
-STUDIES IN EPHESIANS- #14

There are 3 references to dispensation in Eph. We must keep in mind that the use of the word "Dispensation" in the Word is limited to the families of God, and does not apply to mankind in general. It is perfectly possible that 2 or more dispensations may be concurrent, so that we see that they are not primarily ages or time limits. With that in mind, let us examine these three.

1. A DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF THE SEASONS. 1:10. This is in connection with the mystery of His will. This was realized at the time Paul wrote the epistle. It has to do with the One who is first-born (heir) of all creation, first-born from among the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. Now, right now, all things have been gathered together in one (one body or group) in Christ. These "All things" are both in the heavens and in the earth. Do we need to remind you that these things are the things of God and cannot be nor ever can be the things of the evil one? Right now the Lord has been raised far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the coming one: and hath put all things under His feet. We may not see this as yet, but it is an accomplished fact.

2. A DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD. 3:2. This does not have the scope that the first one does, but may be more than many realize. God began dealing with believers in grace in the house of Cornelius. There Gentiles were saved and came into the blessings of Israel without any observance whatsoever of the law. But at that same time Jewish believers were under the law. Then at the end of Acts the middle wall was broken down and so all of God's family of both Jew and Gentile were under grace. This not only applied to the dispensation of the mystery, but also to the dispensation of everlasting life as set forth in the Gospel of John. In fact, we know of no family of God today which is under law, even tho nearly all denominations observe the law to some extent.

3. THE DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY. 3:9. That the word "dispensation" has been translated "fellowship" here does not change the meaning very much. This dispensation or fellowship has to do with a family or household which has the unique hope of occupying the heavenlies in resurrection. It is a group that is blessed without benefit of the Jew in any way, but is blessed in Christ. Eph. 1:3

-REDEMPTION & ATONEMENT-

When man was placed on the earth and a command was given to test him, the penalty of disobedience was "Thou shalt surely die." The commandment was broken. Death came, not only upon Adam, but upon all mankind. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men.

When the command was given, there was no hope then given of a way of escape from that death. But as soon as the transgression was discovered and man confessed, a way of escape was provided. No, it was not shedding of the blood of bulls and goats. It was not the skins which covered them. It was the gospel in Gen. 3:15. When they believed it, they had a hope of resurrection which is the only way of escape from death. The Seed of woman, God's only begotten Son, was the only one who could accomplish redemption. We have the same gospel in John 3:16. It is by believing that gospel, not by any of our own works, that we must be saved.

But after Adam and Eve had believed the gospel and had the hope of resurrection, they still were naked. In that naked state they had no fellowship with God. Here is where the slaying of animals and the provision of skins for clothing came in. They were provided with an atonement or reconciliation so as to restore fellowship with God.

We have the same order of events in the exodus. First Israel were redeemed out of the death of Egypt. They were redeemed by the strong arm of Jehovah. There was nothing for them to do but to trust in the blood. They stood still and saw the salvation of God. But later, at Sinai, the atonement was instituted which was to make a redeemed people fit to come into the presence of God. They had been redeemed from death, but the atonement was for sins.

Today Satan is very busy getting people to look at their sins. If they do this long enough, they will become discouraged and will give up as workmen for God. Satan tried the same trick on Martin Luther and showed him a long list of his sins. But Luther reminded Satan that those sins had been put under the blood and were washed away. Satan had no more to say!

Also today we have a glorious gospel in the which these two things have been, in a sense, reversed. The good news to the ungodly is that their sins have been forgiven, for that was the result of blood shed on Calvary. This gives them boldness to come to God to receive the gift of eternal life. Do not mistake forgiveness of sins for salvation.

-PAUL AND THE GREAT COMMISSION-

In Matt. 28:19-20 and Mark 16:15-18 is recorded the great commission which was given to the apostles. Luke 24:47, 48 also speaks of the same thing. They were to have a world-wide ministry. They were to preach to the nations (heathen). They were to baptize in the triune name. Signs were to follow showing that they were the true apostles.

But the 12 never left the Land that was promised to Abraham during the time of Acts. The only one who preached to a Gentile during that time was Peter. This was in the house of Cornelius. They never did baptize in the triune name. They baptized in the name of Jesus. Thruout Acts the signs did follow.

At a first reading, one might be inclined to think that the 12 gave over the great commission to Paul at a council meeting in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:8-9). But we also find that even after this all during Acts, Paul went to the Jew first when he entered a new city to preach. So he preached to both Jew and Gentile, but always to the Jew first.

We further read in Rom. 11:13, 14 "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them." There is the secret of the ministry to the Gentiles during Acts. It was that some of Israel might be saved. Surely this was not the purpose of the great commission. Then we can conclude that Paul did not have the great commission handed over to him.

Then the question may come to mind; Will the great commission ever be carried out? Certainly it will be carried out! The 12 were chosen to do it. They have not done it yet, but they will do it some day. As rulers over the 12 tribes (then reunited and under the new covenant, Jer. 31:31) the 12 in the Millennium will carry out the terms of the great commission.

Many do not realize that the great commission was given to the apostles and the nation of Israel. This is when they will be able to fulfil their purpose as stated in Exodus 19:5, 6. There they were told they were to be a peculiar treasure and a kingdom of priests. Priests are those who are mediators. Israel is to be a nation of mediators between God and the nations, the very nations who at one time were given up.

No one is obligated to obey the command of the great commission today. It is to be the work of Israel. But now, today, Israel is LO-AMMI (set aside for the time being).

-SOWING TO THE FLESH-

Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Gal. 6:7, 8.

1. John 15:6. Unless any one abide in Me he is cast forth as the branch (Bagster Inter-linear). The branch withers. Its fruit, and bad fruit at that, as well as the leaves, is cast into fire. Here is the picture of one who has lost fellowship with God and lost his testimony. Such was Lot. All he owned was burned up in Sodom and he was saved as by fire. The casting forth is done by the husbandman. It does not say that the branch is burned. But the branch is stripped of all it had. So those who have not will have taken from them even that which they have. Such was the case of the man with the one pound or the one with one talent. This lesson has nothing to do with the standing of the believer, but with his practice and state.

2. 1 Cor. 3:9-15. Here again is a lesson as to state, not standing. For all who are spoken of have built on the one foundation. But all did not build of the same material. The reward is determined by what is used in building and how it is built. Those whose works abide the testing by fire receive a reward. But those whose works do not abide suffer loss, but are not lost. They are saved as by fire. This is a distinction too few today can make. The subject of state and standing needs much study. If you will but read on, you will note that the Corinthians were yet under the law. If a man defiled his body, which was a temple of the Spirit, him would God destroy (kill). He would be judged even as were Ananias and Sapphira. They were not lost. They were believers. But they certainly suffered loss, even of their lives. Lucky we are not under law now!

3. Phil. 3:19. Whose end destruction (Bagster Inter-linear). End is not cessation, but the issue or result. It does not mean the believer will be destroyed, but that he will suffer loss or destruction of something. The something is his works or the material with which he builded. The believer himself can never perish (Jn 10:28). He is sure of a resurrection. But he is not sure of a reward until his works are judged.

The reference in Gal. with which we began refers to brethren, to believers. Is is a warning to them. If they do what they please in the flesh, they will suffer loss. If they do what God pleases (which is taught by the Spirit) they will receive reward. You should pursue the subject further for yourself.

TRUTH FOR YOUTH

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-STRUCTURAL STUDIES #3

In our first study we took up the form called Alternation. We looked at it and gave examples in the simple form. Also it may go on with an indefinite number of pairs in alternation. It is then called Repeated Alternation. It is something like this;

- A¹ /-----
- B¹ /-----
- A² /-----
- B² /-----
- A³ /-----
- B³ /-----

When I got to this point, I opened my Companion Bible at random for an illustration and it opened to Mark 12:2-8. There is a fine example of Repeated Alternation.

- A¹ / 2. A servant sent.
- B¹ / 3. His treatment.
- A² / 4-. Another servant sent.
- B² / -4. His treatment.
- A³ / 5-. Another servant sent.
- B³ / -5-. His treatment.
- A⁴ / -5-. Many others sent.
- B⁴ / -5. Their treatment.
- A⁵ / 6. The only Son sent.
- B⁵ / 7, 8. His treatment.

You will find further examples in John 8:12-19; Jer. 35:12-16, and others.

You will find another form called extended alternation in which the pairs are grouped under two headings as in Luke 15: 11-32.

- A / a/ 12-16. The younger son.
- b/ 17-20-. His penitence.
- c/ -20. His father's compassion.
- d/ 21. Younger son's confession.
- e/ 22, 23. The father's gifts.
- f/ 24. The reason. "For,"&c.
- B / a/ 25-27. The elder brother.
- b/ 28-. His anger.
- c/ -28. The father's entreaty.
- d/ 29, 30. Elder son's complaint.
- e/ 31-32-. The father's gifts.
- f/ -32. The reason. "For,"&c.

No doubt you can readily see the help you can get from this simple structure as you compare and contrast the pairs. They uncover and bring to light many truths that otherwise you would overlook.

As you leaf thru your Companion Bible you will see scores and scores of these outlines in the margins. Use them and get all the teaching you can.

Mr. Welch has made good use of the structures and you can find an index to the various ones he has used in the index to volumes I-XX. I have copied many of these in a notebook for reference when teaching. Also I have made many of my own.

DEAR YOUNG FOLKS; No doubt many of

you who read this column are about the age of 17. This seems to be an important age. It is also the age of importance. A young man or girl of 17 are about as big as they will ever be. Then is when they wonder how their parents can be so ignorant!

A Hoosier novelist has written a book entitled "Seventeen." The writer seemed to know a great deal about folks of that age.

Once a little lad of 17 got "smart" as we would say today. He was mocking his younger half-brother. Can imagine he was sticking out his tongue and calling names or something of that order. At least it cost him and his mother their nice home and they went into the wilderness where he almost died of thirst. Read Gen. 21. That happened a few thousand years ago, and yet today the descendants of these two boys are fighting each other in the land of Palestine. They are the Arabs and Israelites.

But it was not always so bad for those of 17 years. Joseph was 17 when he was sold by his brothers down into Egypt. He was able to withstand temptation, behaved himself very wisely, and when he was 30 he was made prime minister over all the great land of Egypt. God was his partner, of course.

As we look at the news today we find that a great many youngsters of 17 get entangled with the law, especially in the matter of traffic violations. Why? Is this a bad age for the young folks? Just what is the trouble?

Well, here is the trouble. Young children are very dependent on their parents or some adult for everything. They have to be fed and clothed, given advice, and guided in everything they do. So that is an age of dependence. But almost suddenly this changes. There comes a day when the child becomes very independent. He goes to the extreme as the usual thing. He does not want anybody to tell him anything. Outwardly, at least, he appears able to run his own affairs without any help whatsoever. He has become of age in that respect. He may not need God!

But all that is just on the outside. On the inside he is full of fears and uncertainty. The sudden coming to make decisions is a little too much and how he would like somebody to lean on. But he dares not admit it. He must keep up a bold front, or what would his friends think? If anybody ever needed a friend and some advice, it is the 17-year-old. It is also a good time to look to God.

But in a few years things begin to get adjusted a little and so he comes back to normal condition called inter-dependence.

Sincerely in HIM, Oscar M. Baker.

- THE EDITOR'S DESK -

MR. CHARLES H. WELCH is coming to this country for a tour of some of the Bible classes this spring. We have word that his visa has been granted, passage has been booked for both coming and going. In the meantime Elroy Robinson and myself have been working out the itinerary which we can now set forth with little likelihood of any change. You can now be making your plans to go to hear him at the nearest point or points. This is the route;

Plymouth, Ind.	April 29
Warsaw, Ind.	May 1
Hobart, Ind.	2
Indianapolis, Ind.	3, 4, 5
Oshkosh, Wis.	6, 7, 8
Milwaukee, Wis.	9
Rockford, Ill.	10, 11
Lowell, Ark.	13
Springfield, Mo.	14, 15
Fort Worth, Tex.	16, 17, 18
Houston, Tex.	19, 20, 21, 22
Los Angeles, Calif.	26, 27, 28, 29
Riverside, Calif.	30, 31
San Francisco, Calif.	June 4, 5
Fresno, Calif.	6, 7
Chicago, Ill.	9, 10, 11, 12
Muskegon, Mich.	16
Grand Rapids, Mich.	17, 18, 19
Detroit, Mich.	20
Toronto, Ont.	21
Buffalo, N. Y.	22
Philadelphia, Pa.	23, 24, 25
Paterson, N. J.	26, 27, 28

It is possible that the San Francisco meeting may be cancelled. No one has yet made arrangements there. We wrote to about 13 people, but no reply so far.

We have sent out the form letters to all the places for information as to place and time and other details. Much of this information is in. We have to have it in the hands of Mr. Welch by the last of January.

Thanks for your cooperation in this matter. If you wish to help financially with the trip, send you money to Elroy Robinson, 711 Woodland Rd., Knollwood, Lake Bluff, Ill. He will send you a receipt.

THANKS A LOT for all the nice cards and greetings of the season. So nice that so many remembered us. If you do not get cards from us, you will understand that we have been putting all the time and money into our work here.

THE BIBLE CLASS which meets at my home, has been studying the 8 parables of Matt. 13 lately. The class meets each Tue. nite at 7:30. You and your friends are welcome to come in.

We have a few back copies of TFT which may be had for the asking.

LETTERS, AND MORE LETTERS; but how we like them! You sent us 1033 during last year. Nearly all have been answered. The rest will be just as soon as we can get to them. See if you can double that this year.

FINANCIAL REPORT for the year will be out soon. This will be sent to all donors. If you do not get yours, remind us.

WHY NOT send in a \$ bill for a renewal or a new subscription to the Berean Expositor? Many have already done so.

TFT IS FREE and will be sent to anyone anywhere upon request.

TAPES FOR LENDING

- #1. Introductory to life and resurrection.
 - #2. Lessons 1 & 2 in Eph.
 - #3. The Christian's Greatest Need, E.W.B.
- Be sure to specify speed of your recorder, whether 7.5 or 3.75 ips.

BOOKS YOU MAY NEED

The Two Natures, Bullinger	\$.60
The Giver and His Gifts, Bullinger	2.65
Apocalypse, Bullinger	2.50
Witness of the Stars, Bullinger	4.25
Number in Scripture, Bullinger	5.00
The Law of the Offerings, Jukes	2.50
The Coming Prince, Anderson	3.95
The Silence of God, Anderson	2.50
LXX Greek and English, Bagster	6.30
Interlinear N T, Pocket size, Bagster	4.25
N. T. Ministries, Mills	1.25
Expository Dict. of N T Words, Vine	9.50
Englishman's Heb. and Chald. Con.	17.50
Englishman's Greek Concordance	8.50
Thy Testimonies, Vo. 1	2.00
Companion Bible, buckram	12.00
Companion Bible, quarter leather	16.00
Companion Bible, full leather	24.00
New Covenant, Mills (Mimeographed)	.45
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