

Matthew 24:1-8
Birth Pangs
(The King and His Kingdom)

Today we are beginning a series of Messages:
Sunday and Wednesday

A very profound portion of Scripture: Matthew 24

A) Jesus predicts future events – Gives us insight into Last days or end times events

B) If you have been paying attention to Social media – and even the news in recent weeks –
1) you were well aware - Widespread reports – Rapture was going to occur on September 23 –

C) WELL September 23 came and went and we are still here! – No Rapture

D) Can I just say this: Whenever someone predicts a day – you can be pretty sure – that is not going to be the day!

Jesus said: Matthew 24:36 - ³⁶“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

A) But for some reason people continue to try and predict the day –

B) and when I hear of such a prediction – I usually always respond – NOT THAT DAY

1) The apostle Paul gave this insight – in 1 Thessalonians 5:1

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

1 Thessalonians 5:1

C) Thieves don't call ahead..... – they don't send a Save the date:

D) But if the Police put out a report – Door to door salesman – canvassing the neighborhood

1) OR if there is a string of robberies in your neighborhood – you are on high alert –

2) Aware – you take precautions -

No one knows the day or the Hour but we can be aware of the times and the seasons.

A) That is what Makes Matthew 24 such a Profound passage of scripture

B) Jesus gives us insight into – signs leading up to His 2nd coming! V.1

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple,

C) The THEN – gives us the setting and context of this:

1) Jesus has been in the Temple Mount area – series of confrontations with the religious leaders

D) He silenced all of his accusers and then preceded to pronounce a series of Woes on the religious leaders in Ch.23

1) The focus of our study this past Wednesday night – Jesus gave 12 Characteristics of Hypocrisy

E) So after calling out the religious leaders – Jesus is now leaving the temple mount area with his disciples

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. {Interesting the Disciples – were ENAMORED with the Temple- Look at this Lord –

The temple was a site to behold

A) Construction began in 20 BC AND WAS COMPLETED IN 64 AD – so at this time it wasn't even finished – Still spectacular

B) It sat on a 36 acre parcel of ground – center of Jerusalem

1) It took over 18,000 workers 80 yrs to build.

C) The temple was made of white marble – with a solid gold cap on the top of it – that according to Josephus.....

1) The reflection was so bright that when the sun shone on it – couldn't look upon it –

D) Symbol of the glory of God!

The Jews looked at the temple as the sign of God's blessing and presence amongst the people.

A) So as Jesus and the Disciples are leaving – the temple area – they pause to enjoy the Beauty of it.

Aa) That is when Jesus blows their minds – Unimaginable prediction

2 And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

B) This was a startling statement – for one, the wall that surrounded the Temple Mount area was covered with Limestone blocks

1) 50 feet long – 20 feet thick – 12 feet high - Weighing between 400-700 tons

C) Go with us to Israel next fall we will go to the temple institute – go under ground – see some of these original stones in the wall

1) Incredible – How could anyone tear that down.

D) It was an unimaginable prediction –

1) but that is exactly what would happen 37 yrs later in A.D. 70 when the Romans/Titus invaded Jerusalem

E) They were given strict orders not to harm the temple – Drunk soldier - Fire / Gold – Crevices

1) Turned the stones over to get to it – not leaving one stone upon another

Significance: If Jesus can be right about events that would take place 37 yrs into the future –

A) it gives credence to what he is saying will happen over 2,000 years into the future.

B) So Jesus makes this incredible prediction/ and as he and his disciples walk from the Temple Mount to the Mount of Olives – 2 miles

C) Their minds are reeling with confusion – How can this be?

The prediction prompted a question: 3 Now 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?”

A) The Disciples want to know – when is this going to happen – and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the Age

B) Coming is Parousia = Your appearing, your personal presence

C) The Disciples immediately equate – the destruction of the temple with the APPEARING OF MESSIAH –

1) Obviously going to set up - Something NEW

D) To them this was the signal that something is going to come down, something is going to happen.

1) **There is going to be a glorious appearing.....**

This will help you understand why they would react this way:

A) The Jewish people had an eschatology – word that means a scenario of last days events

B) What would be the events that lead up to the culmination of the end of everything? That's eschatology.

C) The disciples had a fixed eschatology. Certain things that were on their prophetic timeline

#1 on the list, there would be a time of turmoil in the Jewish nation. Which they saw that as already fulfilled by a Roman occupation.

D) The Romans were in control. **Check,** world is in turmoil, especially our world.

#2 on their list, a forerunner, a herald, an Elijah like person will come heralding, predicting, announcing the coming of a Messiah.

A) This is the reason people had flocked to the Jordan River to hear and see John the Baptist. **Check,** the forerunner had come.

#3 the Messiah will appear defeating his enemies.

#4 the scattered Jews from around the world will return to Israel

A) Jerusalem will be set up. The kingdom will be brought in geocentrically from the City of Jerusalem.

B) The disciples were thinking – We are somewhere in between number two and number three.

1) Turmoil has happened, the forerunner has come. We're waiting for the Messiah to set up his kingdom.

C) So when Jesus makes this prediction about the temple— they are thinking – this is all going to come down soon! –

1) Something is on the Horizon –they were thinking PRESENT – not 2,000 plus yrs into the future

D) What will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age.

The Phrase the end of the age is used 6 times in the NT – Once in Hebrews 9:26 –

A) 3x in Matthew 13 – 1x in Matthew 24 – 1 X Matthew 28

B) In all but the Hebrews passage it speaks of a time period accompanied with Judgment.

C) Now here is what we need to understand –about this passage IN Matthew 24

1) Jesus is primarily describing events that are leading up to His 2nd coming

D) He is talking about things that go beyond the destruction of the temple in AD 70

E) The Language in the text is clear:

¹⁴ 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.

²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved;

²⁹ “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. ³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

D) So Important to understand when talking about events beyond AD 70

Let’s now consider Jesus’ response:

4 And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. 6 And you will hear of wars

and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Key Phrase in V.8 The Beginning of Sorrows

A) Sorrows = Birth pangs

B) He is painting a picture we are familiar with - Birth pangs –

1) The closer you get to the due date the more frequent and intense those contractions become.

C) That is how you know that you are getting closer to the time when the baby is going to be born:

D) Jesus says- these are going to be the signs – leading up to my coming and the end of the Age –

1) False Christ – Messiahs

2) Wars and Rumors of War – Famine – Pestilence – Earthquakes

Now when Scoffers read this – they say there has always been those things in the History of Humanity

A) TRUE -Always been false Messiahs – always been Wars – true

B) Historians tell us in the whole History of Man – only 8% of the time – there has been peace

1) The other 92% of the time there has been war going on someplace on planet earth.

C) True there has always been famines- pestilence and earthquakes - So how do we interpret this?

1) Again context – Jesus is talking about the things leading up to His 2nd Coming

D) Jesus is describing the scenario of Revelation 6:1-9

1) The tribulation begins with 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse

4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse

1st rider white horse: Anti-Christ – Conquering and to Conquer

2nd rider red horse: War – Take peace from the earth – Killing

3rd rider black horse: Famine – Often follows war
4th rider pale horse: Pestilence – ¼ of the earth's population is killed

A) All of that is followed by Revelation 6:12 – a Massive Earthquake

B) But here is what we need to understand – Rev. 6 describes when the world is going to be **in full blown labor** –

C) So when we hear of these sort of events going on right now – we need to understand –
1) THESE ARE BIRTH PANGS

D) Right now we are in a restrained version OF THOSE Birth pangs

Birth Pangs

A) An 8.1 earthquake hits Southern Mexico killing over 90

- A week later a 7.1 earthquake hits Mexico city killing over 200

B) Always been earthquakes – but earthquakes are definitely on the rise in their frequency and intensity – across the world

1) Website -Earthquakes activity in the last 30 days

C) **400% SPIKE IN GLOBAL WEATHER CATASTROPHES SINCE 1970**

Birth pangs - A new Season of Wars and rumors of wars –

A) Today because of Nuclear weapons mankind has the capability of blowing up the world 5 times over! – **Although once will do the job**

B) That was not Possible during the revolutionary War –

1) the world wasn't going to be annihilated by muskets - Same is true of the Civil war

C) Even World War I – there wasn't the capacity for – global annihilation

D) But Today there are estimated 14,900 Nuclear warheads in the world today.

1) **93% belong to the US and Russia**

But there are nine nations in total who have Nuclear warheads

A) Aside from the USA and Russia those nations are China, India, Israel, France, North Korea, (Scary) Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

B) Iran is trying really hard to become #10 – Also Scary

C) Consider this:

- 1 Megaton bomb has 50x the explosive power of the A-bomb
- 10 Megaton bomb has 500x the explosive power of the A-bomb
- 1 Trident submarine has 40X the power of every weapon detonated during WWII from every country.

D) So yes there has always been War in the history of Humanity

1) but we have entered into a Season – where the potential for destruction has never been seen

E) A season that could easily be the catalyst for the kind of Destruction the book of Revelation describes

Birth pangs

A) **Famine:** 200 million people on planet earth are living in famine Conditions

B) Population of the earth is around 7 billion people world wide w/ 83 million people being added every year

C) We are on target to hit – the 9.8 billion people mark by the year 2050

1) Problem is according to many experts – our food supply cannot handle that size of a population growth – **Birth pangs of famine**

D) Birth pangs

- **Disease:** An estimated **56.4 million people** passed away worldwide in 2015, and 68 percent of them were due to diseases that progressed slowly.

E) Again these are all the restrained versions of the birth pangs

1) **Full blown labor during the tribulation time**

The Purpose of the tribulation is when God is finally pouring out his wrath on a world that has rejected His Son

A) Now I believe along with many others – the Bible teaches clearly we as the church are not going to be here for that

B) For this simple reason: Not appointed unto Wrath:

1 Thessalonians 5:8-11

8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:8-11

C) Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4-5 is talking about last days events and the coming of the Antichrist

1) But in the midst of all of that he gives a word of encouragement for follower of JESUS

D) WE ARE NOT APPOINTED UNTO WRATH – So when you hear of these things – **DON'T FREAK OUT – Not FEAR – HOPE**

1) Comfort each other and build up each other – You are going to miss it

Pattern of God taking his people out before major Judgment:

A) World wide Judgment at the Flood – God protected Noah in an Ark

B) Destroy Sodom and Gomorrah - His pattern - God told Abraham – Genesis 18:25 – **I will not kill the righteous with the wicked**

C) So he took Lot out – before the Judgment began

When it comes time for God to Judge the whole world for rejecting his son

A) He will take His Church out – before the Judgment begins – in an event known as the rapture of the Church

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with

the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

Jesus is going to come to the clouds – Shout – trumpet – We are caught up

A) Harpazo in the Greek – Raptus in Latin – Rapture

B) Snatched away - taken up -

1) JESUS comes not to the earth – (**that's the 2nd coming**) but to the clouds – his followers are snatched up to meet Him - Rapture -

⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, (die) but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

C) Changed – Metamorphosis – Caterpillar becomes a Butterfly –

1) Mortal – puts on Immortality

D) So this is going to happen: We can look forward to this

1) In a moment – in a twinkling – a BLINK of the eye – Everyone blink

So here is the Big question: If we are not going to be here- during the Tribulation

A) Then why does the Lord go into such detail here in Matthew 24

B) The Book of Revelation – several of the minor prophets in describing the events of the tribulation?

B) Three reasons – **#1 For the sake of Israel** – they are going to go through it

1) Context is very Jewish – v.20

And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. {Doesn't matter to us – life doesn't stop for us on the Sabbath

C) First Wake up Israel – Jacob's trouble

Reason #2 We all are going to have people we know who do not know Jesus and who will experience the Tribulation –

A)God wants us to know what is happening to give us a burden for the lost – to pray and to share

B)Always be ready to give a reason for the Hope that is in us

C)1 Peter – God delays – He doesn't want anyone to perish

D)#3 – He wants us to make sure that we are ready

This is what I want to end on today:

A)What does it mean to be ready: - I want to go back to the Birth analogy – Birth pangs

Aa) Discuss - What do you do when you know a Baby is coming ?

B)How does your life Change when you know a baby is coming

1)**Denise and I are living this right now –**

C)Daughter Amy and her husband Marcus are expecting our first – Grandbaby

D)How does your life Change when – a baby is on the way

Good analogy to consider – how living in light of the Lord's soon RETURN

A)What do you do when you know that a baby is on the way? First news – but it seems surreal

B) THE reality doesn't set in right away especially for guys. – until wife starts showing

1)**Baby is moving –Wow – baby in there**
1st there is an Awareness! – We are having a baby

A)It starts to occupy your mind – It is something you are thinking about - **How your life is going to change**

B)Feelings of excitement – coupled with apprehension –

1)Am I ready – Am I going to be a good dad – mom

C)Even as grandparents – Denise and I have been very aware – Denise texts Amy almost daily – how are you feeling.

D)Suddenly in stores – she is looking for extra maternity clothes for Amy

1)Last week – Car worked on in Carlsbad – walking around the Outlet Mall - **Saw the Oshkosh store**

2)I want to go in there – Baby overalls – Never had that thought before

E)My Point – When a Baby is coming – closer it gets the more that it is on your mind. –

1)There is an Awareness – Change plans –

F)Can't be out of town around this time – Speaking request turned down, etc

The same thing is true spiritually – The Lord wants there to be an awareness on our minds and hearts – JESUS IS COMING!

A)Might be today – Awareness – occupies our minds

B)We are aware of the contractions happening all around us.

C)Something you live with on the forefront of your mind – MIGHT BE TODAY.

D)Christian home for the mentally challenged

1)Pristine place – one problem – dirty windows – they are looking and hoping – maybe today.

Not only is there an awareness – there is a Preparedness

A)When a baby is coming – you start getting prepared – You get the baby room ready. – Paint

B)Our daughter has to work full time so my wife is anticipating having to watch the Baby – **several times a week.**

C)All our kids are out of the house – so one of the bedrooms is a guest bedroom –

1) another is now my office –

D)Then we have this room – junk room –

1)You have a junk room – the room you put stuff in – **{Get to that later – stuff –**

D)That room the door is always closed – well that is the only bed room down stairs – Denise is thinking – Baby room -

1) So that is a project for the next month

When a baby is coming – you have to baby proof the house –

A) Put things away – they could get into – secure the cabinet doors - Pool – Alarm

B) You get my point – there is a preparedness that goes into getting ready for a baby –

C) And likewise there should be a preparedness that goes into being ready for Jesus to come for His Church –

D) 1 John 3:3 Whoever has this hope in Him purifies himself just as he is pure

1) Things in your life – not pure – Put away – put out

E) Things in your heart that are not right – you deal with those things

1) It calls for some heart assessment – get prepared

Awareness/ Preparedness / a Readiness

A) Pregnant – you might – go to Lamaze class - you build a crib – buy a stroller

B) Put all the appropriate numbers in the right place on your phone

C) Bag packed and by the door or in the car

D) So too – Spiritually ready – Calling and election sure – ARE YOU SURE – KNOW JESUS

Ready to share the Hope.

A) One of the things I love about the millennial Generation - IMPACT

B) Creative ideas about how to impact a community

C) Sometimes older Christians – Things are getting so bad – our only hope is in the Rapture.

Millennials understand – Things are not good and our only Hope is IN JESUS

A) How can we get more people in touch with Jesus

Technology for spreading the gospel

B) Ways to impact a community –

C) Being ready is not about sitting on our hands and circling the wagons –

1) ITS REACHING THE WORLD AND SPREADING THE HOPE

Watchfulness – Waiting

A) But it is an active waiting – in other words – Life isn't put on hold – sitting by the door – waiting for the baby

B) Hey want to come over to watch the game? - Are you kidding me – don't you know – **having a baby – I am watching and waiting –**

1) Can't come watch a football game - NUTS

C) No it is an active waiting: Many gals – they still go to work – right up to the end –

1) Husband goes to work – Life doesn't stop in other words

That is a good picture because when the Lord tells us to be waiting and watching – the word used for waiting – also speaks of an active waiting

A) God wants us to keep doing Life

B) Two wrong reactions to the idea that Jesus could come at any time

1) Irresponsible – Charge up my credit cards – debt – I will not be here to have to pay for it anyway.

C) Wrong and sinful – Good stewards good witnesses – NEITHER

ANOTHER reaction of some believers – is they become obsessed

A) All they can think about – talk about – every moment they think needs to be lived – telling people about Jesus

B) Problem with that is it becomes forced – instead of led by the spirit

1) Forced usually means not fruitful -

C) The other problem is it is not sustained – burn out – they get discouraged

Mistake: Excited about the Coming of the Lord – instead of the Lord who is coming!

A) Jesus said: Come that you might have life and that more abundantly

B) Jesus wants us to enjoy life – Enjoy what He has given to us – family – friends – things He has created

1) Food and places like the beach – Mountains

C) Don't stop living - Just remember who and what you are living for

1) Power to be His witnesses –

D) He wants us to be – Live life fullest – Live life with purpose

Enjoy it – Look for opportunities everyday – tell others about Him

A) Some of you today – will watch Football – I don't think you should feel guilty about that – in light of this study

B) Being ready – I can do anything that I can imagine Jesus sitting down and taking part in it with me

1) I think – He would sit down and watch a football game – except of course if it was the Raiders (just kidding)

C) Jesus attended Weddings – liked getting together with people for meals

1) Looked for times of Rest ----

D) Always living mindful of His mission – Example