

# BIRTH PAINS

(John 16:21; Matthews 24)

I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, that you shall weep and grieve, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy, a woman, when she gives birth to a child, has grief because her time has come. But when she has delivered the child, she no longer remembers her pain, because she is so glad that a man has been born into the world (John 16:20-21).

YAHSHUA'S analogy is well fitted to the subject of end times. There are no pains worth going through that do not produce a result and relief. When Eve sinned, God punished her with pain in childbirth (Gen. 3:16) He said to the woman, I will greatly multiply your grief and your suffering in pregnancy and the pangs of childbearing; with spasms of distress you will bring forth children.... A woman's labor pain is caused by contractions of the uterus' muscles and by pressure on the cervix. It affects several parts of the body, for the entire body has to accommodate to the change that is happening for the sake of giving birth. Labor contractions are necessary for the body to push the baby out. They grow in intensity and constant as the baby nears the birth canal. But the woman is relieved after it is all over. She rejoices when she hears her baby crying, which is a sign of life. And as YAHSHUA said, she no longer remembers her pain because joy floods her soul with the thought of have given birth to a child. So the end time or the end of ages pains are compared to birth pain, because it gives birth to the fulfillment of prophecy of the Scriptures. YAHSHUA advised us to look up when we see those things are happening, because our redemption is on its way.

If it were not for the pangs of contraction and spasms, the baby would have remained in the womb of his mother. Although contraction is undesirable, it is most necessary for the process of bearing a child to continue. There is a saying, "No pain, no gain." This is an incentive for all of us who want results without the contractions of pain. When the disciples asked YAHSHUA the questions: when will this take place, what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age? They had no idea of what it was to come. The birth pangs are necessary, YAHSHUA said. They are the prelude to the things that are to come. These birth pains are false messiahs, wars and rumors of war, famines and earthquakes in place after place ...but all these are but the beginning of the birth pangs (Matt. 24: 5-8). The contractions of the end times started long ago.

Every generation that has passed has thought that theirs was to be in the end of ages. But they had no idea about the extent of wars and rumors of wars, nations' ability to possess weapons of mass destruction, earthquakes' continuous activities, as we know today. Every day we hear or witness the deterioration of nations' relationship with each other. The nations have lost respect for one another; they all want the latest in weaponry and more advanced in technology, more powerful and efficient in its way to destroy the human race. A nation today has no more privacy, secrecy, and has lost its sovereignty, as the world cries for one world order thinking

that it will bring peace and unite the hearts of the nations. Each nation is an open book to its spies through man-made communications satellites and the mighty computer. There is no more privacy even in the private sector, where life was to be protected and respected by and from government and its branches, including the police forces. Citizens' life from any country is at the mercy of their government and countries under the mercy of another country, especially of those which are powerful. There is fear lodging in the hearts of men robbing the essence of peace and causing many to fall in despair even to the despair of suicide.

This generation, seems to be for a fact, the one who will see the end. The birth pains have been intense and hard to deal with. We feel like screaming at its intensity, desiring for it to go away, but instead, it grows stronger and stronger. YAHSHUA said this is not the end yet. Much more it is to come in this generation time. YAHSHUA, warning His disciples of times like these, He said, Take heed to yourselves and be on your guard, lest your hearts be overburdened and depressed with the giddiness and headache and nausea of self-indulgence, drunkenness, and worldly worries and cares pertaining to this life, and [lest] that day come upon you suddenly like a trap or a noose... keep awake then and watch at all times, praying that you may have the full strength and ability and be accounted worthy to escape all these things that will take place and to stand in the presence of the Son of Man (Luke 21: 34, 36).

The bride of Christ must be alert, prepared and watchful for the completion of His promise of her deliverance. She must understand the reason for these birth pains, when she sees things falling away in chaos and disarray. God's intent is not to harm her, but to bring about the glorious appearance of her bridegroom, at the end of the birth pains when He will come to take her home. She has all the reason to rejoice in these birth pains, as a mother rejoices when the time comes for her to deliver her baby. The bride of Christ must not be carried away with the rest of the world with fear and dread of the future. She must know that ignorance is the mother of destruction and lack of understanding the path that leads to it.

Let's remember the courage of those who suffer for Christ in countries where freedom of religion is non-existent. They have been going through birth pains all their lives. Some of them eventually die never experiencing the joy of religious freedom. But they die free in Christ. The treatment they go through from their persecutors, disregards God's wonderful creation of men's mind in the freedom of choices, when they are forced to deny their faith under bodily and emotional tortures and torments. These pains they endure because they confidently wait for the time when they will be delivered, at the appearance of our Lord YAHSHUA. They, heroes and heroines of the faith, like those mentioned in the Bible, died and will die controlled and sustained by their faith; they know that they are strangers and temporary residents and exiles upon the earth, they are yearning for and aspiring to a better and more desirable country, that is, a heavenly [one] (Heb. 11:13-16). That's reason good enough to justify their sufferings.

The birth pains of the end times are affecting every faithful believer, no matter where they live. It is a time to exercise and strengthen our faith, the pillar that will support the endurance till the end. These are the days of Noah, and the days of Lot. Peter describes the extent that Lot suffered in the midst of that corrupted generation: God spared not the ancient world, but

preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven other persons, when He brought a flood upon the world of ungodly; and He **rescued righteous Lot**, greatly **worn out and distressed** by the wanton ways of the ungodly and lawless, for that just man, living among them, tortured his righteous soul every day with what he saw and heard of [their] unlawful and wicked deed...but know, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, that “the Lord knows how to rescue the godly out of temptations and trials.”(II Peter 2:5-9b). These birth pains call for faith to endure all the things that must take place; it calls for patience, as the farmer waits expectantly for their harvest. So, James writes, so you must be patient, establish your hearts, [strengthen and confirm them in the final certainty] for the coming of the Lord is very near (James 5: 7-8). Be courageous today, my friend. Soon you will be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel, if you remain in faith.