

DISPENSATIONAL PURPOSE OF SIGNS

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH - 2 Tim. 2:15

Dispensation (defined) - The **differing doctrines** whereby God deals with (i.e. reveals, speaks to, dispenses, or ministers to) different groups of people at different times of human history.

- A. “**dispensation**” used 4X in KJB. - 1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10; Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25
- B. This study answers the dispensational purpose of signs.
- C. In the scriptures, **signs** are **always connected** with the **Jews**- 1 Cor. 1:22a
- D. “**signs and wonders**” often occur together in the scriptures (~29X) and are “supernatural **physical** manifestations” (seen with your eyes). - (FM) Ex. 7:3; Deut. 6:22, 7:29; Acts 2:43

1. Signs are supernatural physical manifestations associated with miracles and wonders that are given to confirm/fulfill prophesy and God’s words, e.g. Moses (Law), Elijah & Elisha (prophets), and Jesus Christ and His 12 Apostles. - Acts 2:22; Heb. 2:1-5; Mark 16:15-20 (Gospel of the Kingdom accompanied by 5 signs.)

2. Satan can counterfeit signs. - Deut. 13:1-5 (cf. Rev. 13); 2 Thess. 2:9-12

- A. As a result, God’s word always takes precedence over signs since the **purpose** of signs is to **confirm God’s words**. - 2 Pet. 1:16-21 (cf. Matt. 17:1-9)
- B. **Not all** signs and miracles are genuinely from the Holy Spirit of God. - Rev. 13
- C. **God’s word** is **ALWAYS** the **Final Authority**, not the signs, miracles, & wonders.
- D. Believers are to esteem God’s words more than our necessary food. - Job 23:12

3. Israel, God’s earthly people, began with signs and God consistently uses signs in His dealings with them, so the Jews would believe God’s words. -

Ex. 4:1-9, 17, 29-31; Ps. 74:9; John 4:48; 1 Cor. 1:22

- A. God gave Israel sabbaths as a sign so they would know: 1) that God is the LORD and 2) that He sanctified them. - Ex. 20:8-11, 31:12-17, 35:1-3; Ezek. 20:12, 19-20
- B. God used signs because the full revelation of God’s words was not yet complete.

4. Jesus Christ worked signs and miracles to fulfill prophesy, to prove He was the Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and to demonstrate His great love and compassion. - Isa. 8:18-20; Matt. 11:1-6

5. The gospel of the kingdom was accompanied by signs of the kingdom; the signs pointed to the promised kingdom that was at hand. - Matt. 3:1-2, 4:17, 23-24

- A. Miraculous signs, wonders, and healings are not part of the Age of Grace today.
- B. God has all power to heal and work miracles, but the supernatural sign gifts given to the apostles are no longer in effect. - Matt. 10:5-8 contrast with 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20
- C. For healing/cures today, God often uses doctors, hospitals, medicines, etc.

6. Paul had the sign gifts of an apostle (Acts 14:8-10; 2 Cor. 12:12)

- A. Although Paul was commissioned by Jesus Christ as “**the apostle of the Gentiles**” (Rom. 11:13), signs continued at specific times in the transitional book of Acts while the Kingdom is still being offered to Israel (thru the stoning of

Stephen in Acts 7), to confirm that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, to those Jews who would believe the truth. - Rom. 11:1-6

7. Since Israel (as a nation) refused to believe Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, God used the fall (unbelief) of Israel to bring salvation to the Gentiles, which in turn provoked Israel to jealousy. - Rom. 11:7-15

8. The carnal Corinthian church misused/abused the sign gifts. - 1 Cor. 12-14

- A. For example, they exalted the gift of tongues above the other gifts. - 1 Cor. 12:1-11
- B. Speaking in tongues (in the Bible) is the supernatural and miraculous ability to speak in **other known languages**, and was a **sign to unbelieving Jews**. - 1 Cor. 14:21-22
- C. God's commandments for the **proper use of tongues**. - 1 Cor. 14:23-40
- D. The gibberish of today's "tongues speakers" is **not** being led by the Holy Spirit and has no resemblance to speaking in tongues in the Bible. (Review Handout)

9. Paul said during the Acts period that sign gifts would cease. - 1 Cor. 13:8-13

10. Sign gifts ceased when God set Israel aside in blindness.

- A. At the end of the ministry of the Apostles when Paul fulfilled the word of God. - 1 Cor. 13:9-10; Col. 1:25
- B. There are four "turning points" (from Jew to Gentile) in the book of Acts:
 - 1) Acts 7:51-60 - End of the Mosaic Law dispensation when the Jews rejected the Gospel of the Kingdom
 - 2) Acts 13:44-46 - Turning away from the Jews in Asia Minor
 - 3) Acts 18:1-6 - Turning away from the Jews in Europe
 - 4) Acts 28:25-28 - Turning away from the Jews in Rome
- C. How do we know the apostolic sign gifts are ceased? - 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20

11. The completed word of God (66 books of the KJB) is now complete and is all that is needed to fulfill God's will and our ministries today. - 2 Tim. 3:16-17

- A. Seeking after signs, wonders, miraculous healings, physical manifestations, etc. in the present dispensation and outside the revelation of the scriptures is childish, deceptive, and dangerous. - 1 Cor. 13:11, 14:20
- B. As believers, we are called to walk by faith and not by sight (or signs) and to use the scriptures exclusively in all matters of faith and practice. - Rom. 4:3, 10:17, 14:23b; 2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:6

12. God will reinstitute the use of miraculous signs and wonders in the Tribulation period when He resumes His dealings with Israel. - Rev. 11:1-12

- A. During the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ, the Kingdom commission Jesus gave His Jewish apostles (after His resurrection) will be fulfilled.- Matt. 24:14, 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8
- B. Israel will ultimately be established as a nation and kingdom of priests which will fulfill 1) the royal priesthood and 2) God's original plan for the nation of Israel to be witnesses to the entire world. - Ex. 19:5-6; Isa. 43:10, 44:8, 61:1-6, 1 Pet. 2:9