

## Parson to Person **Biblical Timeline and the Eschaton**

There are several ways to view the timeline of Scripture.

Without question we view the Biblical timeline as beginning with creation in The Book of Genesis and climaxing with the re-creation of a New Heaven and New Earth—as described in The Book of the Revelation.

Theologians have developed several ways of understanding the Biblical timeline ranging from the romantic view of garden to garden (Gethsemane as the center point); the logical view—as historical, present, and prophetic (with the cross as central); the Covenantal view—suggesting three distinct chronologically organized historical periods: pre-creation redemptive planning, works, and grace, leading to the New Heaven and New Earth (the cross as central); and the Dispensational—suggesting seven distinct dispensations leading to the New Heaven and New Earth (and like the others, seeing Jesus, His work at Calvary, His death, burial and physical resurrection as the center point of the dispensational developments).

Each of these models shares the understanding of God’s pre-creation purpose/plan of redemption, the execution of the plan, the restoration of what man forfeited through sin, and the re-creation of the Heavens and Earth—in which God will manifest His glory to the redeemed.

Specific details from start to finish are disputed by Covenantalists and Dispensationalists—in particular, in Israelology and Eschatology. History is obviously better understood and often agreed upon. Soteriological discussions abound in both camps.

Covenantalists suggest we are living in the “dispensation” of grace (which began after the fall and climaxes at the Second Coming—at which time the Great White Throne Judgment occurs and the New Heaven and New Earth thereafter commences. Dispensationalists see grace as manifested throughout all dispensations but with distinctive administrative methods employed throughout the time periods they identify. Dispensationalists also see us in The Church Age—also referred to (by some) as the distinctly emphasized dispensation of grace.

Some administrative overlaps occur between Covenantal and Dispensational groups. For example, the Mosaic Law being fulfilled in Christ. It is! However, Covenantalists suggest that Israel has forfeited her blessings and that the Church has been raised to replace her. Dispensationalists believe God will ultimately fulfill all the promises He has made to both Israel and the Church—not through separate plans of redemption, but through a separate series of interactions—at different periods in time. Furthermore, Covenantalists overlook/misapply and/or place many future events in the past (preterist), while Dispensationalists place many of the same events in the future.

I would like to say herein that most Covenantalists and Dispensationalists agree about many things. However, while Eschatological events might be a less serious reason for division, Israelological disagreements must be viewed as serious and consequential.

My dispensational model is distinguished (to a very small degree) from some traditional dispensational models. I see the administrative periods being segregated by divine worldwide judgments: The Curse, The Flood, The Confusion of Tongues at

# Babylon, The Cross, The Rapture, the Second Coming, and the Great White Throne Judgment.

Nearly all Dispensationalists agree that every dispensation has a command, a failure, and a consequence.

My efforts in today's discussions will be in explanation of what Dispensationalism is, why it is important to our understanding of the nature of God and therefore the Bible, and a walk-through of future events beginning with the Rapture of the Church.

I trust this will be worth your time.

I love you all,

Pastor Paul

