

# Why I believe the New Testament teaches the church to be IN THE LAST DAYS

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There are two words under consideration. The first is **eschatos** from which we get our word eschatology. The second is **sunteleia**. Concerning **Sunteleia**: "This expression means "at the *consummation* of the age," i.e. when it reaches its *intended climax* (*consummated conclusion*).]"<sup>1</sup>

Our approach will be to consider the context in which the word occurs.

Matt.	Mark	Luke	John	Acts	1 Cor.	2 Tim. Heb. James 1 Pet.	2 Pt.	1 John Jude	Rev.
8	4	5	8	3	5	1	2	1	7

Neither Matthew, Mark, and Luke use **eschatos** for End Times.

The word in Matthew 28 is **sunteleia**, "Entire completion, i.e. consummation, end." [Strong's] It occurs six times in the New Testament and only once outside of Matthew (Heb. 9:26).

- Heb. 9:26  
<sup>26</sup> for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for **all at the end of the ages** to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. [ESV]

Notice how Jesus brings in "the end of the ages." God's eschatology is redemptive.

Now, let us consider Matthew's use of the idea.

- Matt. 13:39, 40, 49  
<sup>39</sup> The enemy that sowed them is the devil; **the harvest is the end of the world**; and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup> As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. <sup>49</sup> So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, [see also **Matthew 24, 25; Rev. 14:13-20**]
- Matt. 24:3 As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

Notice how Jesus assures His disciples He is with them as His Vision and Mission move forward toward completion. He will not leave them until Vision is fulfilled.

- Matt. 28:20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

John does not use **sunteleia**, but **eschatos**. The two words are probably working synonyms in this context.

John begins to refer to “the last day.”

“Only in John’s Gospel is explicit allusion found to the ‘last day’ (eschatē hērmera, e.g. 6:39 f., 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48). It is absent from the synoptics.”<sup>2</sup>

“The decisive mark of the ‘last day’, according to the Johannine witness, is the resurrection of the dead. The judgment of unbelievers (12:48) represents the negative side of this. Thus in the expectation of the end in John’s Gospel, as in the eschatological proclamation of the prophets, it is not the thought of judgment, but the all-embracing salvation that stands in the foreground.”<sup>3</sup>

1. There is a LAST DAY for RESURRECTION (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24; 1 Cor. 15:52).

- John 6:39, 40, 44, 54  
<sup>39</sup> And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, **but raise it up on the last day.** <sup>40</sup> For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and **I will raise him up on the last day.** <sup>44</sup> No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And **I will raise him up on the last day.** <sup>54</sup> Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and **I will raise him up on the last day.**
- John 11:24 Martha said to him, “**I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.**”
- 1 Cor. 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable,** and we shall be changed.

2. This LAST DAY is a Day of Judgment (John 12:48).

- John 12:48 The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken **will judge him on the last day.**

- James 5:3 Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. **You have laid up treasure in the last days.**

3. Leading up to the LAST DAY there are LAST DAYS (Acts 2:17).

A. Those LAST DAYS are marked by a fulfillment of Joel 2.

- Acts 2:17 “**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;

B. Those LAST DAYS are perilous (2 Tim. 3:1).

- 2Ti 3:1 This know also, **that in the last days perilous times shall come.**
- 2Pe 3:3 Knowing this first, **that there shall come in the last days scoffers**, walking after their own lusts,
- 1Jo 2:18 Little children, **it is the last time**: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; **whereby we know that it is the last time.**
- Jude 18 How that they told you **there should be mockers in the last time**, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

C. Those LAST DAYS begin with HIS SON (Heb. 1:2).

- Heb 1:2 **but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son**, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
- 1 Pet. 1:5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation **ready to be revealed in the last time.**
- 1 Pet. 1:20 He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but **was made manifest in the last times** for the sake of you

## BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

- Old Testament

“Finally, it is noteworthy that the formula is mostly encountered **in announcements of salvation or prefacing them**. Eschatological time will be stamped by Yahweh’s saving activity. Yahweh will make it possible for his people to turn back (Hos. 3:5). He will destroy his enemies (Jer. 23:20; 30:24). The nations will come to Jerusalem and receive instruction from Israel (Isa. 2:2ff; Mic. 4:1ff). Salvation will penetrate ‘to the end of the earth’ (Isa. 48:20; 49:6). Here the local

significance has a universal eschatological function. In all this Yahweh will reveal himself as holy (Ezek. 38:16, 23). However much the individual pictures of salvation presented by the various prophets differ, the expectation of a comprehensive age of salvation 'at the end of the days' brought in by Yahweh himself is common to them all."<sup>4</sup>

- New Testament

"We should be clear that the scriptural writers did not always use the terms in the same way as we would naturally do. For them, the supremely great event had taken place in the coming of Jesus Christ in the world to effect the salvation of all believers. This was not just an event in history; it was *the* event. Because of what Christ had done everything was altered. From then on, however long it would be until God intervened and set up the new heaven and the new earth, people were living in 'the last times.' The days in which it is possible for people to put their trust in Jesus Christ and to enter into the fullness of the salvation he has brought about differ from all the days that went before."<sup>5</sup>

"For the New Testament writers the coming of Jesus Christ into the world to bring about our salvation was the decisive happening in the entire history of the world. That set in motion the train of events that would bring about the salvation of sinners and eventually see the setting up of God's kingdom, as Revelation makes so clear. This did not mean that all evil would immediately disappear; both the New Testament writings and Christian experience make it plain that evil continues. But the important thing from the Christian point of view is that the saving work of Christ has altered everything. Sin has been decisively defeated and believer have already entered into salvation. However long or short a time it will be before the end of this world as we measure time, we are living in the last times as the New testament writers understand it."<sup>6</sup>

## OBSERVATION | CONCLUSION

1. The Bible teaches a very simplified eschatology.
2. Eschatology is very much redemptive.
3. Eschatology focuses on God fulfilling His Vision and bringing it His end.
4. The Book of Revelation gives us more information as to the content of the LAST DAYS leading up to the LAST DAY. The New Testament Church is in the LAST DAYS.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://biblehub.com/greek/4930.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Vol. 2, p 58.

<sup>3</sup> Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Vol. 2, p 58.

<sup>4</sup> Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Vol. 2, p 56.

<sup>5</sup> Baker, Theological Dictionary of the Bible, p 465.

<sup>6</sup> Baker, Theological Dictionary of the Bible, p 467.