

Text: Matthew 24:4-8

Title: “The beginning of sorrows”

INTRODUCTION

1. Some of the Psalms reflect deep sadness and terror in destruction
2. Psalm 74 is an example

¹ O God, why have You cast us off forever?
Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture?
² Remember Your congregation, which You have purchased of old,
The tribe of Your inheritance, which You have redeemed—
This Mount Zion where You have dwelt.
³ Lift up Your feet to the perpetual desolations.
The enemy has damaged everything in the sanctuary.
⁴ Your enemies roar in the midst of Your meeting place;
They set up their banners for signs.
⁵ They seem like men who lift up
Axes among the thick trees.
⁶ And now they break down its carved work, all at once,
With axes and hammers.
⁷ They have set fire to Your sanctuary;
They have defiled the dwelling place of Your name to the ground.
⁸ They said in their hearts,
“Let us destroy them altogether.”
They have burned up all the meeting places of God in the land.
⁹ We do not see our signs;
There is no longer any prophet;
Nor is there any among us who knows how long.
¹⁰ O God, how long will the adversary reproach?
Will the enemy blaspheme Your name forever?
¹¹ Why do You withdraw Your hand, even Your right hand?
Take it out of Your bosom and destroy them. Psalm 74:1-11

- a) Sanctuary damaged
- b) Burning up of meeting places

WARNING OF SORROWS TO COME

1. The Questions of the Disciples

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" Matthew 24:3

2. The Answer of the Lord Jesus

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows. Matthew 24:4-8

a) On the Religious Scene

- i) Deception
- ii) False Christs
- iii) Many will be deceived

b) On the Geo-political Scene

- i) Wars
- ii) Rumours of wars
- iii) Nations/ kingdoms will give battle to each other

c) National disasters

- i) Famines
- ii) Pestilences
- iii) Earthquakes in various places

d) All these *are* the beginning of sorrows

HOW CAN WE COPE?

¹ *Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ:*

² *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Peter 1:1-4*

1. We have a like precious faith
2. We have exceedingly great and precious promises
3. We are partakers of the divine nature
4. We must do our part to cultivate our faith

THE CHALLENGE TO CULTIVATE OUR FAITH

⁵ *But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For he who lacks these things is short-sighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.*

¹⁰ *Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; ¹¹ for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:5-11*

1. This is our Calling
2. This is our Election

FEATURES TO CULTIVATE

1. Faith
2. Virtue
3. Knowledge
4. Self-control
5. Perseverance
6. Godliness
7. Brotherly-kindness
8. Love

CONCLUSION

1. These features can even abound
2. We need neither be barren nor unfruitful
3. We need not stumble