

Dispensation

The reason why we're looking at the subject of dispensationalism is because it's become a subject of controversy. And the reason why it's become a subject of controversy is because those people who have left the movement are accusing those of us who have remained of entering into a doctrinal belief which is termed dispensationalism. It comes from the word dispensation. We're going to look at what that means in a very basic fashion of what the actual accusation that's been leveled against us is. Before we start we want to review the study that was done previously about how the word itself is used in inspiration and what it actually means. So this is a study on the word dispensation. If we were to look in our Bibles we'll see that the word dispensation occurs four times in the scriptures. It's a word that's used by Paul exclusively and it's in three of his letters and the references are **1 Corinthians 9:17, Ephesians 1:10, and then Ephesians 3:2**, the last one is **Colossians 1:25**. We'll see how we progress with our study but we're not going to read those verses to see how the word itself is used except the first reference.

AA 81.4

1 Corinthians 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.

So it talks about even if we don't fully understand what the verse is teaching in its context it talks about the **dispensation of the gospel**. Just the rough understanding of what the word gospel means it's the good news that we can be saved. Another way to express that thought would be a new covenant relationship that we have or the law of God that's put in our hearts. That's what this dispensation of the gospel is referring to. We're not going to read Ephesians 3:2 but we're going to take one short statement from that, it talks about the dispensation of grace. Paul talks about the dispensation of the gospel and he talks about the dispensation of grace. Again, grace can be understood in a number of different ways, but it really revolves about the receiving of the Holy Spirit or the law that's placed into our hearts, the new hearts that God has promised to give to us. That's how the word itself is used in the scriptures, the word dispensation. We're going to come back to the word and we're going to see what that word actually means in the original language, in the original Greek. It's not used in the Old Testament but similar words are used in the Old Testament, but not this specific word. It's a compound word but we're going to come back to that. What we want to do is see how Ellen White uses this word dispensation.

Remember, the reason why we're looking at this is because those people who have left the movement are now stating that we have entered into apostasy because we're using a doctrinal concept called dispensationalism which we have borrowed or received from apostate Protestantism. And we're taking that idea from Protestantism and incorporating it into our belief system. So we just want to see how we're using the word, how apostate Protestants are using that word, and hopefully to demonstrate that the accusation is really a baseless accusation, it's force, to be crass about it it's just a lie. False information that we are now using this word dispensation in the same way that apostate Protestantism use it.

We're going to go through the Greek word itself and how it's constructed but first let's see how Ellen White uses this word. We're going to do this just in a really simple way. If we would go to the writings of Ellen White and just typed in the word dispensation we'll see that it comes up 246 times in her writings. She uses the word dispensation and then she uses also the word dispensations, it's the plural version of it. If you added them both together it would be 281 hits of that word. So she uses his word extensively. We're going to look at the word dispensation, we're not going to go through obviously all the references that she uses them in but we're just going take a few.

The first one we'll find is in Acts of the Apostles 81.4, the first time you're going to see the way she uses this word, dispensation. We're not going to read the entire paragraph so if you're following through you may miss where this is. We're going to go from the beginning of the sentence, *The record left by Peter and John is as heroic as any in the gospel dispensation*. So she refers to the same term that we read Paul uses here in 1st Corinthians 9:17 where he says the dispensation of the gospel, she says the gospel dispensation. So she uses the word dispensation the same way that Paul does and she speaks of the gospel dispensation.

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1 Corinthians 9:17

Ephesians 1:10

Ephesians 3:2

Colossians 1:25

This is in the book Acts of the Apostles she speaks about Peter and John. If we went to the beginning of the paragraph it says *In the history of prophets and apostles are many noble examples of loyalty to God. Christ Witnesses have endured imprisonment torture and death itself rather than break God's commandments. The record left by Peter and John is as heroic as any in the gospel dispensation. As they stood for the second time before the men who seemed bent on their destruction the fear of hesitation could be discerned in their words or attitude.*

AA 81.4

AA 230.2

Ph 1146.1

We want to see that it's really clear that a simple reading of this shows you that the term gospel dispensation is the period of time where the gospel is going to be given or the Christian Church is established. In simple terms you could call this the New Testament history. That's what this term gospel dispensation is used as in this particular context. It's talking about the time period when the Apostles were doing their ministry. If you go back to the beginning of paragraph it says, *'in the history of prophet and apostles and many nobles noble examples of loyalty to God'*. So she's talking about two different groups of people, hopefully we can see that, the prophets and the apostles, the distinction is being made there. I would argue that the prophets that she's referring to are the Old Testament messengers of God and the apostles are the new messengers from God, so she's going from the old to the new testament. Many histories of loyalty that can be seen in the scriptures old and new, and then she's going to make this term in the gospel dispensation two examples of that are Peter and John. We'll see most of the time that she uses the word dispensation, it's connected to either the gospel or grace, the same way that Paul uses it, and they're really talking about the same time period.

Next we'll look at Acts of the Apostles 230.2 and again we won't read from the beginning of the paragraph, *"they must exhort Christ as man's mediator in the heavenly sanctuary the one in whom all the sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation centered and through whose atoning sacrifice the transgressors of God's law may find peace and pardon"*. So all she's doing in this paragraph from Acts of the Apostles 230 is she's comparing the Old Testament with the new. She's comparing the earthly sanctuary with the heavenly sanctuary. They must exhort Christ as man's mediator in the heavenly sanctuary the one in whom all the sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation centered. That's the earthly sanctuary with the heavenly sanctuary, she doesn't call it the earthly sanctuary she calls it the Old Testament dispensation. We can see the way she's using the term here is very similar to the methodology that she used in this first one that we read, which she's going to compare and contrast two groups: the prophets and the apostles, both noble groups. Here two sanctuary systems, the heavenly sanctuary and the earthly sanctuary system which is called the sacrificial system. She uses the word sacrifice but she doesn't speak about sacrificial system or the earthly sanctuary, she says the Old Testament dispensation, if you look into this is in the bottom half of that paragraph. So she refers to the Old Testament as a dispensation.

Those are the beginning uses of the word. We'll go to some of the later ones now in her writings. This is taken from Pamphlet 1146.1, *"in the closing proclamation of the gospel when special work is to be done for classes of people hitherto neglected, God expects his messengers to take particular interest in the Jewish people whom they find in all parts of the earth"*. So the introductory thought for this paragraph is that there are particular groups in the world that have been neglected, the gospel has not been given to them for whatever reason. The one that she's specifically speaking about here is the Jewish people, they've been neglected and special attention needs to be paid to them in the closing scenes of this earth history. *"As the Old Testament Scriptures are blended with the New in an explanation of Jehovah's eternal purpose, this will be to many of the Jews as the dawn of a new creation, the resurrection of the soul"*. So as we teach them, the old and the New Testament, as we blend them together they will be able to see that Christ really is the Messiah, the Savior of the world because they already accept the old, all we need to do is blend the old and the new together. *"As they see the Christ of the gospel dispensation portrayed in the pages of the Old Testament Scriptures and perceive how clearly the New Testament explains the old they're slumbering faculties will be aroused and they will recognize Christ as a Savior of the world"*.

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1 Corinthians 9:17

Ephesians 1:10

Ephesians 3:2

Colossians 1:25

She uses the term gospel dispensation, the same term that Paul used, the one that we read before. But the way she now connects it, she says the *gospel dispensation of Christ portrayed in the New Testament can be seen portrayed also in the pages of the Old Testament Scriptures and they perceive how clearly the New Testament explains the old*. So even though she doesn't use the word dispensation for the old she's doing a back-to-back comparison of the old and the new, the new is the gospel dispensation and the old is a previous dispensation or in the context of this passage a Jewish dispensation.

AA 81.4

AA 230.2

Ph 1146.1

6 MR 324.1

10 MR 156.2

We'll go to 6 MR 324.1, "Nor does Paul proclaim to the Jews a Messiah whose work is to destroy the old dispensation, but a Messiah who came to develop the Jewish economy in accordance with the truth. {6MR 324.1} So this is an interesting passage and again we're not looking at the context but we'll just go to the beginning of the passage, "*Paul in his journeys combined home and foreign missions. Now he is preaching to the Jews in their own place of worship. Now he is preaching to the Gentiles before their own temple,*" so in the dispensation where Paul is giving the gospel he's going to the world and he's doing two things, he's combining home mission and foreign missions. He goes to the Jews in the synagogues and he also goes to the Gentiles in their temples. So he does this dual work and in the very presence of their gods, "*Nor does Paul proclaim to the Jews a Messiah whose work is to destroy the old dispensation, but a Messiah who came to develop the Jewish economy in accordance with the truth.*" The reason why this is an important and interesting passage is often Christians and perhaps even Adventists like ourselves think that the New Testament is actually there to destroy the Old Testament, to do away with it. People go to the book of Colossians chapter 2 and they talk about nailing all of those rules and regulations of Moses to the cross, they're no longer valid, in many ways they're a waste of time. There have been many discussions in Adventism about the law in the book of Galatians, you've probably familiar with that argument that raised in the church in the 1888 time period where some people would call the law in Galatians the ceremonial law and some would call it the moral law, and there was this argument that was going on. The reason these arguments happen is because there's this thought that the old has been replaced by the new. But we can see here that she's commenting on Paul's work and she says that that is not the case. He didn't come to destroy the old dispensation but what he came to do was to show them the Messiah who explained the old, not destroyed it, at least in the context that she's speaking of here. Then she says one more point, "*who came to develop the Jewish economy in accordance with the truth*" So there's this development of the Jewish economy and not a destruction of it that's how she wants to portray the work of Christ in this particular passage.

In another passage she will speak about the destruction of the Jewish economy, that Christ was the death nail to that economy where he creates a new one. But in this context she wants to call it a development of this old. So what we want us to get from this passage is when she speaks about the development, this is the progression. So if you were to develop something what does that word conjure up in your mind, the word development? It's dealing with the concept of improvement. When you develop something you improve it. It gets better or it gets clearer, it becomes more refined more useful.

Next, 10 MR 156.2 "*The Old Testament, containing the prophecies of the coming of Christ, is now made of small account. The cry now is, "The Christ, the Christ! The gospel, the gospel!"* So already we know that the gospel is not connected with the Old Testament. The gospel is the New Testament in comparison to the old, that's why Paul uses the dispensation of the gospel. "*But the gospel is taught all the way through the Bible*", so even though people talk about the distinction between the old and the new, we can see this thought is being developed from what we saw in 6 MR, where she says it's not a destruction of the old' but it's the perfection or a development of it. "*But the gospel is taught all the way through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The gospel is revealed in all the prophecies of the first advent of Christ as the Saviour of men. Every act of the old dispensation to turn men away from sin or to bring them forgiveness was done with reference to the Saviour who was to come.*" So the old dispensation is the dispensation before the Saviour had come. And in the context it's the Saviour's first advent. "*He was the steppingstone by which man was to be exalted.*"

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1 Corinthians 9:17
Ephesians 1:10
Ephesians 3:2
Colossians 1:25

Now we'll go to 156.3 *As Moses saw this steppingstone despised, and beheld the Jews, blinded by Satan, turning away from their only hope of salvation, and crying, "Away with Christ!" and as he heard the Christian world in the new dispensation crying, "Away with the Father! Away with the law!" he was filled with astonishment. Do men honor God by despising His law? {10MR 156.3}*

AA 81.4
AA 230.2
Ph 1146.1
6 MR 324.1
10 MR 156.2, 3
20 MR 150.2
21 MR 98.8

Again, without giving the context here we'll notice that as Moses saw Christ being despised and beheld the Jews or saw the Jews blinded by Satan turning away from Christ, how could Moses have seen that, he was dead? What the backdrop of this story is when Moses goes to the mountain and he's shown the promised land, he's not only just shown that land, he's actually shown the plan of salvation, that's the reference for the context of this when Moses sees all of these things that are happening. Not only in his own time period but in the first Advent when the Jews rejected Christ and also in the new dispensation when it says *away with the father way with the law*, and that new dispensation's time period in which we're living where basically God and the law, the Ten Commandments are being done away with. What we wanted to pick up there, she speaks about the old dispensation and the new dispensation. The old dispensation is the dispensation of the Jewish nation, and they don't want to let go of all of their baggage so they're going to reject Christ. Then she speaks about the problems in the new dispensation or the Christian dispensation.

20 MR 150.2 *John, the beloved disciple, was the one chosen to receive this revelation. He was the last survivor of the first chosen disciples. Under the New Testament dispensation he was honored as the prophet Daniel was honored under the Old Testament dispensation. {20MR 150.2}*

It's a straightforward passage, she's going to compare two people, you'll see that over and over again. She uses this technique of compare and contrast which is parable teaching, and now she's comparing two prophets John, which he doesn't call a prophet, she just says the beloved disciple, and she's going to compare him with Daniel. John is under the New Testament dispensation and Daniel was under the Old Testament dispensation and both of those people were honored by God.

21 MR 98.8 *Christ did not confine His labors to any special time or place. Often He taught in the outer court of the temple, that the Gentiles might hear Him. He entered the temple as a place that was His own, unawed by its splendor. In this temple, soon to be the tomb of a departed dispensation, He must proclaim the truth. He was the foundation of the Jewish economy. It was to Him that the sacrifices and offerings pointed. Soon the need for these sacrifices was to cease, for in His death type was to meet antitype. {21MR 98.8}*

Christ taught in many different places but he also taught in the temple. When he taught in that temple it was a magnificent building and Christ was a nobody, but he wasn't awed by entering into that placem he wasn't intimidated by the glory of that temple. And then she goes on to say this temple was then going to be the tomb or the sepulcher the coffin or the resting place of the departed dispensation. So the departing dispensation must mean a dead dispensation which is the dispensation of the Jewish nation or the Old Testament dispensation. So in this passage it's not a development of the dispensation, this is the death of one and the rising of a new.

These are some nice quotes about a general usage of how Ellen White uses the word dispensation. You can see it's benign and it's familiar to each of us of how we would have understood it. It's nothing new, nothing unusual.

Next we'll connect the word dispensation with another word that Ellen White uses. so all of this is dispensation and now I want to go through

Dispensation = Age

1 Corinthians 9:17
Ephesians 1:10
Ephesians 3:2
Colossians 1:25

All of this is dispensation and now we'll go through a few quotes and tie two words together: dispensation and age. What we're going to see is that these become interchangeable terms so dispensation equals age. So if dispensation equals age, this is an example of a term or methodology that we use that's called repeat and enlarge. So we're saying the same thing but we're going to just explain it the second time with a different word or in a different way. So we could say dispensation dispensation, which would just be a repeat but we're going to change the word dispensation and turn it into age. So if we're going to see dispensation equals age and hopefully you'll see that in these passages, this is a technique of repeat and enlarge. If you're familiar with William Miller's rules and you've seen a study or a presentation on this subject before, what rule would this be? This would be rule number five. What you're doing is allowing inspiration to define itself. We're not going to go to an external source such as Strong or Thayer or Webster or a secular dictionary to understand what the word dispensation would mean. Inspiration is already going to tell us it means age. That's a trivial example but it's useful just to see it because this is going to be used as a stepping stone to show us that we've been using this concept of dispensation many many times, for years in our movement even though we may not have used the term itself. Even though Ellen White might not use it she refers to the concept of dispensation but she may use other words. And the one that we're going to look at is the word age.

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GC 324.3 The prophecy which seemed most clearly to reveal the time of the second advent was that of Daniel 8:14: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Following his rule of making Scripture its own interpreter, Miller learned that a day in symbolic prophecy represents a year (Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6); he saw that the period of 2300 prophetic days, or literal years, would extend far beyond the close of the Jewish dispensation, hence it could not refer to the sanctuary of that dispensation.

So the Jewish dispensation and the earthly sanctuary dispensation are interchangeable terms, which we referred to in one of these early references which was about the sacrifices and Christ's heavenly ministry. The Jewish dispensation is going to be compared to the sanctuary dispensation, that's the earthly sanctuary dispensation. Hopefully it's clear what the point that is being made here, 2300 days takes you past the first Advent and therefore the Sanctuary that is going to be cleansed in Daniel 8:14 cannot be referring to the earthly sanctuary because it doesn't exist, that's the only point that's being made here. That is being referred to as the Jewish dispensation. *Miller accepted the generally received view that in the Christian age the earth is the sanctuary, and he therefore understood that the cleansing of the sanctuary foretold in Daniel 8:14 represented the purification of the earth by fire at the second coming of Christ.*

Hopefully, we can see what she did, we'll reread it but she's going to compare two time periods, the Jewish time period which he says is the Jewish dispensation, and then she speaks about the Christian time period, but she doesn't call it dispensation, she calls it age. ...*he saw that the period of 2300 prophetic days, or literal years, would extend far beyond the close of the Jewish dispensation, hence it could not refer to the sanctuary of that dispensation. Miller accepted the generally received view that in the Christian age the earth is the sanctuary, and he therefore understood that the cleansing of the sanctuary foretold in Daniel 8:14 represented the purification of the earth by fire at the second coming of Christ.*

We've got the Jewish dispensation which is the sanctuary dispensation or the Jewish sanctuary dispensation, that's the old one and then there's another one which is the Christian age and in this dispensation or this age the earth is considered the sanctuary.

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If we can see what she's doing comparing two different time periods, the Jewish time period and the Christian time period, you know that the way she's using the word dispensation is the same way that she's using age, Jewish dispensation Christian age. Hopefully we can agree that dispensation equals age, she's just chosen to use the word age for Christianity, the Christian time period as opposed to using the word dispensation.

By this brightness God designed to impress upon Israel the sacred, exalted character of His law, and the glory of the gospel revealed through Christ. While Moses was in the mount, God presented to him, not only the tables of the law, but also the plan of salvation. He saw that the sacrifice of Christ was pre-figured by all the types and symbols of the Jewish age; and it was the heavenly light streaming from Calvary, no less than the glory of the law of God, that shed such a radiance upon the face of Moses. That divine illumination symbolized the glory of the dispensation of which Moses was the visible mediator, a representative of the one true Intercessor. {PP 330.2}

We'll summarize what she says, Moses is on Mount Sinai collecting the law from God, the tables of stone. And he's not only going to get the Ten Commandments from God, he's also going to be instructed or shown the plan of salvation. He gets two things, he gets the law and he gets the plan of salvation. Then what he's shown when he's talking about the plan of salvation, then it's not only the sacrifice of Christ the Messiah, but also the sacrificial system. There are a number of layers here, we've got the plan of salvation which is in two steps, she gives it back to front, she says the sacrifice of Christ prefigured the types and symbols. So we've got the symbols, we could just say a lamb, there are more than that, and Christ. That's the plan of salvation, that's one thing that he's shown. He's also shown the law. The symbols or the types, they were the Jewish age. And it was the heavenly light streaming from Calvary, no less than the glory of the law of God that shed such a radiance upon the face of Moses. So when he comes down you know that his face his shining with the glory of God and he has to veil himself, it's not just the ten commandments that's doing that, it's also the sacrifice of Calvary. That light that he sees revealed to him is also what produces this reflected glory from his face, so it's the law of God and the light of Calvary that causes this experience for Moses.

That divine illumination symbolized the glory of the dispensation of which Moses was the visible mediator a representative of the one true intercessor.

So she says that the divine illumination was a symbol of the glory of the dispensation of which Moses was the visible mediator. So there's the dispensation where Moses is the leader and that dispensation is the Jewish dispensation or the dispensation where the priesthood of Aaron is now going to begin to do its work, it's the beginning of the Jewish dispensation if we can say it that way. And we've seen numerous studies, the studies that Sister Tess has done which talks about the Alpha and the Omega the beginning and the end of ancient Israel. Beginning with Moses, ending with Christ, that would here be called the dispensation of which Moses was the visible mediator, that dispensation was the Jewish age. So she refers to the Jewish age and she refers to the dispensation of Moses or the visible leadership that he has. She's connecting the word dispensation with age, she's using them synonymously.

RH, January 4, 1881 par. 6 *Many regard these demands upon the Jews as far above the possible standard of duty required of us. But there are the grounds for this conclusion? Are our advantages inferior to those of the Jews? or has God been less than beneficent with us than with them?*

We're going to see that she's talking about two groups of people. Let's look again the sentence and just pick out the phrase to see the 'Jews' 'us' of the first sentence. Third sentence, *are our advantages inferior to those of the Jews.* So

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Ephesians 3:2
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Or has God been less beneficent with us than with them? So she's comparing us with the Jews, we can see that in the first four sentences. *We hear ministers in the various churches extolling the blessings of the Gospel, and representing the glory of this age as exceeding in every respect that of the Jewish age.*

So there's this age and the Jewish age. *They call the mosaic dispensation one of darkness and exhort the present age as a far greater light and privilege. If this is so, will not God hold us accountable for these increased blessings? Just in proportion to the gifts bestowed will he will be his claims upon us? Are the cause of beneficence less numerous now than they were in the Jewish age? It should be the reverse.*

She's going to compare two groups of people, the Jews and us. The Jewish dispensation the Christian dispensation and she's going to use it in this way, she speaks of this age, the Jewish age, the mosaic dispensation, the present age, now, and the Jewish age. Over and over again she's just going to be referring to the word dispensation as an age as we compares. Over and over again to see her right ease into this compare and contrast technique.

RH Mar. 2, 1886 4 *As time has rolled on from creation and the cross of Calvary, as prophecy has been and is still fulfilling, light and knowledge have greatly increased. But it does not become believers in God or the Bible to pour contempt on the age that has led step by step to the present. In the life and death of Christ, a light flashes back upon the past, giving significance to the whole Jewish economy, and making of the old and the new dispensations a complete whole.*

Again, she's going to use this word the age of the past, *but it does not become believers in God or the Bible to pour contempt on the age that has led step-by-step to the present*, so there's the old age then the present, the past and then she speaks about the old and the new dispensations. So she's going to pick up the word present, past, the old dispensation, a new dispensation and the word the old age. Again she uses this concept here of step by step, so there's this progression and we need to see that sometimes it's going to be the death of the old and the life of the new, and sometimes it's progressive all the way through.

The same article paragraph 12. *While we rejoice today that our Saviour has come, that the sacrifices of the former dispensation have given place to the perfect offering for sin, we are not excusable in showing contempt for that period. Those who make slurring remarks concerning the old Jewish age, show that they are ignorant of the Scriptures, and of the power of God. Amid the moral darkness of the idolatrous nations of that time are seen burning traces of the great I AM. His goings forth stand registered in the pages of Bible history. What is now needed is divine enlightenment, and a more intelligent knowledge of the wonderful dealings of God with his people anciently.*

We want to pick up some words and phrases, she uses the word today, our Savior has come, the former dispensation, that period, the old Jewish age, that time Bible history, now in anciently.

There are a number of more references where she continues to use this idea of interchanging the word dispensation and age.

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Next, we'll look at RH January the 18th 1906 5 We've seen so far that she speaks about the old and the New Testament or the old dispensation and the new dispensation. We want to see here that she's going to develop these thoughts lightly now.

How striking is the contrast between Solomon's ambitious desire to exalt himself, and the life that the Son of God lived upon this earth!

She's going to compare two people Solomon in his luxury and Christ in his simplicity. Solomon had ambitions to exalt himself and Christ is complete opposite of that.

The Saviour of mankind was born of humble parentage in a sin-cursed, wicked world. He was brought up in obscurity at Nazareth, a small town of Galilee. He began his work in poverty and without worldly rank. He sought not the admiration or the applause of the world. He dwelt among the lowly. To all appearance he was merely a humble man, with few friends. Thus God introduced the gospel ...when it says thus god she's going to compare Christ's method of ministry with the present we'll see how he's going to do that.

Thus God introduced the gospel in a way altogether different from the way in which many deem it wise to proclaim the same gospel in this age. At the very beginning of the gospel dispensation he taught his church to rely, not on worldly rank and splendor, but on the power of faith and obedience. {

If we put that all together Solomon is exalting himself, Christ is not. She compares those two stories. Christ is humble and simple Solomon is the complete opposite of that. The point that she wants to make is that God introduced the gospel in a way that is altogether different to the way in which people think the gospel should be given today in this age. She's going to say the same gospel in this age.

Let's draw that out, what she's doing. She's got Solomon here and she's got Christ and Solomon is full of self and Christ is selfless. Solomon is rich and Christ is poor. Then she says thus God introduced the gospel in a way altogether different from the way in which

Solomon	†	Intro.	This age
Self	Selfless	Gospel	Gospel
Rich	Poor	Not worldly	Worldly
bad	good	good	bad

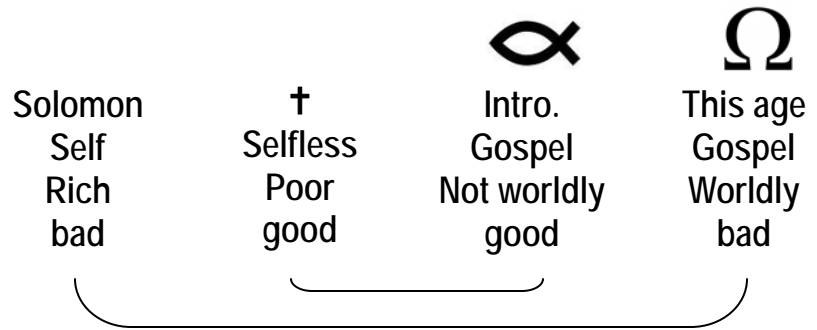
many deem it wise to proclaim the same gospel in this age. So how did God introduce the gospel? Now she's going to speak about the gospel, hopefully we can see it, the gospel is going to be given in how many steps? Two steps, we can see that. The introduction of the gospel and the giving of the gospel in this age, so the gospel is given in two steps - this is the introduction and what does she call it here? This age. So there's a distinction between the age that she's dealing with in the present and the introduction of the gospel, hopefully we can see that. Thus God introduce the gospel in a way altogether different from.... (We'll say from the present) At the very beginning of the gospel dispensation he taught his church to rely not on worldly rank and spender from the power of faith and obedience.

We're going to put 'not worldly'. God told us that the gospel at it's introduction at the very beginning wasn't meant to be based upon worldly principles. When she was comparing Solomon and Christ, bad and good, why is she doing that? Because she wants to compare how the gospel is going to be given, when it was first given it was not worldly which means it was good and therefore how is the gospel being proposed to be given by the people in this present age? By worldly means. We've gone from bad to good to then good to bad. If you've seen presentations on parable teaching before you can see there's the mirror that's being given here and you can see how she's comparing these two different stories, we call that a mirror effect or a chiasm. so we can see that really nicely here.

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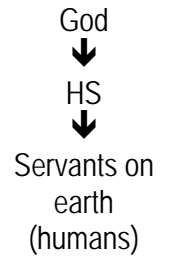
Gospel Dispensation

The point that I want us to pick up is all of this she's told us what it, is she says 'at the very beginning of the gospel dispensation'. All of this is the gospel dispensation, but she's going to split it into two parts, she's going to split it at the beginning of the dispensation and then it would be the end, which in the sentence before she says the same gospel in this age. She's going to use the idea of Alpha and Omega the same way that we use it. We



picked it up all from inspiration, all this methodology is buried in inspiration, it's easy to see. So she's going to compare how it should be done then and how it's going to be done now. All of this is this single dispensation but what I want us to see is what she calls in the Omega or at the end she uses the phrase 'this age' here it is, this age. This is the last part of the gospel dispensation and this was the first part of the gospel dispensation which she says the 'very beginning' or the introduction 'does God introduce the gospel'. So this was the introduction of the gospel and this is 'this age' so what we need to see is the dispensation and this age being used interchangeably. But even in the New Testament dispensation or the gospel dispensation or the dispensation of grace, even within that you have subsections. You have the introduction part and what she calls 'this age' part or the present part. So even in the gospel dispensation it's not just a uniform singular time period, that too can be broken down into parts. Hopefully we can see that, there's many things to see in this passage but the point I want us to see is not only you have an Old Testament and the new, but even in the new, the new dispensation, it can be broken down into parts. So when we speak about an Alpha and Omega, it's not a concept that we've just made up, it's right here, this is just one example of how Ellen White would use the same concept that we use over and

Dispensation	1 Corinthians 9:17 Ephesians 1:10 Ephesians 3:2 Colossians 1:25 AA 81.4 AA 230.2 Ph 1146.1 6 MR 324.1 10 MR 156.2, 3 20 MR 150.2 21 MR 98.8	over again. There are a few more passages but we've seen five witnesses here for dispensation and age. Let's go to Great Controversy page 343.1 and this is going to pick up the word 'age'. If you're familiar with this type of methodology, this is what we would call proof texting. You're going from one word (dispensation) and take that word and you connect it to another word (dispensation = age) and then once you can make that connection you can take the connected word (age) and see how that's being used in another passage. Then you can take the original word and you could substitute that in this particular passage. The reason why that becomes significant is obviously as you see when we read.	
Dispensation = Age	GC 324.3 PP 330.2 RH Jan. 4, 1881 6 RH Mar. 2, 1886 4 RH Mar. 2, 1886 12 RH Jan 18, 1906 5	<i>The work of God in the earth presents, from age to age, a striking similarity in every great reformation or religious movement. The principles of God's dealing with men are ever the same. The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past, and the experience of the church in former ages has lessons of great value for our own time.</i>	
Age	GC 343.1	The reason why this passage is of importance to us is not the first paragraph that we read but the second one but we but our reference point is paragraph 1. We're here to see paragraph 1 but the reason contextually why this is such an important passage is as shown here it says, <i>no truth is more clearly taught in the Bible than that God by his Holy Spirit especially directs his servants on earth in the great movements for the carrying forward of the work of salvation.</i>	God ↓ HS ↓ Servants on earth (humans)



So God directs his Holy Spirit directs human beings here on earth. And she says there *is no truth that's more clearly taught in the Bible than this truth*. This truth is the most important truth that's brought to view in the Bible, the most clearly taught principle or idea. No truth is more clearly taught that whatever God does, he's going to do it through servants on earth via the Holy Spirit. The reason why this is important, again this has happened for many years, but it has the particular relevance today because we are now being accused of following human beings as opposed to following God. It's an accusation that's being leveled in a really ugly way, this idea that people like yourselves are following human beings like Parminder, whereas the people who follow FFA are not following a human being but they're following Christ or God. So there's this distinction that's made between those who follow that ministry are following God directly and those of us who are in the movement who have remained here faithful and true are actually following human beings. But this statement clearly teaches us that the most important truth that's clearly understood in scriptures is that God will direct the work here on earth through human agents.

In connection with that, go back to the first paragraph, it says

The work of God in the earth presents, from age to age, a striking similarity in every great reformation or religious movement. The principles of God's dealing with men are ever the same. The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past, and the experience of the church in former ages has lessons of great value for our own time.

So again there are a number of points to pick up from paragraph one, the one that we would always make when we came to this passage was this idea that there's a *striking similarity in every great Reformation or religious movement*. So a Reformation is a religious movement which is why we call the lines that we produce reformed lines. They're called reformed lines because they're religious movements. Again we've been accused that we're no longer religious movement, that

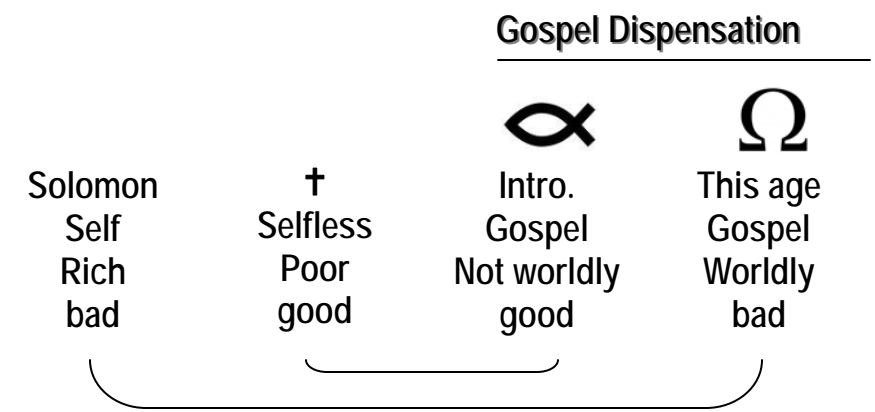
we're a political movement and again that's a baseless accusation. The next sentence *The principles of God's dealing with men are ever the same. The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past*. We'll pick up the word *parallel* in connection with the word *parable*, *the experience of the church in the former ages has less than a great value for our own time. Let's count our way through that, striking similarity in every great movement, principle of God's dealing with men are always the same*, she's repeated herself, *the important movements on the present have their parallel in the past* a third time, *the experience of the church today is the same as that in the path* fourth time. So she's going to repeat herself four times in this first paragraph, over and over again four times, *striking similarity, ever the same, parallel, and the former ages*. We see four, this idea of repeating, but the initial thought says *the work of God in the earth represents from age to age*, so we've already seen how Ellen White uses age in dispensation interchangeably.

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 - 6 MR 324.1
 - 10 MR 156.2, 3
 - 20 MR 150.2
 - 21 MR 98.8

- Dispensation = Age
- GC 324.3
 - PP 330.2
 - RH Jan. 4, 1881 6
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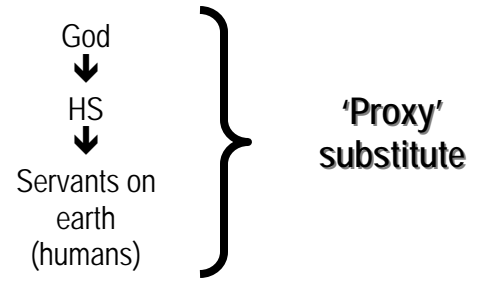
- Age
- GC 343.1

What I want to say is that when it says *the work of God in the earth presents from age to age*, we could also use the idea, the word, *the work of God in the earth presents from one dispensation to another dispensation a striking similarity*.



Parminder Biant

If you go through all of these passages that we read about what the dispensation looks like you see two concepts. One is a replacement of the old with the new and the second idea is this one of development - we saw two ideas **a replacement and a progression**. And both of those ideas are exactly what we use when we talk about our present truth message. We call it progression and repeat and enlarge. So if you've heard the terms progression and repeat enlarge which you all have, it's that same concept that's being replaced by the new, that's repeat and enlarge. Progression means that Christ doesn't come and destroy the Old Testament economy, it's a revelation or a development or a progression from the old to the new. We see both concepts in the usage of the word dispensation as Ellen White will use it, she then connects the word dispensation with age and now we've got these first two paragraphs from Great Controversy, two key paragraphs. One of them says that everything that God does here on earth which is the message of salvation is all done through human beings. What we would call this today would be called a proxy which means a substitute. So if you've heard proxy wars or you've heard people using the word proxy you're not familiar with what that meant, that just means a substitute. God could have done the work himself here on earth but he hasn't, he's chosen to do it through substitutes and we might call them ambassadors, human beings who do his bidding, people who work for him. This is a proxy scenario, it's a substitute, we are taking the place of God and that's why there's this huge discussion in not only in our movement now but in the separation that has occurred, is who are you following, are you following human beings or are you following God? And if we were to stick to the truth, the one that's most clearly pointed out, is if you want to obey God you have to do it through his chosen servants, the ones that he uses to direct the work here on earth.



used here: the old will be replaced by the new, that's repeat and enlarge. Progression means that Christ doesn't come and destroy the Old Testament economy, it's a revelation or a development or a progression from the old to the new. We see both concepts in the usage of the word dispensation as Ellen White will use it, she then connects the word dispensation with age and now we've got these first two paragraphs from Great Controversy, two key paragraphs. One of them says that everything that God does here on earth which is the message of salvation is all done through human beings. What we would call this today would be called a proxy which means a substitute. So if you've heard proxy wars or you've heard people using the word proxy you're not familiar with what that meant, that just means a substitute. God could have done the work himself here on earth but he hasn't, he's chosen to do it through substitutes and we might call them ambassadors, human beings who do his bidding, people who work for him. This is a proxy scenario, it's a substitute, we are taking the place of God and that's why there's this huge discussion in not only in our movement now but in the separation that has occurred, is who are you following, are you following human beings or are you following God? And if we were to stick to the truth, the one that's most clearly pointed out, is if you want to obey God you have to do it through his chosen servants, the ones that he uses to direct the work here on earth.

All of this is in the context of these repeating stories or these repeating patterns. We saw four ways of expressing that in paragraph one and she says it all in the context that the work of God from one age to another age or one dispensation to another dispensation is always the same. This is how Ellen White is using this concept of dispensation. It's the same concept of age to age, and we haven't changed any of that. We'll continue this in the next presentation.

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