

The End of the World

Separating Truth from Fiction, Reality from Crazy

A History of End Time Predictions that Failed

1st century to 21st century

Recommended: *End Time Visions*, Richard Abanes, Broadman & Holman, 1998

AD 60-100

Clement, an early leader, of the church at Rome, declares: "Soon and suddenly shall his will (i.e., the establishment of God's kingdom) be accomplished."

c. 100

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, writes: "The last times are upon us."

c. 150-179

Montanus, Priscilla and Maximilla - leaders of the Montanism movement - prophesy that the end of the world would come within their lifetimes.

c. 250

Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, says: "The kingdom of God, beloved brethren, is beginning to be at hand."

c. 375-400

Saint Martin of Tours, who served as Bishop of Gaul, teaches that the Antichrist exists in his day, writing: "There is no doubt that the Antichrist has already been born. Firmly established already in his early years, he will, after reaching maturity, achieve supreme power."

500

Hippolytus predicts that this year will see the consummation of the ages.

800

The Spanish monk Beatus feels that he will live to see the Antichrist and the end of the world by the year 800.

848

A prophetess named Thiota is able to gather a sizable following by announcing that the end of the world would take place by 848.

1000

Belief throughout Europe during the 900's is that the end of the world would occur in 1000.

1033

This year is targeted as "the end" after the year 1000 passed uneventfully

1184

The coming of the Antichrist in this year is predicted by various Christian prophets.

1186

The populace fears that a planetary alignment would bring the end of the world.

1260

Joachim of Fiore preaches that 1260 will see the appearance of the Antichrist, followed by the world's destruction. During an 1191 interview with King Richard the Lion-Hearted, Joachim says that the Antichrist had already been born.

1345, 1347, 1348, 1360, 1365, 1375, 1387, 1396, 1400, 1417, 1418

The Black Plague: The coming of the Antichrist is predicted for these years.

1420

The Taborites, an extremist Christian sect, held that in 1420 God's fiery wrath would consume the world.

February 20, 1524

A predicted flood is supposed to destroy the world.

1524-1526

Thomas Muntzer leads the German Peasants' Revolt, teaching that the extermination of the wealthy class will bring about God's kingdom on earth. Eventually organized an army of 8000, most of whom were massacred in a single battle against the established army.

1533

According to Melchoir Hoffmann, Jesus' return takes place during this year.

1534

Jan Matthys, a Dutch supporter of Hoffmann, preaches violence to cleanse the ungodly from the earth in preparation for Jesus' return and the world's destruction by Easter 1534.

1656

The year that Christopher Columbus said would bring an end to the world.

1666

Because the year ends in 666, many predicted the end of the world. The Great Fire of London lasted for three days and destroyed 87 church buildings and 13,000 houses.

1673

Deacon William Apsinwall, of the state's General Court, predicts the world's demise "no later than 1673."

1697, 1716, 1736

Influential Puritan Cotton Mather preaches that 1697 would be the year of the world's end. He later changes his prediction to 1716. After the date passes, 1736 becomes his new deadline for Christ's return.

1792

The Shakers believe that the world will end by this year.

1809

Mary Bateman: Her seemingly Magic Hen laid eggs that had "Christ is coming" written on them. Exposed as a hoax.

1843, 1844

William Miller: The Great Disappointment ensues when this religious leader makes several failed predictions. The movement morphs to become the current Seventh Day Adventists.

1910

Halley's Comet sets off panic in many places, most notably in Oklahoma.

1959

The Branch Davidians get started by Victor Houteff who predicts the end on April 22, 1959. The group is so disappointed that it takes years before they re-emerge with David Koresh in the 1990s.

1978

A doomsday cult led by the Rev. Jim Jones convinces many in his Peoples Temple Church (located in California) to move to Guyana. Soon after, he convinces nearly 1000 people that the end has come and to commit mass suicide.

1997

Marshall Applewhite leads the Heaven's Gate cult members to commit mass suicide to join a space ship in the trail of the Hale Bopp Comet.

2000

Y2K – A great multitude of end times predictions emerge.

2004

The Bible Code author Michael Drosnin publishes volume 2, the Countdown, which reveals we're in the Last Days (incidentally after predicting WW3 would happen in 2000).

And So Forth...

Hal Lindsay: The Late Great Planet Earth

Doug Clark: The Jupiter Effect
Edgar Whisenaut: 88 Reasons for 1988
Harold Camping: 1994?
Michael Evans: All Shook Up
Lester Sumrall: Date Suggesting
Southwest Radio Church: A Sensational Ministry
J.R Church: Hidden Prophecies
Grant Jeffrey: Jubilee Timetable
Harold Camping (again): 2011
Strange Mixture: Christian Occultists?

Questions in Light of Failed End Times Predictions

1. What should we learn from these failed predictions of the past?
2. What does Scripture teach about making predictions of the end times?
3. How should we relate to those who make end-times predictions?
4. What should be our attitude in our own day as we await the coming of Christ?

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