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C0439 -- October 6, 2004 -- Ephesians 2:17-22-- Dispensations

Let's review last week's progression in Paul's argument. Review is critical. We learn by repetition. This is what we call training. The book of Proverbs calls this intense instruction *muwcar* (Prov. 1:7, 8); *muwcar* requires repetitious training. Most people don't like training because it hurts and it takes hard work. You've got to go over it and over it and over it. You've got to hammer it into your mentality. If you don't you just turn into a passive, reactionary Christian. When trouble starts you fall apart. You don't know how to respond properly to life's problems. So, we need training and training requires repetition of Bible doctrine. If you don't have the doctrine in place *ahead of time* then you'll crumble under the pressures of life in the *present time*. This is why the military trains men to the point of boredom. They go over and over and over the drills day after day after day. But the officers know the advantages of repetitious training. They know that when their boys hit the field of battle, they will naturally respond the way they were trained. That's what we're after in the Christian life. You train and train and train so that when the problems hit your natural response is DVP. What often happens in war when a soldier fooled around during his training? He gets hurt or killed because he went into an emotional response pattern. I want to train you not to respond emotionally to life's problems. Some of you say, "Well, I'm just an emotional person, that's just who I am." No, the word of God says you can and you should control your emotions. You can train yourself to control your emotions. If you don't learn to control your emotions, they will overwhelm you and once you've fallen into that trap then you can't make objective decisions, everything starts falling apart around you. That's why training by repetition of Bible doctrine is so important. That's why most Christians don't like the kind of teaching I'm doing here. They love emotionalism and entertainment because they love to be fleshly, it feels good and they get all tingly. I teach objectively and verse by verse and I emphasize that this is absolute truth. I refuse to give you a 15-minute feel good sermonette for Christianette's, as Dr. Howard Hendricks used to say. Sermonettes never helped any Christian live the Christian life. What helps is knowing objective truth. That's the only thing that matters. But most Christians would walk out after a Wednesday night here saying, "what did that have to do with my life? You didn't

give me anything practical.” Oh bologna. These kinds of Christians want an instant solution to every problem. They want to feel good when they leave church. All I can say to those types of Christians is that I’m sorry they’ve become so much a part of this TV dinner culture that that’s how you feel, but that’s not what you need. You need Bible doctrine, Bible doctrine. And you may not see the immediate application but it’s required that you know it. I guarantee you if you learn what we’re teaching here in an objective way it will greatly benefit your Christian life. It’s solid meat that grows strong muscles and bones whether you like it or not. And that is what a Christian needs to make it through the Christian life, to be a tough hard as nails Christian instead of a passive, puny believer. And so, that’s why I review so much. It’s important and there’s no way you can get it just listening to it once.

Last week we looked at Ephesians 2:14-16, Paul’s Assertion of Peace. ***For He Himself is our peace***, introduces Paul’s explanation of verses 11-13. Jesus Christ is peace Himself. What did Jesus Christ do? He ***made both groups into one***. What two groups is Paul talking about? He’s talking about believing Jews and believing Gentiles. How did Jesus Christ make these two groups into one new group? He ***broke down the barrier of the dividing wall***. The barrier of the dividing wall was the Mosaic Law misinterpreted. How did Jesus Christ break down the Mosaic Law? Did He destroy it? No. He did not come to destroy it but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17). How then did He break it down if not by destruction? verse 15, ***by abolishing in His flesh the enmity***. See, the Mosaic Law became a barrier between Jews and Gentiles because it was misinterpreted by Judaism. The Law was good when used lawfully and was meant to be a witness device, a witness of the God of Israel to the surrounding Gentile nations. But Judaism misinterpreted the Mosaic Law and when they did this it created enmity between Jews and Gentiles. So, Jesus Christ destroyed the enmity in His flesh, that is on the cross. He did this by fulfilling the Law in His life and therefore rendering it inoperative. The Mosaic Law, wrongly interpreted could therefore no longer be the source of enmity between Jews and Gentiles. It was ***the Law of commandments contained in dogma/ordinances*** that caused the enmity, not the Mosaic Law rightly understood. Paul tells us that the Law is good when used lawfully, but when used unlawfully it causes enmity. Why did Christ do this? Why did He destroy the enmity by rendering the Mosaic Law inoperative? ***so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man***. He did this not to make believing Gentiles become Jews or believing Jews become Gentiles but to make out of believing Jews and Gentiles ***one new man***, one new humanity. We discovered last week through a series of verses that this was the Church, the body of Christ. This new man is not Jew or Gentile but a new race that is raceless! What was the result? There are two: first, it ***established peace***, Jesus Christ is peace Himself and He established peace between the two groups (of believers only) at the cross. Second, he

reconciled them both in one body to God. The two groups have now been reconciled in one body to God. The emphasis throughout the passage is one new group formed from two groups. To whom have they been reconciled? To God. By what means were they reconciled? *through the cross.* There is one way of reconciliation to God. There is one way of salvation. No one, Jew or Gentile, is saved by any other path. There are not many paths to God. All must go through the cross. Why? Because only the cross *put to death the enmity.* Man is at enmity with God and therefore it's God's prescribed means by which that enmity can be changed into peace and that prescribed means is through the cross. The cross of Christ put to death that enmity for the Jew and Gentile who believes in Christ. This is not reconciliation for all men to God nor does it remove the enmity for Jews and Gentiles in general. It only reconciles believing Jews and Gentiles to God and those believing Jews and Gentiles to one another. Anyone who tries to carry over any part of the Mosaic Law beyond the death of Christ is asking for trouble. This merely continues to cause hostility between Jews and Gentiles (e.g., Covenant Theology, moral laws, Roman Catholicism, moral laws, both create hostility between Jews and Gentiles and do not see a special place in God's plan for Israel, they say believers today are the 'new Israel' or 'spiritual Israel'). Unfortunately for them, the Bible does not say this. The best they have is Galatians 6:16 but that text is not saying that the church is the 'Israel of God' but that the Jewish aspect of the church is the 'Israel of God'. Paul had just got done chiding some Jewish believers so he wanted to assure them in particular that God's mercy and peace was still upon them. Today let's finish verses 17-18 and then we'll look at Dispensationalism a little bit.

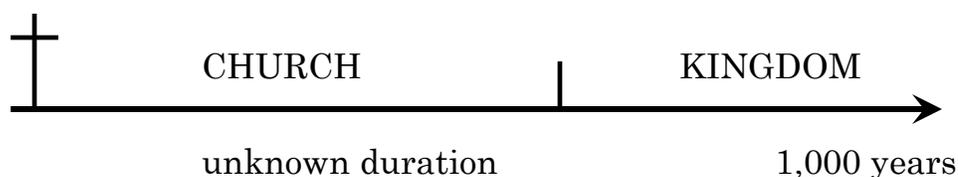
b. Announcement of Peace (2:17-18)

In verses 17-18 Paul announces the peace that believing Jews and Gentiles have with one another and with God because of the cross of Christ. By this we both now have access to God through one and the same Spirit.

(1) Content of the Message: Peace (2:17)

Verse 17 is a loose allusion to Isa. 57:19 (signified by all caps in some translations). In Isa. 57:19, Isaiah is prophesying that God will heal, lead, and comfort Israel despite her idolatry and unjust gain. God will do this because of His unconditional promises in the Abrahamic Covenant. This will take place at the 2nd Coming of Christ. It is at the 2nd Coming that God will heal Israel, lead Israel, comfort Israel and create the praise that comes from Israel's lips. And the context indicates that it is during the Messianic Kingdom that peace will come to those who are far off (i.e., Jews of the dispersion) and to those who are near (i.e., Jews already in the land). In Ephesians 2:17 Paul is not saying that Isaiah 57:19 is fulfilled now.

The Church is not the Messianic Kingdom in any sense. Isaiah 57:19 has not been fulfilled in any sense and will not be fulfilled until the 2nd Coming of Christ. But Paul is making an application of Isaiah 57:19 to the Church Age. We call this Literal Prophecy + Application. In other words, there is a point of similarity between the Messianic Kingdom and the Church Age; namely, there is a present preaching of peace to those who are far off (unredeemed Gentiles) as well as to those who are near (unredeemed Jews). The difference is that Isa. 57:19 is speaking about physical distance, those Jews who will be far off from the land and those Jew who will be near the land while Ephesians is speaking about relationship of the two groups to the unconditional covenants. All Jews, no matter where they lived were near to the covenants but all Gentiles were far off from the covenants. So, this is not recording the fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy. Instead, Paul is simply making an application because of a similarity; the preaching of peace. Some try to say that Isa. 57:19 is being fulfilled now and therefore the Church is the Kingdom. This isn't the case at all! The Church is not the Kingdom. The Church and the Kingdom are distinct and chronologically successive dispensations. Instead, there is simply a point of similarity. Paul never says Isa. 57:19 is fulfilled in the Church.



Paul is teaching in Eph. 2:17 that Christ came preaching peace to unredeemed Gentiles (those who were far off from the covenants) and to unredeemed Jews (those who were near to the covenants).

Greek Text 2:17 kai. evlqw.n euvhggeli,sato eivrh,nhn u`mi/n toi/j makra.n kai. eivrh,nhn toi/j evggju,j\

Translation 2:17 *And having come He preached peace to you who were far off and to those who were near:*

But we have a problem here. When did Jesus preach peace to the Gentiles? Can you think of one place in the Gospels where Jesus preached peace to the Gentiles? I can't find any instances in the Bible. What do we find in the NT? Turn to **Matthew 10:5-6** "These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; ⁶ but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."" Now turn to **Matthew 15:24** "*I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*" Jesus was only sent to salvage the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Jesus considered Gentiles as dogs (v. 26). Further, Jesus never stepped foot outside of the Land of Israel. He did not

preach *peace* between believing Jews and Gentiles in His life on earth. In fact, He came only to the Jews and He preached that the ‘kingdom of heaven was at hand’ (Matt. 4:17). What kingdom did Jesus have in mind? The earthly Davidic Kingdom. This was a legitimate offer to the nation of Israel that if they would accept Jesus as Messiah then the earthly Davidic Kingdom would come. Israel needed to ‘change their mind’ (i.e., repent) about the kind of righteousness needed to enter the Messianic Kingdom. They did not need the kind of righteousness that the Pharisees and Scribes proclaimed, a righteousness based on the misinterpretation of the Mosaic Law. They needed the righteousness of God, they needed to be born again (John 3). This was Jesus’ purpose in the Sermon on the Mount (SOM); to show them the proper interpretation of the Mosaic Law so that the people would see that it was impossible to follow it perfectly. The Mosaic Law was a tutor to lead them to the Messiah (Gal. 3:24, 25). People today are still missing the point of the SOM. The SOM is not giving the moral ethic for the Church Age. Sure, we can make some general applications for all Scripture is useful (2 Tim. 3:16, 17), but Jesus was not giving the moral ethic for the Church Age. Instead, He was illustrating the kind of righteousness that one must have in order to enter the earthly Davidic Kingdom (cf. Matt. 5:20)! (You have heard it said X, but I say to you Y). By this Israel would see their total inability to meet the righteous demands of the Mosaic Law and would to faith in God. The phrases “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God” in the book of Matthew both refer to the Davidic/Messianic Kingdom. There is only one Kingdom.ⁱ “Kingdom of heaven” emphasizes its character (i.e., it will be patterned after heaven) and Kingdom of God emphasizes its source (i.e., who it comes from). The kingdom is therefore like heaven and is from God (cf. Matt. 19:23-24).ⁱⁱ The Church is not the Kingdom in any sense. These must be kept separate.

So, if Jesus did not preach *peace* to the Gentiles and in fact could not until after the cross then what does this verse mean? How or when did Jesus preach *peace* to the Gentiles? Jesus preached *peace* by means of the Holy Spirit through the apostles to the Gentiles after Pentecost (Acts 8 & 10ff). So, the sequence is as follows: 1) Jesus came, 2) Jesus accomplished *peace* on the cross by fulfilling the Mosaic Law which destroyed the Jew/Gentile enmity, and 3) Jesus preached *peace* by means of the Holy Spirit through His apostles.

2) Jesus accomplished
peace

1) Jesus came

✝
50 days

3) Jesus preached peace via HS
through apostles

Therefore, not only is Christ *peace* Himself (v. 14a), but he preached *peace* by means of the Holy Spirit through the apostles.

This verse is significant because it re-enforces the idea that Paul is talking about a new humanity. Gentiles are not becoming Jews. BOTH groups need to hear the message of *peace*. Therefore, it is not that those who are *far off* need to become a part of those who are *near*. Nor is it that the Jews already have *peace* and Gentiles need this *peace*, but that both groups need to hear and heed the message of *peace* so that they become one new humanity, the Church.

(2) Result of the Message: Access (2:18)

The result of this message is given in v. 18. What are the benefits of being a part of this one new humanity, the church?

Greek Text 2:18 ο[τι δι' αυτου/ ε;comen th.n prosagwgh.n oi` avmfo,teroi evn e`ni. pneu,mati pro.j to.n pate,ra

Translation 2:18 *so that through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.*

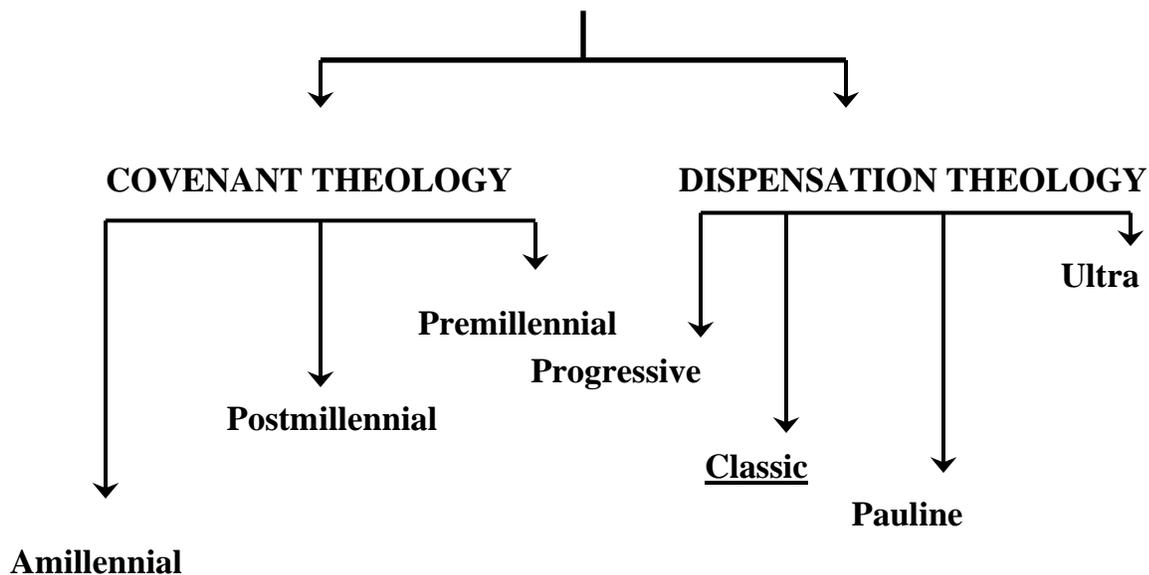
ο[τι δι' αυτου/ ε;comen th.n prosagwgh.n oi` avmfo,teroi, “*so that through Him we both have access*”. The *hoti* should be translated as *so that* indicating result rather than simply *that* (NASB). All uses of *hoti* have to undergo translation in context to decipher whether cause (because), content (that), or result (so that) is in view.ⁱⁱⁱ Notice that all three members of the Godhead are mentioned here. *through Him* refers to the Son. It is through the Son that we have access in the one Holy *Spirit* to the *Father*. All three members of the Trinity are involved in our access to the *Father*. Each member of the Trinity was involved in our redemption in 1:3-14. Now we see that all three members of the Trinity are involved in our free access to the Father. What does it mean to have *access*? The Greek word for *access* was used in the ancient world of one who approached a king, one who had access to the presence-chamber of a monarch. Typically, you’d tremble approaching such a powerful monarch but believing Jews and Gentiles can boldly approach the Father because we have access through Christ and in one Spirit. Thus, access is through Christ, it is in one Spirit because all believing Jews and Gentiles are baptized by one Holy Spirit and it is toward the Father. Without Christ’s work and the baptism of the Holy Spirit no human

being could approach God. Thus, all three members of the Trinity are involved in *initiating* our redemption and in *providing* continual access to the Father.

DISPENSATIONS & DISPENSATIONALISM

So much of Paul’s argument in Ephesians 2-3 is hinging on what we call “dispensations” and “dispensational theology”. If you don’t know what this word means then just stick with me. I’m going to define that word “dispensation” for you in a minute. As you may well know there are several schools of theology. We can narrow them down to two categories: Covenant Theology and Dispensational Theology. In Covenant Theology we have Covenant Amillennialism, Covenant Postmillennialism, and Covenant Premillennialism. In Dispensational Theology we have Progressive Dispensationalism, Classic Dispensationalism, Pauline Dispensationalism, and Ultra-Dispensationalism. If you have ever been a part of a church, it held to one of these schools of theology.

2 SCHOOLS OF THEOLOGY



Covenant – Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed Reformed Baptist, Congregationalist, and Episcopal (if they follow the 39 articles)

Dispensational – Bible, Plymouth Brethren (some Covenant Premillennial), some Conservative Baptists (some Covenant Premillennial), Independent Fundamental Baptist

Sloppy Mixture – Pentecostal, Assembly of God, some Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, 7th Day Adventists

Ultimately it depends on the pastor but many are sloppy in their theology and don't really understand Scripture (not because Scripture is unclear, but simply because they don't study it and they are not logical thinkers).

Now, both of these schools hold to the basic teachings of Scripture. They believe in the Trinity and the deity of Christ, etc., but they all have MAJOR differences in the areas of Israelology^{iv}, Ecclesiology (i.e., the Church), and Eschatology (i.e., last things or prophecy). Each school of theology looks at these areas of Scripture quite differently. Since these are BIG topics in Scripture you can see that it would have an impact over a large area of Scripture. So, everyone sees a system of thought but they all differ as to exactly what that system looks like. The BIG deal here in Ephesians 2-3 is Ecclesiology. For example, looking at this chart did you know that there is only one school of theology here that holds that the Church began in Acts 2? Only Classic Dispensationalism holds to Acts 2 origin of the Church. That's why Ephesians 2-3 are critical to our understanding of Scripture. The doctrinal statement of this church points this out explicitly. *"8. We believe this present Church Age began with the coming of the Holy Spirit of God on the Day of Pentecost, and that it will continue until the coming of Christ for His Church, the time of which coming is not indicated in Scripture; but we believe it to be imminent, personal, pretribulation, and premillennial."* Covenant Amillennial, Covenant Postmillennial, Covenant Premillennial and Progressive Dispensationalism all say the Church began in the OT, they all believe there is only one people of God and therefore fail to make a consistent distinction between Israel and the Church. Pauline Dispensationalist make a consistent distinction between the Church and Israel but they begin the Church in Acts 9 with Paul and Ultradispensationalists begin the Church in either Acts 9, 13, or 28 depending on the author. In the area of Eschatology, Covenant Amillennialism, Covenant Postmillennialism, Covenant Premillennialism and Progressive Dispensationalism all teach that the Church is the Kingdom or that the Kingdom is now-not yet. None therefore hold to a pre-Trib Rapture except some Progressive Dispensationalists, although they say that the timing of the rapture is unimportant.^v All Classic Dispensationalists, Pauline Dispensationalists, and Ultradispensationalists teach that the Church is distinct from the Kingdom and believe in a future kingdom on earth as well as a pre-Trib Rapture of the Church. So, these are BIG differences in the grand scheme of God's plan.

But now I want to tell you a little about current Dispensational Theology. First of all, it's under fire today. There is a war against Dispensationalism. It is hated and despised by many

Christians and non-Christians. We are called racists because we distinguish Israel and the Church, we are told that we are overly simplistic (not intellectual), that we teach more than one way of salvation, etc. I could go on indefinitely with the criticism; some very divisive and cutting, but I'll refrain from doing so. Suffice it to say that it is absolutely hated by many Christians. Some have said that Dispensationalism is dying. For example, in 1994, Charles Ryrie stated, "It was reported to me recently that someone said that Dispensationalism is dying and there will be no dispensationalists left to attend the funeral."^{vi} Is it dying or should it die? I hope to convince you that it is not dying, should not die, and in fact *cannot* die because it is the word of God (Heb. 4:12). First, what is a dispensation? Well, there are two uses of the word in the literature, its scriptural use and its theological use.

SCRIPTURAL DEFINITION. Contrary to common misconceptions, the word "dispensation" is a biblical word (unlike some words like Trinity or Rapture which are theological concepts). It comes from the Greek stem *oikonom-*, *oikos* meaning "house" and *nomos* meaning "law". Thus, the raw word means "the rule or law of a house". In terms of usage *oikonomia* is used 20 times in the NT (Lk. 12:42; 16:1ff, 8; Rom. 16:23; 1 Co. 4:1f; 9:17; Gal. 4:2; Eph. 1:10; 3:2, 9; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4; Tit. 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:10) and 15 times in the LXX, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament (1 Ki. 4:6; 16:9; 18:3; 2 Ki. 18:18, 37; 19:2; 1 Chr. 29:6; 1 Es. 4:47, 49; 8:64; Est. 1:8; 8:9; Isa. 36:3, 22; 37:2). *oikonomia* and its derivatives are variously translated as "household, to be a steward, a manager, stewardship, dispensation, administration, job, commission, treasurer." In English we get the word "economy" from *oikonomia*. Therefore, from Scripture we might define it as "the governing law of a house involving two parties, the master and his steward."

THEOLOGICAL DEFINITION. A working theological definition can be derived from the Scriptural usage. Theologically, a dispensation has been defined in various ways. Early Dispensationalist, C. I. Scofield, emphasized the element of *time* when he defined it as "a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some *specific* revelation of the will of God. Seven such dispensations are distinguished in Scripture."^{vii} Scofield's definition has been criticized because it emphasizes *time* rather than a *household* arrangement. Ryrie therefore tried to remain more in touch with the scriptural use defining it as "a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose."^{viii} This is still too complex for some so I like to define it simply as **"a distinct household arrangement in God's unfolding plan."**

A dispensationalist might be described as one who views the world as a household run by God. In this household-world God is administering its affairs according to His own will and in various stages of revelation over the passage of time. These various stages mark off the distinctive arrangements in the outworking of His plan, and these distinct arrangements make up the dispensations. Understanding God's distinctive arrangements with mankind is essential to properly interpreting the various books of the Bible because each book falls within a specific dispensation. There are seven such dispensations although some theologians hold to a different number. The number of dispensations is not essential. What then is essential to Dispensationalism?

THE ESSENTIALS. Ryrie calls these the *sine qua non*, the "without which nots". Without these three elements the system is not Dispensational. These three elements include: 1) normal or literal interpretation of all of Scripture, including prophecy, 2) God has one plan with two distinct programs, one for Israel and one for the Church and 3) the ultimate purpose of God in history is to glorify Himself. These are in a logical order, if we interpret scripture normally then we will see that God has one plan that includes two distinct programs, Israel and the Church, and we will also see that God's ultimate purpose of planning and implementing history is to glorify God. Salvation is not the ultimate purpose of God; instead, salvation is one of the means by which God brings glory to Himself. Even Christ is not the ultimate purpose of God, Christ is the center of God's purpose, Christ Himself is the major means through which God is glorified (Phil. 1:11; Jude 25).

ESSENTIAL #1: NORMAL/LITERAL INTERPRETATION. What do I mean by the word literal? I don't mean wooden literalism. Wooden literalism means that when Jesus said "I am the door" then He meant that He was a physical door. That's not what I mean. That's silly. But that is one of the biggest charges made against Dispensationalists. That's not what the 'literal interpretation' has historically meant. It has never meant that we don't recognize figures of speech. All languages, including the Biblical languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek have figures of speech. See if you can tell what I mean when I use this common English phrase. "It's raining cats and dogs". What do I mean? It's obvious because you are an English speaker that I just used a figure of speech. When we use this phrase an English speaker normally skips straight to the literal meaning. In other words, for every figure of speech there is always, without exception, a literal meaning it is trying to convey. Figures of speech therefore are a part of literal interpretation. They spice up literature and make it fun to read but they always convey very literal things. They can't be said to mean whatever you want. I could have said the same thing without using a figure of speech, couldn't I? How could I have communicated the same idea without using the phrase "It's raining cats and dogs"? So, you see, either way you are communicating the

same very literal and real idea and you are not free to read into either phrase something entirely different from what it really means. So, we interpret the Bible, and all literature except allegories literally/normally. We do not read between the lines (those are spaces not words), we're interested in the little black letters on the page not the white space around the words. We do not try to get into the author's mind. We are concerned with the words; we can't get into the author's mind. We do not read our thoughts into the words, we let the Bible speak for itself.

What reasons can I give for interpreting all of Scripture normally, including prophecy? There are three reasons. *A Philosophical Reason.* Philosophically, dispensationalists interpret literally because of the received laws of language. A syllogism will describe the logic of the dispensationalist.

1. God is the originator of propositional language
2. Propositional language is a construct designed to communicate conceptual thought between God and men made in His image
3. Men are therefore designed to understand propositional language

Because God is the originator of language, when He communicates to man it can only be understood according to the *received laws of language*, which seem to require a literal understand (e.g., If you eat, you will die). Seeking a deeper sense or a second meaning beneath the words is contrary to the received laws of language. Ryrie comments, "If language is the creation of God for the purpose of conveying His message, then a theist must view that language as sufficient in scope and normative in use to accomplish that purpose for which God originated it."^{ix}

A Historical Reason. Since all the OT prophecies that centered on the First Coming of Messiah were fulfilled literally, it logically follows that the remaining prophecies that center on the Second Coming of Messiah will likewise be fulfilled literally. There is no scriptural indication or vindication for shifting to a non-literal approach just because something is prophetic^x. The literal fulfillment of all prophecy thus far is strong evidence for the literal method.

A Logical Reason. If one does not stay true to the received laws of language then all objectivity is lost. Who then would determine what a word means?^{xi} For language to be communicative it must be built on immutable laws designated for language. A denial of the received laws of language results in the elimination of the communicative property of language. Language becomes utterly meaningless and an improper medium for communication. This subjective approach to language should not be accepted by a Christian theist. The number of interpretations for any given passage would be innumerable if a subjective approach to language were adopted. Thus, for any objectivity to be maintained we can only allow language to be taken in the plain, normal sense.

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- ⁱ Early dispensationalists, and some modern ones, try to say that we are presently living in the “mystery form of the kingdom” (e.g., Scofield Reference Bible, Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, pp. 390-391). They base this teaching on **Matthew 13:11** “*To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.*” The problem with their interpretation is that the verse doesn’t say it’s a “mystery form of the kingdom of heaven”. It simply says that Jesus is giving them, in parable form, “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven”. In other words, Jesus was revealing to those who did believe in His Messiahship new truths regarding the kingdom of heaven that were previously unrevealed in the OT. “kingdom of heaven” has to be taken in the same sense that it takes everywhere else, as a reference to the earthly Davidic Kingdom. See Couch, Mal, *An Introduction to Classical Evangelical Hermeneutics*, pp. 291-299. Toussaint, Stanley, *The Kingdom in Matthew 13* (paper delivered at the 2003 December Pre-Trib Study Group, Dallas, TX).
- ⁱⁱ Early dispensationalists tried to make a sharp distinction between the phrases “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God” but it’s clear that was not Matthew’s intent as Matt. 19:23-24 illustrate. There the phrases are used interchangeably. The most that can be said is that the two phrases have a different emphasis; “kingdom of heaven” points to the Kingdom’s nature or character and “kingdom of God” points to the Kingdom’s source. The one Kingdom will be heavenly and from God.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Wallace, Daniel B., *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 761, 762.
- ^{iv} For a systematic presentation of the Classic Dispensational position on Israel see Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*.
- ^v Brummett, John, *Does Progressive Dispensationalism Teach a Posttribulational Rapture?*
- ^{vi} Willis, Wesley R., Master, John R., and Ryrie, Charles C., *Issues in Dispensationalism* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1994), 9.
- ^{vii} Ryrie, Charles C., *Dispensationalism* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), 23.
- ^{viii} *Ibid.*, 23.
- ^{ix} *Ibid.*, 81.
- ^x The attempt to force prophetic literature, such as the Book of Revelation, into the apocalyptic genre of intertestamental extra-canonical books is an improper methodology of categorizing sections of Scripture as a means to justify abandoning Dr. Cooper’s Golden Law of Interpretation. For more see Dr. Robert Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics*.
- ^{xi} Modern Lexicographers are arguing that words in and of themselves are void of meaning, their meaning must be provided by the context. One such lexicon that takes this approach is Louw-Nida. For more see Dr. Robert Thomas *Evangelical Hermeneutics*.

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