

The End Times Sign of Earthquakes

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By [Nathan Jones](#)

Vic: Today's topic will be the end times sign of earthquakes found in Matthew 24:7 and Luke 21:11.

Nathan, in previous episodes you've taken us through an incredible journey of the signs of the times in Matthew 24 and the parallel passages in Luke 21. You last talked about the end times sign of wars which Jesus revealed in Matthew 24:6. I wanted to ask if you might recap the background of Jesus' lesson in these passages?

Nathan: Certainly. Jesus and His disciples were at the Temple and His disciples were just oohing and aahing with their mouths hanging open. They're just so amazed at the wealth of the Temple. The Temple was the religious heart of Israel at that time, and these disciples were just poor fishermen who'd never seen buildings like the Temple.

And then, Jesus all of the sudden says, "You see all these things? Assuredly I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another that shall not be thrown down."

You can imagine the Apostles' mouths were just hanging open in shock. As a matter of fact, it took them all the way until they walked across the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives to build up enough courage to ask Jesus why He said that. When they did find their courage, they actually asked Jesus three different questions:

1. When will this Temple fall?
2. What will be the sign of the end of the age?
3. What will be the sign of Jesus' coming?

Jesus answered each of these questions. Each answer applied to different time periods associated with each question. For example, "When will the Temple fall?" We know that the Romans destroyed the Temple in 70 AD. What were the signs leading up to the fall of the Temple? The second question, "What will be the signs of the end of the age?" That's referring to the end of the Church Age. That's where we are at right now. We are living at the end of this age just before the rapture of the Church. Then the third question, "What will be the sign of Jesus' coming?" This refers to Jesus' Second Coming at the end of the seven-year Tribulation that's coming to this earth.

Each of the signs that Jesus gives proceeds each of these three questions, except for the tenth and last sign. Also, the closer we get to the Second Coming, the more frequent and more intense these signs will happen. Jesus compares the signs of His Second Coming to birth pains.

First Two Signs

Nathan: We've covered two of the ten signs Jesus gave in answer to the Apostles' questions. The first sign discussed was false teachers and false messiahs. Jesus revealed they'd be all over the place. With 500 cults in the United States alone, we are just drowning in false teachers and false prophets.

The second end times sign that we discussed was wars and rumors of wars. Certainly we are living in a time of tremendous warfare. Every day some nation in the world is attacked or worrying about someone attacking them. Can you believe there are 38 wars going on right now? Millions and millions of people were killed in the Twentieth Century alone. The Lord says those wars would come more frequently and more intensely the closer we got to Jesus' return.

Then we read from Matthew 24:7, "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there will be famines, pestilence, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

There are four signs listed right there.

Vic: Nathan, you gave us some incredible statistics concerning how many people got killed during wars in the last century. You were talking about like 100 million or something to that extent?

Nathan: Most people underestimate just how many people died in the Twentieth Century. Statistics tell between 160 to 187 million people died through all the wars of the Twentieth Century. The 21st Century already appears to be bloodier than the previous.

Yes, there has always been war, but Jesus said they'd come more frequently and more intensely and the death tolls would get higher the closer we get to Jesus' return.

Vic: Amazing! It's very eye-opening to look at the context of history. We can only conclude that we are seeing these end times signs of false teachers and wars are becoming more and more like super signs in a sense.

Quakes Before the Temple Fell

Vic: Now we read from Luke 21:11 where Jesus reveals, "There will be great earthquakes, famines, pestilence in various places and fearful events and great signs from heaven." Tell us about the end times sign of earthquakes.

Nathan: Matthew 24, Luke 21 and Mark 13 are all parallel passages. The Apostles were listening to Jesus' teachings and were writing them down from their own point of view, and some of them put the signs in different order, but all the signs are equal in each parallel passage. I'll follow Luke 21, for normally pestilence would come first if you were reading Matthew 24.

Earthquakes Jesus said would definitely also be a sign that would be increasing more frequently and more intensely the closer we got to His return.

For the first question, the Apostles wanted to know when the Temple would fall. Well, before 70 AD there were quite a number of signs of earthquakes. As a matter of fact, when Jesus was crucified, Matthew 27 tells us that there was a tremendous earthquake. It was so big that the dead rose from their graves! They were walking around Jerusalem after the Crucifixion because of the huge earthquake that happened there. Also, when Jesus was resurrected, according to Matthew 28:2 there was a violent earthquake that shook the whole city of Jerusalem.

Another powerful earthquake happened to Paul and Silas who were in prison in Philippi. Acts 16:26 tells us that when a violent earthquake formed the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open and everyone's chains came loose.

The town of Laodicea which we read about in Revelation 3 in 60 to 61 AD was destroyed by a violent earthquake, though quickly rebuilt. The town of Colossi where we get the title for the book of Colossians was destroyed by earthquakes so many times that eventually the people just abandoned it. They got so tired of rebuilding.

There were a lot of earthquakes shaking the world up before the fall of the Temple. But, they would be nothing compared to when we get closer to the end of this age, and then finally the end of the Tribulation.

Vic: In Matthew 28:51 it says concerning Jesus' Crucifixion, "Then, behold, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom and the earth quaked and the rocks were split and the graves were open." It also says that many of the bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised and coming out of the graves after His resurrection. They went into the Holy City and appeared to many. That's just an incredible passage! All of this happened from that earthquake.

Nathan: Yes, it was another sign that God gave to the people to convince them that Jesus is the Messiah. Even the centurion while he was watching Jesus being crucified and seeing how the sky went dark for three hours and the violent earthquake that followed, he saw those signs and he responded to them. He concluded, "Surely this must be the Christ." That's important that we look at the signs that God's given us in the Bible that talk about the end times, like in Matthew 24 and Luke 21, for we too need to respond to those signs by getting our hearts ready for the return of Jesus Christ.

Vic: Amen and praise the Lord!

Quakes in Our Day

Vic: Nathan, as the time draws closer to the end of this age, we are going to see earthquake statistics grow, right? Just by looking at all the news today, all the wars and natural disasters going on now, it's pretty clear that both wars and earthquakes are increasing in frequency and intensity.

Nathan: As we get into the answer to the question about what will be the signs of the end of the age, we must remember that this age culminates with the Rapture of the Church. That's the taking of believers in Christ up to heaven before the seven-year Tribulation befalls the earth.

I agree that the statistics do prove that the earthquakes are coming more frequently and more intensely with each passing year. A British charity called Oxfam analyzed a set of data that the Red Cross and the United Nations reported. They've concluded that there's been a four times increase in earthquakes in the last 20 years. There are about 500 major earthquakes a year. Just back in 2006, there were only 240. In 1980, even less, only 60. So, we went from 60 to 240 to 500 major earthquakes in just the last 25 years.

Vic: That's incredible! We recently just had a major earthquake in California and another in Chile.

Nathan: I like to check out the usgs.gov website. The United States Geological Survey website has this great interface that reports on all the earthquakes that are happening around the world. The site has a real-time map that pinpoint major earthquake occurrences. They also show you how high they are on the Richter Scale. Usually if you get a 5.0 earthquake or greater then that's considered a tremendous earthquake.

Remember when an earthquake happens, for each point on the Richter Scale that it goes up, it's an exponential curve. The scale is not like steps on the stairs where you get one and then a level two and then a level three, like it's going up a stairs. Instead it's an exponential curve where level two is twice the strength of a level one, and level three is three times the strength of a level two. So, as we go up this Richter Scale up to the nines, they get exponentially more and more intense.

We are seeing just in the last 20 years how level fives and more are occurring more frequently and more intensely. Daily on that site you can usually see large earthquakes. New Caledonia had a 5.0. A few places in Indonesia experienced a 5.6 and a 6.2. Mexico had a 4.6. Tonga had a 4.9. Costa Rico had a 4.6. Western India in the Antarctic ridge had a 5.0.

Science is proving that earthquakes are shaking the earth more frequently and more intensely. Jesus said that is exactly what would happen the closer we got to His return.

Vic: What's amazing is all of these quakes are happening right now. This isn't something we're expecting coming in the future. You can literally go to this website and see this end times sign right before us.

Nathan: Yes, just go to usgs.gov and look where they keep track of all the earthquakes. Just like the UN and the Red Cross, they are all reporting that earthquakes are occurring more frequently and more intensely.

Oxfam also reports that between 1995 and 2004 there has been a 70% increase in earthquakes. That results in 254 million people being affected by earthquakes every year.

Vic: Wow, Nathan! People don't really understand the seriousness of what's going on. A lot of people are being effected every year by these earthquakes.

Nathan: Nearly 174 million people were effected by earthquakes between '85 and '94. That number has now increased to 254 million. That's almost double! A quarter of a billion people live with some earthquake effecting them. That's just terrible to think about.

Earthquakes are even popping up in places where they've never been before. For instance, there have been some in Oklahoma. Oklahoma isn't even on a fault line, but they've been experiencing an endless series of 1.0 and 2.0 earthquakes. It just doesn't make sense why Oklahoma would even have earthquakes.

Vic: That's scary because we are here in Florida and its flat land here, and according to the Bible, we are going to get earthquakes, too. We may even sink into the sea! Thank the Lord we won't be here when that happens, right, Nathan? Because we will be raptured?

Nathan: Exactly. When you talk about water, it reminds me of a tsunami. Do you remember the tsunami that devastated Japan back on March 11, 2011? It was created by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake. It's super rare that the world gets hit with something that powerful. The quake was underwater and created a 133 foot high tidal wave, which is one of the five most powerful ever recorded. When that massive wall of water swept over northern Japan it caused 235 billion dollars in damage and killed 15,854 people and injured almost 27,000 others. People were washed out to sea and thousands of buildings collapsed. The tsunami was a tremendously terrible disaster.

You probably are familiar with the stories of the nuclear reactors that the tsunami affected in Japan, right? Well, a lot of them started going critical because of that tsunami. When we have such powerful earthquakes like that, they do far more damage than just shatter buildings. The Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant has been spewing radiation into the water systems and the radiation has been traveling across the Pacific, now finally even reaching off of the California coast.

Earthquakes cause tremendous interruptions to power grids and services. When you have no power and no services, people start running out of food. They get desperate and crime goes up. Earthquakes create major, major social problems.

Vic: I remember reading there was an actual shift in the ground so that when you look at the affected areas of Japan they've actually been moved some. From the satellite view, it really looks incredible with all that devastation.

Nathan: The wall of water was tragic. It just started spreading over all of Northern Japan, erasing highways and farm fields and burying whole cities. Like you said, the tsunami actually moved one of the Japanese islands a few inches. Can you believe the earth moved that much?

Vic: Now that's amazing!

Nathan: Japan is still trying to recover from it.

Vic: Nathan, I was born in the Dominican Republic. My family immigrated here around 1976 or 1977, somewhere around there. Can you imagine an earthquake that big hitting the Dominican Republic? It would be gone along with Haiti.

Nathan: Yes, you're not kidding. Haiti was hit just a few years ago and it leveled most of the capital city there. It was probably one of the biggest disasters in the last five years. I believe you and I had a radio program discussing that a few years back.

Vic: Yes, in fact we did, and actually individuals can still get a hold of that program if they need to by getting hold of us at Twave.tv

The First Prophetic Quake

Vic: Nathan, the Bible speaks about prophetic earthquakes, right? We know that the earthquakes we are experiencing today are just the beginning of them because they are going to keep getting worse and worse.

Nathan: Yes, once the Rapture of the Church happens and the Church is out of here, it's not the end of the earthquakes yet. They will hit the earth more frequently and more intensely the closer we get to Jesus' return at the end of the seven-year Tribulation. In fact, the Bible prophesies there are four prophetic earthquakes coming up.

Vic: The Battle of Gog and Magog and some other end time events are also going to create some incredible earthquakes, right?

Nathan: Yes. When I say Gog and Magog, there is a war coming which Ezekiel 38 and 39 calls the Gog-Magog War. Out of all the prophetic wars in the Bible, the Gog-Magog War is described in greater detail, even more than Armageddon. It's the war where Russia leads a coalition of Iran, all the 'Stan nations, Turkey, Libya, and most of North Africa against Israel. It's a tremendous push to destroy Israel once and for all.

Ezekiel says Russia will be led by an entity called Gog. Whether that's a person or a demon, I'm not sure. He wants the spoils of Israel. By then Israel will have defeated its neighbors surrounding them, which we read about in Psalm 83. Israel will have to defeat its hostile neighbors around them, causing the nation to grow bigger and stronger. With its gas and natural resources, Israel will start becoming more of a world power. Russia doesn't want that, and so it forms this coalition of nation. Russia will lead a coalition of nation down to destroy Israel. Little Israel, even with their expanded might, doesn't stand a chance against a united Islamic and Russian front.

What's amazing in Ezekiel's prophecy is that we read that God steps back into human history. He destroys the invading armies by infighting and by fire from the sky. The prophecy says God also sends fire on their nations and destroys them. Picture a world where Russia and Islam are no longer really a world player anymore. That time is coming.

Another of the ways in which God will destroy those armies is with a tremendous earthquake. In Ezekiel 38:19-23 we read of a great earthquake in the land of Israel. Mountains will be overturned. The cliffs will crumble. Every wall will fall to the ground.

The Gog-Magog War could happen at the beginning Tribulation or just before the Tribulation starts. The Bible doesn't tell us, but it's clearly a future event that is related to the Tribulation. The earthquake will be so powerful in the land of Israel that the mountains of Israel will be overturned and the cliffs will crumble. The armies attacking Israel will be swallowed up by this earthquake.

It's fascinating seeing this prophecy given about 90 to 95 AD by God to the Apostle John about something that will happen in the future. Bible prophecy is very exact and descriptive.

Vic: The Bible prophesied that Israel would become a nation again, and it has. It's so awesome to see this prophecy fulfilled in our lifetime.

Nathan: Yes, the regathering of Israel is one of the most prolific prophecies in all the Bible. As a matter of fact, the Bible says the Jews will look upon the regathering of Israel as a nation a second time as an even greater miracle than before when they were rescued from the Egyptians at the Exodus.

Also, as a result of the Gog-Magog earthquake we just talked about earlier, Ezekiel says that all the Jews of the world will want to return to Israel. About half of the world's Jewry is in Israel right now. The other half primarily is in your area, Pastor Vic, in Aventura, and also up in New York City and Philadelphia. But, after the earthquake happens, there will be something inside the Jews that will cause them to want to move to Israel.

There are three main reason why I think the Jews will all want to return to Israel. One, they will see Israel become a great nation. Two, the nation will be protected by the Antichrist who will make a covenant with them of protection, although he will break it 3.5 years later. Three, and this is unfortunate, Antisemitism will rise. The people of the world will hate the Jews so much that they'll have to move to Israel just to find a place of safety.

Vic: That's incredible! I'm sure someone reading this now is probably freaking out and saying, "What is going on?" But listen, we want to encourage you by saying that if you have a relationship with Jesus Christ, we believe the Rapture will take place first and we will be out of here, so we won't even feel the shaking.

Nathan: Amen. In our day there will continue to be earthquakes. Believers in Christ will continue to have to suffer through different trials and tribulations while on we're living on this earth. But, the Tribulation, that's the one major event where God will bring His wrath down upon this world for seven years. That's still future. And, it's not for the Church to experience.

When I say the Church, I'm referring to all those who have accepted Jesus as Savior. We will be the ones raptured up to Heaven.

Vic: That's right. You mentioned to us this incredible earthquake that's going to level mountains and cities, so that means the cities of today like New York and Chicago are going to be completely leveled?

Nathan: Well, there are four prophetic earthquakes, starting with the Gog-Magog earthquake, so any one of those four prophetic earthquakes could affect those cities that you listed.

Three Prophetic Quakes

Vic: What are the final three of the four prophetic earthquakes?

Nathan: The second is the Sixth Seal Judgment of Revelation 6 which says a great earthquake will literally bring every mountain down and every island will be moved from its place. There will be a global earthquake in the 9.0 range that will level the earth, and it will happen near the beginning of the Tribulation.

Then we read about a third prophetic earthquake. That's when the Two Witnesses that God sends to share the Gospel with the world from Jerusalem, in the middle of the Tribulation they are going to cause a severe earthquake. A tenth of Jerusalem will collapse during that earthquake and 7,000 people will be die. The survivors will see this earthquake and they will give great glory to God because they realize that God is behind it.

Then we get to the end of the Tribulation for the fourth prophetic earthquake. That's what's called the Sixth Bowl Judgment. This is the biggest earthquake that the earth will have ever experienced. Revelation 16 says no earthquake like this Bowl Judgment quake has ever occurred since man has been on the earth. Verses 18-20 read:

And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

The great city of Jerusalem will be split into three parts. The cities of the nations like you just listed, Chicago and Miami, will collapse. Every island will flee away. Just think, Hawaii might sink into the ocean, and the Falklands. The mountains won't even be recognizable. God will take the mountain ranges of the world like the Appalachians and the Rocky Mountains and flatten them. That 's how bad the earthquakes are going to be around the world. The topography of the world by the end of the Tribulation will be unrecognizable when compared to today's maps.

During that last, dreadful earthquake, the people experiencing it will think it's the end of the world, and it is.

The closer we get to Jesus' Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation the more the world will be suffering like the last few minutes before a baby is born. That's when the wife is screaming at the top of her lungs how much she hates her husband. She's gripping his hand with an iron grip. The pain is so intense. The baby's head is crowning. It's about to come out. That's the worst of it.

Likewise, when the world gets to this Sixth Bowl Judgment earthquake, it will be like no earthquake the ever preceded it. It will be the most intense. People will be dying left and right.

God causes this great quake to judge the world for its sin. When the Two Witnesses experienced that third earthquake, Revelation says the survivors were terrified and gave great glory to the God of Heaven. That's what God is trying to do. He's trying to get people to wake up and take their souls seriously. Sometimes you have to shake up a person's life before they get serious about the eternal and give their hearts and lives over to Jesus Christ.

Vic: Of course, this is all part of God's plan leading into the Millennium. We are going to see some beautiful things that God's going to do during that following thousand years, but before that there will be tribulation.

Shaking Your Faith

Vic: These are the great signs of the end times. I believe that every year, every time we turn on the news, we just see these signs increasing in intensity, right?

Nathan: And the world will just keep on going like that. Why these earthquakes and wars around the world increasing more frequently and more intensely? It's because Jesus said they would. Like birth pains, the end times signs will come more frequently and more intensely the closer we get to Jesus' return.

Therefore, you have to ask yourself, how are you going to respond to this truth? You see the signs around you and so you know that Jesus is going to come back soon. Is your heart ready for Jesus Christ? Have you prepared your life to live with Him forever in Heaven? Or, are you willing to be separated from Him forever in Hell? You've got to make that decision before it's too late.

Vic: We always like to end with an encouraging message of hope for anyone who maybe doesn't have a relationship with the Lord. Nathan, would you share with that person how they can begin a relationship with the Lord?

Nathan: God has given us so much because he loves us so much. After all, He created us. But, we have been separated from Him because of our sin. Sin is rebellion against God. Our hearts don't want God in our lives because we want to do it on our own. But, if you look at your life, you will realize you can't do it on your own very well. Life's a mess, and we need Jesus Christ. To have eternal life we need that rebellion forgiven.

The sentence for our rebellion against God is death. God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, the perfect God and man, to die on the cross for our sins. When we believe in Jesus as our Savior and we put our faith and trust in Him and ask for forgiveness for our sins, He'll forgive them and He'll save us. The death penalty is taken off of us and we know we can live forever with Him in Heaven.

We just need to accept that in our hearts by praying, "Dear, Jesus, please forgive me of my sins and be my Savior." He promises to forgive us of our sins and give us a whole new life.

End of Program