–Save This Page as a PDF–

# Week 5: The Dispensation of Civil Government Genesis 8:14 to 11:32

The third dispensation is called the Dispensation of Civil, or human, Government. It is called that because it is with this particular dispensation that man is given the right of life or death. He is given the authority to rule others. The concept of ruling and having power to execute or not to execute contains within it the concepts of human government. The principle is **whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of man God made man (9:6).** Therefore, **man** is given the authority to execute the murderer, and this carries with it the concept of rule, authority and government.

There are seven dispensations described in the Bible: (1) the Dispensation of Innocence or Freedom **(Genesis 1:28** to **3:5)**; (2) the Dispensation of Conscience or Self-Determination **(Genesis 3:6** to **8:14)**, (3) the Dispensation of Civil Government **(Genesis 8:15** to **11:32)**, (4) the Dispensation of Promise or Patriarchal Rule **(Genesis 12:1** to **Exodus 18:27)**, (5) the Dispensation of Torah **(Exodus 19:1** to **Acts 1:26)**, (6) the Dispensation of Grace **(Acts 2:1** to **Revelation 19:21)**, and (7) the Dispensation of the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom **(Isaiah 4:2-6, 11:1** to **12:6, 54:11-17, 60:1-22).**

The chief ***person*** in this dispensation is Noah. He received new specific divine revelation that told him exactly how this dispensation would be run.

Mankind's ***responsibility*** was to obey the Covenant, or agreement with Noah.

The ***test*** during that dispensation was to rule properly, but they were not to unite under one government, and they were to disperse over all the earth.

But then came the ***failure***. Man tried to unify, using the Tower of Babel as its center. It was both literal and symbolic. Literally, the Tower of Babel was an attempt to build a high tower for the purpose of studying the stars. They wanted to try to reach into the heavens, not to study astronomy, but to study astrology. In reality, they wanted to replace **the LORD** as the creator and center of the universe and put

themselves in **His** place. They did not believe in the worship of one **God**, so they started worshiping many gods, which is polytheism. That was the physical purpose of the Tower of Babel. The symbolic purpose was to deliberately disobey the command to spread all over the world. The purpose of the Tower of Babel was to serve as a center of attraction, to keep humanity together so that they would not spread out and lose contact with each other. They wanted to build an empire. Nimrod was an empire builder and he was going to be at the center of it, not **ADONAI.**

As a result of the failure came the ***judgment***, which was the confusion of tongues. Because of their rebellion against **God** and **His** authority, **He** confused their language. Their common language kept them together. Japanese tend to live around other Japanese people because they can communicate. It tends to make a country cohesive. With the lack of a common language there is turmoil, confusion, conflict and possibly war. By causing the confusion of language, **the LORD** forced a separation. Groups of people found others who could speak the same language and they moved to another part of the world to separate themselves from those they could not understand. Thus **God** accomplished **His** original desire in the Covenant with Noah.

***Grace*** was displayed in the way **ADONAI** preserved **His** remnant. The specific remnant that **God** preserved is listed after the Tower of Babel incident. **Chapter 11** traces the genealogy of Noah and Shem all the way down to Abraham, with whom **the LORD** will begin His next dispensation. So **Elohim** did preserve a remnant who will be the followers of the One true **God** during this dispensation. The promise **He** made about the **seed of the woman (3:15)**, continued to be preserved in spite of the Flood and the Tower of Babel. **God** preserved the unique **seed** line through which the promise of **Messiah** would be fulfilled.