

# Ephesians Series

## Lesson #028

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Dean Bible Ministries

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# EPHESIANS

THE WEALTH, WALK  
& WARFARE  
OF THE BELIEVER

**The Fullness of Times**  
**Ephesians 1:9–10**

**John 1:16, “And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.**

**John 1:17, “For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”**

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**ἀντί *anti***

**Preposition (+gen)  
(+gen) for, in place  
of, instead of  
“in exchange for  
grace”**

**πλήρωμα *pleroma***

**neut sing gen  
fullness,  
completion**

**Eph. 1:7, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness [*aphesis*] of sins, according to the riches of His grace**

**Eph. 1:8, “which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,”**

**Eph. 1:9, “by making known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,”**

**γνωρίζω *gnorizo***

**aor act part masc  
sing nom**

**to make known, to  
reveal**

**“by making known  
to us”**

**μυστήριον**

***musterion***

**neut sing acc**

**mystery, secret,  
previously  
unrevealed  
knowledge**

# The Basis of Knowledge

	<b>SYSTEM</b>	<b>STARTING POINT</b>	<b>METHOD</b>
<b>Autonomous Systems of Perception</b>	<b>RATIONALISM</b>	Innate ideas; Faith in human ability	Independent use of logic & reason
	<b>EMPIRICISM</b>	Sense perceptions; External experience; Scientific method; Faith in human ability	Independent use of logic & reason
	<b>MYSTICISM</b>	Inner, private experience; Intuition; Faith in human ability	Independent, Nonlogical, Nonrational, Nonverifiable
<b>Divine Viewpoint</b>	<b>REVELATION</b>	Objective revelation of God	Dependent use of logic and reason

**Eph. 3:1, “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—**

**Eph. 3:2, “if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,**

**Eph. 3:3, “how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,”**



**Eph. 3:5, “which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it [but] has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:**

**Eph. 3:6, “that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,”**

**Eph. 1:10, “that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.”**

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**fem sing acc stewardship,  
management,  
administration, plan**

**Eph. 1:10, “that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.”**

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**fem sing acc stewardship,  
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administration, plan**

**“managing or administering the affairs of a household. A steward is someone in charge of administering the affairs of the house.”**

# What the Bible Teaches About

## *Dispensations*



**What is a dispensation?**

**οἰκονόμος *oikonomos* and οἰκονομία *oikonomia*,  
management, office from which we get the  
word “economy,” meaning to manage,  
regulate, administer, to plan.**

**A combination of οἶκος, (house) νομὸ (law),  
house law, house rule.**

**“Economy: the management of the resources of a  
community, country, etc.; the disposition or regulation  
of the parts or functions of any organic whole; an  
organized system; the management of household  
affairs.” (*Random House Webster’s Electronic  
Dictionary and Thesaurus, College Edition 1992*)**

**Thus it means managing or administering the affairs of  
a household. This is not a time word.**



- 1. *Oikonomeo*: 1 time as a verb (Luke 16:2 “to be a steward”).**
  
- 2. *Oikonomos*: 10 times as a noun (Luke 12:42; 16:1, 3, 8; Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2; Galatians 4:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 4:10)**
  
- 3. *Oikonomia*:  
“dispensation” (Ephesians 1:10; 3:2, 9)  
“stewardship” (Colossians 1:25;  
1 Timothy 1:4; Luke 16:2–4;  
1 Corinthians 9:17)**

**Dispensations are connected with the mysteries of God, that is, with specific revelation from God (1 Corinthians 4:1; Ephesians 3:2; Colossians 1:25).**

**Eph. 3:2, “if indeed you have heard of the dispensation [*oikonomia*–administration, management, plan] of the grace of God which was given to me for you,”**

- 1. The action of administering or ordering something; dealing out or distributing something.**
- 2. The act of administering or dispensing with some requirement.**

**“I reply that God ought not to be considered changeable merely because He accommodated diverse forms to different ages, as he knew would be expedient for each. If a farmer sets certain tasks for his household in the winter, other tasks for the summer, we shall not on this account accuse him of inconstancy, or think that he departs from the proper rule of agriculture, which accords with the continuous order of nature. In like manner, if a householder instructs, rules, and guides, his children one way in infancy, another way in youth, and still another in young manhood, we shall not on this account call him fickle and say that he abandons his purpose. Why, then, do we brand God with the mark of inconstancy because he has with apt and fitting marks distinguished a diversity of times?”**

**~John Calvin, *Institutes***

**Latin: *dispensatio*, “to deal out, to weigh out, to dispense, or to distribute.”**

***Webster's Third New International Dictionary:***

**(1) a divine ordering and administration of worldly affairs;**

**(2) a system of principles, promises, and rules divinely ordained and administered;**

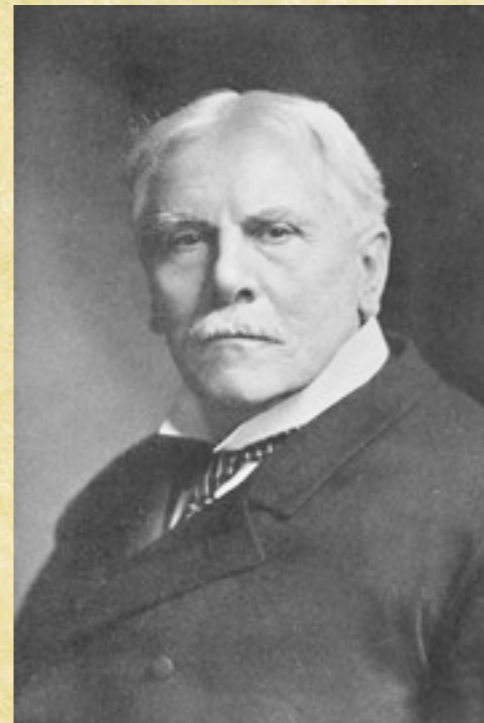
**(3) a period of history during which a particular divine revelation has predominated in the affairs of mankind;**

**(4) any general state or ordering of things.**

**\*A dispensation takes place in time, but isn't necessarily related to time.**

***Dispensation:* A distinct and identifiable administration in the development of God's plan and purposes for human history (Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25–26).**

**Scotfield: A dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God.**



**1843–1921**



**“These periods are marked off in Scripture by some change in God’s method of dealing with mankind, or a portion of mankind, in respect of the two questions: of sin, and of man’s responsibility. Each of the dispensations may be regarded as a new test of the natural man, and each ends in judgment, marking his utter failure in every dispensation.”**

**~C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth***

**“a period which is identified by its relation to some particular purpose of God—a purpose to be accomplished within that period.”**

**~L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology***

**“A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God’s purposes.”**

**~Charles C. Ryrie**



**“A dispensation therefore is a distinct and identifiable administration in the development of God’s plan and purposes for human history (Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25–26). A closely connected but not interchangeable word is age (Greek *aion*), which introduces the time element. God manages the entirety of human history as a household, moving humanity through sequential stages of His administration, determined by the level of revelation He has provided up to that time in history. Each administrative period is characterized by revelation that specifies responsibilities, a test in relation to those responsibilities, failure to pass the test, and God’s gracious provision of a solution when failure occurs.”**

**~Robert Dean, Jr.**

**Tim LaHaye *Prophecy Study Bible***

# GENTILES

# ISRAEL

*Perfect Environment*

*Conscience*

*Human Government*

*Patriarchs*

*Mosaic Law*

*Messianic Age*

*Church Age*

*Tribulation*

*Millennial Kingdom*

**Creation Covenant**

Gen. 1:28-30;  
Hosea 6:7

**Adamic Covenant**

Gen. 3:14-19

**Noahic Covenant**

Gen. 9:1-17

**Abrahamic Covenant**

Gen. 12:1-3

**Mosaic Covenant**

Ex. 20-40

*Logos*

**New Covenant Postponed**

**Armageddon; Kingdom established; New Covenant begins**

## Responsibility

**Fulfill the covenant**

Gen. 1:26-28;  
2:16-17

**Animal sacrifice**

Gen. 3:21

**Fill the earth**

Gen. 9:7

**Stay distinct people**

Gen. 7:14

**Obey the Law**

Ex. 19:3-8

Accept Messiah

**Faith alone in Christ alone**

**Obey Christ**

## Failure

**Ate fruit**

Gen. 3:1-6

**Evil and wickedness**

Gen. 6:5-6

**Built Babel**

Gen. 11:1-4

**Assimilated**

Gen. 34

**Disobeyed**

2 Chron. 36:14

Reject Messiah

**Most reject Christ**

**Gog & Magog revolt**

## Divine Judgment

**Sp. death**

Gen. 3:7-19

**Flood**

Gen. 6-9

**Confusion of languages**

Gen. 11:5-9

**Egyptian bondage**

Ex. 1:8-14

**Diaspora**

Deut. 28:63-66

**Cross 5th cycle**

**Tribulation**

**Satan released; Lake of Fire**

**RAPTURE**

**GWT**

# BIBLICAL DISPENSATIONS

**Dispensationalism is a theological system which understands that God sovereignly governs the history of the human race through a sequence of divinely directed administrations marked by distinctive periods of time as He works out His plan to destroy sin and evil.**

# **Three Essential Elements of Dispensationalism:**

- 1. A consistent literal, historical, grammatical interpretation of the Bible.**
- 2. A distinction between God's plan for Israel and God's plan for the church.**
- 3. The overall purpose of God's plan for His creation is His glory.**

**“the natural or usual construction and implication of a writing or expression; following the ordinary and apparent sense of words; not allegorical or metaphorical” (*Webster’s New International Dictionary*).**



# **THE GOLDEN RULE OF INTERPRETATION**

**When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths indicate clearly otherwise.**