

# **“Last Days”**

## **Part 1**

**10/7/20**

**First of all, when talking about the last days we must note that the NT Bible writers considered themselves to already be in the last days.**

**1 Peter 1:20 “For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you.”**

**Hebrews 1:1-2 “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;”**

**So, we see that the phrase “last days” does not necessarily point to the time just before Christ’s return, but reaches back to the 1st century and time of Christ.**

**Let’s look at a few more passages on the last days having begun with the early church:**

**“Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour” (1 John 2:18).**

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**In Peter’s amazing Pentecost sermon, he quotes the prophet Joel:**

**“And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” (Acts 2:17)**

**Peter told the Pentecost crowd, “This is that. This is what Joel prophesied of. The last days have begun!”**

**Hence, the last days are defined as the continuous period of time from the ministry of Jesus to the second coming—Mankind has been living in the last days for 20 centuries!**

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**Now, in understanding the Bible, it is helpful to think of the Old Testament as the age of PROMISE, and the New Testament as the age of fulfillment.**

**In the OT, God promised his people a Messiah who would establish and rule over his Kingdom. That was THE PROMISE.**

**With the coming of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, we have THE FULFILLMENT—God fulfilled His promise of a Redeemer, a Savior, and a King that would continue the throne of David *FOREVER*, which had been a promise of God to David that we call the Davidic Covenant.**

**When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, he made mention of David's throne and how Jesus was the fulfillment of this prophecy:**

**"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (Lk 1:31-33).**

**So, the promises of God are being fulfilled in these last days, even if they will not be ultimately or finally fulfilled until the last day.**

**Theologians call the time period we're in the "ALREADY" (it has already dawned, the fulfillment has begun) and the "NOT YET" (it is not yet finalized or complete).**

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**Now, the question is, are we in the “last” of the last days?**

**Many of the general signs Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24, Luke 21, and Mark 13 are happening all around us with increasing frequency.**

**The Lord predicted widespread spiritual deception from false Christs, false prophets, and false teachers.**

**He said there would be chronic wars and rumors of war; nation would rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.**

**He also predicted global famines, plagues, and earthquakes in many different places.**

**He further predicted fierce persecution, betrayals, and lawlessness.**

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**But I believe the key sign that we are in the last of the last days is the 1948 rebirth of Israel as a nation.**

**The rebirth of Israel as an independent nation in 1948 is one of the most significant events in world history. Never before has an entire race of people been without a homeland for so long without permanently assimilating into surrounding populations.**

**In just 100 years the Jewish population of Israel has risen an amazing 7,700 percent! Why this mass immigration to Israel? It is a fulfillment of prophecies which say that God will take His people from all the nations and bring them back into their own land.**

**The Prophet Ezekiel prophesied, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone ... and bring them into their own land" (Ezekiel 37:21).**

**In the 20th and 21st centuries, Jews have come to Israel from all over the world, from wherever they have been scattered amongst the nations.**

**The first wave of immigration started in 1882 and particularly involved Jews from Russia and Romania.**

**In 1915 there were just 83,000 Jews in Palestine but this increased to over 6.2 million Jews in 2015, resulting in an amazing 7400% increase!**

**In comparison, over the same period the UK population increased just 55%.**

**Why this return? It is an end-time sign to the nations that God is about to intervene in world affairs!**

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**Equally amazing is the fact that the nation of Israel was “born in a day” when the State of Israel was declared on 14 May 1948. This was dramatic fulfillment of Bible prophecy:**

**“Who has ever seen anything as strange as this? Who ever heard of such a thing? Has a nation ever been born in a single day?” (Isa 66:8)**

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**Further, God has supernaturally protected Israel since her rebirth as a nation.**

**The Bible prophets had declared, “Whoever assails you will fall because of you ... no weapon that is formed against you will prosper” (Isa 54:15,17).**

**I will be a wall of fire around her ... he who touches you, touches the apple of (the Lord’s) eye” (Zech 2:5,8).**

**In 1967 the armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon (and later Iraq) attacked Israel with the goal “to wipe Israel off the map.”**

**Israel defeated the attack in just 6 days even though the Arab armies had huge superiority in armor, aircraft and troops. After**

**the war Israel held the Sinai, the Golan Heights, Gaza, the West Bank and all of Jerusalem.**

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**Then again in 1973, Egypt and Syria launched a coordinated attack on Israel in an attempt to win back territory lost in the 6-Day War. Iraqi forces soon joined the war, and Syria received support from Jordan. The Arab armies used up-to-date Soviet weaponry.**

**The war was launched on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar when Israel is at rest and prayer. This took Israeli Defense Forces by surprise and Israeli casualties were heavy. Nevertheless, after just 20 days Egypt and Syria suffered military defeat!**

**These wartime victories over superior anti-missile technologies are fulfilled prophecy!**

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**The tiny nation of Israel is the size of New Jersey and has less than ten million people, but she still stands unique amongst the nations. Why?**

**The answer is that her existence (past, present and future) is mapped out in the scriptures. No other nation has such a well-**

**defined timeline. Nations come and nations go, but according to the Bible, Israel will last forever!**

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**Thus, in 1948 when Israel was declared a nation again against all odds, it was the fulfillment of what the prophet Ezekiel had said,**

**“Then say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; 22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel” (Ezekiel 37:21-22).**

**“And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the way cities, and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof; and they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God” (Amos 9:14-15).**

**God says, “I'll bring them back and plant them there, and no one will uproot them.” God has brought them back to stay, regardless of what anyone says about it!**

**In short, the rebirth of Israel 20 centuries after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ reveals that Bible prophecy is still being dramatically fulfilled. Surely, Jesus is near. At the door!**