

Are We Near the End of Days?

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"Dear Mr. Wilson:

I am 53 years old and I wonder if Jesus will return during my lifetime. I am a Presbyterian and one of our ministers recently held a class on the book of Revelation and his take was that the end of days was nowhere in sight. I have been wondering for quite some time, are there any specific signs from God indicating that the end is near so that we may be spiritually prepared?

The world has an endless supply of economic, political, geophysical and ethnic troubles – everywhere we turn, there is perplexity. I know that "troubles" do not necessarily mean the end is near, for troubles never end. So, what hints about the end of days does God offer?

Thank you,
Jane"

Dear Jane:

Thank you for your e-mail. You have asked a great question and the answer is "Yes!" God has put two types of hints in the Bible indicating that we are living near the end of days. Before I describe these hints, I would like to offer two comments.

First, many people look at the newspaper rather than the Bible to determine where we are in God's great plan of salvation. History says that civilizations come and go, and we know that world wars come and go. Today, there is no end to bad news. The economy of the whole world has fallen. But look back at the pandemic of influenza in 1918. More than fifteen million people died in one year! Fearful events do not necessarily mean the end of days is near.

Second, some well-intentioned pastors may tell parishioners the end is nowhere in sight and other pastors may claim they have received a vision from God that such and such is going to happen soon. These predictions should not be trusted because we cannot verify the contents of a vision and we cannot ignore the fact that Jesus has promised to return.

So, where should we turn for answers? The answer is simple, but the topic is complex. God's Word reveals God's plans. Bible prophecy tells us where we are in God's plans, and even though you may not fully appreciate all that I am about to say, I hope that my response will encourage you to start digging into God's Word for yourself because there is compelling evidence in the Bible that shows we are living near the end of days. God's Word offers two classes of hints.

There are "long scale" and "short scale" hints. Long scale hints are prophecies that cover

centuries of time. They show a steady progression of time toward the return of Jesus. Short scale hints narrow the time frame down to a few years. Before I present some of these hints, you need to understand a few facts about apocalyptic prophecy.

There are five types of prophecy in the Bible and apocalyptic prophecy is the only type of prophecy that is based on chronology. Each apocalyptic prophecy has a beginning point and an ending point in time and the events within each apocalyptic prophecy occur in the order given.

Apocalyptic prophecy allows us to determine our chronological position within God's plan for our redemption. Second, you need to understand that there are seventeen apocalyptic prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation and when they are properly aligned, they produce an amazing matrix – showing a consistent fulfillment of prophecy over the passage of time.

As we study this matrix, we can see *what* has been fulfilled and *when* it was fulfilled, and we can also see *what* remains to be fulfilled and *when* it will be fulfilled! I have mentioned these two features about apocalyptic prophecy because a person can read the books of Daniel and Revelation a hundred times and miss the hints that God has put there if he does not understand the orderly nature of apocalyptic prophecy.

Long Scale Hints

1. Daniel 2 contains a long scale hint. The sweeping vision in Daniel 2 began in 605 B.C. and it ends with the Second Coming. To show chronological progression, God foretold the rise and fall of several empires and world history affirms the rise and fall of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, Rome, and the breakup of the Roman empire in A.D. 476.

Since A.D. 476, we have been living in a period represented by the feet of the metal man. About nine months before Jesus returns, a new time period will begin represented by the ten toes. (Daniel 2:42) The ten toes represent ten kings who will attempt to destroy Jesus when He returns. (Revelation 17:12-14) The fulfillment of this long scale prophecy has been underway for twenty-five centuries. We are living between A.D. 476 and the appearing of the ten kings, but what we really want to know is how much more time is left!

2. Daniel 7 also contains long scale hint. Daniel 7 parallels Daniel 2 in many ways, but it adds a very important detail. Daniel 7 predicted that a religious power would rise out of the fourth empire and this power would persecute the saints for 1,260 years. This prophecy has been fulfilled!

The Roman Catholic Church came to power during the Roman Empire and the Church persecuted its adversaries until 1798. The French Revolution broke the power of the papacy. The pope was taken prisoner and he died in exile. Daniel 7 indicates the papacy will regain power again and speak "boastful words" against the Most High.

Daniel 7 is another prophecy that contains a long scale hint about the return of Jesus. We are

living between 1798 and a time when the papacy will regain its power over nations and speak boastfully. The fulfillment of this prophecy has been underway for twenty-five centuries. In these first two prophecies, we have progressed from 605 B.C. to 1798, but what we really want to know is how much more time is left!

3. Daniel 8 contains another long scale hint. Daniel 8 contains the longest prophecy in the Bible. This prophecy spans 2,300 years. It began in 457 B.C. and ended in 1844. This prophecy primarily concerns the appearing of Lucifer at *the appointed time of the end*. (Daniel 8:19) It indicates that two things must first happen before Jesus returns. First, Heaven's temple must be cleansed. The cleansing of Heaven's temple is a Hebrew phrase that describes the judgment bar of Christ.

In other words, Jesus will go through the books of record and determine the eternal destiny of each dead person before He returns. This procedure began in 1844 when the 2,300 years ended. Second, before Jesus returns, Lucifer, the devil, will be allowed to physically appear on Earth.

The devil is the destroyer, the horn power in Daniel 8 who will come out of the north. He will come with 200 million angels and blinding glory, and he will deceive billions of people. Once he has gained enough followers, he will abruptly change character and become the stern-faced king, the cruel dictator described in Daniel 8:23.

Claiming to be Almighty God and having miracle working powers to back up his deception, he will rule over the whole world for a short time. (Revelation 13:11-18) So, Daniel 8 contains a long scale hint. This prophecy tells us that we are living between 1844 and the time when Lucifer will appear. We clearly see chronological progression toward the Second Coming in Daniel 2, Daniel 7 and Daniel 8, but what we really want to know is how much time is left!

Short Scale Hints

1. Revelation 7 contains a short scale hint if you understand the prerequisites. Since I have provided a comprehensive explanation on these topics in other places, I will just summarize how this hint works. I believe that God's patience with Earth ended when the Jubilee Calendar expired on April 9, 1994.

This calendar began with the Exodus in 1437 B.C. and it lasted for seven Great Days (each Great Day is 490 years in length). The end of the Jubilee Calendar marks the end of God's forbearance with mankind. When God's patience expired, He gave the seven angels who stand before Him seven trumpets (Revelation 8:2).

The seven trumpets are seven *redemptive* judgments that contain the wrath of God. The first four angels went out from God's throne to begin their horrific destruction in 1994, but they were told to wait! Before God's wrath begins, He will select and empower 144,000 people as prophets. These prophets will speak for God during the Great Tribulation. Of course, we know the Great Tribulation has not begun because one-third of Earth has not been burned up (the

first trumpet judgment). So, we are living between 1994 and the global earthquake (Revelation 8:5) that will mark the commencement of the Great Tribulation.

2. Revelation 12 and 13 also contain a short scale hint if you understand the prerequisites. Again, I have provided a comprehensive explanation about this prophecy in other places, so a summary should suffice. Basically, Revelation 12:7-17 retraces the 1,260 years of persecution described in Daniel 7.

The devil, working through the Roman Catholic Church, "chased God's saints into the wilderness." As 1798 drew near, Earth helped the woman (God's people) by providing a place where people were free to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. The United States of America was established in 1776, just twenty-two years before the papacy was wounded, and this nation "helped" the woman by providing a government with a wall of separation between church and state.

When the devil saw that his 1,260 years were up and that he had not been able to destroy the woman in the desert, he turned his attention to his final assault. He is going to persecute those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus during the Great Tribulation. (The 144,000 will speak the testimony of Jesus during the Great Tribulation.)

When the *appointed time of the end* arrives, the first four trumpets will commence. Revelation 13 indicates that Babylon will form and the woman will be persecuted for 42 months. The short scale hint in this prophecy says that when Babylon forms, the deadly wound given to the papacy in 1798 will be healed.

In other words, a time is coming when the Roman Catholic Church will lead the world in a unified effort to appease God so that His wrath will cease. Look around – since 1929, the papacy has regained much of the respect and influence that it lost during the French Revolution. When Pope John Paul II died in 2005, more than two billion people saw his funeral on TV (the highest number of people ever to watch a single event).

At the present time, 170 nations have ambassadors assigned to the Vatican. In 2008, President George W. Bush held a lavish birthday party for Pope Benedict. These things indicate that the deadly wound inflicted on the papacy in 1798 is almost healed.

These hints indicate that we are living between 1994 and the global earthquake that marks the commencement of the Great Tribulation. (Revelation 8:5) The devil is prepared for his final assault on the woman, the deadly wound inflicted on the papacy is almost healed, and economic and political perplexities are driving the whole world to the brink of ruin.

Merging Long Scale and Short Scale Hints

Long scale and short scale hints work together. The Bible, in its entirety, only speaks of 7,000 years. In other words, if we add up the genealogical records given in the Old Testament, if we chart out the historical records given in the Bible, if we add in the prophetic time periods given in

the books of Daniel and Revelation, the sum of every event found in the Bible totals approximately 7,000 years! Since we know that Jesus will return to Earth at the beginning of the one thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20, a little Bible research reveals that we could be within seven years of the 6000th year! According to my calculations, the year of the second coming could be 2015. Of course, I could be wrong. It could be sooner or later. I do not know the day and hour, but this does not stop me from searching, watching, and praying!

I do know that the Great Tribulation will be 1,335 days in length, so subtracting three years and eight months from 2015, I find that 2011 *could be* the year the Great Tribulation begins. Will God's wrath be released in 2011? Time will tell. I do agree with Billy Graham.

He once said that if God does not do something about the evil that permeates this nation and the world soon, that He will owe Sodom and Gomorrah an apology. I also know that it is very easy to get distracted with the cares of this life. Remember the ten virgins?

They went out to meet the bridegroom, but they went to sleep! Jesus warned His disciples, **"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."** (Matthew 24:42-44)

Summary

Daniel 2 chronologically places us between A.D. 476 and the ten kings who will war against Jesus when He returns. The chronology within Daniel 7 places us between 1798 and the healing of the deadly wound which the papacy received in 1798. Daniel 8 narrows the window of time and places us between 1844 and physical appearing of the devil, which is during the *appointed* time of the end. Revelation 7 narrows the timing even further.

This prophecy places us between 1994 and the first four trumpets. Revelation 12 and 13 places us between 1798 and the formation of Babylon. Moreover, the Bible, as a whole, indicates that Jesus will return at the end of 6,000 years of sin. According to my calculations, these hints place us in the next few decades (and this is 2009).

Of course, my calculations may not be perfect, but there is an abundance of evidence building that we are very close. For example, when I consider the burden that seven billion people impose on Earth's resources, when I see the idolatry, unbridled greed, and sexual immorality that contaminates every nation, when I consider the misery index rising in every nation, I cannot think of a better time for the appearing of Jesus than now!

So Jane, the answer to your question is "Yes!" I believe you are young enough to see Jesus come provided that you survive the 1,335 days of the Great Tribulation.

I hope this helps!

Larry Wilson