

Luke 21:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

Analysis

And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. Jesus begins His eschatological discourse with a warning: *blepete mē planaōthēte* (βλέπετε μὴ πλανηθῆτε, 'watch that you not be deceived'). The verb *planaō* (πλανάω) means 'lead astray,' 'deceive,' 'cause to wander.' False teachers will come *epi tō onomati mou* (ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου, 'in my name')—claiming Christ's authority—and declare *egō eimi* (ἐγώ εἰμι, 'I am [he]') and *ho kairos ēngiken* (ὁ καιρὸς ἤγγικεν, 'the time has drawn near').

These deceivers will claim messianic identity or imminent eschatological fulfillment. The command *mē poreuthēte opisō autōn* (μὴ πορευθῆτε ὅπισω αὐτῶν, 'do not go after them') prohibits following false messiahs. History confirms this warning's relevance: Simon bar Kokhba (AD 132-135) claimed messiahship and led a disastrous revolt. Throughout church history, false prophets have proclaimed 'the time is near,' deceiving many. Jesus' first eschatological concern is not chronology but **spiritual discernment and resistance to deception**. Before discussing when the end comes, He warns about false teachers who will mislead the unwary.

Historical Context

Between Jesus' prophecy and Jerusalem's destruction (AD 30-70), multiple messianic pretenders arose. Josephus records several false prophets who led Jews

to disaster. Theudas (Acts 5:36) claimed prophetic authority; Judas of Galilee led a revolt; an Egyptian false prophet led thousands to the Mount of Olives. After AD 70, Bar Kokhba's messianic claims led to catastrophic war with Rome (132-135). The early church also faced deception—Gnostic teachers, legalists, and apocalyptic speculators troubled congregations. Paul warned of those proclaiming false timelines (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3). Throughout history, date-setters and false prophets have misled Christians. Jesus' warning remains perpetually relevant.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Why does Jesus prioritize warning against deception before answering questions about timing and signs?
2. How can believers distinguish between genuine prophetic teaching and false claims that 'the time has drawn near'?
3. What characteristics of false teachers should alert Christians to deception, especially regarding end-times predictions?

Interlinear Text

ο δὲ εἶπεν Βλέπετε μὴ πλανηθῆτε· πολλοὶ γὰρ
G3588 And he said Take heed not deceived many for
G1161 G2036 G991 G3361 G4105 G4183 G1063

ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὄνόματί μου λέγοντες ὅτι Ἐγώ είμι
shall come in G3588 name my saying G3754 I am
G2064 G1909 G3686 G3450 G3004 G1473 G1510

καί Ὁ καιρὸς ἥγγικεν μὴ οὖν πορευθῆτε
Christ and G3588 the time draweth near not therefore go ye
G2532 G2540 G1448 G3361 G3767 G4198

ὁπίσω αὐτῶν
after them
G3694 G846

Additional Cross-References

1 John 4:1 (Parallel theme): Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Ephesians 5:6 (Parallel theme): Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 (Parallel theme): Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Matthew 24:11 (Parallel theme): And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Jeremiah 29:8 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.

2 Timothy 3:13 (Parallel theme): But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

Luke 17:23 (Parallel theme): And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

2 John 1:7 (References Christ): For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Revelation 12:9 (Parallel theme): And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

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