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Nation Will Rise Against Nation
Matthew 24:7-8; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:10-11
Late in the afternoon on Wednesday the thirteenth of Nisan

Nation will rise against nation DIG: What are meant by birth pains? What are some examples? Why will they be important? Are there going to be local wars or a worldwide war? What difference does it make? What would a world war signal? What did World War I simulate? WW II?

REFLECT: When you realize that the end of the age has begun, how should that affect how you live? Does it give you more peace or cause you more fear? Why?

After hearing **Jesus** describe the end of the age, three questions were asked (**to see link click Jh – The Three Questions**). **He** answered the third question first. **What will be the sign that the end of the age has begun? The Lord** said that there would be a series **of birth pains**. As a pregnant woman's **birth pains** indicate that her child will soon be born, so these universal conflicts and crisis will mean that **the end of the age had begun**.



Then the Lord said to them: The first **sign** will be that **nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. This is a Jewish idiom used in rabbinical literature for a world war.** This would be accompanied with **famines, great earthquakes and pestilences in place after place, and fearful events and great signs from heaven. Luke's** version has a combination of earthly and heavenly **signs**. **Yeshua** had been very clear that mere local wars would *not* be apocalyptic signs **of the end of the age**.[1325] But when **nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,** this meant that **the end of the age had begun.** So World War I was a **sign** that **the birth pains** had begun. **All these, He** said, **are the beginning of birth pains (Matthew 24:7-8; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:10-11).**

This is consistent with Jewish writings of the first century. One Jewish source known as the *Zohar Chadash* states: At that time wars shall be stirred up in the world. Nation shall be against nation and city against city; much distress shall be renewed against the enemies of the Israelites. Another Jewish source known as the *Bereshit Rabbah* states: If you shall see the kingdoms rising against each other in turn, then give heed and note the footsteps of the Messiah (XLII:4).

The rabbis clearly taught that a worldwide conflict would signal the coming of the Messiah. Yet **Yeshua** tweaked their thoughts slightly, because **He** said that when the world war happens, while it would not signal the coming of **Christ**, it would signal the beginning of **the end of the age**. The **birth pains** that **Jesus** talked about are the same as **the footsteps that the rabbis talked about. The footsteps of the Messiah** had to do with the series of pretribulational events that would lead to the Second Coming of **Christ** (see my commentary on **Revelation Bg – The Sequence of Pretribulation Events**). **Matthew** reflected this Jewish concept when **he** wrote that **nation** would **rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom.** [1326]

So World War I was a **sign** that the **birth pains** had begun. And nearly all historians agree that World War II was merely a continuation of World I. Not only that, both world wars turned out to be a turning point in Jewish history. World War I stimulated the growth of the Zionist movement, and World War II led to the reestablishment of the Jewish state of Isra'el by the United Nations after the holocaust. Thus, the sign that **the end of the age had begun** was the worldwide conflict fulfilled by World Wars I and II.[1327]