

	Charles Ryrie ¹	John Feinberg ²	Michael Vlach ³	Matt Postiff ⁴
Hermeneutics	2. Consistent literal interpretation, including OT prophecies.	1. Multiple senses of terms like <i>Jew</i> and <i>seed of Abraham</i> . 2. OT stands on its own without needing re-interpretation by NT. Special use of OT by NT does not cancel OT meaning unless such is explicitly expressed.	1. The meaning of a passage is in the passage itself and not in a NT reinterpretation. 2. Types exist, but Israel is not a type. 6. There are multiple senses of terms like <i>seed of Abraham</i> . The church as the <i>seed</i> does not cancel Israel’s promises.	1. Every passage of the Bible should be interpreted literally, with a focus on stable, textually based meaning. Proper literal interpretation takes into account the contextual matters of grammar, history, immediate context, and theological context (analogy of Scripture). There is no testament priority. This is original intent hermeneutics . 2. God has given more revelation to mankind over the course of time. He has, at times, used this progress of revelation to introduce elements of discontinuity into the administration of his program. Such elements serve a larger unifying purpose.
Israel/Church/Holy Spirit	1. Consistent distinction between Israel and the church.	3. Israel’s covenants will be fulfilled. 4. Israel will have a distinctive future as a restored nation.	5. The nation of Israel will be saved and restored. 4. Israel shares a spiritual unity in salvation but also has a distinct future functional role than the church will have in the kingdom.	The nation of Israel is a special people of God who will be restored as a nation and spiritually saved according to the Biblical covenants, ^{4,6} with a unique role in the future. The Biblical covenants belong to Israel, except for the Noahic, which was made with the entire creation.
		5. The church is a distinctive organism.	3. The church is distinct from Israel. It is not the new or true Israel.	The church is different than Israel, not a continuation or replacement of it, and it will have its own unique role in the future. The church is “brought near” to Israel’s covenants.
				The Holy Spirit has a unique role in the church age, namely Spirit baptism, spiritual gifts, and a new, intensified form of indwelling. ^{4,7}
Future				Future events are the pre-tribulation rapture, Tribulation, second coming of Christ, millennial kingdom, and final judgment. Israel and the church co-exist in the eschaton, sharing spiritual salvation, but with unique roles.
Kingdom	3. The underlying purpose of God in the world is the glory of God.	6. God is doing more than just saving people. His program includes spiritual and material elements.		God is accomplishing not only the redemption of humanity, but also the restoration of creation and the nation Israel, bringing these together under his eternal sovereign reign, all for his glory.

- [1] Numbered according to Charles Ryrie's presentation in *Dispensationalism*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1995, p. 39-41.
- [2] Numbered according to the order in John S. Feinberg's article "Systems of Discontinuity" in Feinberg, John S., ed. *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments*. Crossway, 1988, p. 71-85.
- [3] Numbered according to the presentation in Vlach, Michael J. *Dispensationalism: Essential Beliefs and Common Myths, Revised and Updated*. Theological Studies Press, 2017, p. 30-50.
- [4] Originally summer 2017; updated June 2018. Refer to the following comments.
1. In my column, I'm trying to cover what I think are very important elements of Dispensationalism. I am not trying to produce a minimal list of essentials. Most of these items, if not all, distinguish dispensational theology from covenant theology and other non-dispensational theologies. But even if they are not strongly distinctive, they are key parts of dispensational theology.
 2. My goal is to define Dispensationalism by the areas of systematic theology that it touches.
 3. The Kingdom idea is the "big picture" or unifying element that brings together the various purposes of God, the various people of God, and the various dispensations, and the entirety of creation into a cohesive and united whole. Dispensationalism, often branded as a system of discontinuity since Feinberg's 1988 article, must be recognized as a system that ultimately brings everything together under one head, as indicated in Ephesians 1:10.
 4. The doctrinal category of soteriology doesn't figure into this table because salvation is largely untouched by Dispensationalism, at least in the modified form that I take it. The only difference is that the content of saving faith is "more" in later ages compared to earlier ages because of progressive revelation. There are Calvinists and Arminians who hold to dispensationalism; there are also Lordship and non-Lordship advocates for dispensationalism.
 5. By the term "Biblical covenants" I mean the covenants God revealed to Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the New Covenant. In very general terms, the Biblical covenants specify both spiritual and material blessings that will be experienced by the nation of Israel in the future. This term excludes the "theological covenants" by which I mean the Covenants of works, redemption, and grace advanced by Covenant Theology.
 6. I grant that this last part about intensified indwelling is not accepted by all dispensationalists. The emphasis in the OT seems to be on the indwelling of God in the tabernacle/temple, whereas the emphasis in the NT is on his indwelling not only in the individual believer, but also in the church as a corporate body. This is quite different than the OT type of indwelling and seems more coordinate with a New Covenant type of corporate (individual?) indwelling (Ezekiel 36:27, 37:14).
 7. Feinberg notes that older dispensationalists generally took the kingdom to be entirely future. That view is picked up here, as well as in Vlach, Snoeberger, following McClain and McCune, though not in every detail the same as the older view. In other words, the future-kingdom view is enjoying somewhat of a resurgence among traditional dispensationalists, who have left behind the confusing multi-kingdom or ambiguous kingdom now-and-then (already/not yet) approaches of others in the dispensational school of thought.