

# In A Moment

## INAM-03 “DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH”

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### “THE DOCTRINE OF THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS”

**1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18** *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.* <sup>14</sup> *For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.*

<sup>15</sup> *For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.* <sup>16</sup> *For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.* <sup>17</sup> *Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

<sup>18</sup> *Therefore encourage one another with these words.*

Our course is a study of “THE DOCTRINE OF THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS” as presented, and supported by the **NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES**. I am using the Title, “In a Moment” (taken from **1 COR 15:51-52**) to convey the message of the promise of a **sudden, unannounced, sovereign** work of God by which Believers are **immediately transformed**, whether living or dead, and **taken from this earth** into the glorious presence of Heaven.

In this Lesson we will be observing how “*The Rapture*” fits with God’s eternal plan. These are called “*Dispensations*”. What are they, and what do they reveal about God’s Timeline? The teaching of **Dispensations**, although debated by some, is clearly supported by an overall observation of the Bible, and by direct presentation in Scripture. The truth revealed by studying these **Dispensations**, is vital for our knowledge of the overall plan of God.

What Do the Scriptures Reveal?

### It Is “A LAST HOUR”

“**A**” LAST HOUR VS “**THE**” LAST HOUR:

**1 JOHN 2:18** *Children, it is A LAST HOUR, and as you have heard that Antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore, we know that it is A LAST HOUR.*

The Apostle John was faced with a growing problem of “**Gnostic Heresy**” at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. Many were worried by this, as many of these “**False Teachers**” rose-up from within the “professing Christians”. One of their troubling “Heresies” was the proclamation that **Jesus’ Body was NOT real**... it only appeared to be real. John addressed this directly in **1 JOHN 4**

**1 JN 4:1-3** *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.* <sup>2</sup> *By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,* <sup>3</sup> *and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is NOT from God. THIS is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.*

- The “**Heresy**” centered around the “**person of Christ**” but especially the Incarnation: that Jesus was both God & Man: especially as to whether He had “**flesh**” at all... It was called “Gnosticism”
- This heresy arises from the inspiration of **Satan himself** [ **The Antichrist** ]
- It is presented and advanced by False Teachers who John refers to as “**antichrists**” They are under the influence of “**the spirit of [the] Antichrist**”

- In 1 JN 2:18 he uses THIS designation for the False Teachers of the day [ "... there are **many antichrists**" ]
  - The rise of these **"False Teachers"** IS a sign of the End of Days...
  - John says it is **"A Last Hour"** not **"THE Last Hour"** ...*It is a specific time within the Last Days ...*
  - The Greek structure is very direct... indicating that **it is NOT a specific hour** (or day)...
  - John **"knows"** it is **"A Last Hour"** because of these signs ... [ "... there are **many antichrists**" ]
  - BUT it is not **"THE Last Hour"** for **we have not been changed:**

1 JOHN 3:2-3 *Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that **when HE appears we shall be like HIM**, because we shall see HIM as HE is. <sup>3</sup> And everyone who thus hopes in HIM purifies himself as HE is pure.*

1 JOHN 2:28 *And now, little children, abide in HIM, so that **when HE appears we may have confidence** and not shrink from HIM in shame at HIS COMING.*
- There will be many **"Last Hours"** in these **"Last Days"** ... but they are not **THE LAST HOUR** ...
- ONE of these **"Hours"** we WILL BE **"THE Last Hour"** of **"THE Last Day"**
- **At that time** **"The Veil will be pulled aside..."** [Apokalupsis] and the **"Glory of The Lord's Coming will be SEEN!"**

## DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH:

One of the **"keys"** to understanding NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE, is the knowledge of **"DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH."** This knowledge helps Believers understand the difference between:

1. The **"Way"** God related to people in the **OLD TESTAMENT ERA:** *"Conscience; Government; Promise; The LAW"*
2. This is vastly different than the **"Way"** in which God relates to people during the **NEW TESTAMENT ERA:** *Grace; Justification by Faith; Believers and Non-believers; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit through New Birth; etc.*
3. Then again both of those differ from the **"Way"** in which God WILL deal with Humanity during the time of the **MILLENNIAL KINGDOM, the 1,000 year Reign of Christ on Earth.**

These differences are seen through an understanding of **"DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH."**

## DISPENSATION:

COL 1:25-26 *"... [His Body, The Church] of which I became a minister according to the **STEWARDSHIP** from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, <sup>26</sup> **the mystery hidden for ages and generations** but now revealed to his saints."*

EPH 3:1-2 *For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— <sup>2</sup> assuming that you have heard of **the STEWARDSHIP** of God's grace that was given to me for you, <sup>3</sup> **how the mystery was made known to me by revelation** (Apokalupsis), as I have written briefly.*

Vs 6 **This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.**

Vs 9-11 *"...and to bring to light for everyone what **is the PLAN of the mystery hidden for ages in God**, who created all things, <sup>10</sup> so that **through the Church** the **manifold wisdom of God might now be made known** to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup> This was according to the eternal purpose that He has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord*

**Dispensation** – “Oikonomia” – Lit: “The law of the house” – An established set of rules by which a thing is governed / a “Stewardship” given to someone – The Rules of the House... for an established period of time... These rules may be subject to a certain “period of time” or to a certain “group” within the house

- Through the “ages” of time, God has dealt with mankind in different ways for different periods of time... and for different “groups of people” within that given period of time.

**HEBREWS 1:1-2** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,<sup>2</sup> but in these LAST DAYS he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

- We live in a “different period of time / a different age” than the “ages” that have preceded us. And God is relating / speaking to us (**THE CHURCH**) in a different manner than He has before. These “different periods of time” are called: Dispensations / Stewardships and they demonstrate differences that are apparent in Scripture.
- These “**Rules of the House**” are clearly different as one proceeds through the Ages from Adam to the New Heaven and Earth. This is not “God trying something different” ... They are progressive changes that reveal “Humanity” is NOT capable to redeem itself.
  - They are the way by which God was “*guiding humanity*” to His predetermined goal...
  - Think of them as the way parents deal with their children as they pass from one age to another...
  - Each “*Dispensation*” had a principle whereby a person could declare their “hope in the Coming Messiah” to bring them “salvation”
- The Dispensations Lead to the “Death of the Messiah” [Jesus, God’s Only Son] on the Cross as the perfect redemption price for the forgiveness of man’s sin.
- The Dispensation of Grace (the Church Age) is a testimony to the change that is realized in the lives of those who have received the indwelling Spirit of God, through professing their faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## THE “7” DISPENSATIONS:

1. **THE DISPENSATION OF INNOCENCE:** From the Creation of Adam to “The Fall” – Man lived in Harmony with God through true and direct communion
2. **THE DISPENSATION OF CONSCIENCE:** From “The Fall” to Noah’s Departure from the Ark – The years of Adam’s descendants BEFORE the Flood – Humanity was to live by “the knowledge of good and evil” they had desired
3. **THE DISPENSATION OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT:** From Noah’s Departure from the Ark to the Call of Abraham – Noah’s Descendants AFTER the Flood – God gave humanity the responsibility to “govern themselves”
4. **THE DISPENSATION OF PROMISE** From “God’s Covenant with Abraham” until the “Giving of THE LAW” at Sinai – From The Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph... to the arrival at Sinai – “God’s Promise” was received by “faith” and fulfilled by testimony of living in the “Blessings of God” – Sacrifices were offered as a profession in the “Promised Seed” – God honored their “Faith in His Promise” – They were “Redeemed from Egypt’s Bondage” through “the promise God made to Abraham - Isaac - and Jacob” – **THE PASSOVER** was a celebration of God’s promise of deliverance from death... BEFORE it was a part of THE LAW...
5. **THE DISPENSATION OF THE LAW** – From the “Giving of THE LAW” to “The Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST” – Moses; The Priests; The Sacrifices; and the Prophets; The Age of the Kings; The Babylonian Captivity; and the Return... Everything changed at Sinai... MAN became directly responsible to live to the Holy Standard of God... **THE LAW** - This includes the rise of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the years of Jesus’ Birth; Life; and Death...

6. **THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE / THE CHURCH AGE:** From the “The Resurrection of Jesus Christ” until “**THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS**” – The Church Age introduced “**the most radical change**” in God’s relation to humanity –
- The CURSE OF THE FALL was removed by the Sacrifice of the “PERFECT LAMB” –
  - THE PROMISE was revealed in the PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST –
  - THE LAW was fulfilled and terminated in the Death of JESUS CHRIST –
  - GOD’S grace brought forth NEW BIRTH to those who by faith received Him –
  - The HOLY SPIRIT came to “dwell within” everyone who has been “BORN AGAIN” –
  - The “LIFE OF GOD; RIGHTEOUSNESS; HOLINESS; SONSHIP with JESUS CHRIST” was given to Believers and the promise of ETERNAL LIFE was realized...

**“THE TRIBULATION”** – “The “7 years” After the Rapture until the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of JESUS CHRIST. This is the fulfillment of the “7<sup>th</sup> week of Years” prophesied in DANIEL 9:24

This will include the “21” Judgments of God beginning with the 7 Seals... then the 7 Trumpets... then finally the 7 Bowls... the Fall of Babylon the Great; The Marriage Supper of THE LAMB; the great Battle of Armageddon; and The great TRIUMPH OF CHRIST at His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming

7. **THE DISPENSATION OF THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM OF CHRIST:** From The 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus Christ until the Great White Throne Judgement; This is “The 1,000 year Reign of Jesus Christ upon the Earth” – It will be ended with the Release of Satan from his chains – the great deception and rebellion – the Great Battle against God; the Defeat of Satan – Satan’s consignment to the Lake of Fire; The Judgment at the Great White Throne - and the Eternal damnation in the Lake of Fire (GEHENNA) of ALL who’s names are NOT in the Book of Life...

In every Dispensation there have been ways for “*whosoever will*” to express their faith in the Promised Messiah, and to receive “Salvation”

- Before the “CROSS” there was a Salvation of “Hope” in the fulfillment of a promised REDEEMER... SUBSTITUTE... SAVIOR... MESSIAH...
- During the CHURCH AGE it is “by Faith in the Grace of God” offered through the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ...
- During the TRIBULATION and MILLENNIUM, it will be by expressing Faith in the Glorified and Revealed Son of God... THE LAMB
- Those condemned to Eternal Hell (GEHENNA) will have NO offer of NOR opportunity to repent... believe... or receive forgiveness of sins...

\*\* **THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH:** - This is not truly a “dispensation” like the others... for there is “no realized time” following the **REVEALING OF THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH**...

# The End Times Chart

*"THE PRE-TRIBULATIONAL ... PRE-MILLENNIAL VIEWPOINT"*

