

Matthew 24:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Analysis

For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ (πολλοὶ γὰρ ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου λέγοντες, Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ Χριστός)—The deception is two-fold: false messiahs come both

1. in Jesus's name (claiming his authority)
2. claiming to be Christ themselves.

The emphatic *egō eimi* ("I am") echoes Jesus's own divine self-designation. The word *Χριστός* (Christos) means "Anointed One," translating Hebrew *Mashiach* (Messiah).

And shall deceive many (πλανήσουσιν πολλούς)—The repetition of "many" (πολλοί) is sobering: many deceivers will mislead many followers. This isn't a fringe problem but a widespread apostasy affecting the masses. 2 Timothy 4:3-4 describes the same phenomenon: people accumulating teachers who tickle ears rather than speak truth.

Historical Context

First-century Palestine saw numerous messianic movements. Bar Kokhba ("Son of the Star") led the Jewish revolt of AD 132-135 and was proclaimed messiah by Rabbi Akiva. Before AD 70, Simon bar Giora and John of Gischala led messianic pretenders. The pattern continued through history: Sabbatai Zevi (17th century),

multiple cult leaders, and modern false messiahs all demonstrate this prophecy's ongoing relevance.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How can someone claim to come "in Jesus's name" while actually opposing Christ's teaching?
2. What distinguishes legitimate Christian leadership from false messiahs who claim special revelation or authority?
3. Why are "many" susceptible to deception even when Jesus clearly warned about it?

Interlinear Text

πολλοὺς γὰρ ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου λέγοντες,
many **For** **shall come** **in** ^{G3588} **name** **my** **saying**
G4183 G1063 G2064 G1909 G3686 G3450 G3004

Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ Χριστός, καὶ πολλοὺς πλανήσουσιν
I **am** ^{G3588} **Christ** **and** **many** **shall deceive**
G1473 G1510 G5547 G2532 G4183 G4105

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 24:24 (References Christ): For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

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

Jeremiah 14:14 (Parallel theme): Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.

1 John 2:18 (References Christ): Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

Jeremiah 23:25 (Parallel theme): I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.

Revelation 13:8 (Parallel theme): And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Jeremiah 23:21 (Parallel theme): I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.

John 5:43 (Parallel theme): I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.