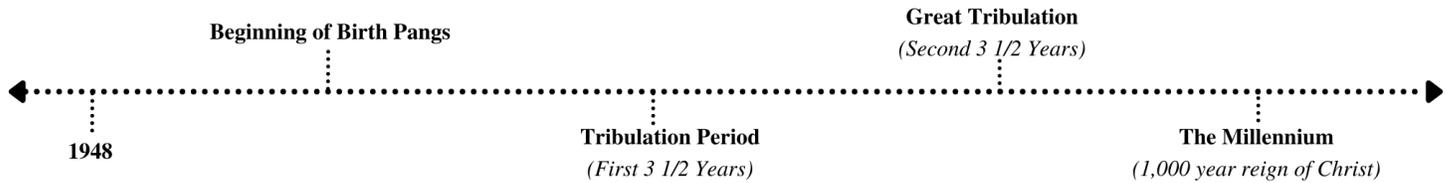


The Increased Birth Pangs (The First 3 ½ Years)

I. Review The Beginning of Birth Pangs

- a. The Bible categorizes 4 main distinct time frames or “seasons” related to the end times. The last 7 years of this age is made up of 2 distinct time periods that each last 3 ½ years. Each season has signs that serve as indicators of that time period.



1. **The Beginning of Birth Pangs (The Beginning of Sorrows)** – Takes place over several decades.
 2. **Tribulation, The Increased Birth Pangs (The First 3 1/2 Years)** – Counterfeit world peace & safety
 3. **Great Tribulation (The Second 3 1/2 Years)** - Unprecedented Destruction
 4. **The Millennium (1,000 year reign of Christ)**
- b. 10 Trends that characterize the Beginning of Birth Pangs
1. Deception & false christs
 2. Wars and rumors of wars (political conflicts)
 3. Ethnic conflict (nation will rise against nation),
 4. Economic warfare (kingdom will rise against kingdom)
 5. Famines,
 6. Earthquakes,
 7. Plagues (pestilence)
 8. Revolts (commotions)
 9. Terrible sights & great signs from heaven
 10. Perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves
- c. 5 Trends That Will Begin With The Birth Pangs & Continue Through the Final 7 Years of This Age
1. Persecution and hatred of believers
 2. Social anarchy (betray one another & hate one another)
 3. False prophets
 4. Lawlessness abounding
 5. Love growing cold

II. Counterfeit World Peace & Safety

(Matthew 24:9-14 NASB), “Then they will hand you over to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. 10 And at that time many will fall away, and they will betray one another and hate one another. 11 And many false prophets will rise up and mislead many people. 12 And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will become cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end is the one who will be saved. 14 This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

- a. The trends associated to the “Beginning of Birth Pangs” will result in global crisis. In the midst of wars, natural disasters and unprecedented shaking, the people of the earth will give into fear, offense, lust, and deception to a degree that we have not yet seen in history. Though the praying church will thrive in this hour by having skillful understanding and supernatural provision, the rest of the earth will be in desperate need of a savior which can only go one of two ways; 1) The Church will preach the Gospel of the kingdom many will be saved, 2) many will be deceived by the Antichrist.
- b. The second distinct time frame related to the end-times is called “The Increased Birth Pangs”, which takes place during the first 3 1/2 years of the final 7 years of this age. This time frame is characterized by counterfeit peace and safety. The Antichrist will emerge on the global stage to establish counterfeit world peace and provide solutions to many global conflicts. During this time the Harlot Babylon religion will persecute the Church (*Revelation 17:2-6*) and there will be a great falling away from the faith (*1 Timothy 4:1*).

(1 Thessalonians 5:3-6 NASB), “While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, so that the day would overtake you like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then, let’s not sleep as others do, but let’s be alert and sober.”

III. The Antichrist & His Role During The Increased Birth Pangs

- a. Satan’s ultimate desire is to be worshiped as God. Since the beginning of humanity’s existence, Satan has tried to win over the attention of mankind. The final 7 years of this age are Satan’s last-ditch effort to entice the most amount of people to rebel against God. During the end times, Satan will promote and empower one man, who will deceive many and lead multitude into Satan worship. We refer to this man as the Antichrist.

(Revelation 13:2, 4 NASB), “And the beast [The Antichrist] that I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon [Satan] gave him his power and his throne, and great authority. 4 they [The multitudes] worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?”

- b. The Antichrist is a real person and a future reality. There have been many that have operated in the spirit of the Antichrist throughout history, but there is one coming who is more deceitful and wicked than the world has ever seen. The topic of the Antichrist is a popular talking point among believers and unbelievers across the earth today, and with many theories and ideas in culture, it’s important that we develop our understanding of this man with a biblical foundation (*Psalms 52:1-7, 55:12-15, 20-21, 109:6-8, 16-19; Is. 10:5-20, 14:16-21, 16:4b-5, 19:4, 24-27, 25:4, 27:1-2, 28:18, 33:1, 51:13; Jeremiah 50:41-43, 51:1-2; Ezekiel 38:7-23; Daniel 2:40-45, 7:7-12, 19-25, 8:23-25, 9:26-27, 11:21-45, 12:7b-12; Amos 3:11-12; Micah 2:4; Matthew 24:4, 9, 12, 15-24; Mark 13:5-8, 14-23; Luke 21:8-9, 20-24; 1Thessalonians 5:3; 2Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1Timothy 4:1-2; 1John 2:18, 4:3; 2John 1:7; Revelation 13:1-8, 11:7-10, 19:19-21*).

- c. The Antichrist will appear to answer the very complex and seemingly unsolvable world issues by his demonically empowered skillful leadership. The angel Gabriel showed the prophet Daniel that the Antichrist will confirm a 7-year political peace covenant with many nations including Israel. Midway through that peace covenant (3 ½ years) he will betray his agreement and direct his rage toward Israel.

(Daniel 9:27 NASB), “And he will confirm a covenant with the many for one week [7 years], but in the middle of the week [3 ½ years] he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come the one who makes desolate, until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, gushes forth on the one who makes desolate.”

- d. This peace covenant is one of the major “**sign events**” that takes place at the end of the age. There are some important timing indicators related to this peace covenant that we need to address.
 1. When the Antichrist initiates his covenant with Israel and the nations, the final 7 years of this age will begin.
 2. When he betrays this peace covenant we know that the final 3 ½ years of this age have been initiated.
 3. Remember, the first 3 ½ years we call “The Increased Birth Pangs” and the 2nd 3 ½ years we call the “Great Tribulation”.
- e. The governmental leaders in Jerusalem and the nations will agree to the Antichrist’s covenant. With this unique season of “peace” in the nations, the antichrist will direct unified hostility toward a new common enemy, the Church (*Isaiah 28:14-18; Daniel 9:27; Ezekiel 38:8-14; 39:26; John 5:43; 1 Thessalonians 5:3*).

(Isaiah 28:14-15,18 NASB), “Therefore, hear the word of the Lord, you scoffers, Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem (leaders of end-time Israel), 15 Because you have said, “We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we have made a pact. The gushing flood [of the Antichrist] will not reach us when it passes by, Because we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves with deception...”18 Your covenant with death will be canceled [The Antichrist will betray his covenant], And your pact with Sheol will not stand; When the gushing flood passes through, Then you will become its trampling ground.”

IV. Harlot Babylon & Her Role During The Increased Birth Pangs

- a. In order to understand the impact of the negative cultural trends in the final 7 years of this age we must address what the Bible calls, Harlot Babylon. The Harlot Babylon is a cultural, political, and religious system centered on love for self, false justice, and lustful desires. The Harlot Babylon will impact every sphere of influence in society. She will intoxicate the nations with the wine of her fornication while she is intoxicated with the blood of the saints (meaning she’s a proponent of martyrdom).

(Revelation 17:2-6 NASB), “With whom the kings of the earth committed acts of sexual immorality, and those who live on the earth became drunk with the wine of her sexual immorality.” 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls, holding in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her sexual immorality, 5 and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery: “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” 6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.”

- b. During the “Increased Birth Pangs” the Harlot Babylon religion will heavily persecute believers, which will be a huge part of “The Great Falling Away” (*1 Tm 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; Matthew 24:9-13; 2 Timothy 3:1-7, 4:3-5; 2 Peter 2:1-3*). Many will depart from the faith in this hour and be given into fear, offense, lust, and deception. The raging nations will cast off the standards of biblical morality and take their stand against Jesus and those who love him. (*Psalm 2:1-3*). It will likely be the most violent and bloody season the Church will ever see.
- c. The Harlot Babylon religion will ultimately lead the world into Antichrist worship (Satan worship). Many who buy into Babylon will eventually give all their allegiance to the Antichrist and his evil regime. The Harlot system will thrive during the “Increased Birth Pangs”, and the nations will be drunk by with her promises of peace, prosperity, tolerance, inclusivity, and her seductions. For a season those who buy into her fornications will experience a short time peace and safety, however the final 3 ½ years of this age (The Great Tribulation) will dramatically change everything for those bought into The Harlot Babylon religion.

V. The Enduring Church That Overcomes

- a. When Jesus taught on “The Increased Birth Pangs”, He taught that the Church would be hated by all nations and that many would be handed over to tribulation and be killed. The reason this happens is because the praying church will be a people of skillful understanding and will not give into the deception of the Harlot or the Antichrist. In fact, the praying Church will preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to the ends of the earth with an *Acts 4* boldness. The reason the Church will be hated by the nations is because we will be an actual threat to the Antichrist and the Harlot; the praying church will be a force to be reckoned with.

(Matthew 24:9 NASB), “Then they will hand you [the church] over to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.”

(Daniel 11:32-33 NASB), “And by smooth words he [the Antichrist] will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will be strong and take action. 33 And those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days.”

(Revelation 13:7 NASB), “It was also given to him [the Antichrist] to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority was given to him over every tribe, people, language, and nation.”

(Acts 4:31 NASB), “And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.”

- b. Despite the rage of the nations, Jesus calls the Church to endure. His prescription for the Church in the hour of “Increased Birth Pangs” is to persevere in the midst of the storm. Despite the persecution we’ll face, this will be the finest hour for the Church. We will be more dependent on the provision and power of God than we ever have been, and we’ll operate in the greatest degree of partnership with Jesus in history. Though we’ll be in the midst of a great falling away, we’ll also see the greatest Global harvest of souls in history. The current hour in which we live is the hour we’re called to store up intimacy that will result in steadfast endurance at the end of the age.

(Matthew 9:13- 14 NASB), “But the one who endures to the end is the one who will be saved 14 This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

(Mark 13:13 NASB), “And you will be hated by everyone because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.”

(Luke 21:19 NASB), “By your endurance you will gain your lives.”

Questions For Discussion

- 1) What is one point that stuck out to you in the teaching tonight? Why?

- 2) Where do you see the Harlot Babylon religious system being raised up in the society today?

- 3) What thoughts come to your mind or emotions do you feel when you think about the Antichrist confirming a false peace convent with many nations and Israel?

- 4) How do we produce end time endurance in this current season of life?