

ARE THESE THE LAST DAYS?

By Denver Cheddie

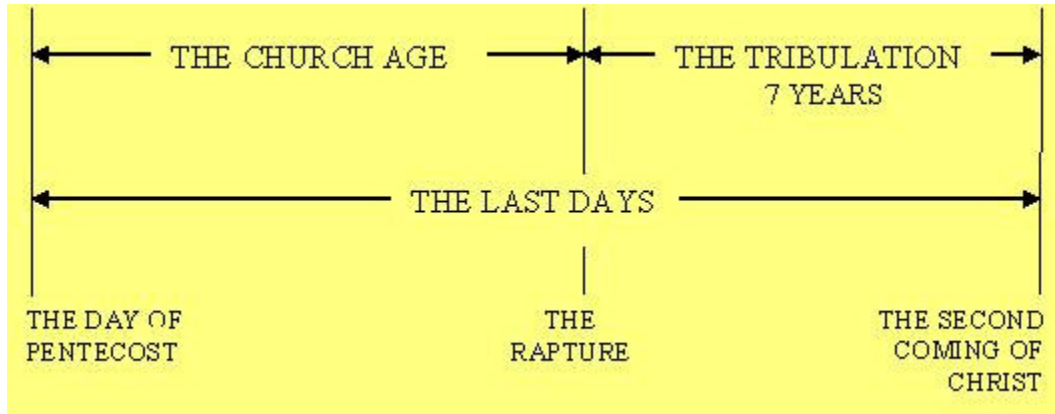
Many have been guilty of forcing current events into the pages of Bible prophecy. Every time there is a war, a threat of war, an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, or even an eclipse of the sun, a comet or meteor showers, they cry "the sky is falling" and "the end of the world is at hand". Many of them have embarrassed themselves by making wrong predictions, the most notorious of all being Y2K. Such have tarnished the reputation of Bible prophecy making it into just another Nostradamus. In this article we examine what the Bible has to say concerning the last days and what we are to expect.

Many without really studying the scriptures just assume the words "last days" point to the 20th/21st century. It is common to hear people remark "I really can't see any generation after this one." In fact throughout the centuries, every generation has believed that it was the last. Maximilla, who died in 179 AD, said "After me there is no prophesy, but only the end of the world." Gregory the Great wrote to John of Constantinople,

"Of a truth it was proclaimed of old through the Apostle John, Little children, it is the last hour (1 John 2:18), according as the Truth foretold. And now pestilences and sword rage through the world, nation rise against nation, the globe of the earth is shaken, the gaping earth with its inhabitants is dissolved. For all that was foretold is come to pass."

That was in the 4th century.

The Bible defines the last days as the entire period from Pentecost to the second coming of Christ.



This Chart is based on a Pre-tribulation Rapture

Acts 2:16-21. 16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Peter linked the events which transpired on the Day of Pentecost to the last days prophesy of Joel 2:28-32. That was the beginning of the "last days". Amazingly some people use this passage as the basis for believing in a great

end time revival where God would pour out His Spirit. That promise was fulfilled in 32 AD and continues to be fulfilled even now. That outpouring is not future any more than it is past and present.

1 John 2:18. Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

John believed he was living in the last days because many antichrists had arisen. He also alluded to a future Antichrist.

1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1 – In 64-68 AD, Paul warned Timothy of troubles to come during the last days. It would be foolish to think Paul was advising Timothy to beware of the troubles to come in the year 2001. Timothy is dead. He was never going to live that long. Paul was admonishing Timothy of events to happen in his very day, the "last days".

See also 1 Cor. 10:11; Heb. 1:1,2; 9:26; James 5:3; 1 Pet 1:20 for other references where the "last days" is identified with the time of Jesus and the apostles.

In Matt. 24:4-8, Jesus listed false christs, wars, famines, and earthquakes as the beginning of birth pains. **"But the end is not yet"**. There have always been wars, natural disasters and false christs. These are nothing new at all. But at no time in NT history has a war or natural disaster occurred at a worldwide level. Even WWI and WWII involved a handful of nations, but were so called for lack of better names.

The Bible predicts no worldwide catastrophe before the rapture. In 1 Thess. 5:3, it states that the Day of the Lord would come at a time when men would be saying "Peace and safety". In Rev. 6:4, the future antichrist is mandated to take peace from the earth. How could he take from the earth what does not already exist? The rapture will take place at a time when the world is generally in peace and prosperity. In other words, no major worldwide crisis is expected before then. No financial crash, no world war, no life destroying meteorite, no alien invasion, nothing.

The Bible spells out in much detail what would occur in the Tribulation. But it only speaks generally concerning the present era. Those who use the Bible to make specific predictions would only succeed in embarrassing themselves and many already have. The mystery of iniquity is already at work (2 Thess. 2:7), meaning that things may get worse as time progresses, but it is only in the Tribulation would God really pour out His judgment on the whole world. It is only then that any worldwide catastrophe is expected. Between now and then, the Bible strongly implies that there would be a period of relative peace and prosperity. This is indeed what will deceive men into thinking they do not need God.

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