

# A Comparison of Matthew 24:29-31 with 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

by James T. Bartsch, WordExplain.com

<b>Matthew 24:29-31</b>	<b>1 Thessalonians 4:13-18</b>
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>31 "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.</p>	<p>13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.</p> <p>14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.</p> <p>15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.</p> <p>16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.</p> <p>17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.</p> <p>18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.</p>
<b>Similarities</b>	<b>Similarities</b>
Coming ( <a href="#">parousia</a> , <a href="#">3952</a> ) (Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39); ( <a href="#">erchomai</a> , <a href="#">2064</a> ) (Matt. 24:5, 30, 39, 42, 43, 44, 46)	Coming ( <a href="#">parousia</a> , <a href="#">3952</a> )
Clouds	Clouds
Great trumpet (Matt. 24:31) <sup>1</sup>	Trumpet of God
Angels	Archangel
Son of Man	Christ; the Lord
Heaven ( <a href="#">ouranos</a> , <a href="#">3772</a> ) (Mt. 24:30, 31)	Heaven ( <a href="#">ouranos</a> , <a href="#">3772</a> ) (1 Th. 4:16)
<b>Dissimilarities</b>	<b>Dissimilarities</b>
This coming of Christ is said to be "after the tribulation of those days"	There is no reference to tribulation in 1 Thess. 4:13-18. It is implied that this coming of Christ precedes the Tribulation, described as "the day of the Lord" (1 Thess. 5:2) and the time of God's "wrath" (1 Thess. 5:9) (1 Thess. 4:13-18 cf. 1 Thess. 5:1-11)
Cosmic disturbances	No cosmic disturbances

Sign of the Son of Man	No sign mentioned
All the tribes of the earth will mourn	No mourning mentioned
All the tribes of the earth will see the Son of Man coming	No indication that all peoples see the Lord
Jesus will send forth His angels to gather the chosen ones	There is the voice or sound of an archangel, but no angels are said to gather believers
Those gathered are referred to as Christ's chosen ones ("elect" – <i>eklektos</i> , <a href="#">1588</a> ) (Matt. 22:14; 24:22, 24, 31) <sup>2</sup>	No reference is made to Christ's chosen ones. The subjects of this event are referred to as "brethren" and "the dead in Christ"
No resurrection is mentioned	A resurrection of the "dead in Christ" takes place
No evidence that believers are "caught up"	Living believers will be "caught up" ( <i>harpazô</i> , <a href="#">726</a> ) together with resurrected believers to meet the Lord. We call this event the Rapture.
Though the elect are gathered "out of the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other end of them" (Matt. 24:31), this seems to reflect OT terminology consistent with the regathering of Jewish people to Israel from the cardinal points of the compass from all over the earth in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom. <sup>3</sup>	Living believers and resurrected believers meet the Lord in the clouds in the air ( <i>aêr</i> , <a href="#">109</a> ) (1 Thess. 4:17)
There is warning given as application from this passage (Matt. 24:36-51)	There is comfort given as application from this passage (1 Thess. 4:18).

1. Great trumpet: One day God will bring about a great "one by one" regathering of His people, the sons of Israel (Isa. 27:12). There will be a signal for this regathering of Israeli expatriates from such countries as far away as Assyria (modern Iraq) and from Egypt. A "great trumpet" will be blown, and the exiles will return to worship Yahweh in the holy mountain (Mount Zion) at Jerusalem (Isa. 27:13). This is the only passage in the OT that mentions a "great" trumpet.

2. Elect: God called Israel "My servant whom I have chosen (*bachar*, [977](#))" (Isa. 43:10) and "My chosen (*bachir*, [972](#)) people" (Isa. 43:20). Jesus was not here speaking of the "elect" of the Church, but rather the "elect" of Israel. Matthew 24 is nothing if not Jewish in outlook. This is information about Israel, not information about the Church.

3. Four winds: God had promised disobedient Israel He would "scatter all your remnant to every wind" (Ezek. 5:10), and that "one third I will scatter to every wind" (Ezek. 5:12). Further, God promised Zedekiah, King of Judah, who broke his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar and allied himself with Egypt, that he would die in Babylon. Moreover, all the Jewish "survivors will be scattered to every wind" (Ezek. 17:11-21).

Nevertheless, God promised Israel, "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back" (Deut. 30:4).

Moreover, God also promised to Israel, "Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made" (Isa. 43:5-7). In that same context, God called Israel "My servant whom I have chosen (*bachar*, [977](#))" (Isa. 43:10) and "My chosen (*bachir*, [972](#)) people" (Isa. 43:20).

Isaiah 11 depicts Millennial conditions. Jesus, the Davidic King, will rule and judge in righteousness and equity (Isa. 1:1-5). There will be Edenic conditions in nature (Isa. 11:6-9). This will be true because "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9). All of earth's nations will submit to Jesus, the David king (Isa. 11:10), whose dominion will be characterized by great glory. The Lord will recover, for the second time, the remnant of His people Israel from all the countries around the earth into which they have been scattered (Isa. 11:11). He will "assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:12). Northern and Southern Israel will be united in harmony (Isa. 11:13). No one will ever again speak of "West Bank." Israel will permanently conquer Gaza on the West and will conquer Jordan on the East bank of the Jordan River (Isa. 11:14). God will dry up the Gulf of Suez to enable Jewish people to return from Egypt. And He will spread out the Euphrates River into seven streams so returning Jewish exiles and come from Iraq and other points North on a well-traveled road (Isa. 11:15).

It is extremely likely that Jesus was referring to these OT passages referenced here in these endnotes when He made His prediction in Matt. 24:29-31. He was not speaking about the Rapture of the Church, which comes about before the Tribulation. He was speaking about the Return of Jewish Exiles in conjunction with Jesus' Second Coming in Power to set up His Millennial Kingdom here upon Earth, sitting on David's Throne on Mount Zion, Jerusalem, Israel.

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