

# Birth Pains

The sight of a woman with a baby bump brings many thoughts to the onlooker. There are those who can not control their hands. Losing social etiquette, they're unable to resist the temptation to feel the new life. To those who have experienced giving birth, it brings on a feeling of sympathy for the things to come. First time mothers cringe with fear as they hear the horrifying accounts of long lasting labor pains followed by the joy of birth. Why would someone feel obligated to warn the joyful expectant mother of what is to come? It is a warning that the time is growing near, and that although it may be scary, it will be worth it in the end. In the book of Mathew we are given a warning about birth pains.

Mathew 24 3-14

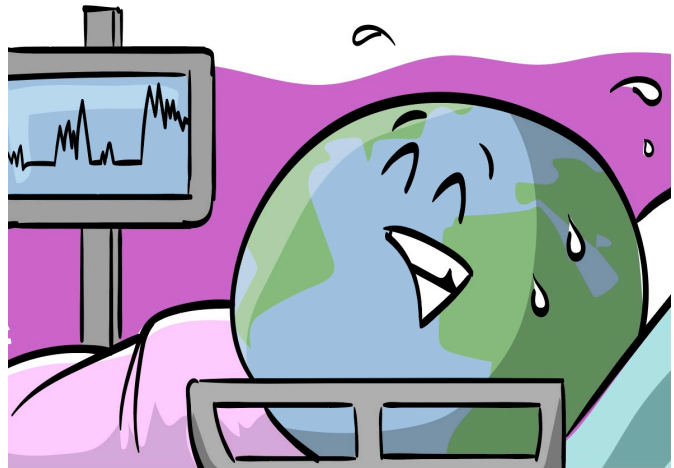
3Later, Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives. His disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will all this happen? What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?"

4Jesus told them, "Don't let anyone mislead you, 5for many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah.'

They will deceive many. 6And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don't panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won't follow immediately.

7Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. 8But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.

9"Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers. 10And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. 11And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. 12Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. 13But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.



Why am I sharing this with you now? Many people are unaware of what is to come. We're seeing bad things happening in the world. We're having pressure and pain like we've never had before. The world is groaning. People are afraid of what is coming; The pains are just beginning. Do not lose heart or be misled. There will be joy to come for those who receive the good news! It is as if Jesus is placing his hands on the world and telling us, "I want you to experience the new life I have prepared for you."