

Sunday, May 3, 2009—Right Division 101: Introduction to Dispensational Bible Study
Part 2

Introduction/Review

- This is the second time this year we have paused from our current series of studies to discuss the fundamentals of dispensational Bible study.
- When we last did this on Sunday, February 1st I presented to you the following basic points:
 - Three Principles of Bible Study: Literal Reading, Comparing Scripture with Scripture, and Dispensational Method
 - Contradictions in the Bible
 - Definition of a dispensation
 - Occurrences and uses of the word in the Scriptures thus proving that it a Scriptural concept
 - Why and How to Rightly Divide
 - God's three fold division of time: Time Past, But Now, and Ages to Come
 - Characteristics of Time Past
 - Summary of Time Past throughout the Old Testament, Gospels, and Early Chapters of the book of Acts—Does Israel have an advantage in this verse?
- The entire message from February 1st is available online along with the notes and PowerPoint that went with it.
- After a brief review of the basic principles and summary of Time Past we will continue where we left off by looking at the nature of the But Now time period as well as nailing down when it began.

Note: please see the notes and PowerPoint from the February 1st message for the details regarding references.

Characteristics of the But Now

- Ephesians 2:13—the gentiles who used to be far off during time past are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
- Ephesians 2:14—peace has been made between Jews and Gentiles and the Middle Wall of Partition has been broken down.
- Ephesians 2:15—Jews and Gentiles are now being formed into a New Man by God himself.

- Ephesians 2:16—on the basis of the cross work of Christ; God is now reconciling both Jews and Gentiles in one body. The time past enmity has been done away in Christ.
- Ephesians 2:17—peace is now preached and offered to those who used to be far off (gentiles) and those that were nigh (Israel).
- Ephesians 2:18—gentiles no longer need to go through Israel to have access to God as they did in Time Past.
- Summary: During the But Now time period all of the Time Past distinctions have been removed based upon the cross work of Jesus Christ. Israel no longer possesses an advantage and is concluded in unbelief with the gentiles. Therefore, one cannot have the Body of Christ until Israel has been concluded in unbelief along with the gentiles.
- Romans 11:11-12—through the fall of Israel God sends salvation to the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy.
- Romans 11:30-32—through the fall of Israel God has sent salvation to the Gentiles apart from Israel.
- Romans 11:26-27—God is not done with Israel. In the Ages to Come, God will finish what he started with His nation.

When Did the But Now Time Period Begin?

- In order to answer this question we need to be very clear on the most important distinction or division one must make in Bible study. The distinction between Prophecy and Mystery.
- Prophecy deals with that which was spoken since the world began. The prophetic program is synonymous with Israel's earthly program.
 - Luke 1:67-73—the establishment of God's kingdom on earth through the nation of Israel was been the chief subject of God's prophets since the world began.
 - Matthew 25:34—here we see the fulfillment of what the prophets had been speaking about since the world began the establishment of the kingdom.
 - Acts 3:19-23—Peter tells Israel that if they will repent for their part in the death of the Messiah, God will send Jesus Christ back to them in fulfillment of all the prophets had spoken about since the world began.

- Mystery deals with that which was kept secret since the world began.
 - Romans 16:25-26—there was some secret information about Christ that was not revealed until God revealed it the Apostle Paul.
 - Ephesians 3:1-8—the formation of the Body of Christ during the dispensation of grace was the subject of the mystery that was not revealed in pervious ages. Therefore, God’s But Now plan to form the body of Christ is the subject of the mystery.
 - Colossians 1:25-27—in time past the Gentiles were without hope and without God.
 - I Corinthians 2:7-8—this was God’s plan since before the foundation of the world only he did not reveal this information to mankind until after the salvation of Paul.
- The Body of Christ did not begin in Acts 2 like 98% of professing Christendom teaches.
 - Acts 2:16—the events of Acts 2 are the fulfillment of prophecy made to the nation of Israel.
 - Acts 2:8-11--Pentecost was a Jewish feast day, attended by Jews and Proselytes from across the ancient world.
 - Acts 2:5, 14, 22, 36—Peter is specially addressing Israel on one of her sacred feast days.
 - Acts 2:41—there was already a church in existence at Pentecost. A thing must first exist before anything can be added to it.
 - Acts 2:17—Peter’s preaching proclaimed that Israel’s last days according to prophecy had arrived, not the first days of the Body of Christ.
 - Acts 2:30-39, 3:19-21—the kingdom was not even offered to Israel until Pentecost; how could the Body have begun then? It was when Israel refused this offer that the nation was set aside and the Body of Christ was formed.
 - Acts 1:8—at Pentecost the disciples were baptized with, or in the Spirit for power. This is quite different from baptism by the Sprit into the Body of Christ.

- Mark 1:7-8—At Pentecost the Lord Jesus Christ was the Baptizer, baptizing His people with or in, the Holy Spirit. Today the Holy Spirit is the Baptizer, baptizing believers into the Body of Christ.
- The title, “the Church which is His body,” is distinct with Paul. This expression is not used at Pentecost or in other New Testament writings.
- Acts 5:31—if the Body of Christ started in Acts 2 why are Peter and the 12 still preaching repentance to Israel?
- Acts 7:51-60—Israel commits the unpardonable sin (Matthew 12:31-32) and is rendered in unbelief thus paving the way for the formation of the Body of Christ.

Paul the First Member of the Body of Christ

- Paul is the perfect type of the Body of Christ. He was both a Roman Citizen and member of the nation of Israel in one person.
- I Timothy 1:16—the Holy Spirit through the pen of Paul tells us that he was the first one and that in him God set a pattern. We are saved after the pattern that God set in Paul.