

DAY 13: THE BEGINNING OF BIRTH PAINS

O Lord, in distress they sought you;
they poured out a whispered prayer
when your discipline was upon them.

17 Like a pregnant woman
who writhes and cries out in her pangs
when she is near to giving birth,
so were we because of you, O Lord;

18 we were pregnant, we writhed,
but we have given birth to wind.

We have accomplished no deliverance in the earth,
and the inhabitants of the world have not fallen.

19 Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise.

You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy!

For your dew is a dew of light,
and the earth will give birth to the dead.

(Isaiah 26:16-19)

I. BIRTH PAINS AND BIRTH

- A. In [Matthew 24](#), [Luke 21](#), [Mark 13](#), Jesus is elaborating on concepts that God has already spoken through Isaiah's lament ([Isaiah 26:16-19](#))
- B. Birth pains lead to birth which is deliverance for the Earth (the restoration of Eden)
- C. God responds assuring the people that a time will come when their struggle will lead to restoration ([v. 19](#))
- D. Israel described as a woman in labor, giving birth BEFORE having labor pains ([Isaiah 66:7-9](#))
 - 1. Israel's expectation was that when the Messiah comes, so will redemption
 - 2. But Isaiah shows that before redemption, the boy is born
 - 3. Jesus was born before redemption
 - 4. When Jesus comes BACK, there will be redemption ([Isaiah 66:14-16](#))
- E. [Daniel 9](#) lays out his prophecy of 70 weeks before the Lord's return and it is clear that the final 7-year period follows an order:
 - 1. Begins with a covenant made by the Antichrist
 - 2. Abomination of desolation
- F. Daniel's prophecy reminds us of the struggling that comes before redemption
- G. When Jesus expands upon the timing of the End Times ([Matthew 24:1-9](#)), he uses language that would immediately remind Old Testament literate Jews of Isaiah's and Daniel's prophecy



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II. FINAL SEVEN YEARS

- A. Before Jesus returns, there will be a final seven-year period
- B. Some of the initial seals will have taken place in the first half of that period
- C. Some seals (trumpets and bowls) are in the final half of that period
- D. In the middle of the seven-year period we see the timing event, Abomination of Desolation
- E. Pre-Wrath: Belief that Jesus returns at the end of the tribulation, before God's wrath is poured out
 - 1. There is a difference between the persecution of Satan and the wrath of God
 - 2. We are on the Earth for the tribulation (persecution of Satan)
 - 3. We are removed for the wrath of God
- F. Classic Pre-Wrath Model:
 - 1. The Rapture and the Return of Jesus is in-between the sixth and seventh seals
 - 2. 30-day period and 45-day period could be the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel
 - 3. Leads into the thousand-year reign of Christ
- G. Post-Tribulational Model:
 - 1. The seals are broken, then the trumpets
 - 2. Jesus returns at the end of the final seven years
 - 3. Then the bowls of wrath are poured out
 - 4. Birth pains prior to the final seven years
- H. (Tentative) Hybrid Pre-Wrath and Post-Tribulational Model:
 - 1. The first three seals in the first three-and-a-half years
 - a) The beginning of birth pains
 - 2. After the Abomination of Desolation come the fourth and fifth seals
 - 3. At the close of the final seven years is when we see the sixth and seven seals, the trumpets, Jesus' return, etc.
 - 4. Pre-Wrath in that we are raptured before the wrath of God is poured out
 - 5. Post-Tribulation in that Jesus returns after the Tribulation
- I. The snapshot of Jesus' return ([Revelation 19](#)) may lead us to believe that this time period happens quickly, when in reality it is a complex series of events

III. THE SEALS

- A. White Horse- The Antichrist
- B. Red Horse- Slaughter, bloodshed
- C. Black Horse- Famine, death
- D. Green/Pale Horse- Disease, death
- E. Fifth Seal- Souls under the alter (martyrs)
- F. Sixth Seal- Cosmic signs
- G. Silence in Heaven and Earthquake

IV. THE FIRST THREE SEALS IN THE FIRST THREE-AND-A-HALF YEARS

- A. When we look at Jesus' Olivet Discourse ([Matthew 24](#)) in comparison to the seals, it seems that the seals are an elaboration on Jesus' discourse on the End Times
- B. Jesus warns of false-prophets, like the Antichrist and the first seal (v. 5)
- C. Jesus warns of wars, like the slaughter in the second seal (v. 6-7)
- D. Jesus warns of famines, like in the third seal (v. 7)
- E. These three issues are described as the beginnings of birth pains (v. 8)
- F. Then Jesus warns that they "will put you to death", the fourth seal (v. 9)

V. THE SIXTH SEAL SIGNALING JESUS' RETURN

- A. "Immediately after the tribulation" then Jesus uses the language of cosmic signs as described on the Day of the Lord ([Matthew 24:29](#))
- B. Jesus quotes Zechariah 12 when he says, "the tribes of Israel will mourn" (v. 30)
- C. Sixth seal, cosmic signs ([Revelation 6:12](#)) leading to Jesus' return

VI. THE TRUMPETS

Trumpets are a signaling of war.

- A. Scorched Earth
- B. Polluted Earth
- C. Contaminated Water
- D. Reduced Sunlight
- E. Insect Plague
- F. 200 Million Man Army from the East
- G. The Kingdom Has Come

VII. THE BOWLS

- A. Boils on Skin
- B. Blood in Sea
- C. Blood from Springs
- D. Burning from the Sun
- E. Darkness
- F. Armageddon (when Jesus defeats the Antichrist in Jerusalem)
- G. It is Done/Earthquake

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VIII. THE CULMINATION OF THE SEALS, BOWLS, AND TRUMPETS

- A. All seem to culminate at the very end
- B. All the various models still point towards these events being clustered towards the end of the time line
- C. Still some uncertainty in how these events will unfold, it is important to be prepared and have as much clarity as possible about what will occur (even if we don't fully understand the precise timing)

IX. MAKING SENSE OF TIMING

- A. The Saints are seen in heaven as God's wrath is poured out ([Revelation 15](#))
- B. However, we seem to be portrayed as coming from heaven with Jesus ([Colossians 3:4](#))
- C. There are good arguments to be made of both Pre-Wrath and Post-Tribulation models
- D. Much evidence that the majority of the wrath of God, as it is poured out on the armies of the Antichrist, is being done so by Jesus while he is on the ground
- E. The return of Jesus is framed in Revelation as the Ultimate Exodus, with Jesus leading the way and wrath being poured out behind Him
 - 1. [Isaiah 40:5, 10](#)
 - 2. [Habakkuk 3:3-6](#)
 - 3. [Jude 14-15](#)
- F. It is more important to be more consumed with the wonder and beauty of what is to come rather than the precise timing of events