The Last Days

We will begin with a crude schematic which is an attempt to show the relationship of the **Last Days** to the **Day of the Lord** and other crucial end time events:

THE LAST DAYS			
First Coming of Christ	**Church Age**	**Second Coming of Christ**	**Millennial Reign of Christ**
Last Days Begin		**Last Days** End	
		Day of the LORD begins in Tribulation (see discussion below) Includes: Great Tribulation Time of Jacob's Distress Armageddon	**Day of the Lord** ends at end of the Millennium

John Walvoord one of the leading scholars in the field of eschatology (prophecy) has this explanation of the last days...

> THE BIBLE USES THE PHRASES "**the last days**" and "**the last times**" with reference to several different time periods. Since the coming of God's promised Messiah is identified with **the last days**, there is a sense in which they began with the incarnation of Jesus Christ: "In **these last days** He [God] has spoken [finally, once for all] to us by his Son" (Heb. 1:2-note), and "He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these **last times** for your sake" (1 Pet. 1:20-note).
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> Broadly speaking, therefore, the **last days** include the earthly life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the entire history of the church to the present, as well as all events prophesied in the Scriptures that are still unfulfilled. Even near the beginning of the church's history John pointed out that the "many antichrists [who] have come" are evidence that this "is **the last hour**" (1 John 2:18-note).
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> Although these predicted events may point to the **last days** in a broader sense than just the life of the church, Paul warned Timothy that "there will be terrible times in the **last days**" (2 Ti 3:1-note). Then he described the character of people, ending with the clause, "having a form of godliness but denying its power" (2 Ti 3:5-note). Both Peter and Jude warned that in the last days "scoffers" will come ("the last days" = 2 Pet. 3:3-note; "the last time" = Jude 1:18-note). Although such opposers of the Christian faith appeared in the early generations of church history, they apparently will increase and become more active as the church approaches its **last days**.
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> In the Old Testament the **last days** are identified with God's yet-future blessings of restoration and salvation for His chosen people Israel (Deut. 30:1-10-commentary or here). God will pour His Spirit on the people of Israel and save them (Jeremiah 23:3-8; Joel 2:28-32-commentary). The people of Israel will return to the Lord (Hosea 3:5), and God will restore them to the Promised Land and Jerusalem will become the capital of all nations (Isa. 2:2-5-commentary; Micah 4:1-8-commentary). Numerous other prophecies speak of these future blessings for Israel without using the phrase "**the last days.**"
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> Before that future time of blessedness will occur, a time of conflict and judgment will come in which God will defeat both His human and His satanic enemies (Joel 2:30-31-commentary; Joel 3:9-15-commentary). This time of tribulation is called "**the Day of the LORD**" (Isaiah 13:6, 9-13-commentary; Zeph. 1:14-18; Mal. 4:1-3, 5-commentary). It in turn will be followed by "the coming of salvation" (1 Pet. 1:5-note) and the fulfillment of Christ's promise of resurrection "at the last day" (John 6:39-40, 44, 54).
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> Anticipate the Lord's coming for His own at any moment, since we are already in the last days. (Borrow The Theological Wordbook)

Notice that Dr Walvoord alludes to the **Day of the LORD**, so the question arises as to how does this '**Day**" relate to the '**last days**?"

The **last days** in one sense is the more "all-inclusive" term, which includes the first portion of the time period know as the Day of the LORD (see schematic below). Recall that the last days began with Christ's first coming and end at Christ's Second Coming. We are now in the **last days**, but we are not in the Day of the LORD. The Day of the LORD begins in the "last" of the last days so to speak. Specifically, the Day of the LORDbegins according to some scholars with the rapture of the church and beginning of the Tribulation (7 year period = Daniel's Seventieth Week), whereas others would place the beginning of the Day of the LORD at the mid-point of the Tribulation when the Anti-Christ reveals his Satanically empowered character and initiates the last 3.5 yearGreat Tribulation (Mt 24:15+, 2 Th 2:3-4+). The Great Tribulation will be abruptly terminated by the return of Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16+), at which time He defeats the Anti-Christ and all other godless opposition and establishes His 1000 year Kingdom on earth (See Revelation 19:11-21+, Revelation 20:4-6+). So while the **last days** includes a "segment" of the Day of the LORD, when Christ returns, strictly speaking **the last days** ends. The Day of the LORD however does not end at the return of Christ, but at the end of the 1000 year reign. Peter says that "the **day of the Lord** will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up." (2 Peter 3:10+) When does this event occur? At the end of the Millennium and just prior to the establishment of theNew Heavens and New Earth (Rev 21:1ff+). There is a "strange" (to me) period of time after the present heavens and earth are destroyed as Peter describes. It is during this unusual "interval" of no earth and no heaven that unbelievers from the beginning of time will be judged (the Great White Throne judgment). John seems at a loss for words in describing this unusual time writing "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence **earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them**." (Rev 20:11+) Notice John cannot "find" earth or heaven which would correspond to the fact that Peter says they have been "obliterated" in the Day of the LORD. While one cannot be dogmatic the end of the earth and heavens (and possibly including the great white throne judgment) would seem to mark the end of that period known as the **Day of the LORD**. The **last days** would have ended 1000 years earlier. Now are you really confused? I realize that in order to explain last days and Day of the LORD one needs to invoke many prophecies from many different books of the Bible, but that is the general nature of prophecy and frankly I think one reason many find it very difficult and/or very confusing. And so in fairness, the Berean reader must understand that much of what is stated above is predicated on a literal interpretation of Scripture regardless whether it is poetic or prophetic, etc. If you are **not** a literalist, then the preceding analysis probably makes no **sense** to you. My favorite saying however is if the plain **sense** of a Biblical text makes good **sense** in context, than one should not attempt to make some other **sense** out of it, (such as one is forced to do when spiritualizing a text or using allegorical interpretations) lest it end up being non**sense**.

The first mention (in the NAS) of the specific phrase "**the last days**" is found in the Old Testament in Isaiah 2:1-4

> The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem (NOTE: THIS IS IMPORTANT! THIS "WORD" IS NOT PRIMARILY GIVEN TO THE CHURCH BUT TO THE JEWS. WE AS MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY WILL DEFINITELY PARTICIPATE IN THE . 2 Now it will come about that In **the last days**, The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it (see depiction of the topography of Jerusalem in this glorious day). 3 And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. (Isaiah 2:1-4--commentary)
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> > **Comment**: Keeping in mind that the last days began with Christ's first coming, here in Isaiah 2:1-4 we have a prophecy which will be fulfilled at Christ's **Second Coming.** Christ will return at the end of the last half of **Daniel's Seventieth Week**, specifically at the end of the 3.5 year period (see the other synonymous time phrases = 1260 days, 42 months, "time, times, and half a time") which Jesus' referred to in Matthew 24:21-note as the **Great Tribulation**.
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> > This dreadful time is also referred to by Jeremiah as the Time of Jacob's Distress (Jeremiah 30:7-note) and by Daniel as "a time of distress" (Da 12:1-note). In His Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25), Jesus gave His Jewish disciples the specific starting "time" of this horrible 3.5 year period:
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> > > Therefore **when** (**TIME SENSITIVE WORD - JESUS ALERTS THE JEWS TO SOMETHING CRITICALLY IMPORTANT**) you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet (Daniel 9:27-commentary), standing in the holy place (REBUILT TEMPLE - cf Rev 11:1-2-note) (let the reader understand) (SEE PAUL'S "COMMENTARY" ON THIS SAME EVENT - 2 Thes 2:3-commentary, 2 Th 2:4-commentary), 16 **THEN** (**WHEN?** WHEN THEY SEE THE PREVIOUS EVENT TAKE PLACE IN THE TEMPLE!) those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. 17 "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his

house. 18 “Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. 19 “But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 “But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. 21 “For **THEN** (**WHEN?** NEAREST ANTECEDENT IS "WHEN" IN Mt 24:15) there will be a **great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will (THIS DESCRIPTION IS CRITICAL AND IS SIMILAR TO THAT IN Daniel 12:1-commentary - IT STRONGLY REFUTES THE INTERPRETATION BY THOSE WHO SAY THIS PROPHECY HAS BEEN FULFILLED IN 70AD WHEN THE ROMANS DESTROYED THE TEMPLE, ETC. WHY DO I SAY THAT? BECAUSE THE NAZI HOLOCAUST KILLED **FAR MORE JEWS THAN THE ROMANS** - YET THERE IS AN EVEN WORSE "HOLOCAUST" COMING WHEN THE ANTICHRIST REVEALS HIMSELF FOR WHO HE REALLY IS AT THE MIDPOINT OF THE 7 YEAR "TRIBULATION" AND 2 OUT 3 JEWS ARE KILLED [Zechariah 13:8-9-commentary] - See Daniel 9:27-commentary). 22 “Unless those days (THESE ARE EVENTS IN THE "LAST DAYS" OVERLAPPING WITH THE DAY OF THE LORD) had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

Now, keep in mind that what Jesus is describing in Matthew 24 are just some of the events that will occur in **the last days**. And notice also that one of the most important days of **the last days** is described in Matthew 24:15, which sadly is a controversial passage, because this passage will be the key to Jewish survival in **the last days**! To misinterpret this passage is potentially to miss the way of escape (cf JESUS' WORDS - Mt 24:16-20-note) when the Antichrist reveals himself as the Satanically empowered (Revelation 13:4-5-note where "BEAST" = ANTI-CHRIST), Anti-Semitic ruthless leader that he will be for 3.5 years. Because Matthew 24:15 is so important to the nation of Israel, I have written an in depth commentary in which I address and refute the interpretations of those writers who do not interpret the Olivet Discourse literally. Click here for the commentary on Matthew 24:15 (and at the top of the page you can advance to the next verse).

The return of the Messiah will (1) put an end to the Great Tribulation and (2) will bring about establishment of His literal, earthly **Millennial Kingdom**. Isaiah 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-3 are virtually identical passages that describe the setting up of Messiah's Kingdom on earth with His throne in Jerusalem (on Mt Zion-see note).

And to reiterate, this general time period is also known as the Day of the LORD, which clealy is not a single day but a period of time in which the LORD engages with the world to bring about judgment of all the ungodly nations and to deliver a redeemed remnant in the nation of Israel (Ro 11:25-29-note, Zech 13:8-9-commentary).

Micah, a contemporary prophet of **Isaiah** gives a virtually identical prophecy -

And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. 2 And many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 3 And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war. (Micah 4:1-3-**note**)

Comment: Grogan adds that "If we accept supernatural inspiration (**Ed**: Which I accept!), then we cannot exclude the possibility of independent revelation in the case of each prophet." (Isaiah: Expositor's Bible Commentary)

In view of the truth that ALL Scripture is God breathed (2Ti 3:16-note) and that the Holy Spirit moved in men of old to speak God's word (2Pe 1:21-note), this repetition in Isaiah and Micah emphasizes the supreme importance of this great truth concerning **Jerusalem's future**. It behooves believers to pay close attention to such repetition and not to ignore it (or become involved in wrangling about words or speculation such as who wrote first, whether one prophet copied the other, etc - cp Paul's admonition to his young disciple Timothy - 2Ti 2:14-note, 2Ti 2:23-note) . **As emphasized so often, one of the important aspects of prophecy is to give believers a future and a hope, and to motivate pursuit of a godly, holy life** (cp 1Ti 4:7, 8-note, 1Ti 4:9, 10, 11-note , 1Pe 1:14-note, 1Pe 1:15, 16-note, 1Pe 1:17-note; 2Co 7:1-note - See also Vertical Vision Empowers Horizontal Living) in this present evil age (Gal 1:4)**. What you are looking for (forward to) will greatly influence what you are living for** (1Jn

3:2-note, 1Jn 3:3-note, cp 2Co 5:7-note, 2Co 4:16-note, 2Co 4:17-note, 2Co 4:18-note, Titus 2:12-note, Titus 2:13-note, Gal 5:5+)

S Lewis Johnson rightly reminds us "One thing that we can say about prophecies is that it provides us not simply satisfaction for our curiosity concerning the future, but it is designed ultimately to give us **consolation** and **edification** through the knowledge of the future. (Messianic Prophecies in Isaiah See also on site article Messianic Prophecies in Isaiah)

Chuck Smith writes that "In the Kingdom Age Jesus Christ will establish His throne on Mt. Zion. We will also go there to be taught by Him. (Rev.1:6-note, Rev 3:21-note, Rev 19:15-note, Rev 5:9,10-note.) So Isaiah and Micah go from the dark, bleak history ("THE DARK SIDE" OF THE DAY OF THE LORD) and now he jumps forward to a day yet future when Jesus Christ the Messiah comes and establishes the kingdom. And the Jews, as the scripture said, will look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they will recognize Him and they will weep over Him (Zechariah 12:10-14-note). Weep over their national blindness and their failure to recognize that He was their Messiah. And He will establish His kingdom on the top of the mountains in Jerusalem. Traditionally, it is felt that the top of Mount Zion will be the place of the throne of Jesus Christ in the Kingdom Age. And this is going ahead now to the Kingdom Age. All nations show flow unto it. (Chuck Smith Commentary - see Isaiah under Sermon Notes)

The **last days** is a term which is found in both the Old Testament an the New Testament (see all 5 uses below). As discussed above the phrase **last days** in Hebrews 1:2-note indicates that this time period begins with the first coming of Christ. And when we compare OT passages such as Isa 2:2 and Micah 4:1, the events which these prophets describe in **the last days**, are associated with the **Second Coming** of Christ to establish His **Millennial Kingdom**. The Second Coming will mark the terminus of the last days.

John MacArthur reiterates that the **last days** speaks of "the period beginning with the **first advent** of Jesus Christ (Ac 2:17; 2Ti 3:1-note; He 1:2-note; Jas 5:3; 2Pe 3:3-note). Old Testament prophets, being without a clear word regarding the time between the **Messiah's two advents**, linked the expression to the Messiah's return to establish His earthly kingdom, i.e., the **millennial kingdom** spoken about in Rev 20:1-10-note (Borrow MacArthur Study Bible)

Grogan adds that **the last days** "is a technical eschatological expression… The NT, making explicit the fact that the Messiah comes twice, applies the phrase both to the period of His first advent (e.g., Acts 2:17; Heb 1:2) and to His second (e.g., James 5:3; 1 Peter 1:5-note). (Ibid)

It is notable that the writer of **Hebrews** in one sentence encompasses the first and second comings of Christ, which in effect define "**the last days**" - "So Christ also, **having been offered once** (First coming - beginning of "the last days") to bear the sins of many , shall appear a **second time** (see Second Coming- which marks the termination of "the last days") for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (He 9:28-note)

Below are all the uses of the phrase **the last days** in the **NAS**…

1. **Jeremiah 23:20** "The anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart; In **the last days** (latter days = Je 23:20ESV) you will clearly understand it.

2. **Jeremiah 49:39** 'But it will come about in **the last days** (latter days = Je 30:24ESV) That I shall restore the fortunes of Elam,'" Declares the LORD.

3. **Ezekiel 38:16** and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It will come about in **the last days** (latter days = Ezek 38:16ESV) that I shall bring you against My land, in order that the nations may know Me when I shall be sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog."

4. **Hosea 3:4, 5** For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar and without ephod or household idols. 5 Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in **the last days** (latter days = Ho 3:5ESV).

   KJV Study Bible (online) - In God's appointed time Israel will come to its senses and will have a national regeneration (cf. Jer. 31:31–34)… Although Christ will reign as sovereign in the kingdom, it is not clear whether He is the only One on the throne. Several passages suggest that David will reign in the Millennium (Is. 55:3, 4; Jer. 30:9; 33:15, 17, 20, 21; Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25; Hos. 3:5; Amos 9:11).

   Constable - They (Israel) would approach the Lord with a healthy sense of fear because of His rich blessings. This would happen "**in the last days,**" namely, the days of Israel's national restoration (i.e., the Millennium; cf. Deut. 4:30; Isa. 2:2; Mic. 4:1).

5. Micah 4:1+ And it will come about in **the last days** (latter days = Micah 4:1ESV) That the mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it.

THE LAST DAYS
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Acts 2:17+ '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;

2 Timothy 3:1+ But realize this, that in **the last days** difficult times will come.

Hebrews 1:2+ in these **last days** has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

> **John MacArthur** on "**these last days**" - There are several ways to interpret the phrase, in these last days. It could refer to the last days of revelation. It could mean that this is the final revelation in Christ, there being nothing else to add to it. Or it could mean that in the last days of revelation it came through God's Son. But I think the writer is making a messianic reference. The phrase "the last days" was very familiar to the Jews of that day and had a distinctive meaning. Whenever a Jew saw or heard these words he immediately had messianic thoughts, because the scriptural promise was that in the last days Messiah would come (Jer. 33:14–16; Mic. 5:1–4; Zech. 9:9, 16). Since this letter was written first of all to Jews, we will interpret the phrase in that context. The woman at the well, though a Samaritan, told Jesus, "I know that the Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us" (John 4:25). She knew that when Messiah arrived, He would unfold the full and final revelation of God, as indeed He did. The writer, then, is saying, "In these promised Last Days Messiah (Christ) has come and has spoken the final revelation of God." Jesus came in these last days. Unfortunately, Messiah's own people rejected Him and His revelation, and so the fulfillment of all of the promises of the last days has yet to be fully realized. (See MacArthur's Hebrews Commentary)

James 5:3+ Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in **the last days** that you have stored up your treasure!

2 Peter 3:3+ Know this first of all, that in **the last days** mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,

THE LATTER DAYS

Another Biblical phrase which has eschatological overtones and is virtually synonymous with **the last days** is the phrase **the latter days** (7 occurrences in the NAS)…

Deuteronomy 4:30-commentary or here (For the **context** read Dt 4:26-29, 31 below) "When you are in distress (ESV = "*tribulation*" Dt 4:30ESV, but Lxx does **not** use **thlipsis**) and all these things have come upon you, in **the latter days**, you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice.

> **MacArthur** on **the latter days** - Lit. "the end of days." Moses saw in the distant future a time when repentant Israel would turn again to the Lord and obey Him. Throughout the Pentateuch, "**the latter days**" refers to the time when Messiah will establish His kingdom (see Ge 49:1, 8–12; Nu 24:14–24+ [**Ed**: esp Nu 24:17+]; Dt 32:39–43+). (Borrow The MacArthur Study Bible)

Keep Context King for accurate interpretation of Dt 4:30. Here is Deuteronomy 4:26-31...

Deut 4:26+ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you shall surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but shall be utterly destroyed. 27 "And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples (Gentiles), and you shall be left few in number among the nations, where the LORD shall drive you (**Ed**: Israel's 10 northern tribes were deported in 722BC by the Assyrians, Judah and Benjamin were taken by the Babylonians in 605, 597, 586BC and finally Israel was dispersed by Rome in AD70). 28 "And there you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell (Divine [righteous] sarcasm! Today the "idols" are even more subtle and seductive - money, power, prestige!). 29 "But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul (Lxx adds "in your

affliction" = **thlipsis** used in Da 12:1-**note**; See why they will seek Him in Zech 12:10+) Deut 4:31 "FOR (**term of explanation**) the LORD your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the COVENANT with YOUR FATHERS (**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** - see Ex 2:24+) which He swore to them." (His covenant includes "**THE LAND**" - see Ex 33:1; Dt 6:10 - so much for so-called "**replacement theology**" - the church is never promised the actual land of Israel!)

Deuteronomy 31:29+ "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in **the latter days**, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands."

Job 42:12 And the LORD blessed **the latter days** of Job more than his beginning, and he had 14,000 sheep, and 6,000 camels, and 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. (This is clearly not a prophetic allusion, but is included for completeness)

Jeremiah 30:24+ The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back, Until He has performed, and until He has accomplished The intent of His heart; In **the latter days** you will understand this.

Jeremiah 48:47 "Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab In **the latter days**," declares the LORD. Thus far the judgment on Moab.

Daniel 2:28-**note** "However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in **the latter days**. (which is essentially God's Plan for the Ages!) This was your dream and the visions in your mind while on your bed.

Daniel 10:14-**note** "Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in **the latter days**, for the vision pertains to the days yet future."

Comment: The messenger proceeds to give Daniel a detailed prophecy of events that would occur in the future. Of course at the time Daniel received this message everything prophesied was future to him. For those who live in the twenty-first century most of the prophecies in Daniel 11 have been perfectly fulfilled in world history. In fact the fulfillment is so accurate that it causes great consternation to those who do not accept a literal interpretation of the Bible and are therefore forced to say that the detailed descriptions in Daniel 11 were written long after Daniel's time. The fact is that in Matthew 24:15 Jesus Himself stated Daniel was the author of "Daniel" and that is sufficient evidence for me!

Notice that the latter days is amplified by the phrase "the days yet future." Careful observation of this detailed prophecy shows that all the predictions up to Daniel 11:35 have been fulfilled, but beginning in Daniel 11:36 through Daniel 12:13, the prophecies have not been fulfilled and are all future to us in the twenty-first century! And so beginning in Daniel 11:36 "the king" is described in such a way that there is no doubt that this is a description of the coming Anti-Christ. But when does the Anti-Christ begin his "reign of terror" which is described in Daniel 11:36-Daniel 12:1? In Matthew 24:15 (see detailed analysis explaining why this prophecy is definitely a yet future event) Jesus gave His Jewish audience a clear, visible sign of when the Anti-Christ would began to rule, stating "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)." In Mt 24:16-20 Jesus makes it very clear that the Jews who are living when this sign occurs are to flee for their lives from Jerusalem. And then in Matthew 24:21 He explains why there is such a sense of urgency: "for then there will be a **great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall." Notice that this description in no way fits the Romans destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, because clearly the Nazi Holocaust was a far greater tribulation for the Jews than was the destruction of Jerusalem. What Jesus is saying is that in the latter days when the Anti-Christ reveals his true identity and commits the abomination of desolation, a period of time ensues which will far surpass the Jewish holocaust in World War II.

THE DAYS TO COME

A third phrase that is related to **the last days** is **the days to come**…

Genesis 49:1 Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what shall befall you **in the days to come**. (NET Bible has "in the future")

NET Note - The expression "in the future" (אַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים, 'akharit hayyamim, "in the end of days") is found most frequently in prophetic passages; it may refer to the end of the age, the eschaton, or to the distant

future. The contents of some of the sayings in this chapter stretch from the immediate circumstances to the time of the settlement in the land to the coming of Messiah.

Carl Armerding - Keil says that this "in prophetic language denotes not the future generally but the last future, the Messianic age of consummation." According to Delitzsch the expression refers to "the future which forms the close of the course of history. The notion is eschatological, but limited by the horizon of the speaker." Gesenius refers to it as a "prophetic formula" which means "in the future time, in the last days."8 It occurs also in Numbers 24:14, Deuteronomy 4:30 and Dt 31:29, and about a dozen times in the Prophets. In each case the definitions given above would suit the context well. If, as Leupold remarks, "Jacob can see in one picture the occupation of Canaan and the Messiah's kingdom but hardly anything that lies between," we need not be surprised to find in the passage an intermingling of the near future with that which is more remote." (The Last Words of Jacob: Genesis 49 -- By: Carl Armerding Bib Sac 112:448 - Oct 55)

Numbers 24:14+ (to help interpret see context = Nu 24:17) "And now behold, I am going to my people; come, and I will advise you what this people will do to your people **in the days to come** ("the latter days" = Nu 24:14ESV)."

Isaiah 27:6 **In the days to come** Jacob will take root, Israel will blossom and sprout; and they will fill the whole world with fruit.

The **ESV Study Bible** comments that the phrase **the last days** "sometimes refers specifically to the time of the Messiah (Hosea 3:5). It is not immediately clear here whether Isaiah is so specific, but the way Isa 11:4 echoes Isa 2:4 shows that the oracle speaks of the Messianic era. NT authors use the various Greek translations of the expression (generally rendered "in the last days") in the belief that, since Jesus inaugurated His Messianic kingship by His resurrection, the latter days have arrived in a decisive way, while at the same time **the last days** await their complete realization and final fulfillment at the end of the age (Ac 2:17; 2Ti 3:1; He 1:2; Jas 5:3; 2Pe 3:3; and probably 1Pe 1:20; 1Jn 2:18). (Borrow ESV Study Bible)

Related Resources:

- See Commentary on Acts 2:15-19
- Acts 2:14-21 I Will Pour Out My Spirit - John Piper discusses the last days

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Adrian Rogers on The Prophecy of the Last Days

First of all, the prophecy of the last days. The Bible teaches there will be last days. That is, it is coming to an end, folks. Time and history will not go on as we have known it. There's coming a time when God will put the final period upon the final sentence upon the final paragraph upon the final page upon the final book of history, and it is coming to an end. And if you're living for this world and this world only, you are, of all people, most foolish. The Bible says this world, "… is passing away and the fashion thereof, but he that does the will of God shall abide forever." Christ is coming back. And those of us who know the word of God and people who are in tune with the Holy Spirit, I believe, have a deep feeling down deep in their hearts that the coming of Jesus Christ is imminent, that it is near, that God is writing in boxcar letters across the horizon, "Prepare to meet thy God." History is coming to a climax, and the Scripture with fiery finger is pointing to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. And one of these days soon I believe that God is going to step down out of heaven with His great ring of keys and say, "Gentlemen, it's closing time." We're about to come to the end of an age. Now the Bible prophesies that the age is coming to an end. The Bible calls it the last days. And then the Bible says that these days are going to be dangerous days and days in which we need to be warned, days in which we need to be prepared. Now, folks, a lot of people who believe in the social gospel don't understand the Bible. They talk about the social gospel. They talk about liberation theology. They talk about saving civilization. I want to tell you, dear friend, civilization will not be saved. And the Gospel was not intended to save civilization. And if you're trying to save civilization, you remind me of a person painting the decks of a sinking ship or perhaps rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. Friend, this civilization is not going to be saved. Satan sails a sinking ship. He rules a doomed domain. This world is coming to and end. We are living, dear friend, in the last days. Now learn this about the Gospel: The Gospel is not here to save civilization from wreckage. The Gospel is here to save men from the wreckage of civilization. That's the Gospel. We are to be calling men out and getting people saved and getting people ready for eternity, for the Bible teaches it is all coming to an end. There are, what the Bible calls, the last days. Now I don't want to spend a lot of time on the last days, per say, the prophecy of the last days. Incidentally, somebody told Mark Twain that the world is coming to an end. He said, "Well, that's all right. We can get along without it." (Excerpt from sermon entitled "Survival in the Last Days" on 2 Timothy 3:1-8 - Click here scroll down to page 107 for this full sermon)