourning will be universal - "Every family apart"

(1) First the royal family - "The family of the house of David" Nathan - the son of David

(2) Next the Priest-hood - "The family of the house of Levi" Shimei - son of a Levite

(3) Next the rest of the people - vs. 14

"All the families that remain" No one is exempted.

The royal - the peasant - the rich - the poor - the great - the small.

They must all repent.

In every house there will be tears of repentance and confession.

Also in every house there will be a well of new-found joy springing up in their hearts. Their long looked for Messiah has come, and brought salvation and deliverance.

Romans 11:15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

The Absolute Greatest Test of all is to become the Bride of Christ

Rev. 19:7—*Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* 8*—And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

Luke 12:36—*And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.*

Gen. 24:58*—And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.*

Ruth 3:3—*Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.* 4*—And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and* ***he will tell thee what thou shalt do.***

Esther 2:15*—Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king,* ***she required nothing but what Hegai*** *the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women,* ***appointed****. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.*

Song 1:4*—Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.* 5:7*—The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.* 7:10*—I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.*

Psalm 45:9*—Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.* 11*—So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.* 13*—The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.* 14*—She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.*

1Peter 1: 3—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.