

## Lighthouse Bible Church

December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Matthew 24: 6 – 8 *Scripture Reading: Revelation 6: 1 - 8*

**‘Signs that the end is Near’ Pt. #2**

### Stand – Read – Pray

We are looking at Matthew Chapter 24 and the answer to the questions the disciples asked of Jesus after they left Herod’s temple for the last time. You remember back in Chapter 23, Jesus told the nation of Israel that **your house**, the temple, **is left to you desolate** because of their rejection of Him as their Messiah and their making the temple a den of thieves.

When Jesus and the disciples left the temple, the disciples were commenting about the stones of the temple and their size and decorative beauty and Jesus said to them **not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down**, in Verse 2 of Matthew 24.

So with what Jesus said about the temple being left desolate and the stones of the temple being thrown down, 4 of the disciples approach Jesus privately after they arrive at the Mount of Olives Verse 3 says and they ask Him a series of questions relative to what they had just been told.

They asked Jesus, in Verse 3, tell us when will these things be and what will be the sign of Your coming and the end of the age. So Jesus begins to answer their question ‘what will be the sign of Your coming’ starting in Verse 4.

When Jesus answers the question ‘what will be the sign of Your coming’ He will also be answering the question ‘what will be the end of the age’.

We saw last time that ‘the end of the age’ meant the final end of all things leading to His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming back to earth. That word end meant the final end and the word age meant the world; we look at that in detail before.

So now Jesus begins to answer the question ‘what will be the sign of Your coming’ and we saw last week in Verse 4 – 5 that one sign that will be prevalent before His coming will be **deceivers and deception** with people claiming to be the Messiah, claiming to be the Christ and **many** will be deceived.

Remember we saw in Verse 8 that **all these are the BEGINNING of sorrows or the beginning of birth pangs**. The closer we get to the return of Christ the more these signs will happen. We ended last time by applying this to our lives today in the fact that there are deceivers out there today that we have to be watchful of. And so this morning we want to continue looking at more of the signs that the end is near and the beginning of sorrows is starting, in Verses 6 – 7.

**Verses 6 – 7: 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. For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom...**

This is the second sign mentioned by Jesus that will increase more and more as it gets closer to His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming and that is the hearing of wars and rumors of wars. There are going to be wars on an unprecedented scale at the time just before the return of Jesus.

And where there are not wars there will be **rumors of wars** taking place and every **kingdom and nation** will be affected by them either involved in a war or hearing about one that they or another country will be in soon.

And by the time you get to the return of Christ there will be conflict and wars and death and destruction and bloodshed everywhere. We have that today, in some places, but not on the scale that will be just before Jesus returns. Today we see the conflict and war and rumors of wars as different leaders of different countries defy NATO treaties and UN Security sanctions and attack other countries that cause allied countries to come to their aid.

You have people like Vladimir Putin in Russia creating tension by taking over Crimea and the Ukraine. In November of this year NATO estimated that they had to scramble fighter jets 400 times because of Russia's increasing air activity and fly near restricted air space.

According to the latest report from the US Congress' US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, "China's rapid military modernization is also altering the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific and could "engender destabilizing security competition" between countries such as Japan and India; while simultaneously exacerbating disputes over regional hotspots such as Taiwan, the Korean peninsula and islands in the East and South China seas. As the US is cutting its national defense budget, the US-Chinese military balance in the Asia-Pacific is tilting in favor of China".

*<http://www.prophecynewswatch.com/2014/November12/121.html#Yf89kEbKZhue7Bhz.99>*

We have all this going on today with different countries and leaders fighting or threatening to fight each other. This is really nothing new, but what we are going to see as it gets closer to the return of Christ is an increase in these wars that will bring nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom on a worldwide, world involved, scale as never before.

We see this spelled out very clearly in scripture. In **Daniel 11: 40 – 45** it says **at the time of the end**, just before Jesus comes to set up His kingdom, **many countries** (most of the major countries of the world) **will come to the land of Israel and be overthrown** at the hand of the anti-Christ and his powerful army that **Revelation 17: 9 – 14** says will consist of 10 nations that will all be ultimately be destroyed when Jesus comes back.

With all the threats of nuclear warfare and all the tensions within the nations, we can see how something can happen on a world wide scale that would bring many countries into battle with one another. As a matter of fact **Revelation 6: 4** says **another horse, fiery red, went out and it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth and that people should kill one another...Verse 8** says that the rider on the pale horse, death and hades that power **was given to them over ¼ of the earth to kill with sword, hunger death and beasts of the earth.**

Later in **Revelation 9: 15** it says **that an army of 200 million would kill a third of mankind remaining.**

But the ultimate worldwide war that will take place, and actually be going on when Jesus Christ comes back to stop it, is the one mentioned in **Revelation 16: 14 – 16** known to us as **the battle of Armageddon**. The leaders of the earth, it says will be demonically controlled and gathered **for the great day of God Almighty**. As a matter of fact, **Revelation 14: 20** says there will be so much bloodshed during this war that the **blood will come up to the horses bridle for about 200 miles.**

Well, we see and hear of wars and rumors of wars in our time now, which we cant help but think that we are closer than ever, but nothing compared to that time ahead. And Jesus tells the people living in that time in Verse 6 of Matthew 24 **see that you are not troubled for all these things must come to pass but the end is not yet.**

When things appear out of control on a world-wide scale, Jesus says don't be afraid, don't be alarmed, don't cry out in fear is what the world **troubled** *throemai* because God's plan is unfolding just as He said because it **must come to pass**. That is comforting for us today as well.

Then at the end of Verse 7 we see the next 3 signs that the end is near. **Verse 7: and there will be famines, pestilences and earthquakes in various places.**

Jesus says there will be three more signs that you can watch for, 3 more sorrows or birth pangs that will increase more and more as the end nears and My return comes. He says their will be **famines, pestilences and earthquakes**. In addition to the many deceivers and false Christ's, in addition to the worldwide massacre of the worlds population by war, there will also be worldwide disasters to many who are left and to the earth itself.

As a matter of fact in the parallel account in **Luke 21: 11** Jesus says in addition to the deceivers and wars; there will be **great earthquakes in various places and famines and pestilences AND there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.**

So all of these are going to be happening and increase the closer we get to the return of our Lord. When we look around today, we have earthquakes in various places, we have famines in different countries, we have pestilences or disease or plagues, *loimoi*, but, again, not on the scale that they will be in that time.

This time frame can be characterized by the way Luke 21 describes it as **fearful sights** *phobotron* which means frightening or terrifying sights. The root of that word is *phobos* where we get our word phobia from.

As a matter of fact, look at **Luke 21: 25 – 28.** *Read*

The Bible describes some of these signs that tell us the end is near and by the way these signs, Verse 7 says, will happen **in various places**. They will not be isolated to one place or another but will happen all over the place, especially when it comes to **earthquakes**.

In **Revelation 6: 12 – 16** *Read* ...a great earthquake...every mountain and island was moved out of its place. **Revelation 11: 13** says that after the two witnesses were raised back to life again and ascended into heaven that **there was a great earthquake and a tenth of the city fell and in the earthquake 7000 people were killed and the rest were afraid.**

**Revelation 16: 18 – 20** there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Now the great city was divided into 3 parts ... and every island fled away and the mountains were not found.

There will also be **famines, pestilences and diseases** during this time as well according to **Revelation 6: 5 – 8** in which **1/4 of the world population will be destroyed in part by.**

The amount of dead bodies left around after the wars and the fact that some of the fresh water resources are going to be poisoned, as **Revelation 8: 10 – 11** and **Revelation 16: 4** says, and the fact that all food sources from land and sea will be destroyed as **Revelation 8: 7 – 12** and **Revelation 16: 3** says, and the fact that many will be struck with **foul and loathsome sores**, as **Revelation 16: 2** says are all going to contribute to the famines and diseases.

Also during this time there will be **fearful sights and great signs from heaven**. Some of the fearful sights and signs from heaven will be a large amount of people being killed by **wild animals** **Revelation 6: 8** says.

**Hail and fire mingled with blood destroying food sources** **Revelation 8: 7** says. **A huge mountain**, a meteor of some type, **landing in the sea** destroying **sea life and ships** **Revelation 8: 8 – 9** says , another one, **Revelation 8: 10 – 11** says **will hit in a river somewhere and poison the water** **Revelation 8: 10 – 11** says.

People, **Revelation 8: 12** says will see **a third of the sun, moon and stars blacked out**. They will be **tortured by** demonic beings for 5 months and want to commit suicide because of the pain inflicted on them, **Revelation 9** says, but they won't be able to.

They will see **two people two witnesses** killed and left in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 days and then they will raise from the dead and many will see that **Revelation 11: 7 – 12** says.

These people, and all people on the earth at that time will hear 3 angelic beings proclaiming the **everlasting gospel and judgment against the pagan nations and against those who take the mark of the beast**.

This will be an unprecedented time of fearful sights and great signs from heaven. Again, we are beginning to see them now, but nothing like what it will be then and then Jesus says, back in our text in **Matthew 24: 8** **all these are the beginning of sorrows**.

There is only one way to escape this and that is in the rapture as a believer

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Verses 6 – 7a:

Daniel 11: 40 – 45, Revelation 17: 9 – 14  
Revelation 6: 4, 8, Revelation 9: 15  
Revelation 16: 14 – 16, Revelation 14: 20

Verse 7b:

Luke 21: 11, Luke 21: 25 – 28  
Revelation 6: 12 – 16, Revelation 11: 13  
Revelation 16: 18 – 20, Revelation 6: 5 – 8  
Revelation 8: 10 – 11, Revelation 16: 4  
Revelation 8: 7 – 12, Revelation 16: 2 – 3  
Revelation 9, Revelation 11: 7 – 12

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Revelation 8: 7 – 12, Revelation 16: 2 – 3  
Revelation 9, Revelation 11: 7 – 12