



Let No One Alarm You About Deceptions

Matthew 24:23-28

What did you think about the opening story of an historical figure predicting the return of Christ?

Where we've been so far in this series:

- Any view of the end times should be judged according to Scripture.
- This is not a matter of “first importance” (1 Corinthians 15:3-5).
- The “end of the age” was a first-century reality (Hebrews 9:26).

- For the temple to be destroyed as Jesus predicted would be the event to bring an end to the Old Covenant and usher in the New.
- There are solid reasons for tying these events to the first century:
 - 1) We have historical verification of the events.
 - 2) Jesus repeatedly uses direct speech to the disciples (“you/your”).

Verses 23-25

- Notice again the unmistakable meaning of Jesus that these are events his disciples would experience.
- In rejecting the true Christ and Prophet, the people would then follow false christs and false prophets to their own destruction.

Josephus, who lived through the Jewish War, refers to this:

“A false prophet was the occasion of these people's destruction, who had made a public proclamation in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that there they should

receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. Now there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose on the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God..." *War*, 6:285-286

Verses 26-27

- Josephus speaks of false messiahs and prophets that led people into the wilderness, promising a miraculous deliverance from the Romans (*War*, 2.259-264, 6.288-315).
- As seen above, false prophets sought refuge in the "inner rooms" (of the temple), promising a deliverance that never came.
- In contrast, the "coming of the Son of Man" would be evident, "plain as day," unmistakably noticeable.
- The "coming of the Son of Man" will be the topic of next week and its interpretation requires us to think like first-century Jews!
- For now, Jesus likens his coming as lightning coming "from the east as far as the west."

- The Roman invasions of Jerusalem during the Jewish War came from east to west under three different Roman commanders (Cestius Gallus, Vespasian, and Titus).

Verse 28

- Here the atrocities of the Jewish War are summarized, with apostate Israel as the corpse!

To be continued...

*In verse 26, Jesus warns his disciples of those who would lead astray, “So, **if they say to you...**” We all have people who are the “theys” in our lives-influencers, people we admire or follow. The question is, are they leading us to Jesus or away from Jesus? Jesus Christ is coming again! May he find us ready and leading others to him!*