

# Study Guide

## Anchor Deeply for the Last Days

### Purpose of This Study

This study is designed to help believers:

- Learn **how the Bible interprets itself**
- Understand the biblical meaning of the “**latter days**”
- See how God’s plan unfolds from **Genesis through Acts**
- Grow in **confidence, endurance, and hope** as we live between Christ’s first and second coming

### Key Theme

**God reveals His plan progressively through repeated phrases and images, weaving Scripture into one unified story that reaches fulfillment in Jesus Christ and continues into the present age.**

## Section 1: How the Bible Interprets Itself

### Main Ideas

- The Bible was written over a long period and originally recorded on **scrolls**, not modern books.
- Early readers relied on **shared phrases**, not chapter and verse numbers.
- Prophets reused familiar phrases to connect **new revelation** with **earlier Scripture**.
- This method builds confidence that **one God authored one unified message**.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to interpret the Bible the way the Bible interprets itself?
2. How does understanding ancient scrolls and oral familiarity change the way we read Scripture today?

## Section 2: The “Latter Days” at the Beginning

### Key Passage

- **Genesis 1:26–28**

### Main Ideas

- Humanity is created in **God’s image**.
- God commands humans to **rule, subdue, and fill the earth**.
- These commands describe **both the beginning and the end** of God’s plan.
- The story begins with mystery: *How will this be fulfilled?*

### Reflection Questions

1. What does it mean that humans are created in God's image?
2. How is "fill the earth" connected to the future, not just the past?

## Section 3: Jacob and the Latter Days

### Key Passages

- **Genesis 49:1**
- **Genesis 49:8–12**

### Main Ideas

- "In days to come" is the same Hebrew phrase translated elsewhere as "**latter days.**"
- Jacob prophesies that **Judah** will rule:
  - A **king** (scepter)
  - Over **many peoples** (Gentile nations)
  - With abundance and blessing
- Partial fulfillment occurs in **David**; complete fulfillment awaits **Christ's return.**

### Discussion Questions

1. What images stand out in Jacob's prophecy (lion, scepter, vine, abundance)?
2. How does this prophecy point forward beyond Israel's history?

## Section 4: Balaam and the Latter Days

### Key Passages

- **Numbers 24:14**
- **Numbers 24:17**

### Main Ideas

- Balaam, though morally corrupt, speaks **true prophecy** under God's control.
- His prophecy:
  - Repeats earlier promises
  - Adds **new details** (a star, expanded rule)
- This confirms continuity: **the same God speaks throughout Scripture.**

### Discussion Questions

1. What does Balaam's story teach us about God's sovereignty?
2. How do repeated symbols (star, scepter, lion) strengthen biblical unity?

## Section 5: Peter and the Latter Days

### Key Passage

- **Acts 2:17–21**

### Main Ideas

- Peter declares the “**last days**” have begun at Pentecost.
- He weaves together:
  - **Joel 2** (Spirit poured out)
  - **Isaiah 2** (nations flowing to God)
- Fulfillment begins spiritually and continues outward through the church.
- Believers become **living temples**, carrying God’s presence into the world.

### Reflection Questions

1. Why does Peter say the “last days” have already begun?
2. How does Pentecost fulfill earlier Old Testament promises?
3. What does it mean to be a “living temple”?

## Section 6: The Already / Not Yet Kingdom

### Main Ideas

- God’s Kingdom has:
  - **Already** arrived spiritually
  - **Not yet** arrived physically
- Believers still struggle with:
  - Sin
  - Suffering
  - Physical death
- Final completion comes when **Christ returns** and the old creation passes away.

### Discussion Questions

1. How does the “already/not yet” framework explain Christian struggle?
2. Why is perseverance necessary in the present age?
3. How do future promises give strength for present hardship?

### Key Takeaways

- Scripture is a **woven fabric**, not disconnected pieces.
- The “latter days” began with Christ and continue today.
- God’s promises are **reliable, progressive, and hope-filled**.
- Believers are called to **anchor deeply**, persevere faithfully, and live with confidence in God’s unfolding plan.