

## Matthew 24:4-14

### Announcements:

- **VBS** - Big thank you to everyone (*decorations still up*) and praise report (*cue Ryan video*)
  - a. **City Serving Day** - July 4th (*sign up*)
  - b. **Adult Volleyball** - July 18th (*sign up*)
  - c. **Selah Nights** - July 13th (*share heart*)
  - d. **Connect Group** - Host Homes & Facilitators (*sign up*)
- **Facility upgrades** - *Family Room & Outdoor Fellowship (overflow) space* (*donate to fund?*)
- **Liturgy Changes** - *Announcements up front, Communion, Kids under 5 in Sanctuary* (July 13)

Please open to **Matthew Chapter 24** (*Need a Bible? Raise your hand...*) **Olivet Discourse (part 2)**

- **Last Week:** *Wanted to gather; not willing; house desolate; glory departed; stones down (UNTIL)*
  - Proud of **Herod's temple** (*like when visitors come from out of town*) - **Become an idol...**
  - **Mt of Olives:** Disciples Q's (**WHEN & WHAT**... *signs of Your coming & the end of age*)
- Here, "**Jesus answered**" (v. 4) the **last question, first** (*intermingled* sermon).
  - **Later, AD 70...** (*shadow, type, or dress rehearsal...*) (*Mark 13 & Luke 21 as well*)
  - In this portion, Jesus gives the answer to the "**signs**" to come at the "**end of the age**"

### Message Title: The World Gives Birth!

- **Labor Pains** (verses 6(b), 8)
- **Spiritual Deception** (verses 4-5, 11)
- **Wars & Disasters** (verses 6(a), 7)
- **Persecution & Apostasy** (verses 9-10, 12)
- **Worldwide Salvation** (verses 13-14)

**READ** (*the whole thing up front...*)

**PRAY**

### Labor Pains (verses 6(b), 8)

#### **V. 6 - See that you are not troubled (frightened / alarmed)**

- In a passage like this, we can *easily gravitate towards fear*, that is **not what Jesus wants for His followers**. (*Jesus speaks not just prophetically, but also, pastorally*)
- We live in a world full of *Chaos & Calamity*, *consequences of a fallen world*.
- People get **fearful & frantic** (*start buying all the toilet paper*).
  - *Jesus is speaking peace in the storm. Don't panic. Don't get all crazy and weird.*

#### **V. 8 - All these are the beginning of sorrows (birth / labor pains) - Theme of this section!**

- (**arche** = *beginnings / origins*) + (**odin** = *labor pains in childbirth*)
  - **Labor** = **Contractions are coming!** (*stress* (Gen 3:16 "**pain**") **Frequency & Intensity**)
    - Things are *going to get worse* in the world, *not better*, before Christ returns.
    - Many associate these events to those *leading up to & during* the *Great Tribulation* (AKA: *Time of Jacob's trouble* (Jer 30:7)) - **Revelation chapters 6-19**.
    - It is my belief that the *church will not be present* for some or all of this (*rapture*)
  - **Birth** = **New Life ("age") ahead!** (*hope*) **The world gives birth to a new age!** (*joy!*)

- Just like a mother or father has pure joy to finally hold that little child in her arms.
- Many associate this new birth to that of the coming Messianic kingdom (Rev. 20)
- This birth theology was well known in ancient Judaism (Talmud & other Messianic texts)
- Romans 8:18-22, NLT - "What we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."
- 1 Thess. 5:1-4, NIV - "Brothers and sisters... you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief."
- Important, these are merely the **"beginning"** - So, as we study these verses, keep in mind that... These "signs" have been present in every generation and they will be especially visible as we approach the end of this age. (BUT any ONE of these by themselves is NOT ENOUGH!)

#### V. 6 - All these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet...

- All these things... MUST - It's going to happen. God has proclaimed it. Nothing will stop it.
- The end is... not yet - The end of what? Israel? Temple? world?? This part is clear: **THE AGE!**
  - These that we're about to read are precursors of the end (signs that we're getting closer)
  - None of those events are the specific sign of the end, collectively they are a sign.

#### Spiritual Deception (verses 4-5, 11)

#### V. 4 - Take heed that no one deceives you (leads you astray) - **This is Jesus' main goal!**

- Take Heed - Be careful. Pay attention. Be watching. Use discernment. Don't be fooled!
- People are curious and want to know: Y2K? Aztec/Mayan? Asteroid? Covid? Nuclear? Aliens?
- But the signs of the times can be easily misinterpreted and therefore cause people to be misled.
- Don't be surprised if people come up with strange theories, or set dates for the end, etc...

#### V. 5 - Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ (Messiah)' and will deceive (mislead) many

- Prior to Jesus, people weren't really claiming to be the Messiah (\$500 bill example)
- But since Jesus, there have been hundreds... (and they will increase as time progresses...)
  - **Dozens have come along.** Too many to list here... (you could do an internet search)
  - One guy you're going to want to keep an eye out for is named **"Abdullah Hashem"** - founding a new Messianic movement - claiming to be the mahdi and a successor of Jesus Christ and he is rapidly gaining a very large following in the U.S. and online.
- Specifically, Luke 21:8 - "and, 'The time has drawn near [is is at hand/has come].'"
  - In 1844, William Miller, a Baptist preacher in New York, predicted the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This led to the Millerite movement, where many followers believed the world would end and Jesus would return by October 22, 1844. When Jesus did not appear as expected, this day became known as **"The Great Disappointment"** (later he and his followers went on to form the seventh day adventist movement)
  - Jehovah's Witnesses (Watch Tower Society) placed the invisible return of Christ on many different dates and kept revising: 1874, 1878, 1914, 1918, 1925

V. 11 - Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many (lead many astray)

- Mohammad - Claiming to receive revelation from God, via Gabriel, in 610AD - Quran.
- Joseph Smith - Early 1800's, a vision from the angel Moroni, gold plates, ancient writings.
- Jim Jones (People's Temple), whose followers drank the poisoned cool-aid in Guyana in 1978
- David Koresh, the Waco Whacko, died in 1993. He founded Branch Davidians.
  - I would place more modern guys like Benny Hinn & Kenneth Copeland in this list too.
- Social Media has allowed for the rapid increase of false prophets like never before (anyone!)
  - Parents - check this with your kids - Influencers influence...

1 John 4:1 - "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

- Perfect example was the solar eclipse in 2024; sign of Jonah; salem/nineveh; 40 days to repent.
- Three times warnings of being **deceived (vv. 4, 5, 11)**. Planao = Planets (wander off...)
  - Don't jump on band wagons or build pet doctrines. **Take heed!** (test against the truth)

Wars & Disasters (verses 6(a), 7)

V. 6 - And you will hear of wars and rumors (threats) of wars

- Well that's always been the case throughout all ages. Nothing new there (as long as man is in charge - sinful, greedy, jealous, power hungry, etc). The Greek text literally reads, "**You will be hearing,**" meaning the reports on this will be INCREASING more & more... (on a global scale)
- Prior to 1914, we never had a **"world war."** Now we have at least two (on the edge of a third)
- World War I was called "the war to end all wars," yet World War II was even more devastating
- The world today is armed to the teeth with more powerful weaponry & technology (over \$7 Billion left behind in 2021 Afghanistan withdrawal alone...)
- There is currently enough nuclear power to destroy the world completely dozens of times over.
- More recently: Russia & Ukraine, and of course, Israel and Hamas, and US and Iran.
  - Ezekiel 38 & 39 (Gog & Magog) prophecy of a future war: Russia, Iran, and Israel.
  - I try not to jump on this every time there is a battle with Israel. You can:
    - (A) Wear out a congregation,
    - (B) Create pet doctrines,
    - (C) Lose credibility as a pastor (wisdom exercises restraint at times...)
    - Re-read ALL of verse 6 again... (**the end is not yet... (still to come)**)

V. 7 - Nation will rise against nation

- Ethnos against Ethnos - "people groups" / "tribes" (sometimes referring to "gentiles/pagans")
  - I find this one fascinating with **"ethnicities"** (from Ethnos)
    - 2020 = BLM. Over the last year = Free Palestine.
    - Rise in Immigration turmoil (BTW - video posted on Expounding the Word)
    - LGBTQIA+ have identified as their own **"people groups"** (the flag represents it)
  - Much of this is due to an atheistic **cultural marxism** (identifying people into "groups")

V. 7 - And kingdom against kingdom

- Basileia against Basileia - "territories" / "dominion's of rule." Formal nations with formal rulers.
  - Rising tensions between world superpowers. United Nations and other kingdoms...

V. 7 - And there will be:

- V. 7 - **Famines** - Due to population explosion (hint at population control (W.E.F.))
  - Estimated 25,000 people die every day due to starvation. *How sad is that?*
    - Poverty (inflation), GMO's, pesticides, land developments, regulations, wars, etc.
    - As the years go on, there WILL BE wide scale food shortages... (Rev. 6 & 18)
- V. 7 - **Pestilences (plagues) (Luke 21:11)** - not in some manuscripts... (another study!)
  - In this context, it is indicating **an epidemic level** (Black Death (AKA: Bubonic Plague (sneeze!)), Small Pox, Spanish Flu, HIV, Covid-19 Plandemic; Malaria (leading today)
- V. 7 - And **Earthquakes** - (**Seismos**) - *Is this why some of you left California? The big one!?*
  - Seastorm (Mt. 8), Paul & Silas (Acts 16), Jesus' Death (Mt. 27) / Resurrection (Mt. 28)
  - One of the largest on record - 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami (9.2) - largest recorded death toll (over 200,000). Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, others.
  - Many listed in The Book of Revelation: chapters 6, 8, 11, and the big one in 16...
  - Rev. 16:17-18 - "Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, 'It is done!' And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was **a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.**"
    - Dominican republic pastor (Juandalee) Missionaries as a kid. These verses!

Luke 21:11, CSB - "...and there will be **terrifying sights and great signs from heaven.**"

- The Book of Revelation speaks of these judgments: Blood, Diseases, Darkness. Fire, Hail.

V. 7 - In various places (in many parts of the world)

- No longer only localized in focus (**not just an "Israel" thing**). *Happening all around the world...*

**Persecution & Apostasy** (verses 9-10, 12)

Just like the other items, these signs are already in the world, but they will **intensify** as we get closer to the return of Christ, and will **drastically intensify** during the Tribulation period (**Rev. chapters 6-13**)

V. 9 - Then they will deliver you up to **tribulation** (hand you over to be persecuted) and **kill you**

- This is a verse no one likes to read or memorize. *Does anyone claim this as your "life verse"?*
- Who is **"they"**? - It's not specified, but clearly they are godless, Christ-hating individuals.
- The Stoning of Stephen, Beheading of James, Nero & Diocletian, Crusades, and Holocaust.
- Going on today, and always has (**VOM**), but will **accelerate in the future** (*likely even in USA*)

V. 9 - And you will be **hated by ALL nations**

- There will be worldwide animosity for Christians. *By various people groups ALL over the world.*
- Some would even dedicate these verses specifically to the **Jews during the Time of Jacob's trouble**. That persecution & hospitality toward them will rise once again (*aren't we seeing that?*)

V. 9 - For **My name's sake** (because you are my followers)

- A **specific type of difficulty** that is reserved only for the Christian...
- John 15:18-19, NLT - "If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world..."



- This is so true. You can belong to all sorts of religious groups today and not suffer much opposition, but the **minute you bring the name of Jesus** into a conversation, things change.
  - Why? Because there is **power in the name of Jesus**. That's why it's even used as a curse word. When people stub their toe, they don't cry out, Oh Buda, or Oh Joseph Smith, or Oh Pope Francis, No they cry out the name of Jesus in vain.
  - This is because His name is the name above all names.
  - And Christ's followers are persecuted because of it...
- 1 Peter 4:14-16, NIV - "If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name."
- But there's a purpose behind it all. Mark's Gospel: "For My sake, for a testimony to them" (v. 9)
- **Persecution** will only result in **proclamation**! An opportunity for the Gospel to shine forth!

#### V. 10 - And then **many will be offended**

- The Geek word here for **offended** is skandalizō (*trap, snare, stumbling, falling or turning away*)
- 1 Timothy 4:1 - "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons..."
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4, NLT - "A time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths."
- 2 Thess. 2:3, AMP - "Let no one in any way deceive or entrap you, for that Day [the coming of our Lord Jesus] will not come unless the apostasy comes first [that is, the great rebellion, the abandonment of the faith by professed Christians], and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction [the Antichrist, the one who is destined to be destroyed]"
  - We're certainly seeing elements of all this today... watered down seeker-friendly movements; accepting of sinful life styles, forsaking of scriptures, universalism.

#### V. 10 - [They] will **betray and hate one another**

- Alliances among all nations will break down. And internally among families & friends...
- Mark 13:12, CSB - "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death." **Betray** means to hand over (like Judas)
  - Christians informing on each other during communist persecution in the Soviet Union.
  - We've seen how quickly this can happen: Covid vaccines, masks, churches meeting.
  - We've got to **guard against bitterness and division in the church**

#### V. 12 - And because **lawlessness will abound** (*multiply / increase*), the **love of many will grow cold**

- In the last days, men will be looking out only for themselves. It will be a dog-eat-dog world.
- **Lawlessness, wickedness & sin** will **run rampant** once again (as in the Days of Noah & Lot)
  - It certainly appears that way to me. That the blood temperature of the world is rising...
- 2 Tim 3:1-5 - "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"

- The **Christian must guard their own heart** against all the *lawlessness to come*. So as to not let our *love grow cold*. *As the world gets more evil, do we get more unloving? (I'm see both...)*
  - We, Christians, are **going to be tested** in this area in the days and years ahead.

There's a lesson in all this. We must not carry **a utopian dream of a dominionist society** *BEFORE the return of Christ*. That's not what the Scriptures teach... *They teach difficulty (birth pains) to come...*

- But remember, we are *"not to be troubled by these things..."* (v. 6)
- *Mark 13:11, NASB - "When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you at that time; for you are not the ones speaking, but it is the Holy Spirit."*
  - \*This is not a verse for *poorly prepared preachers...* *study to show yourself approved!*

### **Worldwide Salvation (verses 13-14)**

Jesus ends with **a couple positives!**

#### **V. 13 - But he who endures to the end shall be saved**

- Some would say this verse implies one can **lose their salvation** if they don't *"endure"* - *that's certainly a possibility*.
- Others would argue that if a person is **truly born again**, then they will *show that by the fact that they do endure to the end*.
- And then others would say this verse is *not even referring to an individual's eternal salvation*, but speaking to those who will be alive **during the Tribulation Period** and if they continue to *"stand under pressure"* during that horribly difficult time, He will *deliver* them (*that holds merit!*)
  - *We've already learned about the intense martyrdom and betrayals to come... and those who stand fast without apostasizing, will be delivered at Christ's return!*
- I think this verse is *meant to be an encouragement* from Jesus. In the *parallel account*:
  - *Luke 21:18-19, NLT - "But not a hair of your head will perish! By standing firm, you will win your souls."* - **Not one hair** of God's people will be lost! And we're *not left to our own power either...*
  - *1 Peter 1:5, CSB - "You are being guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time."* - **Perseverance marks the true saints kept by God!**

#### **V. 14 - And this gospel (Good News) of the kingdom**

- **A new "age," a coming "kingdom!" THIS IS GOOD NEWS!**

#### **V. 14 - Will be preached in all the world as a witness (testimony) to all the nations**

- This has been *going on for 2,000 years*. *Technology and travel are really helping with this!*
- Some argue this has to *happen before Christ will return* (Dominionism) - **we make it happen**
- Others say that this will happen *during the Tribulation period* that will come **in God's Timing**.
  - I lean **towards the latter...** (*but not at the laziness or neglect of the Great Commission*)
- *Two sections* about the future that show *all nations and peoples will hear this GOOD NEWS!*
- *Revelation 7:9-10, 14 - "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the*

Lamb!' ...these are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

- People shared the Gospel for the first group, and then the Lord will **send out one last call!**
- Rev. 14:6-7 - "Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.'"
  - **Wars and disasters will come...**
  - **Deceivers will lead people astray...**
  - **People will be killed for their faith...**
  - **People will betray one another...**
  - **People will fall away from the truth...**
  - **And yet, Jesus promises the gospel will go forth!**
    - **For the gates of hell will not prevail against the church!**

#### **V. 14 - And then the end will come**

- Remember, the end that the disciples asked about in Mt 24:3 was **the end of the age.**
- Jesus speaks to that. **It's baby time! The World gives birth!**
- One age ends... and a glorious new Messianic age begins (it could be sooner than you think!)

#### **Closing:**

In the meantime... **"go . . . and make disciples of all nations"** (Matthew 28:19)

#### **Plead with the souls of men...**

- The pain is temporary; the glory is eternal. **Are you ready for His return?**

#### **PRAY**