

Matthew 24:3-8 “As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.”

- At the beginning of sorrows, when the labor pains began, there would be persecution and martyrdom for those who wish to follow Jesus (Matthew 24:9); many will stumble over this intense persecution and stop following Jesus—even betraying and hating each other out of fear (Matthew 24:10). Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many people (Matthew 24:11). Lawlessness and lovelessness will increase (Matthew 24:12). After all that, Jesus says, then the end of the age will come (Matthew 24:13).

The Greek word translated as “sorrows” (ωδίν ὄδιν) means birth pangs or labor pains. This tells us that these events are not just random, but part of a process, one that builds in intensity until the ultimate fulfillment: the return of Christ and the establishment of His Kingdom. When Do the Labor Pains Begin? The labor pains began the moment Christ ascended into heaven, but like a woman in labor, they increase in intensity as the time of His return draws near. The Apostle Paul writes: “For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.” (Romans 8:22) Creation itself longs for redemption, but the labor pains of the end times will become unmistakable. Jesus gave specific signs to watch for that indicate we are moving closer to the final moments before His return.

Nations and Kingdoms Rising Against Each Other

“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” (Matthew 24:7)

- The word translated as “nation” is ethnos, meaning people groups or ethnic groups. This points to civil wars, racial tensions, and international conflicts increasing as part of the end-times labor pains.

Matthew 24:9-14 “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. And then many will fall away and betray one



another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

The Increase of Lawlessness and Wickedness

"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, unholly, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." (2 Timothy 3:1-4)

- As the labor pains progress, morality collapses. People will reject truth, exalt sin, and openly rebel against God. Jesus warns: "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold." (Matthew 24:12)

Persecution of Believers

Jesus prophesied that those who follow Him will be hated in the last days: "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake." (Matthew 24:9)

- Persecution against Christians is rapidly increasing across the world. From government crackdowns to social hostility, standing for biblical truth is becoming more difficult.

The Gospel Preached to All Nations

Despite all this, the final sign before Christ returns is the spreading of the Gospel worldwide: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14)

- No matter how dark the world becomes, God's light still shines. Technology, the internet, and missionary work are allowing the Gospel to reach places never before possible.

Why Is the Labor Pains Analogy Used?

1. **It Shows Increasing Intensity:** Just like contractions, these events grow closer together and more painful as we approach the climax: the return of Christ.

2. **It Reveals an Inevitable Outcome:** Labor pains lead to birth. Likewise, the pains of this world will lead to Christ's return and the birth of His Kingdom.
3. **It Is a Call to Prepare:** Just as an expectant mother prepares for delivery, so too must believers prepare spiritually, watching for the signs and standing firm in faith.

- Paul affirms this analogy:

"For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape." (1 Thessalonians 5:3)

- The world will not expect the final moment, but believers are called to be alert:
"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thessalonians 5:4)

Matthew 24:15-22 "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."

Daniel 9:27 "And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

Daniel 11:31-32 "Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate. He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action."

Daniel 12:11 "And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days."

Matthew 24:23-28 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."

Matthew 24:32-44 "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Revelation 12:7-12 "Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"