

Dispensations:

The Key to Rightly Dividing God's Word

Father Abraham, the Patriarchs, Birth of Israel

Names: Dispensation of promise or family. Patriarchal dispensation. Abrahamic.

Scripture: Genesis 12 – Exodus 19.

Covenant: Abrahamic or Eternal.

Key events to know:

1. Abrahamic covenant.
2. The Birth of the Nation of Israel.
3. The Devil's seed at work.

Dispensation	Covenant	Description
Eternity Past	None	Original creation. Lucifer & angels.
Innocence	Edenic	Reconstruction of earth. Creation of man.
Conscience	Adamic	Adam's lineage and sons of God.
Human government	Noahic	Noah's flood and lineage.
Promise	Abrahamic	Abraham's seed and birth of nation of Israel

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

In this dispensation we will see God's lineage develop into the Nation of Israel, starting with the Patriarchs, roughly over a period of 500-600 years. The Tower of Babel and the one-world government we saw in the previous dispensation was a turning point in how God will deal with mankind. Now God will call out an _____, of the seed of Shem, to form His own people and nation. Nine generations after Shem, Abram is born. The covenant God makes with this man will change his very identity and the entire world, forever!

The Promises of the Abrahamic Covenant

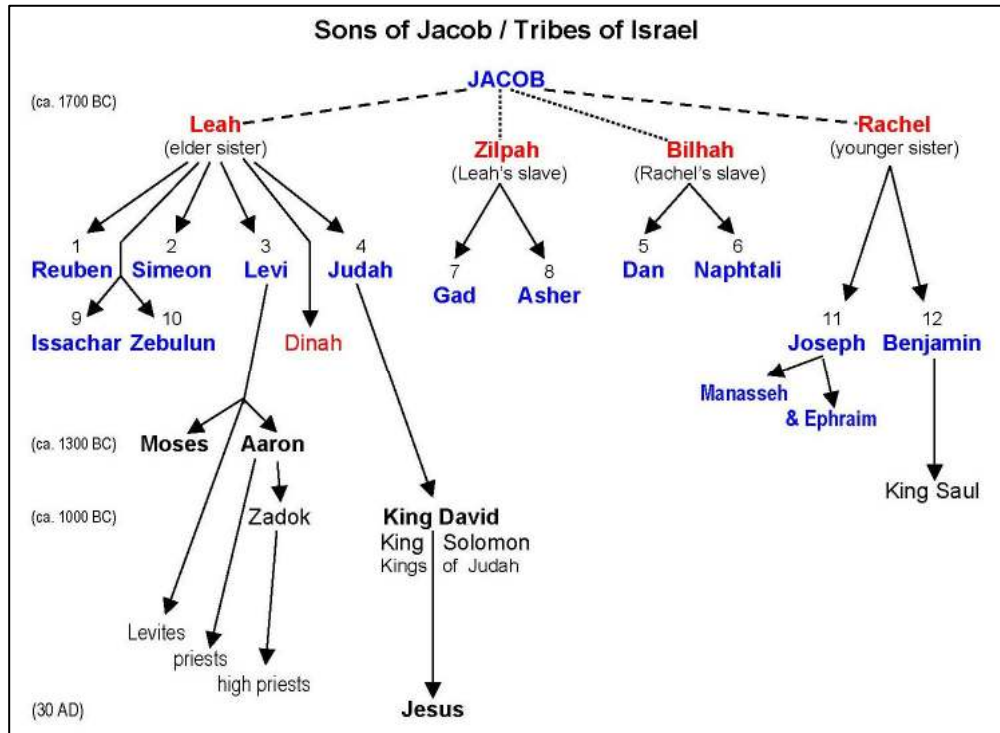
- To make Abraham a great nation: physically through his seed and _____ to all who will believe through faith – Gen. 12:2. You would need to become an Israelite, like Ruth, to partake in these promises. Now, we are born again spiritually and adopted into God's family through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ – 1 John 3:1-2, 5:1-5; Gal. 3:7-8, 24-29.
- To bless him, make his name great, and make him a blessing – Gen. 12:2.
- To bless those who bless him, curse those who curse him, and bless all the families of the earth in him (Jesus Christ the fulfillment of this) – Gen. 12:3.
- To make his seed as innumerable as the stars – Gen. 15:5; Isaiah 9:6-7.
- A prophecy that his seed will dwell in a strange land and be servants to that nation (Egypt) for 400 years but will come out strong and with great substance – Gen. 15:13-14.
- Abraham will have a long life – Gen. 15:15.
- The boundaries of the Promised Land are given – Gen. 15:18-21.

KEY POINTS

- God seals the deal with a sacrifice – Gen. 15:9-12, 17 (see chart). Note all were 3 years old.
- This covenant also has a sign: circumcision - Gen. 17:9-14.
- God reaffirms this covenant in Gen. 22:15-18 after Abraham willingly offers up his only son.
- This covenant is also unconditional but is unique in that it appears to have _____. This nation and government will be upon the very shoulders of Christ, who will reign forever – Is. 9:6-7! NOTE: This is given and applies to Abraham and his seed, Israel, doctrinally. The blessing of salvation can be received by all who receive Jesus as savior but that does **NOT** give Gentiles the specific promises God made to the Jew or Abraham himself!

THE BIRTH OF ISRAEL

Through the covenant God makes with Abraham, we see the dispensation of _____. Over the next several hundred years after this promise was made, we see Abraham’s seed multiply through the patriarchs (Abraham-Isaac-Jacob) and eventually wind up in Egypt, just as God had told Abraham. 66 souls enter Egypt with Jacob (Gen. 46:26) and by the time they exit Egypt over 400 years later, they are a nation of an estimated _____ people (based on Num. 1:46). NOTE: God uses their adversity in Egypt to make them strong and give them a resolve and stubbornness He knows they will need up to this very day because their enemies are always hard at work trying to destroy them.



KEY POINTS

God continues to deal with mankind as a whole through the dispensation of conscience and human government.

THE DEVIL’S SEED AT WORK

As we have seen from the beginning, Satan is hard at work attempting to stop God’s plan and promises and this dispensation is no exception. We saw him create a race of superhumans to take over the earth. We saw him counterfeit God’s seed and attempt to wipe out that seed with the murder of Abel. Now, as God begins to build a nation, Satan will start to build his own nations in an attempt once again to destroy God’s seed. What begins here, some _____ years ago, will have a devastating effect on the Jew and the whole world, to this very day.

- God tells Abraham to leave his country, kindred, and relatives (father’s house) and go to a land He will show him. But he takes his nephew Lot with him. A seemingly small act of disobedience which ultimately places Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah, where he gets drunk and commits incest with his daughters. Each has a son: Ben-ammi (Ammon) and Moab which become 2 enemy nations of Israel – Gen. 12-14, 18-19.

- Satan knows the promised seed will come through Abraham. His wife Sarah is barren. They know the promise of God BUT they are _____ just like we are. So Sarah tells Abraham to take Hagar (an Egyptian) as his wife to conceive a child. This child, Ishmael, becomes the father of the Muslims and a powerful enemy of Israel – Gen. 16-17.
- Esau, after selling his birthright for a bowl of soup, fathers a nation called the Edomites (Gen. 36:9). They were warlike (Genesis 27:40), idolatrous (2 Chronicles 25:14, 20), superstitious (Jeremiah 27:3, 9), proud (Obadiah 1:3), and vindictive (Ezekiel 25:12). The Edomites were the traditional enemies of the Israelites (Ezekiel 35:5) and fought them under Saul's rulership (1 Samuel 14:47). At subsequent times, the Edomites joined enemies of Israel (2 Chronicles 20:10) and joined Babylon against Israel (Psalm 137:7). At the fall of the First Temple, the Edomites attacked Judah and looted the Temple, accelerating its destruction. An Edomite most would know is _____ who built the second temple and ordered the murder of Jewish children 2 and under when he heard of the birth of Jesus – Matt. 2.

DANGERS OF WRONGLY DIVIDING

- The primary false doctrine from this dispensation as a result of wrongly dividing is the “prosperity gospel”:
 - “The Abrahamic covenant is a means to material entitlement”.
 - “This Abrahamic inheritance is unpacked primarily in terms of material entitlements. In other words, the prosperity gospel teaches that the primary purpose of the Abrahamic covenant was for God to bless Abraham **materially**. Since believers are now Abraham’s spiritual children, they have inherited these financial blessings”.
 - “Since God’s Covenant has been established and prosperity is a provision of this covenant, you need to realize that prosperity belongs to _____ now!”

Preachers of this false gospel like Benny Hinn, Joel Olsteen, and Robert Tilton have used this as a reason to build their own **personal** wealth. While God did bless Abraham financially, the real blessing is spiritual through the Lord Jesus Christ – Gal. 3:14.

Chart: Old Testament Sacrifices

Burnt offering – Lev. 1; 6:8-13	Bull, ram, bird, dove or young pigeon	Expression of devotion, commitment, and complete surrender to God
Meat offering – Lev. 2; 6:14-23	Grain, fine flour, olive oil, incense, baked bread	Recognizing God’s goodness
Peace offering – Lev. 3; 7:11-34	Any animal without defect from herd or flock	Worship, thanksgiving
Sin offering – Lev. 4; 5:1-13	*Female goat or lamb for common person	Specific sin, confession of sin
Trespass offering – Lev. 5:14-19, 6:1-7	Ram	Unintentional sin (ignorance)

Abraham’s offering: heifer (peace); she goat (sin); ram (trespass); turtledove and young pigeon (burnt).