



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of Dr. S. Lewis Johnson

The Divine Purpose

History of Dispensational Theology

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Let us begin our study tonight. Father we thank Thee for the opportunity again to consider things that have to do with the Divine Purpose and with our understanding of them, of it. And we pray, Lord, that as we study now, here, this evening that we may get a better perspective concerning the approach that has been made to the understanding of that which thou are doing in our midst through the centuries and today. We give Thee thanks for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for the saving work accomplished for us and again, Lord, we pray that we may be given a deeper understanding of the Scriptures in order that we may understand Thee in a deeper way and be more submissive to Thy will. We ask that Thou be with us each one of us in a special way in this hour together.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Tonight we are continuing our series of studies in the Divine Purpose and the subject for the evening is "The History of Dispensational Theology." Obviously, to try to treat the history of a movement which is a bit over a hundred and fifty years

old is impossible in forty-five or fifty or fifty-five minutes and so I apologize that we will only be able to hit the high spots but I think we will be able to at least have the essence of that history.

And I'd like to begin as the outline suggests by a brief introduction. We've been talking about covenant theology called by many, reformed theology, because almost all reformed theology is covenantal. A unique challenge to the ecclesiology and eschatology of covenant theology arose about a hundred and fifty or so years ago. Its roots are traceable to the city of Dublin in Ireland. And to a group of people who met in that city in different places. One of the men who became a leader of the movement was John Nelson Darby. And John Nelson Darby has since that time been associated with the so called Plymouth Brethren. One might ask why were the Plymouth Brethren called Plymouth Brethren when they arose in Dublin? But the reason for this is that shortly after the rise of these Christian Brethren, as they are called in Britain, shortly after the rise of the Christian Brethren a number of them gathered around the city of Plymouth in England and, furthermore, a good bit of the publication of their early literature took place at Plymouth and so that was the reason they came to be called Plymouth Brethren. You might have thought they would have been called Dublin Brethren because that's really where the Holy Spirit seemed to move in the lives of some of the individuals who were involved.

So the roots of Dispensational Theology are traceable to John Nelson Darby and the Plymouth Brethren to the Bible and prophetic conferences of the latter part of the last century in, particularly, the Niagara Bible Conferences, and we will refer to them later on. His teaching has become enshrined in the Scofield Reference Bible, the most popular of all reference bibles, and the lifesaver of the Oxford Publishing Company

during the last Depression. Had it not been for the sales of the Scofield Reference Bible during the Depression the Oxford Publishing Company said they probably would have gone under, so in one sense that publishing house, very well-known publishing house is indebted to Dispensational Theology.

Dispensational Theology has been refined to some extent and tenaciously defended by Dallas Theological Seminary. So the challenge to covenantal or reformed theology comes from Dispensational Theology. Dispensationalists generally are Calvinists because their theology is usually an inconsistent mixture of Arminianism and Calvinism. Although if one were to simply put these two systems side by side it's not essential as we shall see that Dispensationalism be Arminian in the soteriology of its viewpoints. In fact, it's perfectly consistent with Dispensationalism to have a Calvinistic soteriology. But the vast majority of Dispensationalists espouse the doctrine of the freedom of the will and usually, although not always, combine this predilection against unconditional election.

Now, I am speaking broadly and understand you may know some individuals who are very fervent defenders of unconditional election characteristic of Calvinism but who at the same time say I am a Dispensationalist. There are always exceptions like that and there are a number of these but basically the movement on the whole has been Arminian; that is a mixture of Calvinism and Arminianism.

The greatest tension between Dispensationalism and both historic Calvinism and Arminianism, however, exists in the areas of ecclesiology and eschatology.

Dispensationalists espouse a unique brand of pre-millennialism wedded to the doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture of the church and to a sharp distinction between Israel and the church with separate programs for each of these elections..

Now, that is, I think, a very important point and we will lay some stress on it later on, but when we think of dispensationalism we should think of not simply of a sharp distinction between Israel and the church but also a distinction between these two bodies so far as the past, present, and future is concerned. We will spell that out in more detail in just a moment. These issues have been so set forth that it is not uncommon for Amillenarians and historic Premillenarians to become united by opposition to dispensational premillennialism. I can imagine a dispensationalist in a joking way liking this to the common conflict that brought Herod and Pilate together. But there are certain things that Amillennialists believe that history premillennialists believe as over against dispensational premillenarianism.

One feature of the conflict must be noted. There is a part of the enemies of dispensationalism a frank acknowledgment of the benefits to the church of Dispensationalism. For example, Alburis Peters, who was well known as a covenant theologian and a man wrote a small work against the Scofield Reference Bible, begins the treatment in the pamphlet by writing that dispensationalist were, and I am quoting his precise words, "among the best Christians in our churches those with the deepest faith in the Holy Scriptures and with the most sincere devotion to the Lord." That's from a little pamphlet that he wrote called "A Candid Examination of the Scofield Bible." So it's not uncommon for men who are opposing theological viewpoints within Evangelicalism to acknowledge that Dispensationalists have been in many cases remarkable for their faithfulness to the Lord and to his word. George Ladd, a historic pre-millennialist, has written, "it is doubtful if there has been any other circle of men who have done more by their influence and preaching, teaching and writing to promote a love for Bible study, a hunger for the deeper Christian life, a passion for Evangelism

and zeal for missions in the history of American Christianity." That's a remarkable statement from someone who wrote books against dispensational pre-millennialism. So it's, I think, it is a magnificent encomium for despised system of theology.

However, in spite of that that doesn't necessarily mean that the system is a true system because many of the same things can be said down through the centuries for those who have espoused covenantal theology. Both of these theological viewpoints exist with evangelicalism and so it's not surprising that since they exist within Evangelicalism that there would be many godly men and women who stand within both of these traditions.

So let's turn to our outline as I have it here. Roman I, The Early History of Dispensationalism and we will begin with Capital A, the place of John Nelson Darby. Darby was born in eighteen hundred and died in eighteen hundred and eighty-two. Darby was born in London but he grew up in Ireland. He was educated at Trinity College, part of the University of Dublin. He graduated at the age of eighteen a very remarkable achievement in itself. He was admitted to the bar at the age of twenty-two, but he was converted and abandoned his legal career after one year of legal service. He was ordained in the Church of England and worked there with remarkable success. In fact, you can go back and look at Darby's early years and find that he was a very devoted high churchman in the Church of England, an Anglican.

Darby became disenchanted with the spiritual life of his church and began to meet with members of the Church of England who had similar spiritual desires. And, incidentally, it is not absolutely true to say that he was the beginning of this movement of Christian Brethren. Strictly speaking there seems to have been three groups in Dublin who met somewhat independently of one another. One of the groups was a group of

people who were from dissenting churches, that is, they were not members of the established church, Church of England, Church of Ireland, or Church of Scotland. And then there was a group that was composed of members of the established church and then there was a third group that was composed of mixed background. These individuals were meeting for Bible study, for prayer, for discussion of spiritual things separately and finally became acquainted with one another and, ultimately, came to meet together. And in fact Darby was not one of the original ones he was serving as a curate in the Church of England and was at that time a high churchman. Shortly after, he became convinced that the church was in ruins and he left the church and he began to meet with these people with whom he had made contact. Well as it turned out he was a man with a strong character and unusual abilities a very strong systematizer, very active, and vigorous and he became one of the outstanding leaders of this group of people.

He eventually settled in Plymouth, England where he began to break bread with the believers there. By eighteen hundred and forty their numbers had risen to about eight hundred people and from this and other similar meetings arose those that are called today in the United States Plymouth Brethren in Britain largely called the Christian Brethren. And the surprising thing about this movement is that it really has touched the whole world. There's hardly a place on the face of the globe where if you are looking for a group of Christians who meet Sunday to remember the Lord and to study the Scriptures together, there is hardly a place in which you cannot find some of the Brethren. They have had perhaps one of the broadest and widest missionary movements that have existed in the Christian church but they don't publicize it. In fact, right now a friend of mine is writing a history of the mission movement of the Christian

Brethren in order to supply that particular lack. Darby was an indefatigable worker. He wrote scores of volumes on biblical topics. For example, if you go down to Dallas Theological Seminary or maybe you have them in your own library, some of you might, Darby's works comes to forty volumes and that is not all of the works that he did. His miscellaneous works come to forty volumes. He wrote many other volumes. So he was a man constantly active, constantly working, and, furthermore, he translated the Bible into English. He knew Hebrew and Greek well enough to do that. He translated the Bible into French. He translated the Bible into German. All of these translations came from the pen of John Nelson Darby. So he was a remarkable man.

As I mentioned in his collective writings which I just mentioned its dispensational scheme is set out. And while there are some differences between Darby's scheme and that popularized by Scofield, they are really very similar and in effect it's probably true to say that what is represented in the Scofield Reference Bible and what is represented by the theology of Dallas Theological Seminary in particular in the general areas of theology, ecclesiology accepted, we have essentially the teaching of John Nelson Darby and the early Christian Brethren.

Darby's ecclesiology never really caught on with modern Evangelicalism but his widespread labors let to a deep penetration into the thinking of evangelicals in the western world in the area of eschatology. And this, of course, is where the particular issue of covenantal theology is all against dispensational theology comes to its head. Among the men who followed along in the development of the ideas of Darby and his friends were, perhaps you'll recognize some of these name and perhaps you'll not recognize others but for those of you who have read a lot in biblical literature you'll recognize some of the names at least. They were important men in their day S.H. Cox,

Henry Parsons. Parsons was very prominent in the Bible conference movement of the latter part of the last century. Henry Parsons, William E. Blackstone, Blackstone is particularly well known because of his book on the second coming of Christ, which when it was written had such a wide distribution that if anyone wanted to discuss the second coming of Christ, Blackstone's book was a required book for reading. In fact, when I first became a Christian somebody put W. E. Blackstone's "Jesus is Coming" in my hands. It's a remarkable little book, and Mr. Blackstone was a missionary to the Jews, had a wide ministry, even had a political ministry to the nation Israel. And, in fact, in Israel today there is at least a monument or so to W. E. Blackstone because of the influence that he had in the establishment of the Israeli government. A. J. Frost, James Hall Brooks. James H. Brooks was one of the editors of the Scofield Reference Bible; he was Presbyterian minister of the Central Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, very influential in the Bible conference movement in fact one of the leaders in the establishment of the Bible Conference Movement. G. Campbell Morgan. Many of you have read Morgan's books. William Trotter, Charles Henry McIntosh or CHM. I know when I first became a Christian some of my friends put CHM'S commentary on the Pentateuch and I read all the way through them, William Kelly and many others.

A man among the Brethren who disagreed with Darby but, nevertheless, held essentially the same theology except that they were post tribulation rather than pre-tribulational pre-millennialist were Benjamin Wills Newton, Samuel Predeaux Tregelles, George Muller, many of you know of George Muller, and Robert Cameron. Well the story is too long to tell. It is a very interesting one and even very interesting to read of the disagreements that arose on Bristol and caused the separation of Mr. Newton, an outstanding student of the word, I have books in my library from Benjamin Wells

Newton, he was a very learned man and a very fine expositor of the word of God but he and Darby became a parting of the ways over some problems that existed in the local church in Bristol.

Dispensationism in the Bible Conference Movement largely won the day. The Bible Conference Movement began with the believers meeting for Bible study which became the Niagara Bible Conference and this was about in eighteen sixty-eight and from eighteen sixty-eight to nineteen hundred and one, in other words about thirty years or more the Niagara Bible Conferences were some of the most significant of all the Bible conferences that formed part of that movement. They were attended by men like A.C. Gapeline, James H. Brooks, W. J. Erdman; all of those are editors of the Scofield Bible, H.M. Parsons that I mentioned a minute ago, H.A. Gortner and others. And while there was much discussion among the individuals who took part in these conferences over certain key points, Dispensationism, largely won the day and when finally the Niagara Conference issued a fourteen point theological scheme the essentials of Dispensationism were set out in it. I should mention this that Dispensationism had a very strong influence in the fundamentalist movement in the early part of the nineteenth century because the Princetonians, men like Warfield and Maychent and others had very strong views of the nature of the Bible over the nature of the evangelical Christianity over the nature of the person work of Christ that were practically the same as these men who were Dispensationists in the area of Eschatology and they combined in the opposition to the rise of liberal theology in the earlier part of the century. So Dispensationism had an influence in the resistance to liberal theology and associated with other who didn't hold the same views in the prophetic word with them.

Capital C, the Scofield Reference Bible, Cyrus Ingersol Scofield who was born in 1843 is one of the most important men in the history of Dispensationism. He was a Confederate soldier, isn't that nice, [Laughter], Confederate soldier. He was later a lawyer; he was the United States attorney for Kansas after the war and no less a person than President Grant appointed him as a United States attorney for Kansas. He was converted in 1879 so he was 36 years of age. It's said that Mr. Scofield was practically an alcoholic before he was converted but he was converted through a YMCA worker in St. Louis. He made the acquaintance of James H. Brooks who was pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church there who introduced him to Dispensational pre-millenism. And after service as the pastor in the small congregational church in Dallas, 1882-1895 which is now the Scofield Memorial Church, and in East Northfield, Massachusetts he returned to Dallas in 1903 and began work on the reference bible. Mr. Scofield had the skill of a lawyer and some lawyers, not all of them, some lawyers have a bit of gift of succinctness and precision and this work was produce by one who had those gifts and probably has been the greatest promoter of the system of theology called Dispensationism among all of its promoters. His personal friendship with Lewis Sperry Chafer led to the ultimate association of the teaching with that of Dallas Theological Seminary. If there is anything that may be called standard Dispensationism it's found in the Scofield Reference Bible.

When I was going through Dallas Dr. Chafer frequently referred to Mr. Scofield and in fact attributed the bible teaching ministry he had to Dr. Scofield who called him aside one time and said, "Look Chafer you're not really an evangelist, you're a Bible teacher." Dr. Chafer had been an evangelist but he said "You're not really an evangelist you're a Bible teacher." And Dr. Chafer said that was the thing that influenced him to

think about Bible teaching into which he went and, ultimately, became the founder of the Dallas Seminary.

Roman II, the Systematizing of Dispensationism, then Capital A, Lewis Sperry Chafer. To the founder and first president of Dallas Theological Seminary must go the accolade of being the first organized and detailed systemizer of Dispensational Theology. Now I said earlier and others have said this to but Darby was the systemtizer but Darby never wrote an eight volume systematic theology as Dr. Chafer did so that is why I've said the first organized and detailed systemitizer of Dispensational Theology and in his systematic theology is contained Dr. Chafers Dispensational Theology. This eight-volume work was for years the text of the subject at the seminary here in Dallas and even today represents with some modifications essentially what is taught there because Dr. Chafer's viewpoint is essentially pre-millennial dispensationalism. And while some would like to modify this or that feature about Dr. Chafer's work, essentially, what is taught there is still that that is contained in Systematic Theology. I don't know whether it's used as a text now but in the days when in the fifties and sixties it was always required reading in the text. I came to the seminary before he wrote it and so we listened to him without any text but after the book was written it became required reading for students.

Capital B, J. Dwight Pentecost, just a word or two about these men. Many of you know Dr. Pentecost a very fine man of God who has been a very effective teacher both at the Philadelphia College of the Bible and Dallas Seminary as well as being in his past pastor of a couple of Presbyterian Churches the Northern Presbyterian Church, one use to be the PCUSA, now the UPCUSA. It's likely that Pentecost's book *Things to Come* has been the most influential treatment of a somewhat modified dispensational

eschatology since Dr. Chafer. Dr. Pentecost's work has influenced both Charles Ryrie and John Walvord very significantly when it was published that work had quite an influence on both of those two men. I don't know whether they admitted it or not but some of us who stood back and read both of them and listened also to them recognize Dr. Pentecost had a very good and close influence upon them.

Capital C, John F. Walvord, Dr. Walvord who is the retiring president of Dallas Seminary and the second one after Dr. Chafer, has widely defended dispensationalism with a stress on the pre-millennial pre-tribulationism that characterizes dispensationalism. I think that it is fair to say that has really been the stress of Dr. Walvord's ministry the prophetic word and particularly pre-tribulation pre-millennialism which he has dauntedly defended. And, finally Charles Carwell Ryrie. Dr. Ryrie wrote a book a few years ago "Dispensationalism Today" published in 1965 actually twenty years ago but I remember the faculty meeting in which discussion took place among the faculty members over the fact that some people cannot help but misunderstand dispensationalism. The same can be said of reformed theology as well, of course. We tend to want to criticize other movements without having read them. And if we listen to secondary and tertiary sources we frequently misunderstand and this is true of dispensational theology and well as covenant theology. Well discussion at the faculty meeting was going on over some instances of misunderstanding of dispensationalism and the faculty, several members of the faculty, said what we need is a book in which we answer some of these misrepresentations and also make a few modifications in the comments of some of the people who perhaps have said things that have been misunderstood or were easy to misunderstand. And so Dr. Ryrie wrote "Dispensationalism Today" in answer to that felt need. It's really an explanation of

certain controversial features and a defense of the system against what he has thought to be its misrepresentations.

Romans 3, the Distinctives of Dispensationalism what is dispensationalism? Well now I'd like to set out the things I consider to be the Distinctive of Dispensationalism and we begin with the place that Dispensationalist like to begin, Capital A, the hermeneutics of the system. Dispensationalists espouse, so they say, the grammatical historical method of interpretation. Now, some critics have not been willing to give them credit for this. One of the reasons they haven't been willing to give them credit for it is because, occasionally, they abandon their system. Now that's true of most of us in whatever we do. We're not always consistent. If everybody was perfectly consistent we would all believe the same thing I do. But ah, just wanted to see if you were awake. But we are not consistent and so for that reason you can look in dispensational literature and you can find them espousing a normal interpretation, use that with quotes around it because that's a favorite word normal interpretation, literal interpretation and you'll frequently find some of them will say now we do not mean to say that there are not figures of speech in the Bible and some will go on to say that we do not mean that there is no symbolism in the Bible. These are parts of the system of normal or literal interpretation. But when figures of speech are used, when symbolism is used, they do refer to a literal truth even though in the guise of symbolic language. But, occasionally, you will find some of them that have departed from their system a bit. I won't give you some illustrations of it because that would take us to far astray but there are some and it is not uncommon for some people to say, "Well they say they follow a literal interpretation but they really don't."

Often people will say when they see a figure of speech in the Bible and maybe some dispensationalist does not recognize it when he should have and a critic will say, "You see he is not recognized what is clearly a figure of speech and his literal interpretation is not the kind of interpretation by which we could understand the Scriptures." The system, so Dispensationalist affirm, is required by the laws of grammar and the facts of history and as a matter of fact you will find Dispensationalist often contended that this is the historic method of interpreting the Bible. That's a very interesting thing and I want to say something about it in just a moment. But, for example, John Calvin wrote, "Let us know them that the true meaning of Scripture is the natural and obvious meaning and let us embrace and abide by it resolutely." Now that is a statement that Dispensationalist can thoroughly agree with. The interesting thing about it is that if the two agree on the method of interpretation and it's surprising that they disagree so far as the results are concerned. One of the reasons for that is what some people call literal interpretation of Scripture is not the same thing that others call literal. Of course, others dispute the claim that Dispensationalist practice normal interpretation and as I say there are inconsistencies in their literature. But, I think, it is fair to say it is their intention to interpret literally that is in the sense we have been talking about. And there is one sense in which it's true and one sense in which it's important. Dispensationalist while they follow essentially the same method that John Calvin did though they sometimes arrived at entirely different conclusions, there is one thing they do not do and this thing is something that Calvin and others do, occasionally, do and that is that Dispensationalist do not spiritualize the Scripture.

Now, when we use the term spiritualize we must understand what that means. That does not mean interpret the Scriptures spiritually. To interpret the Scriptures

spiritually is to see simply the spiritual truth that is found in the Scripture that is interpreted by the laws of grammar and the facts of history. In other words, if we were talking about the death of Christ and his atoning work, we would of course lay stress upon the laws of grammar and the facts of history in interpreting as best we can what happened on Calvary's cross, but then when we talk about atonement and the meaning of atonement and what it means spiritually we are interpreting the word of God grammatical, historically and we are finding spiritual meaning in it. Spiritualizing is something else. One instance of spiritualizing is this found often in our amillennial literature but not all amillennial literature but, I think, it is fair to say it is generally in amillennial literature it is to find passages in the Old Testament that have to do in their historical context with the nation Israel, ethnic Israel and to apply them to the Christian church of the present day.

Now, you will find that in many additions of the King James Version, particularly, in the older editions because it was so characteristic of the interpretation of many people. But you will find in the Old Testament a passage from Isaiah or passages in Isaiah, Jeremiah or the prophets or whatever that in the context clearly refer to Israel but the heading is over it will be the Church this and the Church that. That is spiritualizing to take passages that historically, grammatically refer to ethnic Israel and then to affirm that Israel equals the Church, the present day Church not by application but by spiritualizing.

Capital B, The Recognition of Dispensations. Dispensationalists do recognize dispensations in the unfolding of progressive revelation. Charles Ryrie defines a dispensation as "a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose." Daniel Fuller, professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, an opponent of Dispensationalism who

grew up in the Dispensational camp, approves this definition "a period of time during which God deals with man in a certain way." Many Dispensationalist today do not like to use the term "a period of time with dispensations" or with the term "dispensation" because they think of a dispensation often as even overlapping of a dispensations and not essentially a period of time but a stewardship. One definition that is fairly common is a definition from a graduate of Dallas Seminary who teaches at Moody Bible Institute has written on this point his definition is this, it's a fuller definition but I think it's worth listening to. "A dispensation is God's distinctive method of governing mankind or a group of men during a period of human history marked by a crucial event, a test, failure and judgments. From the divine standpoint it is a stewardship, a rule of life or a responsibility for managing God's affairs in his house. From the historical standpoint it is a stage in the progress of divine revelation." We'll talk further about this but we'll just let it rest at that point. But all Dispensationalists recognize dispensations.

Now, you can see that we have to understand Dispensation in the precise theological sense that it has here. As you know the term dispensation has other uses that are very common. For example, a Roman Catholic would have an entirely different definition of dispensation. A dispensation in the Roman Catholic theology is a license granted by a bishop or another ecclesiastical authority permitting some act which in the absence of such dispensation would be illegal according to Canon Law, so a bishop or church official may grant a dispensation which is the freedom to do something that ordinarily is contrary to the Canon Law of Roman Catholic Church.

I mentioned one of these not too long ago in that back about twenty years ago Braniff Airlines began to fly on Fridays to a particular place and I've forgotten the details of it now but I have it in my notes the official announcement that went out but they

gained a dispensation from the Roman Catholic Church Tom Braniff who was the president of the airlines who was a Roman Catholic, they gained a permission from the church authority to serve fish on Fridays in their planes. Of course, that requirement today, I think, is largely disregarded by the Roman Catholic Church. But back when I was growing up no Roman Catholics ate fish on Fridays; at least they didn't do it openly because it was something they were not suppose to do. But Braniff obtained a dispensation and it was published giving permission for that very thing. And Bill Taft sitting over here came up to me tonight and handed me another little card in which the Roman Catholic Church gave was it Bill, Dr Pepper gave a dispensation for something I forget which. But that is the meaning of the term dispensation in church language. But this is a different sense of the term dispensation.

Capital C, the Distinction of Israel from the Church. Dispensationalists distinguish the two elections, the election of Israel and the election of the Church. Considering the present relation between Jews and Gentiles in the one body the Church to be the mystery about which Paul speaks. There is some difference of opinion over the nature of the differences but generally speaking this distinction includes, now this is very important to understand Dispensationalism and in my opinion is one of its weaknesses, it's something for you to think about. But generally speaking I have some friends who are turning away from this but I don't know whether they realize the consequences of it. But generally speaking Dispensationalists believe that this distinction between Israel and the Church includes, involves separate purposes for the Church and for Israel, separate promises for the Church and for Israel and separate destinies, so separate purposes, separate promises, separate destinies. Now, you can find that supported by Dr. Chafer

who is very strong on this point, Dr. Walvoord and also in Charles Ryrie's writings. Now, that is very important and that, I think, maybe one of the weaknesses of the system.

Dispensationalists like to think that their views are found in germ in the fathers, that is the apostolic fathers, but it is to this point impossible to find the teaching regarding separate purposes, separate promises and separate destinies for Israel and the Church in the post apostolic or apostolic fathers for that matter. In other words, that is a new teaching that has not been known in history until the times of J. N. Darby and following.

Capital D, Pentecost and the Inception of the Church. Dispensationalists see the Church as having its birthday, its inception on the day of Pentecost a reason of occurrence of the Baptism of the spirit for the first time in that day. And while it is, I think, generally granted that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit by which all are baptized into the body of Christ can be substantially defended as occurring first on that day. The precise result of that event is a debatable point. But this is fundamental for the understanding of the distinction between Israel and the Church for Dispensationalists. For Dispensationalists always the Church begins on the day of Pentecost except for the ultra Dispensationalists, a small group who like to begin the dispensation of the Church with the Apostle Paul and his ministry. But that is a small movement within Dispensationalism. Like most movements you have a right and a left and that's the right and they are fortunately a very small number and so we don't have to pay too much attention to them. So Pentecost is the inception of the Church.

Capital E, the Distinction of Law from Grace. Dispensationalists usually make a sharp distinction between law and grace or the Mosaic Age from the Church age. Believers are regarded as not being under the Mosaic Law as a code. Although, thinking

Dispensationalists make the point that believers today are expected to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law because they live their lives under the Holy Spirit. For example, in Romans chapter 8 in verse 2 and 3, the apostle writes these words, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to the ones in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed thee from the law of sin and death." For the impossible thing of the law literally we would paraphrase it as that which was impossible through the law in which or by which or in which it was weak through the flesh God having set his own son in the likeness of flesh of sin and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. Now, notice this, "That the righteousness requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit." In other words the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ has been accomplished that those who have come to the forgiveness of sins and deliverance might fulfill the righteous requirement of the law through walking by the Holy Spirit.

Now, many who believe that we should be put under the Law of Moses and the Ten Commandments find it very difficult to understand this precise distinction but Dispensationalists contend that we are not under the law as a code but we are expected to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law because we are under the Spirit. Incidentally, even Berkoff must see some distinction in these matters.

F- the pre-tribulational rapture of the Church. Now it is possible for you to find some Dispensationalists who will say, "I'm a Dispensationalist but I don't believe in the pre-tribulational rapture of the Church." But that is very, very difficult to find. Robert L. Gundry is one instance Dr. Gundry is, at least the last time I spoke with him, still claimed to be a Dispensationalist but he has written books opposing the pre-tribulational rapture of the Church. But ordinary Dispensationalists are pre-tribulational

rapturist. They believe that the coming of Christ is in two phases one preceding the tribulation period the phase of our Lord's advent to the earth following the tribulation period.

Now, you can see the reason for this theologically. Now I am not going to talk about the biblical side of the question now but the theological reason for it is simply the sharp distinction between Israel and the Church, separate promises, separate purposes, separate destinies and so the idea of having two peoples of God on the earth at the same time having different purposes, different promises, different destinies it's too complicated for and thought to be contrary to principles of Dispensationalism. That's why pre-tribulation rapture has almost always been a distinctive feature of Dispensationalism. I know there are some people who would say you can be a Dispensationalist without being such but it is hard to find such. And it is in practical matters and, I think, theologically according to their own views an essential of the system. By the way, that arose at the time of Darby, that particular teaching.

And, finally, last the emphasis on the broader glory of God. This was something that was really originated by Dr. Charles Ryrie. It is contended by Dispensationalists that Covenant theology focuses too narrowly on the redemptive purpose of God, redemptive purpose of God, thinking that all the revelation may be subsumed under the categories of creation, fall and redemption. Their views, that is the Dispensationalists views they say, permit a proper emphasis on the broader cosmic purposes of God inclusive of the future of the world and the ultimate glorification of God by the issues of the redemptive work of Christ in the universe. This is hotly debatable as you can see because reformed theologians, covenant theologians, think they invented the expression "Soli Deo Gloria" to God alone be the glory. What is represented by this, if I may just

offer this suggestion, is a misrepresentation of covenant theology stressed on as I put it here creation, fall and redemption. What Dr. Ryrie has suggested is that redemption has to do simply with personal redemption, but redemption scripturally has to do with redemption of the cosmic universe of which we are a part. So the effects of our Lord's death are effects that touched the whole of this universe and all of the purposes of God in it. You must give redemption a much broader sense and in that case I don't think that this really adds anything to the questions at issue.

Well that's an introduction to the history of Dispensationalism we will talk about the dispensations next week, but if you don't mind we have just a few moments, I only went fifty-two minutes tonight, so if you'd like just a question or two I'd be glad to try and answer some question that you have. Please speak loud enough so I can hear you I'm an old man and I don't have the hearing aid yet thought Martha thinks I need one.

Alright Lee.....inaudible question. Both spiritualized....inaudible...I think you'll find very rarely any covenant theologian who would accuse Dispensationalists of spiritualizing Scripture, occasionally on the interpretation of some little phrase they want to point out you've abandoned your system at that point. But as a general principle Dispensationalists do not follow that methodology, whereas, covenant theologians can be cited and documented as affirming that. For example, Martin Winegartner wrote a book, a very effective book on amillennialism. He has affirmed that he follows the principle of spiritualizing. One can find it in John Calvin. For example, Calvin in interpreting Romans 11:25, where it says, "and so all Israel shall be saved" and even many of his own now many of covenant theologians reject his interpretation. He affirms that the term Israel there is a term that means Jews and Gentiles. That's the kind of thing that would be called spiritualizing. But that is very common. You will find,

however, of course, people who will say and probably some Dispensationalists have made some mistakes in interpreting particular passages. But sometimes, I think, it depends on what is spiritualizing.

Yes, Wilfred....inaudible question... Well the difference was this that Mr. Darby believed in a kind of ecclesiology very similar to the chapel's ecclesiology in which there was no office of pastor/teacher but gifted men as pastor/teachers. Mr. Darby believed in the meeting of the Church and in the frequent observance of the Lord's Supper in an open meeting in which the gifted men had freedom to participate. Dr. Chafer was a Presbyterian he was not a strong Presbyterian and as a matter of fact, he would have been ousted from the Presbyterian Church on the grounds of Dispensationalism were it not for the fact that he was classified, had himself classified as an evangelist. And being classified as an evangelist they couldn't say look you're not laboring within the bounds of the Presbytery. He used to chuckle to us and say "My synagogue" that's what he called his denomination, "my synagogue would love to oust me" this was when he was in his seventies and I think that is one of the reasons they didn't oust him they knew they wouldn't have to contend with him too long. So he would say "my synagogue would love to oust me" and he said "if they do I guess I'll have to start meeting with the Brethren." That's what he used to say and, incidentally, Dr, Chafer did meet every Sunday morning as long as he was able until his wife became ill and she was ill for over a year and was in a coma, he attended the Lord's Supper at the seminary held in the seminary on Sunday morning in which there was an open meeting. It was voluntary students didn't have to attend but Dr. Chafer attended so he had some sympathies with that kind of thing. But that's the major difference. Most of the Dispensationalists have been either Baptist or members of independent churches or Bible churches or

Presbyterians like James H. Brooks and a number of others. You read down the list of people who were editors of the Scofield Reference Bible you'll see two or three different denominations and independent churches as well. But the ecclesiology taught in the Scofield Reference Bible is contrary to the Brethren ecclesiology not in the nature of the Church but in the offices and gifts areas and the meeting of the Church.

One more question...yes.....inaudible question... We're going to do on our list of topics we are devoting one or two times to the distinction between Israel and the Church so later on we will deal with that in some detail. I couldn't possibly answer in one word.

One other....yes friend....inaudible question It would be if what you said was true. In other words, yes, in fact, that would be that passage happens to be one of the passages, those two passages, but particular the one in Romans because it is more difficult to defend that one then the one in Hebrews. But by the way if you go back and read the literature about the various commentators you will find that they all differ and even anti-Dispensationalists affirm that the Dispensationalist interpretation may be a correct interpretation. It's possible to understand Hosea, certainly. It's also possible to understand Paul in a particular way. It's possible also once you have determined that it's a reference to Israel it's possible to take it as an application of the principle found in that and that incidentally is the way Charles Hodge does who is not a Dispensationalist in fact not even a pre-millennialist he was post millennialist. So that is a debated text you've chosen a very good illustration. It's one of the three or four that if you could prove that that was what the New Testament writer did you would have a very good point. Now with reference to the passage in Hebrews 10, and also in Hebrews chapter 8, because the same passage is cited in both places if that depends upon how one constructs the

Abrahamic Covenant promises because the Abrahamic Covenant promises have to do with Abraham, the land and also he says, "indeed shall all the nations of the earth, all of the families of the earth, be blessed." That as the Old Testament unfolds is a reference to the promise of Gentile salvation through the seed of Abraham. And so Hebrews chapter 8, and the citation of Jeremiah 31, and then the reference there are we're going to deal with that later on in our series but that maybe understood simply as part of the original intention of Abrahamic promise. It included Gentile salvation as well. But anyway those are good things but we'll have to stop we'll let you go.

[Prayer] Let's close with a prayer. Father we are grateful to Thee for the privilege of discussion of things that have to do with Thy word. We especially give Thee thanks for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and help us to remember that we stand by virtue of what he has done and our eternal destiny is related to the blood that was shed
[End of Tape]