

Concerning The Last Days

- I. We have been in the last days since Christ's first advent. **HEB 1:1-2; 1JO 2:18.**
- A. There was a fulness of time pegged to John and Christ's ministries. **GAL 4:4-5; MAR 1:15.**
 - B. The last days/time will conclude with the last day and the last trumpet when Christ comes to raise the dead and finish the mystery. **JOH 6:39-40, 44, 54; 1TH 4:14-17; 1CO 15:51-52.**
- II. The general trend of history up to the end is one of diminishing godliness and increasing exaltation of self and the lusts of the flesh even to the denial of nature. **2TI 3:1-5, 13.**
- A. Lust-driven scoffers and mockers will abound. **2PE 3:3-4; JUDE 1:14-19.**
 - B. Faith will be negligible. **LUK 18:7-8.**
 - C. The kingdom of heaven would grow but be corrupted. **MAT 13:31-33.**
 - 1. The gospel and religion of Jesus Christ by the apostolic ministry would indeed be the salt of the earth to preserve it and make it palatable. **MAT 5:13 c/w JOB 6:6.**
 - 2. Counterfeit religion is MSG, not salt.
 - 3. Wherever the gospel had success in casting down superstitions and lusts, life in general improved but the improvements became more important than the gospel.
 - 4. Be mindful that great civilizations have existed without the gospel. Think of Babel, Egypt, etc. Beware of conflating leviathan and the Lord.
 - 5. The greatest period of true evangelism was the first century. **COL 1:5-6, 23; ROM 16:25-26.**
 - 6. History and eschatology are best understood from heaven's perspective: advances in civilization from the standpoint of human ingenuity are not the only measure by which this world and its end should be understood.
 - D. This system will culminate in the ascendancy of a supreme power that intends to displace and eliminate any competition, especially that which comes from the invisible God. **2TH 2:1-10; REV 13:11-18.**
 - 1. The ultimate antichrist, the man of sin, and the system he heads will assume to seize total power over men's souls and interests under guise of being the answer to mankind's troubles. c/w **DAN 3:1-8; 6:6-9.**
 - 2. At the peak of humanism's seeming triumph, Christ will suddenly crash the system. **1TH 5:1-3.**
 - 3. Then His judgment of men according to **ACT 17:31** begins.
- III. The theme of *Peace and safety* (**1TH 5:3**) preceding the judgment of God accords with the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in **MAT 24:35-39; LUK 17:26-30.**
- A. Christ is making clear that the time of the wrap-up at His second coming is not revealed either by presages of destruction or by divine revelation. It is unknown. He comes as a *thief in the night* and thieves don't tip off their targets. **MAR 13:32-37.**
 - B. In both Noah's and Lot's times, civilization was still flourishing as if nothing could upset its course. This is what made their sudden judgments so unexpected.
 - 1. In Noah's day, universal corruption and violence filled the earth. **GEN 6:5-13.**
 - 2. Gross moral corruption and violence defined Sodom and Gomorrah. **GEN 13:13; 18:20; 19:9; JUDE 1:7.**
 - 3. violence: The exercise of physical force so as to inflict injury on, or cause damage to, persons or property; action or conduct characterized by this; treatment or usage tending to cause bodily injury or forcibly interfering with

- personal freedom.
4. Both cultures had maximized human depravity while still having a cohesion of day-to-day life.
 5. Both cultures had only one righteous man in their midst (**2PE 2:5-8**) and it may be observed that even a lousy Christian condemned Sodom. And what about Capernaum? **MAT 11:23-24**.
 6. Thus, wheat and tares coexist until the harvest of judgment. **MAT 13:37-43**.
 7. Nuclear holocaust is not the immediate presage to final judgment but a holocaust of righteousness in a flourishing culture is so.
 8. Mind how Christ's description of the end counters any end-time prediction which distances the deliverance of the righteous from the destruction of the wicked.
- C. The coming of Christ in final judgment implies a destruction of the very material of creation as was the case in Noah's and Lot's days. **2PE 3:10-13**.
1. Other judgments of God against sinners involved His use of pestilences, wars, invasions, turning men over to their own devices, etc. But no "tools" will be used in final judgment other than His own power which will destroy the very foundation upon which sinners stand and depend.
 2. The Flood is standing proof of such judgmental power and the evidence is everywhere so that only a fool would deny it. **2PE 3:5-7**.
 3. We shouldn't be surprised if current and future archaeological evidence of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is dismissed likewise by skeptics.
- D. **MAT 24:35-39; LUK 17:26-30** do not prove that there will be a recurrence of the angelic malfeasance of **GEN 6:1-4**.
1. Those rebel angels are chained in hell unto the final judgment. **2PE 2:4; JUDE 1:6**.
 2. There was no such recurrence in Sodom and Gomorrah. The judgment fell upon wicked men.
 3. The spirits of devils working miracles (**REV 16:14**) and seducing spirits (**1TI 4:1**) will coordinate with their dark master's short release to deceive the nations (**REV 20:3**) but that is the likely extent of wicked angels' workings.
 4. Jesus Christ's use of the judgments in Noah's and Lot's days shows:
 - a. a "critical mass" of moral corruption and violence in a flourishing culture.
 - b. a minimal sliver of righteousness in those cultures.
 - c. two federal heads for whose sake their houses were spared.
 - d. salvation and extinguishing judgment on the same day.
 - e. no survivors among the intended targets.
 - f. a place provided for the saved to live after the destruction. **2PE 3:13**.
 - g. "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (**LUK 17:30**).
- E. Regardless of the corruption around us, we should live unconformed to this world so as to not be ashamed at our Lord's sudden coming and judgment. **2PE 3:14; 1JO 2:28**.