



WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL Volume 20 Number 38 October 8, 2025

Get Ready for the End Times! - Part 3 *Matthew 24: 23-31*

By Tal Davis

Every December we celebrate the coming of Jesus as an infant. As significant as that event was, relatively few people were aware of His arrival at that time. Jesus' second coming will not be like His first. All will see the return of Christ, and there will be no mistaking or misunderstanding what this event is. Until that time, we need not worry about others who might try to convince us they are the coming Messiah. Christ's return will be clear and obvious.

In this five-part series we are examining Jesus' teaching on the end times found in His speech on the Mount of Olives in Matthew chapter 24. As Jesus and his disciples left the Jerusalem Temple, He informed them that it was soon going to be destroyed. They all then headed up to the nearby Mount of Olives. The disciples quizzed Him as to when the terrible events would occur and what was the sign of His coming. Jesus tells them of amazing events that would soon, and in the future, occur as precursors to the end times. (Matt. 24:1-22) Jesus now continues His discourse.

In Part One we studied Matthew 24:1-14 and in Part Two we analyzed Matthew 24 15-22. To read Parts One and Two go here: <https://www.marketfaith.org/2025/08/get-ready-for-the-end-times-part-1-tal-davis/> and here: <https://www.marketfaith.org/2025/09/get-ready-for-the-end-times-part-2-tal-davis/>.

In this Part Three, Jesus presents a catalogue of warnings and illustrations about what to expect and how to respond in the last days. He tells His disciples, and the readers of Matthew's Gospel, to beware of false messiahs who will attempt to lead believers astray. He also presents several important events that will correspond to His Second Coming.

False Messiahs and False Prophets - Matthew 24:23-25

23 Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'He is over here,' do not believe him. 24 For false christs and false prophets will arise and will provide great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 Behold, I have told you in advance. NASB

In verse 23, Jesus reiterates His earlier warnings against counterfeit prophets and messiahs that He had delivered in verses 5 and 11 (see Part One). The crisis described in the previous sections presented an opportunity for those who were so inclined to make outlandish divine claims. But Jesus strongly advises His disciples not to believe anyone who tells

them, '*Behold, here is the Christ*,' Also, if they say, '*He is over here*,' (or "There he is!"). Do not be deceived!

Jewish historian Josephus in his writings mentioned several such militant messianic pretenders who appeared in the First Century A.D. They included Theudas (A.D. 44-46) who claimed he would divide the Jordan River like Joshua and reconquer the promised land from the Romans. Another, named Manahem ben Judah (A.D. 64-66), actually laid siege on Jerusalem. Both of them, and others like them, were quickly vanquished by the powerful Roman army.

Since that time and throughout history, naive people have pointed to various Western political and religious leaders, or to Eastern gurus (spiritual teachers), as the true saviors of mankind or even as incarnations of God. For instance, from about 1975 to 2010, a South Korean preacher made the preposterous claim to be "Lord of the Second Advent." He claimed to be a second Christ who completed the mission Jesus failed to accomplish before His premature death. Though the man died more than a decade ago, thousands of Koreans, and some Americas, still believe his phony message.

These *false christs* (or false messiahs - *pseudochristoi*) He speaks of in verse 24 refer to imposters who claim to be the Jewish Messiah. Jesus associated them with the fall of Jerusalem, but they still appear occasionally in history. *False prophets (pseudoprophetai)* are those who falsely claim to be speaking a word from God. The Old Testament had warnings to Israel to test the prophets before following them (Deut. 18). In the New Testament, Jesus and the Apostles often warned against counterfeit prophets.

False messiahs and false prophets will not always be easy to spot. Jesus warns that they will even seemingly perform *great signs and wonders*. In the Old and New Testaments, *signs (semeia)* were miracles done by specially called people (e.g.s: prophets; Apostles; evangelists; etc.) as evidence of divine authority and power. Of course, Jesus Himself used miraculous signs to authenticate His Messianic claims. The Apostle John especially utilized the term "signs" in his Gospel to validate Jesus' Deity. (John 2:23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2, 26; 7:31; 9:16; 11:47; 12:37; 20:30.)

Wonders (terata - from which we get our word "terror") are likewise miraculous acts that cause the observers to be amazed.

Permission to Reprint

If you wish to reprint this article in your own print or electronic newsletter, please include the following text:

*Reprinted from **Worldview Made Practical**; a free e-zine produced by **MarketFaith Ministries** featuring practical teaching and life tools to help Christians become more effective in their faith life. Discover **MarketFaith Ministries** at www.marketfaith.org.*

Speaking Schedule

If you are interested in having Freddy Davis or Tal Davis present one of our **Worldview Seminars** or to share about worldview and its practical implications at your church or organization, please contact **MarketFaith Ministries** to schedule your event. All contact information is at the bottom of this e-zine.

Worldview Resources

It is one of the primary purposes of **MarketFaith Ministries** to provide resources to help Christians understand the practical implications of worldview. You can find many free resources that will help you in your quest at <http://www.marketfaith.org>.

In most cases, as in the book of Acts, like miracles, they validated God's actions among the people and the messages of His spokesmen Peter, Paul, the other Apostles, and the evangelists (e.g.s: Stephen and Philip). (Acts 2:19; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6,13; 14:3; 15:12)

It seems difficult to imagine that false messiahs and prophets could counterfeit signs and miracles. However, the Scriptures warn that Satan and the demons can seemingly do such marvels and fool naive or ignorant people. (Deut. 13:1-3; Mark 13:22; 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 12:1-3; 13:11-13; 16:14; 19:20)

But Jesus goes farther and says the bogus messiahs and prophets might even fool and *mislead* those who are authentically Christians, ie. *the elect*. Nonetheless, He softens the warning a bit by interjecting *if possible* in the sentence, as if to say, it is not probable that true believers can be duped. But He does not discount it. Believers especially need to be wary of those who attempt to draw them away from following the clear and plain truth of God's word. This again raises a significant theological question: If these professing Christians do get lead astray, do they lose their salvation or do we assume they were never Christ's followers at all?

Whichever way we answer the above question, we can know for sure that those who may be tricked had no excuse for allowing it to happen. Why? Because Jesus, in verse 25, says emphatically, "*Behold!*" ("Listen!") since He has given them ample advanced warning of what is to come. Regular readers of MarketFaith Ministries materials are well aware that Christians today in America are commonly confronted by adherents to non-Christian religions and worldviews. Pseudo-christian cults, practitioners of the occult, believers in the manifold New Age Movements, and, of course, Atheists can be found flooding the internet and media with their heretical teaching.

Pagan symbols, such as the Yen-Yang of Taoism, the Egyptian Ankh, inverted pentagrams, swastikas, Buddha statuettes, and signs of the Zodiac are commonly worn as jewelry, good luck charms, and displayed as bumper stickers. While we do not want to be guilty of being superstitious, Christians should, nonetheless, avoid wearing or displaying pagan emblems. Not that we have anything to fear from them, but we do not want to appear to be endorsing false beliefs.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God's holy people are warned to reject identification with any and all false systems of belief. It is a major theme of the Bible that only the One True God is to be worshipped and that only Jesus Christ is the true Son of God. Authentic Christians should avoid and expose anything, or anyone, competing with that absolute truth.

(Ex. 20:1-5; Deut. 5:6-9; 18:9-14; Isa. 44:6-8; 46:9; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5-6)

Don't Go Where the Buzzards Gather! - Matthew 24:26-29

26 So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out; or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them. 27 For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. 29 "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. NASB

Jesus continues His warnings against false messiahs and prophets. Apparently some in the first century believed the Messiah would appear in the wilderness or desert. This may explain why many people were attracted to John the Baptist and maybe wondered if he was the Messiah. Naturally, he strongly denied it, knowing that only Jesus held claim to that title. (Matt.3:1-11)

Some of those fake messianic pretenders hid out in the desolate regions outside the cities. In verse 26, Jesus rebukes anyone making that assertion, saying simply, *do not go out*. He will not be there. He also retorts against anyone saying, '*Behold, He is in the inner rooms* (or storerooms)!' Some Jews believed the Messiah was alive and hiding in secret places or inner rooms, perhaps in some monastic location, until his revelation (cf. John 7:27). Again, He commands them, *do not believe them!* Either of these fabricated declarations arouse people's undue expectations and usually leads to disillusionment. But Jesus says His coming will need no such verbal pronouncements.

Jesus uses a vivid image (verse 27) to illustrate that his coming will be unmistakable and visible to all. He portrays His coming as like a bolt of *lightning*. (Zech. 9:14) Jesus says it *comes from the east and flashes as far as the west*. Recently, an NFL football game was interrupted and all the players were removed from the field. Nothing gets peoples' attention faster, or scares them more, than seeing a nearby flash of lightning blaze across the night sky. In less than a second it illuminates the clouds above and the earth below with its brilliance, then disappears just as quickly (usually followed by the roar of thunder). Jesus' point is that when He, *the Son of Man*, comes, it will not be in secret. Rather, it will be universally visible and global in extent. No one can miss it.

The Son of Man is an Old Testament Messianic term (Dan. 7:13) used as a divine appellation by Jesus, applying it to Himself. The phrase occurs more than 80 times in the Gospels with all but one used by Jesus

Subscription Information SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE:

A subscription to **Worldview Made Practical** is complementary for anyone interested in receiving it. If you received this email as a forward from a family member or a friend and wish to subscribe for yourself, you may do so at www.marketfaith.org. If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, simply follow the instructions found at the bottom of each edition.

Contact Information

If you wish to contact us directly, you may do so by the following methods:

321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312

E-mail:
info@marketfaith.org
Phone: 850-383-9756

You can order our products and examine our services at
<http://www.marketfaith.org>.

This issue of **Worldview Made Practical** is a production of **MarketFaith Ministries**, © 2025. All rights reserved.

Himself. It is emblematic of Jesus' claims to be the Messiah and God in the flesh. It also attests to His authority as an agent of divine judgment.

Jesus next, verse 28, utilizes the imagery of birds of prey gathering over the body of a dead animal carcass. Someone has called these birds God's sanitation department, because they carry out a particularly unpleasant, but absolutely necessary, task in nature. The word *vultures* can also be rendered "eagles," as in the KJV. However, "vultures" (or the ugly birds we call "buzzards") is probably the better translation since eagles do not eat carcasses. Why Jesus uses this rather grotesque illustration is not clear. Maybe He and His men saw a flock of vultures imbibing on the corpse of a deer or ox as they sat there on the Mount of Olives. Maybe it brought to His mind a Scripture verse in Job (39:26-30). In any case, this verse is tied to those immediately preceding it to describe how all people will be drawn to Christ upon His return. Just as the sight of the buzzards circling and eating clearly indicates the unmistakable presence of a corpse, so the coming of the Son of Man will be unmistakably apparent to all.

Immediately (verse 29) emphasizes that Jesus' coming will happen right after the future time of distress (the tribulation) mentioned in verses 9 and 22. In this case He is not referring to the events to unfold in A.D. 70, but to His final coming (*parousia* - see commentary on v. 3 in Part One). He then uses what was common apocalyptic language drawn from Isaiah 13:9-11 and 34:14 to describe the universality of His coming and its cosmic effects.

Jesus first declares that *the sun will be darkened*. Whether or not the Lord means that literally the sun would burn out is beside the point. Whether literal or symbolic, Jesus describes this and the other celestial portents to emphasize the radical nature of the coming of the Son of Man. The world, and indeed the whole universe, will no longer continue on the decaying course it has been on since the creation. (see Rev. 6:12-17; 8:12)

Worship of the sun, the moon, and the stars was a common practice of Israel's pagan neighbors in the Old Testament. God warned His people that it was idolatry. Those celestial objects were created by God and He is Lord over them. They have no power over the world or its people. In fact, the sun and moon will be ultimately replaced by the heavenly light of God Himself. (Deut. 4:19; Job 31:26-28; Isa. 13:10; 60:19-20; Rev. 21:23; 22:5)

Likewise, Jesus says, *the moon will not give its light*. Naturally, if the sun goes dark (however He meant it) the moon would also stop shining. The moon produces no illumination but reflects the light

hitting it from the sun. It will be, nonetheless, a frightening scenario.

He further announces that *the stars will fall from the sky*. It is unlikely the Lord meant this literally since the stars are so far away from the earth in space. He was again using apocalyptic imagery to describe the dramatic changes to occur in the created order. Astrology is the study of the stars and constellations to foresee the future. It was practiced by the pagan nations of antiquity and, amazingly, by many people still today. But the stars are also merely God's created objects that produce no effects on the world. (Gen. 1:16; Psalm 147:4)

Jesus summarizes this section declaring that *the powers of the heavens will be shaken*. The heavens can refer to the air and the skies above. It can also identify the dwelling place of God. In either case, the Lord's return will bring major changes in their status. All of these celestial phenomena declare that Christ's coming will be sudden and cosmic in scope. Even creation itself will announce the return of Christ. His return will be evident to all.

The Sound of the Trumpet - Matthew 24:30-31

30 And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. 31 And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet blast, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. NASB

As we have seen, earlier Jesus and His disciples had left the Jerusalem Temple precincts and headed to the Mount of Olives. The disciples were enamored with the beauty and architectural magnificence of the Temple and the buildings around it (see Part One). Jesus, however, told them that all those great edifices were soon going to be destroyed. He was predicting what happened in A.D. 70 when the Romans decimated the city of Jerusalem. (vss. 1-2) When they arrived on the mountain, the disciples asked Him two pointed questions. First, they wanted to know when all those bad things (the destruction of the city, etc.) would occur. Second, and probably in their minds the same event, what would be "the sign" of His coming and "the end of the age." (see Part One commentary, vs. 3)

Jesus then delivered His great Olivet Discourse in which He described both the conditions that would lead to the destruction of Jerusalem and eventually to the end of the age and His return. He issued several important warnings to be ready to escape when the troubles came and never to follow false messiahs and prophets.

Now, in verse 30, Jesus returns to the question of *the sign of the Son of Man*. We already addressed the divine Messianic title “the Son of Man” which Jesus applied to Himself (vs. 27). He says that, following the cosmic apocalyptic events enumerated in the previous verses, at the appropriate time, His sign *will appear in the sky*. It is not clear exactly what that sign will look like. As we explored earlier (vs. 24), signs are miraculous acts done as evidence of divine authority and power. Some in the past centuries thought it might be a giant cross in the sky. Whatever it is, like a banner or standard raised by the army of a king to announce his presence, it will be something so significant that it will garner the attention of the whole world. Jesus' insinuation is that everyone all over the globe will be able to see it.

When the peoples of the world behold the sign, He says, *then all the tribes of the earth will mourn*. “Tribes (or peoples) of the earth” includes every nation and ethnic group to whom the gospel has been preached (vs. 14). Their reaction to the unfurling of the divine sign will be to feel a deep sense of shame and despair because they will know that they have lost the opportunity to repent and be saved. A particular sense of terror will be on those nations and individuals who persecuted God's people. (see also Zech. 12:10-12)

The nations' guilty feelings are justified because they will be witnesses to *the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky*. (see Dan. 7:13-14; Matt. 26:64; Rev. 14:14-16) The clouds symbolize God's presence marking the final demonstration of Jesus' Lordship and Deity. It may also symbolize Christ's returning with all the millions of redeemed souls already in heaven who will meet the living Christians still on earth. (1 Thess. 4:16-18; Rev. 19:11-16)

However, unlike His first coming which culminated in His humiliating death and suffering (followed, of course, by His resurrection), Jesus now returns *with power and great glory* to wield judgment over the whole earth. The enemies of God will cringe in terror at the sight of His coming. On the other hand, His redeemed people of all the ages will rejoice! When the time for His coming arrives, whether it is before the millennium, after the millennium, or if there is no millennium at all, everyone will know when it happens.

Jesus then declares in verse 31 that on that fateful day, the Son of Man (Himself) will send forth *His angels* accompanied by a *great trumpet blast*. Angels are God's supernatural messengers who all through Scripture are described as relaying announcements on His behalf (as with the birth of Jesus) and carrying out special tasks in the world. The trumpet harkens back to the sound of a ram's horn (Hebrew: *Shophar*) blown to call the Israelites to war or to announce a great victory. (Isa. 27:13)

In this case, the trumpet will herald that the angels are dispersed to gather all the Lord's redeemed people. (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16) The *elect*, as we said, include people of all races and nations who, by God's grace, through faith, have made Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior. (See Part Two, vss. 21-22) The *four winds* symbolize the four points of the compass. (Ezek. 37:9; Dan 8:8; 11:4) But here they emphasize the universality of the gospel message throughout the world. God is no longer the God of one nation (the Israelites), but of all people everywhere who believe in Jesus.

The worldwide extent of the angelic harvest of redeemed souls is further magnified when He says it is *from one end of the sky to the other*. Perhaps Jesus pointed up at the blue sky and the white clouds above them on the Mount of Olives. The sky, of course, has no beginning or end, but Jesus' usage of the metaphor makes it clear that His redemption cannot be confined by any geographical or political boundaries. When the Lord returns, the gospel will have covered the earth and His redeemed people will be found in every nation and location.

As we have emphasized in this series, the Second Coming of Christ is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith. Unfortunately, even most evangelical Christians rarely contemplate this key biblical teaching. That being said, we do not know, nor should we speculate, as to when the Lord will return. In any case, we should always be on guard. We should study the Bible utilizing sound interpretation for doctrinal teaching on the Second Coming. Remember, false teachers, prophets, and messiahs will attempt to persuade the scripturally uninformed and spiritually naive to accept their distorted eschatological messages.

We should also remember that when the Lord comes again, it will be evident by the visible changes that will happen in nature and the creation. Even the sun, the moon, and the stars will all declare the cosmic scope of His return. When He returns, it will be unmistakable and evident to everyone. Don't worry that it will happen before you or anyone else knows it. If someone says it has already occurred and you missed it, don't you believe it! Meanwhile, live each day in light of the return of Jesus Christ as if it were happening today.

In the next installment, Part Four, we will study Jesus' teaching in Matthew 24:32-41 as He continues to lay out the events leading up to the final end of all things and His Second Coming.

Would You Consider Supporting Us?

Would you consider financial support for **MarketFaith Ministries**? I feel confident that what we are doing is consistent with your beliefs about spreading the gospel and equipping the saints for ministry. Would you let us be one element of your hands and feet in this process? **MarketFaith Ministries** is a 501 (c) (3) not for profit corporation, so your contributions are tax deductible. If you would consider this we would be very grateful. Also, if you would like to know more about the ministry, it would be my pleasure to share with you personally what we are working on and how you can plug in. I can be reached at 850-383-9756 or by e-mail at Freddy@marketfaith.org. As for any donations, they may be sent directly to **MarketFaith Ministries** at 321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312, or you can contribute through our secure website at www.marketfaith.org. Simply click on the “Donate” button at the bottom of the homepage. We are deeply grateful for your support of this ministry.

And, as always, if you have any thoughts, opinions or suggestions about how **MarketFaith Ministries** can help you, please feel free, at any time, to call (850-383-9756) or e-mail (info@marketfaith.org). We are here to serve you.

