

Definition

*OIKONOMIA*, 'home-house-law', denotes

- a. The STEWARDSHIP or ADMINISTRATION OF AFFAIRS,
- b. With mankind, under given conditions,
- c. Characterized and empowered by a special DISPENSATION or supply of God,
- d. By which He further fills up his purpose for the ages (eons) which He made in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

DISPENSATIONS are cumulative to the degree that mankind, today, enjoys some of the benefits accruing from the various gifts which God has bestowed from the beginning to the present.

DISPENSATIONS are the gifts which characterize and empower the stewardship or administration of affairs, which God makes with man during *a period of time*.

In a gradually progressive series of administrations or phases we find God, in His wisdom and gracious provisions,

Beginning with mankind in innocence, and

Step by step leading them up to

Maturity and full knowledge of Himself in glory.

Therefore, He begins with the natural, the temporal and the ritual, and leads to the spiritual, the abiding, and transcendent glory.

With each step God dispenses or donates to mankind some new revelation of his wisdom and knowledge, grace and truth, love and glory, usually richer and fuller than previously known, which becomes the characterizing and empowering gift that distinguishes the new development from the preceding one.

TWELVE STEPS OR DISPENSATIONS

- 1. The Garden of Eden .....INNOCENCE
- 2. The knowledge of Good and Evil....CONSCIENCE
- 3. Authority.....HUMAN GOVERNMENT
- 4. Promise.....HOPE
- 5. The commandments.....LAW
- 6. Emmanuel.....GRACE AND TRUTH
- 7. The Spirit with Power .....PENTECOSTAL
- 8. Justification and Conciliation.....READJUSTMENT
- 9. Transcendent Grace.....SECRET
- 10. Judgment.....INDIGNATION
- 11. Righteousness.....KINGDOM
- 12. Love and glory.....COMPLEMENT

## 1. THE ADMINISTRATION OF INNOCENCE

- a. The first dispensation of God was to entrust the garden of Eden- Paradise- to Adam, to serve it and keep it. (Genesis 2:15).
- b. Adam assumed the stewardship or administration of the affairs of Paradise in negative innocence, i.e. he knew neither good nor evil.
- c. Upon Adam's transgression, disobedience and offence, the *Administration of Innocence* ended with divine judgment that followed. (Gen. 3:9-24)
- d. Adam's sin threw the whole machinery of creation out of gear, producing its groaning and travailing, grinding itself to pieces and turning all into corruption. (Romans 8:18-23).
- e. As Disobedience it brought down the curse of a righteous God (Genesis 3:14-19; Romans 5:19:16,).
- f. As an Offence, it brought estrangement between Himself and the creature upon whom He had lavished so much affection. (Romans 5:10; 16:25-27; 2 Cor. 5:18-19).

## 2: THE ADMINISTRATION OF CONSCIENCE

1. When Adam ate of the forbidden tree, he received "the knowledge of good and evil." (Genesis 3:22) by which a "conscience joining its witness....accusing or defending" in right and wrong doing, became the fruit. (Romans 2:14-15).
2. This dispensation or gift directed the affairs of mankind in this developmental phase.
3. Mankind, however, left to direct their affairs by the light of CONSCIENCE, waxed worse and worse and filled the earth with corruption and violence in the days of Noah. This eventuated in the divine judgment of the DELUGE. (Genesis 6:11-17; 7:10-12, 21-14).

## 3. HUMAN GOVERNMENT

1. After the Flood a new Age (Eon) began, "the present wicked age (eon)" (Galations 1:4) which extends from the deluge or flood to the future 'Great day of His wrath'.
2. Immediately after the Flood, we find God dispensing the authoritative sword of justice to Noah (Genesis 9:1-6) to empower Human Government.
3. This phase continued in accord with the Divine authority dispensed to Noah until the civil revolution or anarchic revolt led by Nimrod, a grandson of Ham, "the mighty in the building of his kingdom of the cities of Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.
4. To cut short the plans and purposes of the revolt of Nimrod, Divine judgment was sent at Babel, confounding the language of the people, so they left off building the city, and Jehovah parted the sons of Adam into 70 languages and nations and spread them abroad upon the face of all the earth. (Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-9; 46:27; Deut. 32:8; Acts 14:15-17; 17:26-28).

#### 4.HOPE

1. With the Divine judgment and dispersion of the sons of Adam at Babel, He “leaves all the nations to go on in their own ways, although He leaves Himself not without the testimony of good acts, giving showers from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with nourishment and gladness.” (Acts 15-17)
2. Then out of the Ur of the Chaldees God called a solitary man – Abram, a Shemite—to whom he dispensed the Gospel of Promise, which empowered a new phase of Hope. (Genesis 11:29-32; 12:1-4; Gal. 3:8).
3. This phase continued until the judgment of the Egyptians and was brought to an end by His judgment on that nation as He had specifically foretold. (Gen. 15:13-14; Exodus 12:35-42; Acts 7:1-7).

#### LAW

1. With the deliverance of the Israelis from Egypt, the new phase of Law was inaugurated, characterized by the dispensation of “the commandments” through Moses (Ex. 19:1, 5-25; Acts 7:1-7).
2. This phase continued until the arrival of John the Baptist.

#### GRACE AND TRUTH

1. In this phased we have the dispensation of the gift of Emmanuel, “God with us” (Matt. 1:23) to the nation of Israel, of the seed of David according to the flesh in fulfillment of the promise God made to the fathers. (Matt. 2:6; Luke 1:26-33; Acts 13:22-24, 32-37) A new phase of Grace and truth was inaugurated with the nation (John 1:17)  
*“From this one’s seed (David), God, according to the promise, led to Israel the Savior, Jesus. (Acts 13:23).*  
  
*“Unto His own He came, and those who are His own accepted him not.” (John 1:11).*
2. After a brief ministry, the phase of grace and truth, concludes with a solemn pronouncement of Isaiah’s judgment on the nation as recorded in Matt. 13:14-15 and John 12:36-44.
3. With the door of the Kingdom locked against the nation, Christ commits the “keys of the kingdom” to Peter (Matt. 16:19), and begins to unfold “the mysteries of the kingdom” to the disciples. (Matt. 13:10,11.,16-52).
4. In due time he fulfilled the Scriptures by presenting Himself to the nation as their lowly King, riding on the colt, the foal of an ass (Zech. (9:9); Matt. 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-44).
5. But the “chief of the people and elders” rejected Him (Matt. 21:42-46; Acts 4:8-12), and in accord with the “determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,” gave Him death on the cross (Acts 2:23; 3:17, 18; 4:23-28).
6. On the third day, God raised Him, according to the Scriptures (Acts 2:24, 31-33; 3:15; 1 Cor. 15:4), and “for 40 days he showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs, speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God.” (Acts 1:3; 10:40-41).

## PENTECOST

1. On the day of Pentecost, 10 days after Christ's ascension to the Father, in answer to His crucifixion prayer, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do," (Luke 23:24), a new phase of affairs with the people of Israel was inaugurated, characterized by and empowered by
  - a. The dispensation of gift of the holy Spirit with power from on high (Luke 24:49; John 14:16.17.25.26; 15:26-27; Acts 1:4-5).
  - b. Peter, standing with the eleven, under the power of the holy Spirit, takes the "keys" and unlocks the door of the Kingdom again to the nation. (Acts 2:14-40).
  - c. The twelve at Pentecost were given a very limited commission.  
*"You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, as well as in entire Judea and Samaria, and to the limits of the land"* (Acts 1:8).
  - d. The twelve, carrying out the Pentecostal phase, never went beyond the limits of their commission, i.e. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the limits of the land.
  - e. In addition, their ministry was confined to Israelites, Samaritans and proselyte Gentiles.
  - f. When God was ready to send the witness to representatives of the nation outside the land, He called Saul of Tarsus and commissioned him for the work. (Acts 9:15, 16; 13:45-48).

## THE READJUSTMENT PHASE

1. In Acts 13 Barnabas and Saul were severed or separated by the holy Spirit for the work whereunto they were called. (Acts 13:2).
2. Saul then begins the ministry in accord with the program which the Lord had outlined to Ananias at the time of his (Saul's) call.  
*"The Lord said to him, 'Go, seeing that he is a choice instrument of mine, to bear my name before the Gentiles as well as kings, besides the sons of Israel, for I shall be telling him how much he must suffer for my name's sake.'"* (Acts 9:15-16)
3. The separation of Saul and Barnabas for this new work initiates the phase of Readjustment. (Hebrews 11:3)
4. Saul now becomes Paul, and for a short time he will conduct a two-fold ministry, first going into the synagogues of the Jews outside the land, and witnessing concerning the Kingdom of God, and persuading both Jews and proselyte Gentiles, concerning Jesus, from the Law of Moses and the prophets. (Acts 13:14; 16-17; 43; 14:1; 17:1-4; 10:11, 16-17).
5. Then when driven out of the synagogues he would proclaim the Gospel of the Grace of God, for which he was separated, (Romans 1:1-5) to Gentile and Jew alike for the obedience of faith for His name's sake (Acts 13:46-48; 14:27-28; 18:4-6; Romans 3:29-30; 4:3-16; Galations 3).  
*"...because of the grace given to me from God for me to be the minister of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles, acting as a priest of the Gospel of God."*
6. Therefore, during this period – from Acts 13 until the last public witness to Israel in Acts 28:17-28 --- two distinct phases ran parallel with each other, namely the Pentecostal and the Readjustment. (Romans 15:15-16).

### THE SECRET PHASE OR ADMINISTRATION

1. The Kingdom door of Millennial Hope now having been set aside nationally for Israel, until a future day, the Pentecostal administration, with the Kingdom hope and blessings – the evidential signs, miracles and wonders – “the powers of the future eon (Hebrews 6:5) and the Readjustment phase, with its spiritual endowments (1 Cor. 13:8-13) ceased.
2. Paul is no longer “bound with a chain for the hope of Israel” but becomes “the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you the nations.” (Ephesians 3:1) and God revealed the secret which he designated before the ages (eons) for our glory. (1 Cor. 2:1, 7-10; Ephesians 3:3, 6; Col. 1:24-27) and the “dispensation of the mystery”. (Ephesians 3:10.)

### THE PHASE OF INDIGNATION OR TRIBULATION

1. After the Rapture of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, the period of The Tribulation, the great one, or the period of Indignation on the sons of stubbornness will follow. (1 Thess. 1:9-10; 5:9-10; Matt. 3:7; Ephesians 5:6; Col. 3:6).
2. It is described as a period of lawlessness, when the man of lawlessness will be unveiled, who will exalt himself and seat himself in the temple of God, claiming to be God. (2 Thess. 2:3-13).
3. “Then shall be great affliction” or tribulation on the sons of Israel. (Matt. 24:21-23).
4. However, a Deliverer shall come out of Zion. (Romans 11:26-27).
5. This will be the coming of Christ on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory, (Matt. 24:29-31), with the vengeance of God (Isa. 35:4; 63:1-6), “in the great day of their indignation.” (Rev. 6:15-17; 19:11-21; 20:1-6).

*“Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives; which is adjoining Jerusalem to the east. (Zech. 14:3-4).*

### THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM HAS ARRIVED

1. “The Eon of the Eon.” (Heb. 1:8).
2. “The Eon of the eons.” (Eph. 3:21)
3. “The Times of Restoration.” (Acts 3:21).
4. “The Coming Age (Eon).” (Eph. 1:21).
5. The world Regenerated. (Vide Matt. 19:28).
6. Era of Refreshing. (Acts 3:19).
7. “The Complement of the Eras.” (Eph. 1:10).
8. The Kingdom set up in power and glory. (Rev. 11:15)
9. Time of Reformation. (Heb. 9:10).
10. Satan cast into the submerged chaos. (Rev. 20:6).

11. The Son of man will be present in power and glory and “He will sit on His throne of glory” and the Millennial Kingdom, the 1000 year reign of Christ with His saints, will be inaugurated. (Rev. 20:6).
12. Christ the Head of the Universe.
13. New Jerusalem descending out of Heaven.
14. This will be the period of Righteousness when God will “judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by the Man whom He hath ordained.” (Acts 17:31).
15. This is the administration in which the sons of Israel will go out under the “Great Commission” of Matthew and “disciple all the nations....teaching them to be keeping all,” whatever He commands them. (Daniel 7:13-14; Matt. 28:18-20; Zech. 8:20-23).
16. The terminal event will be the Great White Throne judgment. (Rev. 20:11).
17. God will set up a Kingdom on this earth which will embrace all the kingdoms under the whole heavens, with Messiah ben David sitting on the throne of His Father, in which God’s will is to be done as it is in heaven.
18. Jerusalem will be the capital city, Israel will be the ruling authority and the sermon on the mount will be the Kingdom judicial system.
19. At the end of the period of Jacob’s trouble Christ will be unveiled from heaven with power and glory and will bring deliverance to waiting Israel. (Romans 11:26, 27; Hebrews 9:28) Thirty days beyond Christ’s unveiling from heaven, the offerings will be resumed and Israel’s order of worship reestablished.
20. The resurrection of the saints in Israel marks the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom. Those who are resurrected “live with Christ a thousand years” (Rev. 20: 6).
21. The Hebrew Scriptures, as well as the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, speak of this time as the “Kingdom of the heavens,” and describes the sovereign rule of Israel over the nations.
22. Paul declared that after the full complement of the nations, i.e. following the completion of the body of Christ, “all Israel shall be saved according as it is written.” (Romans 11:26).
23. The evil effects of Israel’s Diaspora will be nullified by her restoration and abundant blessings will characterize the nation. (Ezek. 36:16-38).
24. The land will be relived of its curse and will blossom in exultation, when Jehovah shall return to Zion. (Isaiah 35).
25. Ezekiel describes how Israel and Judah are to be made one nation again in the land, with David as their king and Jehovah will set His sanctuary in their midst. (Ezekiel 37:21-28).
26. The lands will be divided among the twelve tribes in parallel sections, beginning with Hamath in the north. (Ezekiel 45:7-17; 48:21-23).
27. The site of the new city and the location of the sanctuary and the elevation of the dead sea will require great physical changes in the land surface of Palestine, as well as of the entire earth. (Rev. 16:17-21).
28. The Capital city, the New Jerusalem, will be located in the area of the Holy Oblation, and will reflect resplendent beauty. (Isa. 2:2-3).
29. Though Messiah will be reigning as the Prince of Peace in that day, yet it will be a reign based on righteousness and law. The least infraction of the Kingdom code, as expounded in the sermon on the mount, will receive immediate judgment. (Psa. 101:7-8).
30. Israel will be judged by the twelve apostles. (Matt. 19:28).
31. The millennial sanctuary will not be built in the new city of Jerusalem, but in the midst of the holy Oblation (Ezek. 45:1-6; 48:10, 20-21), about 18 miles north of the city, near Shiloh, where

the tabernacle rested after the sons of Israel conquered the land, and where it remained until the death of Eli.

32. There will be a causeway, a magnificent elevated boulevard, about 18 miles long, reaching from the city to the sanctuary, called "the way of holiness", on which the ransomed of Jehovah will walk. (Isa. 35:8-9).
33. The earth will be relieved of its curse. In the future inhabited earth, under the beneficent reign of Messiah, creation itself, freed from the slavery of corruption, will respond to His redemptive work. The desert will blossom as a rose, orchards will bend low with an abundance of fruit, vines will hang heir purple clusters in the sun, the earth will again be a paradise and man its happy guardian. (Isa. 41:18-20).
34. The animal kingdom will be blessed. Animals, although innocent of the transgression of man, have had to suffer all its consequences passively. But in the glorious era of the Millennium they all will share the blessedness of the reign of the Prince of Peace. (Isa. 11:6-9).
35. Human life will be extended. (Isa. 65:20).

#### **THE FINAL DEVELOPMENTAL PHASE: THE CONSUMMATION.**

1. Before the eons (ages), there was no sin, nor evil, nor condemnation, nor death, nor misery.
2. When the eons have been finished, all these things will be gone, for, at the consummation, death will be abolished, sin repudiated and all reconciled in perfect harmony, love and bliss.
3. The eons (ages) present the time periods during which God effects His grand purpose.
4. Christ gives up the Kingdom to God as Father.
5. After the Eons God will be all in all (things). (1 Cor. 15:28).