

**A
BIBLIOGRAPHIC
HISTORY
OF
DISPENSATIONALISM**

Compiled by
Arnold D. Ehlert



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CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	5
II.	Introduction (continued)	12
III.	Definitions and Early Roots	23
IV.	From the Reformation to 1825	33
V.	From 1825 to about 1850	47
VI.	From about 1850 to the Scofield Era	56
VII.	From about 1850 to the Scofield Era (continued) ..	69
VIII.	Scofield Dispensationalism and the Post-Scofield Era	82
IX.	Scofield Dispensationalism and the Post-Scofield Era (continued)	95
	Additional Bibliography	100
	Index	109

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1. *Purpose and Scope.*

The purpose of this bibliography is to provide a basis for the study of the doctrinal history of the subject of ages and dispensations. William Cox of England said, "There are few more instructive investigations than the study of religious doctrines."¹

The current use of the term "modern dispensationalism" carries two possible inferences: either that the doctrine of dispensationalism as such is modern, or that the particular type of dispensationalism styled "modern" is quite different from ancient dispensationalism. Those who use the term, however, do not always indicate definitely which inference they mean to imply, beyond that of animadversion. Neither do they indicate the history or the features of ancient dispensationalism and related doctrines, if they admit such. This so-called "modern dispensationalism" is usually dated from Mr. John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) and the Plymouth Brethren of England, or from Dr. Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (1843-1921), who popularized the doctrine in his preaching, teaching and Bible notes. As to the division, the bibliography will speak for itself.

In addition to this general situation, there is the particular situation in the Presbyterian Church, U. S., with which the readers of this magazine are familiar.²

Further, there are a vast number of sincere Christians

¹ *A Premillennial Manual*, London: Nisbet, n.d., p. x. That Cox himself held dispensational views is evidenced by his statement, "The millennium, with all its advantages, has, like every other dispensation, failed" (*Ibid.*, p. 106).

² See the editorial in Vol. 100, pp. 337-45.

who have come into more or less of the teaching of dispensationalism and its consequent effect upon the interpretation of the Bible. Perhaps many of these have asked themselves, as the compiler has asked himself, "Is dispensationalism just another fad to be superseded or outmoded in another generation or two?"

The present introduction of the whole subject into the field of the history of Christian doctrine will enlarge the basis for the study of the subject, and should facilitate a general grasp of the historical situation with regard to it.³

Biblical exposition of the subject abounds. But there are those who shy away from teaching which is not expressly covered in the creeds and dogmas of the Church, no matter how appealing the Biblical exposition may be.⁴ To such there will be some comfort in learning that dispensationalism is not too "modern," and that it was acknowledged, in one form or another, by many able men, whose general teaching is accepted, in different branches of the household of faith. The strong conviction, then, that a clear and accurate examination of the Scriptures forces upon a person, with respect to the genuineness and authenticity of the doctrine of dispensationalism, will be reinforced by this light from the past.

For the purposes of the compilation, however, these issues are all secondary. The approach is not to strengthen the faith of some, nor to unsettle the belief of others, but

³The bibliography will of necessity be far from complete. The libraries of the British Isles and the continent would reveal a much extended list, without doubt, could one have access to them. John Edwards, who, according to his biography, spent the two years previous to the publication of his monumental work of two volumes on the subject in 1699 at the library of Cambridge University, says: "I had not met with any author that had undertaken to comprise them all [all the dispensations], and to give us an account of them according to their true Series . . . though I have done but little, yet I never met with any that hath done so much on this Theme, whether we have respect to the full enumeration of the Oeconomies, or whether we speak of the Reasons and Grounds of them." From this statement, it would appear that there was a considerable literature on various phases of the subject at that time, and we may safely assume that it was not neglected after Edwards had elaborated it so fully in his treatise.

⁴To be sure, the Westminster Confession of Faith does mention the subject, Chap. VII, Section VI, "There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations."

to bring to light the facts. No system of dispensationalism—and it will readily be seen that there are many—will be supported in preference to another. An attempt will be made to exhibit each writer's system, and the philosophy that lies behind it, or the basis of approach, or the foundation upon which it rests, whichever is most obvious. Considerable effort is being made to make the data regarding the authors and works as complete and as accurate as possible. Annotations will be sufficient to enable the casual reader to see at a glance the system held by the author, but the careful student will want to examine the original materials for himself.

Some may expect to find works referred to that will not appear. Due to the immensity of the literature on limited phases of the whole subject, it was necessary to eliminate all works dealing with only one or two dispensations, with the millennium as such, with Israel, and with the law-grace controversy. Only such works as mention *three or more* dispensations or economies of God's redemptive dealings with men can be admitted. The many time-period divisions of the Christian era occasioned by the studies of the Apocalypse, many of which are 7-fold, are also eliminated from this listing. The only exceptions to this will be such references as may be necessary to fill out the historical picture.

Neither can mention be made of the host of writers who use the words *dispensation* and *economy* in their various shades of meaning. It should also be remembered that the reduction of a man's position to outline form, where he did not so reduce it (most of them did), does not make the man a "dispensationalist," but is done merely for convenience.

After a presentation of the historical background, the dispensational material proper will be presented in five sections:

- I. Definitions.
- II. Books.
- III. Pamphlets.
- IV. Magazine articles.
- V. Charts.

2. *Historical Background.*

It seems likely that the roots of the whole doctrine of ages and dispensations will have to be traced back to the six creative days, and the seventh day of rest, of Genesis, which have been considered prophetically symbolic of a number of periods of development to be followed by a period of utopia, as the Sabbath follows the six days of work. David Gregory, a learned mathematician and astronomer of Oxford, England, who died in 1710, says: "In the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, the Hebrew letter Aleph, which in the Jewish arithmetic stands for 1000, is six times found. From hence the ancient Cabalists concluded that the world would last 6000 years. Because also God was six days about the creation, and a thousand years with him are but as one day; . . . therefore after six days, that is 6000 years duration of the world, there shall be a seventh day, or millenary sabbath of rest."⁵

Rabbi Baal Katturim said, "There are six millenniums in the first verse of the first of Genesis, answering to the 6000 years which the world is to continue."⁶ This tradition is traceable throughout pagan, Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan theology. While it is not dispensationalism, it seems to be related basically to the main features of the larger doctrine of dispensationalism; and for the twin purposes of showing this relationship, and of demonstrating the distinction between it and dispensationalism proper, with which it might be confused, the various phases of this tradition are here set forth at some length.

a. *The Sex- and Septa-Millenary Tradition.*

i. *Pagan.*

To D. T. Taylor is due credit for citing a large part of the literature dealing with the six and seven thousand year tradition, which is to be found in his book, *The Voice of the*

⁵Hales *Analysis of Chronology*, Vol. I, p. 79, quoted in Taylor's *Voice of the Church*, p. 26.

⁶Sayer Rudd, *Essay on the Resurrection, Millennium, and Judgment*, London, 1734, p. 369. Quoted by Taylor, *Voice of the Church*, p. 26.

Church.' Here he quotes a number of prominent authors to the effect that this tradition is to be found among many of the ancient religious writings.

"The Chaldeans, according to Plutarch, believed in a struggle between good and evil for the space of 6000 years; 'and then Hades is to cease, and men are to be happy, neither wanting food nor making shade.' Zoroaster taught the same. Plutarch assigns no reason for these opinions; but Daubuz from whom I extract them, supposes they are of patriarchal origin. He adds: The Tuscans had an opinion which the Persians still hold, that 'God has appointed twelve thousand years to his works, the first 6,000 were employed in creation, the other six are appointed for the duration of mankind.'"¹

Among the Egyptians, Hermes Trismegistus, originator of Egyptian art, science, magic and religion, taught a similar doctrine.²

"The Etruscan cosmogony was of a very remarkable character. According to the account of it given by Suidas (*s.v.* Τυρρηνία), the demiurge appointed twelve millenniums for his acts of creation, and assigned them severally to the twelve signs of the zodiac. In the first chiliad he created heaven and earth; in the second, the firmament; in the third, the sea, and the waters upon the land; in the fourth, the great lights of heaven—sun, moon, and stars; in the fifth, everything in the air, earth, and water that creeps and flies and runs upon four feet; and in the sixth, man. Six thousand years had thus elapsed before the creation of man, and the human race should endure for six thousand years more.

¹D. T. Taylor, *The Voice of the Church on the Coming and Kingdom of the Redeemer: or, a History of the Doctrine of the Reign of Christ on Earth.* The Bible Student's Library. Revised and edited, with a preface, by H. L. Hastings. Eighth ed. Scriptural Tract Repository, 1866. 406 pp.

²Ward, *History of the Millennium*, p. 2, quoted by Taylor, p. 27. (Charles Daubuz (1670?-1740?), was a prominent French Protestant divine, and a prophetic student of considerable reputation.)

³Gregory, from Hale's *Analysis of Chronology*, Vol. I, p. 79. Quoted by Taylor, p. 26.

The similarity of this creation story to the Biblical account is unmistakable."¹⁰

Zoroaster, ancient Persian philosopher, who is variously located between 500 and 1000 B.C., taught that there would be 6000 years of the world's duration, after which "in the last times after much evil of every kind had afflicted the earth, two beings of supernatural powers appear and extensively reform mankind. In the end another superior personage, viz., Sosioch—a name resembling in sound the Hebrew Messiah [Mashiach]—makes his appearance, under whose reign the dead are raised, the judgment takes place, and the earth is renovated and glorified."¹¹

Theopompus, a Greek historian and rhetorician, who was born about 380 B.C., says that "the Persian Magi taught the present state of things would continue 6000 years, after which Hades, or death, would be destroyed, and men would live happy."¹² The idea may be seen in the writings of Darius Hystaspes, old king of the Medes.¹³

The Sibylline Oracles, interesting writings of uncertain date, purporting to be the teachings of prophetesses concerning kingdoms and times, said to be traceable to pagan, Jewish and Christian sources, carry the same sex-millennial scheme. There were fourteen books, and there is to be seen a rather close relationship to the Scriptural prophecies concerning the Messiah and His kingdom.¹⁴

ii. *Jewish.*

The Jewish tradition of the six thousand years, followed by the Sabbath millennium, dates at least from the second century B.C., the approximate date of Rabbi Elias, according to Bishop Russell of Scotland.¹⁵ His tradition has come

¹⁰*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, art., "Etruscan Religion," Vol. V, p. 538.

¹¹Taylor, p. 28. Prideaux supposes that Zoroaster had been a student of the Hebrew prophets (*Connection*, 1815, Vol. I, p. 382ff.). Hengstenberg thought he stole and adulterated the truths of revelation.

¹²Extracted from Bishop Russell by Taylor, p. 27.

¹³Taylor, p. 26.

¹⁴See Stuart on the Apocalypse, 1845, Vol. I, pp. 87ff., and Taylor, pp. 31-33. (The Oracles are thought by some to be impostures and spurious.)

¹⁵*Discourse on the Millennium*, p. 39, in Taylor, p. 25.

down among Jewish teachers as "the tradition of the house of Elias." He taught that the world would be "2000 years void of the law; 2000 years under the law; and 2000 years under the Messiah." In the seventh millenary "the earth would be renewed and the righteous dead raised; that these should not again be turned to dust, and that the just then alive should mount up with wings as the eagle . . ."¹⁶

It is of considerable interest that on one of the fly leaves of the first edition of Luther's Bible, now in the British Museum, is to be seen a statement of this tradition in the handwriting of Philip Melancthon. In his attestation that it was written in the year 1557, he adds this note: "From this number we may be assured that this aged world is not far from its end."¹⁷ The tradition is also to be found in the Midrash, and is noted in many Christian writings.

Rabbi Gedaliah says: "At the end of 6000 years the world shall return to its old state, without form and void, and after that it shall wholly become a Sabbath."¹⁸

The author of *Cespar Mishna*, in his notes on Maimonides, writes: "At the end of 6000 years will be the day of judgment, and it will also be the Sabbath, the beginning of the world to come. The Sabbath year, and year of jubilee, intend the same thing."¹⁹

Rabbi Ketina is quoted from the Gemarah, a comment on the Mishna, to the effect that "in the last of the thousands of years of the world's continuance, the world shall be destroyed; . . . even as every seventh year is a year of release, so of the seventh thousand years of the world, it shall be the thousand years of release."²⁰

¹⁶Taylor, pp. 25, 26. See also Cave, *History of the Apostles*.

¹⁷Taylor, p. 160.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁹Rudd's *Essay*, p. 369, quoted by Taylor, pp. 26, 27.

²⁰Taylor, p. 27.

Chapter II

INTRODUCTION (continued)

iii. *Early Christian Sex- and Septa-Millenary Tradition*

The Christian sex- and septa-millenary tradition dates back at least to the Epistle of Barnabas, the earliest of the Apostolic Fathers (70-79 A. D.).²¹ The Epistle contains the following lines: "And even in the beginning of the creation he makes mention of the sabbath. And God made in six days the works of his hands; and he finished them on the seventh day, and he rested the seventh day, and sanctified it.

"Consider, my children, what that signifies, he finished them in six days. The meaning of it is this; that in six thousand years the Lord God will bring all things to an end.

"For with him one day is a thousand years; as himself testifieth, saying, Behold this day shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished.

"And what is that he saith, And he rested the seventh day: he meaneth this; that when his Son shall come, and abolish the season of the Wicked One, and judge the ungodly; and shall change the sun, and the moon, and the stars; then he shall gloriously rest in that seventh day."²²

In the fragment known as "The Book of the Secrets of Enoch," reputed to have originated "somewhere about the beginning of the Christian era," and to have "come to light through certain manuscripts which were recently found in

²¹*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed., art., "Epistle of Barnabas."

²²"The General Epistle of Barnabas," Chap. XIII, 3-6. Hone's *Apocryphal New Testament*, London, 1820, p. 158, and comparable editions. (See Chap. XV in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I, Buffalo, 1885, pp. 146, 147.)

Russia and Servia and so far as is yet known has been preserved only in Slavonic," we find a similar reference: "And I appointed the eighth day also, that the eighth day should be the first-created after my work, and that *the first seven* revolve in the form of the seventh thousand, and that at the beginning of the eighth thousand there should be a time of not-counting, endless, with neither years nor months nor weeks nor days nor hours."²³

Justin Martyr (c. 100-163/67), Christian apologist, in his "Dialogue with Trypho," is credited with the following words: "We may conjecture from many places in Scripture that those are in the right who say six thousand years is the time fixed for the duration of the present frame of the world."²⁴

Irenaeus (c. 130—?), Bishop of Lyons, writes: "For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded . . . For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed: it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at the sixth thousand year."²⁵

—Hippolytus (3d cent.) interpreted the seven heads of the Beast of Revelation 13 as seven ages, the seventh having not come in St. John's time.²⁶

Cyprian (Caecilius Cyprianus) (c. 200-258), Bishop of Carthage, and rhetorician, is said to have fixed, with the other Fathers, "the period of 6000 years, and made the seventh Millennium 'the consummation of all.'"²⁷

Lactantius (Lactantius Firmianus) (c. 260-340), tutor to one of the sons of Constantine the Great, is very emphatic on the millenary scheme: "Therefore, since all the works of God were completed in six days, the world must continue in

²³"The Book of the Secrets of Enoch," XXXIII, 1, *The Forgotten Books of Eden*, edited by Rutherford H. Platt, Jr., Cleveland, The World Pub. Co., 1927, p. 93. By permission of Mr. Platt, owner of the copyright.

²⁴D. T. Taylor, *The Voice of the Church*, 8th ed., Scriptural Tract Repository, 1866, p. 59.

²⁵Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," Book V, Chap. XXVIII, sec. 3, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, N. Y., Scribner's, 1899, Vol. I, p. 557.

²⁶E. B. Elliott, *Horae Apocalypticae*, London, Seeley, Burnside, and Seeley, 1846, Vol. IV, p. 344.

²⁷Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

its present state through six ages, that is, six thousand years. For the great day of God is limited by a circle of a thousand years, as the prophet shows, who says, 'In Thy sight, O Lord, a thousand years are as one day.' And as God laboured during those six days in creating such great works, so His religion and truth must labour during these six thousand years, while wickedness prevails and bears rule. And again, since God, having finished His works, rested the seventh day and blessed it, at the end of the six thousandth year all wickedness must be abolished from the earth, and righteousness reign for a thousand years; and there must be tranquility and rest from the labours which the world now has long endured."²⁸

Jerome (Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus) (c. 340?-420), translator of the Latin Vulgate, "taught that the world would endure but 6,000 years, and at their termination (which he placed A.D. 500), the consummation would occur, and Christ come."²⁹

Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers (c. 300-367) "refers to the old idea of a seventh sabbatical Millenary; saying that as Christ was transfigured in glory after the six days, so after the world's 6,000 years there would be manifested the glory of Christ's eternal kingdom. He constantly insisted that the day and hour of the consummation was a secret with God, but knowing the doubtfulness of our world's chronology, he still maintained the idea of the world's sex-millennial duration."³⁰

The name of Augustine (354-430), Bishop of Hippo, has been bandied about considerably in reference to dispensationalism. There will be more to say about his writings from that standpoint in the proper place, but here we notice his remarks on the thousand-year idea. "Now, on the subject of this rest Scripture is significant, and refrains not to speak, when it tells us how at the beginning of the world, and at

²⁸"The Divine Institutes," Book VII, Chap. XIV, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. VII, p. 211. See also Taylor, pp. 82-84.

²⁹Taylor, p. 96. See also Joseph Seiss, *The Last Times*, Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1878, p. 396.

³⁰Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

the time when God made heaven and earth and all things which are in them, He worked during six days, and rested on the seventh day . . . For He had not labored in the view that He might enjoy (a needful) rest, since indeed 'He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created;' but that He might signify how, after six ages of this world, in a seventh age, as on the seventh day, He will rest in His saints; inasmuch as these same saints shall rest also in Him after all the good works in which they have served Him,—which He Himself, indeed, works in them, who calls them, and instructs them, and puts away the offenses that are past, and justifies the man who previously was ungodly. For as, when by His gift they work that which is good, He is Himself rightly said to work (that in them), so, when they rest in Him, He is rightly said to rest Himself. For, as regards Himself, He seeks no cessation, because He feels no labor. Moreover He made all things by His Word; and His Word is Christ Himself, in whom the angels and all those purest spirits of heaven rest in holy silence. Man, however, in that he fell by sin, has lost the rest which he possessed in His divinity, and receives it again (now) in His humanity; and for this purpose He became man, and was born of a woman, at the seasonable time at which He Himself knew it behoved it so to be fulfilled . . . Of His future coming the ancient saints, in the revelation of the Spirit, had knowledge, and prophesied. And thus were they saved by believing that He was to come, even as we are saved by believing that He has come. Hence ought we to love God who has so loved us as to have sent His only Son, in order that He might endue Himself with the lowliness of our mortality, and die both at the hands of sinners and on behalf of sinners. For even in times of old, and in the opening ages, the depth of this mystery ceases not to be prefigured and prophetically announced."³¹

³¹Augustine, "On the Catechising of the Uninstructed," Chap. 17, sec. 28, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Buffalo, The Christian Lit. Co., 1885, etc., Vol. III, pp. 301, 302.

In another place Augustine brings us this outline: "But in that sabbath, in which it is said that God rested from all His works, in the rest of God our rest is signified; because the sabbath of this world shall be, when the six ages shall have passed away. The six days as it were of the world are passing away. One day hath passed away, from Adam unto Noë; another from the deluge unto Abraham; the third from Abraham unto David; the fourth from David unto the carrying away into Babylon; the fifth from the carrying away into Babylon unto the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the sixth day is in passing. We are in the sixth age, in the sixth day. Let us then be reformed after the image of God, because that on the sixth day man was made after the image of God. What formation did then, let reformation do in us, and what creation did then, let creating-anew do in us. After this day in which we now are, after this age, the rest which is promised to the saints and prefigured in those days, shall come."³²

In Augustine's "Tractates on the Gospel of St. John," we find this further explanation: "Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour.

* * * * *

"But why at the sixth hour? Because at the sixth age of the world. In the Gospel, count up as an hour each, the first age from Adam to Noah; the second, from Noah to Abraham; the third, from Abraham to David; the fourth, from David to the removing to Babylon; the fifth, from the removing to Babylon to the baptism of John: thence is the sixth being enacted . . . At the sixth hour, because in the sixth age of the world."³³

It is only fair, however, to recall that Augustine himself altered his position with regard to the millennium. He argues with himself about it in "The City of God." It does not follow, however, that he thereby disallows the other six mil-

³²"Sermon LXXV (CXXV. BEN.), *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, p. 477.

³³"Tractate on the Gospel of St John XV," sections 6 and 9, *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, pp. 100, 101. See also "Tractate IX," sec. 6, *ibid.*, p. 65.

lenniums, as he plainly says in the same place that the sixth millennium was in process in his day. His own confusion in regard to it, after he did change, is plainly to be seen by comparing his discussion in "The City of God" with the passages above quoted.³⁴

One real problem with which Augustine struggled, and which may have influenced his change of mind, is explicitly stated in his comments on the sixth Psalm. The Septuagint version, which Augustine was using, had the following title: "To the end, in the hymns of the eighth, a Psalm to David." On the phrase "of the eighth," ὑπὲρ τῆς ὀγδόης, he remarks as follows: "'Of the eighth,' seems here obscure. For the rest of the title is more clear. Now it has seemed to some to intimate the day of judgment, that is, the time of the coming of our Lord, when He will come to judge the quick and the dead. Which coming, it is believed, is to be, after reckoning the years from Adam, seven thousand years: so as that seven thousand years should pass as seven days, and afterwards that time arrive as it were the eighth day. But since it has been said by the Lord, 'It is not yours to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power:' and, 'But of the day and that hour knoweth no man, no, neither angel, nor Power, neither the Son, but the Father alone:' and again, that which is written, 'that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief,' shows clearly enough that no man should arrogate to himself the knowledge of that time, by any computation of years. For if that day is come after seven thousand years, every man could learn its advent by reckoning the years. What comes then of the Son's even not knowing this? Which of course is said with this meaning, that men do not learn this by the Son, not that He by Himself doth not know it: according to that form of speech, 'the Lord your God trieth you that He may know;' that is, that He may make you know: and, 'arise, O Lord;' that is, make us arise. When therefore the Son is thus said not to know

³⁴See Augustine's "The City of God," Book XX, Chap. 7, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 426-428.

this day; not because He knoweth it not, but because He causeth those to know it not, for whom it is not expedient to know it, that is, He doth not show it to them; what does that strange presumption mean, which, by a reckoning up of years, expects the day of the Lord as most certain after seven thousand years?"³⁴

Andrew of Crete (Andr as Cretensis), who died around 699 A.D., "makes six ages or Millenniums for the world's duration, and argues that at their conclusion, and in the days of the Seventh Trumpet, all would end, and the saints' rest begin."³⁵

Ambrose Ansbert, Latin expositor, wrote a lengthy apocalyptic commentary on the Apocalypse about 760-770 A.D., in which he put forth a unique parallelism, comparing the seven trumpet soundings with those of the jubilee, and those sounded on the seven days' compassing of Jericho, viewing the fall of Jericho as typical of the end of the world. In commenting on the six ages, he denied that they should be identified with six millenniums. The first age of the world he took to be 2000 years.³⁷

This alignment of the old Fathers is not complete. We have it on the authority of none other than Dr. Thomas Burnet (1635-1715), who gained great distinction in England in the latter part of the 17th century, that the list could be extended to include St. Austin (or St. Augustine, who died in 604 A.D.), who founded the monastery of Christ Church, Canterbury; John of Damascus (700?-754), the author of the standard textbook of theology in the Greek Church, "Fount of Knowledge"; Anastasius Sinaita (possibly the Anastasius Sinaita, priest and monk of the monastery of Mt. Sinai, who wrote an allegorical work on Genesis 1-3);³⁸

³⁴"On the Psalms, Psalm VI," *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 15. On this point it might be remarked that the uncertainty of chronology would still forbid any computation that would identify "day and hour," provided the scheme did hold true, because the exact time of the beginning of the cycles is not known, together with other factors that may be doubtful.

³⁵Taylor, p. 123. See also Elliott's *Horae Apocalypticae*, Vol. IV, p. 337.

³⁷See Elliott's *Horae Apocalypticae*, Vol. IV, pp. 332-336.

³⁸See Smith and Wace's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*.

Isidorus Hispalensis (Isidore of Seville), who died in 636 A.D., most learned man of his time, father of the Western Church, and author of a vast medieval encyclopedia; Cassiodorus (Flavius Magnus Aurelius), Roman statesman and writer, who founded monasteries, and retired around the year 540 A.D. to write a long series of ecclesiastical and Biblical works; Gregory the Great (546?-604), pope, fourth Doctor of the Church, and last of the Latin Doctors; and others.”

Dr. Burnet wrote his elaborate work first in Latin, and it was published under the title, “Tellurius Theoria,” in 1681. His own English translation was altered from the original. In this work he recognizes what anyone is forced to recognize, viz., that the ancients were in error in reckoning the expiration of the six thousand year period. As he explains: “They reckoned this prophecy according to the chronology of the Septuagint, which, setting back the beginning of the world many ages beyond the Hebrew, these six thousand years were very near expired in the time of those fathers; and that made them conclude that the world was very near an end.”⁴⁰

Professor George Bush (1796-1858) writes: “Owing to a radical error in their calculus, they conceived themselves as actually having arrived at the eve of the world’s seventh Millenary, or in other words, as having their lot cast on the Saturday of the great anti-typical week of creation.”⁴¹

Elliott in his *Horae Apocalypticae*, lists the following dates for the close of the sixth millennium, and the ushering in of the seventh, as set by some of the ancients: Sibylline Oracles, c. 196 A.D. (the earliest); Cyprian, c. 243; Hippolytus, 500; Lactantius, c. 500; Constantius, c. 500; Hilarion, 500; Sulpitius Severus, 581; and Augustine, 650.⁴²

³⁹Thomas Burnet, *The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, London, J. McGowan, n. d. (This particular edition was wrongly attributed to “Bishop Burnett.”)

⁴⁰*Op. cit.*, pp. 410, 411.

⁴¹George Bush, *A Treatise on the Millennium*, 1836, p. 23.

⁴²For his discussion of this problem of chronology, see his *Horae Apocalypticae*, London, 1846, Vol. I, pp. 199-204, 357-385; Vol. IV, pp. 219-263. See also Taylor’s *Voice of the Church*, 8th ed., pp. 108, 109.

The fact that these were all mistaken is clear. As it has been well said, history is the true interpreter of prophecy. With the moving up of the creation to approximately 4000 B.C. by Archbishop Ussher, there was provided the basis for a new computation in which the sixth millennium would theoretically end prior to the year 2000 A.D. Date setters have a tendency to stay this side of that date almost uniformly. As dates come and go and the millennium fails to materialize, revisions are necessary. It would appear, however, that if the year 2000 A.D. should come and go without the great event's taking place, the whole sex- and septa-millenary tradition and theory would be proved erroneous, for hardly anybody would want to place the commencement of the first millennium any later than 4004 B.C.

Dr. Burnet remarks on this question: "We will make no reflections, in this place, upon that chronology of the Septuagint, lest it should interrupt the thread of our discourse. But it is necessary to shew how the fathers grounded this computation of six thousand years upon Scripture. It was chiefly, as we suggested before, upon the *hexameron*, or the creation finished in six days, and the sabbath ensuing. The sabbath, they said, was a type of the sabbathism that was to follow at the end of the world, according to St. Paul (chap. v. to the Hebrews); and then, by analogy and consequence, the six days preceding the sabbath must note the space and duration of the world. If, therefore, they could discover how much a day is reckoned for in this mystical computation, the sum of the six days would be easily found out. And they think that, according to the psalmist (Psal. xc. 4), and St. Peter (2 Epist. iii. 8), a day may be estimated a thousand years; and consequently six days must be counted six thousand years, for the duration of the world."

Dr. Burnet concludes with the following remark: "This is their interpretation and their inference; but it must be acknowledged that there is an essential weakness in all typical and allegorical argumentations, in comparison of literal. And this being allowed in diminution of the proof, we may

be bold to say that nothing yet appears, either in nature, or scripture, or human affairs, repugnant to this supposition of six thousand years, which hath antiquity and the authority of the fathers on its side."⁴³

Turning now to the later centuries of the Christian era, it is not surprising to find this tradition perpetuated rather extensively.

Joachim Abbas (? -1212?) regarded Revelation 20 as treating of the great Sabbath of a thousand years at the end of the six thousand of the world's history.⁴⁴ Jean Pierre d'Olive (1248/49-1298) followed him, as did also John Bale (1495-1563), bishop of Ossory, converted Romanist, who was born in England.⁴⁵ Andrew Osiander (1498-1552), argues, like Melanchthon, whose real name was Philipp Schwarzert (1487-1560), from the tradition of Elias, observing that "as not all the sixth day was employed in creation, but its evening partly taken into the Sabbath, so it might be expected that all the sixth Millennium would not pass before the sabbatism, but the sabbath begin ere it had all run out."⁴⁶

Joseph Mede (1586-1638) is well known among apocalyptic students as one of the profoundest Biblical scholars of the English church. His works fill a large volume. He wrote that "the divine institution of the sabbatical year's solemnity among the Jews has a plain typical reference to the seventh chiliad, or millenary of the world, according to the well known tradition among the Jewish Doctors, adopted by many in every age of the Christian Church, that this world will attain to its limit at the end of 6000 years."⁴⁷ Isaac Ambrose (? -1664), English Presbyterian, held the same view.⁴⁸ John Bunyan (1628-1688) expounded it in his works.⁴⁹ Robert Fleming (? -1716), Scottish Presbyterian, looked for the con-

⁴³*Op. cit.*, pp. 411, 412.

⁴⁴Taylor, pp. 123, 124; Elliott, Vol. IV, pp. 361-363, 388.

⁴⁵Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

⁴⁶Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

⁴⁷See his *Works*, 3d ed., London, 1672, "*Placita Doctorum Hebraeorum de Magno Die Judicii, et Regno Messiae tunc futuro*," Book III, pp. 535-537.

⁴⁸Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

⁴⁹*Works*, Vol. V, p. 486; Vol. VI, pp. 301, 329.

summation about the year 2000 A.D.⁵⁰ Charles Daubuz, previously mentioned,⁵¹ recounts the tradition in its redemptive aspect.⁵²

The most elaborate treatment of the whole subject of the year-day theory and the heptadic cycle to come to our attention is an extensive volume by H. Grattan Guinness entitled *The Approaching End of the Age*. Section II of the book is entitled, "The Law of Completion in Weeks," and covers 129 pages. He deals extensively with what he calls *septiform periodicity* in nature and in the Scriptures. No one can feel that he has studied the subject thoroughly until he has examined that work.⁵³

The most recent mention of this tradition to come under our notice is an article entitled "The Dispensational Setting of The Transfiguration Scene," by George A. Chambers, in the *Herald of His Coming*. In this article the author links the six thousand years more closely with the six dispensations than most men do. "When God spaced off time," he goes on, "He spaced it off in thousand-year-day dispensations, or age days. . . . The first age day was the day of Adam's life time."⁵⁴

This brings to a close the history of the sex- and septa-millenary tradition. Perhaps it is not out of place to caution again here that this is not dispensationalism; but in order to study dispensationalism intelligently, especially in its time-period aspect, it is necessary to know the background of this tradition.

⁵⁰Taylor, pp. 226, 227; see Fleming's *Apocalyptical Key*, an extraordinary discourse on the rise and fall of the papacy.

⁵¹See footnote, January-March number, p. 99.

⁵²Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-239.

⁵³H. Grattan Guinness, *The Approaching End of the Age* viewed in the light of history, prophecy, and science, 11th ed., London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1892. 776 pp. One should also consult the articles, "Ages of the World," and "Cosmogony and Cosmology," in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vols. I and IV.

⁵⁴*Herald of His Coming*, W. C. Moore, editor, Los Angeles, Vol. 3, No. 2, December, 1943, p. 4. (This scheme of dispensationalism will be outlined in the proper place under the section on magazine articles.)

Chapter III

DEFINITIONS AND EARLY ROOTS

DEFINITIONS

“An unperverted mind,” said Austin Phelps, “will approach reverently any revelation of God in the destiny of man.”¹ The word *dispensation* is a Scriptural term.² Biblically speaking, its meaning, but not its etymology, stems from the Old Testament idea of stewardship, or house management.³ Etymologically it is the anglicized form of the Latin *dispensatio*, which is the rendering in the Vulgate Version for the Greek οἰκονομία. English has also taken over this Greek term as *oeconomy* or *economy*, which is more or less synonymous with *dispensation*.

For a solid background in the use of the Greek term one should consult the standard lexicons, especially Liddell and Scott (the new, 2-volume revised edition), Moulton and Milligan, Cremer, Thayer and W. E. Vine's *Comprehensive Dictionary of the Original Greek Words with their Precise Meanings for English Readers*. This latter specifically denies the time-period aspect of the word in Biblical usage.

The word *dispensatio* should be consulted in Corradini's *Lexicon Totius Latinitatis* of Facciolati, Forcellini and Fur-

¹“Regeneration The Work of God,” preached in the chapel of the Seminary at Andover, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 23, p. 286.

²1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10; 3:9; Col. 1:25.

³Gen. 15:2; 43:19; 1 Chr. 28:1, etc.

lanetti, and Du Cange's *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*.

In approaching the whole subject of dispensations from a historical standpoint one is shut up immediately to the definition found in the *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*. For the benefit of those who might not have access to this set, the theological definition of the word, which is only one of the eleven divisions of the definition listed, is quoted here: "A religious order or system, conceived as divinely instituted, or as a stage in a progressive revelation, expressly adapted to the needs of a particular nation or period of time, as the *patriarchal, Mosaic (or Jewish) dispensation, the Christian dispensation*; also, the age or period during which such system has prevailed."⁴

The word *economy* should also be consulted in the same work. Other definitions of *dispensation* in the theological sense will be found in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed.; M'Clintock and Strong's *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*; Watson's *Biblical and Theological Dictionary*; Gardner's *Christian Cyclopaedia, or Repertory of Biblical and Theological Literature* (a good definition based on covenant distinctions); and Fausset's *Bible Cyclopaedia, Critical and Expository*.⁵ Canon Fausset, because of his unimpeachable scholarship, is especially to be noted. He was born 22 years before Scofield. Theologically he was of the Evangelical school of the Church of England, and he wrote a number of substantial volumes of his own on prophecy. He will be recognized as one of the Jamieson, Fausset and Brown trio of commentary fame.⁶ For the benefit of those who will not be able to consult this *Cyclo-*

⁴Quoted by permission of the Oxford University Press. This definition is followed by several historical illustrations.

⁵First published in London in 1878 under the title, *The Englishman's Critical and Expository Cyclopaedia*.

⁶The original 6-volume critical commentary is not to be confused with the popular one-volume abridgement that is so widely circulated. The latter does not reveal the dispensational viewpoints of Jamieson and Fausset as the original does.

paedia, the outline that Fausset presents is given here:

I—Innocence, in Eden

II—Adamical, after the fall

III—Noaichal

IV—Abrahamic

V—Law

VI—Christian:

i—Present "ministration of the Spirit"

ii—Epiphany of the glory'

iii—Final ages of the ages

Of course definitions can be found in many of the individual works on the subject.

Theologically speaking, an adequate definition of *dispensationalism* probably remains to be written. As soon as the suffixes are added to the word the subject is transferred immediately from Biblical to theological grounds. The recent literature on the subject has made it necessary to revise the theological definition, which it is hoped will receive some adequate consideration by lexicographers. The current conception of the term in the popular mind is entirely inadequate, covering as it does for many the whole field of pre-millennial writings and prophecy, or on the other hand the restricted school of thought that is chiefly concerned only with the present church age and its problems. The one is too wide, the other too narrow.

EARLY ROOTS OF DISPENSATIONALISM

With the background of the division of time into periods so extensively circulated as far back as Babylonian times, it is not surprising that some evidences of the conception of distinctions belonging to these periods should appear early in the history of the Church. It would indeed be most in-

¹Because of the significance of his statement on this point, it will be welcomed by many as given in full here: "The epiphany of the glory of the great God and Saviour (Tit. ii. 13), the *manifested* kingdom when He 'will restore it to Israel' (Acts i. 6, 7; Ezek. xxi. 27), and Himself shall 'take His great power and reign' with His transfigured saints for a thousand years over the nations in the flesh, and Israel at their head (Zech. xiv; Isa. ii., lxv., lxvi.; Rev. xi.15,17, v.10, xx.)"

teresting and profitable to see what the some 383 volumes of Migne's *Patrologiae Cursus Completus* would reveal that could be considered the rudiments of dispensationalism. Our purpose here is only to note such references as have come to our attention.

Clement of Alexandria (150?-220?) appears to have had a sense of dispensational distinctions. Although the specific reference to any statement of his that might properly be so construed has not come to our attention, we have the statement of Dr. Alexander Cleveland Coxe, editor of the American edition of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, that Clement pluralized "the patriarchal dispensation," distinguishing clearly three patriarchal dispensations, as given in Adam, Noah, and Abraham; then comes the Mosaic. Dr. Coxe's father, Samuel Hanson Cox, whose scheme will be noted in the proper place later, claimed that his 7-fold system of dispensations was "sustained by Clement's authority."⁸ It is also interesting to note that Clement's was a multiple-covenant position, as he speaks of the "sacred tetrad of the ancient covenants," the statement calling forth Coxe's elucidation.

There is evidence of a rudimentary distinction to be found in Pelagius (360?-420?), which comes through a note in Augustine's writings. In his discourse on "Original Sin," Augustine takes Pelagius and Coelestius to task for "dividing the times" so as to say that "men first lived righteously by nature, then under the law, thirdly under grace,—by nature meaning all the long time from Adam before the giving of the law."⁹ He quotes them as follows, "'For then,' say they, 'the Creator was known by the guidance of reason; and the rule of living rightly was carried written in the hearts of men, not in the law of the letter, but of nature. But men's manners became corrupt; and then,' they say, 'when nature now tarnished began to be insufficient, the law was added to it, whereby as by a moon the original lustre was restored to nature after its original blush was impaired.

⁸See Elucidation III, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. II, pp. 476, 77.

⁹*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, Vol. V, p. 248.

But after the habit of sinning had too much prevailed among men, and the law was unequal to the task of curing it, Christ came; and the Physician Himself, through His own self, and not through His disciples, brought relief to the malady at its most desperate development.'"¹⁰

Augustine (354-430) is due some consideration on this question. His popularly quoted statement, "Distinguish the times and Scripture is in harmony with itself (*Distribute tempora, et concordat Scriptura*)," occurs in his "Sermon XXXII" on the New Testament Lessons.¹¹ The context is public and private rebuke. Due to this fact he has been discounted considerably as a proper source on the subject. If this is the only place in his writings where this statement occurs, it is unfortunate that it has been used as it has.

Augustine does, however, have some significant statements that could probably have been used more advantageously. Among these are the following: "The divine

¹⁰*Ibid.* Passing notice might be made here to the citation of this argument of Augustine, but not of the quotation on which it is based, by Edwards E. Elliott in *The Presbyterian Guardian*, in his article, "Rightly Dividing St. Augustine," Vol. II, Dec. 25, 1942, pp. 355, 56. As is often the case, the argument drawn from a passage would be discounted by a continuation of the quotation. "Read the next verse," is often a pretty safe answer when one is not prepared to meet the arguments of an opponent offhand. The material that Mr. Elliott omitted indicates plainly enough that the question in view is not one of initial salvation, but of "the rule of living rightly." Likewise in Mr. Elliott's accusation against Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, whom he quotes, of holding a "double soteriology," he quotes this statement: "There are two widely different, standardized, divine provisions, whereby man, who is utterly fallen, might come into the favor of God." He explains what he thinks Dr. Chafer means by this statement as follows: "Dr. Chafer frankly means that the good Jews needed only to be born Jews, but that present-day people need to be born again." Anyone would naturally take it that Mr. Elliott understands Dr. Chafer to be speaking of initial salvation. But if he had gone on to quote him further, his original point would have been useless to him. Dr. Chafer actually says, "Entrance into the right to share in the covenants of blessing designed for the earthly people was and is *physical* birth. . . . The national standing (but not necessarily the spiritual state) of each Israelite, was secured by *physical* birth. . . . The heavenly people, whether taken individually from either Jewish or Gentile stock, attain immediately by faith unto a standing as perfect as that of Christ, which standing is secured by a *spiritual* birth and all the saving operations of God which accompany it." (See *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 93, 1936, pp. 410 ff.)

¹¹*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, Vol. VI, p. 360.

institution of sacrifice was suitable in the former dispensation, but is not suitable now. For the change suitable to the present age has been enjoined by God, who knows infinitely better than man what is fitting for every age, and who is, whether He give or add, abolish or curtail, increase or diminish, the unchangeable Governor as He is the unchangeable Creator of mutable things, ordering all events in His providence until the beauty of *the completed course of time, the component parts of which are the dispensations adapted to each successive age*, shall be finished, like the grand melody of some ineffably wise master of song, and those pass into the eternal contemplation of God who here, though it is a time of faith, not of sight, are acceptably worshipping Him."¹²

Again, "For as the man is not fickle who does one thing in the morning and another in the evening, one thing this month and another in the next, one thing this year and another next year, so there is no variableness with God, though in the former period of the world's history He enjoined one kind of offerings, and in the latter period another, therein ordering the symbolical actions pertaining to the blessed doctrine of true religion in harmony with the changes of successive epochs without any change in Himself. For in order to let those whom these things perplex understand that the change was already in the divine counsel, and that, when the new ordinances were appointed, it was not because the old had suddenly lost the divine approbation through inconstancy in His will, but that this had been already fixed and determined by the wisdom of that God to whom, in reference to much greater changes, these words are spoken in Scripture: 'Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou are the same,'"¹³—it is necessary to convince them that this exchange of the sacraments of the Old Testament for those of the New had been predicted by the voices of the prophets. For thus they will see, if they can

¹²Letter CXXXVIII (To Marcellinus), par. 5, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 482. (Italics ours.)

¹³Ps. cii.26,27.

see anything, that what is new in time is not new in relation to Him who has appointed the times, and who possesses, without succession of time, all those things which He assigns according to their variety to the several ages."¹⁴

Similarly, "If it is now established that that which was for one age rightly ordained may be in another age rightly changed,—the alteration indicating a change in the work, not in the plan, of Him who makes the change, the plan being framed by His reasoning faculty, to which, unconditioned by succession in time, those things are simultaneously present which cannot be actually done at the same time because the ages succeed each other,—"¹⁵

Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus (390?-457?) is credited with the following statement, although the source is not now identified: "God dispenseth all things suitably to the particular time, and measureth his Institutions by the Abilities and Powers of Men."

Mohammedanism has an interesting parallel to the idea of successive revelations by dispensations. "The idea in Islam is that there were 12,000 prophets (nābi), most of whom are unknown and unmentioned. The Koran mentions some score of them altogether; of these the following introduced new 'dispensations' or revelations:

- (1) Adam—the Sāfi of Allah—God's first creation.
- (2) Noah—Nābi-Allah—Prophet of God.
- (3) Ibrahim (Khalīl Allah)—the Friend of God.
- (4) Musa (Moses)—Kalīm Allah—God's mouthpiece.
- (5) 'Isa—Kalimet Allah—Word of God (Jesus).
- (6) Mohammed—Rasul Allah—Apostle of God.

Each of these came for a set period and these six are all of them distinguished from the other ordinary prophets (anbiya) as introducing new legislation."¹⁶ Mohammedan eschatology teaches the establishment of a kingdom of right-

¹⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 483.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶From personal correspondence from Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer. Used by his permission.

eousness in the future, and a period of judgments which will last 1000 or 50,000 years.¹⁷

There is an interesting observation found in an extract from Aelifric (? -1006/20?), otherwise known as Alfricus Grammaticus, Anglo-Saxon translator of Genesis, homilist and hagiographer, to AÆthelwold, alderman, which runs as follows: "Now it thinketh me, love, that that work [the translation of Genesis] is very dangerous for me or any men to undertake; because I dread lest some foolish man read this book, or hear it read, who should ween that he may live now under the new law, even as the old fathers lived in that time, ere that the old law was established, or even as men lived under Moyses' law."¹⁸ He is easily divisible as follows:

I—Patriarchal—"in that time, ere that the old law was established"

II—Mosaic—"Moyses' law"

III—Christian—"now under the new law."

Joachim of Fiore (Latin *Floris*), abbot of Cosenza in Calabria and later founder of his own monastery at Floris, lived from about 1130/45-1201/02. He enjoyed in his day high consideration with popes and princes, and revived "the ancient hope of a glorious time of the Church on earth, preceded by fearful struggles." This hope he derived from the Scriptures themselves. As the result of much concentrated Bible study he formulated a system of historico-prophetical theology. The following quotation will reveal his system: "His fundamental argument is that the Christian aera closes with the year 1260, when a new aera would commence under another dispensation. Thus the three persons of the God-head divided the government of ages among them: the reign of the Father embraced the period from the creation of the world to the coming of Christ; that of the Son, the twelve centuries and a half ending in 1260, and then would com-

¹⁷See article, "Eschatology, 9, Muhammadan," Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V. p. 376.

¹⁸From *Praefatio Genesis Anglice*, Ed. Thwaites, p.1, quoted by J. I. Mombert, *A Hand-book of the English Versions of the Bible*, pp. 1,2.

mence the reign of the Holy Spirit. This change would be marked by a progress similar to that which followed the substitution of the new for the old dispensation. Thus man, after having been carnal under the Father, half carnal and half spiritual under the Son, would, under the Holy Ghost, become exclusively spiritual. So there have been three stages of development in society, in which the supremacy belonged successively to warriors, the secular clergy, and monks (comp. Neander, *Church History*, iv, 229 sq.)."¹⁹

Of these three dispensations, "the first commenced with Adam, the second with John the Baptist; the preparation for the third began with St. Benedict, its development began with the order of the Cistercians, and about 1260 the final development will take place. . . . But there must still take place a last fight against the power of evil, which appears in the person of the last and worst antichrist, in Gog. After this will follow the final judgment and the great Sabbath of the consummation will be ushered in."²⁰

Amalric of Bena (? -1202/06), celebrated philosopher and theologian of the middle ages, notable representative of pantheism, taught that God was incarnate in Abraham, and that his power continued only through the Mosaic dispensation; that with the incarnation in Mary the power was invested in the Son, which continued until the thirteenth century, when the Holy Ghost became incarnate in the Amalricians (or according to Neander, all humanity). "As the coming of Christ set aside the Mosaic law, so the sacraments and ordinances of the second dispensation are now abolished. The sect called the veneration of the saints idolatry; the Church, the Babylon of the Apocalypse; the pope, the Antichrist. The revelation of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of the believers takes the place of baptism, and is indeed the

¹⁹M'Clintock & Strong, *Cyclopaedia*, Vol. IV, p. 922.

²⁰*New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia*, Vol. VI, p. 184. For further elaboration of his system see Kurtz, *Church History*, Vol. II, p. 130. (J. W. Hunkin in "The New Approach to Theology," has noted this system. See *The Expository Times*, Vol. LV, April, 1944, p. 174.)

A Bibliographic History of Dispensationalism

resurrection of the dead and the kingdom of heaven; no other is to be expected; nor is there any hell but the consciousness of sin."³¹ David Dinant was the chief prophet of the Amalricians. Their immediate successors were the Brethren of the Free Spirit.

³¹*Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 146.

Chapter IV

FROM THE REFORMATION TO 1825

This is the period during which the larger doctrine of ages and dispensations had its beginning and unfolding. By 1825 there was a considerable literature to be found on the subject, and the doctrine was well established as a theological concept. It is a strange phenomenon that almost without exception dispensational writers since that date, however, have ignored this body of literature.

William Gouge (1575/78-1653) presents the earliest system of dispensations to come to our attention from this period. Gouge was educated at St. Paul's in London, at Eton, and at King's College, Cambridge. At Cambridge he became fellow and lecturer. In 1643 he was made a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and was chosen to write the Assembly's annotations on 1 Kings to Job. He was counted "the father of the London ministers." His great work was his commentary on Hebrews, finished just before his death and published by his son afterwards.

Gouge's scheme of dispensations, while he does not call them such, is based on the ancient sex-millennial tradition. The specific advance that he makes over the mere division of time into six periods consists in this, that he views them in relation to the development of God's program of redemption. Therein lies the distinction between the terms *ages* and *dispensations*. A theological dispensation has two major aspects: a time-period aspect, and a redemptive-program aspect. Either alone is not dispensationalism.

In his notes on Hebrews 1:1, commenting on the phrase,

“in these last days,” Gouge recalls Augustine’s outline of the ages and links them up with the so-called covenant of grace as follows:

- I—Adam to Noah, the covenant first made to man
- II—Noah to Abraham, the covenant renewed
- III—Abraham to David, the covenant appropriated to Abraham and his seed
- IV—David to the captivity of Israel, the covenant established in a royal line
- V—Captivity to Christ’s coming in the flesh, the covenant revived by Israel’s returning
- VI—Christ’s first coming in the flesh to his second coming in glory, even to the end of the world, in which the covenant was most firmly and inviolably established.¹

William Cave (1637-1713) shortly after Gouge’s death published a book in which he included an introductory discourse on the three major dispensations:

- I—Patriarchal, from the beginning of the world till the delivery of the law upon Mount Sinai
- II—Mosaical, from the delivery of the law till the final period of the Jewish state
- III—Evangelical, to last to the end of the world.²

Pierre Poiret (1646-1719) was a French mystic and philosopher, whose more than forty works are of great importance to French theological thought. He attempted, like many others, to comprehend the whole story of redemption in one sweep, and saw clearly that the work of God through the ages falls into various periods differing in detail, yet preserving a unifying thread throughout. His great work, *L’OEconomie Divine*, first published in Amsterdam in 1687, was (apparently by himself) rendered into English and published in London in six volumes and an appendix, in 1713. He started out to develop the doctrine of predestination, but says that so many things came to his attention

¹William Gouge, *A Commentary on the Whole Epistle to the Hebrews*, Edinb., 1866, Vol. I, pp. 11, 12.

²William Cave, *The Lives of the Apostles*, new ed. revised, Oxford, 1840, pp. 1-106. The book was first published in 1675.

that seemed to be inter-related that he decided to expand the work and the result is a rather complete Systematic Theology, covering in considerable detail six of the seven major divisions (Bibliology being omitted). It is distinctly Biblical, although there is the mystical element and terminology in places, and he admits a modified form of purgatory. It appears to be a modified Calvinism, or mediate theology, but its most interesting and significant feature is the fact that it is premillennial and dispensational. As such, it forms the most solid kind of support to these doctrines as now held by conservative Bible students and teachers. The six volumes are entitled as follows:

I—The Oeconomy of the Creation

II—The Oeconomy of Sin

III—The Oeconomy of the Restoration before the Incarnation of Jesus Christ

IV—The Oeconomy of the Restoration after the Incarnation of Jesus Christ

V—The Oeconomy of the Co-operation of Man, with the Operation of God

VI—The Oeconomy of Universal Providence

The main work is followed by an appendix in the form of a vindication against a letter by a certain Mr. Le Clerc. Volume VI is a sort of recapitulation, but it goes on to treat the subject of the nations in relation to God's program, prophecies and their fulfilment; and there is a summary outline of Paul's epistle to the Romans in nineteen propositions with an abridgment of the first eight chapters, supporting the whole argument of the work. Grace is strong throughout, although free will is allowed.

There is no question that we have here a genuine dispensational scheme. He uses the phrase "period or dispensation" and his seventh dispensation is a literal thousand-year millennium with Christ returned and reigning in bodily form upon the earth with His saints, and Israel regathered and converted. He sees the overthrow of corrupt Protestantism,

the rise of the Antichrist, the two resurrections, and many of the general run of end-time events. These are all discussed more freely and fully than in any author to come under our attention in this bibliography up to the time of Darby.

Poiret's dispensational scheme does not articulate with his volume titles. He is very clear that the seventh dispensation is the millennium. The sixth appears to be the latter portion of what we would call the Christian dispensation, and the fifth the early part of it. The scheme is based on the septa-millenary tradition and somewhat on Augustine's scheme of ages and dispensations. His outline is as follows:

- I—Infancy, to the deluge
- II—Childhood, to Moses
- III—Adolescence, to the prophets, or about Solomon's time
- IV—Youth, to the time of the coming of Christ
- V—Manhood, "some time after that"
- VI—Old Age, "the time of his [man's] Decay"
- VII—Renovation of all Things.

The author explains, "Tho' I do not pretend precisely to determine the Number nor Duration of these Periods, it is obvious however unto all, that the World hath really passed thro' Periods of this Nature."

John Edwards (1639-1716) wrote the first extensive treatise on the subject of dispensations that has come to our attention. He was an eminent English Calvinist, educated at Merchant-Taylor's School, London, and St. John's College, Cambridge, of which latter he became scholar and fellow. He moved to Cambridge in 1697 and spent the following two years in the library there. In 1699 he published two volumes totalling some 790 pages entitled *A Compleat History or*

³Peter Poiret, *The Divine OEconomy: or, An Universal System of the Works and Purpose of God Towards Men Demonstrated*, 7 volumes in 4 (as bound in the edition in the Rufus M. Jones Collection on Mysticism at Haverford College, the last volume having been labeled "Volume VII. Appendix" at some early date), London, 1713. See especially Vol. III, pp. 150 ff.

Survey of all the Dispensations. In his preface he has this to say: "I Have undertaken a Great Work, viz. to display all the Transactions of Divine Providence relating to the Methods of Religion, from the Creation to the end of the World, from the first Chapter of Genesis to the last of the Revelation. For I had not met with any Author that had undertaken to comprise them all, and to give us a true account of them according to their true Series: nor had I ever lit upon a Writer (either Foreign or Domestick) who had designedly traced the particular causes and Grounds of them, or settled them in their right and true foundations. Wherefore I betook myself to this Work, resolving to attempt something, tho it were only to invite others of greater skill to go on with it." From this it appears that there was a literature on the subject at that early date, which could probably still be examined at the Cambridge libraries.

The scheme that Edwards developed is rather involved. He understood three great "Catholic and Grand Oeconomies," the third of which he subdivided, and which constitutes the main sweep of Biblical time to the consummation and conflagration. Following is his scheme outlined.

- I—Innocency and Felicity, or Adam created upright
- II—Sin and Misery, Adam fallen
- III—Reconciliation, or Adam recovered, from Adam's redemption to the end of the World, "The discovery of the blessed seed to Adam":
 - a—Patriarchal economy:
 - (1)—Adamical, antediluvian
 - (2)—Noachical
 - (3)—Abrahamick
 - b—Mosaical
 - c—Gentile (concurrent with a and b)
 - d—Christian or Evangelical:
 - (1)—Infancy, primitive period, past
 - (2)—Childhood, present period

(3)—Manhood, future (millennium)⁴

(4)—Old age, from the loosing of Satan to the conflagration.⁵

It is not possible to go into detail here as to the great mass of material contained in this work. One can only recommend its perusal to any who would attempt to understand the beginnings of dispensationalism in its larger sense.

John Shute Barrington (1678-1734), known as the First Viscount Barrington, was educated at Utrecht, and was a friend and disciple of Locke. In his published work he included an essay on "The Dispensations of God to Mankind, as Revealed in Scripture." In opposition to the Deists, he finds most satisfaction in considering the revelation of God as "the single notion, that runs through the several dispensations of God to mankind in its full light . . . and that it pursues it in the precise order and manner in which it was exhibited in those several dispensations, and will at the same time shew, how all the peculiar doctrines of revelation refer to it. For such a sketch alone will discover to us all the beauties of revealed truth; shewing it in its proper connection, and in all its relations (particularly its use and advantage), and in its unity." This he uses as an apologetic for the unity and divinity of revelation. He understands the dispensations to be "the various methods in which God has extraordinarily discovered Himself to mankind." The following dispensations are discussed at some length in order:

I—The State of Innocence

II—Patriarchal

III—Noahic

IV—Abrahamic

⁴Edwards believed in a millennium, but he took it to be a spiritual reign. He was anti-chilistic. The reign would be characterized by universal righteousness and holiness, but he declines to set the time of its commencement. With regard to the coming of Christ, he says, "I conceive he may Personally Appear above, though he will not Reign Personally on Earth" (Vol. II, p. 720).

⁵John Edwards, *A Compleat History or Survey of all the Dispensations and Methods of Religion*, London, 1699. Two volumes.

V—Mosaic.*

Isaac Watts (1674-1748), the great hymn writer, was also a considerable theologian. His collected works fill six large volumes. He wrote an essay of some forty pages entitled, "The Harmony of all the Religions Which God ever Prescribed to Men, and all his Dispensations towards them." Due to the comparative inaccessibility of his works to the general public, it seems to be in order to quote here his definition of dispensations.

"The public dispensations of God towards men, are those wise and holy constitutions of his will and government, revealed or some way manifested to them, in the several successive periods or ages of the world, wherein are contained the duties which he expects from men, and the blessings which he promises, or encourages them to expect from him, here and hereafter; together with the sins which he forbids, and the punishments which he threatens to inflict on such sinners: Or, the dispensations of God may be described more briefly, as the appointed moral rules of God's dealing with mankind, considered as reasonable creatures, and as accountable to him for their behaviour, both in this world and in that which is to come. Each of these dispensations of God, may be represented as different religions, or, at least, as different forms of religion, appointed for men in the several successive ages of the world."⁶

His outline follows:

- I—The Dispensation of Innocency, or, the Religion of Adam at first
- II—The Adamical Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, or the Religion of Adam after his Fall
- III—The Noachical Dispensation; or, the Religion of Noah
- IV—The Abrahamical Dispensation; or, the Religion of Abraham

⁶John Shute Barrington, *Theological Works*, London, 1826, Vol. II, pp. 379, 380, 387.

⁷Leeds 7-volume edition of Watts' *Works*, Vol. II, pp. 625-660; London edition of 1753, Vol. II, pp. 537-573.

⁸Leeds ed., n.d., Vol. II, p. 625; London ed. of 1753, Vol. II, p. 543.

- V—The Mosaical Dispensation; or, the Jewish Religion
VI—The Christian Dispensation.

It becomes evident at once, of course, that this is exactly the outline of the first six dispensations that has been so widely publicized by the late Dr. C. I. Scofield in his notes. Watts did not hold the millennium as a dispensation, but considered the Christian as the last. He does have a very interesting discussion, however, on the commencement of the Christian dispensation, which will bear quoting here.

“This last and best dispensation of grace, *viz.* the Christian religion, was not properly set up in the world, during the life of Christ, though he was the illustrious and divine Author and Founder of it: And the reason is plain and obvious, *viz.* because many of the peculiar glories, duties and blessings of it, as they are described in the Acts, and in the sacred epistles, did really depend upon those facts, which had no existence in Christ’s own life-time, *viz. his death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation.*”⁹ (Some of the liberal writers who attempt to construct Christianity on the basis of the so-called ‘teachings of Jesus’ would do well to take note of this position that Watts took two hundred years ago.) Another interesting discussion included in the essay is entitled, “The Gradual Change from Judaism to Christianity; and the Jewish and Gentile Christians at last United in One Body.”

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), while he does not develop a scheme of dispensations comparable to those of the writers just noted, does speak of the whole plan and development of redemption as “the whole dispensation,” which he outlines in his *History of Redemption* in three major divisions:

- I—From the fall to the incarnation
II—From Christ’s incarnation to his resurrection
III—From Christ’s resurrection to the end of the world.
The first period he divides into six, which correspond more

⁹Leeds ed., Vol. II, p. 650; London ed., Vol. II, p. 568. (Italics his, as of the Leeds ed.)

or less with Augustine's divisions. But he does use the plural term in regard to this development: "The various dispensations of works that belong to it, are but the several parts of one scheme . . . All the various dispensations that belong to it are united; and the several wheels are one machine, to answer one end, and produce one effect."¹⁰

Edwards has this further to say with regard to the law-grace controversy in his day: "All allow that the Old Testament *dispensation* is out of date, with its ordinances: and I think in a manner pertaining to the constitution and order of the New Testament church, that is a matter of fact wherein the *New Testament* itself is express, full and abundant, in such a case to have recourse to the Mosaic dispensation for rules or precedents to determine our judgment, is quite needless and out of reason. There is perhaps no part of divinity attended with so much intricacy, and wherein orthodox divines do so much differ as the stating the precise agreement and difference between the two dispensations of Moses and Christ."¹¹

John Taylor of Norwich (1694-1761), a learned Unitarian, published in 1745 a work on Romans with a key to the apostolic writings, from which we give the following quotation: "As to the order of time; the apostle carries his arguments *backwards* from the time when Christ came into world, (chap. i. 17. to chap. iv) to the time when the *covenant* was made with Abraham, (chap. iv) to the time when the judgment to condemnation, pronounced upon Adam, came upon all men, chap. v. 12 to the end. And thus he gives us a view of the principal *dispensations* from the beginning of the world."¹²

John Fletcher, whose full name was Jean William de la

¹⁰Jonathan Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption*, Evangelical Family Library, Vol. IX, N.Y., p. 16.

¹¹*The Works of President Edwards* in four volumes, N.Y., 1858, Vol. I, p. 160.

¹²John Taylor, *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistle to the Romans; to which is prefixed a Key to the Apostolic Writings, &c.*, 1745, quoted from Adam Clarke's notes on Romans 5:12, from the second Am. ed., of the *Commentary*, 1817, etc.

Flechiere (1729-1785), affectionately known as 'the Saint of Madeley,' intimate of the Wesleys, and one of the most pious and useful men of his generation, developed an interesting scheme of dispensations. His apology is interesting: "If a judicious mariner, who has sailed around the world, sees with pleasure a map, which exhibits, in one point of view, the shape and proportion of the wide seas, . . . a judicious Protestant may profitably look upon a doctrinal map, (if I may be allowed the expression,) . . . more especially if this map exhibits, with some degree of accuracy, the boundaries of truth . . . Without any apology, therefore, I shall lay before the reader a plain account of the primitive catholic Gospel, and its various dispensations."¹³

Mr. Fletcher divides the Gospel into "four capital dispensations," as follows:

- I—Gentilism, "natural religion"
- II—Judaism, "the Mosaic dispensation"
- III—The Gospel of John the Baptist, "the Jewish Gospel improved into infant Christianity"
- IV—The Perfect Gospel of Christ, the other three "arrived at their full maturity."

To these four he adds two "great dispensations of grace and justice" yet to take place "with respect to every man: (V) the one in the day of *death*, . . . (VI) the other in the day of *judgment*." Following the second coming of Christ there will yet be (VII) "another Gospel dispensation," which we have now in prophecy, "as the Jews had the Gospel of Christ's first advent," during which the Church reigns with Christ for a thousand years, and which he connects with the "restitution of all things."¹⁴ Fletcher also used the word *dispensation* in a peculiar sense relating to the progress of the Christian (see Vol. III, p. 170).

David Bogue (1750-1825) was an English dissenter, a graduate of Edinburgh, pastor for 50 years at Gosport,

¹³John Fletcher's *Works*, N.Y., 1836, Vol. II, p. 261.

¹⁴*Op. cit.*, pp. 263, 264.

where he instituted a theological training school for missionaries, from which developed the London Missionary Society; and was active in the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Religious Tract Society, having written the first tract for the latter. He was a thorough student of theological literature in Latin and cites John Edwards. In 1848 his theological notes were published by Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey. They contain a section on "Divine Dispensation," in which a peculiar system of dispensations based on the so-called covenants of works and grace is outlined. He held that "there are two different dispensations of religion in the Scriptures, to which divines give the name of the covenant of works, made with Adam in innocence, and the covenant of grace, suited to his fallen state." His scheme may be outlined as follows:

I—Covenant of works

II—Covenant of grace:

1. Under the patriarchs:

a. From Adam to Noah

b. From Noah to Abraham

c. From Abraham to Moses

2. Under Moses and the prophets

3. Under Christ.¹⁵

The former is elaborated more fully in Lecture XXXVI, "The Divine Dispensation Towards Man in Innocency."¹⁶

Adam Clarke (1762-1832), the celebrated Methodist commentator of England, has some dispensational notes in his commentary. In a discourse on Nebuchadnezzar's dream, attached to the comments on the second chapter of Daniel, Dr. Clarke postulates three dispensations upon the old sex-millennial tradition of the Jewish house of Elias, two thousand years for each dispensation. These three "grand periods" are to be followed by "a period without terminating limits." He speaks frequently of the Jewish and Christian

¹⁵*The Theological Lectures of the Late Rev. David Bogue, D.D.*, edited by the Rev. Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey, New York, 1849, pp. 526 ff.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 97-99.

dispensations, for instance in his notes on Romans 8:1; Ephesians 1:10; Hebrews 1:2, 3:5, 9:9, 26.¹⁷

Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), dissenter of Unitarian tendencies in England, and later of America, author of 141 works of philosophic, scientific and religious nature, is said to have written a work entitled *Analogy of the Divine Dispensations* in 1771, but the union catalog of the Library of Congress does not list it, and it could not be located in this country.

George Stanley Faber (1773-1843), a very energetic and erudite scholar, educated at University College, Oxford, and elected fellow and tutor of Lincoln College before his 21st year, was a considerable writer on Biblical and prophetic subjects. He delivered the Bampton Lectures for 1801, in which he discoursed on the "connection of the Patriarchal, the Levitical, and the Christian, dispensations, viewed as the component parts of one grand and regular system, the economy of grace." Of these, "there is a closer affinity between the Patriarchal and the Christian, than between either of them and the Levitical: for the Patriarchal and the Christian are equally catholic, but the Levitical is confined to the single nation of the Israelites."¹⁸ Faber enlarged upon the three dispensations in a two-volume work published in 1823 entitled *The Genius and Object of the Patriarchal, the Levitical, and the Christian Dispensations*.

David Russell (1779-1848), dissenting minister of Dundee, Scotland, where he held a pastorate for 39 years, after finishing at Edinburgh Theological Academy, wrote two books which together might be consulted. They are *A Compendious View of the Original Dispensation established with Adam, and of the Mediatorial Dispensation established through Christ*; designed to illustrate their connexion and analogy, published previous to 1824; and *A Familiar Survey of the Old and New Covenants*, including a Summary View

¹⁷The unabridged *Commentary* should be consulted. The quotation on Nebuchadnezzar's dream is from the N. Y. ed. of 1817, etc.

¹⁸George Stanley Faber, *Horae Mosaicae*, London, 1818, Vol. II, p. 6.

of the Patriarchal and Levitical Dispensations, Edinburgh, 1824, this volume containing 432 pages.

Richard Watson (1781-1833), Methodist theologian, author of the famous *Institutes*, evidently subscribed to the same conception of dispensations as Faber did, for he quotes him in the *Institutes*, which were first published just at the end of the period under consideration, being dated 1823.¹⁹ There is some use of the word in the administrative sense in the following chapter, but later in his *Dictionary* Watson expands this doctrine with a definition which includes the following features: "These are otherwise called 'the ways of God,' and denote those schemes or methods which are devised and pursued by the wisdom and goodness of God, in order to manifest his perfections and will to mankind, for the purpose of their instruction, discipline, reformation, and advancement in rectitude of temper and conduct, in order to promote their happiness . . . The works or constitutions of nature are, in a general sense, divine dispensations, by which God condescends to display to us his being and attributes, and thus to lead us to the acknowledgment, adoration, and love, of our Creator, Father, and Benefactor. The sacred Scriptures reveal and record other dispensations of divine providence, which have been directed to the promotion of the religious principles, moral conduct, and true happiness of mankind. These have varied in several ages of the world, and have been adapted by the wisdom and goodness of God to the circumstances of his intelligent and accountable creatures. In this sense the various revelations which God has communicated to mankind at different periods, and the means he has used, as occasion has required, for their discipline and improvement, have been justly denominated divine dispensations. Accordingly, we read in the works of theological writers of the various dispensations of religion; that of the patriarchs, that of Moses, and that of Christ, called the dispensation of grace, the perfection and ultimate object of every other.

¹⁹ Richard Watson, *Theological Institutes*, new ed., carefully revised by Thomas O. Summers, Nashville, 1887, Part II, ch. XXII, p. 475.

A Bibliographic History of Dispensationalism

All these were adapted to the conditions of the human race at these several periods; all, in regular succession, were mutually connected and rendered preparatory one to the other; and all were subservient to the design of saving the world, and promoting the perfection and happiness of its rational and moral inhabitants."²⁰

²⁰Richard Watson, *A Biblical and Theological Dictionary*, N.Y., 1844, art., "Dispensations, Divine."

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DISPENSATIONALISM

Chapter V

FROM 1825 TO ABOUT 1850

The year 1825 seems to be the logical dividing-line between the old and the new dispensationalism. This is not to forget that many of the roots of later systems are to be found in works before that date, nor that much of the older philosophy is carried over to the later period. As late as 1929 a rather substantial volume appeared in England on the subject by George Croly in which he seems utterly to ignore almost all of the dispensational literature since 1825, and indeed much of that before. He might as well have dated his book 1829 so far as the doctrinal content is concerned.

Much has been said about the rise of so-called modern dispensationalism. Many date this beginning with John Nelson Darby, who first wrote on the subject in 1836. It is no doubt true that the Plymouth Brethren, of whom he was a prominent pioneer, colored the doctrine to a considerable extent; but it will appear readily to him who takes the pains to compare all the writers enumerated in this bibliography just how much this contribution was, and how much is to be traced to other various sources.

John Eagleton of Huddersfield has a book on the *Covenant of Works* which has a dispensational aspect to it, as many of them do. He says, "If then, my brethren, the sons of Adam are saved pursuant to God's purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, all the dispensations of providence since the world began, must be in

harmony with that original purpose.”¹ Contrary to what one might suppose from the title, the author of this work denounces the concept of the covenant of works. It is “a scholastic fiction.” It is interesting that Eagleton uses the term *Edenic dispensation*.² But this was the second dispensation, the first, which he does not name, being of necessity pre-Edenic, was a dispensing of the “privileges of man’s creation-state.”³ The succeeding dispensations are not outlined, but the author speaks of “every dispensation of Providence from the creation to the conflagration of the universe.”⁴

John Dick (1764-1833), professor of theology in the United Secession Church, has two lectures in his work on theology that ought to be consulted, even though there is no clear enumeration of the various dispensations outlined. He is convinced that Christianity, while it is not “a republication of the law of nature,” as Tindal had taught, is nevertheless “very near as old as the creation,” as held by President Forbes.⁵

John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), one of the chief founders of the Plymouth Brethren movement in England, is credited with the great revival and a substantial advance of the whole subject of ages and dispensations. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and was called to the English bar but soon gave that up for an ecclesiastical career. He took holy orders and served in a curacy in Wicklow until 1827, when his views on ecclesiastical authority and estab-

¹John Eagleton, *Thoughts on the Covenant of Works: an Epistolary Address, to Junior Ministers of the Gospel of all denominations*, London, 1829, p. 6. (Note: the compiler of this bibliography has not sought material primarily from works on covenant theology. That much of that literature contains dispensational elements in connection with the administration of the covenant is admitted, but the viewpoint is not that of dispensationalism proper. It is also true that many of the works from the dispensational viewpoint primarily are based upon the covenant theory and look in that direction. Probably a complete survey of the literature of dispensational thought would exhaust the covenant literature, but the present effort has not been pursued to that extent in that direction.)

²*Ibid.*, p. 117, etc.

³*Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁵John Dick, *Lectures on Theology*, Oxford, 1836, Lectures XIV and XV, pp. 71-81.

ishments caused him to leave the church and to take up association with a little company of believers of like mind in Dublin. After some travel, he and several others settled in Plymouth and started a little paper called *The Christian Witness* in 1834. It was in 1836 that Darby first published his dispensational views in this paper under the title, "Apostasy of the Successive Dispensations." It was afterward published in French as "Apostasie de l'économie actuelle." Darby's writings have been collected, though the collection is not complete, and published in 32 volumes (there was also a 35-volume edition, including an index volume), and it is in these volumes that we find his available writings on the subject.

In his article from the *Witness* he gives the philosophy of the dispensations and discusses each briefly. Communion with God in a new nature is God's desire for us, and the means by which He can bring us the knowledge of Himself as well as delight Himself in us. Good and evil have their important part in bringing about our instruction in grace, based upon the incarnation of Christ. "This however we have to learn in its details, in the various dispensations which led to or have followed the revelations of the incarnate Son in whom all the fulness was pleased to dwell . . . The detail of the history connected with these dispensations brings out many most interesting displays, both of the principles and patience of God's dealings with the evil and failure of man; and of the workings by which He formed faith on His own thus developed perfections. But the dispensations themselves all declare some leading principle or interference of God, some condition in which He has placed man, principles which in themselves are everlastingly sanctioned of God, but in the course of those dispensations placed responsibly in the hands of man for the display and discovery of what he was, and the bringing in their infallible establishment in Him to whom the glory of them all rightly belonged . . . in every instance, there was total and immediate failure as regarded man, however the patience of God might tolerate and carry on by grace the dispensation in

which man has thus failed in the outset; and further, that there is no instance of the restoration of a dispensation afforded us, though there might be partial revivals of it through faith.”⁶

We might outline Darby’s scheme as follows:

(I—Paradisaical state), to the flood

II—Noah

III—Abraham

IV—Israel:

a—Under the law

b—Under the priesthood

c—Under the kings

V—Gentiles

VI—The Spirit

[VII—The Millennium]⁷

His views may be examined further by consulting the index to the *Collected Writings*.

John Forbes, minister of St. Paul’s, Glasgow, about 1838, contributed a chapter to a book gotten up by ministers of the Church of Scotland, published in 1840, in connection with the action taken by the General Assembly of 1838 to investigate the Jewish people as a mission field for the church. The title of the chapter is, “Origin, Design, and Use of the Jewish Dispensation,” and in it he recalls the following: “Although the essence of true religion has in all ages been one and the same, yet has it been enshrined in

⁶*The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, second edition, London [1857-1867], Vol. I, pp. 192, 193.

⁷It is very difficult to get Darby’s exact outline here, as he is not always a lucid writer. He says “The paradisaical state cannot properly be called a dispensation in this sense [i.e., that there is no instance of the restoration of a dispensation]; but as regards the universal failure of man, it is a most important instance” (p. 194). This succession of dispensations is again discussed in Vol. II, pp. 568-573. In neither place does he attach the millennium to the list as a dispensation, although he firmly holds to the literal thousand years. His chapter on “The Dispensation of the Kingdom of Heaven” (Vol. II, pp. 80-96) does not indicate clearly whether he means to identify the Dispensation of the Kingdom of Heaven with what he elsewhere calls the Dispensation of the Spirit. The Church is not properly a dispensation (Vol. IV, p. 504; Vol. V, p. 24). The present dispensation is parenthetical (Vol. I, p. 142; Vol. XIII, p. 236; Vol. XXVI, p. 373).

various forms of administration, adapted to the circumstances of mankind at different periods; and from this has originated what we are accustomed to term the Patriarchal, the Jewish or Levitical, and the Christian dispensations: the two former being preparatory and introductory to the last.”⁸

W. H. Neal, chaplain of the county of Bridewell, Gosport, Hants., author of *The Mohammedan System of Theology*, has a volume on the three major dispensations as developments of the plan of redemption. He summarizes as follows: “Thus the different dispensations of the true faith have passed in review, all evidently component parts of one grand whole, each contributing in its measure to the gradual development, harmony, and completion of the great work of human redemption through a Divine Mediator. The direct aim and end of all and each of these methods of grace is to introduce the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world in the eternal counsels of Jehovah . . . each is complete and suited to its purpose, and to the particular time in which it was promulgated.”⁹

The work appears to be developed on a covenant-of-grace basis.

Benjamin Wills Newton (1805-1898), a Plymouth Brother, educated at Exeter College, Oxford, an early associate of J. N. Darby, in his *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, has this to say: “Moreover, it is necessary to have some understanding of the *manner* in which the Scripture teaches us respecting man, and the inveteracy of human evil. We are so accustomed to look at it merely in individual exhibitions—to learn it merely in the narrow circle of our own personal history, or in that of those immediately around us, that we find ourselves little prepared to enter into the wider sphere, in which it has pleased God to teach us, through successive

⁸John Forbes, “Origin, Design, and Use of the Jewish Dispensation,” *A Course of Lectures on the Jews*: by ministers of the Established Church, in Glasgow, Philadelphia: Presb. Bd. of Pub., 1840, pp. 29-59.

⁹W. H. Neale, *The Different Dispensations of the True Religion, Patriarchal, Levitical and Christian, considered: or, the Gradual Development, Harmony and Completion of the Great Work of Human Redemption Through a Divine Mediator*, London, 1843, p. 506.

dispensations, the character of man. Since the flood, for example, God has thrice displayed His goodness in dispensing, first to mankind at large, next to Israel, and lastly to the Church, certain blessings, which were committed to them in responsibility, to use for His glory. This responsibility has been in no case answered.¹⁰

Patrick Fairbairn (1805-1874), Scottish nonconformist, famous for his *Typology*, holds the three-fold structure:

I—Patriarchal

II—Mosaic

III—Christian.

“The three eras, then, are those of the fall, of the redemption from Egypt, and of the appearance and work of Christ, as they are usually designated, though they might be more fitly described, the first as the entrance of faith and hope for fallen man, the second as the giving of the law, and the third as the revelation of the Gospel . . . not infrequently, the antediluvian is distinguished from the patriarchal Church, and the Church as it existed before, from the Church as it stood after, the call of Abraham. But important as these events were, in order of God’s providential arrangements, they mark no material alteration in the constitutional basis, or even formal aspect, of the religion then established.¹¹

Samuel Farmer Jarvis (1787-1851), historiographer of the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., graduate of Yale College, and who became professor of Biblical criticism in General Theological Seminary, New York, and later of Oriental literature in Washington College, Hartford, is important in this study first because of his own scheme, and secondly because he was the teacher of Arthur Cleveland Coxe (1818-1896), whom we mention in his proper place, and thirdly because of his covenant views in connection with dispensations. Coxe says of him: “The late Dr. Jarvis, in his *Church*

¹⁰Benjamin Wills Newton, *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, London, 1844, p. 7.

¹¹Patrick Fairbairn, *The Typology of Scripture: Viewed in Connection with the Whole Series of the Divine Dispensations*, Edinb., 5th ed., 1870, Vol. I, p. 24, 231.

of the Redeemed, expounds a dispensation as identified by (1) a covenant, original or renewed, (2) a sign or sacrament, and (3) a closing judgment . . . Thus (1) the Tree of Life, (2) the institution of sacrifice, (3) the rainbow, (4) circumcision, (5) the ark, (6) baptismal and eucharistic sacraments, and (7) the same renewed and glorified by the conversion of nations are the symbols. The covenants and the judgments are easily identified, ending with the universal judgment.¹²

Jarvis says that the history of the Church is properly speaking "the history of the divine economy of human salvation, . . . beginning when sin had rendered redemption necessary, and ending with the final subjugation of the great author of evil . . . one magnificent drama . . . the several acts, the epochs of human history . . . each of these periods ends with a signal act of judgment." He goes on to outline his system as follows:

- I—First period, from the triumph of Satan, and the promise of a Redeemer, to the epoch of the general deluge
- II—Second, commences with the ark and its inhabitants, and ends with the general corruption of the second human race, and the consequent abandonment of the whole Gentile world to their voluntary blindness and impurity
- III—Third, extends from the call of Abraham to the giving of the written law
- IV—Fourth, contains the history of that small nation . . . the chosen people, to the destruction of the first temple, and their captivity in Babylon
- V—Fifth, from the return of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to the destruction of the second temple [70 A.D.]
- VI—Sixth, that in which we live; beginning with the resurrection of Christ . . . looking forward to the Second Advent of the Son of God. This whole

¹² *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Buffalo, 1885, Vol. II, p. 477.

period is declared by St. John to be THE LAST TIME; and it will end at the GENERAL JUDGMENT, of which all the inferior judgments of the preceding periods have been so many types.¹³

Frederick William Robertson (1816-1853), noted British preacher of Trinity College, Brighton, whose sermons are still highly spoken of, mentions that the ages of the world are divisible into three main dispensations, that of the Father, that of the Son, and that of the Spirit."¹⁴

J. H. McCulloh, M.D., an eminent authority of Boston on the antiquities of America, has two volumes on the Scriptures which incorporate more than forty years of diligent investigation of them. His subtitle is sufficient indication of his conception of the three major dispensations. The second volume deals more extensively with the Christian dispensation."¹⁵

John Pye Smith (1774-1851), English independent, educated at the Independent Academy at Rotherham, resident tutor in classics and later in divinity at the Theological Academy of Homerton, outlines various periods up to the time of Christ's coming, which he calls "dispensations of redeeming mercy," which were "a *gradual unfolding* to sinful men of the divine plan for their redemption; in contradistinction from the idea of God's *immediately* sending his Son into the world, for the purposes of salvation as they were

¹³Samuel Farmer Jarvis, *The Church of the Redeemed, or, the History of the Mediatorial Kingdom*, Vol. I, Boston, 1850, pp. 4-6. (This first volume elaborates the first five periods. Volume II was never published, on account of his death. This book was recommended and authorized by the General Conventions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States for 1847 and 1850, as recorded in the journals of those conventions.)

¹⁴F. W. Robertson, "The Dispensation of the Spirit," preached May 19, 1850, *Sermons on Christian Doctrine* (Everyman's Library), London and N. Y., 1907, p. 130.

¹⁵J. H. McCulloh, *On the Credibility of the Scriptures. A Recast, with Enlarged Views, of a Former Work on the Subject, Together with a Copious Analysis of the Religious System Promulgated during the Patriarchal, Jewish and Christian Dispensations, and of Human Developments under them.* Baltimore, 1867, 2 vols. (The original edition was dated 1852.)

disclosed four thousand years afterward.”¹⁶ Various reasons are assigned for such a gradual development of the plan of salvation. The periods are divided as follows:

I—From the fall of man to the deluge

II—From the re peopling of the earth, by the family of Noah, to the calling of Abraham

III—From the calling of Abraham to the exodus

IV—To the entrance into Canaan

V—From the possession of Canaan to the return from the Babylonish exile

VI—To the coming of Christ.

George Smith, a local preacher of the British Wesleyan Connection, who was connected with the mining business in Cornwall, has a book on the dispensations which, according to the introduction written by D.D.W., “presents in a most striking clearness the fact of the *oneness* of the redemptive system. It shows that ‘Christianity is as old as the creation.’ It presents the three-one dispensation as the grand spiritual Cosmos of which the Redeemer is the center. It thus serves to develop a true unity in the manifold parts of the revealed word, to give a comprehensive completeness to our view of the Divine system, to pour an explanatory light upon the numerous otherwise dark passages of the Divine page, and, in fact, to furnish a volume of peculiar evidences to the truth and divinity of the sacred book.”¹⁷

John Cox of England (1802-1878), author of a number of books on millenarianism, indicates a dispensational scheme, but does not elaborate it, in the volume from which we take the following quotation: “The millennium, with all its advantages, has, like every other dispensation, failed.”¹⁸

¹⁶John Pye Smith, *First Lines of Christian Theology*, edited by William Farrer, Boston, 1854, p. 454 ff.

¹⁷George Smith, *The Harmony of the Divine Dispensations: being a Series of Discourses on Select Portions of Holy Scripture, designed to show the Spirituality, Efficiency, and Harmony of the Divine Revelations made to Mankind from the Beginning. With Notes Critical, Historical, and Explanatory.* New York, 1856, p. 8.

¹⁸John Cox, *A Premillennial Manual*, London, n.d. [1856], p. 106.

Chapter VI

FROM ABOUT 1850 TO THE SCOFIELD ERA

John Cumming (1810-1881) was a powerful preacher of the Scottish National Church. He was educated at King's College, Aberdeen. His works outsold those of any other writer of his day. His special emphases were the Roman Church and Prophecy, and it was the opinion of many that he overdid these two themes. His works are, however, numerous and important. In his work, *The Great Consummation*, he has a chapter on "The Seven Grand Dispensations." He says: "During the last six thousand years—nearly exhausted—of the history of our globe, there have been at least six distinct and independent dispensations, to be succeeded by a seventh, the glory and perfection of all that have passed away. Just as there seem to have been six days spent in the creation of the globe, or rather in the arrangement of it, crowned by a seventh, its coronal and its glory; so there seem to have been six successive dispensations or economies, each closing with judgment, and each giving birth to another, a brighter and a better."¹⁹ His scheme is outlined as follows:

- I—Adamic, to the expulsion from Paradise
- II—Antediluvian, patriarchal age, terminating with the flood
- III—Noachian, ending with the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah
- IV—Abrahamic, ending with the exodus from Egypt

¹⁹John Cumming, *The Great Consummation. The Millennial Rest; or, the World as it will be.* N.Y., 1858, p. 12.

V—Mosaic, from the Red Sea to the overthrow of Jerusalem

VI—Christian

VII—Millennium.

With regard to the seventh dispensation, Cumming says, "The mark of this seventh economy . . . is a new heaven and new earth, 'wherein dwelleth righteousness.'"²⁰ But he does not by this mean to deny what we would call the eternal state, rather that is to follow the thousand years and be of the same, or very similar, nature. The difference in his position from that of most interpreters is that he places the new heaven and the new earth at the beginning of the millennium instead of at its close.

Isaac P. Labagh, rector of Calvary Church, Brooklyn, has an interesting outline.

I—The Adamic dispensation, with its seal, the tree of life, commencing in mercy in Eden, and ending in wrath at the flood.

II—The Noatic dispensation, with its seal, the rainbow, commencing in mercy after the deluge, and ending in wrath at the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah.

III—The Abrahamic dispensation, with its seal of circumcision, commencing in mercy at the call of Abraham, and ending in wrath at the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea.

IV—The Mosaic dispensation, with its seal of blood, commencing in mercy at Mount Sinai, and ending in wrath at the destruction of Jerusalem, and overthrow of the Jewish polity.

V—The Christian dispensation, with its seal of Baptism and the Lord's supper, commencing in mercy at the ascension of Christ, or at Pentecost, and to end in wrath at the battle of Armageddon.

VI—The Millennial, with its seal not yet declared, to commence in mercy at the second advent of our Lord, and to end in wrath, after Satan, let loose

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 16.

out of his prison, gathers an army together against the camp of the saints, and is hurled, with all his hosts, in the lake of fire, and lastly

VII—The New Jerusalem, the final and unchangeable state, when the work of the Redeemer being completed, and the season of probation closed, the righteous shall all enter upon that eternal state of perfect and everlasting enjoyment which shall need no other change, because it is incapable of improvement.”²¹

Judge Joel Jones (1795-1860), mayor of Philadelphia, of Puritan ancestry, reputed to be a linguist, theologian and Biblical critic who ranked with the most eminent, wrote a book entitled *Jesus and the Coming Glory*. To it are prefaced a few preliminary words by R.J.B. of Danville, Ky., in which he speaks of the significance of the work. “There are two particulars concerning the authorship of this volume, though subordinate in themselves, seem to me to demand special mention here. In the first place, it is the work of a private gentleman . . . In the second place, it comes out of the bosom of the Presbyterian Church—that great branch of that God-fearing Reformed Church—to whose highest turrets men look to see the light of God as it arises, and breaks on them first of all; and to which they look to see it linger there last of all, when it departs.”²²

On the dispensations Judge Jones says: “The various dispensations of God’s government over the earth and man are among the grandest themes of the Bible. They are stages or parts of an infinite scheme which join on to others yet hidden deep in the Divine mind. Eph. ii.7. They were all appointed and arranged by God the Son; they are upheld and unfolded by his power for the ever increasing display of the Divine attributes. Heb. i.2,3.”²³ The scheme ad-

²¹Isaac P. Labagh, *Twelve Lectures on the Great Events of Unfulfilled Prophecy*, which still await their accomplishment, and are approaching their fulfillment, New York, 1859, pp. 270, 271.

²²Joel Jones, *Jesus and the Coming Glory* (formerly published under the title: *Notes on Scripture*), Philadelphia, 1865, p. 24.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 570.

vanced by the author may be outlined as follows:

I—Dispensation of Paradise, or kingdom of the heavens

II—Dispensation of the fall or the curse of the heavens withdrawn. "This dispensation still continues, yet not without the hope of restitution. Rom. viii.20."²⁴

a—Patriarchal. "Began with the birth of the first man . . . was re-established with Noah, and with respect to the larger part of his descendants, has ever since remained unchanged."²⁵

b—[Jewish]. "In respect to the posterity of Jacob, this economy ended at their exodus from Egypt, under the leadership of Moses, and the giving of the law at Mount Sinai fifty days afterwards . . . That people were then brought into new covenant relations with God, and thenceforward were regarded as a peculiar and elect people . . . The economy thus established . . . terminated with the mysterious rending of the veil of the temple; to be succeeded by

c—The dispensation of the Holy Spirit . . . universal in its scope but not so in its effects. The especial design of it is to gather an elect people out of all nations, Acts xv.14, not the universal salvation of all men, in any age of it."²⁶

d—"The last days . . . by which we understand the ultimate subdivision of the second of the great dispensations before mentioned."²⁷

William Cunningham (1805-1861) was a Scotch theologian of considerable repute. He became professor at New College, Edinburgh. He has this to say about the dispensations: "The series of God's dealings with the human race since the fall has been commonly ranked under three great

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 571.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 572.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 572.

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 572, 573.

divisions, usually called oeconomies, or dispensations—viz., the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian.”²⁸ Each of these he subdivides into three, as follows:

I—Patriarchal:

a—Fall to the deluge

b—Deluge to calling of Abraham

c—Calling of Abraham to the giving of the law

II—Mosaic:

a—Giving of the law to the establishment of the monarchy

b—Establishment of the monarchy to the Babylonish captivity

c—Babylonish captivity to Christ

III—Christian:

a—Ancient, apostolic age to the early part of the seventh century

b—Medieval, early part of the seventh century to the Reformation

c—Modern, commencement of the Reformation to the present day

It will be noted that these are more of the nature of historical divisions than strictly dispensational, especially in regard to the Christian period, although he does call it the Christian dispensation. The church of the Christian dispensation is “the Christian Church, more strictly so called.”²⁹

W. C. Bayne, probably the William Craig Baynes (1808-1887) of McGill University, Montreal, was a Plymouth Brethren dispensationalist of the middle 19th century in Canada. He wrote a series of articles in *Waymarks in the Wilderness* in which he discussed the following three dispensations:

I—Eden dispensation

II—Ante-diluvian dispensation

²⁸William Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, 2d ed., Edinb., 1864, pp. 1, 2.
(The first edition was published the year following his death, 1862.)

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 5.

III—Patriarchal dispensation.³⁰

There is a little pamphlet on this man written by T. M. Taylor which is on file in the library of McGill University, in which we learn that Bayne(s) had come under the influence of the Plymouth Brethren and that "a series of lectures on the dispensations, delivered in the old historical St. Gabriel Street Church, attracted much attention and awakened in many Christians interest in dispensational truth (which as distinguishing the economies or periods is found to help so much to a right understanding of scripture and the Lord's coming)."³¹

David Higgins, a layman of the legal profession, of the diocese of Maryland, has a little volume on the *Three Dispensations of Grace*, at the close of which he says, "I have thus endeavored to present a summary of the dispensation of the grace of God to our sinning race, partially developed in the patriarchal ages, settled into a system of typical ritualism under the Jewish polity, and at last fully developed and taught to all people through the instrumentality of the Holy Catholic Church."³²

There is a peculiar little volume entitled *Alpha and Omega*, in which the millennial-day tradition is laid out in considerable detail covering human history. The reconstruction of the earth, as outlined in Genesis 1, took six days, or, since a day is as a thousand years, six thousand years, and human history since has run in a parallel pattern. Christ was born ("the Sun of Righteousness rose") at the end of the fourth day. "During this day, or thousand years of human history, 'God made two great lights, and the stars also.' The moon of Hebrew Prophecy, Greek Literature, and Roman Law, and the Sun of Christ's living humanity, the former reflecting prospectively the coming glory of the lat-

³⁰*Waymarks in the Wilderness, and Scriptural Guide*, edited by James Inglis, New York, Vol. II, 1864, pp. 41-57; 127-143; 184-196; 253-269; 355-364; Vol. III, 1865, pp. 42-53; 117-122; 234-244.

³¹T. M. Taylor, *The Late Mr. Baynes*, n.d., p. 3.

³²[David Higgins], *Studies upon the Harmony of the Three Dispensations of Grace*. By a layman of the Diocese of Maryland, New York, 1866, p. 129.

ter, were fully manifested . . . The Sun was turned into darkness when Christ died on the cross; and the moon will be turned into blood when Hebrew Prophecy, Greek Literature, and Roman Law, conjoined with the divine life of God's Son, become the spirit and life of human existence, individual, social, and national."³³ This gives an indication of the fanciful and mystical nature of the work. The year 1878 is made out from several angles to be a year of consummation.

Robert Jamieson (1802-1880) of St. Paul's, Glasgow, of the famous Jamieson-Fausset-Brown trio, wrote the notes on the Pentateuch in the original edition of that famous commentary, and on Genesis 2:17, he has an interesting word to say on the subject. "The Edenic dispensation had the true character of a covenant, for in every dispensation or promise God has made to the Church there was an outward sign annexed (cf. Gen. xvii. 7-10; Exod. xii. 11; I Cor. xi. 20-28); and as in the subsequent dispensations their respective signs were pledges of the promises to which they were severally annexed—*i.e.*, as far as material can signify or picture spiritual things—so the tree of life, which nourished Adam's physical life, typified that spiritual life which he, while obedient, possessed in the 'Lord God.' It has been a question much discussed, What character did Adam sustain in this primitive dispensation?—was it that of an individual, or did he appear the representative, the federal head of his posterity?"³⁴

In *The Economy of the Ages*, the author of which is unknown to the compiler, there is a treatment of the plan of redemption somewhat after the order of Jonathan Edwards' *History of Redemption*. The author says, "The work of redemption has been carried forward in distinct eras, or dispensations, marked by their own peculiarities, and each

³³*Alpha and Omega, or, the Life and Mission of Christ as the Word of God*, Printed for the author [who is unknown], Edinburgh, 1867, pp. 145, 146.

³⁴Jamieson, Faussett and Brown, *A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments*, in six volumes, London and Glasgow, (preface) 1868.

one being an advance upon that going before. Through all these eras of the past sin has been in the ascendant; and what God has done in the way of salvation, has been in gathering out a remnant . . . these eras . . . have all terminated in signal disaster and overthrow, and, in a certain sense, failure."³⁵ The outline of this writer seems to be as follows:

I—Antediluvian

II—Patriarchal

III—Mosaic, commencing with the possession of Canaan

IV—Present

V—Millennial

VI—Dispensation of the fulness of times, the eternal state.

Charles Hodge (1797-1878), famous professor of theology at Princeton, whom merely to mention is sufficient for any theological novitiate, has devoted a section to the different dispensations in his chapter dealing with the so-called covenant of grace. The following dispensations of the covenant of grace are enumerated:

I—First, from Adam to Abraham

II—Second, from Abraham to Moses

III—Third, from Moses to Christ

IV—The Gospel dispensation.³⁶

Hodge has an interesting statement that may or may not allow for what others have listed as the last dispensation (whether the millennium or the eternal state). He may have in mind that others have added such, when he says, "We have no intimation in Scripture that the dispensation of the Spirit is to give way for a new and better dispensation for the conversion of the nations. When the gospel is fully preached, then comes the end." He had just stated previously that "this dispensation is, therefore, the last before

³⁵*The Economy of the Ages*, New York, 1869, pp. 288, 289.

³⁶Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, New York, 1874, Vol. II, pp. 373-377.

the restoration of all things; the last, that is, designed for the conversion of men and the ingathering of the elect.”³⁷

Jan Jakob Van Oosterzee (1817-1882), Dutch Protestant preacher and theologian, educated at the University of Utrecht, where he later served as professor of practical theology, has an interesting chapter in his work on theology in which he outlines a good apologetic for a plan of God, but does not indicate the details of the plan. He says, “The developed idea of God leads necessarily to the idea of a Divine plan with regard to the world; which—eternal and independent as God Himself—develops itself in the course of time, but to which the fitting key is found only in the records of the Christian Revelation of Salvation. . . . The *realisation* of the world-plan of God takes place in time, *i.e.*, by degrees and after a long interval.”³⁸

Robert Lewis Dabney (1820-1898), professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia and later of the University of Texas, who had a large part in the founding of Austin Theological Seminary in Texas, spoke of the old three-fold scheme of dispensations, the Abrahamic, the Mosaic, and the Christian, which characterize the administration of the so-called Covenant of Grace.³⁹ Yet, while he adopted this division for discussion, he really repudiated the distinctive aspect of the Patriarchal: “There seems no adequate reason for regarding the patriarchal age,

³⁷If an observation may be permitted in this connection, it is evident that those who otherwise follow Hodge and his system of theology, and who violently oppose dispensational teaching as held by Darby, Scofield and others, would have to admit that their objection is directed not against the larger doctrine of dispensations as time-period divisions in God's program of redemption, but against certain details of single dispensations, and related subjects, such as Israel and the church, and their careless handling of the matters involved has confused the minds of many. Rather than denounce dispensationalism as such, it would appear to be a more intelligent procedure to take up and deal specifically with the various items on the basis of their own merits and problems.

³⁸J. J. Van Oosterzee, *Christian Dogmatics*, London, 1878, Section LV, “God's Plan of the World,” pp. 295, 299. (This was first published as *Christelijke Dogmatiek* in 2 parts, 1870-72.)

³⁹R. L. Dabney, *Syllabus and Notes of the Course of Systematic and Polemic Theology Taught in Union Theological Seminary, Virginia*, 4th ed., Richmond, 1890, p. 431. (The work first appeared in 1871.)

from Adam to Moses, as essentially a different dispensation from that of Moses. Certainly that representation is incorrect which makes the former a free and gracious dispensation, while the latter only was burdened with the condemning weight of the moral and ritual law."⁴⁰

Henry Grattan Guinness (1835-1910), educated at New College, London, founder and director of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (formerly the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missions), holder of two fellowships (F.R.A.S., F.R.G.S.), a rather substantial writer on prophetic subjects, held the sex-millennial position, and said, "The grand primary division of all human history, whether viewed from the moral, or from the chronological standpoint, is into three main, comprehensive, and long-enduring dispensations." He listed, however, the millennial age, and claimed that each dispensation takes its rise out of the preceding. His outline is as follows:

I—Patriarchal.

II—Jewish.

III—Times of the Gentiles.

IV—Millennial age."⁴¹

Samuel Hanson Cox (1793-1880) was of Quaker parentage but served in the Presbyterian Church. He was one of the founders of the University of the City of New York, and of Union Theological Seminary. He was moderator of the General Assembly in 1846. His division of the dispensations is given in a note of elucidation in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* by his son, Arthur Cleveland Coxe, editor of the American edition. It is significant in that it is, in outline, though not in nomenclature, the exact parallel of Dr. Scofield's system.

I—Paradise.

II—Adam.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 443, 454 ff.

⁴¹H. Grattan Guinness, *The Approaching End of the Age Viewed in the Light of History, Prophecy, and Science*, London, 11th ed., 1892, pp. 325 ff. (First published in 1878 or earlier, see pp. xviii, xix.)

- III—Noah.
- IV—Abraham.
- V—Moses.
- VI—Christ.
- VII—Millennial period.⁴²

It should be noted that this outline of the dispensations was held by the elder Cox on a multi-covenant foundation. Coxe's elucidation was occasioned by Clement's phrase, "the sacred tetrad of the ancient covenants," symbolized by the four pillars of the entrance into the holy of holies. Obviously these four were pre-tabernacle covenants.

Arthur Cleveland Coxe (1818-1896), second bishop of western New York, graduate of the University of the City of New York and of General Theological Seminary, author of *Lectures on Prophecy* (1871), and editor of the American reprint of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, may be assumed to have shared his father's system of dispensationalism. See above under Samuel Hanson Cox (1793-1880).

John R. Graves (1820-1893), Baptist preacher of Arcadia, near Memphis, Tenn., has an extensive volume on the subject in which he outlines the following dispensations as the scheme of the development of the work of Christ in the covenant of redemption, based on the creation-week pattern:

- I—Adamic, Monday, Anno Mundi 1.
- II—Antediluvian, Tuesday Morning, A. M. 100.
- III—Patriarchal, Wednesday Morning, A. M. 1657.
- IV—Jewish, Thursday, A. M. 2465-4004.
- V—Gospel.
- VI—Millennial or Messianic.
- VII—Eternal Sabbath.

On page 424 of the work, Dr. Graves has a diagram that shows the "Gentile Dispensation" as extending from the preaching of John the Baptist to the second advent of Christ, or strictly speaking, the rapture of the saints. His general eschatological scheme follows quite closely the order

⁴²Elucidation III, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Buffalo, 1885, Vol. II, pp. 476, 477.

as held by Darby, Scofield, etc. He appears to have been quite widely read, and quotes a good many authors. He ceases to date the dispensations after the first four."

Samuel James Andrews (1817-1906), an Irvingite (Catholic Apostolic Church), educated at Williams College and Lane Theological Seminary, later instructor in Trinity College, Hartford, author of the widely-known work, *Christianity and Anti-Christianity*, held the old threefold division, and has the following to say about the scheme: "Each successive stage of the redemptive work—Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian—is, also, a higher stage of Divine revelation. . . . Man, therefore, in each period of his redemptive history down to the end, is upon trial whether he will accept his place of subordination and dependence upon God, will acknowledge his sinfulness, will renounce his own will, and co-operate with Him in His purposes of salvation according to his measure of knowledge; or will refuse His grace, and defiantly and persistently reject His authority." He held to a literal earthly kingdom reign, but was not sure whether the thousand years was to be taken literally or as indicating a long period.

The Reverend George Wilson published a remarkable book in Bloomington, Ill., in 1887, entitled *The Kingdom of God Developed*. It represents a vast amount of labor, covering as it does 1,055 large pages, and amounting to over 685,000 words. The viewpoint is original in that he made "no effort to avoid or adopt the conclusions of others." He outlines four major ages:

I—Incipient Age, B. C. 4004-1491.

II—Preparatory Age, B. C. 1926-A. D. 29.

III—Intermediate Age, A. D. 29-1996.

¹¹J. R. Graves, *The Work of Christ in the Covenant of Redemption; developed in Seven Dispensations*, Texarkana, Baptist Sunday School Committee, 1928, 569 pp. (First published in 1883.).

¹²Samuel J. Andrews, *God's Revelations of Himself to Men as Successively Made in the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian Dispensations and in the Messianic Kingdom*, New York, 1885.

IV—Consummated Age, Millennium.⁴⁵

In a chapter called "Retrospect" Wilson recapitulates his whole work. (His scheme is properly to be included in a discussion of the dispensations, even though he calls his divisions "ages" because they are conceived of as developing God's program of redemption. We draw the dividing line between the twin doctrines of ages and dispensations at this point: if time is divided into periods without respect to God's redemptive program, those divisions would be ages but not dispensations.) The Incipient Age is not subdivided. He divides the Preparatory Age, however, into ten periods, the first of which is from B. C. 1926-1491, and the last of which covers B. C. 63-A. D. 27. Likewise the Intermediate Age is subdivided into six periods, covering Church history from Pentecost to what he believes will be its close, the Second Coming of Christ. This is an interesting outline, and since copies of the book are probably rather scarce, we give it here:

1. First, or White Horse, Period, A. D. 29-325.
2. Second, or Red Horse, Period, A. D. 330-630.
3. Third, or Black Horse, Period, A. D. 630-1050.
4. Fourth, or Pale Horse, Period, A. D. 1050-1648.
5. Fifth, or Free and White-Robed Period, A. D. 1648-1996 (or perhaps sooner).

6. Sixth Period, or Wrath of Almighty God Period. This last period "will be a period of revolutions, invasions, subversions, uprootings, annihilations, radical and permanent changes, terminating in the perpetual power and happiness of the next, or consummated age."⁴⁶

⁴⁵George Wilson, *The Kingdom of God Developed* according to the Inspired Records and Predictions. Published by the author, Bloomington, Ill., 1887.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 963-992.

Chapter VII

FROM ABOUT 1850 TO THE SCOFIELD ERA (continued)

Burlington B. Wale, British philologist and prophetic student, has a very important treatment of the dispensations in his book, *The Closing Days of Christendom*. Three chapters are devoted to various aspects of the subject: VI, "‘Purpose,’ ‘Age,’ and ‘Dispensation,’"; VII, "The Silent Juncture of Eras"; and VIII, "The Aspects of Dying Dispensations." In the first he distinguishes between an age and a dispensation as follows: "An ‘age’ is a period the commencement and close of which are distinguished by *great physical changes* taking place in the earth and its atmosphere. An ‘age’ may therefore comprise within it many ‘dispensations.’ A ‘dispensation’ has reference to the *moral* government of God, in its manifest action upon, and interposition in, the affairs of man."⁴⁷ He sees three ages:

- I—Completion of creation to the deluge
- II—Noah’s emergence from the ark to the Second Advent of the Redeemer
- III—Millennial age, a thousand years.

Three is the number of "constitutional completeness." Three statements are made in the Bible concerning these ages: (1) "They were constituted for Christ" (Heb. 1:2); (2) "That to the principalities, Governments, and powers (authorities) in the heavenlies might be *made known, through the Church,*

⁴⁷Burlington B. Wale, *The Closing Days of Christendom* as foreshadowed in Parable and Prophecy, London, S. W. Partridge & Co., 2d ed., 1883, p. 33.

the much diversified wisdom of God, according to a 'plan of the ages' which he formed for Christ Jesus our Lord"; (3) "The last of the three ages, the age to come, He hath not put into subjection to the angels, but in immediate subjection to Christ" (Heb. 2:5).⁴⁸

The dispensations are outlined as follows:

- I—Edenic
- II—Antediluvian
- III—Patriarchal
- IV—Legal
- V—Evangelical, earthly ministry of Christ
- VI—Ecclesiastical, Pentecost to the death of the last of the apostles
- (VII)—Christian or Gospel dispensation
- VII (or VIII)—Millennial.⁴⁹

In connection with the so-called seventh dispensation, Wale has an interesting and unique argument: "We . . . speak inaccurately when we call the present condition of things in Christendom the 'Christian dispensation,' or the 'Gospel dispensation,' though in consequence of conventional custom, and the universal use of the words to represent the present ecclesiastical condition of things, we are compelled to adopt it. . . . We do so *under protest*—because the distinctive characteristic of a divine dispensation is wanting. [This characteristic Wale had just declared to be that "at the head of each of the dispensations we have been considering there was a personal representative of God upon earth:—Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Christ, and the twelve apostles—an ultimate standard of appeal; but since the days of the Apostles there has been no such personal representative of God upon earth."] How then, it may be asked, would we describe the ecclesiastical condition of things which has existed in Christendom since the apostles died?

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 36, 37, italics his.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 34-42.

We reply, so far as a descriptive name is concerned, we should apply to it the name that the Saviour applies to it, by way of anticipation, in the parables of Matthew 13th chapter, 'the Kingdom in Mystery,' while its typical and prophetic representative is to be found in the condition of things which existed in Israel in the time of the Judges—when 'every man did that which was right in his own eyes.' The principles of the Mosaic dispensation were indeed in force, but there was no active, visible, living authority to compel their observance. Such has been for nearly eighteen centuries the condition of Christendom; the principles of the Gospel are in force, but men do as they like about observing them: some reject them, some deny them, others adopt a portion of them, according to the exercise of their own judgment and will, and throw aside the rest as distasteful, or undeserving acceptance or credence. Another party nominally accepts them all, and buries them beneath ritualistic observances and the 'traditions of the Fathers'; others again use them as a stalking horse to preferment and social distinction.

"Religious society is split up into an infinite number of sects and parties each looking with jealous, envious, or doubtful eyes upon the others. Each religionist joins the 'church of his choice,' a contradiction in terms, an utter incongruity if there were a real manifest church of Christ on earth; as great an incongruity as it would have been, if the various tribes of Israel had each—regardless of the divine institution of the Aaronic priesthood, chosen priests, temples and sacrifices for themselves. But as in the time of the Judges, so still, God does occasionally raise up deliverers, teachers, reformers, like Luther, Whitefield, and others, to recall first principles, and to recover lost truths. But scarcely are such reformers gathered to *their* fathers, before, like Israel of old, the so-called Christian Churches of modern days do 'evil again in the sight of the Lord,' and sink back into spiritual sloth and slumber, or split into fresh sects and

parties, heaping up to themselves teachers after their own choice.

“From a prophetic standpoint the period intervening from the destruction of Jerusalem to the end of the present age is

“THE TIME OF GOD’S LONGSUFFERING, an interval of grace in which God is silently accomplishing and calling out the number of His elect from the Gentiles, to constitute the ‘Church of the firstborn,’ whose names are registered in heaven; it is the time of God’s ‘longsuffering’ with a fallen world.”⁵⁰

The two chapters on “The Silent Juncture of Eras,” and “The Aspects of Dying Dispensations,” are eminently worth reading, and really cry for complete reproduction here, but of course cannot be given in full.

Pastor Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916), privately educated minister, first of Congregationalist connections, published the first of his widely-known series in 1886, *The Plan of the Ages*. The teaching he says in the preface had been gradually unfolding for fifteen years. His chart, attached to the front of the book, outlines the dispensations as follows:

- I—Dispensation first, to the flood, 1656 years
- II—Dispensation second, or “Present Evil World” consisting of:
 - a—Patriarchal age
 - b—Jewish age, from Jacob’s death to the end of the “70 weeks”
 - c—Gospel age, from Jesus’ baptism to the completion of the church, which is His body
- III—Dispensation third, the “Fulness” of times, consisting of:
 - a—The millennial age
 - b—The “Ages to Come.”

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 42-44. (This extensive quotation will be pardoned, we trust, by reason of its importance.) The pertinent statement concerning the millennium in the outline above is to be found on p. 57, not in sequence with the other dispensations.

In his explanation of the chart he says: "In each of these three great dispensations, epochs or 'worlds' God's plan with reference to men has a distinct and separate outline; yet each is but a part of the one great plan which, when complete, will exhibit the divine wisdom—though these parts considered separately fail to show their deep design. Since the first 'world' ('heaven and earth,' or that order of things) passed away at the time of the flood, it follows that it must have been a different order from 'this present evil world' of which our Lord said Satan is the prince; hence the prince of this present evil world was not the prince of the world that was before the flood, although he was not without influence then . . . the first 'world,' or the dispensation before the flood, was under the supervision and special ministration of angels, who were permitted to try what they could do to recover the fallen and degenerate race. . . . Each of these dispensations has its distinct seasons for the beginning and development of its work, and each ends with a harvest manifesting its fruits. The harvest at the close of the Jewish age was a period of forty years, lasting from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, when he was *anointed* of God by the Spirit (Acts 10:37, 38), A. D. 29, until the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70. In this harvest the Jewish age ended and the Gospel age began. There was a lapping of these dispensations, as represented by the chart. A 'harvest' constitutes the closing period of the Gospel age also, during which there is again a lapping of two ages—the Gospel age ending, and the Restitution or Millennial age beginning."⁵¹

A. J. Frost, a prophetic conference speaker and writer, lists the following outline:

- I—Paradisaical or Edenic
- II—Antediluvian
- III—Patriarchal

⁵¹Charles T. Russell, *Millennial Dawn*, Vol. I, *The Plan of the Ages*, Allegheny, Pa., 1905, pp. 220-224. See also ch. iv, pp. 65-76. The series later was published as *Studies in the Scriptures*, seven volumes in all, including one put together after Russell's death by his followers.

- IV—Mosaic
- V—Christian
- VI—Millennium.⁵²

James Hall Brookes (1830-1897), prominent pastor of St. Louis, Missouri, and editor for 23 years of *The Truth*, a Biblical and prophetic magazine for believers, divides the dispensations according to the view of Professor Bayne of McGill University, who is noted above.⁵³ Bayne's full outline was not given in the work there cited, and is here reproduced as given by Brookes:

- I—Eden dispensation
- II—Antediluvian dispensation
- III—Patriarchal dispensation
- IV—Mosaic dispensation
- V—Messianic dispensation
- VI—Dispensation of the Holy Ghost or of the Gospel
- VII—Millennial dispensation.⁵⁴

Brookes' influence has been very strong in the whole Bible study movement.

William A. Parlane, Bible Conference speaker, had a pamphlet entitled *Elements of Dispensational Truth* in which he discussed various phases of related Biblical doctrine but did not set forth a formal system of dispensations. He has a diagram showing the Jewish, Christian and Messianic ages, with the "missing week of Daniel" located between the last two. One of the interesting features of the work is his chapter on the ten virgins, which parable he interprets as belonging to the Jewish age.⁵⁵

George Hawkins Pember (1837?-1910) took his B.A. and

⁵²A. J. Frost, "Condition of the Church and World at Christ's Second Advent; or, Are the Church and World to Grow Better or Worse Until He Come?" *Prophetic Studies of the International Prophetic Conference*, Chicago, 1886, pp. 166-177.

⁵³Pp. 211, 212.

⁵⁴James H. Brookes, *Maranatha; or the Lord Cometh*, 10th ed., N. Y., 1889, p. 285.

⁵⁵Wm. A. Parlane, *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, Collingwood, Canada, 1894; a second revised edition was published in 1905 by Charles C. Cook of New York.

M.A. from Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. He was one of the three dominant prophetic scholars of the Victorian age. His dispensational scheme is as follows:

- I—First dispensation, before the fall
- II—"A different age," from the fall to the flood
- III—Third dispensation, in which "God now invested man with the sword of the magistrate"
- IV—Fourth dispensation, "the pilgrim age," from the separation of Abraham to Sinai
- V—Fifth age, from Sinai to the dispersion, 70 A.D.
- VI—"Parenthetical dispensation of grace," the present age, to the revelation
- VII—Millennial age, "the last trial of the human race."⁵⁶

His philosophy is evident in these words: "Thus, by seven distinct and altogether diverse tests, it will have been proved that no possible circumstances can give man the power of recovering himself from sin; that he must either cry out for the help of the Lord, or perish from His presence forever."⁵⁷

Robert Cameron, a prophetic speaker and writer of the last generation, has a peculiar layout of the ages:

- I—Pre-temporal age (the eternity of the past up to the beginning of human history)
- II—Kosmic periods ("marked changes in the condition of the earth"):
 - 1—First age, from the beginning to the fall
 - 2—Second age, from the fall to the flood
 - 3—Third age, covers the period from the fall to the second coming of the Lord, and is broken up into three redemptive ages.
 - a—Patriarchal age

⁵⁶G. H. Pember, Chap. II, "The Seven Dispensations," *The Great Prophecies of the Centuries Concerning Israel and the Gentiles*, with two colored charts, 2d ed., London, 1942, pp. 19-30. (The book was first published in 1895.)

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 25.

b—Mosaic age

c—Church age

4—Fourth age, “the millennial period, extending from the second advent to the judgment of small and great before the great white throne, whether it continue one thousand or many thousands of years”

5—Fifth age, “begins at the terminus of the millennium and is perpetuated as ‘the Age of the Ages,’ in the new heavens and the new earth, after all old things have passed away.”⁵⁸

“Every one of these ages,” writes Cameron, “ends in the judgment of sin, except the last age, concerning which we have no mention of either sin or end.” He has some departures in the book from the common position of other dispensationalists regarding the Church.⁵⁹

Frank White, speaker at the Mildmay prophetic conferences, says, “I have likened the age now present to one vast bridge spanning the centuries between the fall and the first promise to the appearing in glory of the Promised One—the Lord from heaven—the Second Adam. Within the span of this bridge are several distinct and successive arches, each complete in itself, yet each a part of the entire bridge.” These arches are:

I—Adam to Noah

II—Noah to Abraham

III—Abraham to Moses

IV—Moses to Christ.

“Instead of making another arch between the first appearing and the second, as some would do, but for which, I think, Scripture does not furnish the necessary materials, I would rather speak of this last arch as widened out in consequence

⁵⁸Robert Cameron, *The Doctrine of the Ages*, New York, 1896, esp. Chap. V, “Determining the Ages,” pp. 50-56.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, p. 51.

of Israel's fall. We are living in the time of this last arch."⁶⁰

DISPENSATIONALISM SINCE 1900

It is hardly correct to make a new division of the period from 1825 to date, as there is little that is new in respect to the main outlines of the standard seven-fold system of dispensationalism, yet with the publication of the Scofield Bible that has now gone into millions of hands the subject has been popularized as it never was before the turn of the century. There are also new developments to be found in the various elaborations of the doctrine, that have come to be called ultra-dispensationalism. The dispensationalism philosophy has found its way more fully into prophetic works and has been incorporated into courses of study in colleges, Bible schools and seminaries as dogmatic teaching or as informative material.

James Martin Gray (1851-1935), for years president of the Moody Bible Institute, and a prominent figure in Bible conferences throughout the country, set forth the following outline of the dispensations:

- I—Edenic age
- II—Ante-diluvian age
- III—Patriarchal age
- IV—Mosaic age
- V—Church age
- VI—Millennial age
- VII—"Fulness of the times" age
- VIII—Eternal age.⁶¹

G. B. M. Clouser has outlines of both the ages and dispensations. The ages he divides as follows:

- I—Ante-diluvian, Adam to Noah
- II—Noah to Abraham

⁶⁰Frank White, "The Present Dispensation," *The Sure Word of Prophecy*, Addresses on the Second Coming of the Lord, Mildmay Park, 1897, pp. 158-166.

⁶¹James M. Gray, *Dispensational Bible Studies*. A study of the Whole Bible by Epochs. Cleveland, 1901, 216 pp.

III—Abraham to the exodus

IV—Exodus to the captivity

V—Gentile supremacy, Nebuchadnezzar to the Cross

VI—The Cross to the coming of the Son of Man

VII—The millennium.

His five dispensations are:

I—Conscience, 4004-1921 B.C.

II—Law, 1921 B.C.-A.D. 29

III—Grace, from the Cross to the second advent

IV—The Great Tribulation

V—Righteousness, 1000 years.

James H. Brookes said of the large chart, "It is the best that has yet fallen under my eye." Clouser says, "In the dispensations we read the story of God in redemption; in the ages, the ways of God in government."⁶²

Ethelbert William Bullinger (1837-1913) is a prominent figure in the field of dispensational literature. He is credited with one of the major departures in the doctrine. Strangely neither he nor his numerous writings are listed in the standard works of biography and bibliography, although he was no mean scholar. His lexical and concordance works are very substantial.

Bullinger outlines his scheme of dispensations in his book, *How to Enjoy the Bible*. He has one of the best discussions on the word *dispensation* to be found. He is content to let it carry its fundamental meaning of *administration*. The time element he understands to be implied by the figure of metonymy by which "*the act of administering* is transferred to *the time during which that administering* is carried on."⁶³

⁶²G. B. M. Clouser, *Dispensations and Ages of Scripture*. A Study of the Divine Plan for the "Age Times." With chart, New York, Francis E. Fitch, 1903, p. 14.

⁶³E. W. Bullinger, *How to Enjoy the Bible; or, The "Word," and "the Words," How to Study them*. London, 1907, p. 79.

The seven times or dispensations are outlined by Bullinger in his characteristic manner:

- A| The Edenic State (Innocence)
- B| Mankind as a whole (Patriarchal)
- C| Israel (under Law)
- D| The Church of God. The Secret.
The Dispensation of Grace
- C| Israel (Judicial)
- B| Mankind as a whole (Millennial)
- A| The Eternal State (Glory)

He goes on to explain that "these times and periods of different administrations have their correspondence: in which

The *first* corresponds with the *seventh*;

The *second* with the *sixth*;

The *third* with the *fifth*;

The *fourth*, occupying the central position, stands out alone by itself, and has no correspondence with any of the others."⁶⁴

The fourth, or Church Dispensation, began "outwardly by the ministry of Paul, in the Dispensation or administration committed formally to him; and inwardly by the revelation of the mystery as further set forth in its fullness in those epistles which he wrote from his prison in Rome: Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians."⁶⁵ It ends with the rapture of the saints.

The fifth period is "the Day of the Lord," when Israel, who was in the third "under Law," is to be judged "by the law." Bullinger does not state that this period coincides with what others would call the seven-year tribulation period. This and the sixth, or Millennial Dispensation, belong to "the times of restitution of all things . . . (Acts iii. 21)." The Millennial Dispensation will begin with the binding of Satan and end with the great white throne and lake of fire, lasting a thousand years.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 95.

A further word ought to be said with regard to Bullinger's teaching on the Church Dispensation. He is very definite that it is "a parenthesis," as is indicated by Christ's stopping in the middle of a sentence in His reading of Isaiah 61:1, 2 in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-20). The period of the rejected kingdom is not in view in the four Gospels, for it had not yet been revealed; they themselves belong to the former Dispensation. The seven parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13 are to be viewed as though the present Dispensation had no existence. They relate to both the fourth and sixth. The Lord's prayer belongs to the fourth also. "The bringing of John's baptism, which belonged to the kingdom, into this present Church period has led to confusion and disruption. It has proved a bomb which has rent the visible Church into fragments."⁶⁶ In the Gospels we have one baptism, John's; in the Acts and the earlier Pauline epistles, representing a transitional period, we have two baptisms, John's and the Spirit baptism; since the later Pauline epistles, we have only one again, the Spirit baptism.

Bullinger's teaching is elaborated much more fully in his magazine, *Things to Come*, published from 1894 to 1915, and in a series of pamphlets, and in the notes appended to his *Companion Bible*. There is need for a very careful study of this man and his work with a view to determining just what features he originated himself, and what he drew from earlier teachers.

E. C. and R. B. Henniges published a book in Australia in 1909 in which they list three major divisions according to 2 Peter 3, the second of which they subdivided, giving the following outline:

- I—The world that then was—2 Peter 3:6, the Antediluvian Age, from Adam to the flood.
- II—The heavens and the earth which are now—2 Peter 3:7:
 - a—Patriarchal Age, Abraham to the captivity in Egypt

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 133.

b—Jewish Age, Moses to the destruction of Jerusalem

c—Gospel Age, beginning of Christ's ministry to the destruction of the present "heavens" and "earth."⁶⁷

III—The new heavens and new earth—2 Peter 3:13, the Kingdom Age, one thousand years.⁶⁸

There is also a chapter in the book on "Salvation and the Covenants," which, while mentioning "many covenants" in the Bible, lays special stress on three: the Abrahamic, the Law, and the New Covenants. The three mediators were Abraham, Moses and Christ. The book is peculiar, leaning strongly to the system and philosophy expounded by Scofield and his school, but running off into questionable details of interpretation particularly in respect to the future state of the wicked.

⁶⁷The Gospel Age coexisted with the Jewish from the beginning of Christ's ministry to the destruction of Jerusalem. The terms *heaven* and *earth* are used by the authors symbolically and refer to the "higher beings and influences which exercised sway over the 'earth'" and "the social order" or "affairs of mankind" respectively; the "destruction" in view here is prior to the millennium.

⁶⁸E. C. and R. B. Henningses, *Bible Talks for Heart and Mind*. The Covenant Publishing Co., Melbourne, 1919, 288 pp. The book was first published in 1909.

Chapter VIII

SCOFIELD DISPENSATIONALISM AND THE POST-SCOFIELD ERA

J. H. Burridge of St. Andrews, Bristol, England, has a chart dividing time as follows:

- I—Adam to the flood, trial of conscience
- II—Flood to Abraham, trial of government
- III—Abraham to the Captivity, trial of law
- IV—Captivity to the Cross
- V—Cross to the coming
- VI—Millennium⁶⁹

Beyond the peculiarity of his divisions with respect to the captivity, his system runs very nearly along the regular lines.

Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (1843-1921) was the son of an Episcopalian family, strongly Puritan in background. He was admitted to the bar in Kansas, elected to the State legislature, and later appointed U. S. attorney for the District of Kansas. After a successful practice he was one day led to a genuine acceptance of Jesus Christ as his own personal Savior, and thus began a career that has shaken the Christian world. Dr. James H. Brookes of St. Louis did much to influence Scofield in the lines of Bible study. In midsummer of 1882 Scofield reached Dallas and preached his first sermon in the First Congregational Church, now the Scofield Me-

⁶⁹J. H. Burridge, *God's Prophetic Plan*, a comprehensive view of God's dealings with man from the creation to the new heavens and new earth, illustrated by a colored chart, Am. ed., St. Louis, 1909, 311 pp. This was first published in England.

morial Church, of Dallas. Here he was later ordained to the ministry by a large committee of Congregational ministers, after a course of study lasting 18 months, in which he went through three standard treatises on theology and numerous other works.

While at the Dallas church Scofield set up Bible classes, and as a result of the need he felt in connection with these classes he put together the "beginning truths" of Bible study during his vacation in the summer of 1888 in the form of a booklet known as *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, which has gone into many editions by several publishers, and has helped many thousands to understand the Bible. A correspondence course was set up and personally conducted by Dr. Scofield from 1890 to 1915. He commenced his great work on what came to be *The Scofield Reference Bible*, in 1902, but had to give up the pastorate before he finally brought it out in 1909.

It would be quite superfluous to go into detail as to the distinctive teachings of the Scofield Reference Bible, for it has become the basis of the personal study of hundreds of thousands of Christians, and it, with the works of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, who served with Dr. Scofield as an associate in evangelistic campaigns and Bible conferences for a number of years, has become the focal point of attack of nearly all antidispensationalists. Suffice it to list here his outline, which has been the basis for so many works on the subject since his time, but which, it must be remembered, was not original with him.

- I—Innocency, Genesis 1:28
- II—Conscience, Genesis 3:23
- III—Human Government, Genesis 8:20
- IV—Promise, Genesis 12:1
- V—Law, Exodus 19:8
- VI—Grace, John 1:17
- VII—Kingdom, Ephesians 1:10⁷⁰

⁷⁰*The Scofield Reference Bible*, edited by C. I. Scofield, N. Y., 1909, new and improved edition, 1917. The Scripture references in the list of dispensations refer to the place in the notes where Scofield discusses each.

It would have to be assumed that the consulting editors of the *Scofield Reference Bible* endorsed the dispensational scheme and teachings of it and all that is thereby entailed, but specific works of some of these men have not been seen to reveal a formal treatment of the subject as such, and therefore could not be included in this bibliography, even though their writings are in harmony with the implications of the doctrine. These men are Henry G. Weston, William J. Erdman, Arthur T. Pierson, W. G. Moorehead, Elmore Harris, Arno C. Gaebelain, and William L. Pettingill.

George Soltau outlines nine ages:

I—Age of Creation

II—Age of Desolation and Darkness

III—Age of Renovation and Innocence

IV—Age of Conscience

V—Age of Government in the Hands of Men

VI—Jewish Age

VII—Present Age

VIII—Millennial Age

IX—Dispensation of the Fulness of Times⁷¹

Charles H. Welch of London has a book on the dispensations which shows the influence of Bullinger very strongly. Welch was the editor of a periodical named *The Berean Expositor*, which was published in London from 1909 to 1923 or later. His book, *Dispensational Truth*, deals mainly with the place of Israel and the Church in the purpose of the Ages. It is rather of the nature of an introduction to the subject, and a second volume was projected, but it has not come to the attention of the compiler that it ever appeared.⁷²

Adolph Ernst Knoch (1874-), compiler of the *Concordant Version*, seems to have been the first to develop an elaborate system of ages and dispensations that has attracted the interest of a number of Bible students, but so far as is known to the compiler no organizational or secta-

⁷¹George Soltau, *Past—Present—Future*; or Scripture fulfilled, fulfilling, unfulfilled, with coloured chart, London, 1912, pp. 2-4.

⁷²Charles H. Welch, *Dispensational Truth: or the Place of Israel and the Church in the Purpose of the Ages*, London, 1912, 299 pp.

rian ties bind together the members of this group. Their chief interest centers in the *Concordant Version*, which they usually quote in their literature, and in other books and charts prepared by about half a dozen men.

Knoch began his intensive study of the Bible in the latter part of the last century. He published a pamphlet entitled *The Divine Calendar* in 1913, and a book, *The Mystery of the Gospel*, in 1914. He insists on the use of the word *eon* instead of *age*, and speaks of "eonian times" as distinct from "pre-eonian" and "post-eonian." Distinction is also made between "the eon of the eon," "the eon of the eons," and "the eons of the eons." It is difficult to compress into a few lines the elaborate system set forth by Mr. Knoch, but the following quotation will indicate the extent to which he goes:

"The history of the universe may be considered from various viewpoints. Its divisions vary according to the special aspect. It is characterized by

(1) TWO GRAND CREATIONS

besides three special creations;

(2) THREE HEAVENS AND EARTHS

as to its *material basis*;

(3) FIVE WORLDS

as to *moral constitution*;

(4) FIVE EONS

as to the duration and character of each world;

(5) TWELVE ECONOMIES

for purposes of human administration;

(6) A WEEK'S WORK

for the restoration of the second earth;

(7) FOUR MONARCHIES

in regard to governing principles;

(8) THREE DAYS

as regards the direction of earth's affairs;

besides various other PERIODS or ERAS, concerned with special occurrences or extraordinary dealings which arise."⁷³

⁷³A. E. Knoch, *The Divine Calendar*, Los Angeles, [1913], pp. [1, 2].

Out of these details we select only the twelve administrations or "economies" with their representative characters and dispensations for listing, as being pertinent to our subject:

- I—Innocence, Adam, Paradise
- II—Conscience, Seth, Curse
- III—Government, Noah, Authority
- IV—Promise, Abraham, Hope
- V—Law, Moses, Law
- VI—Incarnation, Jesus, Grace and Truth
- VII—Pentecostal, Peter, Spirit
- VIII—Transition, Paul as Priest, Mercy
- IX—Secret, Paul as Prisoner, Grace
- X—Judgment, Man of Sin, Wrath
- XI—Kingdom, Son of Man, Justice
- XII—Fulness, Son of God, Christ the Head of the Universe⁷⁴

Knoch has since altered some of the terminology of the above outline, which may be seen by consulting his *Administrations Contrasted with Dispensations*, Los Angeles, [1937], p. 7.

Knoch also edits a periodical, *Unsearchable Riches*, and others of similar mind issue small forum publications. The following men have written pamphlets or prepared charts along the general lines set forth by Mr. Knoch: Adlai Loudy (1893-), Vladimir Michael Gelesnoff (1877-1921), David Mann, F. L. Fallis, and R. H. Lampkin. It will be seen that there is some of the same splitting up of the Christian age here as we find in Bullinger, although this system goes further in that respect than he did, and has other features that are distinctive. Knoch holds to the reconciliation of all on the basis of Colossians 1:20.

William Evans (1870-), Bible teacher and conference director, educated at Moody Bible Institute, Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary, and the University of Chicago (Ph.D), ordained in the Presbyterian ministry, has a sys-

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, from the chart, pp. 16, 17. The chart synchronizes these periods and folds so as to conceal the secret administrations.

tem of the dispensations slightly different from that of anyone else examined:

I—Edenic, Genesis 1:25-2:25

II—Patriarchal, sometimes divided into three divisions:

1—The Age of Conscience, Genesis 4:1-8:14

2—The Age of Human Government, Genesis 8:15-11:9

3—The Age of Promise, Genesis 12:1-Exodus 19:8

III—Law, Exodus 20-Acts 2

IV—Grace, Acts 2 to the Rapture of the Church

V—Judgment, Revelation 4-19

VI—Millennial, Revelation 20

VII—Eternal, Revelation 21, 22⁷⁵

He gives characteristics of the dispensations and the crises, or judgments, connected with the end of each, in a manner somewhat similar to that of Haldeman.

Isaac Massey Haldeman, (1845-1933), pastor of First Baptist Church, New York City, from 1884 to his death, has written a large number of volumes and pamphlets on various phases of Biblical truth. In his *Dispensational Key* he outlines eight dispensations:

I—Edenic, creation of man to expulsion from Eden

II—Antediluvian, birth of Cain to subsidence of the flood

III—Patriarchal, going-forth of Noah to death of Joseph

IV—Mosaic, exodus to the coming of John the Baptist

V—Messianic, baptism of Jesus to the Cross

VI—Holy Ghost, begins *secretly* at John xx:22 with the breathing on of the Holy Ghost; begins *publicly* at Acts ii:1-4, with the coming of the Holy Ghost to Israel as the Power promised to them through the prophet Joel. It ends *secretly* at I Thess. v:2, with the Rapture, and ends *publicly* at Rev. xix:11-20; xx:1-2, with the appearing of Christ and the binding of Satan

⁷⁵William Evans, *Outline Study of the Bible*, with illustrative charts, Chicago, 1913, pp. 30-37.

VII—Times of Restitution, Appearing of Christ and Binding of Satan to the delivering up of the kingdom to the Father, I Cor. xv:24:

a—The Thousand Years

b—After the Thousand Years.

VIII—Eternal State, begins at Rev. xxi:1 and never ends.¹⁶

Haldeman has an interesting outline of the major features of each dispensation, which we merely list here:

Each dispensation, except the last, ends in the failure of man under responsibility:

I—To the Word

II—To Conscience

III—To Fatherhood

IV—To Law

V—To Incarnation

VI—To the Gospel

VII—To the King of Righteousness

At the close of each of these dispensations God gives man up to his own way:

I—To the Knowledge of Sin

II—To the Imaginations of Evil

III—To the Food of Egypt

IV—To Formalism

V—To Judicial Blindness

VI—To the Love of the World

VII—To the Going after Satan

At the close of each dispensation God takes off the restraint of evil and allows it to head itself up in some particular form of judgment:

I—In a Fallen Woman

II—In Sinful Angels

III—In the king who knew not God

IV—In the Hypocrisy of Scribes and Pharisees

V—In Judas

VI—In Antichrist

VII—In Satan

¹⁶I. M. Haldeman, *A Dispensational Key to the Scriptures*, N. Y., 1915. pp. 10-19.

Each dispensation ends with a great World Crisis:

- I—The Expulsion of Man
- II—The Flood
- III—The Bondage of the Chosen People
- IV—The Beheading of John the Baptist
- V—The Cross of Christ
- VI—The Rapture of the Church
- VII—The Binding of Satan⁷⁷

Haldeman also wrote a book to defend dispensationalism and the Scofield Bible against the attacks of Philip Mauro.⁷⁸

Clarence Larkin (1850-1924) was educated as an engineer. He joined the Episcopal Church, but was afterward ordained as a Baptist minister. When the first World War broke out in 1914, he was called upon to speak on "War and Prophecy," which led him to the preparation of numerous charts and outlines, which finally appeared in the form of a large volume entitled *Dispensational Truth, or God's Plan and Purpose in the Ages*, which is the great work on the subject. It was first issued in 1918. A revision appeared later, and the book has gone into fourteen printings. It has been highly recommended by such men and publications as I. M. Haldeman, *The Sunday School Times*, *Union Seminary Review*, Gill Inglis, *New Zealand*, G. R. Brink of *Switzerland*, etc. It would be impossible to go into detail as to this book without occupying more space than can be given here. He identifies the days of the creative week with the seven thousand years of human history, and adds an eighth, the duration of which is unknown, extending from the destruction of Satan to the surrender of the kingdom. His dispensational outline is as follows:

- I—Antediluvian age:
 - 1—Edenic dispensation
 - 2—Antediluvian dispensation

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 19-21.

⁷⁸I. M. Haldeman, *A Review of Mr. Philip Mauro's Book "The Gospel of the Kingdom,"* N. Y., 1931, 253 pp.

II—The Present age:

- 3—Postdiluvian dispensation
- 4—Patriarchal dispensation
- 5—Legal dispensation
- 6—Ecclesiastical dispensation

III—Age of Ages:

- 7—Messianic dispensation⁷⁹.

Larkin has 176 large pages of explanatory material and charts covering every conceivable subdivision of the subject, and one would have to go through this material to understand what labor the author put on it during the three years he spent on developing it. He also has a book entitled *Rightly Dividing the Word*, containing the cream of his sermons and Bible lectures over a period of 30 years.⁸⁰

Algernon James Pollock (1864-), an evangelist of Britain who has itinerated throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles, parts of the continent, the Americas and Australia, has a brief chapter on the dispensations in his book, *Things Which Must Shortly Come to Pass.* His outline follows:

- I—Dispensation of Innocence
- II—Dispensation of Unrestrained Will
- III—Dispensation of Government
- IV—Dispensation of Promise
- V—Dispensation of Law
- VI—Dispensation of "The Times of the Gentiles"
- VII—Dispensation of the Millennium⁸¹

The sixth dispensation "began with Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and will end when Christ returns to this earth to put all enemies under His feet and to reign."⁸²

John Ashton Savage defines a dispensation as "the dis-

⁷⁹Clarence Larkin, *Dispensational Truth*, or God's Plan and Purpose in the Ages, Philadelphia, 6th ed., 1920, chart between pp. 16 and 17.

⁸⁰Clarence Larkin, *Rightly Dividing the Word*, illustrated, Philadelphia, 1921 (4th printing, 1943), 328 pp.

⁸¹Algernon J. Pollock, *Things Which Must Shortly Come to Pass*, London, 1918, pp. 12-16.

⁸²*Ibid.*, p.15.

tribution of a series of historical events through certain periods of time, from one epoch to another. . . . All events and occurrences in Scripture may be conveniently arranged in such epochs and dispensations, each having its own distinctive features."⁸³ While this definition does not comply with the classification of dispensational truth used as a basis for inclusion in this bibliography, the author in his chart accounts for the whole span of time, and in his book deals with many of the regularly dealt with phases of the subject, so that it was considered wise to include a mention of it. In the text he outlines and discusses the epochs and dispensations together:

- I—Epoch 1, the Creation of the World
 - A—Dispensation A, From the Creation to the Deluge
- II—Epoch 2, the Deluge
 - B—Dispensation B, From the Deluge to the Call of Abraham
- III—Epoch 3, the Call of Abraham
 - C—Dispensation C, from the Call of Abraham to the Exodus
- IV—Epoch 4, Exodus of Israelites
 - D—Dispensation D, Exodus to the Captivity
- V—Epoch 5, the Captivity of the Jews
 - E—Dispensation E, from the Captivity to the Birth of Christ
- VI—Epoch 6, the Birth of Christ
 - F—Dispensation F, the Christian and Church Period
- VII—Epoch 7, the Rapture and First Resurrection
 - G—Dispensation G, the day of Tribulation
- VIII—Epoch 8, the second stage of the Lord's Coming and the Judgment of the Nations
 - H—Dispensation H, the Millennium
- IX—Epoch 9, Satan Loosed out of his Prison

⁸³John Ashton Savage, *The Scroll of Time, or Epochs and Dispensations of Scripture* (with chart), London, 1918, p. 1.

A Bibliographic History of Dispensationalism

I—Dispensation I, the Last Rebellion and Final Battle

X—Epoch 10, Judgment of the White Throne

K—Dispensation K, the New Heavens and New Earth.

William Graham Scroggie (1877-), educated at Exeter, Malvern, Bath and Spurgeon's College, minister of Spurgeon's tabernacle from 1938-1943, gives the following outline:

I—Adamic

II—Antediluvian

III—Noachian

IV—Patriarchal

V—Sinaitic, in "at least three minor ages":

1—Mosaic

2—Gideonic

3—Davidic

VI—Christian

VII—Millennial

VIII—Final, from the close of the Millennium to the deliverance up of the Kingdom

To these dispensations Scroggie gives the following characterizations: innocence, conscience, government, promise, law, grace, righteousness, satisfaction. He believes that we are fast approaching the close of the sixth age.⁸⁴

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer (1871-), president of the Dallas Theological Seminary and editor of *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA*, follows Dr. C. I. Scofield in the outline of the dispensations. Dr. Chafer's chief contribution to the subject is the fact that he wrote an elaborate apologetic for the doctrine of dispensations,⁸⁵ and in his construction of a full system of Biblical theology based on the dispensational and premillennial distinctions. In the latter respect he appears to have been the only man outside of Pierre Poiret to have accomplished this to date. Dr. Chafer's work will appear in the

⁸⁴W. Graham Scroggie, *Ruling Lines of Progressive Revelation*, N. Y., n.d., pp. 51-69. The book was published in London in 1918.

⁸⁵"Dispensationalism," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 93, pp. 390-449, October-December, 1936, reprinted in pamphlet form.

next year or two, according to present plans. He has discussed the dispensations in his *Major Bible Themes*.⁸⁶

Philip Mauro (1859-), a lawyer who was formerly an ardent dispensationalist, but who later became just as ardent an opponent of the doctrine, wrote a book to overthrow the whole system, even going so far as to pronounce it on the verge of dying. It is obvious throughout the book that Mr. Mauro knew absolutely nothing of any dispensationalism before Darby, for he says, "The entire system of 'dispensational teaching' is *modernistic* in the strictest sense; for it first came into existence within the memory of persons now living and was altogether unknown even in their younger days." His second chapter is entitled, "The 'Seven Dispensations' Viewed in the Light of Scripture."⁸⁷ One has only to read I. M. Haldeman's answer to this unscholarly work to see how far a man can swing from one position to another, when neither was based on a knowledge of the history of the doctrines involved, or on a sound exegesis. (In this statement we are referring only to the work mentioned, not to Mr. Mauro's numerous other writings.)

George Croly, rector of Bondleigh, Devonshire, England, has a rather peculiar volume in which he uses the parallelism of the Patriarchal, Jewish and Christian dispensations as the basis for a discussion of Christian evidences. The cross that Constantine saw in the sky, for instance, is compared with the rainbow that appeared to Noah. "Christianity is . . . the seed planted in the day of Abraham; shut up, but maturing, in the day of Judah; and shooting above the earth in the day of Christ . . . the body laid in the grave with the patriarchal dispensation; the spirit existing, but separate and viewless, in the Mosaic; the spirit and body re-united, with more vivid attributes, a nobler shape, and a perpetual exist-

⁸⁶Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, Chicago, 1944, pp. 96-102. This was first published in 1926.

⁸⁷Philip Mauro, *The Gospel of the Kingdom with an Examination of Modern Dispensationalism*, Boston, 1928, pp. 8, 9.

ence, in the Christian."⁸⁸ This is the most recent book to come to our attention that is based on the old ideas of the divine dispensations and gives no evidence of familiarity with the later types of dispensational patterns, or even of the works of Poiret, Edwards, and Watts.

The final chapter is on "The Future" and, while it does not distinguish details, it does anticipate a falling away of the Church, followed by "a period of fearful retaliation on the powers of the earth, which have perpetrated those violences; . . . the recall of a large portion of the Jewish nation to the religion of the promise, the acknowledgment of Christianity . . . the second coming of the Lord of Christianity; the establishment of an era of religious peace and happiness on earth, as large as man is capable of enjoying, until his transfer to a higher state of being." Two resurrections are in view, but only the one general judgment."⁸⁹

⁸⁸George Croly, *Divine Providence; or, the Three Cycles of Revelation, Showing the Parallelism of the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian Dispensations. Being a New Evidence of the Divine Origin of Christianity.* Chatham, Mackays Limited, 1929, p. 280.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 369-71.

Chapter IX

SCOFIELD DISPENSATIONALISM AND THE POST-SCOFIELD ERA (continued)

Alfred Pearson of Australia, author of *The Climax of the Ages*, has a book, *Creation and Its Sequel*, in which he discusses the dispensations in the light of their having been created for Christ (Heb. 1:1-3). The book discusses in order:

I—The first heaven and earth

II—The second heaven and earth

III—The heavens and the earth which are now

IV—The dispensation of the last day

V—The eternal state

Under the second period are contemplated the six days of creation, the Eden story and the antediluvian period. The third covers the period from the patriarchs to Christ's final revelation from heaven. The fourth is the millennial reign. The book deals in detail with pertinent features of each of these periods.⁹⁰

Norman Baldwin Harrison (1874-), prominent Bible teacher and author of a number of books on Biblical subjects, has a chapter on the dispensations as a "structural . . . scheme around which the plan of redemption is formed." He finds the pattern in Genesis 1, in the creation week, and in the "law of the octave," with the first and the eighth as introduction and conclusion, and the story of man's redemption told in the other six, which appear structurally as two sets of threes:

⁹⁰Alfred Pearson, *Creation and Its Sequel*. An exposition of the Divine Purpose in the Universe as revealed in the Scriptures; with the tracings of the realisation of this purpose in history from Eternity to Eternity, Sydney, 1929, 488 pp.

1. Creation and Fall
2. Good and Evil
3. Government
4. Chosen People
 - a. Separated from Nations
 - b. Fruitful as a Nation
5. Gospel—Christ, Church, Christians
6. Tribulation
7. Millennium
 - a. Nature Restored
 - b. Man Ruling
8. God's Eternal Rest.⁹¹

George Herrmann Gudebrod (1863-) says, "The seven periods or dispensations are foreshadowed in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, and in the first five books of the Bible. They were outlined by Jesus Christ in a mysterious way in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, and they were more clearly revealed in the second and third chapters of Revelation. . . . The golden candlestick with the seven candles described in the Old and New Testaments represents the seven dispensations. Christ is the middle candle or light—there were three before Christ, there will be three after Christ. . . . The seven dispensations, or churches, are outlined in what our Bible calls the Song of Moses."^{91a}

C. A. Chader, Swedish Bible teacher, formerly a missionary to India, and recently pastor in Brooklyn, New York, published a book in Swedish in 1934, which has been issued in English by himself. In it he elaborates the whole plan of God through the ages, illustrating the material with a large colored chart which goes with the book. The dispensations shown on the chart are as follows:

- I—Innocence
- II—Conscience
- III—Human Government
- IV—Promise
- V—Law

⁹¹Norman B. Harrison, *His Book or Structure in Scripture*, Chicago, 1934, pp. 15, 16, 19 ff.

^{91a}G. H. Gudebrod, *Bible Problems Solved*, New York, 1937, Part III, Chapter IV, pp. 171 ff.

VI—Grace

VII—Tribulation

VIII—Millennium.⁹²

—Clifton Lefevre Fowler (1882-), president emeritus of Denver Bible Institute, has a few features that are not met elsewhere. His outline includes the tribulation as a dispensation:

I—Innocence

II—Conscience

III—Authority

IV—Law

V—The Body

VI—Tribulation

VII—Kingdom

There is some interesting material in his book and many points are dealt with in detail that are passed over in other treatments. Regarding the fifth period, he finds significance in the fact that Pentecost, the commencement of the period, being on the 50th day, indicates the character of the period it introduces because the number 50 is composed of 5 tens. Thus the fifth period (indicated by the 5) is a period of testing, because ten is the number of testing in the Scriptures. Thus Paul had ten amanuenses in his employ to bring the message of this age to the world. "As God enters this fifth dispensation and prepares for the dispensational test, He gives to the age a perfect spiritual democracy—the Body of Christ—in which the test is to take place."⁹³ Thus the governmental theory of the fifth dispensation was democracy. In this the church has failed. (One is reminded of the statements in this connection made by Burlington B. Wale, discussed previously.) In the sixth period the principle of testing is dictatorship.

Dr. Henry Allen Ironside (1876-), prominent Bible teacher and author of nearly half a hundred works on Biblical subjects, pastor of the Moody Memorial Church of Chi-

⁹²C. A. Chader, *God's Plan Through the Ages*, with chart, London, Edinburgh and Grand Rapids, 1938. 163 pp.

⁹³Clifton L. Fowler, *Building the Dispensations*, Denver, 1940, p. 129.

cago, has for many years been a staunch defender of the doctrine of dispensationalism. He has come into conflict with the various extreme forms of the doctrine and has written a number of brochures on certain phases of the subject. He discusses the system as a whole in his *Lamp of Prophecy*, where he follows Scofield's outline.⁹⁴

David Lipscomb Cooper (1886-), president of the Biblical Research Society and editor of the *Biblical Research Monthly*, holder of the Th.M., Ph.D., and Litt.D. degrees, has a section in his large work, *The World's Greatest Library Graphically Illustrated*, entitled "The Record of Man's Earthly Pilgrimage." He diagrams the dispensations after the regular manner, except that he calls the third "Civil Government," and makes the tribulation a dispensation, throwing the millennium forward as the eighth. While using the commonly accepted title for the second dispensation, Cooper argues that to name it merely "conscience" is a mistake, as there is ample evidence of a primitive revelation "which God made to man, which served its purpose, and which God has not seen fit to preserve to us."⁹⁵

Arthur Isbell (1913-), a graduate of the Dallas Theological Seminary, wrote his master's thesis on the subject, "Total Depravity as Manifested in the Dispensations." He follows the regular seven-fold division of dispensations, and the nature of the material can be seen by looking at the chapter headings on each dispensation:

- I—The Origin of the Total Depravity of Humanity
- II—The Human Conscience Reveals Human Depravity
- III—Depravity as seen under Human Government
- IV—Depravity Untouched by the Promise of God
- V—God's Standard for Israel Unkept by a Depraved People
- VI—God's Grace for All Humanity Which Is Still Depraved

⁹⁴H. A. Ironside, *The Lamp of Prophecy*, or Signs of the Times, Grand Rapids, 4th ed., 1940, pp. 34-53.

⁹⁵David L. Cooper, *The World's Greatest Library Graphically Illustrated*, Los Angeles, 1942, p. 32.

VII—The Righteous World Government Over a Depraved Humanity.⁹⁶

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

As a bibliographer, one is not supposed to take a doctrinal position. The purpose of this bibliography has been to locate and list the literature on the subject, where three or more dispensations are seen as divisions of God's redemptive program with regard to the relationships between man and God in what we call time. It falls to others, then, to use this literature. The materials were collected with the hope that a new approach to the whole subject of ages and dispensations will be made. Sufficient has been indicated from the works listed, however, to enable one to make a hasty and a fairly accurate survey, it is believed, of the history of the doctrine of dispensationalism. It becomes evident at once that we have here a study, the roots or foundations of which reach far back into antiquity. Like all other doctrines, there is to be traced a development of the doctrine. That is God's way with His truth in the inspired writings, and it has been the way of the theologian ever since. Those who disparage the doctrine on the grounds that it has not always existed in its present form in theological thought, forget these facts.

One of the evident values of such a bibliography is the fortification of the general doctrine by the vast extent of authority from the standpoints of antiquity, theological and ecclesiastical diversity, approaches to Biblical interpretation and geographical distribution. Biblical exegesis is the ultimate criterion in Biblical theology, but it should not be allowed to determine doctrine without a knowledge of the history of doctrines. Let it be said again that this bibliography aims merely at providing the tools for work, not at doing the work that needs to be done.

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

This checklist is supplementary to the titles covered in the main work. It is selected on the same basis, i.e., only books and pamphlets are included which outline three or more dispensations as time periods in God's program. Many books on the doctrinal and apologetic aspects of the subject will not be found here, but can be found elsewhere. The Library of Congress subject heading coverage of the subject has been somewhat unsatisfactory. Many of the older works were subject headed under COVENANTS (THEOLOGY), which properly should have been under either DISPENSATIONS (THEOLOGY), or DISPENSATIONALISM. The latter two headings seem to have been adopted later, and are both now being used.

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features may appear in prophetic charts of various kinds, and prophetic aspects of truth are usually included in dispensational charts. This list includes only those that list three or more dispensations. Of course many charts occur in books on the subjects. They are not included here. Titles in brackets were supplied. Colors are indicated; otherwise charts are in black and white. Imprint is included, if present.

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INDEX

This index covers only the text material, as the additional lists are already in alphabetical order.

- Aelfric, 30
Amalric of Bena, 31
Ambrose Ansbert, 18
Ambrose, Isaac, 21
Anastasius Sinatia, 18
Andrew of Crete, 18
Andrews, S. J., 67
Augustine, 14-18
Austin (or Augustine),
St., d. 604, 18
- Barnabas, Apostle, 12
Barrington, J. S., 38
Bayne, W. C., 60-61
Bogue, David, 42-43
Brookes, J. H., 74
Bullinger, E. W., 78-80
Burnet, Thomas, 19, 21
Burridge, J. H., 82
Bush, George, 19
- Cameron, Robert, 75-76
Cassiodorus, 19
Cave, Wm., 34
Cespar, Mishna, 11
Chader, C. A., 96
Chafer, L. S., 92
Chaldeans, 9
Chambers, G. A., 22
Clarke, Adam, 43-44
Clement of Alexandria, 26
Clouser, G. B. M., 77-78
Cooper, D. L., 98
Cox, John, 55
Cox, S. H., 65-66
Coxe, A. C., 66
Croly, George, 93-94
Cumming, John, 56-57
Cunningham, Wm., 59-60
Cyprian, 13
- Dabney, R. L., 64-65
Darby, J. N., 5, 48-50
- Daubuz, Charles, 22
Dick, John, 48
- Eagleton, John, 47
Edwards, John, 36-38
Edwards, Jonathan, 40-41
- Elias, Rabbi, 10
Elliott, E. B., 19
Enoch, Book of the secrets of, 12
Erdman, W. J., 84
Etruscans, 9
Evans, Wm., 86-87
- Faber, G. S., 44
Fairbairn, Patrick, 52
Fleming, Robert, 21
Fletcher, John, 41-42
Forbes, John, 50
Fowler, C. L., 97
Frost, A. J., 73
- Gaebelein, A. C., 84
Gouge, Wm., 33
Graves, J. R., 66
Gray, J. M., 77
Gregory, David, 8
Gudebrod, G. H., 96
Guinness, H. G., 22, 65
- Haldeman, I. M., 87-89
Hales, William, 8
Harrison, N. B., 95
Hennings, E. C. & R. B., 80-81
Hermes Trismegistus, 9
Hilary, 14
Hodge, Charles, 63
- Irenaeus, 13
Ironside, H. A., 97-98
Isbell, Arthur, 98
Isidorus Hispalensis, 19

Index

- Jamieson, Robert, 62-63
Jarvis, S. F., 52-54
Jerome, 14
Joachim Abbas, 21
Joachim of Fiore, 30
John of Damascus, 18
Jones, Joel, 58-59
Justin Martyr, 13
- Katturim, Baal, Rabbi, 8
Knoch, A. E., 84-86
- Labagh, I. P., 57
Lactantius, 13
Larkin, Clarence, 89-90
- McCulloh, J. H., 54
Mauro, Philip, 93
Mede, Joseph, 21
Moorehead, W. G., 84
- Neal, W. H., 51
Newton, B. W., 51-52
- Oostersee, J. J., van, 64
- Parlane, W. A., 74
Pearson, Alfred, 95
Pelagius, 26
Pember, G. H., 74-75
Pettingill, W. L., 84
Pierson, A. T., 84
Poiret, Pierre, 34-36
Pollock, A. J., 90
Priestley, Joseph, 44
- Robertson, Wm. R., 54
Rudd, Sayer, 8
Russell, C. T., 72-73
Russell, David, 44
Russell, Michael, 10
- Savage, J. A., 90-91
Scofield, C. I., 5, 82-83
Scroggie, W. G., 92
Smith, George, 55
Smith, John Pye, 54
Soltau, George, 84
Suidas, 9
Sybilline oracles, 10
- Taylor, D. T., 8-9
Taylor, John, 41
Theodoret, 29
Theopompus, 10
- Van Oostersee, *see* Oostersee
- Wall, B. B., 69-72
Ward, H. D., 9
Watson, Richard, 45-46
Watts, Isaac, 39-40
Welch, C. H., 84
Westminster confession of
 faith, 6
Weston, H. G., 84
White, Frank, 76
Wilson, George, 67-68
- Zoroaster, 9-10

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A BIBLIOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF DISPENSATIONALISM

by Arnold D. Ehlert

This book is indispensable to a thorough study of dispensationalism. All the important books, pamphlets, magazine articles and charts are listed and discussed as to their nature and contribution to the subject.

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From About 1850 to the Scofield Era

Scofield Dispensationalism and the Post-Scofield Era

Additional Bibliography: Books and Pamphlets, Articles, Charts

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