

The Quickening: Is Time Accelerating?

Many have noted that time seems to be accelerating. The hours, days, seasons, and years appear to fly by faster than ever before. An hour no longer feels like 60 minutes (unless you're waiting in line!). One week seems to run into the next. It's as if we're watching the blur of a speeding train pass by.

Science and Scripture

The pace of life has certainly increased, but is time speeding up? Recently, scientists have been shocked to discover that their measurements indicate the expansion of the universe is actually increasing. Rather than slowing down, as their Big Bang theory postulates, astronomers have been stunned to learn that the expansion of the universe appears to be accelerating.¹ CNN reports "Scientists are scratching their heads over a finding that indicates the universe, rather than slowing down, is being expanded by a mysterious force at an accelerating rate."²

God's Word states simply: "(God) alone spreads out the heavens..." (Job 9:8). Therefore this "mysterious force" is no mystery to a Bible believer. It is God Himself who stretches out the heavens at the pace He sees fit.

However, it is interesting that secular scientists have determined that the universe – which is comprised of time, space, matter, and energy – is expanding at an increasing rate. Would this affect the dimension we call time? We on earth do not understand time well enough to draw any conclusions; however, the Creator certainly knows the answer.

If an acceleration of time is occurring, is it anticipated in the Bible? When describing the Great Tribulation period, Jesus stated: "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened" (Matthew 24:22). Jesus said that if He did not cut those days short, man would destroy all flesh.³

Of course, the context of Matthew 24:22 refers to Jesus coming back to earth to rescue His people from the intense trials which will come upon the earth during the Tribulation. Yet, as is often true of other Bible prophecies, could this perceived speeding of time foreshadow that which will be fully realized during the Great Tribulation?

Creation Birth Pangs

Do other Scriptures indicate a speed-up of time in the last days? While there is no single Scripture that specifically states that time will speed up, several passages imply a quickening during earth's final days.

Jesus likened the last days' signs to birth pangs (Matthew 24:8). The Greek word *odin*, often translated as *sorrows* in Matthew 24:8, literally means *birth pangs*. In addition, the apostle Paul reminded us that "the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage

¹ <http://www.answersingenesis.org/e-mail/archive/AnswersUpdate/2007/0407.asp>

² <http://www.cnn.com/TECH/space/9802/27/accelerating.universe/>

³ This, in itself, is an amazing prophecy. Consider that when the Lord made this declaration the armaments of His day were swords and spears. But today, with nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, it is possible to wipe out all flesh on planet earth.

of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now” (Romans 8:21-22).

As the time of delivery draws near, birth pangs always increase in both intensity and frequency. Therefore, the creation itself would travail with increased frequency as the time of delivery draws near.

Interestingly, Scripture teaches that time is a physical property and is therefore part of God’s creation (Genesis 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:9). Therefore the dimension we call time would also travail, and perhaps increase, as earth’s final days climax.

Time Changes

Jesus explained that at the very end of this age, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken” (Matthew 24:29).

We are told that God created “lights” (the sun, moon, and stars) in the heavens “for signs and seasons, and for days and years” (Genesis 1:14-16).⁴ For instance, a year is the time required for the earth to travel once around the sun. The seasons are caused by the changing position of the earth in relation to the sun. And the moon’s phases follow one another in clock-like precision – constituting the lunar calendar.

If these lights – the sun, moon, and stars – are affected in the last days, and the very “powers of heaven” shaken, does this indicate a significant disruption in how the dimension of time will pass? In the Book of Amos we are informed: “And it shall come to pass in that day [the Tribulation], says the Lord GOD, that I will make the sun go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in broad daylight” (Amos 8:9).

Certainly God Himself “changes the times and the seasons” (Daniel 2:21) as He sees fit. He is the one and only Sovereign God. He alone determines kings and nations and ordinances and times and seasons. So it is no surprise that His Word anticipates this time dilation, and perhaps acceleration. Interestingly, Scripture even informs us that the Antichrist “shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law...” (Daniel 7:25).

More Scriptures that Suggest Acceleration

Other Scriptures that imply this quickening of life include Daniel 12:4: “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.” Today we are witnessing an explosion of available knowledge. With the advent of the computer, and now the Internet, it is estimated that our cumulative knowledge is doubling every five years. And since the Industrial Revolution, multitudes are running to and fro just as the Bible prophesied. This exponential increase in available knowledge, and the ability to travel conveniently at accelerated speeds, is beyond what anyone could have imagined!

⁴ Interestingly, as an aside, evolution teaches that the cosmos evolved by random chance, yet the Bible agrees with the observable evidence: God created “lights” (the sun, moon, and stars) in the heavens “for signs and seasons, and for days and years” (Genesis 1:14-16).

Another Scripture that may anticipate this perceived increase in the passing of time is found in the Book of Revelation. During the tribulation period, which is described in Revelation chapters 6-19, we read that the judgments will follow in rapid succession. Once the Tribulation begins, these events will transpire very rapidly: “The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly” (Revelation 11:14). Read Revelation chapters 6 through 19 for yourself and see how many global cataclysmic events are compressed into less than 7 years of history. Coupled with Jesus’ and Paul’s birth pangs warnings, these Scriptures indicate that as we draw closer to these climaxing events, we should expect the last days’ signs to also occur with increased rapidity.

Furthermore, Jesus declared in the final book of the Bible: “Behold, I am coming quickly!” (Revelation 3:11). In fact, Jesus reiterates three times in the last chapter of the Bible that He is coming quickly (Revelation 22:7, 12, 20). Some commentators note that the Lord is not only declaring that His return is imminent, but that this phrase also indicates that once these events begin to occur they will follow in rapid-fire succession.

One more Scripture concerning the last days that we will quote states concisely, “The great day of the LORD is near; it is near and hastens quickly...” (Zephaniah 1:14).

Last Days Bible Prophecies

Those who study the Bible know that we are living in the last days and the times of these prophesied birth pangs are currently ramping up. Every major last days’ trend anticipated in the Bible is being positioned in place. Like a tsunami that sweeps the globe, developments in Bible prophecy are overwhelming and irrefutable.

During the Olivet Discourse, Jesus listed several last days’ signs and then summarized: “So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near – at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place” (Matthew 24:33-34). In other words, once we see all the signs coming into focus, we should expect the climax of these events within one generation.⁵

Here is a list of some of the major Biblical last days’ trends – all of which are in place today:

- 1) Wide-spread deception in Christ’s name (Matthew 24:4-5; 11; 24-26; 2 Thessalonians 2; 2 Peter 2:1-3; etc.)
- 2) Global communications foreseen (Revelation 11:9-10; 17:8).
- 3) A global cry for peace (1 Thessalonians 5:3).
- 4) Chaotic weather prevalent (Luke 21:25-26).
- 5) A move toward a global government (Daniel 2:40-44; 7:23; Revelation 13:7-8).
- 6) Technology capable of tracking the world’s population (Revelation 13:16-17).
- 7) Israel regathered into their nation after being dispersed for nearly two millennia (Isaiah 11:11-12; 43:5-6; 66:8; Jeremiah 31:7-10; Ezekiel 37:21-22; 38:8).
- 8) Jerusalem a burdensome stone to all nations (Zechariah 12:2-3).
- 9) Israel prospering economically (Ezekiel 38:12-13).

⁵ Many differ in their opinion on what is meant by a generation (40 or 70 or 120 years have been proposed), and what exactly is the trigger point (the rebirth of Israel in 1948, or the regaining of the control of Jerusalem in 1967, or when all signs are in place). However, the clear exhortation given by Jesus repeatedly is that we should be awake and looking up eagerly expecting our Lord’s return at any moment.

- 10) Preparations to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (Daniel 9:27; 12:11; Mark 13:14; Revelation 11:1-2).
- 11) Russia, Iran and other countries rising as military powers and preparing a surprise attack on Israel (Ezekiel 38).
- 12) Anti-Semitism worldwide increasing (Deuteronomy 28:37; Jeremiah 29:18; 44:8).
- 13) Homosexuality flaunted (Luke 17:28-30; Genesis 19; Jude 1:7).
- 14) A move toward a global religion (Revelation 13:8; Revelation 17).
- 15) Lawlessness abounding (Matthew 24:12; Revelation 9:21).
- 16) Babylon reemerging on the world scene (Zechariah 5:11; Isaiah 13; Revelation 17-19).
- 17) Increased interest in the occult, witchcraft, and sorceries (Revelation 9:21; 18:23; 21:8; Isaiah 47:9-15; Micah 5:10-15).
- 18) The kings of the East rising (Revelation 9:14-16; 16:12).

There are many more last days' signs that appear to be culminating before our very eyes. Therefore, all indications are that delivery must also be fast approaching.

Whether time is actually speeding up, or whether our perception is the result of these birth pangs increasing, we cannot be certain. One thing is for sure, the Bible is true and the Lord's return is near.

The Gospel

Yes, events are climaxing. Time is short. Therefore, the most important question for each of us to answer is "Do we know the Lord?" "Are we prepared to meet our Creator?"

The Bible states that sin has separated us from God (Isaiah 59:2). A quick review of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) should prove this fact. One lie makes us liars in God's holy eyes. Placing our interests or any created thing before our Creator or His Word is idolatry. Lust is adultery according to Jesus (Matthew 5:27-28). Saying "Oh my God" casually is taking His name in vain – also known as blasphemy – and this commandment is even listed before "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:7-13).

The truth is we have all sinned against our Creator. The penalty for any sin is death – physical death and spiritual separation in hell (Romans 6:23; Revelation 21:8). "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)" (Ephesians 2:4-5).

The wonderful news is that our Creator, the Lord Jesus Christ, became a man and died for our sins. Jesus never sinned yet He willingly and in love died in our place. He paid for all our sins on the cross and then rose from the grave, defeating death! All who repent (turn) from their sins and trust Jesus as Lord and Savior will be saved.

Time is short. Please do not wait. Place your trust in Jesus Christ as Creator, Lord and Savior today!

"Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away" (James 4:14).

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

“For by Him (Jesus Christ) all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight” (Colossians 1:16-22).

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