

Audio Teaching Sermon

Message #46

Beginning of Labor Pains

[A Intro – Pastor Jefferson 0:00 thru 1:22]

Hey everybody! It is my constant prayer that those listening to this Audio Teaching Sermon Series are eager to absorb more of the teaching of Jesus. While you might be hearing my voice, make no mistake—as you meditate and study the words of Scripture, it is **Jesus** Himself who is doing all the instruction. This is the **46th Message** in this **Series**, and I'm pastor Jefferson. We've been talking about the **3rd prophecy** of the parable of the **Fig Tree** and have been discussing each of the signs Jesus told us to watch out for. I want you to now open up your Bible to **Matthew 24:7**. This is the next sign Jesus spoke about. It says, ¹ *"For nation will rise against nation,* ² *and kingdom against kingdom,* ³ *and there will be famines* ⁴ *and earthquakes* ⁵ *in various places."* Growing up, after reading this verse, I always envisioned the arrival of a most scary world, where everything would be coming apart at the seams. But, if the first blush topical meaning of this verse is true, then how could it be a valid warning?

[B Heavens Above the Ground 1:22 thru 2:35]

What I'm saying is, that if we have to wait until society has essentially exploded into chaos, what kind of advanced warning would that be? If there is no time available after receiving the warning to make changes, how can we then effectively heed it? Well, nowhere in Scripture does God operate that way. In fact, He gives ample warning of coming trouble. For example, **Noah** preached for **120 years** before the **Great Flood** came. With the nation of **Israel** appearing in **1948**, God is giving us **85 years** before the start of the **Tribulation**. As I've shown time and again, our Heavenly Father interacts with man using a level of intelligence where we can begin to at least understand what He is telling us. But don't for one moment question what He is doing, as God Almighty works an infinite number of chess moves ahead of us. The Bible says His intelligence is farther above us than the heavens are above the ground.

[C Most Distant Manmade Object 2:35 thru 4:22]

Allow me put this in perhaps an example which illuminates pretty clearly what God is saying. The farthest manmade object from earth is the **Voyager 1** space probe—launched way back in 1977, the year I graduated from high school. Just for fun, let's assume this

represents the limit of man's intellect. The probe is now **1 light day** away from Earth. Not one light year—we are talking about 1 light day—the distance a beam of light travels in 24 hours. The closest star to earth is Proxima Centauri. It is 4 light years and 90 light days away. Or, 1,550 times farther away from us than **Voyager 1** currently is. That means it would take Voyager 1 about **73,000 years** to reach Proxima Centauri, if that were its destination. That's over 12 times the length of Biblically recorded human history. And we're talking about the *closest* star to us. The furthest galaxies in the known universe are over 14 billion light years distant. And God's intellect is even greater than in this example. His intellect is infinitely higher than ours. So, when we try in our prayers to call for decisions that belong solely to God, we actually wind up insulting Him, whether you know it or not. Okay, let's return to **Matt 24:7**.

[**D** Race Becomes a Major Issue 4:22 thru 6:03]

Look now at T-1. It reads: ¹ "For nation will rise against nation." The word we see for **nation** is: *ETH-nos* and means '**tribe, race or ethnic group.**' It's where we get our modern word *ethnic*. The word **ethnic** means '**of or relating to large groups of people according to common racial, national, tribal, religious or cultural origin or background.**' The root of this same word is used when Jesus gave us the order for His **Great Commission**, where in **Matt 28:19** we are to go forth and make disciples of all nations—of all *ethnicities*. Jesus is speaking about assorted races here. Next we see the words **will rise up**. We find the word [7] *eh-GER-thes-set-tie* and it means '**to arouse, incite, stir up, or to move against.**' Jesus is discussing the inflammation of raw emotion between people with race as the main issue. Since the creation of Isreal, the world has been witness to **race based conflicts** involving the Balkans, Rwanda, Chechnya, Iraq, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Darfur, to name a few, as well as in Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip, and even the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine are all relevant examples of attempted race based conflict or ethnic cleansing by one group over another.

[**E** Dividing Over Ideology 6:03 thru 7:28]

Next Jesus says in T-2, ² *and kingdom against kingdom.* The word He uses here for **kingdom** is *bah-sil-LAY-ah*, but does not refer to a literal, physical kingdom. It is defined as '**the realm where a sovereign rules.**' In Scripture, it most often is associated with the

rule of Christ in the hearts of believers. So, Jesus here is not talking about a physical kingdom, He is instead discussing **ideology**, which is defined as **‘a manner or the content of beliefs characteristic of an individual, a group or a culture.’** What we are seeing today has always existed—it is a war between **good versus evil**. A continuous fight over man’s souls. Satan is very adept at hiding lies, by concealing them inside a few sentences which at first blush sound amazing. I did a study of the **2016 Democratic platform**, where I examined each and every plank. And would you be surprised that 100% of them contained language which was in direct conflict with Scripture? Using political parties to divide people has been going on since they were invented. And nothing has changed.

[**F** Famines and Earthquakes 7:28 thru 9:01]

Look now at **T-3**. Jesus uses the words ³ *and there will be famines.* The word we see for **famines** is [3] *lee-MOI* and in each of the 3 places it is used means **‘the dearth of something.’** Note that the word is plural. Jesus could have used the singular, but clearly He did not, as recorded in each of the gospels. Most people define **famine** (singular) as **‘the extreme scarcity of food.’** But by choosing the plural form of the word, Jesus was telling us there will be multiple types of famines. Keep this in mind as I break down the remainder of the verse. Next we see in **T-4** the words, ⁴ *and earthquakes.* The definition of the word **earthquake** is **‘the shaking or trembling of the earth that is volcanic or tectonic in origin.’** Earthquakes have been common since Adam and Eve walked out of the Garden of Eden. I had a discussion awhile back with a seismologist who demonstrated that nothing about earthquakes has changed since the modern *seismograph* was invented in **1875**. The rate, magnitude and locale of earthquakes have remained—pardon the pun—rock steady over that time period. We therefore must investigate further.

[**G** God’s Warnings are Specific 9:01 thru 10:31]

When we read the 2nd half of the verse, it says: ³ *and there will be famines* ⁴ *and earthquakes* ⁵ *in various places.”* Let me plainly tell you, God never issues warnings which are that imprecise and generic. Mankind has known earthquakes and famine throughout his existence on the planet. Jesus was not just spouting these signs off the top of His head, rendering **vague** and **imprecise** prophecies. No! He is giving us far more information than misguided and/or lazy Biblical translators would have us believe. And

don't for one moment equate such loose translation with having the same detail and accuracy of the original text. **Satan** has clearly snuck in and allowed *perversion* of God's word to be *stealthily* inserted into modern translations. Allow me to give you one of the grossest examples of this that I have found. In **Luke 1:27**, where the mother of Jesus, Mary is clearly identified twice as a **virgin**, by the use of the *Greek* word [5] **par-THEN-non**, which can only mean '**a woman who has never had sexual relations.**' It is specifically speaking of a female who has aged beyond puberty and is not yet married.

[**H** **Virgin Means Virgin** **10:31 thru 12:03**]

Despite those facts, there are modern versions of the Bible which refuse to use the word "**virgin**" and will instead use "*young woman; or something like that.*" This, despite the fact that the Greeks themselves named a major temple in Athens the "**Parthenon**" in honor of **Athena**, the virgin goddess. In the Greek, **par-THEN-non** means only one thing: a virgin woman. They could have named it "Athena" in her honor but didn't. These translations of the Bible seek to deny and/or conceal the **virgin birth** of Jesus Christ. This is why we must always remain vigilant in our Bible study. The *Greek* word Jesus uses in place of **earthquakes** in **T-4**, is [3] **sice-MOI** and just like famines, only appears in these same 3 verses. The word is also plural. And while we use the word earthquakes to describe seismic activity, **sice-MOI** does not translate solely over to only earthquakes. It translates to seismic, meaning '**a large commotion, a gale or a tempest.**' When we look up the word **seismic**, we find it means '**having a strong or widespread impact.**' Do you see a pattern here, where God uses ordinary words to define unordinary situations?

[**I** **Hitting Us Where We Live** **12:03 thru 13:39**]

The last thought, **T-5**, we read the words "*in various places.*" The *Greek* word we see for **places** is [5] **TOH-pos**, and it means '**any portion of space marked off from the surrounding area.**' More specifically, it means the boundaries used to delineate inhabited spaces, such as with cities, towns or villages. It refers to any of the plot lines defining the boundaries of a parcel of land, a lot or a home, to include city or town limits. It essentially means '**the boundaries delineating the inhabited places where we live.**' The word for **in** we see is **kah-TAH** and means '**down, against or by way of.**' So, when we combine all the definitions we arrive at the following translation of this verse: "*There are going to be very large seismic events* (hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, tsunamis, pandemics, etc.)

which will cause extreme scarcity of products (to include food, fuel, water, shelter, medical supplies, etc.) *within our inhabited spaces, to increasingly include our villages, cities and towns.*” Now, for those who believe these natural disasters are simply being driven by the fact that there are more people living in the world, I’ve got some scientific data for you to digest.

[**J** The Migration to the Cities 13:39 thru 15:07]

The world population today is 3.5 times what it was back in 1948. At that time, most folks lived in rural locations. But since then, there has been a big global shift with people moving to the cities. It has to do primarily with the **mechanization** of farming and the increase in production of consumer goods. Back then, **28%** of the population lived in the cities, to include the urban areas surrounding them. Whereas today over **60%** of folks globally reside there now. In the US, it is even higher with **84%** of people living in urban settings. Because cities have much higher densities, the overall space taken up by buildings, homes, factories, etc. has remained relatively constant, even after accounting for the increase in population. And there is no disputing the fact that these tempests are impacting humanity with a much higher frequency. Whether you want to blame changes in the climate or people moving to areas more prone to being impacted—it doesn’t really matter. The rate at which lives are being lost along with the increasing cost of property damage are both swelling at an accelerating and alarming rate.

[**K** The Beginning of Labor Pains 15:07 thru 16:48]

The risk analysis done by insurance companies proves it. While they blame the change on everything under the sun, there is still no denying that it is happening now, and getting worse with each passing day, exactly in conformance with the prophetic words of Christ. Blame it on climate change or whatever—it doesn’t alter the fact that it is happening just as Jesus warned us it would. When we read the next verse, **Matthew 24:8**, it brings the signs into a much clearer focus. Jesus says, ¹ *“All these then ¹ are the beginning of birth pains.”* Jesus just finished answering the first question His disciples asked Him; *“Tell us when will these things happen?”* The signs we have been discussing to this point can be found in **verses 4 thru 8**. Thus, they can be likened unto the labor pains experienced during childbirth. The closer to delivery a baby comes, the pains become increasingly stronger and arrive at shorter intervals. The word we see in **T-2** for **beginning** is **ar-KHAY**

and means '**a commencement, or the initial starting point.**' It brings the idea that what comes first is foremost and has the priority, ahead of the rest. Thus, the establishment of the **Fig Tree**—aka the Nation of Israel—is the event which started God's stopwatch.

[**L** Signs of a Painful Nature 16:48 thru 18:10]

The Greek word we see for **of birth pains** is [2] *oh-DIN-non* and translates to '**labor pains, agony, or sorrow.**' The Bible also refers to this as a coming time of sorrows. The *Greek* dictionary uses the word **travail** to describe it, which means '**work which is especially painful or of a laborious nature.**' It can mean either physical or mental exertion, as both are certainly applicable. So, the signs Jesus gave us to this point began following the establishment of the nation of Israel. And He warns us that these signs will become stronger and will happen at increasingly shorter intervals. As the preaching has been watered down with good sounding humanism, Christianity has once more become popular. The threat of nuclear war is being heard on the airwaves more and more often. Ethnic cleansing, hate speech and diverging ideologies are resulting in increasing violence with each passing day. Not to mention the destruction and havoc caused by natural disasters increasingly impacting our towns and cities, reaching epidemic proportions.

[**Z** Some Final Thoughts 18:10 thru 19:43]

When reading these verses at a topical level, they do not convey timely warnings worthy of their name. To believe otherwise makes Jesus look like either some fraudster or even worse—an idiot. I just used the last **5 teaching audio sermons** breaking down and discussing 5 verses in the "**Little Apocalypse**" chapter—**Matthew 24**. It required over an hour and a half of teaching just to answer the disciples' first question. Sure, we can stick with the topical reading, because then we can ignore that we are actually living in the End Times. This will allow us to sleep better at night until the first use of nuclear weapons in this age catches our attention. We will return to discussing the **10 virgins**, where fully half of the church will wait too long before beginning their **discipleship training**. So, the real question you have to ask yourself is, "*How long am I willing to wait before I get serious about Jesus and His teachings?*" There is a minimum amount of time required to reach sufficient maturity while in the proverbial nest of Christ. Speaking of time, that's all I have for today. **So, until next time my beloved, this has been Pastor Jefferson, speaking in God's Holy name and for His glory alone. Amen!**