

INTRODUCTION

- * How we interpret what the Bible says IS extremely important!
Should it be taken literally? Should it be considered as a book of good moral precepts, like other religious books? Should it be considered symbolic, or allegorical (in other words, does it mean something different than what it says)?
- * Two weeks ago we began looking at the importance of "right dividing the Word of truth."
- * Last week, we began considering the system of interpretation referred to as "Dispensationalism" - which is guided by four presuppositional beliefs:
 - 1) that the Bible should be interpreted using a literal interpretation, 2) that God has progressively given additional revelation to man throughout time, 3) that the unifying purpose of the Scriptures is the glory of God, and 4) that there is a clear distinction between the church and physical Israel.
- * Succinctly, Dispensationalism is the stewardship of the revelation of God.
 - God, throughout history, has provided additional revelation regarding His person and plan. Additionally, He has given men a stewardship responsibility regarding that revelation.
 - Biblically, there are specific time-frames (or periods of history) where God has given additional revelation and stewardship responsibilities. Each of these stages of history, or "dispensations," can be marked by a beginning event, additional revelation to believe and obey, the failure of man, and a closing event.
- * As we concluded last week, we were considering the Biblical evidence for this system of interpretation, by examining passages where Paul declared that God had given him new revelation regarding the "mystery" which He had not disclosed until the time of the church, and considering Jesus' declaration that Jerusalem would be trampled "until the time of the Gentiles was fulfilled."
- * The goal today is to continue this examination and seeing what the scriptures declare regarding the distinction between Israel and the church.

INSTRUCTION

I. DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIVES

- A. A Literal Interpretation
- B. Progressive Revelation

- C. The Purpose of God is Doxological
- D. A Clear Distinction Between Israel and the Church

II. DISPENSATIONAL DEFINITIONS

A. The Basic Definition: A System of the Regulations of Government

B. The Biblical Definition: A Stewardship of the Revelation of God

1. THE SYSTEMATIC EXPLANATION

2. THE SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

- a. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2
- b. Ephesians 1:7-10
- c. Ephesians 3:1-12
- d. Colossians 1:24-27
- e. Galatians 4:1-5

f. Luke 21:20-24

g. Romans 11:25-29

h. Jeremiah 31:35-37

i. Jeremiah 33:14-26

j. Revelation 10:5-7; 11:1-2 (cf. Daniel 9:24-27)

III. DISPENSATIONAL DELINEATION *(Lord willing, we'll pick it up here next week!)*

INTROSPECTION

- * HOW IMPORTANT TO YOU IS THE PROPER INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES?
- * ARE YOU WILLING TO SPEND THE TIME IN ORDER TO "RIGHTLY DIVIDE THE WORD OF TRUTH"?
- * WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL? DO YOU VALUE THEM AS GOD DOES?
- * IS THERE A NEED TO "CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK" ... AND, THEREFORE, ACT?

INTERACTION ... Thoughts & Questions to ponder for later discussion

It may be helpful to re-read the passage before the discussion.

- * How does the importance of the nation of Israel in God's prophetic plan affect us as individuals, as a church, as a nation?

2. THE SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

- * 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 ¹ Let a man so consider us, as servants (lit. under-oarsman) of Christ and **stewards** (oikonomos: house law/ruler) of the **mysteries of God**. ² Moreover it is required in **stewards** (oikonomos) that one be found faithful (pistos).
- * Ephesians 1:7-10 ⁷ In [Christ] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹ **having made known to us the mystery** of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ **that in the dispensation (oikonomia) of the fullness (placroma) of the times (kairos)** He might gather together in one (anakephalaioimai- putting on the head) all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him.
- * Ephesians 3:1-12 ¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles-- ² if indeed you have heard of **the dispensation (oikonomia) of the grace of God which was given to me for you**, ³ how that by revelation **He made known to me the mystery** (as I have briefly written already, ⁴ by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), ⁵ **which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit** to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶ **that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel**, ⁷ of which I became a minister (diakonos) according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. ⁸ To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make all see what is the fellowship (koinonia) of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; ¹⁰ to the intent **that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places**, ¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.
- * Colossians 1:24-27 ²⁴ I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, ²⁵ of which I became a minister (diakonos) according to the stewardship (oikonomia) from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill (placrow) the word of God, ²⁶ the mystery which has been hidden from ages (aion) and from generations (genea: a period of people), but now has been revealed to His saints. ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of **this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**.
- * Galatians 4:1-5 ¹ Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, ² but is under **guardians (epitropos: turn-over man) and stewards (oikonomoi) until the time appointed (prothesmios: appointment)** by the father. ³ Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. ⁴ But **when the fullness (placroma) of the time (chronos) had come, God sent forth His Son**, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.
- * Luke 21:20-24 ²⁰ "But **when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies**, then know that its desolation is near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. ²² For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ²³ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. ²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And **Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times (kairos) of the Gentiles are fulfilled (placrow)**.
- * Romans 11:25-29 ²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this **mystery**, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that **blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles** has come in. ²⁶ And **so all Israel will be saved**, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; ²⁷ for **this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins**." ²⁸ Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.
- * **Jeremiah 31:35-37** ³⁵ Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar (the LORD of hosts is His name): ³⁶ "If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever." ³⁷ Thus says the LORD: "If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel For all that they have done", says the LORD.
- * **Jeremiah 33:14-26** ¹⁴ 'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah: ¹⁵ **In those days and at that time** I will cause to grow up to David a Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. ¹⁶ **In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell safely**. And this is the name by which she will be called: The LORD our righteousness.' ¹⁷ "For thus says the LORD: 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; ¹⁸ nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.' " ¹⁹ And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, ²⁰ "Thus says the LORD: **'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season,** ²¹ **then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant**, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. ²² As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.' " ²³ Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, ²⁴ "Have you not considered what these people have spoken, saying, 'The two families which the LORD has chosen, He has also cast them off'? Thus they have despised My people, as if they should no more be a nation before them. ²⁵ "Thus says the LORD: **'If My covenant is not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth,** ²⁶ **then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant**, so that I will not take any of his descendants to be rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them.' "
- * Revelation 10:5-7 ⁵ The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven ⁶ and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, ⁷ but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, **the mystery of God would be finished (teleo: finished)**, as He declared to His servants the prophets.
- * Revelation 11:1-2 ¹ Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and **measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there**." ² But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread **the holy city underfoot for forty-two months**.
- * Daniel 9:24-27 ²⁴ **"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city**, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. ²⁶ And **after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself**; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. ²⁷ **Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering**. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate."