

# **The Never Ending Last Days?**



**By  
Willie Martin**

# The Never-Ending Last Days

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**T**HESE ARE THE LAST DAYS, cries a radio preacher who calls himself a prophet of God; so read numerous newsletters and religious publications; so teaches the television evangelist with a book on prophecy for sale; so say and think concerned citizens throughout the land. So has it been said for 2000 years!

As the Scriptures say, there is nothing new under the sun and so it is with men and their last days theology. Gary DeMar in his book "Last Days Madness," which shows the list of such men is long and dated, going back as early as the second and third centuries. For example, there was Montanus, a self appointed prophet of God predicting the end.

"In the third century, a prophet called Novatian gathered a huge following by crying, 'Come, Lord Jesus!' Donatus, a fourth-century prophet, commanded attention when he stressed that only 144,000 people would be chosen by God. He found this magic figure in Revelation 14:1 (a verse which the Jehovah's Witnesses use to proclaim their own version of his heresy). Both Novatian and Donatus were branded as heretics by the Church." (The Sky is Falling, in Future, John C. Souter, Wheaton, IL, Tyndale 1984)

Martin Luther wrote in 1532: "The last days is at hand. My calendar has run out. I know nothing more in my Scriptures." (Misreading the Signs of the Times, Mark Noll; Christianity Today (February 6, 1987), pp. 10-11; Also see Mark U. Edwards, Jr., Apocalyptic Expectations: The Scourge of God, in Luther's Last Battles: Politics and Polemics, 1531-46 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983) pp. 97-114) As the year 1000 A.D. drew near, the old St. Peter's basilica was thronged with weeping, trembling masses awaiting the end of the world. Then there was a similar conviction in 1100, 1200 and 1245. "In 1531, Melchior Hofmann announced that the second coming would take place in the year 1533—

Nicholas Casa held that the world would not last past 1734." (The Sky is Falling, in Future, John C. Souter, Wheaton, IL, Tyndale, 1984)

The list of present day "last days proclaimers," if properly researched and compiled, would probably be staggering. Here are just a few: Edgar C. Whisent put out a book, "88 Reasons Why the Rapture is in 1988." In 1992, Charles R. Taylor in "Bible Prophecy News" said: "What are you starting to read probably is my final issue of Bible Prophecy News, for Bible prophecy fulfillment indicates that Jesus Christ our Lord will most likely return for us at the Rapture of the Church before the fall of 1992 issue can be printed."

"1994?" was a writing by Harold Camping predicting Jesus would return sometime in the fall of 1994. David Allen Lewish wrote a book "Prophecy 2000: Rushing to Armageddon." Dave Hunt wrote "Peace and the Rise of Antichrist." Also, let's not forget Hal Lindsey's most profitable book "The Late Great Planet Earth" with a sale of 25,000,000 copies.

But What Does the Bible Teach Concerning the Last Days?: If that question was properly answered, the last days proclaimers wouldn't sell many books or reap much in donations to stay on the airwaves. Last Days existed 2000 years ago, according to the Bible. Consider the words of Hebrews 1:1-2: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son..." (KJV)

Following are some Bible questions for you. According to Hebrews 1:1-2, the writer of Hebrews considered the last days to be:

- a). Something coming in the distant future (like 2000 A.D.)
- b). The very last days in which he wrote the words "hath in these last days."
- c). Impossible to understand and predict without reading a book on prophecy or hearing a self proclaimed prophet.

Let's consider another Bible passage: "But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them; 'Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel;

“And it shall be in the last days, God says, That I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions And your old men shall dream dreams...” (Acts 2:14-17, NASV)

Now, let's have another Bible test question. According to Acts 2:14-17, the apostle Peter considered the very day he spoke to be those days that Joel had prophesied of and called last days.

- a). True
- b). False
- c). Impossible to tell from the text.

The correct answers to these two questions are self evident just as it's self evident these two Scriptural passages teach the last days existed nearly 2000 years ago! 2 Timothy 3:1 reads: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." (KJV) 2 Peter 3:3 also seems to indicate the last days as something in the future:

"knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." (KJV) How can it be that last days existed at the time of the writing of Hebrews 1:1-2, and Acts 2:17 and yet also be days yet to come in the future? The answer to that comes in understanding the Bible meaning of last days.

As a rule, when men use the term last days, they think in terms of the end of the world. Billy Graham, for example, wrote: "If you look in any direction, whether it is technological or physiological, the world as we know it is coming to an end. Scientists predict it, sociologists talk about it. Whether you go to the Soviet Union or anywhere in the world, they are talking about it. The world is living in a state of shock." (The Return, Mike

Evans, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1986, p. 122) The Bible term, "last days," does not carry this meaning. That is why the last days could be at one time and then another. To prove that the Bible meaning of last days is not the end of the world, let's look at how the term is used in an Old Testament Bible passage, Ezekiel chapter 38. It's a controversial passage dealing with the invasion by Gog.

We'll not deal with the who, what, where, why of the invasion or if it's already happened, but with the when. Verse 16 tells us when. "It will come about in the last days that I shall bring you against my land." So then what happens? Does the world end?

Reading in chapter 38 & 39 concerning that invasion and conflict, one learns how it concludes and that the world continues on. Verse 22 of Ezekiel 39 says "And the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God from that day onward." Note the words "from that day onward," showing us the world did not end in the last days of Ezekiel 38.

Once one understands that the Bible term, last days does not mean the end of the world, that the last days existed nearly 2000 years ago, and would exist some time in the future, then one can move on to another important Bible truth concerning last days.

There Are More Than One Last Days: In other words, there have been last days and there will be last days. If the phrase "last days" does not mean the end of the world, then what does it mean the end of? How about the end of an era or age! Hebrews 6:5 speaks of an "age to come." If an age is to come, then that means an age will end prior to the coming of a new age; so there would be last days of an age! 1 Corinthians 10:11 says, "Now these things happened unto them by way of example and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come." (NASV)

The King James Version uses the word "world" instead of "ages." "Upon whom the ends of the world are come." The Greek word is "aion" and according to "Holman's Exhaustive Concordance," means "continued duration, a space of time, an age." This passage clearly teaches there are

ages and the end of ages had come upon those people living in Corinth, 2000 years ago. It's unfortunate that this word is usually translated as world in the King James translation as in most instances it is far more accurate to translate it as "age."

Take for example Hebrews 9:26. The King James says: "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The New American Standard says, "...but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Young's Literal Translation says, "...at the full end of the ages..."

Noah lived in the last days, i.e., the end of an age. They were last days for people to repent and be saved from destruction. Last days of an age wherein wickedness and sin had culminated.

Moses lived in the last days: or in an end of an age. We have heard the phrase "last days of the Roman Empire." Well Moses lived in the last days of Pharaoh's Egyptian Empire. They were the last days for innumerable first born male children.

The apostles and their disciples lived in the last days: Just as Peter stated in Acts 2:16-17. Days just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem which ended the age of the old Levitical Priesthood and temple sacrifices. It was not only the end of an age but the "consummation of the ages." (Hebrews 9:26, NASV)

Many New Testament Scriptures pertain to the end of that age or the last days that existed 2000 years ago. John the Baptist warned the establishment of his day (Pharisees and Sadducees) of the end by saying,

"And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down, and thrown into the fire." (Matthew 3:10, NASV) A Most Important Point Concerning Last Days: So far, you have read some very important truths concerning the subject of last days. Let's briefly summarize them.

- 1). Men have been crying out and warning that we are in the last days for nearly 2000 years.
- 2). Last days existed 2000 years ago and were to exist in the future. How can this be? Because...
- 3). There are more than one last days.
- 4). Last days means the end of an age not the end of the world!

These are important truths to understand but more important is this: **People Survived the Last Days.**

You see not only did Noah live in the last days, but he lived beyond them as well. Moses and his people lived in the last days and beyond. The apostle's and the disciples lived in the last days and beyond. These people were not just **Survivors** but **Overcomers** and **Conquerors!** People of faith and hope.

The damnable consequence of this false modern day, (Jew)deo-Christian **Last Days Theology** is it conquers and defeats the Christian soldiers who, themselves, should be more than conquerors. Victors taking dominion, overcoming the world through faith, hope, and love. It causes people to wring their hands in despair, believing things will get progressively worse in almost every area of life until Jesus returns with His angels.

One writer described the effect as, "Preoccupation with the end can act as a cultural sedative, leaving the world to its own inescapable eschatological certainties, giving man little impetus to effect change beyond his own isolated individualistic world.

While society collapses, the population grows in its despair and joins 'the cult of expanded consciousness, health and personal 'growth' so prevalent today.' If the end is perceived as just around the corner, then why bother? 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die.'" (Last Days Madness, Gary DeMar, Atlanta, Georgia: American Vision, Inc., p. 9)

The Most Important Point Concerning Last Days: The most important point concerning the "last days" is how not to let them be your's or your family's last days. In other words, how to survive, overcome and be victorious.

