



INTRODUCTION: Writing to Timothy, Paul said "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15).

The student of the "word of God" is here spoken of as a "workman." A workman cannot intelligently do his work without a plan. He must have drawings and specifications. God said to Moses as to the Tabernacle, "See that thou make all things according to the 'pattern' showed to thee in the mount. " (Heb. 8:5).

The student of God's word must understand "God's Plan and Purpose in the Ages," or there will be confusion in his work of interpreting the scriptures. The word "dispensation" is used in the Bible four times. In every case, it is obvious from the context that God is referring to a period of time. In (Col. 1:25-27 and Eph. 3:2-5) the word ages is used, and in (I Cor. 9:17) Paul discusses a particular gospel that was committed to him. It is also interesting to note that the word "dispensation" does not appear until Paul writes his epistles. The reason is obvious - the mystery of the ages had not been revealed until then (Eph. 3:5-7). Without noting these dispensations, and the divisions that they create, a great deal of confusion can result.

We must also distinguish between the "TIMES" and "SEASONS" of the scriptures. Daniel said of God, "He changeth the "TIMES" and the "SEASONS", " (Dan. 2:21), and Jesus said to His disciples - "It is not for you to know the "TIMES" or the 'SEASONS'." (Acts 1:7) Job testified that the "TIMES are not hidden from the Almighty." (Job 24:1). And of the children of Issachar it was said that they had "understanding of the TIMES." (I Chron. 12:32) By the "SEASONS" we are to understand the climatic changes of the earth due to the movements and changing characteristics of the sun, moon and stars, which God ordained to regulate the "Seasons." (Gen. 1:14) As to the "TIMES", we have them

designated as the "TIMES OF IGNORANCE," (Acts 17:30); the "TIMES OF THE GENTILES," (Luke 21:24); the "TIMES OF RESTITUTION," (Acts 3:21) and the "Dispensation of the FULLNESS OF TIMES." (Eph. 1:10)

## I. THE ORIGINAL PLAN

To understand properly what fits between the sides of eternity it is essential to have some kind of a grasp for God's original plan. (Isa. 45:18) states that the earth was created to be inhabited. (2 Peter 3:13) alludes to this plan being fulfilled not only in the present, but also in the future eternity.

## II. THE ORIGINAL CREATION - (Gen 1:1)

This creation was in the dateless past. It was undoubtedly a perfect creation, for there has never been a record of God ever creating anything that was not perfect. Even Satan was perfect in the day of his creation (Eze. 28:15). There is very little information in the Bible about the original creation for what we read about in (Gen. 1:3-31) is a re-creation or a restoration of the earth to its original condition before it was made "formless and void" and submerged in water and darkness.

## III. THE KING OVER THE ORIGINAL CREATION

Satan is referred to as the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4) in this present age, but it appears that he had also occupied that position in eternity past (Eze. 28:11-19). It is important to grasp that Satan was king over a physical creation and a spiritual one. (Job 1).

## IV. THE FALL OF THE KING

The chaotic condition of the earth in (Gen. 1:2) is generally associated with the fall of Satan. The text most used to support this is (Isa. 14:12-16). In reality, this may be a prophetic passage, but it certainly pictures Satan's past fall in type.

The fall of Satan in eternity past is supported by a recreation. Only something of that magnitude would have caused the earth to be without form and void.

Re-creation is supported by:

A. The expression "And God said that it was good" is not found on the second day of creation. The reason for the omission is apparent only if the reader grasps the truth of (Eph. 6:10-13; Isa. 24:21; and Job 41:31- 32). The second heaven, in which we find the solar systems, galaxies, nebula, star clusters, and constellations, also contains the demoniac posers, fallen angels, and Satan himself.

B. Instructions are given to man to replenish the earth (Gen. 1:28). The dictionary definition of replenish is "to recover former fullness".