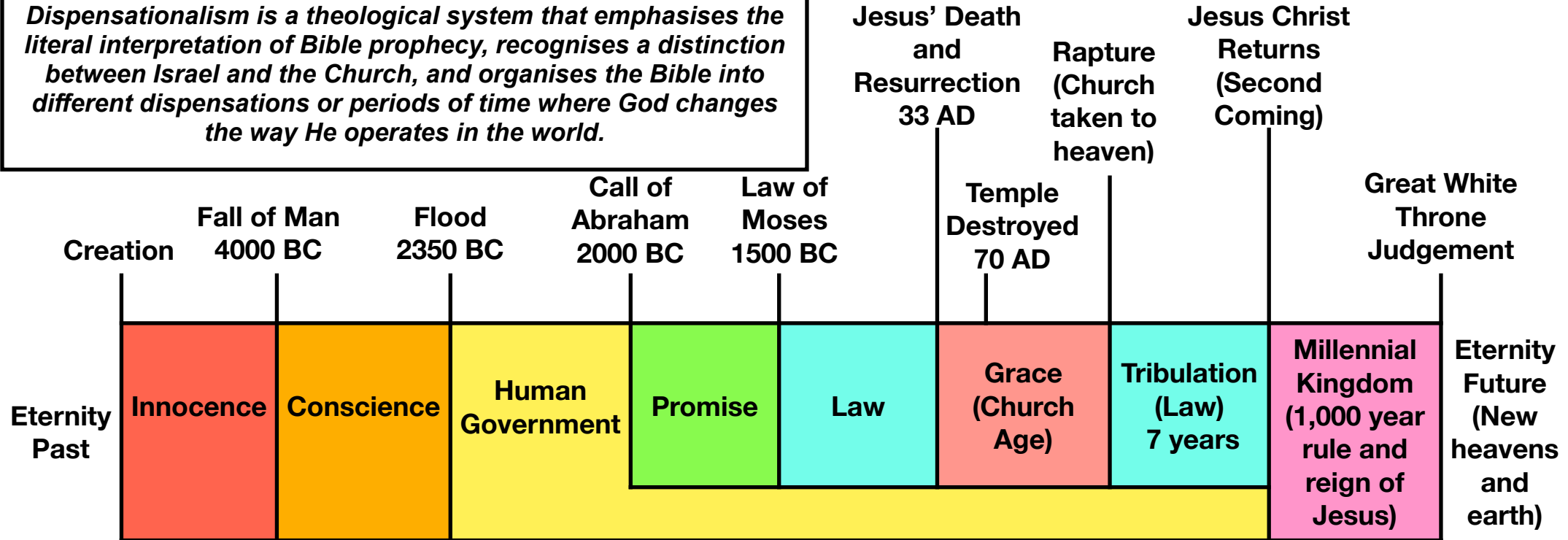


# Dispensations of the Bible

*Dispensationalism is a theological system that emphasises the literal interpretation of Bible prophecy, recognises a distinction between Israel and the Church, and organises the Bible into different dispensations or periods of time where God changes the way He operates in the world.*



## THE SEVEN YEAR TRIBULATION

5. Law → 6. CHURCH AGE → RAPTURE → TRIBULATION → SECOND COMING → 7. MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

THE SEVEN YEAR TRIBULATION FITS IN BETWEEN THE SIXTH DISPENSATION, "THE AGE OF GRACE/CHURCH AGE" AND THE SEVENTH DISPENSATION, "THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM". THE RAPTURE (THE REMOVAL OF THE CHURCH FROM THE EARTH) MARKS THE END OF THE CHURCH AGE WITH THE TRIBULATION SOON TO BEGIN. THE TRIBULATION ENDS WHEN JESUS RETURNS AT THE SECOND COMING AND THEN THE 1,000 YEAR MILLENNIAL REIGN OF JESUS CHRIST BEGINS SOON AFTER.

Note: Some dispensation charts include the Tribulation as an separate dispensation (making a total of 8 dispensations), but really it is just the completion of the fifth dispensation, *The Law*, being the last seven years (Daniel's 70th week or set of seven years) to complete the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27, commonly known as Daniel's seventy weeks prophecy. A total 490 years (70x7 years) was determined for the nation of Israel and Jerusalem. There was exactly 483 years (69 weeks or sevens of years) from the command to rebuild the walls and city of Jerusalem to Messiah the Prince (the triumphant entry—when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey). The final seven years (Daniel's seventieth week) is future and Daniel 9:27 clearly says that it begins when the antichrist confirms an agreement for 7 years with the nation of Israel, but then breaks it by defiling the temple at the half way mark (3 1/2 years).

## **Dispensationalists understand the Bible to be organised into 7 ages or periods of time:**

1. **Innocence:** Starting with Creation and Adam and Eve and ending at the fall (Genesis 1:1—3:7),
2. **Conscience:** Starting with Cain and Able and ending at the flood (Genesis 3:8—8:22),
3. **Human Government:** Starting after the flood with Noah and ending at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 9:1—11:32),
4. **Promise:** Starting with Abraham and continuing to Moses (Genesis 12:1—Exodus 19:25),
5. **Law:** Starting when God gave the Law to Moses and finishing when Jesus died on the cross. (Exodus 20:1—Acts 2:4),
6. **Grace:** Starting on the Day of Pentecost and finishing at the Rapture (Acts 2:4—Revelation 20:3),
7. **The Millennial Kingdom:** Starting at the end of the Tribulation Period when Jesus takes possession of the earth at His second coming and finishes at the Great White Throne Judgement. (Revelation 20:4–6).

These dispensations are not different paths to salvation, but different ways in which God relates to man.

Each dispensation includes a recognisable pattern of how God worked with people living in that dispensation or time period. That pattern is:

- 1) Man's responsibility,
- 2) Man's failure,
- 3) God's judgment, and
- 4) God's grace