

THESE ARE THE LAST DAYS *Part 1*

When we talk about the “last days” we are talking about those days that lead up to THE END OF THIS AGE.

Matthew 24:3

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the END OF THE WORLD?

The disciples weren't asking when the *world* would come to an end. They were actually asking when will this *age* come to an end?

Matthew 24:3 THE GOOD NEWS BIBLE

3 As Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him in private. “Tell us when all this will be,” they asked, “and what will happen to show that it is the time for your coming and the END OF THE AGE.”

When we talk about the last days, we are talking about the days leading up to the end of this *age*. Moreover, these last days will precede the *coming* of the Lord. (Understand, when the disciples spoke about the Lord's *coming* they did not mean His coming *in the clouds*. They meant His coming *to reign or rule*! We call the “rule” of Christ the *Millennium* because it will last for 1000 years!)

But, what will those days leading up to the end look like? Well, Jesus actually tells us in the following verses!

Matthew 24:6–9

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

These events are very similar to what we read in Revelation 6.

Revelation 6:3–8

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. 4 And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. 5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. 7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. 8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

Notice, the judgments in these verses are similar to the ones Jesus mentioned in Matthew...with one difference. These judgments are preceded by the “opening of seals.”

In the ancient world, documents, like deeds, were often drafted and sealed. The sealed copy was kept in a secure place and an additional unsealed copy was given to the family of the owner. This way if the property was ever lost, say to debt, then the owner (or another member of his family) would present their copy to the magistrate. If their copy matched the sealed copy, then the property could be reclaimed!

This is what we see happening here. Christ is opening these seals because He’s *reclaiming* the property (the world) that was lost by the original owner! Furthermore, the reason we see judgments each time He opens the seals is because this is what it will take for the unsealed “copies” to match the *sealed* copy. Lastly, we are the unsealed copies or epistles! (2Corinthians 3:2–3)

ARE THESE THE LAST DAYS?

The next obvious question is, “Are we IN the last days now?” Someone might say, “Yes, these ARE the last days.” While I agree that we are living in troubled times, I DO NOT believe that these are the *last* days. I say this is because Jesus depicts the last days as a time of great *Tribulation*.

Matthew 24:21, 29

21 For then shall be great TRIBULATION, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

29 Immediately after THE TRIBULATION of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

Therefore, the events in *Matthew 24* are really a description of the *Tribulation*. Moreover, you know you are in the last days when the *Tribulation* begins! How can we know that we're in the *Tribulation*? Jesus said we know that we're in the *Tribulation* when we see the "abomination of desolation."

Matthew 24:15

15 When ye therefore shall see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

The *abomination of desolation* is a clear-cut sign that we're in the last days!

DANIEL'S PROPHECY

Daniel 9:21–24

21 Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. 23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. 24 SEVENTY WEEKS are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to BRING IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

The Angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel in a vision to reveal God's plan to "make an end of sin" and to "bring in everlasting righteousness." (This sounds very similar to the new "age" when Christ *reigns in righteousness*!) Also, the Angel Gabriel gives Daniel a *timeline* of when these things will be accomplished (70 weeks).

Daniel 9:25

25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

Here the Angel Gabriel is giving Daniel a *break down* of these 70 weeks. He says that from the time when the commandment goes forth to restore Jerusalem to the rebuilding of the city will be 7 weeks. And from the time the city is rebuilt unto the Messiah would be three score and 2 weeks (62 weeks). If we add all this together, from the time the commandment is given to restore Jerusalem unto the Messiah would be a total of 69 weeks.

Now, history tells us that these **69 weeks** actually took **483 years**. So, this 70 week timeline represents 70 weeks of *years*, not *days*!

But, what happened to the 70th week?

Daniel 9:27

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Notice, the abomination of desolation will take place during Daniel's 70th week. Jesus said the abomination of desolation will take place during the Tribulation. Therefore, the Tribulation must represent Daniel's 70th week! If the Tribulation represents Daniel's 70th week, then the Tribulation represents **the last 7 years** before God ushers in a new age of everlasting righteousness!

This begs the question, "Where will the Church be during this time?"