

What Is To Come...
A Primer on Futuristic Premillennialism
Lesson #02 – What Is Dispensationalism

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“...dispensationalist wants to say no more and no less than what the Bible reports.”

What is dispensationalism? Dispensationalism is a method of biblical interpretation which states that God has used different means (economies, dispensations) in which He has administered His will to people during different periods of history. This interpretive method seeks a literal, grammatical, historical interpretation of scripture and leads to a premillennial eschatology (Jesus is coming before the 1000 kingdom to reign on the earth). The single most significant key in dispensationalism is seeing Israel and the church as distinct bodies through which God will accomplish His scripturally stated purposes.

Distinctions, Definitions, and Descriptions of Dispensationalism

In 1965 Charles Ryrie offered three points to be considered the essentials of dispensational theology:

1. A _____ between Israel and the _____;
2. An approach to _____ called literal interpretation
(If the _____ sense makes _____ sense; seek no _____ sense).
3. The belief that the underlying purpose of God in the world is God’s _____
(_____ as opposed to _____)

When linking all the common points of these three descriptions, the three most significant elements of dispensationalism are:

1. The _____ of the church (in contrast to Israel)
2. A _____ for the nation of Israel (this will be explained in detail in lessons to come)
3. A plain, normal, _____, and consistent hermeneutic (method of interpreting the Bible).

Differences between dispensational and non-dispensational hermeneutics:

1. The relation of the _____ of revelation to the priority of one testament over the other;
2. The understanding and _____ of the New Testament’s use of the Old Testament;
3. The understanding and implications of _____.

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Six Essential Beliefs of Dispensationalism

1. Progressive revelation from the New Testament does not _____ Old Testament passages in a way that cancels the original authorial _____ of the Old Testament writers as determined by historical-grammatical hermeneutics.
2. Types exist, but national Israel is not a type that is _____ by the church.
3. Israel and the church are _____, thus the church cannot be identified as the new or true Israel.

The title Israel is used a total of _____ times in the New Testament, but is always used of ethnic Jews.

In the books of Acts the term Israel is used _____ times and church (ekklesia) _____ times. Yet the two groups are always kept distinct.

4. There is both spiritual _____ in salvation between Jews and Gentiles and a _____ role for Israel as a nation.
5. The nation Israel will be saved, _____ with a unique identity, and function in a future millennial kingdom upon the earth.
6. There are multiple senses of “seed of Abraham”; thus, the churches identification as “seed of Abraham” does not _____ God’s promises to the believing Jewish “seed of Abraham.” (Galatians 3:7; 29)

Four senses of the term “seed of Abraham.”

1. It can refer to those who are _____ descendants of Abraham.
2. It can refer to the _____, who is the unique individual seed of Abraham.
3. It can refer to the righteous _____ of Israel (cf. Isaiah 41:8 with Romans 9:6)
4. It can refer in a _____ sense to believing Jews and Gentiles (Galatians 3:29).

The application of the titles “sons of Abraham” or “seed of Abraham” to believing Gentiles does not mean that believing Gentiles are spiritual Jews or part of Israel.