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Week 5: The Dispensation of Promise Genesis 12:1 to Exodus 18:27

The fourth dispensation is given two names: the Dispensation of Promise or the Dispensation of Patriarchal Rule. The first name emphasizes that **God** was revealing **Himself** by making a specific series of promises. This dispensation gets its name from four B'rit Chadashah passages: **Romans 4:1-26, Galatians 3:15-19. Hebrews 6:13-15** and **11:9.** All four passages emphasize a promise to **Abraham**. The second name emphasizes the fact that **the LORD** is ruling by means of **His** patriarchs, primarily **Abraham**, **Isaac**, **Jacob**, and **Joseph**.

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 **Abraham**. **He** stands as the head of this new age and **he** was given new divine revelation that became the basis of a new dispensation.

Mankind's ***responsibility*** was to believe in the promises of **God**. Although they may not be seen now, they were to believe in, trust in, and have faith in **His** promises. **Abraham**, of course, is our example. We are told in **15:6** that **Abram** believed **the LORD**, **he** had faith in the promises of **ADONAI**, and it was **credited to him as righteousness**.

The ***test*** during that dispensation was to stay in the Land that **God** had brought them.

The ***failure*** is seen in the tendency to leave the Land. For example, **Abraham** left

the land in **Genesis 12** and got himself into trouble. Later **Jacob** also left the Land and got his descendants into trouble. **Isaac** was contemplating leaving the Land in **Genesis 26** when **God** warned him against doing so. Failure was also seen on the part of the Israelites because of their consistent tendency to leave the land. The brothers of **Joseph** sold him to someone who would make him a slave in Egypt.

Ultimately the ***judgment*** for their failure to stay in the land was slavery in Egypt.

Grace was seen in the fact that the nation of Isra'el was preserved whether they were in the land or outside of the land. **God** continued to guard **the Seed of the Woman** (see my commentary on **Genesis, to see link click Be – He Will Crush Your Head, and You Will Strike His Heel**), who would come through **Abraham**, **Isaac**, and **Jacob**.