

How Do You Know Who To Trust ?

International Bible Lessons

Mark 13:14-27

Sunday, February 27, 2011

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“Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory” (Mark 13:26—NRSV).

“Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory” (Mark 13:26—NASB-U).

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory” (Mark 13:26—KJV).

Jesus told His disciples exactly how He would return to earth after He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. He even showed them what His second coming in the clouds would look like, for He would descend the way He ascended. Luke wrote that two angels asked His disciples, “Why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven” (see Acts 1:9-11). Knowing these facts, believers should not be misled by anyone who tries to attract followers by claiming to be the Messiah.

Jesus warned that prior to His return the times would be so troubled that if it were possible even those who followed Him and His teachings could be led astray. Deceivers would come and work signs and wonders to trap many in falsehood and disbelief. They would claim that their powers authenticated their teachings, even though they contradicted the Bible’s teachings. The Bible warns us to expect false prophets and teachers, and from these warnings we have learned to evaluate what people teach based on the Bible’s absolute standards.

In the future, the times may bring such pain and uncertainty that many may follow anyone who seems to demonstrate the knowledge and power to meet their needs, whether rightly or wrongly. The Bible warns against following those who promise to meet people’s physical needs while leading people away from trusting in the true God. Though troubles come, God has promised, “for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he has cut short those days” (Mark 13:20).

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Thinking Further

1. What types of battles, incidents, or troubles should believers flee? How do we know when we should fight instead of flee in a situation? What might believers say or do when they believe God wants them to flee and someone calls them a coward or disloyal for fleeing?
2. In various parts of the world today true followers of Jesus Christ are suffering persecution or various hardships because of current events. Where might some of this suffering be taking place in our world today? Pray for all those enduring or about to endure these troubling times.
3. How can knowing that God can cut short days of suffering encourage you and enable you to encourage others? How can knowing these facts help you in our daily prayers?
4. What does Jesus say false messiahs and false prophets will do in an effort to mislead people? What can believers do to avoid being led astray?
5. How did Jesus say He would return? How does knowing this make a difference in the hope believers strive to maintain?