

# Dispensations

The 7,000 years of Human History



***Ephesians 1:10*** "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.."



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Article Series | End-Times Prophecy

**Dispensations** | The 7,000 years of Human History

The Seven Dispensations {Time Periods} ..... 4

1. Dispensation of Innocence ..... 4

2. Dispensation of Conscience ..... 5

3. Dispensation of Government ..... 5

4. Dispensation of Promise ..... 6

5. Dispensation of Law ..... 6

6. Dispensation of Grace ..... 7

*INTERLUDE: The 7-year Tribulation* ..... 7

7. (Final) Dispensation of Rest ..... 8

Chart on the Dispensations of Time ..... 9

# The Seven Dispensations {Time Periods}

There are seven dispensations throughout all of history (this includes past, present and future). Each period shows a pattern of how God works with people living in the dispensation. The pattern consistently shows a Responsibility; a Failure; a Judgment; and Grace to move on..

Each dispensation is unique but it will always end in catastrophe due to man's rebellious nature. Currently, we are in the dispensation of grace where all that is required of us is BELIEF in God's plan of salvation. But this age too will end in catastrophe (man is without excuse).

## **The Old Testament {Past}**

1st Dispensation - Innocence

2nd Dispensation - Conscience

3rd Dispensation - Government

4th Dispensation - Promise

5th Dispensation - Law

## **The New Testament {Present church age}**

6th Dispensation - Grace

## **INTERLUDE: The 7-year Tribulation {Future}**

The tribulation is an interval period where God will deal primarily with His ancient people Israel, to bring them to repentance. Ultimately, the tribulation will be a time of God's wrath upon an unbelieving world.

## **The Millennium {Future}**

7th Dispensation - Rest

## 1. Dispensation of Innocence

Creation Date: 4003 BC

Estimated duration of dispensation: 33 years {The 1st Adam}

This time period takes place during [Genesis 1:26-3:7](#). Dispensation begins in the Garden of Eden and ends with the Fall.

In the beginning.. God creates the world, Sun, Moon and stars in six days and rests on the seventh day ([Genesis 1:1-2:3](#); [2 Peter 3:5-7](#)). Mankind is given authority to rule, as well as the ability to make personal choices using free will. Adam and Eve are pure, innocent and enjoy fellowship {a relationship} with God.

**Responsibility:** Be fruitful and multiply; have dominion over all the earth.

**Man's Failure:** Adam and Eve chose to sin and disobey. This act transferred their dominion over to Satan. [Genesis 2:4-3:24](#); [2 Corinthians 4:4](#)

**God's Judgment:** Death and separation.

**God's Grace:** Covered their shame; Promise of a coming Saviour.

## 2. Dispensation of Conscience

Estimated Date: 3970 BC

Duration of dispensation: 1623 years

This time period takes place during [Genesis 3:7-8:22](#). Dispensation of Conscience begins at the fall and ends with Noah's Flood.

Civilization inherits Conscience where the knowledge of good and evil guided man's morality. Death also enters into the world where the departed dead go to an underworld deep beneath the earth. The saved went to a place known as "*Abraham's bosom*" {Now empty}. All the unsaved go to a place called hell where they remain in torment until judgment day. These two places were separated by a "*great gulf*" ([Luke 16:19-31](#), [23:43](#); [Acts 2:31](#)). As there is no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood, sacrificial offerings were a temporary means of covering sin. Ultimately, this was a foreshadow to the perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Restore fellowship by offering sacrifices and calling upon the name of the Lord.
<b>Man's Failure:</b>	Mankind becomes exceedingly wicked; their thoughts were evil all the time. Fallen angels are referenced in corrupting flesh as Giants (Nephilim) were on the earth in those days. See <a href="#">Genesis 6:1-7</a> ; <a href="#">1 Peter 3:19-20</a> ; <a href="#">2 Peter 2:4-6</a> ; <a href="#">Jude 1:6-7</a>
<b>God's Judgment:</b>	Destroyed world with a Flood ( <a href="#">Genesis 6:1-8:19</a> ; <a href="#">Jude 1:6-7</a> ). Fallen angels that sinned are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness until judgment day {Greek translation for hell used here is "Tartarus" - The Deepest abyss of Hades}. <a href="#">2 Peter 2:4</a>
<b>God's Grace:</b>	Blood sacrifices covered man's sin ( <a href="#">Leviticus 17:1-11</a> ); Noah's Ark gets carried safely through the flood event.

## 3. Dispensation of Government

Estimated Date: 2347 BC

Duration of dispensation: 426 years

This time period takes place during [Genesis 9:1-11:32](#). Dispensation of Government begins after the flood and ends at the Tower of Babel.

The year of the flood occurs 2348 BC, exactly 1656 years from creation. Noah and his family step off the Ark, feet touching land in the year 2347 BC.

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Replenish the earth; Authority to govern and prosecute others.
<b>Man's Failure:</b>	Did not scatter and fill the earth; Mankind exalts itself, unifying themselves as one.
<b>God's Judgment:</b>	Confused their Language at the tower of Babel. <a href="#">Genesis 11:1-9</a>
<b>God's Grace:</b>	Scattered people over all the earth.

## 4. Dispensation of Promise

Date: 1921 BC

Duration of dispensation: 430 years. See [Galatians 3:16-17](#)

This time period takes place during [Genesis 12:1](#) - [Exodus 19:25](#). This dispensation begins after the events of the tower of Babel and ends when the Law is given to Israel.

Abraham {born approximately 1996-1821 BC} is promised blessings to him and his heirs (commonly known as the Abrahamic covenant). Abraham was given a promise that his descendants would one day become a great nation and eventually possess a promised land. Israel became a nation on May 14th 1948. [Genesis 12:1-3](#); [Romans 4:11](#)

2000 years from the dispensation of conscience (commencing at the fall in 3970 BC) brings us to Abraham. 2000 years from this point will take us to 32 AD (the most likely year of the crucifixion). It is interesting to note that Abraham is pin-pointed perfectly, exactly dead-centre in this 4000 year history leading to Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The covenant is made with Abraham at age 75. [Genesis 12:1-4](#)

**Responsibility:** Believe and obey the covenant terms to share in the promises.

**Man's Failure:** Enslaved promised seed.

**God's Judgment:** Plagues and death of First-born.

**God's Grace:** Passover Blood.

## 5. Dispensation of Law

Date: 1491 BC

Duration of dispensation: 1522 years

This time period takes place during [Exodus 20:1](#) - [Acts 2:4](#). Dispensation begins when the Law is given to Israel and ends at Pentecost with the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Moses {born approximately 1520-1400 BC} receives the 10 commandments ([Exodus 20:1-24:12](#)). The Law exposes man's sinfulness, preparing him for the coming Saviour.

**Responsibility:** Commandments and Laws for Israel to govern life and activities.

**Man's Failure:** Broke commandments; failure to keep Laws.

**God's Judgment:** Destruction of Nation and First Temple; Subjected to bondage.

**God's Grace:** Second Temple and Gospel to first Jew.

## 6. Dispensation of Grace

Estimated Date: 32 AD

Estimated duration of dispensation: 1993 years

This time period takes place during [Acts 2:4](#) - [Revelation 3:22](#). Dispensation of Grace begins at Pentecost and ends with the Rapture of the Church.

The church age (times of the gentiles): God demonstrates His Love and Grace by redeeming us from sin with His own Blood. New covenant laws are written in men's hearts. [Ephesians 3:1-13](#)

The nation of Israel is temporarily cast off as a partial hardening had come upon her and will continue until "*the fullness of the Gentiles*" has come in. This simply means that there is a waiting period until a divinely set number of Gentiles are saved. The saved, known as the body of Christ {the church} is made up of both Jews and Gentiles who believe ([Luke 21:24](#); [John 14:1-3](#); [Romans 11:23-28](#); [Colossians 1:26-27](#); [Revelation 21:9](#)). If Israel's rejection of Jesus is a blessing for the Gentiles, the restoration of Israel will be even more so. [Romans 11:1-36](#)

**Responsibility:** Those who have Faith and believe the Gospel of Salvation are given the Spirit of Grace, and become sons of God in a new spiritual Kingdom. [Acts 2:1-21](#); [Matthew 3:16-17](#)

**Man's Failure:** Rejects the Saviour, Legalized and liberalized Grace.

**God's Judgment:** 7 Seals of world judgment.

**God's Grace:** Some saved from all Nations (Those who believe the Gospel of Salvation).  
This dispensation ends with the Rapture of the Church. [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#); [John 14:1-3](#); [1 Corinthians 15:51-52](#); [Revelation 19:7-18](#)

Events in Heaven proceeding the Rapture of the Church:

**Judgment Seat** (Rewards given). [2 Timothy 4:8](#); [1 Corinthians 3:11-15](#); [2 Corinthians 5:10](#)

## INTERLUDE: The 7-year Tribulation

Projected Start Date: 2025 AD

Duration: 7 years

This time period takes place during [Revelation 4:1-19:21](#). The tribulation begins after the church has been raptured and ends at the battle of Armageddon {Second Advent}.

The 7-year tribulation will commence shortly after the rapture of the church during which time God will deal primarily with His ancient people Israel, to bring them to repentance. This prophecy is also known as Daniel's 70th week, and "*the time of Jacob's trouble*". "70 weeks" (490 years) were determined for Israel, where each prophetic week represented seven years. So far only 69 weeks of this prophecy have been fulfilled - The prophecy began with the decree to restore and re-build Jerusalem, however the prophecy ended abruptly 483 years later at the crucifixion. The final week (7 years) is a future event that will ONLY commence after the rapture, once "*the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*."

*"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people {Israel} and upon thy holy city {Jerusalem}, to finish the transgression {the single act of rejecting their Messiah}, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting*

righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." [Daniel 9:24](#)

See also [Jeremiah 30:1-24](#); [Daniel 9:24-27](#), [12:1-13](#); [Matthew 24:21-22](#); [Luke 21:24](#); [Revelation 6:1-19:21](#)

The tribulation will be a time of God's wrath upon an unbelieving world. There will be much distress and wickedness in the hearts of people with catastrophic events, the likes of which the world has never seen. A seven year covenant will be made with Israel by the Anti-Christ under a false pretence of "*Peace and safety*", however this treaty will be broken mid-way. By the end of the seven years, Israel will realise that the Lord Jesus Christ was indeed their Messiah. They will finally accept Him as Lord and Saviour and they will be redeemed. The Tribulation will culminate in the Battle of Armageddon, which will be cut short by the Second Coming of Christ. It is at this point that the Lord Jesus returns physically to earth, feet touching the mount of Olives, along with His saints and Holy Angels where every eye shall see Him (This is the second advent). He will make war against the Anti-Christ and the ungodly nations and then establish His earthly Kingdom. [Joel 3:1-16](#); [Zechariah 14:1-5](#); [Revelation 16:13-21](#)

See also [Deuteronomy 4:29-31](#); [Ezekiel 20:33-44](#), [39:7-24](#); [Joel 2:28-32](#); [Zechariah 12:10-14](#); [Matthew 23:37-39](#); [Luke 13:34-35](#)

Events on earth proceeding the second advent:

**Marriage supper of the Lamb.** [Matthew 25:1-13](#); [Revelation 19:6-10](#)

## 7. (Final) Dispensation of Rest

Projected Start Date: 2032 AD

Duration of dispensation: 1000 years {Millennium}

This time period takes place during [Revelation 20:1-6](#). Dispensation begins after the battle of Armageddon and ends with fire from heaven.

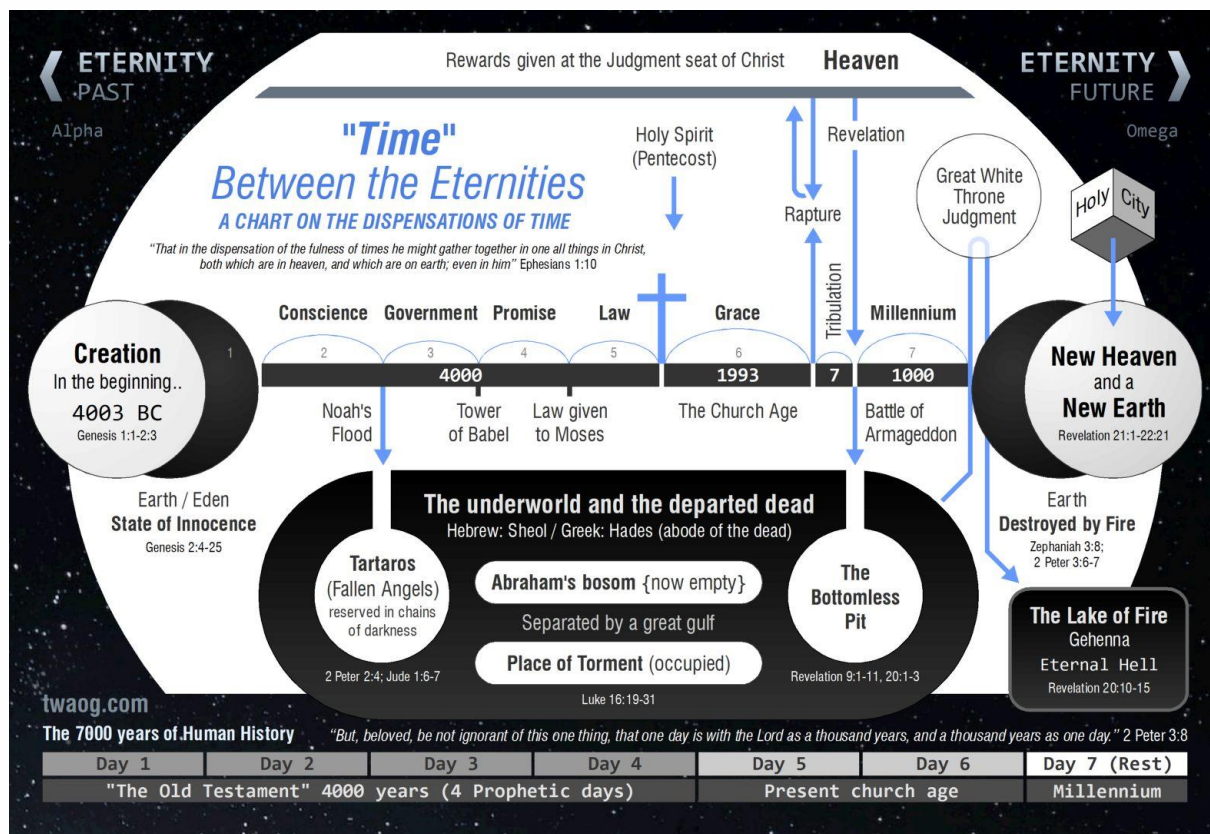
Jesus returns as The Messiah at the second advent ([Zechariah 14:1-5](#); [Matthew 24:27-31](#)) and the Messianic Kingdom is established. The Millennium is unique as there is no tempter. Satan is bound and cast into the bottomless pit ([Luke 8:28-31](#); [Revelation 9:1-11](#), [20:1-3](#)). The surviving tribulation believers replenish the earth. Peace and righteousness prevail for one thousand years, where church age saints and the faithful elect reign with the Lord Jesus Christ.

See also [Isaiah 2:1-11](#), [11:6-9](#), [60:22](#), [65:20-25](#); [Zechariah 8:1-23](#), [14:6-21](#); [Revelation 20:1-6](#)

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Journey to Jerusalem to pay homage and worship the King. <a href="#">Isaiah 2:2</a> ; <a href="#">Zechariah 14:16-21</a>
<b>Man's Failure:</b>	Satan is released to deceive the nations once more. Mankind attacks City of God. <a href="#">Revelation 20:7-8</a>
<b>God's Judgment:</b>	Fire from Heaven, Earth destroyed ( <a href="#">Zephaniah 3:8</a> ; <a href="#">2 Peter 3:6-7</a> ; <a href="#">Revelation 20:9-15</a> ). The " <i>great white throne</i> " judgment takes place ( <a href="#">Daniel 12:1-3</a> ; <a href="#">Matthew 25:31-46</a> ; <a href="#">Hebrews 9:27</a> ). The unsaved are cast into the lake of fire: Gehenna (Hell). <a href="#">Revelation 19:20</a> , <a href="#">20:10-15</a>
<b>God's Grace:</b>	Creates New Heaven and New Earth; Eternal state ( <a href="#">2 Peter 3:13</a> ; <a href="#">Revelation 21:1-22:21</a> ). The Holy city {new Jerusalem} comes down from God out of heaven. <a href="#">Revelation 3:12</a> , <a href="#">21:2-27</a>



# Chart on the Dispensations of Time



## Credits

Dr. Ralph "Yankee" Arnold. Website: [yankeearnold.com](http://yankeearnold.com) - Design concept for our "Time Between the Eternities" illustration chart (pictured above) drew it's initial inspiration from Dr Arnold's chart on the "Prophetic Survey of Time", as well as "The Spirit World" and "Ages and Dispensations" illustration charts drawn by Clarence Larkin.