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## Dispensations

Dispensations are periods of time in which God has dealt with humanity in different ways, according to Christian theology. The concept of dispensations is derived from the Bible and is based on the idea that God has revealed His will to humanity through a series of distinct stages or dispensations. Each dispensation is characterized by a specific set of rules or laws, which God has given to humanity as a means of testing their faithfulness and obedience.

In Christian theology, there are typically seven dispensations that are identified, although there is some variation in the way that different theologians classify them. These are:

1. The dispensation of Innocence: This dispensation is associated with the time before the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, during which humanity was sinless and lived in perfect harmony with God.
2. The dispensation of Conscience: This dispensation begins with the Fall of Adam and Eve and extends until the time of Noah's flood. During this time, humanity had a conscience and was able to discern right from wrong, but there was no formal law or system of government.
3. The dispensation of Human Government: This dispensation begins after the flood and extends until the time of Abraham. During this time, God gave humanity the authority to govern itself and establish laws and systems of justice.
4. The dispensation of Promise: This dispensation begins with God's call to Abraham and extends until the time of Moses. During this time, God made specific promises to Abraham and his descendants, including the promise of a land and a people.
5. The dispensation of Law: This dispensation begins with the giving of the Law to Moses and extends until the time of Christ. During this time, God gave the Israelites a detailed system of laws and regulations that they were required to follow in order to be obedient to Him.
6. The dispensation of Grace: This dispensation begins with the death and resurrection of Christ and extends until the Second Coming. During this time, God offers salvation to all who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
7. The dispensation of the Kingdom: This dispensation begins with the Second Coming of Christ and extends into eternity. During this time, Christ will reign as King over all the earth, and there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

### Example :in Moses time

Exo 20:1-26

Ten Commandments for the Covenant Community

20 Then God gave the people all these instructions[a]:

2 “I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery.

3 “You must not have any other god but me.

4 “You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. 5 You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. 6 But I lavish unending love for a thousand generations on those[b] who love me and obey my commands.

7 “You must not misuse the name of the Lord your God. The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name.

8 “Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 You have six days each week for your ordinary work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.

Heb 1:1-2

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

Dispensationalism is a method of interpreting history that divides God’s work and purposes toward mankind into different periods of time. Usually, there are [seven dispensations identified](#), although some theologians believe there are nine. Others count as few as three or as many as thirty-seven dispensations. In this article, we will limit ourselves to the seven basic dispensations found in Scripture.

1. The first dispensation is called the Dispensation of Innocence

This dispensation covered the period of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. In this dispensation God's commands were to (1) replenish the earth with children, (2) subdue the earth, (3) have dominion over the animals, (4) care for the garden, and (5) abstain from eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God warned of the punishment of physical and spiritual death for disobedience. This dispensation was short-lived and was brought to an end by Adam and Eve's disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit and their expulsion from the garden.

(Genesis 1:28-30 and 2:15-17).

#### [Gen 1:28-30](#)

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

29 Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

#### [Gen 2:15-17](#)

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;

17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

2. The second dispensation is called the Dispensation of Conscience, and it lasted about 1,656 years from the time of Adam and Eve's eviction from the garden until the flood (Genesis 3:8–8:22). This dispensation demonstrates what mankind will do if left to his own will and conscience, which have been tainted by the inherited sin nature. The five major aspects of this dispensation are 1) a curse on the serpent, 2) a change in womanhood and childbearing, 3) a curse on nature, 4) the imposing of difficult work on mankind to produce food, and 5) the promise of Christ as the seed who will bruise the serpent's head (Satan).

#### [Gen 3:8-22](#)

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

9 But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, 'Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.

15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers;

he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

16 To the woman he said,

"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children.

Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.

18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

20 Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

22 And the Lord God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”

3. The third dispensation is the Dispensation of Human Government, which began in [Genesis 8](#). God had destroyed life on earth with a flood, saving just one family to restart the human race. God made the following promises and commands to Noah and his family:

1. God will not curse the earth again.
2. Noah and family are to replenish the earth with people.
3. They shall have dominion over the animal creation.
4. They are allowed to eat meat.
5. The law of capital punishment is established.
6. There never will be another worldwide flood.
7. The sign of God’s promise will be the rainbow.

About 325 years after the flood, the earth’s inhabitants began building a tower, a great monument to their solidarity and pride ([Genesis 11:7-9](#)). God brought the construction to a halt, creating different languages and enforcing His command to fill the earth. The result was the rise of different nations and cultures. From that point on, human governments have been a reality.

4. The fourth dispensation, called the Dispensation of Promise, started with the call of Abraham, continued through the lives of the patriarchs, and ended with the Exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt, a period of about 430 years. During this dispensation God developed a great nation that He had chosen as His people ([Genesis 12:1–Exodus 19:25](#)).

1. From Abraham would come a great nation that God would bless with natural and spiritual prosperity.
2. God would make Abraham’s name great.
3. God would bless those that blessed Abraham’s descendants and curse those that cursed them.
4. In Abraham all the families of the earth will be blessed. This is fulfilled in Jesus Christ and His work of salvation.
5. The sign of the covenant is circumcision.
6. This covenant, which was repeated to Isaac and Jacob, is confined to the Hebrew people and the 12 tribes of Israel.

5. The fifth dispensation is called the Dispensation of Law. It lasted almost

- 1500 years, from the Exodus until it was suspended after Jesus Christ's death. This dispensation will continue during the Millennium, with some modifications. During the Dispensation of Law, God dealt specifically with the Jewish nation through the Mosaic Covenant, or the Law, found in Exodus 19–23. The dispensation involved temple worship directed by priests, with further direction spoken through God's mouthpieces, the prophets. Eventually, due to the people's disobedience to the covenant, the tribes of Israel lost the Promised Land and were subjected to bondage.
6. The sixth dispensation, the one in which we now live, is the Dispensation of Grace. It began with the New Covenant in Christ's blood (Luke 22:20). This "Age of Grace" or "Church Age" occurs between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel 9:24. It starts with the coming of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and ends with the Rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4). This dispensation is worldwide and includes both Jews and the Gentiles. Man's responsibility during the Dispensation of Grace is to believe in Jesus, the Son of God (John 3:18). In this dispensation the Holy Spirit indwells believers as the Comforter (John 14:16-26). This dispensation has lasted for almost 2,000 years, and no one knows when it will end. We do know that it will end with the Rapture of all born-again believers from the earth to go to heaven with Christ. Following the Rapture will be the **Tribulation** lasting for seven years.
  7. The seventh dispensation is called the Millennial Kingdom of Christ and will last for 1,000 years as Christ Himself rules on earth. This Kingdom will fulfill the prophecy to the Jewish nation that Christ will return and be their King. The only people allowed to enter the Kingdom are the born-again believers from the Age of Grace, righteous survivors of the seven years of tribulation, and the resurrected Old Testament saints. No unsaved person is allowed access into this kingdom. Satan is bound during the 1,000 years. This period ends with the final judgment (Revelation 20:11-14). The old world is destroyed by fire, and the New Heaven and New Earth of Revelation 21 and 22 will begin.