

"The Olivet Discourse"

Matthew 24-25

Part 9

Introduction: Tonight we return to our study of the "birth pains" which Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24:8.

Matthew 24:8

⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows.

In Matthew 24 Jesus is speaking to His Disciples about the "end of the age" and His return to earth to set up His Kingdom. In Matthew 24:4-7 Jesus began to speak of the "birth pains" which the world will experience before His return. The "birth pains" which He speaks of will all take place during the 7 year period of the Great Tribulation which is also known as the 70th Week of Daniel.

In our study we have taken some time to consider the "birth pains" and in so doing we have went back to the book of Revelation to look at 3 sets of judgments which will come upon the world during the Great Tribulation. There are the Seal Judgments, the Trumpet Judgments and the Vial Judgments. To look at these judgments in the book of Revelation is to look at the "birth pains" under a microscope. In other words we find more detail in the book of Revelation than we do in the teaching of our Lord in Matthew 24.

In our study we have come through the Seals, the Trumpets and 5 of the Vial Judgments.

A. The Vial Judgments

Vial #6

Notice Revelation 16:12-16

This Vial Judgment is the preparation of the Battle of Armageddon. The Euphrates River will be dried up so that the armies which are gathered by the Satanic Trinity can make their way to Mount Megiddo.

This will be Satan's attempt to defeat Jesus Christ at His return to the earth. There will be 3 demonic spirits which will go forth from Satan, the Anti-christ and the False Prophet and they will work miracles in order to gather an army for this battle.

Notice Revelation 16:14

Notice Revelation 19:17-21

Here is the actual battle. This is a battle in which Satan throws all he has at the Lord in an attempt to defeat Jesus because Satan knows that Jesus will eventually cast him into the Lake of Fire for all eternity to be tormented.

Revelation 20:10

¹⁰ And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Now let me show you another passage which will give a few more details about this Battle of Armageddon.

Notice Revelation 14:14-20

The blood from this battle will flow 4.5 feet deep and the river of blood will be about 180 miles long. That gives us an idea as to the

number of people that will join with the Satanic Trinity in this battle against the Lord.

Vial #7

Notice Revelation 16:17-21

When this vial is poured out there will be widespread destruction.

1. It will contain the world's worst earthquake.
2. The topography of the planet will be changed.
3. There will be hail stones which will fall that will weigh about 110 pounds each.

These are the end of the judgments and the end of the "birth pains".

So we have looked at 3 "birth pains" from the Words of our Lord.

A. Great deception. (Matthew 24:4-5)

B. Civil unrest. (Matthew 24:6-7a)

C. Great catastrophes (Matthew 24:7b) which include the 3 sets of judgments in Revelation.

Let us now go back to Matthew 24.

I. Jesus' Answer to the Disciple's Questions

Matthew 24:4-44

Part 6

There are yet more birth pains which Jesus speaks of in Matthew 24.

D. Persecution

Notice Matthew 24:9

Here we see that during the Great Tribulation there will be a hatred for believers. The hatred will be so great that many believers will be put to death.

Now this verse raises a question, "Who are these believers?" We know the church will be raptured away before the Great Tribulation. So who are the believers?

These will be people who will get saved after the rapture. But we need to know that everyone who has heard the Gospel on this side of the rapture and rejected it will not be able to be saved because God will send them a strong delusion and they will believe the lies of the anti-christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

⁹ Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

¹⁰ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

¹¹ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

¹² That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Therefore, the people who will be saved during the Great Tribulation are people who have never heard the Gospel on this side of the rapture. Something interesting to consider is that all who enter the Great Tribulation will be unsaved. At the beginning of the Great

Tribulation God will allow 144,000 Jewish men to get saved and they will then share the Gospel during the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 7:4

⁴ And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Revelation 14:1-4

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

² And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

³ And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

⁴ These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

There will also be 2 other very effective witnesses for God during the great Tribulation.

Revelation 11:3

³ *And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*

These 2 witnesses will minister for 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years and they will be empowered by God in order to reach the unsaved.

Revelation 11:4-6

⁴ *These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.*

⁵ *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.*

⁶ *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

It will be through the witness of these men, the 144,000 Jewish men and others who get saved that many others will be saved during the Great Tribulation. Let me show you how effective their witness will be.

Revelation 7:9-14

⁹ *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;*

¹⁰ *And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

¹¹ *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,*

¹² *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

¹³ *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*

¹⁴ *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

But let us get back to the Words of Jesus. There will be great persecution during the tribulation. Let me show you several verses which reflect how great the hatred will be for believers during the tribulation. Let us look at what happens when the 2 witnesses are killed in Jerusalem.

Revelation 11:7-10

⁷ *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*

⁸ *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*

⁹ *And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.*

¹⁰ And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

These verses reflect the hatred. The world will celebrate when these men are killed. Even to the point of sending gifts to one another. It will be like Christmas to them. Now let me show you the hatred in action.

Revelation 6:9-11

⁹ And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

¹⁰ *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

¹¹ *And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*

These are killed for the stand they take on the Word and for their testimony.

Remember the great multitude which John could not number who had come out of the tribulation? They also are slaughtered for their faith.

How will they be killed?

Revelation 20:4

⁴ *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the*

witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Believers will be beheaded for their faith.

Conclusion:

Let me leave you with one more thought.

Notice Matthew 24:9 again.

"*Deliver you up*" means "to be arrested". The bottom line is that under the kingdom of the anti-christ it will be illegal to be a follower of Christ. The cost of discipleship will be very high.