

"Are These Birth Pains?"

Back in May, we received a letter from our dear friend Sharon Sanders informing us of the passing of her husband, Ray. Ray and Sharon spent their entire lives living in Jerusalem, where they reached out to Holocaust survivors with the love of Jesus. We have so many precious memories tied to them, and I must say that Ray and Sharon have made our lives infinitely richer.

Over the next several days, we wrote back and forth as we tried to comfort her, and in one of her letters, she said, "I, along with you, wonder what happened to our country, the world, and all that is in it. The birth pangs are upon us... and I don't think most people are ready."

This leads me to several questions that demand an answer. Are we in that period when the birth pains have started, and what things would qualify as a "birth pain"? Let's start by showing you what the "birth pains" **do not** include.

Matthew 24:6-8 KJV

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, **but the end is not yet.**

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 **All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

Everything listed in these three verses should not be considered "birth pains." They have been happening for thousands of years. So, what do "Birth pains" look like? To find the answer, we must look at what the scriptures say about "**The day of the Lord**" because in 1 Thessalonians 5 and Isaiah 13, "The day of the Lord" is tied to "birth pains."

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 NOG

2 You know very well that **the day of the Lord** will come like a thief in the night.

3 When people say, "Everything is safe and sound!" destruction will suddenly strike them. **It will be as sudden as labor pains come to a pregnant woman.** They won't be able to escape.

Isaiah 13:6-8 NLT

6 Scream in terror, for **the day of the Lord has arrived**—the time for the Almighty to destroy.

7 Every arm is paralyzed with fear, Every heart melts,

8 and people are terrified. **Pangs of anguish grip them, like those of a woman in labor.** They look helplessly at one another, their faces aflame with fear.

Eight prophets in the Old Testament speak in detail about the "Day of the Lord." It is not presented as a single day but rather a time of judgment that happens **immediately before** Jesus's return. The verses I gave above give a good synopsis of what that time will look like, and as you can see, it isn't pretty. It also appears to be inescapable.

Amos 5:19 EASY

Nobody will escape! It will be like a man who runs away from a lion, but then he meets a bear! When he goes into his house to be safe, he puts his hand on a wall and a snake bites him!

As I study these verses and others, it becomes evident that what we see happening today fits the Bible's description of the prophesied "birth pains." And I tell you the truth when I say, "**It is only going to get worse, much worse!**" And so I admonish you, "**You must keep your eyes on Jesus!**" His return could be imminent. He is either coming back to gather His church in the rapture or to rule and reign. Believe what you want, but as for me...

I believe the rapture is very close.

I believe this for many reasons, but in this setting, I believe it because of 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 KJV

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ...

Church, the baby will soon be here!