

God's unfolding story.

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, June 24th AM

God has a plan, that includes you! (Jer. 29:11) While God is Timeless (Mal. 3:6), we are not. God reveals his plans progressively (as we're able to receive them). A careful study of human history reveals that God's focus with mankind as "progressed" through different ages.

These "ages" are known as "Dispensations."

1. The Age of Innocence. (*Garden of Eden*) Gen. 2,3

A. Began with Fellowship with God.

1) Broken by Sin! Gen. 3:6-8

B. Ended with expulsion from Eden. (Gen. 3:23,24)

2. Age of Conscience. Gen. 4-7

A. The Fall of man (Gen. 3) → Flood. (about 2000 years)

1) Increase of Demonic activity and human rebellion. (Gen. 6:1-5)

2) God gave them 120 year transition to repent. (Gen. 6:3)

3. Age of Government. Gen. 8-12 (426 years)

A. Marked by disobedience (Babel) Gen. 11)

1) Even after God's 2nd chance they degraded into idolatry (again!)

Although Government & Idolatry continues today,

B. God's focus shifted to Abram and Israel. Gen. 12

4. Age of Promise. (About 500 years)

A. Began with God's call to Abram. (Gen. 12)

1) Transitioned with Pharaoh's pride and the 10 plagues.

B. Ended with the Exodus and giving of the Law.

5. Age of the Law. (about 1500 years)

A. Began with the 10 Commandments. (Ex. 20)

1) Revelation of Redemption. Ro. 6:23 *"The Wages of sin is death"* (Lev. 17:11-12)

a) God's primarily focused on the Jews.

(1) It was His desire that through them, the Gentiles would learn of His love. (Ex. 19:5,6)

(2) Instead of influencing the Gentiles, they fell into their idolatry! (Ex. 32)

B. Ended with Jesus Crucifixion.

1) Jesus' ministry was a transition period. Mt. 3:17; Jn. 1:29

Gal 3:24 *"the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith..."*

a) To give Israel a chance to recognize and repent. Mt 15:24; Jn 1:11

b) To fulfil prophecy! Dan 9:26

(1) Jesus fulfilled at least 353 prophecies.

<http://www.accordingtothescriptures.org/prophecy/353prophecies.html>

(2) As prophesied, Israel's leaders rejected him. (Is. 53; John 19:14-15)
Jesus' death and resurrection led to:

6. The age of the Church. (Age or Grace)

A. Began at Pentecost. Acts. 2 See Vs. 39-48

Ro. 11:25 *"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery...;*

that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

1) This "time of the Gentiles" is why there was a "prophetic parenthesis" between Daniel 9:26 and 27 before Israel's final "week". (2 Peter 3:9)

2) God's primary vehicle to reach the world is now through His Church. (Mt. 5:14; Mk. 16:15)

1 Peter 2:9 *"ye are a ...royal priesthood...; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:"*

B. The next "Transition event" is the Rapture! (1 Thes. 4:13-18)

In Mt. 24:14,15 Jesus warned of this: *"this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all Nations; and then shall the end come... 21 "For then shall be great tribulation"*

Conclusion:

Jesus return will take place in two phases, separated by the "Tribulation".

Phase 1: The Rapture (Latin: Raptus) For His Church. (John 14:1-3; 1 Thes. 4:13-18)

The tribulation is the "transition" between the "Church Age" and the "Kingdom Age" to give Israel one last opportunity to repent. (The 70th "week" of Daniel 9:27)

(1) They will get what they wanted (a political messiah) in the Anti Christ.

(2) When he fulfils the prophecies of Dan. 9:27, (See Mt. 24:15-22)

they'll realize the truth of why Jesus came!

Zech. 12:10 **"They shall look upon me whom they pierced, and mourn"**

Ro. 11:26 *"and so all Israel shall be saved..."*

Phase 2: The Second coming in Power. (See Rev. 19:11-20; Mt. 24:29,30)

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall... the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Application:

Sometime there will be no more time to decide! (Rev. 10:5-7)

1 John 2:28, 3:3 *"and now... abide in him; when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.... Every man that hath this hope in him, purifies himself..."*

Someday will be your last day! 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 *"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. now is the accepted time..."*