

# The Age of LAW

When Israel came out of Egypt a whole new administration began as God gave the nation laws that impacted on every area of life; there were sacrifices and offerings made by Divinely appointed priests, dietary and hygiene laws, moral and social laws; there were laws that pertained to warfare, land title, and to finances. The escape from Egypt changed the Israelites from slaves to an organized and responsible nation but there was more to it than national liberation.

The laws given to Moses on Mount Sinai were given by God and were intended to point each Israelite to God's plan of salvation which would unfold after centuries of time. The sacrifices for sin taught every individual that God is holy and that the wages of sin is death. The sacrifices clearly demonstrated that forgiveness could only be obtained by the death of another and the intercession of the priesthood taught that sinners need a mediator and advocate with a holy God. All of God's laws were just and good and obedience brought blessing to all who obeyed.



The law also pointed to One who would come from heaven to fulfil the "types" or shadows seen in the Temple rituals. Paul wrote: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal.3:24). The age of Law passed when Christ appeared and ascended to the Father. Jesus said:



"The law and the prophets were until John...it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail" (Luke 16:16-17).

The law is prophecy in picture form and every jot and tittle will come to pass.

John was the last of the Old Testament prophets and he declared that Jesus was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

John also indicated that Old Testament saints were only "friends of the Bridegroom" (John 3:29) (Christ) but New Testament saints are "the Bride" of Christ. All the law is fulfilled in Christ who now has a new relationship with all who believe in Him.

Christ is our sacrifice, our Great High Priest, and our Advocate with the Father and He has placed His Holy Spirit within all who believe in Him so that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.

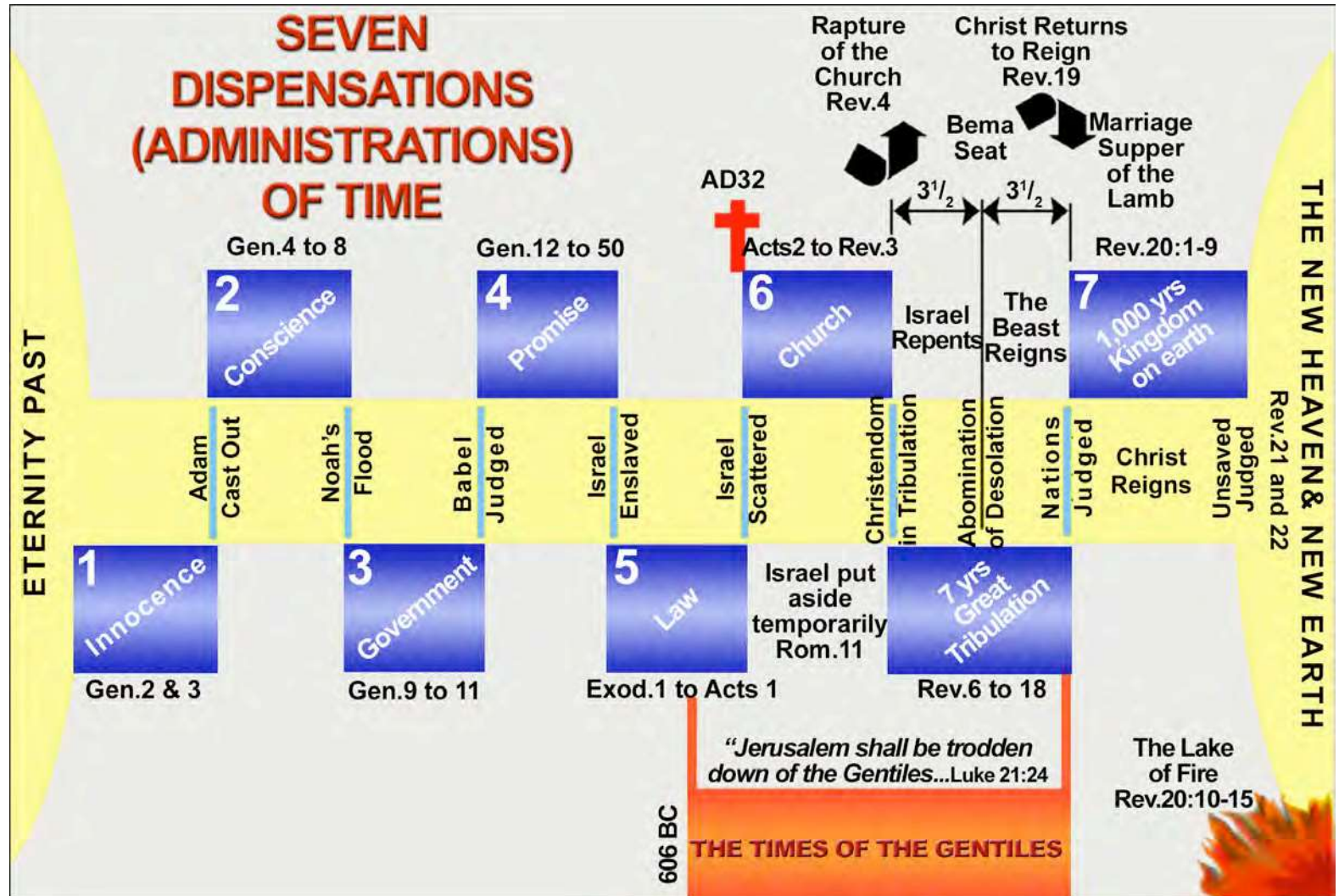
# The Seven Dispensations of Time

There are seven clearly defined periods in history when God administered the human race differently. These periods are called Dispensations or Ages. God's way of salvation however, has never changed. Salvation has only ever been by grace, through faith as indicated in chapter 11 of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Before Christ came to earth, animal sacrifices reminded men that atonement was only possible through the shedding of the blood of a substitute, but animal sacrifices were only shadows of Christ's perfect sacrifice. In the fulness of time Jesus Christ the Son of God, came from heaven to be born of a virgin, die as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world, and to rise from the dead. Salvation in every dispensation was by faith alone but administration changed. The seven dispensations are as follows:

- 1) **The Age of Innocence** when Adam and Eve lived sinlessly in the garden of Eden.
- 2) **The Age of Conscience** after Adam sinned and received the knowledge of good and evil.
- 3) **The Age of Government** after the Flood when God entrusted nations with authority to administer His Law.
- 4) **The Age of Promise**, or of the Patriarchs, from Abraham to the Exodus.
- 5) **The Age of Law** from the Exodus when Israel became a nation, to the formation of the Church at Pentecost.
- 6) **The Age of the Mystery Church** from Pentecost to the Rapture of the Church before the seven-year Tribulation.

7) **The Age of Christ's Kingdom** on earth from the return of Christ immediately after the Tribulation, for 1,000 years, until the eternal state and the New Heavens and new Earth.

God's administration of the human race changed but in every administration man proved to be a failure and required judgment.





# Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

Paul wrote: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH.** But shun profane and vain babblings" (2Tim.2:15-16).

There are divisions within Scripture which we need to recognise. There are divisions of time as seen in seven different dispensations and there are three classes of people with whom God deals: the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church.

From the beginning of time God dealt with the nations of the Gentiles but after He called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees, the Hebrew nation became the repository of Truth in the world.

When Israel rejected her King the nation was temporarily blinded while God calls out from the Gentiles a bride for Christ; the Church.

At the end of this age, Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, will call for His bride and the Church will be Raptured. The marriage of the Lamb will take place in heaven while God deals with Israel for seven years on earth.

During the seven years of Tribulation Israel will repent and Christ will reign from the throne of David at Jerusalem for 1,000 years.

At the end of the 1,000 years the earth will be renovated by fire and there will be a new heaven and earth.

The Church will dwell in the New Jerusalem which will descend from heaven, Israel will dwell around the eternal City, and the saved Gentiles occupy the new earth. The names of the 12 Apostles are in the foundations of the city and the names of the 12 tribes of Israel are on its 12 gates.

