

Chapter 7. God's Covenant With Man

[The Divide Between Creator and Creature Required a Covenant]

1. The distance between God and the creature is so great that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition [benefits] of him as their blessedness and reward but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.^a

- a. 1 Sam 2:25;
Job 9:32-33; 22:2-3; 35:7-8;
Psa 100:2-3; 113:5-6;
Isa 40:13-17;
Luke 17:10;
Acts 17:24-25

[The Covenant of Works Made with Adam]

2. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works,^a wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity,^b upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.^c

- a. Gal 3:12
- b. Rom 5:12-20; 10:5
- c. Gen 2:17; Gal 3:10

[The Covenant of Grace Made with Christ]

3. Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second,^a commonly called the covenant of grace: wherein he freely offered unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him that they may be saved,^b and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.^c

- a. Gen 3:15; Isa 42:6; Rom 3:20-21; 8:3; Gal 3:21
- b. Mark 16:15-16; John 3:16; Rom 10:6, 9; Gal 3:11
- c. Ezek 36:26-27; John 6:44-45

[The Covenant of Grace is Called a Testament of Jesus Death]

4. This covenant of grace is frequently set forth in the Scripture by the name of a testament, in reference to the death of Jesus Christ the testator, and to the everlasting inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed.^a

- a. Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25; Heb 7:22; 9:15-17

[One Covenant under Two administrations]

5. This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law and in the time of the gospel:^a under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all fore-signifying Christ to come,^b

What are the elements of a covenant?

1. Its parties
2. Its Promise
3. Its Conditions
4. Its Penalty or Reward

What are the elements of the covenant of Works?

1. Its parties - God & Adam – federal head of mankind
2. Its Promise – Life
3. Its Conditions - Obedience of Adam
4. Its Penalty or Reward – Eternal death or life.

What are the elements of the covenant of Grace?

1. Its parties - God & Christ as federal head of elect sinners.
2. Its Promise – Life
3. Its Conditions - Obedience of Christ
4. Its Penalty or Reward – Eternal death or life.

which were for that time sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah,^c by whom they had full remission of sins and eternal salvation; and is called the Old Testament.^d

a. 2 Cor 3:6-9

b. Rom 4:11; Col 2:11-12; 1 Cor 5:7; Hebrews 8-10 throughout

c. John 8:56; 1 Cor 10:1-4; Heb 11:13

d. Gal 3:7-9, 14

[The New Testament Administration is Clearer & Wider but not Different]

6. Under the gospel, when Christ the substance^a was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper;^b which, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity and less outward glory, yet in them it is held forth in more fulness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy,^c to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles;^d and is called the New Testament.^e There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations.^f

a. Col 2:17

b. Mat 28:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-25

c. Jer 31:33-34; Heb 12:22-28

d. Mat 28:19; Eph 2:15-19

e. Luke 22:20

f. Psa 32:1 with Rom 4:3; Acts 15:11; Rom 3:21-23, 30; 4:6, 16-17, 23-24; Gal 3:14, 16; Heb 13:8

In our English Bible the word "dispensation" is consistently taken from two Greek words (OIKOS + NOMOS) meaning government or order of the house.

So Biblically, dispensation does not mean a period of time but a method of administration.

By this definition the covenant view of the gospel cannot agree with the dispensationalist view, as dispensationalists interpret the Bible according to seven periods of time.

When you see "dispensation" in the Bible read and think ADMINISTRATION

[Col 1:25](#) Whereof^{fG3739} |^{G1473} am made^{G1096} a minister,^{G1249} according^{G2596} to the^{G3588} dispensation^{G3622} of God^{G2316} which is given^{G1325} to me^{G3427} for^{G1519} you,^{G5209} to fulfil^{G4137} the^{G3588} word^{G3056} of God;^{G2316} [1Co 9:17](#) For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a **dispensation** of the gospel is committed unto me.

[Eph 1:10](#) That in the **dispensation** of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:

[Eph 3:2](#) If ye have heard of the **dispensation** of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

[Col 1:25](#) Whereof I am made a minister, according to the **dispensation** of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

