

## Doctrine of Latter Days

1. The word that is translated "latter" in the Bible simply means "future" or "later on." It is used thirty nine times in the Old Testament and three times in the New Testament.
2. The expression "latter days" refers to sometime "later" from the viewpoint of the speaker.
3. How much later is determined in part from when the Bible declares something to be fulfilled as the following references illustrate.
  - In Numbers 24:14 Balaam told Balak what the Israelites would do to the Moabites "*in the latter days*" (cf. Micah 6:5).
  - In Deuteronomy 4:30 Moses tells the people that when they are in tribulation "*in the latter days*" that they should turn to God (Deuteronomy 31:29 cf. Judges 2:19, 20), which they did.
  - Knowing his people well Moses predicted that "*in the latter days* [i.e. after his death] the people would turn from God, and they did (Deuteronomy 31:29 cf. Judges 2:19, 20).
  - Jeremiah spoke harsh words to the priests of Jerusalem and told them that the anger of the Lord was against them, yet "*in the latter days*" they would come to understand why (Jer. 23:20; 30:24). The harsh judgment of God, the Babylonian captivity, and the deliverance from that captivity.
  - In the "*latter days*" God promised a deliverance of the Moabites from captivity (Jer. 48:47) as well as the Elamites (Jer. 49:39).
  - Ezekiel's prophecy of the Jews being delivered "*in the latter days*" (Ezek. 38:16) finds a historical fulfillment.
  - Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream of an image or as verse 29 says, "what should come to pass hereafter." All that Daniel saw--four successive world empires--came into existence before the first advent of Christ (Daniel 10:14).
4. The term "*latter*" is used to describe other things in the Bible.
  - "the latter sign" (Exodus 4:8).
  - "the latter end" (Numbers 24:20; Deuteronomy 8:16; 32:29; Ruth 3:10; 2 Samuel 2:16; Job 8:7; 42:12; Proverbs 19:20; Isaiah 41:22; 47:7; 2 Pet. 2:20).
  - "the latter rain" (Deuteronomy 11:14; Job 29:23; Proverbs 16:15; Jer. 3:3; 5:24; Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:23; Zechariah 10:1; James 5:7).
  - "the latter husband" (Deuteronomy 24:3).
  - "the latter years" (Ezekiel 38:8).
  - "the latter times" (Daniel 8:23; 11:29; 1 Timothy 4:1).
  - "the latter house" (Haggai 2:9).

- "the latter growth" (Amos 7:1).
4. To summarize, the specific passages which uses the term "latter days" are Numbers 24:14; Deuteronomy 4:30; 31:29; 38:16; Daniel 2:28; 10:14; Hosea 3:5).
  5. All of these passages refer to something that would happen in the future from the viewpoint of the speaker.
  6. All of these passages find historical fulfillment.