The Signs of the Parousia: a Diachronic and Comparative Study of the Apocalyptic Vocabulary of Matthew 24:27-31

Ki Kon Kim
Andrews University

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The signs of the Parousia: A diachronic and comparative study of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matthew 24:27-31

Kim, Ki Kon, Ph.D.
Andrews University, 1994

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A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

by
Ki Kon Kim
February 1994
ABSTRACT


by

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Name of researcher: Ki Kon Kim

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Robert M. Johnston, Ph.D.

Date completed: February 1994

The purpose of this study is to find continuity and discontinuity in the use of the apocalyptic vocabulary in Matt 24:27-31 with that of the apocalyptic literature by tracing its possible literary allusions or parallels.

Chapter 1 states the problems concerning Matt 24:27-31, as well as the purpose and limitation of the study; reviews relevant literature; describes methodology and procedures used; and surveys the ancient sources which witness to the apocalyptic traditions which may be assumed to be related to the passage.

Chapter 2 explores the term "Parousia" in order to grasp the meaning of the Matthean Parousia because it is the
subject of the signs and the key to understanding the structure of Matt 24.

The purpose of chapter 3 is to trace the concept of the six apocalyptic terms and motifs of Matt 24:29-31. It attempts to find the genealogy of each apocalyptic vocabulary item of the Matthean Parousia signs, and to discover continuity and discontinuity with antecedents by tracing the trajectory. Thus, all apocalyptic terms or word groups of Matt 24:29-31 are studied in the light of the Old Testament, the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, the New Testament, the Qumran texts, and the rabbinic literature.

Chapter 4 attempts to synthesize a combined trajectory based on the outcome of chapter 3, and to find the place of Matt 24:27-31 in the apocalyptic tradition. The continuity and discontinuity of Matt 24:27-31 with possible antecedent traditions are analyzed along with the functions of the peculiar Matthean apocalyptic terms in the Matthean Parousia scene.

Chapter 5 summarizes the results and lays out the conclusions of the study. It seems that the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 has a unique place and function in the apocalyptic tradition. Matthew's Christian perspective is the source of his creativity. Two main elements which are distinguished in Matt 24:27-31 are the Christocentric eschatology and Matthew's intention to make the Parousia of Jesus vivid and dramatic by inserting his peculiar apocalyptic terms into each scene of the Parousia.
To my parents
  who taught me faith

To my wife, Chung Hyo,
  who patiently supported me
  from beginning to end

To my sons, Hyun June and Hyun Min,
  who sacrificed their dreams for
  their father, but surely will be
  compensated by their heavenly Father
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<tr>
<td>AUSS</td>
<td>Andrews University Seminary Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSa</td>
<td>Bibliotheca Sacra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT</td>
<td>The Bible Translator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.T.</td>
<td>The Babylonian Talmud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTB</td>
<td>Biblical Theology Bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBQ</td>
<td>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJD</td>
<td>Discoveries in the Judaean Desert</td>
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<tr>
<td>DNTT</td>
<td>The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBC</td>
<td>The Expositor's Bible Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVO</td>
<td>Evangelical Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExpT</td>
<td>The Expository Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDB</td>
<td>Harvard Divinity Bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDB</td>
<td>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBE</td>
<td>The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>JETS</td>
<td>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSNT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</td>
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<td>JSS</td>
<td>Journal of Semitic Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td>Journal of Theological Studies</td>
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<td>JNES</td>
<td>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</td>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>JOR</td>
<td>Jewish Quarterly Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>KJV</td>
<td>King James Version</td>
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<tr>
<td>LXX</td>
<td>Septuagint</td>
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<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Masoretic Text</td>
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<tr>
<td>NovT</td>
<td>Novum Testamentum</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTS</td>
<td>New Testament Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTP</td>
<td>J. H. Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</td>
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<tr>
<td>RExp</td>
<td>Review and Expositor</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSB</td>
<td>Religious Studies Bulletins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSV</td>
<td>Revised Standard Version</td>
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<tr>
<td>RO</td>
<td>Revue de Qumran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanh</td>
<td>Sanhedrin</td>
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<tr>
<td>SJT</td>
<td>Scottish Journal of Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWJT</td>
<td>Southwestern Journal of Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>TDNT</td>
<td>Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>UBS</td>
<td>United Bible Society</td>
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<td>WTJ</td>
<td>Westminster Theological Journal</td>
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Most of all, I wish to express my deep thanks and praise to God who is always gracious to me.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Terms and concepts have parentage and biographies. They have genealogies and trajectories. Each point in their paths is explained and illuminated by their pasts. This dissertation is an attempt to trace the prehistory of the apocalyptic vocabulary used in Matt 24:27-31 and to examine its relationship to that prehistory.

Several reasons prompt this choice. First of all, Matt 24:27-31 is an important resource for studying the Parousia, the second coming of Jesus, because of its ample apocalyptic vocabulary which the other Gospels do not have.¹

¹Matt 24 has its peculiar apocalyptic vocabulary, which is not found in Mark and Luke, e.g., "the increase of wickedness," "the Parousia," "the sign of the Son of Man," "the mourning of the tribes," "the clouds of heaven," and "the great trumpet call." Five out of six appear in Matt 24:27-31. Furthermore, Matt 24 is one of the most significant and complete eschatological chapters in the New Testament. Most of the other sections of the New Testament dealing with future things confine their teachings to certain phases of the doctrine. For example, 1 Cor 15 sets forth the doctrine of resurrection, while 1 Thess 4:13-18 concerns the ascension of the saints. On the other hand, the Olivet Discourse in Matt 24 presents the teachings of Christ covering all major phases of New Testament eschatology.
Beginning with Johannes Weiss (1892)\(^1\) and Albert Schweitzer (1906),\(^2\) there has been in New Testament scholarship growing awareness of the importance of eschatology in Jesus' teaching and the relationship between the apocalyptic literature and the Olivet Discourse. Therefore both apocalyptic tradition and the Gospel of Matthew are currently the subject of renewed interest in New Testament studies.\(^3\)

\(^1\)Johannes Weiss, *Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*, trans. R. H. Heirs and D. L. Holland from *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, 1892 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 136. Weiss concludes as follows: "We do not await a kingdom of God which is to come down from heaven to earth and abolish this world, but we do hope to be gathered with the Church of Jesus Christ into heavenly ΒΟΟΛΔΕΙΑ. In this sense we, too, can feel and say, as did the Christian of old: 'Thy kingdom come.'"


\(^3\)Matt 24 has always fascinated students of the New Testament. The number of articles devoted to apocalyptic in theological journals has evidenced the great interest in this subject. There are 240 articles collected in the accompanying Bibliography. Sixty-two of them directly refer to Matt 24 or the Olivet Discourse. In 1959, Wolfhart Pannenberg claimed that the study of apocalyptic was crucial for understanding Christian theology. He asserted that the apocalyptic concept of history "was both the presupposition of the historical thinking of the West, and the horizon which spans the whole of the Christian theology in general." See Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Redemptive Event and History," in *Basic Questions in Theology: Collected Essays*, vol. 1, trans. George H. Kehl (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), 15-80. According to Ernst Käsemann, apocalyptic is the "mother of all Christian theology." See Ernst Käsemann, "The Beginning of Christian Theology," in *New Testament Questions of Today*, trans. W. J. Montague from selections from the German *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen*.
The second reason is that Matt 24:27-31 presents some problems because of Jesus' considerable use of apocalyptic vocabulary and motifs. It is generally accepted among scholars that Jesus used the current popular conceptions as convenient vehicles for teaching His message. This point has raised some questions about the

(London: SCM Press, 1969), 100. However, Käsemann's article was challenged in an article by Wayne G. Rollins, "The New Testament and Apocalyptic," NTS 17 (1970/71): 454-76. Rollins indicates that Käsemann hastens to emphasize that the teaching of Jesus is not to be regarded as the source of "post-Easter apocalyptic," and that he depends almost exclusively on the Gospel of Matthew for his evidence.

1 Most of all, Matt 24 is the most extended eschatological discussion found in the teaching of Jesus. The eschatological teachings of Jesus are recorded in Matt 24 and 25, Mark 13, and Luke 21. W. J. Rewak, "Symbolism and the Eschatological Discourse," Bible Today 14 (1964): 931: Rewak states that Mark contains nothing that is not found in Matthew and Luke and Luke has re-edited it considerably, referring almost the whole sermon to the siege and fall of Jerusalem. Donald Hagner calls the Gospel of Matthew an "apocalyptic Gospel" (Donald A. Hagner, "Apocalyptic Motifs in the Gospel of Matthew: Continuity and Discontinuity," BT 7 [1985]: 60): He holds that, from beginning to end, and throughout, Matthew makes such an ample use of apocalyptic motifs and apocalyptic vocabulary that it deserves to be called by that name. According to Günther Bornkamm, the Gospel of Matthew is thoroughly apocalyptic from the birth narrative to the resurrection. See Günther Bornkamm, "Endwartung und Kirche im Matthäusevangelium." in The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology: Studies in Honor of C. H. Dodd, ed. W. D. Davis and A. Daube (Cambridge: The University Press, 1956), 222-60.

2 See Leopold Sabourin, "Apocalyptic Traits in Matthew's Gospel," RSB 3 (1983): 19-36; Hagner, 53-82. Jesus adopted certain vivid apocalyptic figures in Matt 24: Wars, famines, earthquakes (24:7), and celestial signs (24:29-30) are prominent. The Son of Man will come "on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (24:30)." At the sound of a loud trumpet call His angels are sent out to gather His elect "from the four winds, from one end of
originality of the discourse. Many scholars observe that the language is typical of the Jewish apocalyptic, and suggest that Matt 24:27-31 originates not from Jesus, but from a non-Christian Jewish apocalyptic document incorporated by Mark into his Gospel and taken over by Matthew with further Christian elaboration.¹

Perhaps the most intriguing reason is the observation that the writer of the Gospel of Matthew amplifies his Parousia scene (Matt 24:27-31) by inserting his own peculiar apocalyptic vocabulary, not shared with Mark or Luke, e.g., "Parousia," "the sign of the Son of Man," "the mourning of the tribes," "clouds of Heaven," and "a great trumpet call."

It is clearly not an accidental, but an intentional redaction. Matthew uses six peculiar terms in chap. 24, and five out of these six are used in Matt 24:27-31.

As Goulder illustrates, one of the essential tools for the study of the Gospels is the vocabulary of characteristic words for each of the Gospels.1 Is it possible to develop a genealogy of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 in order to understand the intrinsic meaning of the Matthean Parousia signs? How does the amplified apocalyptic vocabulary function in the Matthean Parousia scene? These are my basic questions in this dissertation.

Matt 24:27-31 is perhaps the most difficult part of the Olivet Discourse. Few passages of the Bible have called forth more disagreement among interpreters than Matt 24:27-31 and its parallels in Mark 13 and Luke 21.2 Roark states


that Matt 24 is a "thorn in the flesh of the interpreter."¹

There are at least five main views in understanding the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31.

The first solution is that of Schweitzer² and Strauss.³ They understood Jesus to adopt the vocabulary of the Jewish messianism of His day, to have been completely mistaken in His views, and to have died in disillusionment.

Another widespread view holds that the Olivet Discourse is a Jewish apocalypse which was put on the lips of Jesus in a modified and extended form by the early Church. Colani held that position.⁴ Bultmann might be seen as another representative of this view.⁵ Higgins

² Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, 223-403.
⁴ Colani, 146-202. Colani was a supreme apologist. When Renan's Vie de Jésus appeared, Colani launched a series of articles in criticism of it. In 1864 he issued his book, Jésus-Christ et les croyances messianiques de son temps. The major point which Colani sought to establish is that there is no connection between Jewish messianism and the Gospel. He makes it plain that Mark 13 and its parallels therefore must be accounted for as a tract by first-century Christians facing persecution just before A.D. 70.
⁵ Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, trans. K. Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 1:4: "Jesus' message is connected with the hope of other circles which is primarily documented by the apocalyptic literature." See also idem, Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting, trans. R. H. Fuller (London: Thames &
supports the view that Matthew has derived this interpolated material from a Christian apocalyptic source and has adapted it to the present context.¹

The other extreme solution is held by J. M. Kik and others.² When Kik comes to this troublesome passage, he solves its problems by relating the apocalyptic vocabulary unquestionably to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.³

Hudson, 1979), 86-96.

¹A. J. B. Higgins, "The Sign of the Son of Man (Matt. xxiv. 30)," NTS 9 (1963): 300.

²A. Feuillet, for example, interprets Matt 24 by saying that the whole chapter refers to the destruction of Jerusalem as a historical judgment wrought by the Son of Man (by means of the Roman armies) on the unbelieving Israel. Feuillet then argues that the references to the Parousia in Matt 24 (vss. 3,27,37,39) refer to the fall of Jerusalem. In other words, Feuillet interprets Matthean eschatology by the destruction of Jerusalem so that even the Parousia of the Son of Man is reduced to that event. See A. Feuillet, "Le sens du mot Parousie dans l'Evangile de Matthieu: Comparison entre Matt xxiv et Jac. v, i-ii," in The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: University Press, 1956): 261-80.

³J. Marcellus Kik, The Eschatology of Victory (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers, 1971), 53-176. This school, which applies this passage to the downfall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, is represented by scholars such as H. B. Swete, A. Feuillet, and P. Carrington. But the description of Matt 24:27-31 is today overwhelmingly taken as applying to the end of the Age and the Parousia; see Desmond Ford, The Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1976), 64. According to F. W. Burnett, Matthew's redaction of 24:3 shows his concern for the future Parousia of Jesus as Son of Man, and for the events which will precede it. Therefore in verse 3, Matthew is no longer addressing the destruction of the temple. Matthew's purpose in this last great discourse (chaps. 24-25) is not to show Jesus' predictions have been fulfilled in the events of A.D. 70 but to prepare Christians for enduring faithfulness during the
According to him, the apocalyptic language, e.g., sun, moon, and stars, does not refer to the Parousia signs, but to the Jewish nation. Therefore the falling of the stars means the passing away of the Jewish nation. The clouds are not the sign of the Parousia; they only refer to God's judgment and power.

On the popular side of contemporary interpretation, apocalyptic eschatology in relation to the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24 has influenced millions by its dispensational interpretation. Through the writings of C. I. Scofield, and more recently, Hal Lindsay, dispensationalism has successfully popularized a detailed scenario of the final events.

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1Kik, 128.

2Ibid., 142.


4Hal Lindsey, with C. C. Carlson, The Late Great Planet Earth (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970), 11-188. The Dispensationalists think that Matt 24 stands out as the compass for end-time direction regarding the imminent rapture of the Church, the seven-year tribulation period, the rise of Antichrist, the battle of Armageddon, and the coming of Jesus to set up His millennial Kingdom. They see this section of Scripture (Matt 24:1-34) as the key to prophetic interpretation.
Finally, recent conservative scholars suggest that the vocabulary of Jesus in Matt 24 comes from the "prophetical perspective."¹ They state that in His prophetic vision into the future, Jesus foresaw the events related to the destruction of Jerusalem blended into unity with the events of the Parousia.

When we carefully study the structure and the vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31, we realize that the foregoing interpretations do not provide a satisfactory explanation of the problematic passage. Matt 24:27-31 has been commonly viewed through the lens of a particular theological interpretive scheme that makes the eschatological discourse appear complex and enigmatic.² As some scholars propose, a more precise determination of Jesus' relationship to the

¹The entire future lay as one great unity before His prophetical vision—just as when we look at a mountain range in the far distance, all the mountains, although some are nearer and some farther, seem to be blended into a single unity. Cf. Ford, 62-109. Ford analyzes the four chief positions interpreting the Olivet Discourse. These positions are: (1) application to the fall of Jerusalem only, (2) application to the end of the Age only, (3) application to both events on the basis that Christ blended the themes, and (4) application to both events on the basis that the fall of Jerusalem is a part of the predicted end of the Age.

apocalyptic tradition is one of the urgent tasks confronting New Testament scholars.¹

One of the prerequisites to the study of the Matthean Parousia is a correct understanding of the significance of the vocabulary found in Matt 24:27-31. The vocabulary cannot be correctly understood unless it is viewed from the proper perspective and unless the canonical and noncanonical background is thoroughly comprehended.² Therefore the study of the vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 in the light of its probable prophetic and apocalyptic background should be fruitful. To escape from theological prejudices and imposed eschatological schemata, this paper concentrates on the biblical terms themselves, tracing their roots and branches as a necessary prolegomenon to understanding the message of Matt 24:27-31.

Definition of Terms

In this dissertation, the term "apocalyptic" designates, first of all, the literary genre of the Apocalypses which claim to disclose the secrets of the end-

¹John W. Granger, "Matthew's Use of Apocalyptic" (Th.D. dissertation, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990), 2; John W. Bowman, The Religion of Maturity (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948), 235: "To determine our Lord's attitude toward the subject of apocalyptic is one of the really urgent tasks at the present time confronting New Testament scholars, and indeed, all who are concerned about what he thought."

time; and then second, it describes the kind of eschatology and ideas usually found in the apocalyptic writings.  

The capitalized term "Apocalyptic" literature is used mainly to indicate a body of Jewish noncanonical literature that flourished during the intertestamental period (200 B.C.-A.D. 100) which contains visions and revelations of the spiritual world and of the future kingdom of God.

The small-letter "apocalyptic literature" or "apocalyptic tradition" is applied in a broad sense to all the Jewish literature, including the Qumran literature and rabbinic literature which have apocalyptic content. It is also applied to parts of the writings of the Old Testament

1Many, if not all, scholars employ the adjective "apocalyptic" substantively. But some scholars would limit the word to adjectival functions. The adjective "apocalyptic" had been given a larger meaning to include writings which are not strictly apocalypses, but whose content deals largely or in substantial part with the sort of eschatological expectations which are found in the apocalypses. In this sense the eschatology of Jesus is called apocalyptic. See John J. Collins, The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity (New York: Crossroad, 1984), 2; George. E. Ladd, "The Kingdom of God in the Jewish Apocryphal Literature," BSA 109 (1952): 318. For the definition of "Apocalypse," "Apocalyptic eschatology," and "Apocalypticism," see Paul D. Hanson, "Apocalypticism," IDB Supplementary Volume, 1976, 28-34. According to him, "Apocalypse" is a literary genre which is one of the favored media used by apocalyptic writers to communicate their messages; "Apocalyptic eschatology" is neither a genre, nor a system of thought, but rather a religious perspective; "Apocalypticism" refers to the symbolic universe in which an apocalyptic movement codifies its identity and interpretation of reality.
prophets,\(^1\) as well as to portions of the New Testament\(^2\) which have apocalyptic motifs and vocabulary.

The word "vocabulary" is used as an inclusive term embracing terms, expressions, motifs, and imagery.

**Purpose and Limitation of the Study**

The main purpose of the present study is not to look at all of the problematic questions of Matt 24:27-31, but to attempt to find continuity and discontinuity in the use of the apocalyptic vocabulary in Matt 24:27-31 with that of the apocalyptic literature by tracing its possible literary allusions or parallels.\(^3\) If possible, I tried to find the roots and branches of the vocabulary, and dominant patterns for each historical stage—a genealogy of the terminology, as it were.

The other purpose is to determine Matthew's usage of apocalyptic ideas and imagery, and to seek the role of

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\(^1\)E.g., Daniel, Joel, Amos, Zechariah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel.

\(^2\)E.g., The Olivet Discourse, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Revelation.

\(^3\)It is generally agreed among conservative scholars that Matthew makes considerable use of apocalyptic vocabulary and motifs, but the roles of the apocalyptic vocabulary and motifs of Matt 24 are significantly different from that of the Jewish apocalyptic literature. Most conservative scholars recognize those differences, but they have not adequately explained how and why they are different: cf. Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 125; E. F. Scott, "The Place of Apocalyptic Conceptions in the Mind of Jesus," *JBL* 16 (1922): 139; Amos N. Wilder, "The Nature of Jewish Eschatology," *JBL* 25 (1931): 201-6.
apocalyptic vocabulary in Matt 24:27-31 on the basis of the results of the diachronic study. A thorough comparative study serves to determine whether Matt 24:27-31 represents a mutation in the apocalyptic tradition.

This dissertation is limited to the apocalyptic vocabulary associated with the Parousia as presented in Matt 24:27-31. The reasons are as follows:

1. The other signs in Matt 24, such as false prophets, wars, famines, and earthquakes have a generic nature which could find a degree of fulfillment in every age, and these have no special difficulties with interpretation. However, the events immediately connected with the Parousia have been much debated.¹

2. It is to be noted that the Gospel of Matthew has five peculiar apocalyptic terms in Matt 24:27-31 not shared with Mark or Luke. This suggests that Matthew wants to emphasize the Parousia signs in a special way.

¹Most agree that some passages, such as 24:4-26, are reminiscent of His words elsewhere. But it is precisely this passage (24:27-31) about the Parousia and the end of the world which aroused most suspicion. Scholars have assumed that this portion is a miniature Jewish apocalypse which has been incorporated, e.g., T. Colani, R. Bultmann, and A. J. B. Higgins; see pp. 7,8. Thus it is supposed that this passage tell us little of Jesus' own views. J. A. T. Robinson claims in Jesus and His Coming (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), 57: "As far as His own words are concerned, there is nothing to suggest that He shared the expectation of a return in glory which the Church entertained and ascribed to Him." See on this point the exhaustive survey on the "Little Apocalypse Theory" by Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Future, 1-112.
3. Matt 24:27-31 contains a word group which was used in the Old Testament to describe theophany, the Day of the Lord,\(^1\) and the Danielic Son of Man.

4. Moreover, Matt 24:27-31 has a peculiar structure which we find nowhere else in the apocalyptic tradition.

The parallel chapters of Mark and Luke are considered, but not in detail, because more than half of the terms of Matt 24:27-31 are peculiar to Matthew, and because the synoptic problem is not the main purpose of this study. But, for the clarification of comparison, this study assumes that Matthew amplifies the Markan material.

In dealing with Matt 24:27-31, I have limited the dissertation chiefly to the genealogy and function of the apocalyptic vocabulary, which is certainly close to the heart of the controversy regarding this chapter.

**Review of Literature**

It seems that the rich apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 has not yet been adequately investigated.

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\(^1\) The descent of God, the clouds, and the great trumpet call are used as a word group to describe theophany. In Exod 19 we have (1) the divine descent, (2) the voice, (3) the clouds, and (4) the trumpet. This is a theophany in the past, but it may be noticed that all these features are present in Matt 24:27-31. Isa 11-34 contains another passages on the Day of the Lord and it speaks of: (1) the darkness of the heavenly bodies (13:10; 24:1-10; 34:4); (2) the ensign motif (11:10,12; 13:1; 18:3); (3) the mourning of the tribes (13:6; 24:4); (4) the coming of the Lord on the cloud (19:1); (5) the great trumpet call (27:13); and (6) the gathering of the elect (11:11; 27:13; 56:5-8). All these appear in Matt 24:29-31.
There have been many studies on the Olivet Discourse and the eschatology of Jesus. But there is no specific intensive work directly associated with the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 as a whole.

In 1852, Moses Stuart wrote a forty-six-page article entitled, "Observations on Matt 24:29-31, and the Parallel Passages in Mark and Luke, with Remarks on the Double Sense of Scripture." It is significant in that this article deals exactly with Matt 24:29-31 as the present dissertation aims to do, but the purpose and method of the article are different from this dissertation. In the first part of his article, Stuart tries to interpret Matt 24:29-31 verse by verse. However, his study is governed excessively by his presupposition that all the signs of Matt 24:29-31 must be interpreted as an indication of the destruction of Jerusalem.

He argues that the literal sense of the signs is an absurdity. An eclipse of the sun and the moon cannot be considered a judgment scene at the end-time. Stuart asks:

How could all the tribes of the earth see these phenomena, and bewail themselves because of them? ... How can the literal sound of a trumpet reach the ears of the unnumbered dead who have slept in dust for thousands of years?

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2 Ibid., 334-35.
In the second part, he asserts that all these Parousia signs are to be applied to civil, political changes and disruption and especially to the destruction of the Jewish capital and commonwealth. Although Stuart takes some Old Testament passages as evidence of his argument, he does not explore the apocalyptic vocabulary itself.

In the middle of this century (1954), an exhaustive study of the Olivet Discourse was published by G. R. Beasley-Murray, an English Baptist. He divided his work, Jesus and the Future, into two sections. The first and larger one gives a detailed history of the interpretation of Mark 13 from 1846 to 1954. The second half discusses the "theology" of Mark 13, namely, the basic ideas of that chapter and the relation in which it stands to other eschatological passages of the New Testament. Even though the book is, as its title suggests, primarily a study of Mark 13 and of the authenticity of the Markan discourse, it has useful insights regarding Matt 24 and Paul's related teachings in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Though his work is

1Ibid., 449.

significant for this dissertation, his main purpose is not to study the apocalyptic vocabulary itself.

There are four dissertations written directly on the Olivet Discourse. James F. Rand\(^1\) wrote his dissertation on the basis of Dispensationalism and tried to prove the validity of the dispensational scheme of eschatology. George Fuller\(^2\) tries to defend the Olivet Discourse as an authentic proclamation of Jesus. Ronnie Woolery\(^3\) attempts to examine interpretations and applications of the Olivet Discourse in light of the present-day expectation of the Parousia. John Hart\(^4\) discusses the dominant eschatological nature of the prophetic discourse of Matt 24. The largest part of their studies is devoted to an analysis of the Discourse itself. None deals with the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24.

One of the indispensable basic resources for this paper is the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament


\(^3\)Ronnie George Woolery, "The Olivet Discourse in Light of Present-Day Expectations of the Parousia" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1977), 1-221.

(TDNT) in ten volumes, published in 1964-1976.¹ The historical study of New Testament terms is its major purpose. Some articles in TDNT provide useful information and insight for studying the vocabulary of Matt 24 and its linguistic background. Ten articles were found relative to the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31.² But, as Bromiley indicates in the editor's preface, it obviously cannot replace comprehensive study. Its task is to mediate between ordinary lexicography and the specific task of exposition.³ First of all, it omits some apocalyptic vocabulary items of Matt 24:29-31, e.g., ἡ ἁλίας, ἡ σελήνη.


³TDNT, 1:ix.
Some articles ignore the significance of the eschatological meaning of the apocalyptic vocabulary. Since each item is a dictionary entry, and not a comprehensive article, it is relatively brief. The Jewish apocalyptic is not treated extensively in TDNT. Some writers ignore it or deal with it superficially. Most articles give weight to the secular Greek usages and the linguistic word groups. They are in danger of confusion words and concepts. As Sawyer observed, it is an enormously difficult task to combine philology and theology, as this dictionary aims to do.

James Barr points out that a great difficulty of TDNT arises from a neglect of syntactical relations and of groupings of words. The real communication of religious and theological patterns is by the larger word combinations and not by the lexical units of words. Barr concludes his criticism as follows: "We may then sum up these criticisms

1E.g., Foerster, "οφθηρ, ορηρον," 1:503-5.


3Stählin, 3:830-52; Schrage, 7:841-43.

4John F. A. Sawyer, Review of TDNT, in SJT 21 (1968): 92: "The other basic error of TDNT is the confusion between word and concept."


6Barr, 222.

7Ibid., 264.
of *TDNT* by saying that the great weakness is a failure to get to grips with the semantic value of words in their contexts."¹

Most of all, the articles of *TDNT* do not attempt to trace and determine Matthew's usage of apocalyptic vocabulary, ideas, and concepts by comparing the allusions and parallels. Neither do they attempt to show the genealogy of the terms and concepts in the apocalyptic traditions, which is one of the main tasks of this study.

A useful study for the present dissertation was published by Lars Hartman in 1966.² Hartman argues that the synoptic eschatological discourse is a primitive Christian midrash on Daniel which originated with Jesus Himself. The result is a study which is illuminating in showing the heavy dependence of the eschatological discourse on the Old Testament and its themes.³

He divides his study into two parts. The first part is a critical analysis of the patterns of the literary

¹Ibid., 231.


³The Markan and Matthean descriptions of wars, persecutions, apostasy, the abomination of desolation, false prophets, and the glorious coming of the Son of Man with his ingathering of the elect are all found in Daniel. The only details of Daniel not found in the Synoptic apocalypse are the cosmic signs and the cryptic references to the time of the final events and to the role of the blasphemous King.
structure in the intertestamental Jewish apocalypses.¹ In
the second part, the author examines Mark 13 and Matt 24 and
concludes that there is an exposition of certain passages
from the book of Daniel, together with some other related
texts.² He makes some valuable suggestions for this topic.
The author's study of the role played by Old Testament texts
and motifs in apocalyptic literature is useful (Part 1).
His arguments for the idea that the synoptic discourse is
based upon an exposition of passages taken from Daniel are
attractive (Part 2).

But his concern and purpose are different from those
of the present dissertation. As he points out in the
introduction, he has restricted himself to trying to
determine the association with the Old Testament and the
part played by the Old Testament in these texts as they
exist at present. He also excluded rabbinic texts and
Qumran literature,³ because his investigation was concerned
with literary structures in the available Jewish apocalyptic
texts and not the origin or history of the ideas, motifs,

¹He divides the apocalyptic material into five
groups, according to its function in the apocalyptic scheme:
it is used to describe (1) the preliminary time of evil,
(2) divine intervention, (3) the judgment, (4) the fate of
sinners, and (5) the joy of the elect.

²Hartman, 172.

³Ibid., 14.
and concepts. His main concern was not the contents but the framework. He thus expressed his methodological limitation in his conclusion of the first part as follows:

The fact that I deliberately neglected to examine my material genetically and comparatively is explained by the necessity for concentration and is not a denial that it can and should be examined in this way.

The main task of this dissertation is to examine the material genetically and comparatively to trace the origin and history of the ideas, motifs, and concepts.

In 1981, Leopold Sabourin published an article in which he first discusses some characteristics of the apocalyptic and its dependency on the Old Testament prophecies. In the second part, he analyzes the apocalyptic traits in Matthew which Matthew has significantly modified in an apocalyptic sense.

According to his conclusion, Matthew centers his interest on the apocalyptic expectation of the Parousia of the Son of Man. Matthew, more than Mark, has recognized in the events of his time the climate which was foreseen by Jewish apocalyptic. Sabourin's insight is helpful for this study, but he enumerates only the apocalyptic traits of

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1Ibid., 13. "This is a limited literary aim and the discussion is mainly carried on the literary plane."

2Ibid., 137-38.


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Matthew and does not trace the apocalyptic vocabulary and its background.

Fred W. Burnett published his dissertation entitled *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia: A Redaction-Critical Study of the Eschatological Discourse in Matthew* which was accepted at Vanderbilt University in 1979.¹ In this book, Burnett sets out to examine the purpose and function of Matt 24 within the first Gospel as a whole. He suggests that Matt 24:3-31 functions as "the testament of Jesus-Sophia," a farewell to the disciples which anticipates the return of Jesus as the Son of Man. He also states that Matthew clearly distinguishes between the predicted destruction of the temple and the coming of the Son of Man which will inaugurate the consummation.² What one finds in this book is not a study of Matthean apocalyptic vocabulary or terms and imagery, but an extensive discussion about Wisdom Christology as an important theme in Matthew. His methodology owes more to the disclosure of redactional elements in Matthew by comparison with Mark and Luke, and to the myth of Sophia's rejection than to a detailed literary analysis of Matthew's Gospel on its own terms.

In 1985, Donald A. Hagner devoted a thirty-page article to the subject of "Apocalyptic Motifs in the Gospel

¹Burnett, 1-467.
²Ibid., 218-24.
of Matthew."¹ The article is composed of five parts. The first part defines the apocalyptic viewpoint. He states that Matthew's eschatology has an apocalyptic orientation, and, furthermore, it is rooted deeply in Old Testament prophecy. Part 2 investigates the life setting of Matthew's readers. Hagner suggests that the original readers were Jewish-Christians whose view of the last things would have been heavily influenced by the Old Testament. Part 3 explains the importance of apocalyptic in the Gospel of Matthew.² In Parts 4 and 5 he deals with the purpose and function of the apocalyptic in the Gospel of Matthew and summarizes the function of apocalyptic in Matthew under four related headings: (1) instruction, (2) encouragement, (3) paraenesis, and (4) readiness.

While Hagner's article contributes to this topic, his main purpose is, as he mentions in his preface, not to trace possible literary allusions of parallels to the


²Ibid., 60-66. Hagner insists that from beginning to end Matthew makes such ample use of apocalyptic motifs and apocalyptic terms that it deserves to be called "the apocalyptic Gospel." It is, Hagner holds, thoroughly apocalyptic from the birth narrative to the resurrection. The famous Five Discourses of Matthew are also apocalyptic. It is, of course, in the fifth and the last discourse (chap. 24) in the Gospel that we encounter the most complete presentation of the apocalyptic viewpoint.
apocalyptic literature, but to indicate only the apocalyptic motifs and functions in the Gospel of Matthew.\(^1\)

One of the recent works on the relation between Matthew and the Apocalyptic tradition is Granger's Th.D. dissertation in 1990.\(^2\) He attempts to prove that the entire Gospel of Matthew is an apocalyptic book.

The work is divided into two chapters. Chapter 1 is an examination of the Apocalyptic literature during the New Testament era. Chapter 2 delineates the apocalyptic distinctives within Matthew's Gospel. His conclusion of the study points to Matthew as a man thoroughly in line with the Jewish apocalyptic tradition, though he suggests that Matthew turned some apocalyptic emphases, such as eschatology, from speculation to more practical concerns.

His work is interesting and attractive in that he finds some common elements between the apocalyptic literature and the Gospel of Matthew. The title of the dissertation is close to this topic, but the focus is different from that of my study because he devotes much space to describing the characteristics of the Apocalyptic literature, and because his main purpose is to explore the apocalyptic characteristics of the Gospel, focusing only on

\(^1\)Ibid., 53.  
the Passion and Resurrection narratives. He does not trace the history of the vocabulary.

This survey of the literature yields the result that most works are not adequate to satisfy my purpose, because the vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 has not received careful attention in terms of comparison with other biblical and noncanonical apocalyptic literature. Some works try to determine the background of the apocalyptic vocabulary, but they usually emphasize only one aspect—the influence of the apocalyptic in the Gospel of Matthew. They deal partly with the Old Testament background, the apocalyptic traits, and the apocalyptic influence on Matt 24; but they do not attempt to study comprehensively the continuity or discontinuity of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24 with the apocalyptic tradition and its function in the Gospel of Matthew by comparing possible allusions and parallels. The present dissertation, therefore, attempts to pursue this issue.

Methodology and Procedure

The method of this study is primarily inductive, diachronic, and comparative. It is inductive because a conclusion is drawn from particular cases and because the premises in this study are usually based on facts or observations found in the apocalyptic tradition. The diachronic approach is understood here as a method that seeks the original roots and traces the development of
concepts, motifs, and terms. The word "comparative" means that in this dissertation I compare the usage of the apocalyptic vocabulary in Matt 24:27-31 with similar or parallel usage in the other apocalyptic writings in the light of their roots in the Old Testament. An attempt is made to arrange the parallels into stemmas.

This dissertation includes as many as possible of parallel passages in the Old Testament, the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, the Qumran texts, the New Testament, and the rabbinic literature which describe directly what is to happen at the time of the end. The materials are dealt with according to chronological order, as far as it is possible, but the exact chronological order is not as crucial as logical order in a stemma, which I seek to construct, to establish the trajectory of each item.¹

In order to achieve the proposed objectives, this paper is organized as follows:

Chapter 1 is the introduction. It contains a statement of the problem, purpose and limitation of the research, a survey of related secondary literature, and a description of methodology and procedure. A survey of the ancient sources witnessing to the apocalyptic tradition

¹Just as in textual criticism a later manuscript may be a witness to an earlier reading, it is conceivable that a later document may preserve an earlier stage of the tradition.
justifies the reason why I use the sources to study the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31.¹

Chapter 2 explored the term "Parousia" which is important in order to grasp the meaning of Matthean eschatology. If we want to study the "signs of the Parousia," we must, first of all, know what the Parousia means in Matt 24. It seems that Matthew adopted the term intentionally because he uses it four times in a single chapter (vvs. 3, 27, 37, 39), and that the term "Parousia" is the key to understanding the structure of Matt 24. This chapter is a basic study for the exploration of the Parousia signs in chapter 3.

Chapter 3 is the main portion of the dissertation. The purpose of chapter 3 is to trace the trajectory of the six apocalyptic vocabulary items of Matt 24:29-31. It attempts to find the root and branches of each apocalyptic vocabulary item of the Matthean Parousia signs, and to discover continuity and discontinuity by tracing the trajectory. In order to reach this goal, all apocalyptic terms or word groups of Matt 24:29-31 are studied in the light of the Old Testament, the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, the New Testament, the Qumran texts, and the

¹According to scholarly theories, the possible sources of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24 are the Old Testament, the Qumran literature, the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, Mark 13, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 Cor 15, and possible early apocalyptic traditions preserved in rabbinic literature.
rabbinic literature. Parallels and allusions are cited from these sources and compared with each other to find continuity and discontinuity of the apocalyptic vocabulary. The parallels are noteworthy insofar as we may assume that the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 was nourished by the Old Testament, and that it was developed into new conceptions at each historical stage.

Chapter 4 attempted to synthesize a combined trajectory based on the outcome of chapter 3, and to find the place of Matt 24:27-31 in the apocalyptic tradition. The continuity and discontinuity of Matt 24:27-31 are analyzed along with the functions of the peculiar Matthean apocalyptic terms in the Matthean Parousia scene.

The fifth chapter is devoted to summarizing results and laying out the conclusions of the study.

**Ancient Sources Witnessing to the Apocalyptic Tradition**

The Olivet Discourse can not be correctly understood unless the real scriptural and non-scriptural background is thoroughly comprehended. What is this background? Is it possible to discover the relationship between the ancient apocalyptic traditions and Matt 24:27-31? Is it relevant to trace the traditions to find the pre-history of Matthean apocalyptic vocabulary? To answer these questions, we must search some possible ancient sources that have common apocalyptic motifs and terms with Matt 24:27-31.
The Old Testament Apocalypses

Most commentators observe that Matthew is peculiar in his frequent use of the Old Testament. Matthew contains over sixty quotations from the Old Testament, more than twice as many as any other Gospel. Among these quotations, twelve are introduced by a fulfillment formula characterized by a passive form of τοῦτο (to fulfill).

Furthermore, "literary analysis shows that the Old Testament plays an essential part in the structure of the eschatological discourse." The whole chapter (Matt 24) is deeply indebted to the language of the Old Testament, not by way of direct quotations, but by the constant use of the language, particularly of the apocalyptic parts of the Old Testament. Sometimes there is a clear allusion to a specific passage.

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1All quotations from the English Old Testament, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Revised Standard Version. The LXX text used in this dissertation is Alfred Rahlfs' edition, The Septuagint (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).


3Hartman, 13. It is evident that the early Christians studied the Old Testament intensively and made great use of it in the construction of their theology. It has been powerfully argued by Rendel Harris that the first Christian book ever produced was a collection of the Old Testament proof-texts, the original Testimony Book. Cf. J. Rendel Harris, Testimonies, 2 vols. (Cambridge: University Press, 1916-20); Burkitt's observation: "To collect and apply the oracles of Old Testament in the light of the New Dispensation was the first literary task of the Christian Church." See Frances. C. Burkitt, Gospel History and Its Transmission (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911), 127.
Many passages of the Old Testament, especially those connected with the Day of the Lord,\(^1\) declare that at some future time Yahweh will descend in glory from heaven to destroy His enemies or to judge the world;\(^2\) this Advent is in some cases preceded by a shaking of the heavenly bodies.\(^3\) Hartman shows that the Old Testament plays an essential part in the structure of the eschatological discourse.\(^4\) We need only to cite some apocalyptic passages from the Old Testament books as follows:\(^5\)


\(^2\) Isa 19:1, "Behold, the Lord is riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt; and the idols of Egypt will tremble at his presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them."

\(^3\) The apocalyptic passages, besides exhibiting other characteristics that have been mentioned, are full of physical wonders. "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Yahweh cometh" (Joel 2:30-31). "The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining" (Joel 3:15). There are to be new heavens and a new earth (Isa 65:17; 66:22). Destruction is to come upon all the earth (Isa 24). The Mount of Olives is to be cleft by a great valley (Zech 14:4).

\(^4\) Hartman, 11-292. For a convenient table of parallel passages, see Hartman, 156.

\(^5\) Exodus and Psalms are not apocalyptic, but contain some terms and motifs which the later writers use eschatologically. The narrative of the Exodus as recorded in Exod 1-19 contains many impressive eschatological pictures which are patterns of the end-time signs. The imagery of the 10 plagues (Exod 7:15-10:29) is largely appropriated in the New Testament Apocalypse of John to portray the last judgment of God to the world (Rev 15-16). The Passover (Exod 12:1-28) was instituted to symbolize and...
Amos,¹ Micah,²


¹Amos may be seen as the first eschatological preacher among the "writing prophets" in the Old Testament. See Gerhard F. Hasel, Understanding the Book of Amos (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), 112. According to Amos, the Day of the Lord would be quite different from what men imagined. It is the day of disaster for Israel. It is a day of darkness and not light. In Amos 4:13 and 9:5, Yahweh comes down and treads on the high places of the earth, the mountains melt like wax, and the valleys are cleft. All this imagery expresses Yahweh's power over the natural world.

²Mic 1:3-4 announces that Yahweh is coming to earth in awful majesty in order to punish the sin of Israel which lies in the capital cities of Samaria and Judah. Mic 1:3 portrays the coming of Yahweh. Yahweh leaves his dwelling place and comes down to tread upon the high places of the earth. In 1:4 the prophet describes the cosmic effect of his appearance in terms of "the thunderstorm, earthquake, or volcanic eruption." Cf. T. E. McComiskey, "Micah," EBC, 7:398-99.
Isaiah, Zephaniah, Joel

The message of Isaiah is strongly eschatological. See G. W. Grogan, "Isaiah," EBC 6:14-16. One of the outstanding eschatological images of Isaiah is the motif of theophany and the Day of the Lord. In Isa 30:27-28, and 65:15, the prophet depicts the coming of God with the traditional language and imagery of theophany. Several passages in Isaiah are also important in connection with the Day of the Lord (Isa 11:10-16; 13:1-13; 18:3; 19:1; 24:1-13; 34:4; 56:6-8). Some key words and motifs in Matt 24:29-31 are found in these chapters: ensign, remnant (elect), gather, four corners of the earth. The cosmic signs are frequent in Isaiah. The Day of Yahweh affects the whole cosmos. The darkening of the heavenly bodies becomes a characteristic feature in descriptions of the final cataclysm. Isa 13:10 contains the very same imagery which is employed in Matt 24:29. Cf. G. von Rad, "The Origin of the Concept of the Day of Yahweh." JSS 4 (1959): 97-108.

See Ralph L. Smith, Micah-Malachi, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 32 (Waco, TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1984), 131; von Rad, 102. The Day of Yahweh is a major motif in Zephaniah. The author is called the prophet of the Day of the Lord because his description of the universal and oppressively near Day of the Lord is the most detailed (Zeph 1:7-14; 2:2-3; 3:8). The prophet announces the nearness of the day of the Lord (Zech 1:7). In 1:15-18 Zephaniah portrays the Day of Yahweh as "the Day of wrath." It is characterized by distress and anguish, ruin and destruction, darkness and gloom, clouds and thick darkness, and trumpet blast and battle cry (vss. 15-16).

Joel's theology contributes greatly to the field of eschatology; R. D. Patterson, "Joel," EBC 6:234. The term "the Day of Yahweh" occurs 5 times in Joel (1:15; 2:1, 11; 3:4; 4:14); Douglas Stuart, Hosea-Jonah, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 31 (Waco, TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1987), 230-31. It is obvious that the theme of the Day of Yahweh dominates the book of Joel (1-2). In Joel 2:11, the Day of Yahweh is characterized as "great and very terrible" (2:11; cf. Zeph 1:10, 14). On that day, changes are anticipated in the heavens and in the earth: the earth will quake, the heavens will tremble, the sun and moon will become dark, and the stars will withhold their brightness (2:10).
Zechariah,¹ Ezekiel,² and Daniel. The only apocalyptic writing which Matthew designated by name is the book of Daniel.³ It may be significant to note that Matthew is the only Synoptic writer who identified the Abomination of Desolation as that spoken of by Daniel. There is little doubt that Matt 24 has Daniel as its background.⁴ It is

¹George L. Robinson calls Zechariah "the most messianic, the most truly apocalyptic and eschatological, of all the writings of the Old Testament"; George L. Robinson, "Book of Zechariah," ISBE (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939), 5:3136. In Zechariah we have a vivid, graphic picture of the closing scene of this age, which is known as the day of the Lord. As for the apocalyptic and eschatological aspect, Zechariah predicted the final siege of Jerusalem (12:1-3; 14:1-2), the Lord's defense of Jerusalem (14:3-4), the judgment on the nations (12:9; 14:3), and the ultimate holiness of Jerusalem and her people (14:20-21). See Kenneth L. Barker, "Zechariah," EBC, 7:599.

²The scope and style of Ezekiel is more apocalyptic than any other book of the Old Testament, for his 48 chapters are made up of vision, allegory, and parable. See C. G. Howie, "Ezekiel," IDB (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 2:212: "Thus, the book of Ezekiel became a prologue to apocalyptic, which glimpsed the glorious future in secretive terminology and symbolic language."

³Many exegetes have pointed out that Matt 24 is a midrash upon Daniel. Cf. David Wenham, The Rediscovery of Jesus' Eschatological Discourse, Gospel Perspectives, Vol. 4 (Sheffield: England: JSOT Press, 1984), 309; Austin M. Farrer, St. Matthew and St. Mark (London: Dacre Press, 1954), 16; Hartman, 145, 235; Ford, 72, 78, 111; Donald Sneen, Visions of Hope: Apocalyptic Themes from Biblical Times (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1978), 37. It has often been shown that for the most part, Matt 24 is reinterpreting Daniel 9:24-27 and its expansion in 11:31 to the end of book. It is almost certain that Christ had in mind the last part of Dan 11 and all of Dan 12. Matt 24 refers to both chapters.

⁴The passages about the Son of Man coming in power and glory (Matt 13:41; 16:27; 24:30; 26:64) or having received power (Matt 28:28) are generally considered to be
explicitly acknowledged in Matt 24:15. Therefore, a correct understanding of Dan 7:13-14 is essential to a consistent and accurate interpretation of the discourse.¹

The Apocalyptic Literature

In the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, I have chosen to examine ten apocalyptic books from Charlesworth's edition of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, volume 1:² ¹ Enoch (second century B.C. to first century A.D.),³ Sibylline allusions to Dan 7:13-14. In addition to Matthew's 21 usages of the title "the Son of Man" which are paralleled in either Mark or Luke, there are usages found only in Matthew (cf. Matt 10:23; 13:37,41; 16:13,28; 17:12; 19:28; 25:31; 26:2). In 6 of these 9 passages, the text points unmistakably to Dan 7:13-14 as the background (cf. 10:23; 13:37,41; 16:28; 19:28; 25:31). The difference is that here the Son of Man appears in place of God, and that the celestial phenomena which accompany this appearance are associated in the Old Testament with theophanies on the Day of Yahweh. Farrer's summary cannot be denied: "It is the prophecy of Daniel," he says, "which gives its decisive shape to Christ's prediction on the Mount of Olives." A. M. Farrer, A Study in St. Mark (Westminster, London: Dacre Press, 1951), 136.

¹Ford, 112-13.


³¹ Enoch, or Ethiopic Enoch, has been pronounced by R. H. Charles the most important pseudepigraphal writing for the history of the development of theology in the period just before the New Testament era. Charles also says: "Nearly all the writers of the New Testament were familiar with it, and were more or less influenced by it in thought and diction." See R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1913), 2:163. E. Isaac also holds: "There is no doubt that the New Testament world was influenced by
Oracles (second century B.C.-seventh century A.D.),\(^1\)

Testament of Abraham (first to second century A.D.),\(^2\)

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\(^1\)Only Books 3-5 appear to be Jewish; the others are Christian. Most scholars agree that the corpus of this book dates from the middle of the second century B.C. The so-called Christian Sibyllines are later. Books 1 and 2 seem to date from around the middle of the second century A.D., and Books 6 and 7 depend upon them. Originally, there were fifteen books and verse fragments, but only twelve are extant. These are not fundamentally apocalyptic, but there are apocalyptic passages, particularly in the third book, which are important in a study of apocalyptic ideas. See J. H. Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research with a Supplement (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 185. John J. Collins, "Sibylline Oracles," in OTP, 1:317-24; G. W. E. Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A History and Literary Introduction (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 162-65.

\(^2\)The Testament of Abraham exists in two basic forms: a longer form and a shorter form. The longer of the two is by far the more interesting and probably preserves a more original form of the outline of the story. Though estimates of the date are very difficult, E. P. Sanders assumes a date for the original of A.D. 100, plus or minus 25 years. See E. P. Sanders, "Testament of Abraham," in OTP 1:875. Recension A has been influenced by the wording of the New Testament in at least three places (11:2,10f; 13:13-14). Recension B may also have been influenced by the wording of Matt 7:13, although the image of two gates probably does not
Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (second century B.C.),
Testament of Moses (first century A.D.), Apocalypse of
Zephaniah (first century B.C.-first century A.D.),
Apocalypse of Abraham (first to second century A.D.),
2 Enoch (late first century A.D.),


1H. C. Kee, "Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs," in OTP, 1:775-80: "Its use of the LXX suggests that it was written after 250 B.C." Nickelsburg proposes that the time and place of their composition are difficult to ascertain (Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature, 231). However, the Testament of Levi and Judah are central figures in the eschatological signs and events of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. Finally, God Himself will be revealed to all the nations (TLevi 4:4), among whom Israel will stand as a light (TLevi 14:34; TJud 22:3).

2The Testament of Moses is the farewell exhortation to his successor Joshua, in which he unfolds the future course of history. The date of the work is not certain and may be classified into three broad categories: (1) the first half of the second century A.D.; (2) during the period of the Maccabean revolt, i.e. 168-165 B.C.; (3) before the fall of Jerusalem, the first three decades of the Christian era, possibly being contemporaneous with the public ministry of Jesus. J. Priest wrote concerning the Testament of Moses that "The possibility exists that some New Testament authors were familiar with the Testament of Moses, but it would be better to say that both the Testament of Moses and certain New Testament texts show familiarity with common traditional material." See J. Priest, "Testament of Moses," in OTP, 1:919-24.

3O. S. Wintermute, "Apocalypse of Zephaniah," in OTP, 1:498-506. The date of this writing is somewhere between 100 B.C. and A.D. 175.

4R. Rubinkiewicz, "Apocalypse of Abraham," in OTP, 1:682-88. It is commonly held that this was composed at the end of the first century A.D. No decisive argument, however, has been given in support if this date.

5P. I. Andersen, "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in OTP, 1:94. 2 Enoch, written in the late first century, is preserved in a long and a short recension, both of which,
century A.D.),\textsuperscript{1} and 2 Baruch (about A.D. 100),\textsuperscript{2} In addition, other Pseudepigraphas that contain apocalyptic passages are examined from Charlesworth's edition volume 2: especially Jubilees (second century B.C.),\textsuperscript{3} Psalms of especially the former, have been reworked by later scribes. Andersen saw several similarities of note between Matthew and 2 Enoch. He observes that apart from similarities to Jude and 2 Peter, 2 Enoch comes closer in language and ideas to Matthew than to any other part of the New Testament. Thirteen similarities are to be found in the margin of the translation of 2 Enoch, but most of the references are slight. See also Nickelsburg, \textit{Jewish Literature}, 185-88.

\textsuperscript{1} 4 Ezra, referred to as II Esdras in the Apocrypha, consists of 7 visions which Ezra is said to have seen in Babylon. According to most scholars, the original Jewish document known today as 4 Ezra was composed about A.D. 100, perhaps in Palestine. The important apocalyptic section of the book consists of chapters 3-14. We can see a number of similarities in thought and diction between Matthew and 4 Ezra: 23:37 (1:30), 25:34 (2:13), 24:1 (5:2), 13:43 (7:97), 4:7 (13:31), 24:7 (15:15), 22:14 (8:3), but it is difficult to demonstrate direct dependence on the Scriptures upon 4 Ezra. It would be also unlikely that Matthew knew 4 Ezra. The time frame does not fit well with that conclusion, rather it is more reasonable the assume that most of the close citations probably came from Christian redactors. Granger, 132. Cf. Nickelsburg, \textit{Jewish Literature}, 287-94; B. M. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," in \textit{OTP}, 1:517-24; Jacob M. Myers, \textit{1 and II Esdras}, The Anchor Bible vol. 42 (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1986), 107-30.


\textsuperscript{3} The Book of Jubilees derives its name from the fact that it divides history into periods of 49 years. It is generally agreed the work belongs to the second century B.C. The writer of Jubilees thought that the era of the Messianic Kingdom had set in. There is detailed description of the Messianic woes (23:13,14,18,19,22). It is possible that
Solomon (first century B.C.),¹ Pseudo Philo (first century A.D.),² and Life of Adam and Eve (first century A.D.).³ This selection is justified by the following considerations:

1. The fourteen apocalyptic works contain apocalyptic language and motifs found in Matt 24:27-31.

2. It is generally agreed that the dates of this literature spanned from 200 B.C. to A.D. 100. The dates are generally appropriate for the purpose of this study, even though the dates of some sections are not clear or are later than that of Matthew. Exact chronological order is not as crucial as logical order because sometimes the later literature more strongly reflects the earlier motifs.

"Paul and the authors of Luke, James, Hebrew, and 2 Peter were familiar with the expressions and ideas" in Jubilees: O. S. Wintemute, "Jubilees," in OTP, 2:49; cf. Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature, 73-79.

¹ The Psalms of Solomon as a whole do not belong to apocalyptic literature, but because of Ps 17, they are included. It is generally agreed that the writing belongs to the middle of the first century B.C. because 2:30-35 refers to the death of Pompey in 48 B.C. The original language is now generally recognized to be Hebrew. See Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, 195; R. B. Wright, "Psalms of Solomon," in OTP, 2:639-70.

² D. J. Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," in OTP, 2:299: "We can establish 135 B.C. as the earliest possible date for the composition of the work and the latest possible date is around A.D. 100. A date around the time of Jesus seems most likely."

³ M. D. Johnson, "Life of Adam and Eve," in OTP, 2:252. "The most natural span for the original composition would be between 100 B.C. and A.D. 200, more probably toward the end of the first Christian century. The Greek and Latin text were produced between that time and A.D. 400."
3. The passages of the literature have an apocalyptic and eschatological nature.

The Qumran Literature\(^1\)

It is important also to consult the Dead Sea Scrolls because members of the Qumran community believed that they were the last generation, living on the very edge of the end time.\(^2\) The most sustained and extensive picture is given in the War Scroll, which is a description of the final war at the end of the age.\(^3\) The characteristic features of their communal life resulted from an eschatological exegesis of the Old Testament. In a similar way, the eschatological

\(^1\)All quotations of the Qumran literature, unless otherwise indicated, are from Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 3d ed. (New York: Viking Penguin, 1987), but the numbering of columns and lines follows Sommer's. See A. Dupont-Sommer, *The Essene Writings from Qumran*, trans. G. Vermes (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1973).

\(^2\)The Messianic Rule (1QSa) begins with the words: "This is the Rule for all the congregation of Israel in the last days." See also Michael E. Stone, *Scripture, Sects and Visions: A Profile of Judaism from Ezra to the Jewish Revolts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 67. Michael Stone describes such a notion as follows: "The Dead Sea Covenanters lived under a strong feeling of the imminence of the end. This eschatological tension was so high that they felt that their own community lived in a sort of anticipation or prolepsis, a bridging as it were of the gap between this age and the age to come."

\(^3\)The "War Scroll" tells in detail the final military struggle, calculated to last 40 years, of the sons of light against the children of darkness, who in the seventh and last battle are finally defeated by the sons of light. See Yigael Yadin, ed., *The Scroll of the War of the Son of Light Against the Son of Darkness*, trans. from the Hebrew by Batya and Chain Rabin (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 5-387.
expectations of the Qumran people were also deeply rooted in biblical traditions.¹ Because the Parousia signs, however, were not the main concern of their eschatology, we do not anticipate finding many parallels in the Qumran texts. It is a paradox that the writings collected by the eschatological community do not discuss the Parousia signs or the coming of the Messiah on the clouds from heaven.²

After exhaustive study, W. D. Davies concluded that the Qumran literature does not offer an important background to Matthew's Gospel, but he accepts the possibility of an indirect relationship between them.³ After studying the relationship between the Qumran community and Matthew, Akio Ito raises a question about the possibility of an indirect relationship. He concluded that it is more likely that Matthew and the Qumran community belong to a broadly apocalyptic stream of Judaism of the time, because one cannot find anything, in Matthew, distinctively characteristic of the Qumran literature.⁴


conclusion of his book *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, well illustrated how the Qumran literature relates to the New Testament.¹ According to his conclusion, the two bodies of material are essentially different in various perspectives.² Most of all, the eschatological teaching of Jesus and the early Church can be seen in perspective against the eschatology of the Qumran community. But this does not mean that we must ignore the Qumran literature; on the contrary, we can profitably study the Qumran writings to understand better the New Testament concept.

The New Testament³

Five books in the New Testament have passages mentioning the Parousia signs. It is not clear whether any of them was the source of Matt 24:27-31, if the Gospel of


²Ibid. LaSor concludes: (1) The two bodies of material are essentially different in historical perspectives. There is little or no historical material in the Qumran texts. There is much historical material in the Gospels. (2) The eschatological teaching is different from each other. (3) It seems reasonable that the two movements were independent.

Matthew was written before A.D. 70.¹ However, the importance of the other New Testament writings is not necessarily that they were sources for Matthew, but that they are witnesses to the same or similar tradition.

The Synoptic Gospels

Mark 13 is well known as the "Little Apocalypse."² The eschatological teaching of Jesus is recorded in Matt 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. Most scholars maintain that Matthew generally follows Mark in his Gospel, and his version of the discourse is manifestly closer to the Markan than the Lukan. Luke has re-edited the discourse considerably, referring almost the entire sermon to the siege and fall of Jerusalem.³ If we focus only on the Parousia scene, it is possible that Matthew followed the frame of the Markan Parousia scene, but enlarges it to double the length.

The Pauline Epistles

The similarities between the Pauline writings and the Olivet Discourse have been debated. There are two main

¹Robert H. Gundry, Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), 8. There has been much debate about the date of Matthew. Gundry gives a reasonable discussion. Since he believes that Luke depends on Matthew and Luke-Acts was completed not later than A.D. 63, he proposes that Matthew must be still earlier. Considering all the evidence, the 60's are the most likely decade for Matthew's composition.

²On the "Little Apocalypse" theory, see p. 4 n. 1.

³Rewak, 931.
streams of interpretation of the relation: (1) Paul's dependence on Matthew and (2) Matthean dependence on the Pauline writings. M. D. Goulder suggests that Matthew's eschatology is in many places clearly dependent on Paul. The Thessalonian teaching is closely followed in Matthew.1 On the other hand, other scholars propose that Paul used Matthean materials. D. A. Carson observes that the Discourse itself is undoubtedly a source for the Thessalonian Epistles.2 J. B. Orchard claims that the Matthean and Pauline passages have a common thread of thought and a similar development, and concludes that the two Epistles to the Thessalonians are reminiscences of the eschatological discourse of Christ as reported in the Synoptic Gospels, especially St. Matthew.3 Hartman4 and

1Goulder, 70, "The evidence for a direct link from Paul to Matthew, according to Goulder, may be described as massive. In the development of anti-Pharisee polemic between Rom 2, 1 Thess 2, and Matt 23, of eschatology between 1 Thess 4-5 and Matt 24-25; and of the doctrine of the apostles between Eph 2 and Matt 16-18, the evidence even for a documentary link is strong. . . . Nothing is likelier than that Matthew possessed the substance of the Pauline teaching, and nothing would be more natural than that he should make it a part of the doctrinal basis of his midrash."

2Carson, 489: "If so, then we may say that Jesus Himself sets the pattern for the New Testament eschatology."


4Hartman, 178-205.
G. H. Waterman¹ take a similar position. David Wenham's argument is in the middle.² Although we have no solid evidence to believe that Paul had access to Matthew's Gospel, it is likely that Paul had access to the same oral or written traditions which Matthew later incorporated in his Gospel before Paul's mission in Thessalonica.³

If we compare the Matthean Parousia signs with those of the Pauline writings, we can find that it is not easy to assert Paul's dependence on Matthew or Matthean dependence

¹G. H. Waterman, "The Sources of Paul's Teaching on the Second Coming of Christ in 1 and 2 Thessalonians," JETS 18 (1975): 105-13. Waterman refers to 24 terms and motifs common to the Synoptic and Paul's writings: Parousia, the Lord Himself, from heaven, the angels, the trumpet, the survivors, clouds, to meet the Lord, the time of Christ's coming, the Day of the Lord, thief in the night, sudden destruction, labor pains, no escape for the unprepared, sons of the Light, watch, the danger of sleeping, the danger of drunkenness, salvation, power and glory, gathering the saints, the apostasy, the antichrist, and the preaching of the Gospel as a testimony to all nations. He concludes that the words of Jesus as recorded by Matthew were the source of Paul's teaching because there is a greater amount of material parallel to Matthew's account than to either Mark's or Luke's.

²David Wenham, "Paul and the Synoptic Apocalypse," in Gospel Perspectives (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 2:345-75. After studying parallel groups, he concludes that Paul's traditions have links with Synoptic Gospels, and that his closest links seem to be with Matthew or M. But he holds that the linkage is not the same thing as proving that the traditions antedate Paul.

³Ford, 198-99. It is possible that the early church specially cherished not only the record of the Passion and the Resurrection, but also traditions regarding the Parousia. From the beginning these would have been circulated orally, and probably also in written form, to inspire and maintain hope among those who longed to behold their absent Lord.
on Paul. There are four passages in 1 and 2 Thessalonians which refer to the Parousia: 1 Thess 4:13-18; 5:1-11; 2 Thess 1:7-12; and 2:1-12. The first passage mentions only two of the six Matthean Parousia signs: trumpet and clouds. The other three passages deal with the thief motif and the man of lawlessness. In 1 Cor 15:52-58, Paul describes the scene of the advent of Christ, but he uses only one Parousia sign, the sound of trumpet, emphasizing the resurrection of the saints.

In conclusion, therefore, it is not clear whether Paul was influenced by Matthew's writing or visa versa, if one focuses on the Parousia signs.

Revelation

It is generally agreed that the Book of Revelation was written after Matthew.\(^1\) Therefore Revelation can not be a source of Matt 24. However, it is true that it also reflects earlier aspects of the apocalyptic tradition.\(^2\) The similarity between Matt 24 and Revelation in regard to form and content cannot be ignored. In both cases, the Church in a hostile world is warned of trials and calamities.


\(^2\)On the relation between the Gospels and Revelation, see Louis A. Vos, *The Synoptic Traditions in the Apocalypse* (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, 1965), 54-208.
ahead, and encouraged by the promise of the coming of Christ.¹ A very striking similarity exists between Matt 24:27-31 and Rev 1:7 in the motif of Christ coming on the clouds and that of the tribes' mourning, a motif which does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. Rev 6 has been generally considered as an extended interpretation of the Olivet Discourse. John is following the pattern of wars, famine, and pestilence found in the Synoptic Apocalypse.² Especially in the sixth seal (Rev 6:12-17), we notice a distinct parallel with the Matthean Parousia scene.³ R. H. Charles has carefully examined the relation of the two chapters and has presented a strong case for the dependence of Rev 6 on the eschatological discourse.⁴ Rev 6 reproduces almost all the signs of Matt 24.⁵ Especially

¹Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Future, 238. But Beasley-Murray observes that, unlike the eschatological discourse, Revelation makes no provision for delay before the breaking of the final woes upon the world.


³Rev 6:12-13: "When he opened the sixth seal. . . . there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale."


⁵Gospel: Matt 24:14; (Rev 6:1,2); War: Matt 24:6,7,10; Mark 13:7,8,12; Luke 21:9,10,16,25; (Rev 6:5,6); Famine: Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11 (Rev 6:5,6); Pestilence: Luke 21:11 (Rev 6:7,8); Persecution: Matt 24:9,10; Matt 10:17-22;
the cosmic signs of Rev 6:12-13 are described in very similar language. On the whole, it seems to be a reasonable assumption that John knew the eschatological discourse and used it in the construction of Rev 6.¹

The Rabbinic Literature

As is well known, the rabbinic writings are all post-New Testament, and are often written in conscious polemic against Christianity. Hence, the evidence they present may be considered as a witness to an independent chain of interpretative tradition of the apocalyptic vocabulary.

To search possible earlier traditions preserved in the rabbinic writings, I have examined the apocalyptic vocabulary in that corpus. However, one finds only a few passages dealing with the end-time signs, in spite of its vast materials.² I discuss here primarily the earlier


¹Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Future, 240.

²A. J. Saldarini, "Apocalyptic and Rabbinic Literature," CBQ 37 (1975): 348: "Scholars have long been perplexed by the absence of all but the smallest amounts of apocalyptic imagery in rabbinic literature of the first two centuries A.D. . . . How much did the rabbis know and read apocalyptic? Did they merely avoid it or strongly reject it?" Saldarini explains that as the canon of the Hebrew Bible was finally fixed between the middle of the first century and the middle of the second: "the apocalyptic literature is usually seen as being excluded from the canon
classic works of rabbinic literature (Targum,1 Midrash,2 Mishna,3 and Talmud4), except for a few outstanding cases in the later literature for the following reasons: (1) since Apocalyptic themes are not central to rabbinic literature, only a few allusions that reflect the Old Testament are found, and (2) since the rabbinic literature was written after the New Testament, it cannot be the main stream of my study. 

at this time. This rejection, according to this line of reasoning, explains the absence of apocalyptic imagery in Tannaitic literature and the failure of the rabbis to produce apocalyptic books alongside their legal works and to preserve older apocalyptic works in the original language. Louis Ginzberg proposes, interpreting P. T. Sanh 10:1 (28a), that only the public reading and study of certain texts was forbidden, but that private study was allowed: see Louis Ginzberg, "Some Observations on the Attitude of the Synagogue Towards the Apocalyptic-Eschatological Writings," JBL 41 (1922): 129. However, the reason why rabbinic literature deemphasizes apocalyptic and eschatological speculation can be assumed. It was its association with the disasters of A.D. 70 and A.D. 135. Furthermore, reasons are stated or easily inferred from the passage in B. T. Sanh 96b-98a. Much speculation and time-setting had been stimulated by the reading of Daniel, and so we find a rabbi saying (R. Samuel b. Nahmani): "Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the End. For they would say, since the predetermined time has arrived, and yet he has not come, he will never come" (B. T. Sanh 97b). Ironically this proves that people were doing that very thing.

1The Aramaic Bible: The Targum, ed. Kelvin Cathcart et al., vols. 6-12 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1986).
Since Apocalyptic themes are not central to rabbinic literature, the rabbinic literature does not include separate literary works which may be identified as apocalypses. A small amount of apocalyptic imagery is found, however, in the rabbinic literature, although with restricted functions. Since the Mishnah is not an apocalypse, it makes little use of apocalyptic imagery; and the Talmud, as might be expected, contains some expansions and additions. B. T. Sanh 90a-99a contains some valuable materials about the day of the Messiah and the resurrection, even though it is not a coherent apocalypse.

As we have seen above, though all the ancient sources have some terms and motifs of the Parousia signs, it is difficult to define the literary dependence and the source of the Matthean Parousia signs because we cannot find exact verbal parallels. Therefore, I have searched out the sources of the Parousia signs by tracing the motifs and concepts of the apocalyptic vocabulary in the apocalyptic tradition. Chapter 2 first examines the term "Parousia" because it is the subject of the six apocalyptic signs.

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1Craig A. Evans, *Noncanonical Writings and New Testament Interpretation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 121: "Since its concern is primarily legal, one should expect to find in it little historical narrative and little eschatology."
CHAPTER II

THE PAROUSIA IN MATTHEW 24

The purpose of this chapter is to study the term παρουσία which is usually translated in the KJV and RSV by "coming." Before examining the "signs of the Parousia" in chapter 3, it is necessary to begin the search with the study of the term "Parousia," the subject of the signs. In the Gospels, the term Parousia is found only in Matt 24. Matthew uses it four times in chap. 24. In the LXX and the Apocalyptic literature written in Greek, the term Parousia


2There are two parallel terms in Matt 24: τέλος (vs. 14) and ἐρχόμενον (vs. 30).

3Matt 24:3, 27, 37, 39.

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is found only a few times, and most of these carry a noneschatological meaning, with a few exceptions. The term Parousia is also not frequent in the New Testament. It occurs twenty-four times, of which fourteen are in Paul's writings. Now some questions arise. What is the meaning of the Parousia in the Matthean context? Why did Matthew use this rare term so much in a single chapter? What is the function of the term in the context of Matt 24?

First of all, one step might trace the history and concept of the term itself to determine the intrinsic nature of the Parousia. Since the term is not used in the LXX and other Apocalyptic literature with an eschatological meaning, it is reasonable to think that Matthew adopts the meaning of the term from the usage of his contemporary linguistic milieu.

The usual meaning of the word παρουσία in Greek is that of presence, and by implication, arrival. It is one of the great contributions of modern scholarship to enable

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1 In the LXX: Jdt 10:18; 2 Macc 8:12; 15:21; 3 Macc 3:17; In the Apocalyptic literature: TAb(A) 2:5 and TLev 8:15 22:2 use the term as the meaning of "presence." TAb(A) 13:4,6 and TJud 22:2 use the term to describe coming of God.

2 Matt 24:3,27,37,39; 1 Cor 15:23; 16:17; 2 Cor 7:6,7; 10:10; Phil 1:26 2:12; 1 Thess 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess 2:1,8,9; Jas 5:7,8; 2 Pet 1:16; 3:4,12; 1 John 2:28.

3 Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1992), 1343: (1) presence, of persons, (2) arrival or visit, of a royal personage, (3) occasions, (4) official visit, and (5) in the New Testament, the Advent.

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us to understand what the first-century Christians thought when they read the term Parousia in the Gospel of Matthew. According to Adolf Deissmann, the Parousia was a technical expression for the arrival or visit of the king or emperor from the Ptolemaic period down into the second century A.D.\(^1\) The corresponding Latin term is adventus. The cities of Corinth and Petras struck advent coins commemorating the visit of Nero. They bear the inscriptions Adventus Augusti.\(^2\) In Greece a new era was reckoned from the Parousia of the Emperor Hadrian.\(^3\)

A decree was issued in a city of the kingdom of Pergamum because of a triumphal entrance of a king, Attala III (138-3 B.C.), and the decree laid down the order of the reception ceremony into the city.

As he approaches the city, all the crown-bearers of the twelve gods, and of the god-king Eumenus, will take their crowns, while the priests and priestesses will open the temples of the gods and offer incense. . . .

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\(^2\)Ibid., 373. Here we have corresponding to the Greek Parousia the Latin word advent, which the Latin Christian afterwards simply adopted.

\(^3\)Ibid., 368: "In Greece a new era was reckoned from the Parousia of the Emperor Hadrian, that all over the world advent-coins were struck after a Parousia of the emperor, and that we are even able to quote examples of advent sacrifices."
All the citizens shall go out to meet him, and all the women and young girls, the whole populace wearing white garments and crowns. It shall be a feast day.\(^1\)

We might also include the description of Titus' entry into Antioch that Josephus gives us in his Jewish War:

The people of Antioch, on hearing that Titus was at hand, through joy could not bear to remain within their walls until, but hastened to meet him, advanced to a distance of over thirty furlongs, not only men but crowd of women and children also, streaming out from the city. And when they beheld him approaching, they lined the road on either side and greeted him with extended arms, and invoking all manner of blessings upon him returned in his train; but all their acclamations were accompanied by a running petition to expel the Jews from the town.\(^2\)

In the first-century language milieu, therefore, the Parousia was above all a coming of a king and a feast for the people. A new era began in Greece with the Parousia of the Emperor.\(^3\) Matthew's use of the term Parousia four times in a single chapter suggests that Matthew exhibits a joyful expectation of the event so designated.

It is not enough to know the contemporary meaning of the Parousia. Although Matthew uses the contemporary language, the Parousia of Matt 24 has not only a first century secular background, but also a background in the Old Testament. Therefore, the following section traces the

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\(^2\)Josephus *The Jewish War* 7.110-3.

\(^3\)Deissmann, 368.
concept of the term from the Old Testament to the rabbinic literature in order to clarify its meaning.

The Old Testament Background

The LXX does not use the term παρουσία in the eschatological sense. It occurs four times in those apocryphal books that were originally written in Greek, but always in a secular sense. Therefore we cannot trace the eschatological meaning from the vocabulary itself. Nevertheless, the idea is there, for from the earliest times the Old Testament speaks of the coming of God. πάρειμι occurs in the LXX over seventy times. It means "to come," and this affects παρουσία accordingly.

Theophany in the Old Testament

As a background to Matthew's use of Parousia, it is necessary to study the Old Testament theophanies because Matthew describes the second coming of Christ in theophanic language in Matt 24:27-31. T. F. Glasson points out how the


2Oepke, "παρουσία, πάρειμι," 5:861-62: The coming of God in direct self-attestation and in the cultus (Exod 20:24); the coming of God in history (Isa 19:1; 30:27); the coming of God as world King (Deut 33:2, 26); the coming of the Messiah (Zech 9:9; Dan 7:13).

3Ibid.
motif of Parousia is deeply rooted in Old Testament theophany.¹

The phenomena of theophanies of the Old Testament are of many different forms and kinds. A very rich and varied terminology gathers about the theophanies. Nowhere is the imagery and symbolism more profuse, more impressive, and wide-ranging than in theophany.² There is no consistent form of appearance; it changes from one occasion to the next. Ernst Jenni enumerates a threefold differentiation of the coming of God in the Old Testament: (1) Offenbarungs-begegnung (revelational encounter), (2) die kultische Vergegenwärtigung Gottes (God's cultic

¹Glasson, The Second Advent, 167-87. Glasson maintains that many passages of the Old Testament declare that at some future time Yahweh will descend in glory from heaven to destroy His enemies or to judge the world: this Advent is in some cases preceded by tribulation and followed by the Lord's reign. He observes that these passages draw their imagery as a rule from the manifestation at Sinai, which may be described as the original Theophany.

²George A. F. Knight, "Theophany," ISBE, 4:827-31. The term "theophany" is not a biblical word. It derives from the Greek word θεοφανεία, which is a compound of the noun θεός and the verb φανείν (to appear, to make manifest). There is no Hebrew equivalent for this term. God manifests Himself, and the Unknown One condescends to make Himself known. He comes, He appears, He descends, and history is punctuated by the divine arrivals; Marcea Eliade, Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return, trans. W. R. Trask (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1959), 104-7. In his book Eliade has properly grasped their significance in the history of religion: "The God of Jewish people is no longer an Oriental divinity, creator of archetypal gestures, but a personality who ceaselessly intervenes in history, who reveals his will through events. Directly ordered by the will of Yahweh, history appears as a series of theophanies, negative or positive, each of which has its intrinsic value."
visualization), and (3) Gericht und Heil (for judgment and salvation).¹ The first group includes accounts of God's coming to converse with a particular person (e.g., Num 12:4-5), whether directly or through a messenger, or a dream (e.g., Gen 20:3; Num 22:9). The second and third groups deal with theophany to the community as a whole (e.g., Exod 19; Num 16:19). It should be noted that in the first group, the theophanies appear "without introduction, without preparation, without anticipation or expectation."² The main concern of this chapter is the second and third groups.

For a better understanding of the conception of the Parousia in Matt 24, it is necessary to explore briefly some Old Testament theophany passages. The most important passage is that of the theophany on Mount Sinai, setting the pattern for many other theophanies.³ The appearance of Yahweh is accompanied by natural phenomena, which include "a thick cloud," "flashes of lightning," "thunders," "a very loud trumpet blast"⁴ as well as "the smoking," "fire," and

³Exod 19:16-25 is the first occurrence of theophany unless one goes back to creation.
⁴The shofar is first mentioned in Exod 19:16 at the Sinai theophany.
"the great quaking of the whole mountain." It is associated with the manifestation of the terrible majesty and power of God. The Sinai theophany also serves as a confirmation of the making of the covenant between God and Israel (Exod 19:5-8). Therefore the ancient Israelites considered the Sinai event as the fundamental act of God's self-disclosure. They were hoping that through God's grace this event might become again a powerful reality for the life of the nation. Accordingly, this hope was "revived and revised in Jewish literature over and over again." Therefore it is significant that similar terms and motifs of the Sinai theophany are used to describe the Matthean Parousia scene.

The Sinaitic theophany left its impress upon many other parts of the Old Testament, notably upon the poetry on ancient Israel. The theophany in the Psalter employs imagery that is reminiscent of the antecedent theophany on Sinai. The same traditional language, such as glory, lightning, thunder, and earthquakes, is also used to

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2O. Betz, 89.
describe theophanic appearances of God in Pss 18:7-15,\(^1\) 50:3-4,\(^2\) and 97:1-6.\(^3\)

The prophets also picture Yahweh's coming to judge and to save in the vivid colors of a theophany. If the Sinai narrative tells of a "revelation of Yahweh in the past," the theophany passages in the Psalter speak of a "coming of God in the present," and the prophets announce

\(^1\)Peter C. Craigie, *Psalm 1-50*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 19 (Waco, TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1983), 171; Arthur Weiser, *The Psalms* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), 189. Ps 18 may be called "a royal song of thanksgiving." The title verse indicates that the song was sung on the day of deliverance. The theme of this Psalm is the theophany for the salvation of the king. The depicted language is reminiscent of the Sinai theophany. His Coming evokes the earthquake, smoke, and storm, which are all characteristic elements of Yahweh's theophany. The description of one riding upon clouds and wind is associated with a powerful storm. The Psalmist's intention was to declare that when the Lord came for His deliverance the came with power and glory, and creation was subject to its Master.

\(^2\)Cf. Glasson, "Theophany and Parousia," 259. Ps 50 begins with a description of the future advent: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him" (vs. 3). The purpose of this theophany is revealed in vs. 4: God comes "that he may judge his people." It is the theophany of judgment. Vss 4 and 6 indicate that it is in order to judge that He comes. It is significant to find that He not only judges but also calls, "Gather my saints together unto me" (vs. 5).

\(^3\)In Ps 97:1-6, there is a mixture of thunderstorm and earthquake imagery. In vs. 2, Yahweh is enveloped in "clouds" and "thick darkness," which are clearly reminiscent of Yahweh's theophany on Mount Sinai (Exod 19:9,16; Deut 4:11). Lightning flashes lightened the world; the mountains melt like wax before the fiery descent of Yahweh. These are characteristic elements of theophanic descriptions.
the "appearance of God in the future."\textsuperscript{1} Five theophany passages are the most significant in the prophets.\textsuperscript{2}

In Isa 30:27-28, the prophet describes the coming of God with the traditional language and imagery of theophany. Strong theophanic language is used to picture the wrath of the approaching God to Assyria.\textsuperscript{3} Isa 66:15 presents another theophanic prediction.\textsuperscript{4} Yahweh appears as the Divine Warrior to execute judgment. Here the glory of restored Israel (66:10-14) is contrasted with the judgment of the wicked.

Micah (1:3-4) announces that Yahweh is coming to earth in awful majesty in order to punish the sin of Israel which lies in the capital cities of Samaria and Judah.\textsuperscript{5} Habakkuk describes the coming of the Lord as a warrior riding on a horse and driving the chariot of victory (3:3-

\textsuperscript{1}Joseph Ahn, 88.

\textsuperscript{2}Isa 30:28-33, 66:15-16; Mic 1:2-7; Hab 3:3-15; and Dan 7:13-14.

\textsuperscript{3}Dense clouds of smoke, a consuming fire, and a rushing torrent.

\textsuperscript{4}Isa 66:15: "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire and his chariots like the storm wind to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire."

\textsuperscript{5}In Mic 1:4 the prophet describes the cosmic effect of God's appearance in terms of "the thunderstorm, earthquake, or volcanic eruption."
11). The Lord thus comes to judge the wicked and to save the righteous.¹

Though Dan 7:13 may not be classified as a theophany passage in terms of the coming down of God from heaven to the earth, it is an important background to the Parousia of Matt 24:27-31.² Suddenly, with the clouds of heaven, one like a Son of Man approached the Ancient of Days. The term "clouds of heaven" is typical theophany language, and is vital to understanding the relation between Dan 7:13 and Matt 24:27-31 because only Daniel uses the vocabulary νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ in the LXX, and only Matthew uses νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ in the Olivet Discourse of the Gospels (Matt 24:30).³

¹The prophet also illustrates the effects of the divine manifestation: the mountains are shattered; they sink and writhe; the waters rage; the sun and moon stand still; the nations tremble. The purpose of this manifestation is made known in Hab 3:13: "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, for the salvation of thy anointed. Thou didst crush the head of the wicked, laying him bare from thigh to neck."


³However, it should be noted that the Son of Man is led to the throne of the Ancient of Days, and does not come down to earth as in Matthew. But Gundry suggests that we can understand nothing else than that "He comes earthward to receive the dominion over the earth which is now to be taken from the beasts and given to him, and to exercise that dominion upon the earth with the saints. Jesus' interpretation of Dan 7:13 as a descent by an eschatological,
In sum, two ideas are expressed in the theophany motif seen in the Old Testament: the coming forth of Yahweh and the reaction of nature at His coming. More important than the form in which Yahweh comes is the purpose for which He comes. The passages we have considered provide the answer: Yahweh comes for the punishment of the wicked and for the deliverance of His people. Thus the concept of theophany in the Old Testament is important for understanding the Parousia in Matt 24. The descent of Yahweh with signs provides the characteristic pattern of the description of the advent of Jesus in the New Testament.

Beasley-Murray concludes:

The supremely important matter is that God comes into the world, now in the present and in the future. . . . When the eschatological perspective is added to the historical dimension, the concept of theophany stands for the coming of God into the world for the revelation of His glory and accomplishment of His purpose for the world He has made.1

The Day of the Lord in the Old Testament

The Day of Yahweh concept associated with a theophany motif is also an important key for understanding the Parousia of Matt 24 because three out of six Parousia

Messianic figure is not to be rejected"; Robert H. Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope (Leiden: E. J. Brill, Publishing Co., 1982), 233. The accompaniment of the clouds in His appearance serves to give the figure a sense of majesty and seems to imply that the origin of the figure may be celestial rather than earthly.

1Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Kingdom of God, 10.
signs in Matt 24:29-31 are the characteristic signs of the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament. It is significant to realize that the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament is not a date but an event.\(^1\) The prophets used the phrase "the Day of Yahweh" (יְהֹウェָה הָיָה)\(^2\) to designate "the impending decisive intervention of God in various momentous historical events of the past, future and imminent time."\(^3\) The day foreshadows an eschatological day of Yahweh at the end of time.

The Day of the Lord in the Old Testament is "a day of punishment" (Isa 10:3), a day of the "wrath of the Lord" (Ezek 7:19), "a great day of the Lord" (Zeph 1:14), "the day of judgment" (Isa 26:21; Amos 5:18-21), and "the day of gathering" (Isa 11:10-16; 27:13; 56:6-8).\(^4\) It was regarded as a day of calamity for sinful Israelites as well as for Israel's enemies. Generally, the concept of the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament is dark and foreboding.\(^5\) One of

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\(^1\)Ibid., 11.

\(^2\)The term appears only in prophetic texts: Isa 2:12; 13:6,9; 22:5; 34:8; Jer 46:10; Ezek 7:19; 13:5; 30:3 Joel 1:15; 2:1,11; 2:31; 3:14; Zeph 1:7,14-18; Obad 1:15; Zech 14:1; Mal 4:5.

\(^3\)E. Jenni, "Day of the Lord," IDB, 2:784.

\(^4\)In the New Testament Paul picked up this theme for eschatological use and applied it to the event of Jesus' Parousia.

\(^5\)Joseph Ahn, 146. According to his analysis, all of the 11 Day of Yahweh texts are in the context of prophetic doom oracles. Six of them are against Judah/Israel (Amos 5:18-22; Isa 2:12; Zeph 1:7-2:3; Ezek 13:1-6; Joel 1-2; Mal
the characteristics of the Day of the Lord is that the heavenly bodies are darkened when the time for final judgment comes upon the nations.¹

The oldest passage in the Old Testament in which the Day of the Lord occurs is Amos 5:18-20. Amos clearly "attacks the hope of those who already anticipate its coming."² Several passages in Isaiah are important in this connection.³ Isa 13, an oracle against Babylon, is a typical example of prophetic representations of the Day of the Lord.⁴ In describing the "day of the Lord," the prophet says: For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising and the moon will not shed its light (Isa 3:13-24) and five are against foreign nations: Babylon (Isa 13:2-16), Egypt (Ezek 30:1-9), Edom (Obad 15-21), and all nations in general (Joel 3-4; Zech 14:1-21).


²James Luther Mays, Amos (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), 103. The prophets asks: "Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord! Why would you have the Day of the Lord? It is darkness, and not light" (5:18). Thus, the Day of Yahweh is the day of judgment for Israel instead of a day of light because she has transgressed against the Lord and broken His covenant. The punishment for the breaking of the covenant is the curse of darkness.

³Isa 11,13,18,19,24,27,34.

⁴The Day of Yahweh affects the whole cosmos. The earth becomes a desolation (Isa 13:9), and is shaken out of its place (Isa 13:13). Cosmic signs appear in heaven, as the sun, moon, and stars are darkened and the heavens tremble. The darkening of the heavenly bodies becomes a characteristic feature in descriptions of the final judgment.
Here Isa 13:10 contains the very same imagery which is employed in Matt 24:29. Although the mode of expression in Isaiah is somewhat different from that in Matthew,\(^1\) the fundamental idea is the same, namely the extinction of light. Isa 34 is the other possible background of Matt 24:29-31. It tells of the Lord's anger against all nations at the day of vengeance (34:1-15), yet the prophecy is actually against Edom. The cosmic accompaniment of Edom's judgment is even more marked than in that against Babylon.\(^2\)

The Day of Yahweh as "the day of clouds" is seen also in Joel 2:2-31. It is obvious that the theme of the Day of Yahweh dominates the Book of Joel (1-2).\(^3\) In Joel 2:11, the Day of Yahweh is characterized as "great and very terrible."\(^4\) The Day of Yahweh is also a major motif in Zephaniah.\(^5\) The author is called "the prophet of the Day of the Lord" because the description of the universal and

\(^1\)In Isa 13:10, the darkening of the heavenly bodies is related to the judgment of the sinners (Isa 13:9), but Matt 24:29 focuses on the coming of the Son of Man.

\(^2\)Isa 34:4: "All the host of heaven shall rot away, and the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall fall, as leaves fall from the vine, like leaves falling from the fig tree."


\(^4\)Joel 2:10-11: "The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. . . . For the Day of the Lord is great and very terrible."

\(^5\)Ralph L. Smith, 131.
oppressively near Day of the Lord is most detailed in his prophecy.¹

Three characteristics should be noted in the "Day of the Lord" motif: (1) the darkening of the heavenly bodies, (2) the terror of the sinners, and (3) the restoration motif. First, the word "darkness" (אֵלֶ֖ל) is familiar to us from Amos 5:18, 20, Zeph 1:15, 17, and other "the Day of the Lord" passages.² In those verses darkness is a curse against sinners. Second, the Day of the Lord is the judgment day for sinners. The terrors of the Day of the Lord are described in various passages (Amos 5:18; Isa 2:10, 12; 26:21). It will be the day of mourning for the wicked, not only for Israel³ but also for the Gentiles.⁴

Third, it is noteworthy that the Old Testament views the Day of the Lord not only as a destructive judgment, but also as constructive salvation and restoration. The prophets who

¹Zeph 1:7-14; 2:2-3; 3:8. The prophet announces the nearness of the Day of the Lord (1:7), and portrays the Day of Yahweh as "the Day of wrath." It is characterized by distress and anguish, ruin and destruction, darkness and gloom, clouds and thick darkness, and trumpet blast and battle cry (1:15-16).


³Jer 4:8; 6:26; 9:10; Zech 12:10-14.

⁴Mourning of Babylon (Isa 13:1-22), mourning of Moab (Isa 15:3), mourning of Tyre (Ezek 27:31), mourning of the Ammonites (Jer 49:3), and mourning of the wicked people (Isa 65:13).
emphasize the darkness of the Day also produce the message of salvation.¹

If we put together the various signs of the theophany and the Day of the Lord, the following picture of the Parousia in the Old Testament emerges: The Lord will descend from heaven and His descent is linked with fire, earthquake, lightning, thunder, cloud, trumpets, and darkening of the heavenly bodies. His people will be gathered; the tribes will mourn; there will be judgment. But these will become the signs of salvation to the elect of God. It is significant that we find the same signs and a similar picture in the Matthean Parousia scene (Matt 24:29-31), though there is a different structure and emphasis. If the Old Testament is the main background of Matt 24:27-31, these two motifs of the Old Testament are the important elements to understanding the Matthean Parousia scene.

¹The assurance of the final salvation of the remnant is promised emphatically in Zephaniah (3:12-20) who prophesied a "day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation" (Zeph 1:14-15). This theme of the final coming of God for the purpose of judgment and salvation is developed at length by other Old Testament prophets such as Hosea (2:21-23), Isaiah (2; 11; 13; 27; 56), Micah (4:1-5), Jeremiah (30:8-11; 50:30-33), Ezek (11:17-21), Joel (1:15-20; 2:1-11,30-32; 3:1-21), and Zechariah (2:10-11; 14:1-21).
The Parousia in the Apocalyptic Literature

Apocalyptic literature is full of expectation of the imminent end when God will come to rule and judge, though some of these are not to be classified as theophanic compositions in the Old Testament style. "The Day of the Lord" of the Old Testament is "the Day of Judgment" of the Apocalyptic literature.¹

The Day of the Lord is the Day of Judgment in 1 Enoch.² The coming of God for judgment is portrayed in vivid color in 1 En 1:3-9. It is parallel to Exod 19:16-20, but connects with the Day of Judgment.

The holy Great One will come forth from his dwelling. And from there he will march upon Mount Sinai and appear in his camp emerging from heaven with a mighty power. . . . And great fear and trembling shall seize them unto the ends of the earth. Mountains and high places will fall down and be frightened. And high hills shall be made low; and they shall melt like a honeycomb before the flame. And earth shall be rent asunder, and all that is upon the earth shall perish. And there shall be a judgment upon all, (including) the

¹Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel: From Its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah, trans. by W. F. Stinespring (New York: Macmillan Co., 1955), 278. According to him, "the Day of Judgment" is more often called "the birth pangs of Messiah." The meaning of these words is not the pains and suffering of the Messiah Himself, but the pains and tribulations of the Messianic age.

²The writer of 1 Enoch declares the imminent, inescapable judgment which will befall sinners. He warns of "the day of judgment (98:8)," "the day of destruction," "the day of the great judgment," and "the day of anguish and great shame" (98:10). After describing numerous types of sinful actions (94:2-9), the writer clearly points out "the day of darkness," and "the day of great judgment" which the sinners will meet. It is the "day of burden and tribulation" (45:2).
righteous. And to all the righteous he will grant peace. He will preserve the elect, and kindness shall be upon them. . . . Behold, he will arrive with ten million of the holy ones in order to execute judgment upon all (italics mine).¹

Some of the significant texts in which the Son of Man concept is found is the Similitudes of Enoch, 1 En 37-71.² "The Son of Man" is characterized at great length.³ But He is never said to come in the clouds of heaven in the glory of a divine theophany.

Five passages in the Greek text have the term προσωπικός. In TAb(A) 2:5 and TLev 8:15, it is used as "presence." In TJud 22:2, Judah says that his rule shall be terminated by men of alien race, until the salvation of Israel comes, until the coming (προσωπικός) of the God of righteousness. The passages exhibiting the closest parallels to Matt 24:27-31 are found in TAb(A) 13:3-6.

For God said, "I do not judge you, but every man is judged by man." On account of this He gave him

¹1 En 1:3-9.

²The second section of 1 Enoch, known as the Similitudes (chaps. 37-71), is found only in the Ethiopic version, which for a long time was the only version known. But 11 different Aramaic fragments of 1 Enoch were found at the Qumran caves, and none of them had this section in which the Son of Man doctrine is set forth. It is now believed by some to be a Christian addition. See LaSor, 104; J. T. Milik, The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragment of Qumran Cave 4 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1976), 4.

³He is pictured as a divine, pre-existent being (48:3; 62:7), His function is the judge (46:4-6; 62:3-11; 69:27; 69:29), He is called also "His [God's] Anointed" (i.e., the Messiah—48:10; 53:4). The main function of this heavenly Son of Man is to share with God in the inauguration of the kingdom.
judgment, to judge the world until His great and glorious Parousia (ἡς μεγάλης καὶ ἐνδόξου αὐτοῦ παρουσίας). . . . And at the second Parousia they will be judged by the twelve tribes of Israel (italics mine).

Even though in two instances, the Parousia indicate the coming of God, this is the judgment scene, not the glorious coming of the Messiah. In the second judgment, all living creatures will be judged by the twelve tribes of Israel. Furthermore, there is no clear evidence that the dates of TAb(A) are earlier than that of Matthew.

4 Ezra 4:33-5:20, composed about A.D. 100, provides a parallel with Matt 24. By comparison, we can see striking similarities and differences in the Parousia concept between the New Testament and the Apocalyptic literature. If we accept that 4 Ezra was composed about A.D. 100, perhaps in Palestine, the similarities between 4 Ezra and Matthew would be explained. The writer of 4 Ezra might know the Gospel


2 Nickelsburg, The Testament of Abraham, 40: "Perhaps we are dealing here with a combination of the motif of the righteous judging their enemies and the picture of Israel exalted over the nations."

3 It has been suggested that the first two chapters of 4 Ezra (5 Ezra) is a Jewish apocalypse which has been subjected to Christian interpolation. See Graham N. Stanton, "5 Ezra and Matthean Christianity in the Second Century," JTS 28 (1977): 67-83.
tradition. However, there are significant differences between them. In 4 Ezra the confusion and judgment continue after the cosmic upheaval, whereas in Matthew the confusion (24:29a) and the mourning are over (24:30a), and the new hope and salvation begins (24:30b-31). The darkening of the heavenly bodies is a part of the confusion and judgment.

*4 Ezra 4:33-5:13*

How long are we to remain here? And when will come . . . the harvest of our reward? Now concerning the signs: Behold, the days are coming when those who dwell on earth shall be seized with great terror. . . . Unrighteousness shall be increased. . . .

And the sun shall suddenly shine forth at night and the moon during the day. Blood shall drip from wood, peoples shall be troubled and the stars shall fall. . . . There shall be chaos also in many places, and fire shall break out. . . . and all the friends shall conquer one another. . . . These are the signs which I am permitted to tell you.

The most outstanding difference is that the coming of the Son of Man is not found in the Apocalyptic literature. In Matthew, the confusion and signs are not only judgment, but rather they sharpen the focus on the bright coming of the Son of Man. The Parousia of the Son of Man will terminate all mourning and will begin a new order.
(gathering the elect) with the victorious trumpet call (Matt 24:31).

In 4 Ezra, the Messiah is identified as a divine redeemer figure. As J. H. Charlesworth points out, this is the only place in the Pseudepigrapha to state that the Messiah shall come and die. The Messianic age is only a period of transition to the world to come (7:11-14, 18, 112). The end of this world and the beginning of the world to come is the Day of Judgment, which will come after the advent of the Messiah. This may be why the mode of the Messiah's coming is nowhere described in 4 Ezra as a glorious descent from the sky with an angelic retinue.

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1He is pictured as a divine, pre-existent being (48:1; 62:7), dwelling in heaven with the Lord of Spirits (46:1-3.). His function is the judge (46:4-6; 62:3-11; 69:27; 69:29), vindicator of the righteous (48:4; 62:12; 71:17), universal ruler (62:6; 71:15-17), and object of worship (48:5; 62:9). He will sit on God's throne and pour forth all the secrets of wisdom and counsel.


34 Ezra 7:112-14: "This present world is not the end; the full glory does not abide in it; But the day of judgment will be the end of this age and the beginning of the immortal age to come, in which corruption has passed away, sinful indulgence has come to an end, unbelief has been cut off, and righteousness has increased and truth has appeared."
4 Ezra also emphasizes the "attack of the nations in the Days of the Messiah, and in connection with this ingathering of the exiles and the return of the ten tribes."\(^1\)

The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch, usually known as 2 Baruch, is probably dated A.D. 100.\(^2\) Only two verses have any bearing on the question of the Messiah's coming: 29:3 and 30:1. After a time of terrible tribulation, the advent of the Messiah is described in 29:3: "And it will happen that when all that which should come to pass in these parts has been accomplished, the Anointed One will begin to be revealed." However, the time of the Messiah is limited. After the Messiah's departure in glory, the resurrection of the righteous will occur. 2 Bar 30:1 describes the return of the Anointed One.\(^3\) The word "return" suggests that the Messiah previously has been on the earth. But this passage has been regarded as a Christian interpolation.\(^4\) Therefore, there is no "coming of the Son of Man from

\(^1\)Klausner, 363.

\(^2\)Klijn, 1:616. According to Klijn, the relation with 4 Ezra is significant. If 2 Baruch is dependent on 4 Ezra, a date around A.D. 100 is probable. If 2 Baruch is later than 4 Ezra, because it appears to show an advanced stage of theological development, the Apocalypse of Baruch seems to come from the first or second decade of the secondary century.

\(^3\)2 Bar 30:1: "And it will happen after these things when the time of the appearance (Syriac, m'tyt'; Greek, ἀναπαύσιος) of the Anointed One has been fulfilled and he returns with glory, that then all who sleep in hope of him will rise (30:1)."

\(^4\)Glasson, The Second Advent, 232.
heaven" in the Apocalyptic literature, except for the possible Christian interpolation.

In sum, there is no clear concept of the Parousia in the Apocalyptic literature. The concept of the theophany and the Day of the Lord in the Apocalyptic literature are: the day of judgment, the day of suffering and tribulation, and the day of destruction. Only the righteous would be free from the coming judgment.

The Qumran Literature

The Qumran community had a strong sense of living in the end-time. The Qumranians did look for the coming of the Messiah, and they expected the end of the age and the judgment of God. However, its messianic concepts were not clearly developed. A number of scholars, however, find two Messiahs in the Qumran texts: the Messiah of Israel, or Davidic Messiah, and a Messiah of Aaron, or priestly Messiah. The "Messiah of Israel" is mentioned in the Messianic Rule (1QSa 2:14, 27), and the Blessing of Jacob

1LaSor, 100-102, 1QS 9:11; 1QSa 2:11-23.

2LaSor, 94. The Qumran writings speak of a "Day of Revenge" (1QS 10:19), a "Day of Slaughter" (1QH 15:17), a "Day of Judgment" (1Qp Hab 13:2-3).

3LaSor, 105.

41QSa 2:14: "And then [the Mess]iah of Israel shall [come], and the chiefs of the [clans of Israel] shall sit before him, [each] in the order of his dignity, according to [his place] in their camps and marches."
The expression of "the Messiah of Aaron and Israel" was found in the Manual of Discipline. The Teacher of Righteousness is perhaps the most similar figure to the Messiah. The Habakkuk Commentary from the Dead Sea Scrolls (1QpHab) speaks of the Teacher of Righteousness seven times. His name is unknown. He was a priest to whom God made known "all the mysteries of the words of His servants the prophets." He was pursued by the Wicked Priest to the house of his exile, and "at the time appointed for rest, for the Day of Atonement, he appeared before them to confuse them, and to cause them to stumble on the day of Feasting, their Sabbath of repose." However, there is no statement that the Teacher of Righteousness or the Son of Man will come on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. LaSor is correct when he

14QPBless 2:5: "Whenever Israel rules there shall [not] fail to be a descendant of David upon the throne. For the ruler's staff is the Covenant of kingship, [and the clans] of Israel are the feet, until the Messiah of Righteousness comes, the Branch of David."

2IQS 9:11: "But shall be ruled by the primitive precepts . . . until there shall come the Prophet and the Messiah of Aaron and Israel."


41QpHab 7:4-5.

51QpHab 11:4-8.
observes: "There is no statement that his followers waited for him in groaning and travail or in hope; there is no indication that the last judgment is connected with his return."¹

Perhaps one of the best examples of the theophany representation occurs in the third Thanksgiving Hymn of the Qumran community.²

For God shall sound His mighty voice, and His holy abode shall thunder with the truth of His glory. The heavenly hosts shall cry out and the world's foundations shall stagger and sway. The war of the heavenly warriors shall scourge the earth; and it shall not end before the appointed destruction which shall be for ever and without compare.³

The "mighty voice of God," "thunder," and "shaking of the foundation" are the typical language of the theophany of the Old Testament.

One of the unique points of the Qumran community is the expectation of wars in the end-time. The nature of the war is described in The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness (1QM),⁴ wherein it is made clear that the course of the war is wholly in the hands of God and wholly

¹Lasor, 236.
²Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Kingdom of God, 42. He proposes that the most overwhelming representation of the coming of God in all this literature is that which occurs in the third Thanksgiving Hymn of the Qumran community.
³1QH 3:34-36.
⁴Yadin, 1-252.
determined by Him. At the end, God and His angels join the Sons of Light to gain the final victory, and the result is the glory of God and the salvation of Israel (1QM 19:1-13).

In sum, it is noteworthy that the tendency of the Apocalyptic literature and the Qumran writings stress the destructive effects of the divine intervention in the world at the last day rather than the coming of the Lord as an event. Nevertheless, the hope of the apocalyptists was undoubtedly directed to the coming of God to abolish evil and to establish righteousness in the world.

The Rabbinic Literature

In the rabbinic literature, the expression "the Days of the Messiah" is frequently interchanged or confused with "the World to Come." There is but one criterion for keeping these two concepts distinct. The messianic age is not the end of all human life on earth: it is a period of "transition to the last judgment, the resurrection of the dead, and the New World." This fact may explain the reason why the rabbinic literature has few signs of the Parousia.

Some references in rabbinic writings seem to refer to the Messiah's descent on the clouds. Midrash Rabbah

1Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Kingdom of God, 42.
2Klausner, 420.
3For a detailed study, see chapter 3.
Num 13:14 comments on "one like unto a son of man," citing Dan 7:13. In B. T. Sanh 98a, the Son of Man is described as the One coming with the clouds of heaven. B. T. Sanh 96b-97a called Messiah Bar Nafle (the son of clouds). Tanhuma Toledoth 6:20 describes the Messiah as Anani (man of the clouds). All these instances seem to be messianic applications with the cloud motif, considering Dan 7:13. But it is highly doubtful that they mean the divine Messiah coming from heaven on the clouds.

In summary, the evidence shows that references to a messianic descent in the rabbinic literature are very rare indeed, and occur only in relation to Dan 7:13. There is no clear indication in the rabbinic sources, as far as our knowledge of them goes, that the Messiah will be a divine Son of Man who comes down on the clouds amid the cosmic signs, with glory and great power. This confirms that the Parousia is a "Christian doctrine."¹

The Parousia in the New Testament

In the New Testament, μετάφωσις became a technical term to describe the return of Jesus.² The term Parousia

¹Glasson, The Second Advent, 245.

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does not appear frequently in the New Testament. It occurs twenty-four times, of which fourteen appear in Paul.¹

In the Gospels we find it four times only—in Matt 24.² In the Johannine writings, the word appears only in 1 John 2:28. The term does not occur in Acts, but the first primitive community clearly expects the Parousia (Acts 1:11; 3:20-21; 10:42; 13:33). In the New Testament, the word is not limited to Christ's coming in glory—it can also be used in connection with the "coming" of a person,³ and even with the "coming" of the man of sin (2 Thess 2:9). But it obtains a special significance when it is used for the coming of the Lord: the Parousia, His manifestation.

This expectation of the coming of the Lord, and what accompanies it, is one of the "most central and powerful motifs of Paul's preaching."⁴ In seven cases Paul uses, in reference to Jesus, the term Parousia, which had already acquired a technical designation for the second coming of

¹Matt 24:3,27,37,39; 1 Cor 15:23; 16:17; 2 Cor 7:6, 7; 10:10; Phil 1:26 2:12; 1 Thess 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess 2:1,8,9; Jas 5:7,8; 2 Pet 1:16; 3:4,12; 1 John 2:28.
²Matt 24:3,27,37,39.
³Coming of Stephanas in 1 Cor 16:17; coming of Titus in 2 Cor 7:6; coming of Paul in Phil 1:26; 2:12. Of particular interest is 2 Cor 7:6-7.
Christ. In five of these instances, it is joined with the word "Lord," Κυρίος.\(^2\)

The Parousia is also closely associated in the New Testament with the motif of the Day of the Lord. Evidence of the continuing importance of this concept in the New Testament is seen wherein the New Testament frequently refers to "the Day," sometimes by itself and at other times with a variety of complements.\(^3\) Paul frequently uses the Day of the Lord concept to designate the second coming of Christ. He combines the two ideas (the Day of the Lord and the second coming of the Lord) in 1 Cor 1:7.\(^4\) In the Thessalonian letters (1 Thess 4:15-5:11; 2 Thess 2:1), "the

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\(^1\) Cor 15:23; 1 Thess 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess 2:1, 8.

\(^2\) 1 Thess 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess 2:1. We find it 3 times in 2 Peter (1:16; 3:4,12), and twice in Jas 5:7.

\(^3\) "That day" (Matt 7:22; 24:36; 26:29; Mark 13:32; 14:25; Luke 10:12; 17:31; 1 Thess 5:4; 2 Tim 1:12,18; 4:8); "the day of judgment" (Matt 10:15; 11:22,24; 12:36; 2 Pet 2:9; 3:7; 1 John 4:17); "the day" (Matt 25:13; Luke 17:30; Rom 2:16; 13:12; 1 Cor 3:13; Heb 10:25; 2 Pet 1:19); "His day" (Luke 17:24); "the last day" (John 6:39,40,44,54; 12:48); "the day of the Lord" (Acts 2:20; 1 Thess 5:2; 2 Thess 2:2; 2 Pet 3:10; 1 Cor 5:5); "a day" (Acts 17:31); "the day of wrath" (Rom 2:5; Rev 6:17); "the day of redemption" (Eph 4:30); "the day of visitation" (1 Pet 2:12); "the day of God" (2 Pet 3:12); "the great day" (Jude 6; Rev 16:14). Paul uses long terms: "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" in 1 Cor 1:8; "the day of the Lord Jesus" in 2 Cor 1:14.

\(^4\) 1 Cor 1:7: "As you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ; who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (italics mine)."
coming of the Lord" and "the day of the Lord" are also equated. Therefore it is clear that "the day of the Lord" in Paul is simply the traditional Day of the Lord of the Old Testament.¹

One of the outstanding developments of the Parousia concept is found in the epistles to the Thessalonians.² The Parousia (1 Thess 4:13-18) is introduced primarily to comfort the persecuted Christians at Thessalonica. Paul comforts and encourages the suffering congregation by focusing their attention on the not-yet-fulfilled final intervention of God in Christ (1 Thess 2:19). This is the main purpose of the letter.³ The foundation for hope in the Parousia is set in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection of the dead believers and the meeting with the Lord in the clouds are highlighted at Paul's Parousia (1 Thess 4:15). At the end of time, the man of lawlessness will be revealed (2 Thess 2:1-3), but the

¹Robinson, Jesus and His Coming, 18; Henry M. Shires, The Eschatology of Paul in the Light of Modern Scholarship (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), 65. Shires proposes that Paul's basic understanding of the Parousia is not derived from any messianic speculation. He observes that it may not even reflect the teaching of Jesus as reported in the Synoptic Gospels, and that the ground for Paul's concept seems to be the Old Testament expectation of the Day of the Lord. But he does not explain why Paul is silent about the signs of the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament.

²Cerfaux, 58; Joseph Ahn, 180-243; Hartman, 178-295; Moore, 92-174.

³Hartman, 181.
Lord Jesus will slay him by His appearing and His Parousia (2 Thess 2:8).

Striking parallels emerge with the eschatological parables of Matthew: the day will come like a thief (24:43), we must prepare for it by watching (25:13), and we must practice charity (24:45-9). The differences are that Matthew uses six Parousia signs, but Paul uses only two. Furthermore, Paul does not mention the cosmic signs, the most important sign of the Day of the Lord.

Jas 5:7-8 also refers to Christ's Parousia, and admonishes the faithful to be patient until the coming of the Lord. 2 Pet 1:16 emphasizes that the Parousia of Jesus Christ is not a fable. Mockers will come in the last days and ridicule the promise of His Parousia (3:3-4). Believers should wait for and hasten toward the Parousia of the day of God (3:12).

In conclusion, the Parousia of the New Testament inherits the motif of theophany and the Day of the Lord of the Old Testament. It seems that the New Testament writers used the term Parousia or the phrase "Day of the Lord" interchangeably for the same event. Paul took over the Old Testament doctrine of the Day of the Lord and applied it to the Lord's second coming by changing the subject from Yahweh to Christ. In the New Testament, the Parousia is not the

1 The trumpets and the coming of the Lord on the clouds of heaven.

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day of darkness, as in the Apocalyptic literature, but is the day of victory.\textsuperscript{1} The significance of the New Testament Parousia concept is its certainty and its optimism. As we have seen, the concept of the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament and the Apocalyptic literature is rather dark and foreboding. On the other hand, the New Testament idea is "pervaded with the elements of hope and joy and victory."\textsuperscript{2} Though Paul uses the concept of the Day of the Lord, he never uses its specific negative elements: the darkening motif of the heavenly bodies and the mourning of the tribes. He proclaims only glory and expectation of the Parousia of Christ. Christ is the center of the Parousia; and theophany becomes Christophany. This Christocentric conception of the Parousia in the New Testament illuminates our understanding of the Matthean Parousia scene in that Matthew also shared the concept of the Parousia with the other New Testament writers.

**The Meaning of the Parousia in Matt 24**

The word \textit{παρουσία} does not occur elsewhere in the Synoptics, and all four uses in Matthew fall within chap. 24 (vss. 3, 27, 37, 39). It seems that Matthew uses the four

\textsuperscript{1}In 1 Cor 15:51-56, like that in 1 Thess 4:15-17, the description of the Parousia is concerned especially with the resurrection of the dead. Christ's resurrection is eschatological, the prelude to the drama which will reach its conclusion at the Parousia. The Parousia will be described in the light of victory over death.

Parousia passages in Matt 24 intentionally. If this is so, from where does Matthew take the term Parousia and the motif? What is his purpose and what is the function of the term in the structure of Matt 24? These are the basic questions of this section.

Since we found that the term is not used in the LXX and other Apocalyptic literature with an eschatological meaning, it seems that Matthew adopted the meaning of the term from the usage of his contemporary linguistic milieu. As we have studied, the term Parousia was used in the first century Graeco-Roman world to indicate the coming of the king. Therefore the Parousia of Matthew became a technical term to describe the coming of the Son of Man as in the writings of other New Testament writers.

But, even though Matthew adopted the contemporary language, the Parousia of Matt 24 does not bear only the first-century secular meaning because it is used to describe the eschatological event. Therefore we have traced the concept of the "coming of the Lord" motifs in the apocalyptic traditions. We have studied the Old Testament teaching concerning the theophany and the Day of the Lord because we know that Matthew uses the traditional Old Testament motifs to portray the Parousia. From this study, it is clear that the coming of God and the Day of the Lord form an important background to the Parousia concept in Matt 24. The Son of Man figure of Dan 7:13-14 also influences
the Parousia concept of Matt 24. The essential difference between the Matthean Parousia and the Old Testament motifs is that Christ is the center of the Matthean Parousia. The focus is not on the judgment, but is on the glorious coming of Jesus.

We have found that Matthew shares the Parousia concept with the other New Testament books, but there are also some discontinuities. Paul used the term Parousia fourteen times in his books, but some significant differences are found between Matthew and Paul. Paul uses the Parousia mainly in relation to the resurrection or the physical transformation of the saints, thus emphasizing the human impact. On the other hand, Matthew focuses on the divine glory of the coming of the Son of Man. The signs are important for Matthew to emphasize the certainty and vividness of the coming of the King.

Why does Matthew use the term Parousia four times in chap. 24, whereas Mark and Luke omit it? Beasley-Murray maintains that the chief contribution of Matt 24:27-31 (Mark 13:24-27) to the descriptions of the Parousia in the Gospel is the "clear depiction it gives of the event as partaking of the nature of a theophany."¹ It links the Parousia conception of the New Testament with that of theophany which is the core of the Old Testament hope. Burnett suggests two characteristic points of the Parousia in Matt 24. First,

¹Beasley-Murray, "The Parousia in Mark," 577.
the use of Parousia by Matthew would suggest that Matt 24 is to be understood eschatologically, that is, as a future event.¹ The nearness of His coming is especially emphasized by the word Parousia in Matthew.² Second, it is the "Parousia of Jesus in Matthew." Jesus is the "Son of Man whose future arrival Matthew's community awaits."³ But it is still not quite clear why Matthew uses the term Parousia so frequently (Matt 24:3, 27, 37, 39), and employs such a varied vocabulary to describe the Parousia.

It seems that Matthew adopts the term "Parousia" intentionally because he uses it four times in a single chapter and makes the term the key word for his eschatological structure. Therefore it is significant and important to study the meaning and function of the term "Parousia" in the structure of Matt 24. Without such knowledge, it is difficult to understand Matt 24, especially, the eschatology of the Olivet Discourse, the center of the New Testament eschatology.

Matt 24 begins with the questions of the disciples about the signs of the Parousia. Matt 24 consists of the disciples' question and Jesus' answer to them, and His answer is composed of two parts containing the term

¹Burnett, 219.
³Burnett, 219.
"Parousia." The term Parousia is the key word in the main structure of Matt 24. It becomes clear how important this term is to understanding Matt 24 as a whole and 24:27-31 in particular, if we carefully notice the Parousia passages.

Table 1.—The Four Parousia Passages in Matt 24

I. The questions of the disciples (24:3)

A. πότε ταύτα ἔσται καὶ (24:3a)
B. τί τὸ σημεῖον τῆς (1) σῆς παρουσίας (2) καὶ συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος (24:3b)

II. The answers of Jesus (24:4-51)

A. The signs of the close of the age (4-26)
B. The signs of the Parousia (27-31)

οὕτως ἔσται ἡ παρουσία τοῦ ὦλου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (27)
C. The time of the close of the age (32-35)
D. The time of the Parousia (36-51)

1. οὕτως ἔσται ἡ παρουσία τοῦ ὦλου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (37)
2. οὕτως ἔσται ἡ παρουσία τοῦ ὦλου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (39)

The first mention of the Parousia (24:3) is significant. The key to Matthew’s understanding of the entire discourse is provided by the noting the difference from Mark in Matt 24:3. Whereas in Mark 13:4 the disciples asked Jesus, "Tell us when will this be, and what will be the sign when these things are all to be accomplished?" in Matt 24 the disciples asked Jesus, "Tell us, when will this
be, and what will be the sign of your coming (παρουσίας)\(^1\) and of the close of the age (συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος)." 

What did the disciples ask Jesus? Did they have in mind one,\(^2\) two,\(^3\) or three questions?\(^4\) It is possible that in the disciples' mind the destruction of the temple is linked to the close of the age and the Parousia. The destruction of the temple represented a major crisis for Judaism. Therefore, for the disciples, the announcement of the destruction of the Temple is not that of a disaster but of the judgment and the end of this age.\(^5\)

Nevertheless, it seems that Jesus in Matthew wanted to differentiate the signs and times of the Parousia from those of the close of the age by using the term Parousia. Matthew makes "explicit what was implicit and what Jesus recognized as implicit in their question."\(^6\) What is,

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\(^1\) Burnett discusses in his book, *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia*, 112-218, how Matthew's redaction of Matt 24:3 shows his concern for the future Parousia of Jesus as Son of Man, and for the events which will precede it. According to him, in Matt 24:3, Matthew is no longer addressing the destruction of the temple. He suggests that it is to be understood eschatologically, that is, as a future event.

\(^2\) Question on the destruction of the Temple

\(^3\) Questions on the Parousia and the close of the age

\(^4\) Questions on the destruction of the Temple, the Parousia, and the close of the age


\(^6\) Carson, 497.
then, the difference between the συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος and παρουσία?

Παρουσία and συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος

In Matt 24:3, παρουσία and συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος are both governed by a single definite article. Does it mean that they are the same event? It is true that if a second article does not occur, there is no sharply different aspect of the person or phase of the subject.1 Therefore some scholars observe that the "Parousia" and the "close of the age" are descriptions of the same event.2 R. T. France holds that position. He maintains that συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος could refer to the conclusion of any era (not necessarily the final one), and the destruction of Jerusalem is its beginning. Accordingly, Parousia has the same nature.3 Eduard Schweizer,4 Fred Burnett5 and Robert


2France, 337.

3Ibid.


5Burnett, 223: "συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος means the eschatological end of history for Matthew which will be inaugurated, not by the destruction of the temple, but by the Parousia of Jesus as Son of Man."
Mounce\(^1\) also propose that both events belong to a single unit. Therefore the Parousia signs herald the consummation, the final judgment.

But other scholars distinguish the Parousia from the close of the age.\(^2\) Several reasons support this interpretation:

1. The absence of the article on συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος does not necessarily mean that παροσία and συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος are the same event. According to Greek grammar, sometimes groups more or less distinct are treated as one for the purpose in hand and hence use only one article:\(^3\) e.g., Luke 14:3, τοὺς νομικοὺς καὶ Φαρίσαιους; Mark 15:1, τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ γραμματέων; Acts 23:7, τῶν Φαρίσαιων καὶ Σαδδουκαίων. They are different in nature and function, but belong to one group in a broad sense. This phenomenon is more frequent in examples where a genitive occurs:\(^4\) Phil 1:19, τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως καὶ

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\(^2\)Puller, "The Olivet Discourse," 158; Rand, 213: "Two signs are called for by the questions of the disciples in Matt 24:3: the sign of the coming of Christ and the sign of the end of the age"; Carson, 497: "Parousia is closely tied with Jesus' glorious 'appearing' or 'coming' at the end of human history."

\(^3\)Robertson, 787.

ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (your prayers and help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ; Phil 2:17, τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως (the sacrifice and service of your faith). Τῆς παρουσίας καὶ συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος in Matt 24:3 belongs to this category.

2. It seems unreasonable to claim that the Parousia is the same event with συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος. This interpretation cannot explain why Jesus in Matthew tried to describe the Parousia differently and why the dramatic signs of Matthean Parousia scene are only a herald of the last judgment. Furthermore, the Parousia cannot be a long time span or reoccurring event because of the once-for-all nature of the term, and because of the peculiar structure of the Matthean Parousia scene which is sharply contrasted by the events occurring almost simultaneously. This assumption can be also justified by the fact that Jesus in Matthew intentionally differentiates the Parousia from the other end-time events by using the technical term four times in a single chapter, and that Jesus' answer does not link the Parousia with the close of the age.

3. It seems that the term συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος does not necessarily mean the last judgment.¹ Συντελείας

¹George C. Fuller, "The Olivet Discourse: An Apocalyptic Timetable," WTT 28 (1965): 158. "It was current Jewish belief that the consummation would involve not a single event but a complex of events, perhaps extending over a long period of time. . . . Out of this there arises the suggestion that ΣΥΝΤΕΛΕΙΑ refers to the whole complex of the last days, from the ministry of Jesus until His Parousia."
τοῦ αἰῶνος¹ occurs six times in the New Testament,² and all, except one in Heb 9:26, are found in Matthew.³ In Matthew it is most likely that the phrase looks to the end of the age. However, Jesus made it clear in Matt 24 that some events of this period (συντέλεια) will take place before the Parousia comes.⁴ Heb 9:26 sees the cross as introducing the coming age and thereby marking out συντέλεια τῶν αἰώνων."⁵ Here it is clear that the writer regarded Jesus' life and death as part of the συντέλεια. He stresses that the "saving work accomplished in Christ is itself the event of the end-time."⁶

In conclusion, the Parousia is the last part of συντέλειας τοῦ αἰῶνος in a broad sense because the signs of συντέλειας τοῦ αἰῶνος include all the signs of Matt 24:4-26. That is the reason that both events are governed by one

Cf. Testament of Levi 10:2-4. Here the συντέλεια includes at least the considerable amount of time that would be consumed by the "scattering of Israel."

¹ KJV—the end of the age; RSV—the close of the age.
³ Since Heb 9:26 uses συντέλεια τῶν αἰώνων, συντέλειας τοῦ αἰῶνος is peculiar to Matthew.
⁴ Matt 24:4-26. See Delling, 8:66. "In Matthew it refers to eschatological events which have still to take place (24:3; 28:20)."
⁵ Carson, 497; Heb 9:26, "He has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."
⁶ Delling, 8:66.
definite article, even though the character and functions are different. Nevertheless, it seems that Jesus in Matthew tries to distinguish the Parousia event by using the term Parousia to make the event of the coming of the Son of Man something special.¹

In this outlook, the questions of the disciples are largely composed of two parts, time and sign: (1) When will this be? and (2) What will be the sign of your παροισία and the sign of συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος? Jesus' answer is also composed of two parts: sign and time. Each part is composed of three sections: (1) a general element, (2) the close of the age, and (3) Parousia. In each part Jesus in Matthean distinguishes the Parousia from other elements by using the term "Parousia."

Table 2 clearly shows the symmetric structure of Matt 24. It seems that Jesus answers the disciples' questions in reverse order. First of all, He tells about the signs of συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος (24:4-26), and then about the sign of παροισία (24:27-31). At the end of the discussion, He deals with the time of the end (24:32-51).

¹It seems that Jesus in Matthew distinguishes the two terms, συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος, which means the close of the age, and παροισία, which is the coming of the Son of Man. In other words, it seems that He differentiates the signs and time of the Parousia from those of the close of the age.
In the first part (24:4-31), Jesus explains the signs of the close of the age (συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος) and the Parousia. He distinguishes the signs of the two events by using the term Parousia. In the first section, He explains the general signs of the close of the age. There will be wars and rumors of wars, and famines and earthquakes (24:6-7). But all these are only the beginning of the birth-pangs (24:8). There will be tribulation and persecution (24:9-10). Many false prophets and Christs will arise and lead many astray (24:5,11). Then the gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, and the end will come (24:14).

In the second section (24:15-26), Jesus gives a specific sign of the συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος by quoting βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως from Daniel. Scholars have debated...
the interpretation of these passages,¹ but it is most plausible that this section (24:15-26) discusses the specific sign of the destruction of Jerusalem. The contemporary Gospel writer, Luke, interpreted the term ἑλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as the Roman armies encompassing Jerusalem (Luke 21:20). In the mind of the disciples, the destruction of the temple might mean the close of the age. But in Jesus' mind οὐντέλεια is not only the destruction of Jerusalem but also the close of the age, including all the preceding events before the end. Therefore it is possible that Jesus did not separate the destruction of Jerusalem and the close of the age by His prophetic perspective. Of course, the imminent national destruction and the close of the age were two distinct events, separated by a long period of time. However, both events had much in common. Jesus probably blended the description of these two events in Matt 24:4-26. In the fall of Jerusalem the prophetic eyes of Christ saw a microcosm of the destruction of the world. Two lofty mountain peaks² stand out on the eschatological horizon.

¹For further information on the origin and significance of the mysterious ἑλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, see Ford's book, The Abomination and Desolation, 2-314. Chapter 1 of his book shows the importance of this study as acknowledged by many exegetes.

²The destruction of Jerusalem and the close of the age.
In the third section (24:27-31), we find that Jesus in Matthew begins to speak about the sign of the Parousia. Jesus intentionally distinguished the Parousia signs from the other signs by using the same term Parousia (24:27) which the disciples use when they ask the question in 24:3. But the problem is that Matt 24:27 is connected to the preceding verses by ὅπερ γάρ. Can we consider Matt 24:27 as a beginning of a new section in spite of ὅπερ γάρ?

Γάρ is a causal conjunction introducing the reason or cause of what precedes. It is translated as for, since, and therefore. That is why we assume that Matt 24:27 is connected to the preceding verses by γάρ. It seems that Matt 24:27 is not disconnected completely from the previous verses, especially vss. 23-26. Matt 24:27 explains why they do not have to be deceived as described in vss. 23-26. The Parousia signs will be as "unmistakable and as universally visible as a flash of lightning." Thus, mention of the Parousia here is precisely to indicate that it is not to be looked for in the chaotic events of the destruction of Jerusalem, but will be "something of quite a different character." In other words, the particle γάρ here

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1Liddell and Scott, 338.
2France, 342.
3Ibid.
concludes the previous events, and introduces the new one emphasizing the differences.\(^1\)

It is also significant to observe that ὁστερ γάρ occurs two times in Matt 24, and both of them are used to announce the Parousia sign section (24:27) and Parousia time section (24:37).\(^2\) Therefore ὁστερ γάρ concludes the previous events and emphasizes the difference of the nature of the Parousia signs and time.

Thus, by using ὁστερ γάρ, Jesus begins to explain the signs of the Parousia by describing the general character of the Parousia (Matt 24:27). He states why the disciples should never pay attention to any false rumors or reports regarding the second coming of the Son of Man. When He comes, no person will miss it. For as "the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man (24:27)."

In the next part (Matt 24:29-31), Jesus in Matthew illustrates dramatic and vivid scenes composed of six

\(^1\)The idiomatic usage of "ὁστερ γάρ . . . οὐτος" is also used to compare two events: Matt 12:40, "as Jonah was . . . so will the Son of Man"; Matt 13:40, "Just as the weeds are gathered . . . so will it be at the close of the age; Matt 24:27, "as the lightning comes . . . so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

\(^2\)One of the most important features of the Parousia usages in the structure of Matt 24 is that Jesus uses the technical term Parousia at each significant point when He wants to distinguish the Parousia from other eschatological events. Wherever He uses this term, we realize that He is dealing with none other than the Parousia itself. This is the key to understanding the structure and meaning of Matt 24.
Parousia signs. They are not only visible, but also audible; no one can escape these scenes. This part (24:29-31) is the climax of whole Parousia chapter and is the main theme of the present study.

Εὐθέως δὲ μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν (24:29)

The Matthean Parousia scene (24:29-31) begins with one of the difficult problems of this Parousia passage, "immediately after the tribulation (Εὐθέως δὲ μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν)." The Parousia certainly did not come immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, unless we interpret the Parousia signs symbolically. Various suggestions are offered to solve the problem. Lenski wants to retranslate εὐθέως as "suddenly."¹ Most scholars, such as Fuller, hold to prophetic foreshortening. According to them, two eschatological peaks stood on the horizon, and they appear to be joined "immediately," though as one comes to the first peak, he sees numerous other small peaks and valleys stretching out between the first and the second. From this perspective, the second peak comes immediately after the first peak.²

But the most plausible and reasonable proposal is to interpret the θλίψιν not as the destruction of Jerusalem,


²Fuller, "The Olivet Discourse," 161.
but as the tribulation extending throughout the interadvent age. Thus the signs of the Parousia follow the tribulation "in those days (Mark 13:24)"—the entire interadvent period of Θλίψις.¹

Καὶ τότε (24:30)

The structure of the Matthean Parousia scene (24:29-31) is connected by καὶ τότε. Τότε is an adverb indicating some point in past time or also of a future time.² The Greek term καὶ τότε in Matt 24:30 indicates that the signs will occur subsequently and over a short period of time. The word τότε is a characteristic feature of the first Gospel. Τότε is used by Matthew sixty-one times to carry on a narrative. It is true that τότε does not always have a significant temporal meaning in Matthew. Blass defines that τότε is used as a connective particle to introduce a subsequent event, but "not one taking place at a definitive time."³ But, as McNeil observes, the Olivet Discourse in Matthew supplies some "striking instances in which τότε expresses consecutive action in the future."⁴ The sharp contrasts of the Matthean Parousia scene connected by καὶ τότε and the nature of the signs in Matt 24:29-31 strongly

¹Carson, 505; Hart, 192.
²Robertson, 300; Liddell and Scott, 1808.
³Blass 240.
demonstrate that the events will occur almost at the same
time. **Tóte** found in the parable of the sheep and goat is an
another good example: then the king will say to those at His
right (25: 34); then the righteous will answer (25:37); then
He will say to those (25:41); then they also will answer
(25:44); and then He will answer them (25:45). In order to
make sense, the story must occur subsequently and
simultaneously. Thus, "from the first **Tóte** to the last in
this discourse we are hurried urgently from one climax to
another with intensifying momentum."\(^1\)

The Identity of ἡ συνέλεια

The second part (24:32-51) of Jesus' answer, having
two Parousia passages (24:37,39), is on the time of the end.
After answering about the sign of the **συνέλεια** and **παροσνομα**
of the second question (24:27-31), Jesus in Matthew now
comes back to the first question of the disciples, "When
will this be?" As in the first part, He illustrates (1) the
general character of the end-time element (24:32-33),
(2) the specific time elements (24:34-35), and (3) the
Parousia event as the conclusion (24:36-51). Thus the
parable of the fig tree (24:32-33) is used to explain the
general nature of the nearness of the end-time. A number of
popular writers and some dispensational writers understand
the fig tree to refer to the reestablishment of Israel as a

\(^1\)Ford, *The Abomination of Desolation*, 172.
Walvoord holds this view. But this theory lacks solid scriptural support. Walvoord himself admits that no scriptural text warrants the use of the fig tree as representing Israel. The context in Matt 24 does not refer to the restoration of Israel.

Therefore this lesson of the fig tree (24:32) is based on the common observation that the twigs become tender before summer and bring expectations of summer. Most common trees in Palestine are evergreen except two trees which lose their leaves in winter's rainy season: the almond and the fig tree. The almond's leaves return in early spring; the fig's return in late spring. Thus, the fig tree serves as the "ideal announcement of summer's real imminence." Since summer was the season for harvest in Palestine, the fig tree is a perfect parable to teach that the time is near.

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3Ibid., 22.

4Carson, 506.

In Matt 24:34-35, Jesus sets a specific time limit, "this generation." This passage has been a stumbling block to interpreting the Parousia signs, even though Matt 23:36 suggests that "this generation" indicates the disciples' generation. If "this generation" means the disciples' generation, how can we explain the darkening of the sun and moon, falling of the stars, and coming of the Son of Man on the clouds? Weiss and Schweitzer understood that Jesus made a mistake by adopting the contemporary Jewish messianism. Kik solved the problem by symbolically interpreting all the Parousia signs, and applying them to the destruction of Judaism. Some scholars interpret "this generation" as "race, kind," and propose that Israel will continue to exist until all these things are fulfilled. The other explanation suggests that it means simply "age" or a "period of time" without specifying how long. Some others prefer the interpretation that the generation is not the generation to whom Christ is speaking, but the generation to whom the signs will become evident.

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1Cf. chapter 1, pp. 6-9.

2A. C. Gaebelein and R. C. H. Lenski belong to this group; cf. Lenski, 952.

3Schweizer observes that "this generation" means not just the first generation after Jesus but all the generations of Judaism that reject Him: Schweizer, Matthew, 458.

4Walvoord, 20-32.
Elsewhere in Matthew, however, "this generation" consistently refers to Jesus's contemporaries.1 Furthermore, if we carefully study the symmetric structure of Matt 24, we can see that this passage does not deal with the Parousia, but with the destruction of Jerusalem. According to the structure, this passage does not belong to the foregoing Parousia signs because from 24:34-35, Matthew is talking about the time element, not the Parousia signs. Moreover, he is not yet dealing with the time of the Parousia, because the term Parousia does not appear until vs. 37. The symmetric form of the structure shows that Matt 24:34-35 is the other part of Matt 24:15-26, indicating the destruction of Jerusalem. Accordingly, "this generation" is not related to the Parousia.

Furthermore, πάντα τοῦ θανάτου in Matthew means not the signs of the Parousia, but the signs in Matt 24:4-26. The Greek term πάντα τοῦ θανάτου appears in Matt 24:2,3,8,33,34. Most cases suggest that the term describes the general signs and tribulations, not the Parousia signs. Πάντα τοῦ θανάτου also indicates the processes of the fig tree (24:33). They are underway and progressing. It is illogical to include vss. 29-31, i.e., the darkening of the heavenly bodies, the coming of the Son of Man, and the gathering of the elect as part of "all these things." It is pointless to say, "when you see the Parousia signs, know that it is near," because

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the Parousia signs will occur almost simultaneously. Therefore the more natural way to interpret πάντα τοιαῦτα is to see it as referring to the distress of vss. 4–26, the tribulation that comes on believers throughout the period between Jesus' ascension and the Parousia in general, and the tribulation before the destruction of Jerusalem in particular. This fact explains Jesus' enigmatic statement that "this generation will not pass away till all these things take place," since some of them who heard the Olivet Discourse did indeed see all the tribulation and destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

As Jesus blended the two events in the sign section, it is also possible here that this generation means the last period of the συντέλεια by the prophetic perspective. The events of the immediate period leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem "portend a greater and more universal catastrophe when Christ returns in judgment at the end of time." Robert H. Gundry uses the term "double fulfillment" and Robert H. Mounce uses "multiple fulfillment" to describe this interpretation.

1 Cf. Hart, 211-13; Woolery, 59; Carson, 507.
2 The destruction of Jerusalem and the close of the age.
3 Mounce, Matthew, 228.
4 Gundry, 491.
5 Mounce, Matthew, 228.
In Matt 24:36-51, Jesus at last states the time of the Parousia. Two appearances of the term Parousia testify to this (24:37,39). The time character of the Parousia is clearly expressed in the first sentence that "no one knows, not even the angels of heaven nor the Son, but the Father only (24:36)." Matt 24:37 compares the time of the Parousia with the days of Noah by using the Parousia phrase, οὐτώς ἔσται ἡ παροικία τοῦ οἰκοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. What does the days of Noah mean? Jesus explains that until the moment of their destruction "they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" (24:38).

The fourth Parousia passage (24:39) concludes that they did not know "until the flood came and swept them all away." And then Matthew continues the theme of certainty about the Parousia, yet uncertainty about the time with a group of parabolic sayings: (1) two men will be in the field one is taken and one is left; (2) two women at the mill; (3) two persons—the householder and the thief; and (4) two servants. These provide excellent examples of how Matthew uses the uncertainty of the time of the Parousia to reinforce his moral exhortation to his church.¹

In conclusion, it seems that Jesus in Matthew intentionally used the term Parousia four times in Matt 24 to distinguish the signs and the time of the Parousia from

other end-time signs and times. We cannot miss the Parousia section because it begins with the peculiar term Parousia, and because there is nothing that human elements can do to change the phenomena in the Parousia section. No room is left for man either in the area of signs or times of the Parousia. If we accept this Parousia structure, some problematic verses may be understood.¹

The most interesting point for me is the structure of the Matthean Parousia scene in the second section of the first part. In this sign part, Matthew describes the Parousia most vividly and dramatically by using almost all the eschatological signs and motifs of the Old Testament. Therefore it is important to trace the Parousia signs of Matt 24:29-31, the climax of the Parousia chapter, to understand the Parousia of Matthew.

Careful observation discloses that the Matthean Parousia passage (Matt 24:29-31) is composed of three scenes and six Parousia signs: Scene I, (1) the darkening of the

¹The structure of Matt 24 is composed of two parts: the sign part (4-31) and the time part (32-51). Each part consists of three sections: (1) general character, (2) specific events, and (3) Parousia. According to the structure, the parable of the fig tree belongs to the general character of the time part. Thus we realize that Jesus in Matthew was talking about the general character of the expectation of the end-time, not about a special nation or event. Likewise, since "this generation" passage belongs to the specific event of the time part, we can assume that the passage indicates Jesus' disciples' generation in particular, and the period between the first coming of Jesus and the close of the age in general. If we understand this, we do not need to be confused concerning the eschatological events and times in Matt 24.
heavenly bodies (24:29) and (2) the appearing of the sign of
the Son of Man in heaven (24:30a); Scene II, (3) the
mourning of the tribes (24:30b) and (4) the coming of the
Son of Man on the clouds of heaven with power and great
glory (24:30c); Scene III, (5) the sending of the angels
with the great trumpet call (24:31a) and (6) the gathering
of the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to
the other (24:31b).

Anyone familiar with the Old Testament will
immediately recognize that this is precisely the result of
combining the signs of the Sinai theophany with those of the
Day of the Lord passages. Furthermore, Matthew uses five of
his six peculiar terms when he describes the Parousia. What
is the meaning of the signs of the Parousia in this Parousia
context? What are the functions of the peculiar Matthean
terms in Matt 24:27-31?

The main purpose of this dissertation is to trace
the six Parousia signs in Matt 24:29-31 and to discover
continuity and discontinuity in the use of these terms and
motifs. Therefore, in chapter 3, I attempt to trace the six
terms and motifs which constitute the signs of the Parousia
in Matt 24:29-31.
CHAPTER III


The purpose of this chapter is to trace the six Parousia signs of Matt 24:29-31. It is an attempt to find the root and branches of each apocalyptic motif of the Matthean Parousia signs, and to discover continuity and discontinuity with logically anterior literature. In order to reach the goal, all the apocalyptic terms or word groups of Matt 24:29-31 are studied in the light of the Old Testament, the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, the Qumran texts, the rabbinic literature,1 and the New Testament. The materials are examined chronologically as far as possible.2 After tracing a specific apocalyptic term,

1With respect to chronological order, the rabbinic literature was probably after Matthew, but I have put the rabbinic literature before the New Testament in order to place Matthew as a conclusion at the end of each section.

2It is extremely difficult to set correct dates for the literature. Furthermore, the dates of some literature overlap each other (e.g., the Apocalyptic literature, the Qumran literature, and the New Testament). As I commented in the introductory chapter, exact chronological order is not as crucial as logical order in establishing the trajectory of each item.

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I draw two trajectories\(^1\) of semantic development at the end of each main section, according to the result of the trace. The process of the tracing and its trajectories supplement each other. The former makes the latter, and the latter sharpens the former.

**Scene I (24:29-30a): Disappearing and Appearing of the Signs**

The first scene is the prelude to the whole drama. Suddenly the heavenly illumination disappears, and on the dark background appears the sign of the Son of Man. It is a majestic and impressive introduction to the Matthean Parousia scene.

**Scene Ia: The Darkening of the Sun and Moon and the Falling of Stars**

The first sign of the Parousia in Matt 24:29-31 is the darkening of the sun and moon and the falling of the stars from heaven—the shaking of the powers of the heavens.\(^2\) The language seems to be influenced by Isaiah

\(^1\)Chronological trajectory and logical trajectory.

\(^2\)In the closing statement concerning cosmic phenomena, the evangelists add: καὶ ἄνωθεν τῶν οὐρανῶν σαλτσάνθνα (Matt 24:29; Mark 13:25). Most commentators agree that this seems to be an expansion or summary of what has already been said, the darkening of the heavenly bodies. In Deut 4:19, where 'all the host heaven' includes the previous mention of sun, moon, and stars. The saying is commonly interpreted as implying the break-up of the universe. Luke condenses all these events into "there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars" (Luke 21:25). Cf. Beasley-Murray holds in his book, *A Commentary on Mark Thirteen* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1957) 87: "The phrase sums up the previous three clauses."; John A. Broadus,
(13:10; 34:4) and Joel (2:10,31; 3:15), but there is no actual quotation from the Old Testament. To grasp the meaning and function of the darkening of the sun and moon and falling of the stars in Matt 24:29, I trace first the genealogy of the motifs and then draw the trajectories.

Cosmic upheaval is a standard feature of the signs of the end of the age in the biblical and non-biblical literature.¹ The sun will be darkened, the moon will cease to shine, and the stars will give no light or will fall. Significantly, the cosmic phenomena associated with eschatological happenings regularly include references to the sun alongside those to the moon and the stars. In ancient Israelite life, the sun, moon, and stars also played an important role as signs or omens. The most important sign relating to the heavenly bodies was the darkening of the light. This darkening, or the falling of the heavenly bodies, was regarded as a bad omen because it appeared to

break the natural order and was contrary to the purpose of creation. Sometimes the language of darkening was interpreted as portending divine judgment or impending doom.\(^1\) To trace the roots of the motif, and to understand the context in which the Matthean readers viewed the passage, the meaning of the motif is examined from the Old Testament.

**Old Testament Background**

It is difficult to deal with the sun, moon, and stars separately because they usually occur together in the Old Testament. However, I find that they have somewhat different nuances for the people of Israel when they are darkened. Thus, I first note the sun, moon, and stars separately, and then later combine them.

The sun in the Old Testament

The sun is the first heavenly object mentioned in the Bible. Its creation is described in Gen 1:16. The major purpose of the sun is "to rule the day . . . and to divide the light from the darkness." If the sun is so important to people, what did it mean in Old Testament times when the prophets spoke of the darkening of the sun? Did it mean a return to the primal chaos before the glory of the Creator?

\(^1\) For details about darkness, see Conzelmann, "ΟΚΟΤΟΣ," 7:423-45. Darkness generally denotes the whole range of what is harmful or evil.
First of all, it is helpful to study the role of the sun in the LXX. Table 3 shows that in the Old Testament the term הָלוֹךְ is used literally in many cases. The role of the sun is assigned to time by reference to its rising, setting, and midday heat or daylight.

According to table 3, the similarly frequent usage is the common Semitic idiomatic expression "under the sun" by which Ecclesiastes designates life in the real world.

1 הָלוֹךְ occurs 149 times in LXX to refer to the sun. The term הָלוֹךְ in the LXX is the translation of 10 different Hebrew words, representing 9 different roots: (1) יָסָד, (2) יָשָׁד, (3) יָשָׁב, (4) יָסָב, (5) יָסָב, (6) יָסָב, (7) יָסָב, (8) יָסָב, (9) יָסָב, יָסָב. The most popular term in the LXX, as in the Hebrew Old Testament, is יָסָב. Its 136 occurrences are scattered throughout the LXX.


3 Gen 15:12,17; 28:11; Exod 17:12; 22:26; Lev 22:7; Deut 16:6; 23:11; 24:13,15; Josh 8:29; 10:27; Judg 14:18; 19:14; 2 Kgs 2:24; 3:35; 3 Kgs 22:36; 2 Chr 18:34; Job 2:9. Sunrise marked the beginning of daylight and sunset the beginning of night. The divisions of time marked by sunrise and sunset also played a role in the civil and cultic legislation. Sunset was the deadline for paying the day laborer his wages (Deut 24:15; Lev 19:13). In ritual matters, sunset marked the time after which a person purifying himself was clean (Lev 22:7; Deut 23:11).

4 Exod 16:21; 1 Kgs 11:9; Isa 49:10; 2 Kgs 12:11,12; Neh 8:3; Job 8:16; Ps 57(58):8; Cant 1:6.

5 Eccl 1:1,9,13,14; 2:11,17,18,19,20,22; 3:1,16; 4:7,9,13,15,17,19,20,22; 6:1,12; 8:9,15,17,19,20,22; 9:1,6,9,9,11,13; 10:5,7.
Table 3.—The Roles of the Sun, Moon, and Stars in the Old Testament (LXX)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Moon</th>
<th>Stars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literal meaning</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiomatic (figurative) usage</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object of worship</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign of the Day of the Lord</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The sun is also used in the sense of eternity,¹ and designates the direction east.² The sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies were worshiped throughout the ancient world, but the worship or celebration of the sun was strictly forbidden for Israel. Nowhere in the Old Testament is the sun itself considered to be either divine or an attribute of God.³

¹Pss 71(72):17; 88(89):36.
³In contrast to this idolatrous worship, throughout the LXX the sun is understood to be the creation of God, a heavenly body which rules the day: Gen 37:9; Deut 17:3; 33:14; Josh 10:12,13,13; 15:7,10; 3 Kgs 8:53; 4 Kgs 23:5;
Except for literal and idiomatic usage, the important references to the sun are in expressions which can be described as apocalyptic in tone. Most characteristic is the reference to a darkening of the sun as a prelude to or an accompaniment of the Day of the Lord. In some passages, an impending historical judgment is in view.

The moon in the Old Testament

The term "moon" (σελήνη) usually occurs in combination with "sun" and "stars." In the LXX, the moon is never referred to alone; only twice is the moon referred to apart from the sun, and in both places it is associated with the stars (Job 25:5; Ps 8:3). The use of σελήνη in

Job 9:7; 31:26; Ps 18(19):4; 73(74):16; 120(121):6; 135(136):8; 148:3; Eccl 1:5; 12:2; Isa 38:8; 60:19; Jer 38(31):35; Jonah 4:8. The heavenly orbs here are not divine powers but simply important functional parts of the created order. Jeremiah claims that it is Yahweh "who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night" (Jer 31:35). Ps 74:16 celebrates God's lordship over the creation, including His establishment of "the luminaries and the sun." See also Pss 104:19; 136:8; Job 9:7.

1Darkening of the celestial bodies is the peculiar sign of the Day of the Lord: Isa 13:10; 24:23; 30:26; 60:19; Joel 2:10,31; 3:15; Ezek 32:7; Amos 8:9; Hab 3:11; Mic 3:6.

2Isa 13:10 (Babylon); Ezek 32:7 (Egypt); Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15 (Jerusalem); Mic 3:6 (Jerusalem).

3σελήνη occurs only 9 times and in association with ἅλος in the New Testament. It occurs 31 times in LXX for the translation of the Hebrew word נַבִּים, נַמְפִּים. The term נַבִּים is used in most cases (30 times).

4Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897; reprint, Grand
its literal sense is found twelve times in the LXX. The moon's principal purpose is to rule the night and to give light. Its second important function is to mark seasons, days, and years. Like the sun, the moon is a common symbol of permanence, although its changing phases can also indicate instability (Isa 19:6). The moon's brilliant whiteness symbolizes beauty (Eccl 6:10).

The most important aspect of the moon is its religious element. The religious festivals of the Hebrews, as of many primitive societies, were determined by the lunar calendar. One of the most important aspects of the moon in ancient Israel was the New Moon feast. Every new moon was a special day, with sacrifices being offered and trumpets blown (Num 10:10; 28:11). It is interesting to note that the new moons were determined by observation, not calculation.

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1Gen 37:9; Josh 10:12,13; Job 25:5; 31:26; Pss 8:3; 73(74):16; 120(121):6; 135(136):9; 148:3; Jer 38(31):35; Ps 103(104):19.

2Pss 71(72):7; 88(89):37.


4In ancient Israel, the appearance of the new moon was announced by the Sanhedrin, the highest court, and then broadcast by mountaintop signal fires throughout the land. See Hayyim Schauss, The Jewish Festivals: History and Observance, trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 114-15; T. C. G. Thornton, "Jewish New Moon
As with the sun, the prospect of eschatological judgment and blessing was affected by the light of the moon: (1) in judgment it will be "darkened" (Eccl 12:2; Isa 13:10; Ezek 32:7; Joel 2:10); "confounded" (Hab 3:11); turned into blood (Joel 2:31); (2) in blessing its light will be as the light of the sun (Isa 30:26); the moon will not function as a luminary at night (Isa 60:19); no longer will the moon withdraw itself (Isa 60:20).

As figure 1 shows, some significant facts are found in the motif of the bloody moon. The bloody-moon appears the first time in Joel 2:31, and reappears in the Apocalyptic literature (TMos 10:3-10) and in the New Testament (Acts 2:20; Rev 6:12). It is apparent that the bloody-moon motif was used in the apocalyptic tradition as expression of the seriousness of the judgment.

Figure 1. Development of the bloody-moon motif.

Some interesting phenomena are found in figure 1. Whereas the bloody-moon motif is a common apocalyptic term of the apocalyptic tradition, it seems that Matthew and Mark tried to avoid its use. The reason for Matthew's avoidance is not clear at this point. He apparently wanted to avoid using two catastrophic terms at the same time. The other significant trends found in the diagram are that the later prophets used more apocalyptic or catastrophic terms than did the earlier prophets. For example, although most passages on the darkening motif are found in Isaiah, Isaiah never used the "bloody-moon" motif. It appears first in Joel 2:31. This fact may be an evidence that Isaiah was written earlier than Joel.

The stars in the Old Testament

The words οὐρανός and ὀξυρον are found forty-six times in the LXX. The latter may refer to a constellation, but in the LXX the two words are interchangeable. In the Old Testament, the stars, like the sun and moon, are the heavenly bodies created by God (Gen 1:16). The Hebrews


2They represent 5 Hebrew words: (1) לְפִי, (2) נֵבִי, (3) מָצַק, (4) מָשָׁא, (5) מַיַּש. But in most cases the LXX uses οὐρανός for the Hebrew term לְפִי (39 times).

3Gen 1:16: "And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also." Cf. Gen 1:16; 37:9; Job 3:9; 9:7; Pss 8:3; 135(136):9; 148:3; Isa 45:12; Jer 8:2; 38(31):35.
were especially aware of three characteristics of the stars: their number, their distance or height, and their brightness. The frequent use of both ὁστήρ and ὁστρον in the LXX is in reference to their incalculable number, usually with the descendants of the patriarchs in mind. In relation to their brightness and height, in the Old Testament, stars are symbols of supernatural beings, either of people or of representatives of God's glory and power. Job 38:7 speaks of the morning stars singing together at the creation of the earth. Satan is even called Lucifer,

3Obad 1:4; Jer 28(51):9.
5Num 24:17; Judg 5:20; Job 22:12; 38:7; Isa 14:12; Dan 8:10.
6In various Near Eastern religions, the "morning stars" were venerated as gods and goddesses, esp. Venus. Therefore some commentators interpret the "morning stars" as a reflection of the ancient pagan cults: see Marvin H. Pope, Job, the Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1986), 292; Norman Habel, The Book of Job (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 538. But stars were frequently identified with angels in Jewish tradition (Judg 5:20; Job 38:7; 1 En 18:13,15; 21:3,6; 43:1-4; 86:1-6; 88:1-3). Therefore, in the context of Job 38:1-7, the "morning stars" are not celestial beings but are synonymous with "son of God." In Gen 1:14-19, the stars were created on the fourth day, but here they existed at the initial stages of creation. This fact indicates, as Hartley suggests, that "the morning stars" in this context is primarily a term that
which means bright star of the morning. The battle of the stars against Sisera (Judg 5:20) is interesting imagery, indicating a direct intervention by God in the battle.

In the Old Testament, the eschatological motif of the stars occurs less frequently than does the sun or the moon.

forms a synonymous parallelism with "the son of God," who existed prior to the creation of the earth. See John Hartley, The Book of Job, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 495. The "sons of God" (Job 1:6; 38:7) are the spiritual beings who are serving as God's messengers. The LXX translates "sons of God" as "angels of God (Ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ Θεοῦ)." An interesting translation is preserved in the Qumran Targum (11QtgJob 30:5) which reads: "When the morning stars shone together, and all of God's angels shouted in unison?" See Michael Sokoloff, The Targum to Job from Qumran Cave XI (Jerusalem: Bar-Ilan University, 1974), 87. The intention of the change of the verb "sing" to "shine" may be to avoid saying that the stars, worshiped by the pagans, sing.

According to Isa 14:12, the king of Babylon imagined himself to be the "Day Star, son of Dawn."


Isa 13:10; 34:4; Joel 2:10; 3:15; Ezek 32:7. Only 5 occurrences are found in the Old Testament compared with 11 and 10 occurrences each of the sun and the moon, respectively.

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The darkening of the sun, moon, and stars in the Old Testament

What, then, did it mean for the people in Old Testament times that the sun and moon are darkened and the stars are falling? Where did Jesus get His idea of the darkening of the heavenly bodies? To pinpoint which of the Old Testament texts was Matthew's primary source is difficult, because the Matthean text is not a verbal quotation from the Old Testament. However, some passages in the Old Testament do have the same imagery as Matt 24:29. Gen 1:2 describes the primal chaos before the creation. Darkness was upon the face of the deep.1 In Exod 10:21-23 and Ezek 32:7,8, the darkness of the heavenly bodies is a reference to the judgment on Egypt during the Exodus. Within the context of Ezek 32, the judgment against Egypt was described as darkness which God brings upon them.

When I blot you out, I will cover the heavens, and make their stars dark: I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over you, and put darkness upon your land, says the Lord God (italics mine).2

The vivid imagery of the darkened sun, moon, and stars is used by the prophet to depict the end of the glory of

1Gordon J. Wenham, Genesis 1-15, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1 (Waco, TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1987), 16: "It is just another description of the terrible primeval waste, but it could hint at the hidden presence of God waiting to reveal Himself."

2Ezek 32:7-8.
The significant element in this passage is that the expression "cover" (κάλυψις) is used. It alludes to the darkening not as a celestial disorder, but as God's action to express His majesty and judgment.

The possible parallels of Matt 24:29 are found in Isa 13:10, 24:23, and 34:4. Isaiah sees the Day of the Lord as a time when "the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; and the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light" (Isa 13:10). As David Wenham observes, the word ὁμοθήρεσις resembles Matthew's description, and the description of the moon "not giving its light is also very close to that in Matt 24:29." Isa 24:23 illustrates: "Then the moon will be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem" (24:23). The meaning is literally that the splendor of His light, manifesting His presence, shines so bright that the light of the sun and moon grows pale and is superfluous. In comparison with the glory of Yahweh, the sun and moon must recognize their meaninglessness. The phrase may be a


2David Wenham, Jesus' Eschatological Discourse, 309: "On the other hand, the order in Isa 13--stars, sun, moon--is different from that in the Synoptics; and the picture in Isa 13 is of the sun being dark when it rises, not, as apparently in Matthew/Mark of the sun being turned dark."
"formality used in announcing the throne appearance."\(^1\) Isa 34:4 portrays a day of Yahweh's judgment over the nations:

All the host of heaven shall rot away, 
and the skies roll up like a scroll. 
All their host shall fall, 
as leaves fall from the vine, 
like leaves falling from the fig tree.

Isa 34:4 is significant, though the exact terms (sun, moon, stars) are not found, in that it alludes to the falling of the stars,\(^2\) and that relates to the falling of the leaves from the fig tree.\(^3\) All creation is affected by the sins of the nations and the necessary divine reaction. It is a terrible and horrifying picture. But we should note that it is only a background for the announcement that follows.\(^4\) This fact provides a very important clue to understanding the function of the celestial signs in Matt 24:29-31. The darkening of the heavenly bodies is not a catastrophic upheaval, but a premonitory stage of the main event.


\(^3\)This expression reminds us Rev 6:12-14: "And the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale: the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place."

\(^4\)Watts, Isaiah 34-66, 9. Isa 34:1-4 is only an introduction for Yahweh's judgment toward Edom (34:5-17).
The other Old Testament passages that most resemble the Matthean description are found in Joel. David Wenham illustrates that there is something to be said for the view that the Joel passages were the primary influence, and that the other Old Testament allusions were then drawn in: (1) the Joel passages have the idea of the sun turning dark (2:10, 30), though the actual word σκοτισθήσεται is found in Isa 13:10; (2) the correct order (sun-moon-stars); and (3) the idea of the moon turning dark and the word φέγγος (2:10). 1 The three passages in Joel are associated with the Day of the Lord. Joel 2:10 identifies the darkness of a locust plague as the Day of the Lord. It was God's judgment on Judah for its disobedience. 2 Joel 2:30-31 says:

And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord (Joel 2:30-31).

All of this "dramatic and catastrophic action" heralds Yahweh's coming to deliver the righteous and to judge the wicked. 3 Of interest is the expression that the moon turns into blood. The influence of Joel 2:31 is unmistakable in

1Wenham, Jesus' Eschatological Discourse, 310.

2In Joel, the day of the Lord is a day of darkness and gloom, so fearsome that when God releases his word. Joel prophesies (2:10): the earth quakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. In these terms the prophet sets forth the cosmic "sympathy" with Israel's terror as she confronts unprecedented and unendurable disasters.

3Douglas Stuart, 261.
The failure of the stars to give their light becomes standard apocalyptic language used to describe historical and eschatological judgment.²

Joel 3:14-15 refers to the judgment at the eschaton. The darkness of the eschatological Day of the Lord results in vindication for His people and destruction for those who have oppressed them.³

Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And the Lord roars from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth shake; but the Lord is a refuge to His people, a stronghold to the people of Israel (Joel 3:15).

In Joel, we find an extensive scenario of judgment and an equally extensive scenario of redemption.

As we have seen above, the themes of darkness of heavenly bodies are significant in the Old Testament. As in the Greek world, darkness describes "the whole range of the harmful or evil."⁴ Darkness has its roots in the primal

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¹Rev 6:12: "The sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit."

²Isa 13:10; Ezek 32:7; Joel 2:10; 3:15.

³The prophets proclaim that the day of Yahweh will not be, as the people expect, a day of joy for Israel, but a day of darkness and calamity (Joel 2:2,10; Amos 5:20; 8:9). The eschatological darkness means the final and eternal destruction of the faithless and disobedient. Isa 13:10 portrays a Day of the Lord in which Babylon is judged by the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars. In Isa 30:26, on the other hand, the brightening of the sun and the moon symbolizes God's blessings on His people.

⁴Conzelmann, "ΟΚΟΤΟΣ," 7:428.
chaos which was abolished by the appearance of light on the first day of creation (Gen 1:2,3). Darkness is an expression for captivity (Ps 107:10), evil (Ps 44:19, Job 19:8; 22:10, 30:26), and wickedness (Pss 10:7; 11:2; 74:20; 82:5). Darkness is the "place where the light of God does not shine."\(^1\) When individuals separate themselves from God by disobedience, darkness remains (Ps 107:10). Thus, it became a fitting Old Testament symbol for judgment.\(^2\) But in God's saving activity, He makes use of darkness, as when He sent darkness upon Egypt (Exod 10:22).\(^3\)

By analyzing the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars in the Old Testament, we may conclude as follows:

1. The darkness of the heavenly bodies in the Old Testament is not cosmic upheaval, but the disappearing of the light before the glory of the Creator.\(^4\) It has its roots in the primal chaos which was abolished by the appearance of light on the first day of creation (Gen 1).\(^5\)

\(^{1}\)Hans-Christoph Hahns, "Darkness," DNTT, 1:422.


\(^{3}\)Ps 69:23; Isa 5:30; 50:3; Ezek 30:18; Joel 2:2,3. However, the key to the Old Testament view of light and darkness is faith in God as Great who stands above both. He is not only the Lord of light; darkness also has to bow before Him. God created both light and darkness (Isa 45:7). He causes day to follow night (Ps 104:20).

\(^{4}\)Ezek 32:7,8: "When I blot you out, I will cover the heavens, and make their stars dark: I will cover the sun with a cloud, and moon shall not give its light." Isa 24:23 describes the darkening of the sun and moon as "ashamed and confounded" before the manifesting of God's glory.
Thus it is a premonitory stage before the main event.

2. The darkness of the Day of the Lord is a signal of the day of judgment, and at the same time, a preparative setting for the main event.

3. The later prophets are more apocalyptic than the earlier.

4. On the basis of the above discussion, it is more reasonable to think that the prophets of the Old Testament did not think of the darkening of the heavenly bodies as a mere symbol describing the terrible picture of the Day of the Lord, but expected a literal darkening on the Day of the Lord. Several reasons for this come from this study: (a) the motif is rooted in the real darkness on Egypt in the Exodus events; (b) the darkening of the heavenly bodies in the Old Testament is a premonitory setting of the main event, and therefore must be as literal as that event; (c) since it is not a catastrophic cosmic upheaval, it is a phenomenon possibly occurring repeatedly, without disrupting the cosmic order.

Celestial Signs in the Apocalyptic Literature

The concept of eschatological darkness is emphasized and becomes further catastrophic in later Jewish Apocalyptic
writings. Table 4 shows us that except for a literal and some idiomatic (figurative) usage, the eschatological motif is strong in the Apocalyptic literature in comparison with the Old Testament. Especially, in the case of

1The statistics were obtained from Albert-Marie Dennis, *Concordance grecque des Pseudépigraphes d'Ancien Testament* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1987); James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*; and my own research. On the detailed statistics, see Appendix II.

2Sun: 1 En 14:18,20; 17:4; 18:4; 41:5,8; 69:20; 72:3,11,21,23,25,29,31,33,37; 73:3,6,7,8; 74:6,9,10,11; 75:6; 100:2; 106:5,10; 2 En 11:3,3,4; 12:2; 15:2,2,4; 29:3,6; Sib Or 3:21,93,221,385,494; 4:13,174,191; 5:209,238,258,346,421,512,526; Jub 2:8; 2 Bar 6:1,2,5; 7:1,2,4,5; 8:1,3,4,6,7; 9:8; Tab(B) 4:4,5; TLev 11:4; 18:3,4; TJud 25:2; TNap 3:2; TBen 8:3; Ps Sol 2:11,12; 4:19; 8:8; Moon: 1 En 41:5,8; 69:20; 72:3,37; 73:2,7; 74:3,11,14, 16; 75:6; 78:4,11,13,14; 79:3; 2 En 13:1; 16:1,1,8; 29:3,6; TNap 3:2; 3 Bar 9:1,8,8; Sib Or 3:21,713; 5:361; Jub 2:8; Stars: 1 En 14:8,11,17; 18:4; 43:1; 69:21; 72:3; 75:1,6; 2 En 11:3,3,3,3; 29:6; Sib Or 3:22; 3:334; 4:14 Jub 2:8; 3 Bar 9:1,8,8; TNap 3:2.

3Sun: Sib Or 3:652; LAE 36:1; Jub 8:4; Tab(A) 7:2,3,4,6,8; Tab(B) 7:5,7,9,14,15,16; TNap 5:1,2,3,4; TLEV 4:3; 14:3; TJud 24:1; Moon: LAE 36:1; Jub 8:4; Tab(A) 7:2,5,6,8; Tab(B) 7:5,9; TNap 5:1,2,3,4; TLEV 14:3; Star: Falling Stars (fallen angels): 1 En 18:13,15; 21:3,6; 43:1-4; 86:1-6; 88:1-3; Falling Stars (eschatological events): Sib Or 2:202; 5:17; 8:190-94,341. Messiah: TLev 18:3; TJud 24:1; Others: Jub 8:4; Ps Sol 1:5; Tab(A) 1:5; 4:11; 8:5; Tab(B) 7:8.

stars, more than half of the cases are used in a symbolic or eschatological way.

Table 4.—The Roles of the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars in the Apocalyptic Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Moon</th>
<th>Stars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literal (time, season)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiomatic (figurative)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eschatological upheaval</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To clarify the functions of the sun, moon, and stars in the Apocalyptic literature, I have compared all the idiomatic (figurative) and eschatological usages in Table 5. The literal function of the sun, moon, and stars is not significant for this purpose.

Table 5 indicates that the sun, moon, and stars are used idiomatically in the Apocalyptic literature. They represent the "glory of men,"¹ "hope,"² "prosperity,"³ and "light of Israel."⁴

¹TAb(B) 7:5,7,9,14,15,16.
²TLev 4:3.
³TNap 5:1.
⁴TLev 14:3.
Table 5.— The Functions of the Sun, Moon, and Stars in the Apocalyptic Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Moon</th>
<th>Star</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 En 18:13</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Falling stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:15</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Falling stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:3</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Falling stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:6</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Falling stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43:1-4</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Falling stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 80:1-4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 80:4-8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86:1-6</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Falling stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88:1-3</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Falling stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*102:2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sib Or 2:34</td>
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<td>TAb 1:5</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<td>Figurative</td>
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<td>Figurative</td>
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<td>5:4</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>TLevi 4:1</td>
<td>x</td>
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</tr>
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<td>x</td>
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</tr>
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<td>14:3</td>
<td>x</td>
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</tr>
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<td>18:3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Figurative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*TMos 10:4-5</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Eschatological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TJud 24:1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Figurative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Ps-Philo 19:13</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Eschatological</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- **a** I omit the literal use of the function of the sun, moon, and stars because it is not significant for this purpose.
- **b** "Falling stars" motif is one of the most characteristic features of the Apocalyptic literature. Falling stars are identified in 1 Enoch with the fallen angels.
- **c** The sign * indicates that sun, moon, and stars appear together.
- **d** The falling stars in Sibylline Oracle are associated with the eschatological destruction of the earth.
- **e** The evil power (Beliar) does not darken the sun and moon, but raises up the great fiery sun and shining moon.
As we see in table 5, stars especially are used more symbolically than other celestial signs. Stars symbolize numberless descendants, and are a familiar symbol in Jewish writings for the expected Davidic king. Conversely, stars are consistently identified in 1 Enoch with the fallen angels who transgressed with the daughters of men before the Flood. These angels are held for punishment in the "prison house of the angels." It is also significant that stars are frequently used alone, not linked with the sun and moon, whereas the sun and moon are usually used together. Where the stars are used alone, eleven out of twenty occurrences represent the "falling stars" motif. The "falling stars" motif appears seven times in 1 Enoch and four times in the Sibylline Oracles. It is notable that all seven passages in 1 Enoch indicate the punishment of fallen angels who transgressed with the daughters of men before the Flood. These angels are held for punishment in the "prison house of the angels."

---

1 TAb 1:5; 4:11; 8:5.
2 TLev 18:3; TJud 24:1.
3 1 En 21:3-10.
6 1 En 21:3-10.
1 En\textsuperscript{1} 21:3–6 addresses the identity of the stars which fall down from the sky:

And there I saw seven stars of heaven bound together in it, like great mountains, and burning with fire. At that moment I said, "For which sin are they bound. . . . these are among the stars of heaven which have transgressed the commandments of the Lord and are bound in this place until the completion of ten million years, according to the number of their sins."

By contrast, four cases in the Sibylline Oracles associate falling stars with the eschatological destruction of the earth, emphasizing the eschatological upheaval.\textsuperscript{2}

The other significant motif of stars in the Apocalyptic literature is the "battle of stars." Figure 2 shows the concept of the motif further developed in the Apocalyptic literature.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node [text width=3cm]at (0,0){Judg 5:20}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (-1,-1){Ps-Philo 3:1; 32:11}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (1,-1){Ps-Philo 3:1; 32:11}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (2,-1){Sib Or 5:155–59, 214, 514}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (0,-2){Stars fought against Sisera}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (-1,-3){Stars fought for Israel}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (1,-3){A great star attacked Babylon}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (-1,-5){Ps-Philo 3:1; 32:11}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (1,-5){Sib Or 5:155–59, 214, 514}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (0,-7){Judg 5:20}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (-1,-9){Ps-Philo 3:1; 32:11}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (1,-9){Sib Or 5:155–59, 214, 514}
  \node [text width=2cm]at (0,-11){Judg 5:20}
  \end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

Figure 2. Development of the "fighting star" concept.

\textsuperscript{1}Charlesworth, OTP, 1:7. 1 Enoch was written in the second century B.C. to the first century A.D.

\textsuperscript{2}Sib Or 2:202: "But the heavenly luminaries will crash together, also into an utterly desolate form. For all the stars will fall together from heaven on the sea"; Sib Or 8:190: "All the stars will fall directly into the sea, all in turn, and men will call a shining comet 'the star', a sign of much impending toil, war, and slaughter"; Sib Or 8:341: "For all the stars of luminaries will fall from heaven."
As we see in figure 2, the function of a savior is exercised by "a great star" that comes from heaven and burns the sea and Babylon:¹

But when after the fourth year a great star shines which alone will destroy the whole earth, because of the honor which they first gave to Poseidon of the sea, a great star will come from heaven to the wondrous sea and will burn the deep sea and Babylon itself and the land of Italy.²

Here we see a development of concept in the late apocalyptic literature. The star was a familiar messianic symbol in Jewish writings for the expected Davidic king.³ The leader of the Jewish revolt in A.D. 132 was given a messianic title, Bar Kokhba, son of the star.⁴ In Ps-Philo 32:11, the stars stand at Israel's side in battle. God commanded the stars to depart their positions and attack Israel's enemy, and the stars came down and burned up the enemy's camp. The tradition of the astral battle is reflected in Judg 5:20. Table 6 also shows that eschatological upheaval or eschatological judgment is predominant in the Apocalyptic literature, when the sun, moon, and stars appear at the same time.

Table 6 clearly illustrates the difference in the character of the celestial signs between the Old Testament

²Sib Or 5:155-59.
³TLev 18:3; TJud 24:1.
⁴His name was Simon bar Kosiba.
and the Apocalyptic literature. It shows the predominant trend of cosmic upheaval in the Apocalyptic literature.

Table 6.—Comparison of Celestial Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Moon</th>
<th>Stars</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Old Testament</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa 13:10</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>not shed light</td>
<td>not give light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel 2:10</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>withdraw light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel 3:15</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>withdraw light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezek 32:7</td>
<td>cover sun with clouds</td>
<td>not give light</td>
<td>darkened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apocalyptic literature</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 En 80:4-8</td>
<td>interchange activities</td>
<td>alters its order</td>
<td>change their order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Ezra 5:4,5</td>
<td>shines at night</td>
<td>shines during the day</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sib Or 5:475f</td>
<td>never rise</td>
<td>moonless night</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:203</td>
<td>shines at night</td>
<td></td>
<td>leave the vault of heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMos 10:3-10</td>
<td>not give light</td>
<td>blood</td>
<td>disarray</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sun, moon, and stars in the Apocalyptic literature are not only darkened, but also alter their order, interchange their activities, or never appear. The sun will be turned into darkness and shine at night; the moon will turn into blood, and the heavens and earth will shake. The stars will
leave their orbits; the firmament will fall down; the order of the seasons and of night and day will be destroyed.¹

In ancient Jewish thought, the obedience of the cosmic order was to be copied by the obedience of the faithful to the commands of God (cf. Ps 19). If the commandments were broken, the constellations would forsake their order, and creation would begin to disintegrate.² Therefore, in apocalyptic thought, cosmic catastrophe is a consequence of sin. Thus, massive alteration of the heavens is not only a sign that the end of all things is at hand, but also the judgment itself. As the writer of 1 Enoch illustrates the terror of the day of judgment, he associates the fainting of all the luminaries with great fear; the whole earth shall faint and tremble and panic (1 En 102:2).

The Sibylline Oracles ³, probably written before 31 B.C., also refers to the termination of luminaries.⁴ The

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¹En 80:4-8; Sib Or 3:83-89, 796-806; cf. T Levi 4:1, Ass Mos 10:4-6.

²Thus, TNap 3:2-5 reads: "Sun and moon and stars change not their order; so do ye also change not the law of God in the disorderliness of your doings. The Gentiles went astray . . . and changed their order. But ye shall not be so, my children . . . in the earth, and in the sea, and in all created things, the Lord who made all things, that ye become not as Sodom, which changed the order of nature."

³John Collins, OTP, 1:381-82. This oracle must have been written shortly before the battle of Actium (31 B.C.) and, presumably, in Egypt.

⁴Sib Or 3:82-90: "Then all the elements of the universe will be bereft, when God who dwells in the sky and the whole variegated vault of heaven falls on the wondrous earth and ocean. . . . There will no longer be twinkling
sun will be eclipsed in the middle of heaven. The great hymn of the last things of TMos 10:3-10 well describes the celestial signs on the judgment day. It is significant that it describes the moon which will be turned wholly into blood:

The sun will not give light.
And in darkness the horns of the moon will flee.
Yea, they will be broken in pieces.
It will be turned wholly into blood.
Yea, even the circle of the stars will be thrown into disarray (italics mine).²

The Fourth Ezra 5:4-5, composed in late first century A.D.,³ also describes it with the same tone:

The moon shall alter its order, and will not be seen according to its (normal) cycles (1 En 80:4) . . . And the sun shall suddenly shine forth at night, and the moon during the day. Blood shall drip from wood, and the stone shall utter its voice; the peoples shall be troubled, and the stars shall fall (italics mine).⁴

spheres of luminaries, no night, no dawn, no numerous days of care, no spring, no summer, no winter, no autumn."

¹Sib Or 3:796-803: "I will tell you a very clear sign, so that you may know when the end of all things comes to pass on earth: when swords are seen at night in starry heaven toward evening and toward dawn, and again dust is brought forth from heaven upon the earth and all the light of the sun is eclipsed in the middle from heaven, and the rays of the moon appear and return to the earth."

²TMos 10:5.
³Metzger, OTP, 1:520.
⁴4 Ezra 5:4-5.
The Fourth Ezra 7:40 describes the judgment day as a day that has no sun, moon, and stars. It is significant to find that catastrophic cosmic upheaval is predominant from the earliest literature to the latest in the Apocalyptic literature.

In sum, the darkening motif of the Apocalyptic literature shows continuity with the Old Testament, but also significant modification. The catastrophic judgment motif is predominant. The continuities with the Old Testament are as follows: (1) the Apocalyptic literature has almost all the motifs and terms that the Old Testament has; (2) both corpora have the motif of darkening, falling, and shaking of the heavenly bodies at the judgment day; (3) the darkening of the heavenly bodies reflects the Day of the Lord or the judgment day.

The discontinuities from the Old Testament are also significant: (1) the most outstanding discontinuity is that the Apocalyptic literature emphasizes the disarray of the heavenly beings rather than darkness or withdrawal; (2) some motifs are enlarged and exaggerated (e.g., battle of stars, the falling stars); (3) the cosmic signs are not only signs but also the judgment itself; and (4) in the Apocalyptic

14 Ezra 7:39-44. The day of judgment will be not only a day that has no sun or moon or stars, but also a day that has "no wind or water or air, or darkness or evening or morning, or summer or spring or heat or winter or frost or cold or hail or rain or dew, or noon or night, or dawn or shining or brightness or light, but only the splendor of the glory of the Most High."
literature, the cosmic signs are not a premonitory stage, but the end of the world itself.

The Qumran Literature

In the Dead Sea Scrolls there has been further detachment from the natural phenomena. The motifs of "darkening of heavenly bodies" or "falling stars" are not found in the Qumran literature.¹

The Qumran literature, however, does speak of celestial bodies in a few places. They are created by God. 1QH teaches that God has spread the heavens for His glory and has appointed the stars to their paths, and the clouds to their tasks.² David is compared with the brilliant light of the sun.³ The great light of heaven for the day time and the little light of heaven for the night, without transgressing their laws, dominate over all the world.⁴ According to The War Scroll, on the day when the hand of the God of Israel is raised against all the multitudes of Satan, the sun hastens to set on that day.⁵

Regarding darkness, however, one of the most important themes of the Qumran literature is that of man

¹See appendices 1 and 2.
²1QH 1:10-13.
³11QPs² 27:1.
⁴1Q34 2:1.
⁵1QM 18:5; Yadin, 344: "'Hasten' is allusion to Joshua 10:13."

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caught in the tension between "light and darkness." The War Scroll tells in detail of the final military struggle between the sons of light and the children of darkness, who are finally defeated by the sons of light. All the children of righteousness are ruled by the "Prince of Light and walk in the ways of light," but all the children of falsehood are ruled by the "Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness." But it is not my intention in this chapter to pursue this motif in detail.

The Rabbinic Literature

In the rabbinic writings, the apocalyptic tradition is partly continued and partly broken. The equation of darkness and wickedness is no longer made on cosmological grounds, but occurs sometimes merely in exegesis.

1Hans, 1:423.
2Yadin, 4,7,33,257.
3IQS 3:20. Here light and darkness oppose one another as cosmic forces which determine the existence of man. IQS 3:20-22 presents the motif well: "All the children of righteousness are ruled by the Prince of Light and walk in the ways of light, but all the children of falsehood are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness. The Angel of Darkness leads all the children of righteousness astray, and until his end, all their sin, iniquities, wickedness, and all their unlawful deeds are caused by his dominion in accordance with the mysteries of God."
Rabbis thought that God created the sun, moon, and stars in one set. They depend upon each other. The moon borrows from the stars and the stars from the moon.\(^1\)

The moon was created on account of the festival,\(^2\) and Israel increases and diminishes just as the moon does.\(^3\)

The luminaries are gifts from God.\(^4\) The sun has healing, power and blessing for the people of God, but for others it is a burning power.\(^5\) "The sun will come forth and the righteous derive benefit from it. . . . The wicked, on the

\(^1\)Midrash Exod Rabbah 31:15: "Observe how all God's creation borrow one from the other; day borrows from night and night from day. . . . The moon borrows from the stars and the stars from the moon. . . . The light borrows from the sun and the sun from the light."

\(^2\)Ibid., 15:22: "God created 365 windows in the firmament. . . . Some of them were created to serve the sun and some for the moon . . . save for eleven windows into which the moon does not enter. . . . So also, the sun is called great while the moon is called small; the sun is called great because it exceeds the moon by eleven days. The moon was created on account of the festivals, and Israel increases and diminishes just as the moon does."

\(^3\)The Midrash, 3:192, no. 6: "The waxing and waning of the moon is not harmful to it, for this process is necessary for the fixing of the festivals. Similarly, Israel's alternate periods of rise and fall will not harm them."

\(^4\)Midrash Gen Rabbah 6:5: "R. Jonathan said: Three things were given as a gift to the world, viz., the Torah, the luminaries, and rain."

\(^5\)Midrash Gen Rabbah 78:5: "R. Berekiah commented: The sun rose in order to heal him, but for others only to give light. R. Hunda said in R. Aha's name: It was indeed thus: the sun healed Jacob and burned up Esau and his chiefs."
other hand, will be punished by it."¹ The sun, moon, and stars are compared to some leaders. Esther is compared to the moon, and Alexander is compared to the sun.² According to B. T. Baba Bathra 75a, Moses is compared to the sun, and Joshua to the moon.

One characteristic of the rabbinic literature is the tendency toward symbolic interpretation of the celestial signs. Targum Ezek 32:7 translates the clear statement of the darkening of heavenly bodies in the Old Testament into symbolic words:

Trouble shall cover you when I dim the glorious splendor of your kingdom from the heavens; and the people of your armies, who were as numerous as the stars, shall be reduced. A king shall cover you with his armies like a cloud that rises and covers the sun, and like the moon, whose light does not shine during the day (italics mine).³

Here the stars are symbolized as numerous armies, and they cover the sun and moon as a cloud does. Targum Isa 34:4 also shows the rabbinic trend to escape from the expression of the cosmic upheaval as signs of judgment. If we compare this with Isa 34:4, the difference is clear, as the following comparison chart shows. The Targum adds many words and shifts the symbolism of the cosmic signs. The expression "like a scroll" was changed into "in the scroll," and "all

¹Midrash Eccl 1,5:2.


their host" became a symbol of "all their armies." The word
darkness with its derivation is less predominant. The
opposite of God's light is not darkness, but the absence of
light. The following is a comparison between Isa 34:4 and
Targum Isa 34:4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Testament Isa 34:4</th>
<th>Targum Isa 34:4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All the host of heaven</td>
<td>All the forces of heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shall rot away, and the</td>
<td>shall melt completely and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skies roll up like a</td>
<td>be wiped from under the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scroll. All their host</td>
<td>skies just as was said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shall fall, as leaves</td>
<td>concerning them in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fall from the vine, like leaves</td>
<td>scroll. All their armies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>falling from the fig tree.</td>
<td>shall come to an end as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leaves fall from a vine,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>like what is withered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. T. Pesahim 68a distinguishes the world to come
from the days of the Messiah. According to it, the
darkening of the sun and moon refers to the world to come,
and the shining of the light sevenfold indicates the days of
Messiah.¹ It is interesting that B. T. Sanh 108b mentions
the disarray of celestial orders: "After the seven days the
Holy One reversed the order of nature, the sun rising in the
west and setting in the east, that the wicked might be
arrested by the phenomenon and led to repentance." One
thing which should be noted here is the reason for the
celestial disarray. It is for the repentance of sinners.

¹B. T. Pesahim 68a: "R. Hisda opposed [two verses].
It is written, Then the moon shall be confounded, and the
sun ashamed; whereas it is written, Moreover the light of
the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of
the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of the seven days?
There is no difficulty: the former refers to the world to
come; the latter to the days of the Messiah."
Therefore it is not the sign of the judgment or the day of Yahweh. In B. T. Mo'ed Katan 25b, R. Isaac b. Eleazar, quoting from Amos 8:9-10, points out that the day is as hard for Israel as the day when the sun set at noon-tide.

One of the most interesting observations is found in B. T. Sukkah 29a. It describes the eclipse of the sun as an evil omen to the nations of the world, and the eclipse of the moon was an evil omen to Israel.

Our Rabbis taught, When the sun is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for the whole world. . . . It was taught: R. Meir said, Whatever the luminaries are in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel since they are inured to blows. . . .Our Rabbis taught, When the sun is in eclipse it is a bad omen for idolaters; when the moon is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel, since Israel reckons by the moon and idolaters by the sun; if it is in eclipse in the east, it is a bad omen for those who dwell in the east; if in the west, it is a bad omen for those who dwell in the west; if in the midst of heaven it is bad omen for the whole world.

The most significant thing is the description of the relationship between the moon and Israel. Rabbis interpreted the eclipse of the moon as a bad omen for Israel. Eschatologically, Israel is compared to the moon because the moon shows itself both by day and night, symbolizing the two worlds:

Israel is the heirs of two worlds—this world and the World to Come. On this account did God entrust the secret of the moon to Israel that they should reckon according to it. . . . Just as the moon shows itself both by day and night, so do Israel rule both in this world and the World to Come.\(^1\)

\(^1^\)Midrash Exod Rabbah 15:27. Cf. Gen Rabbah 6:3; SS Rabbah 6,10,1.
They see in the moon themselves, who were the heirs of the two worlds. Is there any connection between this conception and the New Moon festival?

New Moon festivals differed in one respect from other Jewish festivals. They did not simply require the observance of various ceremonies on a certain day, but they also required an actual sighting of the new moon itself to confirm that this was the correct day for the celebrations. The authority to bear this testimony and through it to establish the beginning of the month and the dates of the festivals was vested in the Sanhedrin. When they accepted the report of the witnesses, the New Moon was

1Mishnah Megillah 4:2. The Mishnah indicates that at the start of each month (which was determined by the appearance of the new moon) special synagogue services were held. The Israelite calendar was lunar, and no matter how the calendar changed the months were always governed by the moon; see Gowan, Bridge between the Testament, 213. Thus it is not surprising that the first day of each lunar month was a day set apart to worship God; see J. E. Hartley, "New Moon," ISBE, 3:527. God was thought to be especially near on the new moon; thus it was a good time to seek God's special guidance by consulting a prophet (2 Kgs 4:23). Ezekiel four times mentions receiving a vision on the first day of the month (Ezek 26:1; 29:17; 31:1 32:1).

2Thornton, 97-100; Gowan, Bridge between the Testament, 213; Schauss, 114. It appears that in the old days Jews figured their calendar—the month, the year, and the festivals—entirely by observation, by the testimony offered that the moon had appeared and had been seen. Later, astronomic calculation was instituted in connection with the calendar, but the Jews were not certain of its exactness and still had recourse to witnesses.
announced through the lighting of fires on the hilltops.\textsuperscript{1}

In this way, the beginning of each month depended on the empirical sighting of the new moon.\textsuperscript{2} Therefore the darkening of the moon must be a bad omen to people. Clement of Alexandria (150-215 A.D.) states:

\begin{quote}
And if the moon be not visible, they do not hold the sabbath which is called the first; nor bread, nor the feast, nor the great day. They do not celebrate the New Moon.\textsuperscript{3}
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1}Schauss, 115; Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 1:7: "If a father and his son saw the new moon they may go [to bear witness]; not that they can be included together [as a valid pair of witnesses], but that if one of them is found ineligible the other may be included to make a pair with some other [witness]; 1:9: "If a man saw the new moon but could not walk, he may be taken on an ass or even on a bed"; 2:6: "How do they examine the witness? The pair which come first they examine first. They bring in the elder of the two and say to him, 'Tell us how thou sawest the moon: facing the sun or turned away from it? to the north or to the south? how high was it? to which side was it leaning? and how broad was it?'"
\item \textsuperscript{2}Schauss, 114; Thornton, 98. In the Jewish Calendar in use during this period the months did not have fixed predetermined lengths. Each month could be either 29 or 30 days long. So its reappearance could not be predicted with complete certainty. This may explain the two-day feast of 1 Sam 20:27. For the Jewish calendar at this period, see Schauss, 114; Thornton, 98: "Diaspora communities which were a long way from Jerusalem could not have relied upon official sightings of the new moon at Jerusalem. By the time any news from Palestine had reached them the month concerned would be many days or weeks old. They must therefore have relied on their own sightings of the new moon to determine the start of each month and its New Moon festival."
\end{itemize}
Thus, the very nature of the Jewish calendar and the Jewish observance of New Moon festivals would have encouraged Jews to observe the sky around the end of each month and try to spot the new moon for themselves. Therefore the darkening of the moon had special significance for Jews. It meant the end of a feast, a bad omen for Israel, and the judgment day.

In sum, the rabbinic literature generally preserves the Old Testament motifs of darkening. The points of continuity with the Old Testament are as follows: (1) the heavenly bodies are created by God; (2) they are sometimes used symbolically indicating some leaders. Some discontinuities from the Old Testament are also found: (1) a trend of symbolic interpretation of the celestial signs is found in the Targums (Ezek 32:7; Isa 34); (2) the darkening of the heavenly bodies is no longer a sign of the Day of the Lord, but only an evil omen; and (3) the moon is profoundly related to the feasts and the fate of Israel.

**New Testament**

In the New Testament, the ordinary usage of ἀποκάλυψις is continued, but it is noteworthy that the motif of judgment and Parousia is strong, as we see in table 7. In literal use, it acts as a marker of time and direction. The

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1Thornton, 98.

idiomatic use of ἡλιος is found quite often.¹ Most apocalyptic usages of ἡλιος are found in the Synoptic Gospels and Revelation.² They are used in the context of some cosmic catastrophe to occur at the Parousia.

Table 7.—The Role of the Sun, Moon, and Stars in the New Testament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Moon</th>
<th>Stars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literary (time, season)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiomatic (figurative)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parousia sign</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object of worship</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the New Testament, ἀλήμνη occurs only in association with ἡλιος. As with the sun, the moon is used figuratively (Rev 12:1). Five out of nine occurrences are used eschatologically. As the sun will be darkened, so "the

¹Grace: Matt 5:45; Happiness: Matt 13:43; Light, Brightness: Matt 17:2; Acts 13:11; 26:13; Rev 1:16; 10:1; 12:1; 19:17; Heat: Rev 7:16; East: Rev 7:2; 16:12. In the transfiguration narrative of Matt 17:2, the face of Jesus was shone like the sun. Jesus teaches in Matt 13:43 that "the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Many cases appear in Revelation: The face of the mighty angel coming down from heaven was like the sun (Rev 10:1); the true church is symbolized as a woman clothed with the sun (Rev 12:1).

moon will not give its light."¹ Acts 2:20 describes the
darkening of the moon as blood. Rev 6:12 similarly says
that at the opening of the sixth seal "the full moon became
like blood."

In the New Testament, ὁμήρος and ὀπτρυόν occur twenty-
seven times,² and eight may be described as ordinary or
literal.³ The figurative use of stars is predominant in
the New Testament, especially in Revelation.⁴ It is
interesting to find that Revelation exhibits all the star-
motifs found in the apocalyptic tradition, as seen in figure
3. The "seven stars" appear five times in the opening
chapters of Revelation.⁵ These seven stars, held in the
right hand of the Son of Man, are the angels of the seven
churches (Rev 1:20).

¹Matt 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25; Acts 2:20; Rev
6:12.

²Matt 2:2,7,9,10; Acts 27:20; 1 Cor 15:41,41; Rev
22:16; Rev 1:16,20,20; 2:1,28; 3:1; 12:1; Jude 13; Rev
8:10,11; 9:1; Heb 11:12; Rev 8:12; 12:4; Acts 7:43; Matt

³Matt 2:2,7,9,10; Acts 27:20; 1 Cor 15:41,41,41.

⁴Eleven occurrences out of 13 indicate angels or
Satanic leaders, mostly in Revelation. For the study on the
cosmic signs of Revelation, cf. Jean-Noël Aletti, "Essai sur
la symbolique céleste de l'Apocalypse de Jean," Christus 28
(1981): 40-53; Paul S. Menear, "The Cosmology of the
Apocalypse." in Current Issues in the New Testament

Figure 3. The star motif in Revelation.

It is interesting to find that in Rev 1:20, stars are a symbol of the divine messenger (angels). The other stars in Rev 8:10-12; 9:1; 12:4 may be a symbol of leaders who oppose God. They are reminiscent of the falling stars of 1 Enoch.¹ The "morning star" in Rev 2:28 and 22:16 is a promise that the long night of tribulation is all but over and that "the new eschatological day is about to dawn."² In this sense, Revelation can be called the "Book of Stars."

There are five eschatological passages in the New Testament that mention the darkening of the sun and moon and the falling of the stars (Matt 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke

¹In 1 Enoch the seven stars are fallen angels who transgressed the commandments of God: 1 En 18:13,15; 21:3,6; 43:1-4; 86:1-6; 88:1-3.

How is one to understand "the sun and moon will be darkened" and "the stars will fall from heaven" on the basis of the above background?

Table 8 suggests that darkness has eschatological features, and it is used negatively in the New Testament. When Jesus was on the cross, "there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour" (Matt 27:45; Mark 15:33). Since it was a foretaste of the fate of those who would reject the gospel (Matt 8:12), it was an apocalyptic darkness, reminiscent of the Old Testament Day of the Lord (Matt 24:29; Mark 13:24). Therefore, the darkening of the sun is a signal of the day of judgment, not blessing, in the New Testament.

1The Lucan parallel simply says that there will be signs in sun, moon, and stars (Luke 21:25). Rev 6:12 describes the whole moon as blood red. The quotation of Joel 2:31 in Acts 2:20 speaks of the moon being turned into blood.

2In the New Testament, as in the Old Testament, light is constantly associated with God and with the people of God. In this sense it has an eschatological meaning. For New Testament writers "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). God is said to dwell in light (1 Tim 6:16; 1 John 1:7). He is "the Father of lights" (Jas 1:17). The light is also used to describe Jesus and His mission. The Gospel of John especially favors this imagery and begins to use it in 1:4; "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." John's Gospel proceeds, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (1:5). Jesus alone is "the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5). Anyone who follows Him "will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (8:12). In the age to come "there will be no more night, for the Lord God will give them light" (Rev 22:5).

3Conzelmann, "ΟΧΩΤΟCs," 7:440.
### Table 8.—Comparison of Celestial Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Moon</th>
<th>Stars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Old Testament</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa 13:10</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>not shed light</td>
<td>not give light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel 2:10</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>withdraw light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel 3:15</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>withdraw light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezek 32:7</td>
<td>cover sun with clouds</td>
<td>not give light</td>
<td>darkened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apocalyptic literature</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 En 80:4-8</td>
<td>interchange activities</td>
<td>alters its order</td>
<td>change their order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Ezra 5:4,5</td>
<td>shines at night</td>
<td>shines during the day</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sib Or 5:475f</td>
<td>never rise</td>
<td>moonless night</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T Mos 10:3-10</td>
<td>not give light</td>
<td>blood</td>
<td>disarray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Testament</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt 24:29</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>not give light</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>darkened</td>
<td>not give light</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev 6:13</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>blood</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 also exhibits that the darkening motif of the New Testament follows the Old Testament motif, but it is significantly different from the Apocalyptic literature. There is no expression of cosmic disarray in the New Testament. There is, however, significant similarity in the motif of falling stars between the Apocalyptic literature and New Testament, especially in Revelation. It might be well to note that the New Testament without exception speaks of the falling stars when it indicates the sign of the Parousia, whereas there is no expression of "falling stars" in the Old Testament when the sun, moon, and stars are used together. The differences of the New Testament from the Apocalyptic literature are that the falling stars in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts are not a symbol of the fallen angels, but the sign of the Parousia. Also the Apocalyptic literature uses the "falling stars" motif eleven times, but it is used only when stars are mentioned alone without the sun and moon.¹

In sum, both the motifs of judgment (Revelation) and of the Parousia (Gospels) are prominent in the New Testament. The continuities with the Old Testament are: (1) the New Testament usage of the eschatological celestial signs generally follows the Old Testament motif; (2) the

¹There is one passage mentioning the falling of the stars with the darkening of the sun and moon in 4 Ezra 5:4-5, but Syrian, Aramaic, and Latin are uncertain, see OTP, 2:532, note "e." Furthermore, 4 Ezra was probably written after Matthew.
Parousia signs of the New Testament, as in the Old Testament, have the motifs of theophany and the Day of the Lord. The New Testament also exhibits continuities with the Apocalyptic literature: (1) the New Testament uses the falling star motif; (2) there is a significant similarity in the motif of falling stars between the Apocalyptic literature and Revelation (fallen angels or Satanic leaders).

It should be also noted that there are significant differences: (1) though the New Testament uses the motifs of the theophany and the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament, the main focus of New Testament is not the judgment or covenant, but the Parousia of the Son of Man; (2) Paul often describes the Day of the Lord, but does not use the celestial sign; (3) all the aspects focus on the coming of the Son of Man to fulfill all the signs of the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament, and all the hope of the eschatological transformation. The discontinuity from Apocalyptic literature is that the purpose of the celestial signs of the New Testament is not cosmic upheaval as in the Apocalyptic literature, but a sign for the Parousia.

The Meaning of the Celestial Signs in Matt 24:29-31

Cosmic upheaval is a standard feature of the end-time signs. The darkening of the heavenly bodies in the Old Testament is a sign of judgment on the Day of the Lord. It
is not cosmic upheaval which disrupts the cosmic order, but a premonitory setting of the main event. In the Apocalyptic literature, the catastrophic judgment motif is predominant. In the New Testament, both motifs of judgment (Revelation) and Parousia (Gospels) are discernable.

The same cosmic catastrophic language is found in Matt 24:29. In speaking of His Parousia, Jesus used the apocalyptic imagery—the darkening of the sun, moon, and falling of the stars, etc.—familiar to His hearers with their background in Isa 13:10; 34:3; Ezek 32:7; Joel 2:10-11; 3:15 and the extra-canonical Apocalyptic literature so popular in first-century Palestine.1 The picture is very vivid. After the most terrible tribulation of all time, all at once the sun becomes darkened, and naturally the moon also ceases to give her light; the stars fall from heaven; and the powers of the heavens are shaken.

What, then, is the continuity and discontinuity of Matthew with other traditions? The parent passages of Matt 24:29 seem to be Gen 1:2 and Exod 10:21-23. The primal darkness before creation and the darkness before the Exodus are probably the patterns of the darkening motif in the

1 Jesus borrowed the terminology of His day to express His ideas. This was one of the reasons why his message was accepted and promoted. There is abundant evidence in the Gospels that He used the current popular conceptions, and used them as convenient vehicles for teaching the truth. See Fred Glover, "The Apocalyptic Element in Christianity" (S.T.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1934), 53-359; Hagner, 53-82.
apocalyptic tradition. It is helpful to see the differences by comparing four representative passages mentioning the darkening of the heavenly bodies.

In table 9, we find that Matthew portrays the familiar sign of the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament, for the darkening of the heavenly bodies is one of the peculiar features of the Day of the Lord. The four passages are the end-time signs in the Old Testament, the Apocalyptic literature, and the New Testament as well. Jesus in Matthew seems to adopt the motif of Isaiah rather than the catastrophic elements of the Apocalyptic literature.

Table 9.—A Comparison of Four Passages about Darkening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isa 13:10</td>
<td>The sun—dark Moon does not shed its light; Stars not give their light.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 En 80:4-8</td>
<td>The sun interchanges their activities; Moon alters its order; Stars change their order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev 6:12-13</td>
<td>The sun became black as sackcloth; the full moon became like blood and the stars fell to earth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt 24:29</td>
<td>The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light; and the stars will fall from heaven.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Isa 13:8-6; 34:4; Joel 2:1-12; 3:1-21; Zech 14:1-21; Amos 5:18-9. The other features are the mourning of the tribes and the gathering of the remnant.

2In Ezek 32:7, God pronounces: "I will cover the sun with a cloud." In other words, the darkening of the heavenly bodies in the Old Testament is not cosmic upheaval, but the phenomena that God's power and glory cover the lights.
One element here which is different from the Old Testament is that Matthew, like Mark and Revelation, adopts the motif of falling stars to describe the Parousia, while the Old Testament does not use this imagery when the sun and moon appear with the stars. Why does Matthew use the falling-star imagery with the darkening of the sun and moon, which is different from the Old Testament star motif, and which is similar to the imagery of the Apocalyptic literature? It seems, however, that Matthew borrowed the motif from Isa 34:4, not from the Apocalyptic literature. One crucial evidence of this is that the writer of Revelation also uses the motif of Isa 34:4 when he describes the falling stars (Rev 6:12). Moreover, one significant point is that in Matthew the falling stars do not mean the fallen angels or Satanic leaders. However, it seems that the combination of the falling stars with the darkening of the sun and moon was influenced by the contemporary apocalyptic tradition.

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1Because in the Apocalyptic literature, stars are used alone in all the motifs of the falling star, not linked with the sun and moon. In the Apocalyptic literature, the stars fall into the sea (Sib Or 2:202; 8:190), or indicate the fallen angels (1 En 18:13,15; 21:3,6; 43:1-4, 86:1-6; 88:1-3).

2Compare the two passages: Isa 34:4, "All the host of heaven shall rot away, and the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall fall . . . like leaves falling from the fig tree"; Rev 6:13-14, "and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale; the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up" (italics are mine).
Matthew and the Apocalyptic literature both use the same language and framework derived from the Old Testament, but the conceptual contents expressed within the framework are different from each other. Matthew does not have the same catastrophic concept as the Apocalyptic literature. The darkening of the heavenly bodies is not judgment itself, but a premonitory setting to make the Parousia more vivid and dramatic. However, the Apocalyptic literature contributes to Matthew in that Matthew uses some motifs of the Apocalyptic literature to highlight the Parousia, making his message more effective for his contemporaries.

Since Matthew belongs to the New Testament era, it generally manifests the New Testament concepts and theology on the eschatology. However, one of the outstanding discontinuities from the other New Testament books is that Matthew uses the motifs of the darkening of the sun and moon and the falling stars while Revelation adds the bloody-moon motif and Paul omits the celestial signs in his Parousia scene. The other discontinuity is that the premonitory character of the cosmic sign is stronger in Matt 24:29-31 than in any other book in the New Testament.

If we can call the phenomenon a development, the darkening motif of the Apocalyptic literature is more catastrophic than that of the Old Testament. It seems that the Gospel writers wanted to avoid the catastrophic expressions of the Apocalyptic literature and to adopt the
Old Testament darkening motif, but they also could not escape the influence of contemporary apocalyptic traditions. Therefore, they used the falling-star motif with the darkening of the sun and moon. That kind of development arrives at its zenith in Revelation. The writer of Revelation combined the darkening sun, the bloody moon, and the falling stars in Rev 6:12-13. In the New Testament, the darkening motif is not only a sign of judgment, but also a premonitory sign of the coming of Christ.

What, then, is the meaning and function of the darkening of the heavenly bodies at the Parousia in Matt 24:29? Some scholars think that it is possible to interpret the celestial signs as being symbolic of national calamities at the end-time.¹ Kik states that the symbols are used to represent the end of the old dispensation; therefore, God in His righteous wrath has removed the Jewish nation from His heavens. The sun of Judaism has been darkened; as the moon, it no longer reflects the light of God; the bright stars, as the list of heroes in Heb 11, no longer shine in the Israel

¹W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, Matthew, The Anchor Bible, vol. 26 (New York: Doubleday, 1971), 298; G. B. Caird, Saint Luke (Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, 1963), 232: Caird argues strongly that the shaking of the powers of heaven should be interpreted politically as the overthrow of pagan imperial supremacy; Meier, 287: "It is introduced by a picture of the chaos in the church and society now extending to the whole of the universe."; Carson proposes the literal interpretation, but also admits that in some political contexts similar expressions are used metaphorically (Carson, 505).
of the flesh.¹ Woolery also proposes that the "cosmic phenomena are not worldwide in scope, neither do they refer to nations in general, but are symbolic of the irreversible fall of national Israel in A.D. 70 from the plan of God."²

However, as many scholars indicate, Kik and his followers mistake its application when they refer to it as the mere dissolution of Judaism,³ because Matt 24:29-31 deals with the Parousia, the second coming of the Son of Man, not with the event of A.D. 70. As R. H. Mounce points out, the scene depicted is "clearly that of the return of Christ at the end of history as we know it."⁴ Furthermore, the darkening of the heavenly bodies is not based on symbolism but on real historical events in Old Testament times. The above investigation shows that it cannot be interpreted as merely a symbol. The prophets anticipated it as a real historical event which will occur on the Day of the Lord. They expected that the signs appear repeatedly in their history as an evidence of God's presence. Jewish expectation of the literal fulfillment of the signs of the

¹Kik, 130; cf. Gaebelein, 506: "It is ridiculous to say that the Lord spoke these words about His visible manifestation, but did not really mean a literal return; but what He meant is the destruction of Jerusalem."

²Woolery, 52.

³Morrison, 478.

⁴Mounce, Matthew, 227.
Parousia is also clear from 2 Pet 3:4 in the New Testament era.¹

The other evidence comes from the structure of Matt 24:29-31 itself. If the cosmic signs are the premonitory setting for the coming of the Son of Man, it cannot be a symbol.² Increasing numbers of modern scholars interpret

¹In this famous passage, the apostle tells us that in the last days mockers will come, calling in question the possibility of the fulfillment of our Lord's promise to return. The basis of their objections is that "all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation."

²Extraordinary darkening of the sun and moon has occurred more than once in history, and it can be made to happen again in a more intense manner. Cf. J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1972), 153-4: "On the 19th of May 1780, a wonderfully dark day was experienced throughout the northeastern portion of the USA. The witnesses of it have described it as supernatural and unaccountable. It was not an ordinary eclipse, for the moon was nearly at the full. It was not owing to a clouded condition of the atmosphere, for the stars were visible. Yet it was so dark from nine o'clock in the morning throughout the usual hours of sunshine that work had to be suspended, houses had to be lit with candles, the beasts and fowls went to their rest as in the night time. A most marvelous meteopic of this class witnessed on the night of the 13th of November, 1833. During the three hours of its continuance, hundreds and thousands of people, of all classes, were thrown into the utmost consternation, and filled with the belief that the very scene described in this text, were actually transpiring. Fiery balls, as luminous and as numerous as the stars, came darting after each other from the sky, with vivid streaks of light trailing in the track of each. They were of various sizes and degrees of splendor, flashing as they fell, and so bright as to awaken people from their sleep. It seemed as if every star in the firmament had suddenly shot from its sphere, and was falling to the earth. And all who saw it will bear witness that it was a most terrific spectacle."
the Parousia signs as literal. If the darkening of the sun and moon is a literal sign appearing in heaven, what is the purpose of the phenomenon in Matt 24:29-31? It is important to remember that even though we could expect the literal fulfillment of the sign, the cosmic signs in Matt 24:29 are not the last devastation of the earth, but the premonitory signs of the coming of the Son of Man. It would seem that this awe-inspiring confusion in the heavens signifies "less the transformation of the universe than a preparation for the coming of the Son of Man."2

For Matthew, the most important thing is not the identification of the sign, but the role of the sign to reveal the coming of the Son of Man more vividly and dramatically. Therefore, it is better to take the passage as setting the stage for the return of the Son of Man.3 Before His appearing, the heavenly bodies lose their brilliance and become dark, so that only the revelation of

---

1Mounce, Matthew, 226: Mounce proposes that "it is better to take the phrase in a more literal way"; Carson, 505: Carson observes that the cosmic signs are probably meant to be taken literal because of the climactic nature of the Son of Man's final self-disclosure. Bruner, Matthew, 869; Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to Mark (London: Macmillan & Co., 1959), 518: Vincent Taylor believes that because of the literally understood wars, earthquakes, and other real phenomena at the beginning of the sermon, we should understand this verse at the peak of the sermon, literal and objectively, too.

2Beasley-Murray, A Commentary on Mark 13, 87.

3Mounce, Matthew, 226; Woolery, 51; Taylor, 517.
the glory of the Son of Man fills the cosmos. Then, the
darkening of the sun is a necessary prelude to the dawning
of another light, the glory of the coming of the King.
The prophet Isaiah describes it well:

Then the moon will be confounded, and the sun
ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion
and in Jerusalem (Isa 24:23). . . . The sun shall be no
more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the
moon give light to you by night; but the Lord will be
your everlasting light (Isa 60:19).

On that day, God's people need "no sun or moon to shine upon
it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the
Lamb" (Rev 21:23). Thus, the celestial signs have two
functions in Matt 24:29-31: the sign of the Parousia and the
setting for the Parousia. They are signs indicating the
nearness of the Parousia; at the same time, they are the
setting which makes the Parousia more vivid and dramatic.

In sum, in Matt 24:29-31 we find a vivid scenario of
redemption, to which the darkening of the heavenly bodies is
a prelude. All the signs of theophany and the Day of the
Lord are focused on the coming of the Son of Man. Here
theophany becomes Christophany and the Day of the Lord
becomes the Day of Christ.

1Amos 8:9 describes it vividly: "And on that day,"
says the Lord God, "I will make the sun go down at noon, and
darken the earth in broad day light."

2Paul, S. Minear, "Some Archetypal Origins of
Apocalyptic Predictions," Horizons in Biblical Theology

3Ibid., 116.
Based on the study in this section, I have drawn two trajectories: the chronological trajectory (diagram 1) and the logical (motifs) trajectory (diagram 2). The former shows the development of the motifs and concepts chronologically; the latter indicates the logical relationship of the motifs. The colors demonstrate the path of the motifs to make it easier to trace. The continuity and discontinuity are shown with different lines as follows:

— Allusion: Both literatures have the same concept and the same key terms.¹

—— Possible Allusion: Both literatures have either the same concept or the same key terms.

……… Echo: Not the same motifs or terms, but have similar ideas; not clear influence.

—— It is not clear which one influences the other.

****** The motifs and terms are well contrasted.

¹There are three basic criteria to determine allusion: verbal parallel, thematic parallel, and structural parallel. The more parallels one finds to a particular source, the more likely it is that the author had that source in mind as he wrote.
allusion
A>B
possible allusion
A>B
not clear which one influences the other

200 B.C.
Quaran Literature
No motif of the celestial signs in heaven

100 A.D.
Symbolic interpretation
Targum Ezek 32:7, Isa 34

100 A.D.
Midrash
Exod 15:17

500 A.D.
Rabbinic Literature
Ezek 32:7
Cover heaven-stars
Cover sun with cloud
Cover moon—not light

New Testament
Mark 13:24
Sun-dark
Moon—not give its light
Stars-fall

Act 2:20
Bloody moon

Revelation
Sib Or 5:475
Cosmic Disarray

Sib Or 5:475
Cosmic Disarray

Sib Or 5:475
Cosmic Disarray

Sib Or 5:475
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Sib Or 5:475
Cosmic Disarray

Sib Or 5:475
Cosmic Disarray

Sib Or 5:475
Cosmic Disarray

Sib Or 5:475
Cosmic Disarray
Logical Trajectory Diagram 2: The Darkening of the Sun, Moon, and Stars

Old Testament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Egypt Motif</th>
<th>Judgment Motif</th>
<th>Day of the Lord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cover the sun with a cloud; not cosmic disarray Gen 1:2 Exod 10:21-23 Ezek 32:7</td>
<td>Sun will be dark. (σκοτίζονται) Moon will not shed its light. Stars not give light</td>
<td>Sun &amp; Moon are darkened. Stars withdraw their shining. Joel 2:2-10 3:14-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apocalyptic Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judgment Motif</th>
<th>Cosmic disarray</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun, moon, stars alter their order. Sun, moon, stars alter their order.</td>
<td>1 En 80:4-8; 4 Ezr 5:4-5; Sib 5:475 TNap 3:2-5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloody Moon</td>
<td>TMos 10:3-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling Stars (1)</td>
<td>Eschatological events; Sib 2:202, 8:190, 341.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sun will be darkened. Moon will not give its light Stars will fall from heaven Matt 24:29-31

Bloody Moon
Sun—turn darkness Moon—blood Joel 2:31

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## Allusion Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif</th>
<th>Judgment Motif</th>
<th>Day of the Lord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun &amp; Moon are darkened.</td>
<td>Sun will be dark. (σκοτιοθέτησα)</td>
<td>Isa 13:10-13; 24:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun &amp; Moon are darkened.</td>
<td>Moon will not shed its light.</td>
<td>Joel 2:2-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host shall fall like leaves falling from the fig tree.</td>
<td>Stars withdraw their shining.</td>
<td>3:14-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallen from heaven, Star, moon</td>
<td>Moon—blood</td>
<td>Isa 34:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallen from heaven, Star, moon</td>
<td>Sun—turn darkness</td>
<td>Joel 2:31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood Moon</td>
<td>Moon—feast</td>
<td>Matt 24:29-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling Stars (1)</td>
<td>Falling Stars (2)</td>
<td>Matt 24:29-31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Literature

- Joel 2:2-10, 3:14-15
- Isa 13:10-13; 24:23
- Joel 2:2-10
- Isa 34:4
- Joel 2:31

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### Day of the Lord

- Sun and Moon are darkened.
- Stars withdraw from their shining.
- Joel 2:2-10
- 3:14-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bloody Moon</th>
<th>Falling Stars (1)</th>
<th>Falling Star</th>
<th>Battle of Stars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun — turn darkness</td>
<td>Host shall fall like leaves falling from the fig tree.</td>
<td>Fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn</td>
<td>Stars fought against Sisera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon — blood</td>
<td></td>
<td>Isa 14:12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel 2:31</td>
<td>Isa 34:4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Qu'ran Literature

- No motif of celestial signs in heaven

### New Testament

- **Parousia Signs**
  - Bloody Moon
    - Acts 2:20; Rev 6:12
  - Falling Stars
    - God's leader
      - Rev 1:16, 20; 2:1, 28; 3:1
    - Falling Stars (2)
      - Satanic leader
        - Rev 8:10, 11; 9:1

### Rabbinic Literature

- Moon — feast of Israel
- Midrash
- Exod 15:17
- Bad omen of sun — nation
- Symbolic interpretation
- Targum Ezek 32:7, Isa 34

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Scene Ib: Appearing of the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven

In this section, I deal with the second part of the first scene. The structure of each Matthean Parousia scene consists of two parts. The first part is the preparatory stage and the second is the main theme of the scene. Therefore, the following examines the highlights of the first scene: the appearing of the sign of the Son of Man in heaven after the disappearing of the light of the heavenly bodies.

In the dramatic setting of the darkening of the sun and moon and the falling of the stars, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven more brightly and impressively (Matt 24:30a). What is the sign of the Son of Man appearing in heaven? Only Matthew mentions the sign of the Son of Man in heaven (τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν οὐρανῷ), and its real meaning is mysterious.¹ No single parallel passage appears in the biblical and extra-biblical literature.² Therefore, the term "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven" is considered by searching the three motifs: (1) sign of the theophany in heaven; (2) the "ensign" motif; and (3) the Son of Man passages.

¹K. H. Rengstorff, "ΣΗΜΕΙΟΝ," 7:236.
²There are many signs of the Day of the Lord--theophany, last day, and of the day of the Messiah--but one can find no real parallel term to "sign of the Son of Man in heaven" of Matt 24:30.
Old Testament Background

The signs of theophany in heaven

My main concern here must be limited to finding the sign in heaven when the Lord appears in the Old Testament. It is a well-known fact that one of the important characteristics of the theophany is the reaction of nature. In Exod 19:9-24, Lord came down upon Mount Sinai with "thunders and lightnings" (19:16). God descended in the pillar of fire, with the storm, and with an earthquake.

Significant to discerning the sign in heaven is the expression that God will descend in a "thick cloud" (Exod 19:9). The coming down of Yahweh in the clouds frequently

---

1One of the most significant phenomena of theophany in the Old Testament is the reaction of nature at the coming of God. These phenomena are first seen in the theophany at Sinai (Exod 19:16-20), and after that event God's appearing is linked with the fire, with an earthquake, with lightening and thunder, or with a catastrophic natural phenomena. The coming of the Creator evokes the shaking of the whole creation. Glasson, "Theophany and Parousia," 259-70; E. C. Kingsbury, "The Theophany Topos and the Mountain of God," JBL 86 (1967):205-10: The storm theophany: Judg 5:4-5; Ps 58:7-8; Deut 33:2-3; Hab 3:3-4; Zech 9:4; Pss 18:9-14, 77:17-19; the earthquake theophany: Amos 9:1,5; Isa 6:3-4; 29:6-7; Joel 3:16; Hag 2:6-7; Isa 64:1-3; the combination theophany of the storm and earthquake imagery: Jer 10:10-14; Isa 30:27-33; 1 Kgs 19:11-14; Isa 42:13-15; Pss 18:7-15, 50:1-6, 97:2-5.


3Judg 5:4-5; Ps 68:7-8; Deut 33:2-3; Hab 3:3-4; Zech 9:4; Pss 18:9-14, 77:17-19.

4Amos 9:1,5; Isa 6:3-4; 29:6-7; Joel 3:16; Hag 2:6-7; Isa 64:1-3.
occurs in the Old Testament. Exod 34:5 tells that Yahweh descended in the cloud to meet Moses. The Psalter says of God that "clouds and thick darkness are round about him" (Ps 97:1-6). The cloud is described as the vehicle of God's descent and His dwelling place. As J. Luzarraga points out, no other literature uses "so insistently the metaphor of the clouds to describe theophanies as Israel does." What is, therefore, the most prominent sign in heaven in the scene of the descent of God in the Old Testament? Only three signs may appear in heaven: (1) lightning, (2) thunder, and (3) clouds. If we could consider that the lightning and thunder are accompanied with the clouds, it is clear that in the Old Testament the only visible sign in heaven is the clouds.

The "ensign" motif

The other motif to be examined is the "ensign" motif of the Old Testament. The "ensign" is a translation of σημειών in the LXX, and is related to the trumpet and the gathering. Therefore, some scholars try to interpret the

---

1 Pss 99:7; 104:3; Isa 19:1.


sign of the Son of Man in Matt 24:30 in light of the "ensign" motif in the Old Testament. They observe that the sign of the Son of Man may be an allusion to the ensign which was to be set up by Yahweh as a rallying point for His dispersed people. They interpret that Matthew's word οὐσιοῦν means not only "sign," but also the biblical Greek for "ensign" or "standard," and should be so translated here. Therefore, the sign of the Son of Man in heaven is taken to be neither a sign nor the Son of Man Himself, but the standard or banner to which the eschatological people of God would rally.

J. A. Draper argues that the "sign" of the Son of Man springs out of the Old Testament holy war, mediated through the prophets. He suggests that the Hebrew Whatever lies in the LXX some 125 times. The main usage is in the Pentateuch and the prophets. In the LXX, οὐσιοῦν is predominantly a translation of the Hebrew נְצָר, and means (1) sign, mark, token; (2) miraculous sign, miracle.

According to Glasson, this motif is of great interest and should be considered seriously because it has to do with the trumpet and the gathering of the elect. Isa 11:12, the famous "gathering passage." Glasson proposes that Matthew's word οὐσιοῦν means not only "sign"; it is also the biblical Greek for "ensign" or "standard" and should be so translated here (Glasson, The Second Advent, 199). One of the difficulties with Glasson's view is that nowhere in the New Testament does οὐσιοῦν mean "ensign," whereas there are some passages that οὐσιοῦν mean "ensign" in the LXX and Qumran literature.

1See Rengstorf, "ΟΥΣΙΟΥΝ," 7:200-75. οὐσιοῦν occurs in the LXX some 125 times. The main usage is in the Pentateuch and the prophets. In the LXX, οὐσιοῦν is predominantly a translation of the Hebrew נְצָר, and means (1) sign, mark, token; (2) miraculous sign, miracle.

2See Glasson, "The Ensign of the Son of Man," 299-300; idem, The Second Advent, 200; Draper, 1-21.

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behind the sign of the Son of Man.\textsuperscript{1} \textit{O\textbar} was used as the meaning of the "ensign," "standard," and "banner" in the Old Testament. In Canaan, the means of the gathering together at war time were: (1) a horn blast; (2) raising of a \textit{O\textbar} on the top of a hill, which would be a sign to the tribes to gather for war; and (3) sending messengers throughout the land (Judg 7:24). The \textit{O\textbar} was a wooden pole erected on a hill, which had an insignia on top.\textsuperscript{2}

Besides Jer 51:27,\textsuperscript{3} most of the other \textit{O\textbar} passages are found in Isaiah. Isaiah, in particular, is deeply influenced by the tradition of the holy war, which becomes a central and characteristic theme.\textsuperscript{4} The first prophecy concerning the \textit{O\textbar} occurs in Isa 5:26-7, where the evil conduct of the leadership of Israel draws the anger of Yahweh on the nation.\textsuperscript{5} As a result of this, Yahweh Himself sets up the \textit{O\textbar} to summon a nation from afar to make war on Israel.

\textsuperscript{1}Draper, 2.
\textsuperscript{2}J. W. Wevers, "Methods of War," IDB, 4:803.
\textsuperscript{3}An archetypal picture of gathering the nation for war may be provided by Jer 51:27: "Set up a standard on the earth, blow the trumpet among the nations." In the prophecy of Jeremiah, God initiates war against Babylon. The pole is set up to summon the tribes, the horn is blown and the troops are inscribed.
\textsuperscript{5}Draper, 5.
Lars Hartman suggests that the reference to the "sign of the Son of Man" in Matt 24:30 is inspired by Isa 11:10-12:¹

In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; Him shall the nations seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious. In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant which is left of his people from Assyria. . . . He will raise an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

The gathering of the dispersed tribes of Israel is significant. The "ensign" is raised not for a war of punishment against Israel, but for the gathering in of the lost tribes. This context of the motif in Isa 11:10-12 suggests that the passage is a strong parallel of Matt 24:30-31, for it is clear that the keyword and thematic associations connect Isa 11:10-12 with Matt 24:30-31. If this interpretation is adopted, the reference to the trumpet blast for the gathering of the elect (24:31) is also reasonable. The problem of this interpretation is that the ensign is not a sign but the subject itself, because the root of Jesse is the ensign itself, and the people will be assembled to the ensign.

In Isa 13:2-6, the Lord, in raising a signal, is summoning a great multitude against Babylon because of its

¹Hartman, 165. Hartman observes that in Isa 11:10-12 the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples, and Matthew identified "the root" with the Son of Man. The "root standing as an ensign" is the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven.
iniquity. The theme goes further to the gathering of the
nation for the destruction of the Day of the Lord. Isa 18:3
links oplay to the blowing of the trumpet.\(^1\)

> All you inhabitants of the world,
you who dwell on the earth,
when a signal is raised on the mountains, look!
when a trumpet is blown, hear (italics mine)!

It is an interesting comparison to say that the signal is a
visible sign (look!), and the trumpet sound is an audible
sign (hear!).\(^2\) Isa 31:9 is directed against Assyria. The
officers will be in terror at the sight of the battle
"standard." Isa 62:10-11 refers to the "ensign" in the
context of the promised salvation to Jerusalem.\(^3\)

Figure 4 shows the progression of the ensign. It is
true that the 03 passages in Isaiah find some similar motifs
and key words in Matt 24:29-31. As this diagram clearly
shows, however, the purpose of the ensign in the Old
Testament was a sign for the gathering, not for the mourning
of the tribes. Furthermore, it is mainly linked with the
war context, and it appears on a hill, not in heaven.
Moreover it is not a sign but an object to which the

\(^1\)Draper, 8; Grogan, 100. O\(\) (banner) is a favorite
with Isaiah.

\(^2\)In Matt 24:29-31, the sign of the Son of Man is
emphasized as a visible sign, and the great trumpet call is
pronounced as a audible sign.

\(^3\)Isa 62:10-11: "Lift up an ensign over the peoples.
Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth.
Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your salvation
comes.'"
dispersed people of God assemble. Therefore it is different from the sign of the Son of Man in Matt 24:30.

![Diagram showing the progression of the ensign motif.]

Figure 4. The progression of the ensign motif.

The Son of Man passages

One reason that I want to include some "Son of Man" passages here is that one cannot understand the true character of the sign without knowing about the subject of the sign, the Son of Man Himself. The other reason is that the term is the most central theme in the Parousia scenes, even though the Son of Man is not a Parousia sign itself, and that all the Parousia signs focus on the term the "Son of Man." Therefore it is a necessary step for us to trace briefly the "Son of Man" passages.

---

1The Son of Man appears 3 times in Matt 24:27-31: (1) ἡ παρουσία του υἱοῦ του ἀνθρώπου (24:27); (2) το σημεῖον του υἱοῦ του ἀνθρώπου ἐν σορανῳ (24:30); (3) τον υἱον του ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐπι των νεφελων του σορανου μετα δυνάμεως και δόξης πολλῆς (24:30).
Because of its importance in the New Testament and its long history in biblical and extra-biblical literature, however, few titles have been so exhaustively investigated as the title "Son of Man." However, results of the investigation still remain inconclusive and there is no consensus either on the ultimate origin of the title or on its precise development in Judaism. Therefore, it is not my intention to enter here into an extensive discussion concerning the Son of Man. Since my main focus in this chapter is not to search the identity of the Son of Man, but to study the signs of the Parousia, my attempt in this section is limited to finding clues to decode the peculiar


2 Peter F. Ellis, Matthew: His Mind and His Message (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1974), 111.
Matthean vocabulary, "the sign of the Son of Man," by an essential background study of the term "the Son of Man."

Can we find the sign of the Son of Man motif in the Son of Man passages in the Old Testament? The Hebrew מַעֲשֵׂה יָד occurs 107 times in the Old Testament. Of the 107 occurrences, 93 are in Ezek 2:1-47:6. In the 14 outside Ezekiel, with the exception of Daniel, the phrase occurs only in poetic couplets.¹ In each instance, מַעֲשֵׂה יָד is literally translated in the LXX with the Greek ὥμοιος ἄνθρωπον. In this context, the expression means "man" or "mankind," with special nuances here and there.²

In 93 occurrences in Ezekiel the phrase carries the meaning "mortal man" or mere "mortal," whom God wills to lift up and strengthen with His Spirit. The prophet is addressed 70 times as "son of man," and 23 times in the more emphatic form, "you son of man."³ Ezekiel is called "son of man" by God because he is identified as a representative of Israel, the people of God. But there is no divine figure of the Son of Man, or the motif of the "sign of the Son of Man" which appears in heaven.

In the Old Testament, Daniel is the book most significantly related to Matt 24:30. Dan 7:13-14, the

¹Num 23:19; Job 16:21; 25:6; 35:8; Pss 8:4; 80:17; 143:3; Isa 51:12; 56:2; Jer 49:18,33; 50:40; 51:43.
²David. E. Aune, "Son of Man," ISBE, 4:574.
³Ibid.
famous embryo of all Son of Man discussions,\(^1\) describes the
divine messianic figure of the Son of Man:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Behold, with the clouds of heaven,} \\
\text{there came one like a son of man,} \\
\text{And he came to the Ancient of Days} \\
\text{and was presented before him.} \\
\text{And to him was given dominion} \\
\text{and glory and kingdom,} \\
\text{that all peoples, nations, and languages} \\
\text{should serve him;}
\end{align*}
\]

Here, again, the clouds of heaven are the unique sign of the
appearing of the Son of Man.

Attempts to find the origin of the Danielic "Son of
Man" have been much disputed, for many scholars think it is
the root of the Son of Man motif in the following
apocalyptic literature. The great majority of scholars have
concentrated their efforts on identifying the Danielic Son
of Man with a biblical entity, especially within Daniel
itself. Mowinckel\(^2\) and Klausner\(^3\) agree that the origin of
the idea of the Son of Man was from Daniel, not from 1 Enoch
or other Apocalyptic literature.\(^4\) Several scholars have

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\(^1\)Ford, \textit{Crisis}, 2:246.

\(^2\)Mowinckel, 355.

\(^3\)Klausner, 291-92.

\(^4\)Though Glasson claims that a comparison of Dan 7
with Enoch 14 leads him to believe that the theological "Son
of Man" concept came from Enoch (Glasson, \textit{Second Advent}, 15-
17), R. H. Charles states that the Book of Enoch depends on
Daniel clearly and definitely in explaining the idea of the
"Son of Man" (R. H. Charles, \textit{The Book of Enoch} [Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1912], 306-7). Montgomery also points out
that the writer of Enoch apparently expended the idea which
appeared originally in the Book of Daniel. See J. A.
Montgomery, \textit{A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book

proposed that the Danielic Son of Man should be understood as a divine figure.\textsuperscript{1} Other scholars have understood the phrase as a reference to a leader of the messianic kingdom,\textsuperscript{2} or saints,\textsuperscript{3} or angel.\textsuperscript{4} Similarly, the phrase "one like a son of man" is understood as a collective representation of Israel.\textsuperscript{5}

Though there has been much debate about the identity of one like a Son of Man, we note the following messianic

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1}Sabourin concluded that "in connection with Dan 7:13 it is observed that the coming with the clouds is an exclusively divine attribute"; see Leopold Sabourin, "The Biblical Cloud," BTH 4 (1974): 304.

\textsuperscript{2}W. O. E. Oesterley, The Jews and Judaism During the Greek Period (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1941), 152-55: Oesterley holds that the writer of Daniel used the term "Son of Man" to portray a leader of the coming Messianic kingdom; T. W. Manson, The Teaching of Jesus (Cambridge: The University Press, 1948), 227-29: Manson proposes that the figure of the Son of Man was individualized among Christians as the result of the ministry of Jesus.


\textsuperscript{4}Ferch, 94-105. Most commentators, who favor the identification of the Son of Man with an angel, interpret the manlike being as Michael. Michael is a celestial being who has defended and led Israel and will do so in a final judgment context. He thereby displays some messianic characteristics.

\textsuperscript{5}Klausner interprets this Son of Man as "the righteous but oppressed people of Israel." See Klausner, 230; Mowinckel (346-53) and Klausner (291-92) agree that the origin of the idea of the "Son of Man" concept came from Daniel.
traits:¹ (1) the Son of Man receives dominion, glory, and the kingdom (7:14a); (2) all peoples, nations, and languages will serve Him (7:14a); (3) His kingdom is everlasting and indestructible (7:14b). In short, the Son of Man of Dan 7:13-14 is an "individual, heavenly, eschatological" being which exercises messianic royal powers.²

It is significant that only Daniel uses the vocabulary γίς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου with σφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ in relation to the Son of Man in the Old Testament, and only Matthew uses the same term in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:30). With regard to "appearing" in Dan 7:13-14, the clouds of heaven are the only sign of His appearing.

In summary: (1) the most prominent sign in heaven when God descends is clouds; (2) the motif of the "sign in heaven" is not found in the "ensign" passages; (3) the only sign of the appearing of the Son of Man in Dan 7:13-14 is the clouds of heaven. Therefore, if we can find only one clear sign of the appearing of the Lord or the Son of Man in heaven in the Old Testament, it is the clouds of heaven,

¹In Daniel, the Son of Man means: (1) man in general (LXX 3:82), (2) the prophet (8:17), (3) messianic figure (7:13). One important thing to note here is that what the prophet really means when he describes "one like a Son of Man." In all of the Old Testament occurrences, with the exception of Dan 7:13 and 10:16, the son of man is a human being. But, in Dan 7:13 the Son of Man is no actual human being, but a figure in human form symbolizing a non-human reality.

²Ferch, 105.
even though the cosmic signs are not associated with the sign of the coming of the Lord.

The Sign of the Son of Man in the Apocalyptic Literature

To examine the motif of the "sign of the Son of Man" in the Apocalyptic literature, we trace the motifs of "the sign of theophany in heaven," and "the Son of Man" passages, for there is no clear motif of ensign in the Apocalyptic literature.

The sign of theophany in heaven

There are frequent allusions to the coming of God in the Apocalyptic literature, though "many of these are not to be classified as theophanic compositions in the Old Testament style." Nevertheless, the motif "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven" is not found in the Apocalyptic literature. However, in the Apocalyptic literature, as in the Old Testament, the clouds are the sign of the theophany in heaven, but the motif is not as clear and predominant as in the Old Testament.

The opening oracle of 1 Enoch begins with the reminiscence of the Sinai theophany; the traditional features of Old Testament theophany are mentioned. It is

1In Dennis' concordance of the Pseudepigrapha, we find OTLEIOV 10 times in the Apocalyptic literature. But there is no clear ensign motif in the Apocalyptic literature.

2Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Kingdom of God, 41.
natural that we expect to see the clouds which were on Mount Sinai, but there is no sign in the heavens when God will appear. Interestingly enough, instead of coming with clouds in heaven, God will march upon Mount Sinai in 1 En 1:4–9. The poem concludes with the following stanzas: "Behold, he arrives with ten million of the holy ones in order to execute judgment upon all."¹ Though the "clouds of heaven" motif is not as predominant as in the Old Testament, the Apocalyptic literature does have some passages indicating that the Messiah comes with the clouds (2 Bar 53–72; 4 Ezra 13:1–5; 15:34–35).

There are some passages mentioning signs which will appear before the coming of the Lord. 1 En 38:2 notes one sign of the coming of the Lord: "The Righteous One appears before the face of the righteous, he shall reveal light to the righteous and the elect who dwell upon the earth." In Testament of Levi 8:11, Levi heard from the seven men in white clothing that his prosperity shall be divided into three offices as a sign of the glory of the Lord who is coming. But those signs will not appear in heaven. A parallel passage to Matt 24:30 is found in Sib Or 3:798. Swords are seen at night in the starry heavens when the end of all things comes to pass on earth. The structure is similar, but the concept is different from Matt 24:30. The

¹Isaac, 13; cf. Jude 14: "Behold, the Lord came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment on all."
swords are not seen after the cosmic signs, and are not linked with the coming of the Lord on the clouds. To conclude, there is no clear motif of "sign in heaven" in the earlier Apocalyptic literature.

The Son of Man passages

Although there is no exact term "the sign of the Son of Man" in the Apocalyptic literature, the designation "Son of Man" does occur occasionally in the Apocalyptic literature. In the Apocalyptic literature, the term is found only in 1 En 37-71, in 2 Bar, and in 4 Ezra, in varying characterizations. Two conceptions characterize the


2 The Ethiopic version of Enoch consists of 5 parts: (1) The Book of the Watchers (1-36), (2) The Book of the Similitudes (37-71), (3) The Book of Astronomical Writings (72-82), (4) The Book of Dream Visions (83-90), and (5) The Book of the Epistle of Enoch (91-107). Four of them have been found among the Qumran writings, but no fragments of the Similitudes have been found. This has led many scholars to the conclusion that the Similitudes cannot be pre-Christian and cannot be used for interpreting the New Testament. The Book of the Similitudes consists of 3 discourses or parables: (1) First Parable (chaps. 38-44), (2) Second Parable (chaps. 45-57), (3) Third Parable (chaps. 58-69). See Charlesworth, OTP 1:7.

3 If 2 Baruch is dependent on 4 Ezra, a date around A.D. 100 is probable.

4 Ezra, referred to as II Esdras in the Apocrypha, according to most scholars, was composed about A.D. 100, perhaps in Palestine.
figure of the Son of Man in a particular way in the Apocalyptic literature: (1) He is not a man, but a preexistent heavenly figure, and (2) His primary task consists in the achievement of the judgment of the world, in which salvation is bestowed upon the saints.¹

Some of the significant texts in which the Son of Man conception is found is the Similitudes of Enoch, 1 En 37-71. The designation "Son of Man" occurs sixteen times in 1 En 37-71, but nowhere else in 1 Enoch.² In the Similitudes of Enoch, "the Son of Man" is characterized at great length.³ He will sit on the throne of his glory, and He will be the savior and vindicator of the elect.⁴ The passages may be an allusion and enlargement of the Son of


²1 En 46:2,3,4; 48:2; 60:10; 62:7,9,14; 63:11; 69:26,27,29 (twice); 70:1; 71:14,17.

³He is pictured as a divine, pre-existent being (48:3; 62:7), dwelling in heaven with the Lord of Spirits (46:1-3.). His function is the judge (46:4-6; 62:3-11; 69:27; 69:29), vindicator of the righteous (48:4; 62:12; 71:17), universal ruler (62:6; 71:15-17), and object of worship (48:5; 62:9). He will sit on God's throne and pour forth all the secrets of wisdom and counsel.

⁴It has been argued that the Son of Man here should be identified with Enoch himself, but this is very unlikely. He is a supernatural figure and pre-existent in some form which is attributed to him. His work and character are closely allied to God's own. He is the Messiah (48:10), the Righteous One (38:2), and the Elect One (40:5).
Man passage in Dan 7:13-14. Nevertheless, there is no clouds motif in this passage, though the clouds are the unique sign of the appearing of the Son of Man in Daniel.

The clouds of heaven are found in 4 Ezra. It is often proposed that 4 Ezra is dependent on 1 En 37-71. Scholars have presented a list of passages from the Similitude that were utilized by 4 Ezra. 4 Ezra 3-14 is composed of a series of seven visions. In the sixth vision (13:1-7), the figure of "the man from the sea" appeared and "flew with the clouds of heaven." At first sight, the structure seems similar to Dan 7:13-14, but the concept is different. The reference to the Son of Man's coming up from the heart of the sea is puzzling. 4 Ezra focuses on the

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1 The main function of this heavenly Son of Man is to share with God in the inauguration of the kingdom: Cf. 1 En 46:1-3: "At that place, I saw the One to whom belongs the time before time. And his head was white like wool... And I asked the one--from among the angels--who was going with me, and who had revealed to me all the secrets regarding the One who was born of human beings... And he answered and said to me, 'This is the Son of Man, to whom belongs righteousness, and with whom righteousness dwells. And He will open all the hidden store rooms.'" Here, the Enochian Son of Man passages are a midrash on Dan 7:13-14. For detailed comparison between Dan 7 and 1 En 46, see Caragounis, 101-12.

2 While the functions of the Messiah in 4 Ezra are similar to the functions of the Son of Man of 1 Enoch, those similarities are not sufficient to pose literary dependence by either author. The author of 4 Ezra 13, like the author of 1 En 37-71, was dependent on Dan 7:13-14. Dependence on Dan 7:13 is particularly evident in 4 Ezra 13:1-3.

3 Caragounis, 92. 4 Ezra 6:49-52 (1 En 60:7-9); 7:32 (51:1,3); 7:37 (61:1; 60:6); 7:36 (48:9; 27:3); 7:125 (62:10).
judgment. However, the figure has supernatural characters of the Son of Man, and the only sign in the heaven is the clouds.

In sum, we found neither any parallel to Matt 24:30, nor significant clues to the sign of the Son of Man in the Apocalyptic literature. However, there are some continuities with the Old Testament: (1) in both corpora, there is no real term "the sign of the Son of Man"; (2) the only sign in heaven when the Lord or the Messiah comes down is the clouds in both corpora; (3) the Son of Man figure in both 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra is probably dependent on Dan 7:13-14. Discontinuities from the Old Testament are also found: (1) the primary task of the Son of Man is the judgment of the world in the Apocalyptic literature; (2) as a sign of the Son of Man, the cloud motif is not so clear and predominant as in the Old Testament.

The Qumran Literature

The Qumran society was a community which was awaiting the coming of God at the end of time. But ironically, there is no clear sign of the theophany and the sign of the Son of Man in heaven in the Qumran literature. There is no "Son of Man" concept in the Dead Sea Scrolls so far published.¹ This is somewhat strange in view of the fact that the Son of Man concept belongs to the apocalyptic

¹LaSor, 104; Casey, 114.
movement in Judaism, and the Qumran community is usually placed within this movement. As we have seen earlier, eleven different manuscripts of the Book of Enoch were found from the Qumran caves. These fragments represent all parts of Enoch except the Book of the Similitudes (37-71), and it is only in this part that the Son of Man doctrine is found. LaSor assumes that it would appear then that either the Book of the Similitudes was not yet part of the Book of Enoch or that the Qumran Community excised the part from its document. From this it appears that Qumran eschatology was messianic but not apocalyptic—at least so far as the Son of Man concept is concerned.

However, three ensign motifs are found in the Hymn Scroll. In the war scroll, there is a distinction between the דָּל and the מַמְר. The banner carried into battle is called מַמְר and is inscribed with the slogans of the army. On the other hand, upon the banner of the tribes they shall write "ensign (דָּל) of God" and the name of the prince of the tribes. The Hymn Scroll has two references to the דָּל. In the first passage (1 QH 2:13-14), the author of the hymns, 1

1LaSor, 140.
2Ibid.
3Yadin 270; 1QM 3:13-17: "Upon the great banner at the head of the whole people they shall write 'people of God' and the names 'Israel' and 'Aaron' as well as the names of the twelve tribes of Israel according to their order of birth."
41QM 3:14.
perhaps the Teacher of Righteousness, describes himself as an ensign raised up for Israel:

> But to the elect of righteousness
> Thou hast made me a banner,
> and a discerning interpreter of wonderful mysteries,
> to try [those who practice] truth
> and to test those who love correction (italic supplied).  

In the second reference to the 03 (1 QH 6:34-35), the righteous dead are called to raise up the "ensign" in the eschatological war. As Draper points out, the connection between the ensign and the resurrection of the dead at the time of the eschatological war may be a significant background to the development of the term in the New Testament.

The Rabbinic Literature

In the rabbinic literature, the motif of "the sign of the Son of Man" is not found, but the theophany scene generally follows the Old Testament motif. Clouds of heaven are also the most important sign of theophany in the rabbinic literature. Midrash Rabbah Gen 56:1 tells that Abraham saw a luminous cloud enveloping Mount Moriah. The

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2Draper, 13; 1QH 6:34: "Hoist a banner, O you who lie in the dust! O bodies gnawed by worms, raise up an ensign for [the destruction of wickedness]! [The sinful shall] be destroyed in the battles against the ungodly."

3Drapper. 13.
clouds may be the best sign to show God's presence and His glory in the rabbinic literature.¹

In the time of the rabbis, titles like Son of Man and Son of God could no longer be used, except for a few occasions reminiscent of Dan 7:13² because of competition with Christianity.³ Therefore I took another path to trace the passages of the Son of Man. It is the way to trace the passages reflecting Dan 7:13, or the term "sign of the Messiah." Nevertheless, these passages do not figure as often as one might have expected in such a vast collection.

A "Son of Man" passage is found in Midrash Rabbah Num 13:14. The author cites Ps 72:11 and Dan 7:13 in answer to the question: How do we know that the Messiah will hold sway on land? "All nations shall serve him"; it also says, "Behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man . . . and there was given unto him dominion . . . . that all the peoples . . . should serve him." In the B. T. Sanh 96b, Messiah is called "Bar-Nafle (the Son of Cloud), and 98a notes that the Messiah will come with the clouds of heaven. Targum 1 Chr 3:24 calls the Messiah "Anani," that is, "He of the clouds." Tanhuma Toledoth 6:20

¹For details, see the cloud section.
²E.g., B. T. Sanh 98a.
The rabbi of Tanhuma thought that Anani (He of the clouds) was the messianic title. Although this motif is frequently interpreted as an allusion to the Danielic Son of Man, it is significant that the rabbinic literature uses only "clouds" as a related title to Messiah, among many signs of theophany.

In summary, the examples discussed above support the thesis that Dan 7:13-14 and its "Son of Man" were understood messianically by many rabbis. The rabbis linked clouds to the Messiah's coming in terms of Dan 7:13, but it is doubtful that the rabbis believed that the cloud is a sign of the coming Messiah.

The Sign of the Son of Man in the New Testament

In the New Testament, the term "the sign of the Son of Man" is not found except in Matt 24:30. Since the ensign motif also does not occur in the New Testament, the following three motifs are discussed: (1) the sign of theophany in heaven, (2) the Son of Man, and (3) the sign in heaven in Revelation.

1 Midrash Tanhuma Genesis, vol. 1, trans. John T. Townsend (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 1989), 167: "Who is Anani? This is the Messianic [King] as stated in (Dan 7:13); As I was looking on (in a vision at night), behold, along with Anani of <heaven, one like a human being>.

2 For detailed discussion about Bar Nafle and Anani, see the clouds section of chap. 3.
The sign of theophany in heaven

The sign of theophany is not frequent in the New Testament. At Jesus' baptism, two events followed: first, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and second, a voice from heaven (Matt 3:16-17, Mark 1:10-11). The transfiguration is clearly a theophanic scene.\(^1\) The three disciples saw that a bright cloud enveloped them, and heard a voice from the clouds. Of the synoptists, only Matthew says that the cloud was "bright,"\(^2\) and this alludes to many things. First of all, it suggests that the clouds of Jesus are not dark and thick clouds on the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament, but glorious white clouds (Rev 14:14). Second, it supports my assumption that the sign of the Son of Man is the bright and glorious clouds appearing in heaven after the darkening of the heavenly bodies.

The most important theophanic scene in the New Testament is the description of Jesus' ascension (Acts 1:9-11) and return (Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; 1 Thess 4:17; Rev 1:7; 14:14-16). In any case, one thing is clear: Christ went up with a cloud, and will return on the clouds of heaven. Even though the description of the Parousia in the Gospels is somewhat different from that in the Pauline writings, the most common element is the sign of the clouds.


\(^2\)Carson, 386.
The Son of Man passages

As mentioned, the sign of the Son of Man is not found in the New Testament except Matt 24:30; however, the expression "Son of Man" occurs eighty-two times in the gospels. It is found in Matthew thirty times; in Mark, fourteen; in Luke, twenty-five; and in John, thirteen. Outside the Gospels, it is found in Acts 7:56 and Rev 1:13: 14:14.¹

In the Gospel tradition, the Son of Man was Jesus' favorite way of designating Himself. In fact, it is the only title He freely used, except in one text where His words are quoted (John 12:34). The title is never used by anyone else to designate Jesus. Although the four Gospels constantly refer to Jesus as "the Son of Man," no attempts are made in the Gospels to explain the meaning of the phrase. This absence of any definition or explanation may imply that the designation was so well known to Jesus' contemporaries that any such explanation would be superfluous.²

Much has been written about the source of the term "Son of Man" and about its meaning in the texts of the Gospels, but it cannot be said that there is anything

¹Aune, 4:576.

²Another significant feature about the Greek phrase ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is that, with exception of John 5:27, it always has the definite article, suggesting that it referred to a well-known entity.
approaching unanimity on the meaning of the term. Most writers have concluded that the term could be traced to the influence of the book of Daniel. Morris thought that "Son of Man" was a technical apocalyptic term and, as such, was one of the central New Testament symbols expressing God's coming to Man.

The use of "Son of Man" in the Synoptics falls into three distinct categories: the Son of Man in earthly

1Some interpreters have found the background for Jesus' usage in Ezekiel: W. A. Curtis, Jesus Christ the Teacher: A Study of His Method and Message Based Mainly on the Earlier Gospels (London, Oxford University Press, 1943), 135-43; Alan Richardson, An Introduction to Theology of the New Testament (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1958), 20, 128; E. M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel (London: SPEK, 1961), 73-78. However, this fails to explain the eschatological use of the Son of Man in the Gospels (Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, 147). In the Similitudes of Enoch, we find that the Son of Man has become a messianic title of a pre-existent heavenly figure who descends to earth to sit upon the throne of judgment to destroy the wicked of the earth. But it is also not clear that the Son of Man figure in Enoch can become the background of the Son of Man concept of the Gospels because many scholars think the Similitudes cannot be pre-Christian.


ministry;¹ the Son of Man in suffering and death;² and the Son of Man in eschatological glory.³ The largest number of sayings are those that concern the coming of the eschatological Son of Man.⁴ This occurs twenty-eight times.

¹To forgive sins (Mark 2:10; Matt 9:6; Luke 5:24); Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27; Matt 12:8; Luke 6:5); eating and drinking (Matt 11:19; Luke 7:34); nowhere to lay his head (Matt 8:20; Luke 9:58); a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven (Matt 12:32; Luke 12:10); who do men say that the Son of Man is? (Matt 16:13); sows the good seed (Matt 13:37); persecution (Luke 6:22); came to save the lost (Luke 19:10); Judas' betrayal (Luke 22:48).

²The Son of Man must suffer (Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22); will suffer (Mark 9:12; Matt 17:12); risen from the dead (Mark 9:9; Matt 17:9); delivered into the hands of men (Mark 9:31; Matt 17:22; Luke 9:44); delivered to chief priests (Mark 10:33; Matt 20:18; Luke 18:31); came to give his life (Mark 10:45; Matt 20:28); woe to the betrayer (Mark 14:21; Matt 26:24; Luke 22:22); betrayed to sinners (Mark 14:41; Matt 26:45); three days in the earth (Matt 12:40; Luke 11:30).

³The Son of Man comes with the holy angels (Mark 8:38; Matt 16:27; Luke 9:26); coming with clouds and great glory (Mark 14:26; Matt 24:30; Luke 21:27); coming at an hour you do not expect (Matt 24:44; Luke 12:40); as the lightning (Matt 24:27; Luke 17:24); as in the days of Noah (Matt 24:37; Luke 17:26); you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel (Matt 10:23); send his angels (Matt 13:41); some will not taste death (Matt 16:28); sit on glorious throne (Matt 19:28); before the angels of God (Luke 12:8); you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man (Luke 17:22); so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30); will he find faith on earth? (Luke 18:8); to stand before the Son of Man (Luke 21:36).

⁴Caesarea Philippi and Peter's recognition of Jesus' Messiahship marks a turning point in Jesus' self-disclosure to His disciples. Before Caesarea Philippi, He had spoken of Himself only as the earthly Son of Man. After Caesarea Philippi, two new notes are introduced: the Son of Man must suffer and die, but afterward he would come as the eschatological Son of Man to judge and to rule in the eschatological Kingdom of God (Matt 16:13-28).
In Mark, the Son of Man is found predominantly in sayings that speak of "His earthly activity or anticipated suffering, death, and resurrection." Luke has quite a number of passages which he shares with Matthew and Mark. The phrase "the Son of Man" occurs thirteen times in John. The Gospel of John has its own distinctive material concerning the Son of Man. The Johannine sayings do not fall into the three classifications of the Synoptic Gospels. John is making use of an independent tradition.

1See Hare, The Son of Man Tradition, 183-211. In Mark, the Son of Man designation is used 14 times, including 2 earthly ministry sayings, and 9 suffering sayings. Only 3 times does the expression appear in a saying referring to Jesus' eschatological role (Mark 8:38; 13:26; 14:62). Mark makes clear throughout his Gospel that Jesus, the Son of Man, is the Messiah, the Son of God. But His greatness does not consist of power and majesty. The Son of Man must save sinners by his death and serve. The most vivid statement about this motif is found in Mark 10:45: "For the Son of Man also came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

2Hare, 183.

3The Son of Man designation occurs 25 times in Luke, including 8 earthly ministry sayings, 7 suffering sayings, and 10 eschatological sayings.


5There are several sayings that refer to the Son of Man in his passion, but the idiom is different from the Synoptics. The angels ascend and descend on the Son of Man (1:51). John speaks of Jesus' being lifted up from the earth, and sees therein Jesus' glorification.

6The difference between the Synoptic and Johannine uses of Son of Man does not require us to conclude that the Evangelist of the early church radically transformed the true historical tradition. On this point, Ladd writes properly: "John does indeed play down the eschatological
occurrences of the Son of Man designation refer to His passion and death, which are regarded as constituting His exaltation.\(^1\) The most significant motif among the Son of Man passages is the eschatological motif, and we found that the only sign in heaven when Jesus comes again will be clouds.

The sign in heaven in Revelation

The idea of a sign in heaven (σημεῖον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ) appears in Revelation. There are three signs in heaven in the Apocalypse: (1) 12:1, a woman clothed with the sun; (2) 12:3, a great red dragon; (3) 15:1, seven angels with the plague. Unlike Matthew, the writer of Revelation describes the sign in heaven in detail. But the signs are not the signs related to the coming of the Son of Man, and are not related to the cosmic upheaval. They are the symbolic signs of the great controversy between God and Satan.

In summary, although there is no clear parallel of the term "the sign of the Son of Man" in the New Testament, the clouds in heaven are also the most clear sign of the ascension and second coming of the Son of Man. Some sayings by omitting them and emphasizes one aspect that is implicit in the Synoptic sayings: the pre-existence and incarnation of the Son of Man. John probably emphasizes the reality of Jesus' flesh in the Son of Man sayings (6:51) to counter docetic tendencies": Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, 246.

continuities with the Old Testament are found: (1) though the theophanic motif is not frequent in New Testament, the most clear sign of theophany is the clouds, as in the Old Testament; (2) "Son of Man" was a technical apocalyptic term based on Dan 7:13-14. The continuity of the New Testament with the Apocalyptic literature is that clouds in heaven are the main sign in both corpora when the Son of Man appears.

The discontinuities from the Old Testament cannot be neglected: (1) the theophanic scene in the New Testament is the description of Jesus' ascension and return, and in any case, a clear sign is the clouds; (2) there is no ensign motif in the New Testament, therefore it is doubtful that the New Testament is influenced by the ensign motif. The discontinuity from the Apocalyptic literature is that the Apocalyptic literature emphasizes the clouds as a sign of the terrible judgment, whereas the New Testament focuses on the Parousia.

The Meaning of the Sign of the Son of Man in Matt 24:29-31

We have seen that there is no single parallel to Matt 24:30a in the biblical and extrabiblical literature, and that the unique sign in heaven at the theophany scene is the clouds in the apocalyptic tradition.

The Matthean "sign of the Son of Man" is one of the most enigmatic features of his version of the eschatological discourse. Scholars are unclear as to what the sign is
intended to be, where the idea comes from, and how it fits into the Matthean chapter. Only Matthew has the statement of the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: καὶ τὸτε φανήσεται τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν οὐρανῷ (24:30a). Mark and Luke leave out this passage and simply say, "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory."

The parent passages of Matt 24:30a are probably Exod 19:9-16 and Dan 7:13-14. Since the sign of the Son of Man is related to the theophanic scene, Jesus in Matthew might have in mind the theophanic scene at Mount Sinai when He spoke of the sign of the Son of Man. It is also generally agreed that Matt 24:30 is a reference to Dan 7:13, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐρχέτο in the LXX. The only apocalyptic writing which Matthew designated by name is the book of Daniel (24:15). Therefore the passages about the Son of Man coming in power and glory (Matt 13:41; 16:27; 24:30; 26:64) or having received power

1Wenham, Jesus' Eschatological Discourse, 318.

2Matthew follows more closely to the LXX than does Mark: Matthew has ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ in exact agreement with the LXX, where Mark has simply ἐν νεφέλαις. Here the context is clearly supplied by the Book of Daniel. In Dan 7 the ceremony takes place in the heavenly court, and the "one like a son of man" (7:13-14) comes with the clouds of heaven. The expression "one like a son of man" suggests someone or something other than a human being. In Matt 25:30 the Son of Man is identified as Jesus. And the way in which his "second coming" is described deliberately evokes Dan 7:13-14: "they will see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of the heaven with power and much glory."
(Matt 24:30; 28:28) are generally considered to be allusions to Daniel.¹

With that background, let us now focus on Matt 24:30, the verse where "the sign of the Son of Man" phrase is found. Only Matthew reports that Jesus, after speaking about cosmic convulsions just before the end, announces as something specific the appearing of the οὗτος οὗ τοῦ άνθρωπος (24:30). What is the meaning and background of the term "the sign of the Son of Man?" What is Matthew's intention to interpolate the peculiar term? Unfortunately, even though the structure of Matt 24:27-31 is clear, the saying about the sign of the Son of Man is itself mysterious. Because nothing is said about the nature of this sign, and because only Matthew uses the term in Scripture, there has been much debate about the source and meaning of "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven" (Matt

¹Granger, 113. However, there are some important differences between Daniel and the synoptists. Woolery enumerates the differences in his dissertation, "The Olivet Discourse in the Light of Present-Day Expectations of the Parousia," 189: According to him, the Synoptists revised Daniel in several ways: (1) The Son of Man in Daniel is brought to God's throne and not to earth, but the Son of Man in Synoptic Gospels is coming from heaven; (2) the synoptists present no revelation of God, only the Son of Man; (3) Daniel writes nothing about the Son of Man coming to gather the scattered people of God. Nevertheless, in spite of the adaptation of Daniel, the central theme of both Daniel and the evangelists is the exaltation of the Son of Man.
24:30).¹ I found that most suggestions are not based upon
the Matthean Parousia setting, but on the term itself or on
their assumption. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the
options.

The "sign of the Son of Man" has received five basic
interpretations:

1. From the historical perspective, Kik argues that
ἐν σύρρωσι only modifies τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου and not
σύμβλογ. This means that the sign was not in heaven but on
the earth, which was the destruction of Jerusalem. In his
view, the sign is the destruction of the temple and city
which marks the end of the old dispensation of Judaism.²
But it is highly doubtful that all the Parousia signs must
be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70
because the scenes speak clearly of the return of the Son of
Man. As Vincent Taylor observes, the Parousia is not a
human event. There is no room left for man in the Parousia
scene.³

2. The oldest interpretation, perhaps, is that after
the crucifixion, the cross became the sign of the
resurrected and ascended Lord. The sign of the Son of Man,

¹See Glasson, "The Ensign of the Son of Man," 299-
300; Rengstorf, "σύμβλογ," 7:236-37; Higgins, Jesus and the
Son of Man, 109-14; idem, "The Sign of the Son of Man," 380-
82; Beasley-Murray, Mark 13, 93; Ford, The Abomination of
Desolation, 106; Burnett, 338-54.

²Kik, 137.

³Taylor, 517.
then, is an enigmatic allusion to the cross, a phenomenon of portent in the sky which will cause the tribes of the earth to mourn, because it is the sign of the advent of the Son of Man, the judge. According to this theory, the "sign" is the cross which was taken up into heaven after the resurrection, and would reappear in the sky at Jesus' Parousia.\(^1\) Higgins has put forth a vigorous argument that the sign is the cross.\(^2\) The biblical background of this theory is in Rev 1:7, Zech 12:10, and Dan 7:13-14. In Rev 1:7, the Son of Man comes with the clouds, is seen by every eye, and by those who pierced Him, and consequently all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Most scholars hold

\(^1\)Cf. Some evidences are found in the New Testament Apocrypha. See Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha*, trans. R. McL. Wilson (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 1:225, 258. Gospel of Peter 10:39: "And whilst they were relating that they had seen, they saw again three men come out from the sepulchre, and two of them sustaining the other, and a cross following them"; Didache 16:6-8; "And then the proofs of the truth will appear; the first proof, an opening in the heavens; the next proof, the sounding of the trumpet, and the third, the resurrection of the dead. . . . Finally, the world will behold the Lord riding the clouds in the sky." Others explain the "proofs of the truth" as "a sign spread out in heaven," that is, Christ appearing on the cross with outstretched arms. There is an important allusion of Matt 24:30 in Epistula Apostolorum 16: "And we said to him 'O Lord, great is this that you say and reveal to us. In what kind of power and form are you about to come?' And he said to us, 'Truly I say to you, I will come as the sun which bursts forth; thus will I, shining seven times brighter than it in glory, while I am carried on the wings of the clouds in splendor with my cross going on before me, come to the earth to judge the living and the dead.'"

\(^2\)Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man*, 108-14; cf. idem, "The Sign of the Son of Man," 380-82; Burnett, 341.
that Matt 24:30 and Rev 1:7 may represent independent adaptations of Zech 12:10 and Dan 7:13. But, as Paul said, because the cross is a stumbling block to Jews and "foolishness to Gentiles" (1 Cor 1:23), it is doubtful that the cross will make the tribes of the earth mourn.

3. Another possible suggestion is that the sign is the Shekinah glory with which the Son of Man comes. Jesus gives two signs: the ensign of the hostile army which signals the destruction of the city, and the ensign of the Son of Man which heralds the redemption of His people. Beasley-Murray and Ford propose that the sign of the Son of Man most probably signifies the Shekinah glory with which He comes, a fitting counterpart to the impious ensign of Rome.2

4. As we have observed in the Old Testament section, some others maintain that the sign of the Son of Man may be an allusion to the "ensign" and the "standard" which were to be set up by Yahweh as a rallying point for His dispersed people.3

1Since Matthew, like the author of Revelation, is familiar with the association of the Zechariah passage with Dan 7:13, the absence in Matthew of any allusion to piercing is somewhat surprising.

2Beasley-Murray, Mark 13, 93; Ford, The Abomination of Desolation, 106.

3Glasson, The Second Advent, 200; idem, "The Ensign of the Son of Man," 299-300; Draper, 1-21.
5. The final suggestion is that the sign is the Son of Man Himself. This interpretation is based upon a formal correspondence between "the sign of Jonah" (Matt 12:39) and the "sign of the Son of Man" (24:30).\(^1\) It is tempting to see some connection between the sign of the Son of Man and the sign of Jonah (Luke 11:29). The form of the expression is exactly parallel.\(^2\) It is clear from the next verse in Luke that the sign of Jonah is the Son of Man. "For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation" (Luke 11:30). But the problem is that it is not so certain whether there is also a correspondence in meaning.\(^3\) Moreover, the sign of the Son of Man of the Parousia will be not for repentance, whereas Jonah was a sign of repentance for the Ninevites.

What, then, does the expression mean in the Matthean context? To Matthew and his readers, "Son of Man" is another name of Jesus. What is, then, the sign of Jesus? I found that this enigma must be considered in the context of the Matthean Parousia scenes because the sign of the Son of Man is Matthew's peculiar term. Mark and Luke do not give us a detailed Parousia order, as does Matthew. The sequence is as follows: (1) disappearing of the heavenly

\(^1\)Tödt, 153.

\(^2\)Higgins, "The Signs of the Son of Man," 381.

\(^3\)Higgins, Jesus and the Son of Man, 110-111. Higgins argues that it is extremely unlikely that the sign of the Son of man in Matthew is the Son of Man himself.
lights; (2) appearing of the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; (3) mourning of the tribes; (4) coming of the Son of Man on the clouds; (5) great trumpet call; and (6) gathering the elect.

After examining the order of the Parousia scene, we discover several aspects of Matthew's sign of the Son of Man. First of all, it is unlikely, because of its order, that the sign of the Son of Man is simply the Son of Man Himself. The problem is that the coming of the Son of Man is described two sentences later. According to the order, the appearance of the sign of the Son of Man in heaven is the sign of Jesus' Parousia, not the Parousia itself. The actual Parousia of the Son of Man is preceded by the sign and then by the mourning of the tribes of the earth. The reason the tribes will mourn is the appearance of the sign of the Son of Man. It is not correct that the Son of Man causes the mourning of the tribes, for this advent comes after the mourning has begun.

Second, it is not certain that the sign of the Son of Man is an "ensign" or a "banner." One of the difficulties with this view is that nowhere in the New Testament does οὖμειον mean the "ensign" or the "standard."\(^1\) Another weak point of this assertion is that the "ensign" is related only with war, not with the coming of the Lord in the Old Testament, whereas the sign of the

\(^1\)Burnett, 346.
Son of Man is the premonitory sign of the coming of the Son of Man. A third problem is that none of the "ensign" passages in the Old Testament are in such a specific setting as Matt 24:30, and are not related to "οὐκ ὄπω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ." The fourth problem is that even though we accept the "ensign" theory, the problem still remains unsolved because we do not know what the "ensign" really is.

Third, ἐν τότε occurs twice in 24:30. The words denote succession that is almost instantaneous. The events are occurring closer and closer together. The sign of the Son of Man will be made brilliantly visible in the sky after the darkening of the heavenly bodies. In order for the contrast to be effective, the interval between the scenes must be very short.

Fourth, since the darkening of the heavenly bodies is the cosmic sign, it is more fitting that the appearing of the sign in heaven should be a thing we can see in heaven.

Fifth, the sign of the Son of Man must bring the mourning of the tribes on the earth. It must be something terrible and a final sign of the last days which causes the mourning of the unsaved.

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1 See chap. 2, pp. 99-100; Lenski, 948.

2 Burnett points out that its (the sign of the Son of Man) significance for Matthew is that it clearly announces the end of this epoch and ushers in the judgment (Burnett, 350); Rengstorff, "ΟΤΙΜΙΟΥ," 7:236; "From the context one may gather only that it is something which is clearly terrifying, since it causes all races on earth to strike up a lament for themselves in their last hopeless distress."
Sixth, we also find emphasis on the universal visibility of the Son of Man's coming. That is why Matthew inserts references to the appearance of the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. "Will appear" stresses visibility. Every eye will see it (Rev 1:7).

Finally, the term "the sign of the Son of Man" might have been familiar to the Matthean readers because Matthew did not need to explain it. If it had not been, he would have described it in detail as the writer of Revelation does.¹

One of the possible solutions to the sign of the Son of Man is that it is the cross in connection with Zech 12:10, or the Ten Commandments,² or the Shekinah Glory. However, such signs do not indicate directly the coming of the Son of Man. The sign must be a clear, undeniable sign of the coming of the Son of Man. That is the reason why the tribes of earth mourn.

¹The writer of Revelation illustrates three apocalyptic signs appearing in heaven in the Book of Revelation: 12:1-2 ("a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars."); 12:3-6 ("another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon."); 15:1 ("Then I saw another portent in heaven, great and wonderful, seven angels with seven plagues"). John describes what he saw in heaven in detail.

²The Apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:29-31 is the same as the terms of the Sinai theophany when God gave the Ten Commandment to the Israelites. Therefore it is possible that the Covenant Law appears again with the same theophanic sign at the Parousia. This assumption can also explain the reason for the mourning of the tribes.
The most plausible answer is that the sign of the Son of Man is the glorious clouds which indicate clearly the coming of the Son of Man. When we see the Old Testament theophany, there were always clouds before the descent of the Lord, and the theophanic clouds are so glorious that everyone could distinguish the clouds from ordinary clouds.¹ If the mourning and the trumpet sounds are the audible signs, the clouds are the most significant visible sign of the coming of the Lord. In Acts 1:11, the most unique visible sign of His ascension is the clouds. As the disciples had seen Him go up into clouds, they would see Him coming down on the clouds from heaven.² The angel said to the disciples: "Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). We should note the emphatic words: οὗτος—οὕτως—όν τρόπον.³ The same Jesus would indeed return in the same way He left.⁴ He departed visibly, He shall return visibly; He went to heaven, He will come from

³Acts 1:11: "This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, (thus) will come in the same way."
heaven; He went away with clouds, He will come with clouds.¹

When the writer of Revelation wrote the scene of the returning of Christ, the only sign he describes is the clouds: "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him" (Rev 1:7). Therefore, if there is a sign related to the coming of the Son of Man, which the first-century believers knew very well as a sign of Christ's return, it would be the glorious clouds. It is significant that only Matthew mentioned a "bright cloud" in Matt 17:5. Therefore, I prefer to take the clouds as the sign of the Son of Man in the context of the Matthean Parousia scenes, which will appear brightly in the sky in contrast with the black and angry firmament.

To conclude, in the first scene, Jesus in Matthew describes the appearing of the sign of the Son of Man in a striking way with a background of a darkening of the cosmic lights. After the clouds of glory appear, as the clearest sign of the coming of the Son of Man, the tribes of the earth will realize that this is the end of the world, and that they have no hope to be gathered as His elect because

¹This is, of course, not ordinary clouds which we have all the time. The "sign clouds" were and will be the most glorious clouds which all the tribes will immediately recognize as the sign of the Parousia. The Son of Man will not be seen yet, but the tribes of the earth will realize that the Son of Man will come with those clouds, and their fate will be decided forever. That is the reason why the tribes of the earth mourn.
they have rejected the calling. The function of such teaching from Jesus for Matthew's community clearly has the double aspects of warning and hope. It is the "warning of judgment and the hope" that they will not be among the mourning tribes.¹

Two trajectories are drawn based on the study of this section: the chronological trajectory (diagram 3) and the logical (motifs) trajectory (diagram 4). Diagram 3 shows the development of the motifs and concept of the sign of the Son of Man chronologically, diagram 4 indicates the logical relationship of the motifs. The colors demonstrate the path of the motifs and make it easier to trace the motif. As we see in diagrams 3 and 4, we find that it is difficult to trace in the apocalyptic tradition the correct concept of the sign of the Son of Man. Even though the clouds have been the most plausible sign in heaven in the apocalyptic tradition, the evidences still need further study.

¹Burnett, 351.
Chronological Trajectory Diagram 3: The Sign of the Son of Man

Old Testament

Before 1000 B.C.

750-650 B.C.

- Isa 11:10-12
  - Ensign+
  - Gathering

- Isa 13:1-10
  - Ensign+
  - Mourning+
  - Darkening

650-550 B.C.

- Dan 7:13-14
  - The sign of heaven of the Son of Man—Clouds

Apocalyptic Literature

2 cen B.C.

- 1 En 37-71
  - Son of Man passages but no cloud appear

100 A.D.

- 2 Bar 53-57
  - Clouds coming up from the sea not in heaven

- 4 Ezra—Judgment Clouds
  - 13:1-7, A man came up out from the sea, flew with the clouds
  - 15:34-35, threatening clouds

Exod 19:9-16; 34:5

Theophany sign in heaven—clouds

Isa 18:3

Ensign + Trumpet

Jer 51:27

Set up a standard blow the trumpet

Sib Or 3:798

Sword in starry heaven

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Theophany sign in heaven—clouds

Exod 19:9-16; 34:5
Theophany sign in heaven—clouds

Isa 13:1-10
Isa 18:3
Ensign + Mourning + Darkening
Ensign + Trumpet

Jer 51:27
Set up a standard
blow the trumpet

Matt 24:30
Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.

Luke 21:21
Parousia sign—cloud

Mark 13:26
Clouds are important sign of the Parousia.

Mark 9:2-13
Theophany sign—clouds

Acts 1:9f
Ascension sign—cloud

4 Ezra—Judgment Clouds

13:1-7, A man came up out from the sea, flew with the clouds
15:34-35, threatening clouds

Sib Or 3:798
Sword in starry heaven

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A — A^- allusion contrast

-Hark 13:26
Clouds are important sign of the Parousia.

Theophany Son of Man

Clouds are the most prominent sign of theophany.

Rabbinic Literature

Revelation 1:7; 14:14-16
Clouds are the main sign of the Parousia.

Acts 1:9f
Ascension sign-cloud

Luke 21:27
Theophany sign-cloud

Mark 13:26
Clounds are important sign of the Parousia.

Mark 9:2-13
Theophany sign-clouds

Matt 24:30
Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.

Matt 17:5
Theophany sign-clouds

Sign of the Parousia.

Banner — Teacher of Righteousness 1QH 2:13-14
Ensign — Raised up by the dead 1QH 6:34-35

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Logical Trajectory Diagram 4: The Sign of the Son of Man

A→B possible allusion  A→B allusion
A**********B contrast  A.......→B echo
A←→B not clear which one influences the other

Old Testament

The Ensign Motif
Isa 11:10-12
Ensign + gathering
Isa 13:1-13
Ensign + mourning + darkening
Isa 18:3; Jer 51:27
Standard + trumpet

The Sign of Danielic Son of Man—Clouds
The only sign of the Son of Man in Dan 7:13-14 is the clouds of heaven.

Theophany Sign in Heaven—Clouds
The most prominent sign of theophany in heaven is clouds
Exod 19:11-24
34:5; Ps 97:1-6

A Jacalptic

Judgment Motif
The sign in heaven when Messiah comes is clouds but emphasize judgment
2 Bar 53-72
4 Ezra 13:1-5; 15:34-35

Son of Man Figure
emphasize judgment
1 En 37-71
4 Ezra 13:1-7

The Sign of Danielic Son of Man—Clouds
Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.
Matt 24:30

New Testament

Theophany
Transfiguration Mt 17:5
Ascension Acts 1:9-11

Son of Man
Parousia
Matt 24:30
Mark 13:30
Luke 21:27
Rev 1:7
14:14-16

Rabbinic

Theophany Motif
Clouds are the most prominent sign.
Midrash Gen R. 56:1

Son of Man Figure
Clouds are used as messianic title a reflection of Dan

Qumran Liter.
Banner
Teacher of Righteousness
1QH 2:13-14
Ensign
Raised up by the dead
1QH 6:34-35

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Scene IIa (24:30b): Mourning of the Tribes

After the sign of the Son of Man, the second Parousia scene is introduced by και τότε. Matthew's interest is "not only in the appearance of the sign, he is more interested, perhaps, in the fact that "seeing" the sign would lead to understanding about Jesus as the Son of Man and about one's relationship to Him."¹ In Scene IIa we hear the mourning of the tribes at the Parousia of the Son of Man. Who are the tribes? Why are they mourning? What is the function of the mourning of the tribes in the Parousia context in Matt 24:27-31?

Matthew uses the Greek verb κόπτω to express the mourning of the tribes in 24:30. Κόπτος (mourning) is the noun form of κόπτω (mourn).² According to Liddell and Scott's dictionary, κόπτω means (1) "smite," "cut off," "strike," and "beat," and (2) mourn for any one.³ Stählin summerizes: "It is common to Greek and many other languages of the East and the West that verbs with the basic sense of 'to beat' take on the secondary sense 'to mourn.'"⁴

¹Burnett, 345.
³Liddell and Scott, 979.
⁴Stählin, 3:831.
Old Testament Background

In the LXX, ΚΟΠΤΕΩ occurs fifteen times, and ΚΟΠΤΕΙΝ eighty-four. They are mostly used for ὙΠΟ and ὙΠΟ,¹ and the terms are predominantly used for smite, beat, cut off,² and mourning in general.³ In Old Testament times, heathen mourning practices for the dead were forbidden (Lev 19:28; Deut 14:1),⁴ but it was customary before or at a burial to wail and lament for the dead, to beat the breast and so to fulfill one's loving obligations toward the dead person.⁵ Some were

¹Stählin, 3:836. "The exact equivalent of ΚΟΠΤΟΜΑΙ in the strict sense is the Hebrew ὙΠΟ. . . . In the broad sense, however, the words ΚΟΠΤΟΜΑΙ, ΚΟΠΤΕΩ correspond to Hebrew terms for mourning, esp. the verb ὙΠΟ." The Hebrew Bible uses ὙΠΟ 38 times, and ὙΠΟ 15 times, to refer to "mourn" or "mourning." But in the LXX, ΚΟΠΤΕΩ, ΚΟΠΤΕΙΝ are not translating ὙΠΟ at all, and are mostly used for ὙΠΟ (27 times) and ὙΠΟ (15 times), and are predominantly used for mourning in general. The other terms indicating "mourning" are as follows: ὙΠΟ (12), ὙΠΟ (18), ὙΠΟ (5), ὙΠΟ (4), ὙΠΟ (3).

²Fifty-five times: Gen 32:8; Exod 27:20; 29:40; Lev 24:2; Num 13:24 (23), 25(24); Deut 19:5; 25:18; Josh 10:20; 11:8; Judg 1:4,5, 17; 6:30; 9:48,49; 20:43; 2 Kgs 5:20,24; 3 Kgs 5:6,6,11; 11:15; 12:24; 4 Kgs 19:23; 2 Chr 2:8,9, 16(15); 31:1; 34:4,7; Judg 15:5; Esth 5:14; Hag 1:8; Zech 14:12; Isa 9:10; 10:15; 14:8; 22:12; 32:12; 37:24; 41:44; Jer 23:29; 26(46):5,13,22; 29(47):6(5); 31(48):2,37; 48(41):5; 51(44):8; Ezek 9:5,7,8; 39:10.

³Twenty-two times: Gen 23:2; 50:10,10; 1 Kgs 25:1; 28:3; 2 Kgs 1:12; 3:31; 11:26; 3 Kgs 13:29,30,31; 14:13,18; Esth 4:3; Eccl 3:4; 12:5; Jer 8:2; 16:4,5,6; 22:18; 41(34):5.

⁴Lev 19:28, "You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh on account of the dead."

⁵Haarbeck, 2:418.
professional mourners (2 Chr 32:25; Eccl 12:5; Jer 9:17). Women assumed the chief role and were called "singing women" (2 Chr 35:25), or "mourning women" (Jer 9:17). Two purposes of mourning were the eulogy of the dead and lamentation of the tragic situation in the Scripture. How did the Jewish people practice the ΚΟΠΕΤΟΣ? The people of Israel had a variety of customs associated with mourning for the dead.1 The most common practice was to tear one's clothes, put on sackcloth, and to mourn many days (Gen 37:34).

It is not necessary to search all the ninety-nine usages of the term ΚΟΠΕΤΟΣ, ΚΟΠΕΣΙΝ, for most of them are not within the motif of the mourning of the tribes at the Parousia.2 Only eighteen out of ninety-nine occurrences are used as the description of the judgment or eschatological motif.3 The prophet Micah mourned for the transgression of Israel (1:8,11).4 In the oracle concerning Moab, Isa 15:1-

1Gen 23:1-2; 37:34-35; 2 Sam 3:31-34; Jer 16:6-7; Ezek 24:16-18. The linguistic and biblical data show the following practices of mourning: going barefoot; stripping off one's clothes; cutting the hair and beard; scattering of ashes; fasts; cries of sorrow and lamentation. In addition, beating the breast (Isa 32:12), the face (Ezra 6:9; 20:43) or the hip (Ezra 21:17; Jer 31:19) is an established part of mourning. See Haarbeck, 2:417; Stählin, 3:837.

2For detailed information, see Appendix 2.


4McComiskey, 7:406. Here the prophet lamented the destruction of Samaria by representing himself as wailing and going about unclothed as a sign of mourning.
concerning Moab, Isa 15:1-9 describes realistically the fear and mourning of the tribes who meet the judgment day.

In the streets they gird on sackcloth;
  on the housetops and in the squares
  every one wails and melts in tears.
  Heshbon and Ele-a'leh cry out,
  therefore the armed men of Moab cry aloud;
  his soul trembles.1

Jeremiah lamented the disaster of Israel coming from God's wrath and described the mourning of the people of Israel2 that was as "mourning as for an only son" and the "most bitter lamentation" (6:26). The wrath of God will not be limited to Israel because "evil is going forth from nation to nation" (25:32). The judgment shall extend "from one end of the earth to the other" and they shall not be "lamented, or gathered, or buried; they shall be dug on the surface of the ground" (25:33). Therefore Jeremiah proclaims: "Wail, you shepherds, and cry, and roll in ashes, you lords of the flock" (25:34). Ezekiel illustrated the mourning of the people for the destruction of Tyre and Tarshish (27:25-36).3

1Isa 15:3-4; Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1985), 1:457. It is a weeping of bitterness and anguish, for the land is destroyed.


3Ralph H. Alexander, "Ezekiel," EBC, 6:878. Many parallels to Rev 18:1-19 are found here. They bitterly mourned for Tyre in her death by putting on sackcloth, shaving their heads, placing dust on their heads, and rolling in ashes—all normal conduct at a funeral.
A significant passage for Matt 24:30 is found in Zech 12:10-14. Many scholars propose that these verses are significantly related with Matt 24:30 and Rev 1:7. According to Zech 12:10-14, Yahweh will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a "spirit of compassion and supplication." Then they will look on Him they have pierced and will weep bitterly. The weeping will involve all the families in Jerusalem. Undoubtedly this passage in Zech 12 is eschatological, but the problem is that the mourning of Zech 12:10 is not the wailing of the desperate sinner, but the mourning of the repentance of Israel.

It is not enough to study only the meaning of the term itself, because the motif is more important than the term. Therefore, it is also meaningful to study other eschatological "mourning" motifs, though they do not use the exact terms, ΚΟΠΕΤΟΣ, ΚΟΠΤΕΙΝ.

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1For a detailed comparison, see Louis Vos, 60-75; Carson, 505; Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament*, 52-53.

2Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 278-79. Zech 12:10 says that the weeping of Jerusalem in the 'end-time' will be as great as the "weeping of Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddon. The reference is to some great public lamentation which might have been repeated annually in the plain of Megiddon, but we are not told the precise nature of the event." It is probably best to understand the prophet here as saying, the eschatological weeping will be as loud and deep as the pagan's wailing for their gentile gods."

3Ibid., 278.
There is a significant motif in the Old Testament for understanding the "mourning of the tribes" in Matt 24:30. It is the motif of "the Day of the Lord" as we saw in chapter 2. The mourning of the tribes occurs at the "Last Day," the great judgment Day of the Lord. Both motifs (mourning of the tribes and the Day of the Lord) tell of the mourning and fate of the sinner before the Lord. If we search for the identity of the tribes at the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament, we find some clues to interpret the "mourning of the tribes" motif in Matt 24:30.

It is generally held that the Day of the Lord is the day of Judgment.1 Through the prophets, God proclaims terrible judgment, and with this proclamation He calls for lamentation over the affliction of the people.

Amos 5:16-20 refers to the mourning, gloom, and darkness of the Day of the Lord:2

In all the squares there shall be wailing;
and in all the streets they shall say, "Alas! Alas!"
They shall call the farmers to mourning,
and to wailing those who are skilled in lamentation,
And in all vineyards there shall be wailing,
for I will pass through the midst of you,
says the Lord.
Woe to you who desire the Day of the Lord!
Why would you have the Day of the Lord?

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1Zeph 1:15. That day will be a "day of wrath," a "day of distress and anguish," a "day of trouble and ruin," a "day of darkness and gloom," and a "day of clouds and blackness."

2Hasel, 112: "The picture of the yôm YHWH of the Lord in the Book of Amos makes it clear that it is a day of disaster for Israel. It is a day of darkness and not light."
It is darkness, and not light; as if a man fled from a
lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and
leaned with his hand against the wall, and a serpent
bit him.
Is not the Day of the Lord darkness, and not light, and
gloom with no brightness in it? (italics mine)\(^1\)

In Amos 5:16-20, the picture of the Day of the Lord makes it
clear that it is a day of mourning for Israel. The
implication is plain: the prophet's contemporaries
understood that the Day of the Lord would be a day of
calamity for the earth, but they were assured that its
desolations would meet other nations, not them. However,
they must know that the Day of the Lord is not upon Gentiles
as such, but upon the rebellious against the Lord, whoever
they may be.

Isa 13, an oracle against Babylon, is a typical
example of prophetic representations of the situation of the
Gentiles at the Day of the Lord.\(^2\) It develops the images
of war with its accompanying terror, desolation, and death.
While the prophecy is directed against Babylon, the heavens
and the earth are said to be shaken in that day and disaster
comes upon the whole world:

\textit{Wail, for the Day of the Lord is near; as destruction
from the Almighty it will come! Therefore all hands will
be feeble, and every man's heart will melt, and they
will be dismayed. Pangs and agony will seize them; they

\(^1\)Amos 5:16-20.

\(^2\)Young, 408-09; G. W. Grogan, "Isaiah," EBC, 6:98.
Babylon is the object of the prophecy. Chap. 13 (chaps 13-
23) begins whole series of prophecies against the nations.
will be in anguish like a woman in travail (italics mine).\textsuperscript{1}

In Isa 13:6-8, the trembling fear and shaking terror of men is compared to the anguish of a woman in travail.

Isa 24 surveys the devastation and the judgment upon the world. The prophecy in it is of a "world-wide catastrophe which affects men of all classes and all places which should be regarded as a unity."\textsuperscript{2} The fields are barren and unplanted. The cities are ruined and are without life. The "earth mourns and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth" (24:4, italics mine). It is significant that the peculiar sign of the Day of the Lord, the darkening of the heavenly bodies, appears with the mourning motif. In comparison with the glory of Yahweh, the sun and moon "must recognize their meaninglessness."\textsuperscript{3}

In Isa 65, the eschatology reaches its zenith.\textsuperscript{4} God here speaks of the rebellious people, who, in contrast to His servants, walk in a way that is not good. The people provoke Him to anger by following their own devices (65:2-3). Therefore, God speaks:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1}Isa 13:6-8.
\item \textsuperscript{3}Watts, Isaiah 1-33, 330; cf. Isa 60:19; Zech 14:7; Rev 21:23; 22:5.
\item \textsuperscript{4}Grogan, 6:348.
\end{itemize}
Behold, my servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but you shall be put to shame; behold, my servants shall sing for gladness of heart, but you shall cry out for pain of heart, and shall wail for anguish of spirit (italics mine).  

Four contrasts follow in vss. 13-14, each of which is introduced by "behold!" Here the true servants of God are to enjoy supreme happiness, whereas the apostate will wail. Those who have been disobedient will receive the opposite of what comes to God's servants. Despair will overtake those who have rejected the promises of hope.

Figure 5 shows the mourning motifs of the Old Testament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mourning of Israel</th>
<th>Mourning of Gentiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jer 4:8; 6:26; 9:10</td>
<td>Babylon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5. The Mourning of Israel and Gentiles.

In conclusion, the mourning of the people in the Old Testament is the eschatological wailing for both Israel and all the nations who do not obey God. It is significant that the terms "mourn bitterly," "mourning as for an only son," "ash," and "sackcloth" appear when the prophets speak of the

1Isa 65:13-14.

2Watts, Isaiah 34-66, 345: "The contrast in the fate of the two groups is shown by their responses. Yahweh servants will sing. The others will wail in their anguished spirit."
mourning of Israel at the last day (Zech 12:10, Jer 6:26). This may indicate that the mourning of the people of God is greater and more bitter than that of the tribes of the world, and that the mourning is not for judgment but for repentance.

**Mourning of the Tribes in the Apocalyptic Literature**

The eschatological κόπτω and κοπετός¹ are not found in the Apocalyptic literature which is written in Greek, but the motif of "the mourning of the tribes" is found in Day of the Lord or in the judgment scenes.

1 En 102:1-3 describes the terror of the judgment day which has some parallels to Matt 24:27-29:

> In those days, when he hurls out against you terror of fire, where shall you flee, and where shall you find safety? When he flings his word against you, will you not faint and fear? All the luminaries shall faint with great fear, the whole earth shall faint and tremble and panic. All the angels shall fulfil their orders. The children of the earth will seek to hide themselves from the presence of the Great Glory, trembling and confounded. You sinners, you are accursed forever; there is no peace for you!²

It is interesting to find affinities with heavenly bodies fainting and sinners who are accursed and trembling before the glory of God, and the angels who fulfill their orders. The Most High will arise on that day of Judgment in order to execute a great judgment upon all the sinners in 1 En 100:7-

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¹Mourning or lamentation on lawless deeds: Sib Or 5:193; beat, cut off: Sib Or 3:396, 398, 651, 731; 5:86, 219.

²Isaac, OTP, 1:82.
9. Great fear and trembling shall seize them unto the ends of the earth.¹

Sib Or 3:670-79 also depicts the cosmic judgment and terror of people. As God will speak with a great voice, and judgment will come upon them from the great God, all the souls of men and all the sea will shudder before the face of the Mortal (Lord) and there will be terror. Sib Or 3:694-697 forms an epilogue. It speaks of a general outcry in the land: "Then they will recognize the immortal God who judges these things. Wailing and tumult will spread throughout the boundless earth at the death of man."²

The terror and the anguish at the end of the age is also described in 4 Ezra 6:11-24.³ The books will be opened before the firmament, and all shall see it together.

¹Ibid., 1:81; 1 En 100:7-9: "Woe unto you, sinners, when you oppress the righteous ones, in the day of hard anguish, and burn them with fire! You shall be recompensed according to your deeds. Woe unto you, you hard of heart, who are watchful to devise evil! Fear shall seize you, and none shall come to your aid. Woe unto you, sinners because of the words of your hands! On account of the deeds of your wicked ones, in blazing flames worse than fire, it shall burn" (italics mine).

²Sib Or 3:694.

³Metzger, 1:535. 4 Ezra 6:20-24: "The books shall be opened before the firmament, and all shall see it together. Sown places shall suddenly appear unsown, and full storehouses shall suddenly be found to be empty; and the trumpet shall sound aloud, and when all hear it, they shall suddenly be terrified. At that time friends shall make war on friends like enemies, and the earth and those who inhabit it shall be terrified, and the springs of the fountains shall stand still, so that for three hours they shall not flow."
There will be natural disorder; and the "trumpet shall sound aloud,"¹ and when all hear it, "they shall suddenly be terrified" (6:23). In 4 Ezra 7:78-87, the suffering consists primarily of remorse for the past and dread of the future.² The last time is the "final evil time," which the rabbis often call the woes of the Messiah. 4 Ezra 13:16-19 is typical.

_Woe to those who will survive in those days! And still more, woe to those who do not survive! For those who do not survive will be sorrowful, because they understand what is in store for the last days, but not attaining it. But woe also to those who do survive, for this reason—they shall see great dangers and much distress, as these dreams show (italics mine)._  

4 Ezra 13:29-32 reports the detailed description of the turbulence of the people. This passage opens with the expression: "Behold, the day is coming." Two features are particularly notable in this expression: (1) Redemption is assigned to the Most High; (2) this passage introduces the immediate judgment.³ "Bewilderment of mind" shall come over those who dwell on earth (13:30). From these

¹The trumpet blast announced by this verse is not that announcing the eschaton but a fearful omen. See Stone, 171.

²Metzger, 1:539; 4 Ezra 7:80-84: "Such spirits shall not enter into habitations, but shall immediately wander about in torments, ever grieving and sad in seven ways. The first way, because they have scorned the law of the Most High. The second way, because they cannot now make a good repentance that they may live. . . . The fourth way, they shall consider the torment laid up for themselves in the last days."

³Stone, 402.
apocalyptic texts, the tumult of the nations is outlined more clearly; there shall come astonishment of mind upon the dwellers on earth, and they shall "plan to war one against another, city against city, place against place, people against people, and kingdom against kingdom" (13:31). These things are expected to take place before the revelation of the Messiah (13:32).

The context of 2 Bar 48:30-42 is a description of the evil time before the coming of the Judge (48:40). There will be turbulence. Many will be agitated by wrath to injure many; and they will raise armies to shed blood; therefore, a fire will consume their thoughts. The climax is probably represented in 48:40-41:

For the Judge will come and will not hesitate. For each of the inhabitants of the earth knew when he acted unrighteously, and they did not know my Law because of their pride. But many will surely weep at that time—more, however, because of the living ones than of the dead.1

1 There are some other passages to express that the eschatological turmoil will occur only to the wicked. 2 Baruch depicted clearly that the woe apparently falls only upon the ungodly who dwell outside the land (2 Bar 9:2; 32:1; 40:2; 71:1). In the Apocalypse of Abraham, the terrors of the latter days are thought of as God's punishment of the Gentiles, particularly those who have oppressed the offspring of Abraham. Apo Ab 29:14 depicts: "Before the age of justice starts to grow, my judgment will come upon the heathen who have acted wickedly through the people of your seed who have been set apart for me. In those days I will bring upon all earthly creation ten plagues through evil and disease and the groaning of the bitterness of their souls." In Apo Ab 30:2, the eschatological woes are introduced as "the plagues which God has prepared for the heathen."
In sum, the Apocalyptic literature generally follows the mourning motif of the Old Testament; on the last day, the sinners will mourn, but it is the day of salvation for the people of God. However, it has some discontinuities from the Old Testament: The Old Testament describes at the same time the mourning of the sinners and the mourning of the Israel. But the Apocalyptic literature only illustrates the mourning of the nations. The Apocalyptic literature also emphasizes the judgment and punishment aspect of the mourning motif by using the terms woe, fear, burn, fire, flames, terror of fire, flames, accursed, and torment.

The Qumran Literature

In the Qumran literature, the theme of the mourning of the tribes does not appear frequently. The Hebrew word ילעא translated ΚΟΠΕΤΟΣ, ΚΟΠΠΕΙΝ in the LXX occurs only a few times and means mourning for death, disaster, and sorrow.¹

The other mourning motifs, though they do not use the exact term ילעא, reflect the theme of the woe of the wicked at the judgment day.² According to the Damascus Document, God's judgment of sinners will leave "no remnant


²CD 1:11,12; 2:6,7,20; 1QS 2:4-8; 4:11-14; 1QM I:5-7; 3:9; 11:9-11; 1Qp Hab 10:3-5.
remaining of them nor survivor."¹ The wicked will end in the terrible pit of fire and darkness. The Community Rule tells of its horror.² The wicked will be in a "multitude of plagues by the hand of all the destroying angels," and "everlasting damnation by the avenging wrath of the fury of God."³ All their times from age to age are in most "sorrowful mourning and in bitter misery, in calamities of darkness until they are destroyed without remnant or survivor."⁴

The evil doers will be destroyed in the eschatological war between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness.⁵ The wickedness will be subdued without a remnant, but this time shall be the "time of deliverance for the people of God."⁶

The Rabbinic Literature

In the rabbinic literature, there are many references to "mourning" as a Jewish custom, but the theme of the mourning of the tribes at the end time seldom

¹CD 2:6,7.
²1QS 2:5-7: "Be cursed because of all your guilty wickedness! May He deliver you up for torture at the hands of the vengeful Avengers! . . . Be cursed without mercy because of the darkness of your deeds!"
³1QS 4:12.
⁴1QS 4:13-14.
⁵Cf. Yadin, 4,7,33,310.
⁶1QM I:5.
appears.\(^1\) It generally follows the Old Testament motif. According to B. T. *Rosh Hashanah*, 16b refers to the fate of the wicked quoting Dan 12:2: "There will be three groups at the Day of Judgment--one of thoroughly righteous, one of thoroughly wicked, and one of intermediate. . . . The thoroughly wicked will forthwith be inscribed definitively as doomed to Gehinnom." B. T. *Nedarim* 8b indicates that the wicked shall be judged and punished thereby.

**The Mourning of the Tribes in the New Testament**

In the New Testament, \(\text{Κόπτω}\) occurs only eight times and appears exclusively in the Synoptic Gospels and Revelation.\(^2\) The noun form \(\text{Κοπήτος}\) is used only once (Acts 8:2). Among these nine cases, two passages use the term meaning to "cut down"\(^3\) and the other five cases are used as "bewailing and lamenting" the dead at funerals (Matt 11:17; Luke 8:52; 23:27; Acts 8:2). The story of Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:52) shows the mourning which followed immediately upon a person's death. Mourning women met Jesus on the way to Golgotha (Luke 23:27). In the early Christian church, "devout men" came together after the death of Stephen to make great lamentation over him (Acts 8:2). As we have

\(^1\)See the index of *The Mishnah, The Midrash*, and *The Babylonian Talmud*.


\(^3\)Matt 21:8; Mark 11:8.
seen, most occurrences are about mourning for the dead. In Rev 18:9, the kings of the earth, who committed fornication with Babylon, will weep and wail over her when they see her destruction.

The motif of "the mourning of the tribes at the Parousia" is found only in Matt 24:30 and Rev 1:7. One of the most difficult sayings in Revelation is found in Rev 1:7: "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, every one who pierced him; and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of Him." Most scholars agree that Rev 1:7 and Matt 24:30 quote from Dan 7:13 and Zech 12:10. In Daniel's vision, the prophet saw one like a son of man coming "with the clouds of heaven" (Dan 7:13). In Zechariah he saw that the inhabitants of Jerusalem would "mourn for Him" (Zech 12:10). These two prophetic motifs seem to be joined by John and are adapted to describe the "impending advent of the victorious Christ and the response of a hostile world to the revelation of his universal sovereignty." Desmond Ford proposes that the quotation from Zechariah about the weeping of all the earth's nations, as they look upon Him whom they have pierced, points to Armageddon when the angry multitudes of earth, intent on

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1 See Louis Vos, 60-75; Carson, 505; Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament, 52-53. The historical allusion in Zech 12 concerns the weeping over Josiah who was slain at Megiddo in the seventh century B.C. That righteous king prefigured a greater One.

2 Mounce, Revelation, 72.
destroying the people of the lamb, are suddenly interrupted by the advent of Him whom they have despised.\(^1\) Louis Vos observes that Matt 24:30 appears to be more faithful to Dan 7:13, whereas Revelation 1:7 appears to be closer to Zech 12:10.\(^2\)

Because these two Old Testament passages are common to both Rev 1:7 and Matt 24:30, it seems very likely that the Matthean and Revelation traditions are also related.\(^3\) Wenham suggests two particular points supporting the relationship between Matt 24:30 and Rev 1:7: \(^4\) (1) they are agreed in the wording and form of the last clause, ἀρνεῖται πᾶσαι αἱ φυλai τῆς γῆς, which is a contraction and modification of the wording of Zech 12:10-14 of LXX; (2) both Matthew and Revelation combine the Zechariah citation with a citation of Dan 7 about the Son of Man's coming in the clouds. \(^5\) The juxtaposition of the "seeing" the coming of

\(^{1}\)Ford, *Crisis*, 2:247.

\(^{2}\)Louis Vos, 65.

\(^{3}\)Ibid., 61. According to Vos, there are three possibilities: (1) the Revelation could be dependent upon the Gospel; or (2) both the Apocalypse and the Gospel could be dependent upon a common collection of Old Testament passages or directly dependent upon the Old Testament itself; or (3) both Matthew and John could independently be repeating what Jesus was reported to have said then He talked with His disciples on the Mount of Olives.


\(^{5}\)The order of citations is opposite: Matthew--mourning/seeing/coming in the clouds; Revelation--coming/seeing/mourning.
the Son of Man on the clouds and the "mourning of the tribes" indicates that in both Matt 24:30 and Rev 1:7 it refers to an "eschatological event." This agreement of Matthew and Revelation would be simply explained if the author of Revelation knew Matthew.\(^1\)

There is another way to study the motif of the "mourning," though it does not represent the exact term κρότων. In Matthew, Jesus says seven times that the evil one will be cast out, and there they will weep (κλαίειν) and gnash their teeth.\(^2\) In this instance, the word always describes the condition of the wicked associated with the judgment.

In Rev 6:15-17 after the description of the signs in the heavens, there is a picture of terror: "the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place" (6:14). Then all the people hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of

\(^1\)On the use of the Synoptic Gospels in Revelation, see Vos, 54-193; Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Future, 240. Beasley-Murray proposes that it is a reasonable postulate that John knew the eschatological discourse and utilized in the construction of Rev 6. However, the significant element in the utilization of terms is not so much that the same word is employed, but that it is interpreted in the same way.

their wrath has come, and who can stand before it?" (6:16-17). The imagery expressed here, though not the wording, is distinctly reminiscent of Matt 24:30, where the tribes of the earth mourn. In Rev 18:11,15,19, the judgment on Babylon is mourned by those who committed fornication with her. The deep sense of loss at the destruction of their source of wealth pervades the description of their reaction. However, their grief is from selfish feelings of loss, not from repentance.\(^1\)

In sum, the eschatological mourning motif in the New Testament is not the mourning of repentance, but the mourning of the unsaved on the day of judgment. The continuities with the Old Testament are: (1) in both corpora, the mourning of the tribes is not limited to the tribes of Israel or to the Gentiles, but extends to all those who are not saved at the moment of the Day of the Lord; and (2) both corpora have the Babylon motif and the mourning motif for their destruction by those who committed fornication with her. One continuity with the Apocalyptic literature is that both corpora have some judgment tone in the scene of the eschatological mourning.

The discontinuity from the Old Testament is that the mourning in the New Testament is not for repentance (cf. \(^1\)George. E. Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972), 239.)
Zech 12:10), but for their lost opportunity. The discontinuity from the Apocalyptic literature is that though the "mourning of the tribes" motifs in the New Testament, except Matt 24:30, indicate judgment, the New Testament uses vivid judgment terms less often than does the Apocalyptic literature; e.g., fire, blazing flames, and natural disorder.

The Meaning of the Mourning of Tribes in Matt 24:29-31

As we have seen, the mourning of the tribes on the Day of the Lord contains some eschatological meaning. The mourning of the people in the Old Testament is the eschatological wailing for both Israel and all the nations who do not obey God. The Apocalyptic literature only illustrates the mourning of the nations, emphasizing the judgment and punishment aspects. The eschatological mourning in the Gospels and Revelation is not the mourning of repentance, but the mourning of the unsaved on the day of judgment in relation to the Parousia. With these inheritances, Matthew describes the mourning of the tribes in his peculiar structure of the Parousia.

Matthew starts the second scene of the Parousia with another ἔστω. Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the "Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (24:30c). The second scene consists of two dramatic events: the mourning
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of the tribes of the earth, and the coming of the Son of Man from heaven. Who are the tribes of the earth? and why will they mourn?

Some scholars who hold a dispensational position assert that the mourning of the tribes of the earth has reference to the twelve tribes of Israel.¹ Gaebelein claims that "all the tribes of the land" simply means that the persons who mourn belong to the twelve tribes of Israel. All the Jews of the land were to mourn at that time.² As a historicist, Kik interprets the passage as the event fulfilled in the year A.D. 70, that there was deep mourning not only among citizens of Jerusalem and Judea, but also by the diaspora scattered over the entire world, as they learned of the ruin of the beloved city and Temple.³

But, φυλαῖ means "a company of people united by kinship or habitation, a clan, tribe." It is used in the New Testament in a twofold way: either to refer to the tribes of Israel or to the kindreds of the earth.⁴ Therefore a careful examination of the context is largely

²Gaebelein, The Olivet Discourse, 67.
³Kik, 139.
determinative. Kik also ignored the eschatological order in
the Parousia scene connected by Καὶ ὁ Τότε. The event of the
mourning of the tribes occurs just after the appearing of
the sign of the Son of Man, and just before the coming of
the Son of Man on the clouds, not at A.D. 70. The context
and structure of Matt 24:29-31 suggest that the tribes of
the earth are the unsaved who reject Christ.

Why do they mourn? Many scholars observe that Matt
24:30 and Rev 1:7 combine Zech 12:10 with Dan 7:13-14, and
try to find the reason for the mourning in Matt 24:30.
However, the problem is that the expression Κόσμονται πᾶσαι
αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς in its original context (Zech 12:10-12)
means that the Jews will mourn in repentance. The mourning
of Matt 24:30 is the remorse accompanying the disclosure of
divine judgment at the coming of Christ. The thrust of the
verse is that "upon the imminent return of Christ,
unbelievers will mourn the judgment which follows from their
rejection."¹ In view of Matthew’s judgment scene, which
includes πάντα ὑπὲρ ἑαυτῶν (25:32), and in the light of the
contrast here between αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς and τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς
ἀνθρώπου (24:30-31), Manson is correct when he states that "the
original sense of Zech 12:10-12 has been abandoned here."²

¹Mounce, Revelation, 73.
²T. W. Manson, Sayings of Jesus, as Recorded in the
Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Luke, Arranged with
Burnett, 347.
Another example of the New Testament usage of the phrase "the tribes of the earth" supports this. Rev 1:7 says that every eye will see Him when He comes with the clouds, and "all the tribes of the earth will wail on account of Him." It means that all who have rejected the "Gospel of the kingdom" will have no hope of repentance when the sign appears.\(^1\) Therefore, the reference to the mourning of the tribes on the earth (Matt 24:30) is worldwide fear of approaching judgment. It is the mourning of the unsaved who have no more opportunity for repentance because the elect will be gathered by the angels with the great trumpet call. The wail of many will be born of lost opportunities, of a deep grieving.\(^2\)

A close look at the context, as well as a background study of the apocalyptic tradition, leads us to discover that the tribes of the earth are not only Jews but also all people who suffer the covenant woe by rejecting the Gospel, and that their mourning is not for repentance but a bitter wailing for their lost salvation. It seems that the parent passages of Matt 24:30b, the Old Testament passages which


have contributed most to the concept of this mourning motif, are Isa 13:1-20 and Isa 24:1-23. The combination of two key terms, the darkening and mourning, are found in these passages. As we have seen in Matthew, as in the Old Testament, the last day is a day of anguish and turmoil for the wicked (Isa 65:13). The unsaved people, either Israel or Gentile, will mourn at the day of judgment. The discontinuity from the Old Testament is that the mourning in Matt 24:30 is not a general turmoil of the Day of the Lord, but a specific and last mourning of the wicked, which will occur between the appearing of the sign of the Son of Man and the coming of the Son of Man from heaven.

The Apocalyptic literature has a significant continuity with Matt 24:30b: the mourning of the sinners (1 En 102:1-3; 4 Ezra 13:16-19) on the judgment day is not that of the Jews; rather, it is the mourning of all sinners who are enemies of Israel. In Matthew the tribes are not the enemy of Israel, but all the unbelievers, including the people of Israel. The other continuity with the Apocalyptic literature is that 1 En 102:1-4 and Matt 24:29-31 have two typical signs of the Day of the Lord: the darkening of the luminaries and the mourning of the tribes. The discontinuity from the Apocalyptic literature is also significant. The main focus of the mourning in Matt 24:30

\footnote{Isa 13:1-22; 15:3; 24:1-3; 27:31; 65:13; Zech 12:10-14.}
is not on the judgment as in the Apocalyptic literature, but on emphasizing the glory of the Parousia.

Matt 24:30b also has some continuities with the New Testament. In both corpora, the tribes are not limited to the twelve tribes of Israel. It is the mourning of all those who are not saved. While portraying the terror of the last day, Rev 1:7 reflects its universality: "every eye will see Him, every one . . . and all the tribes of the earth wail on account of Him." In Matt 24:30, therefore, the mourning tribes indicate not just the Jews, but all people everywhere. All over the earth, in every tribe, village, city, and nation, there will be a great collective wail.

The development of the term and motif is not clear. Although some emphases on judgment are found in the Apocalyptic literature, the apocalyptic traditions use the same Old Testament languages and motifs. However, the concept, which the term carries, becomes new and deepens in the Matthean Parousia scene. In Matt 24:29-31, even the mourning of the tribes, which is the traditional judgment motif, focuses not on the judgment but on emphasizing the glory of the coming of the Son of Man.

The most significant creativity of Matthew comes from the structure of his peculiar Parousia scene. Matthew had a purpose when he inserted the mourning motif into the Parousia scene. The sinner will mourn at the end of time, but the main focus of the mourning in Matt 24:30 is not on
the emphasis of the judgment as in the Apocalyptic literature\(^1\) and in the other passages of the New Testament,\(^2\) because there is no judgment scene in the Matthean Parousia scene. The chief function of the mourning in Matt 24:30 is the premonitory setting for the coming of the Son of Man. The mourning of the tribes of the earth is sharply contrasted to the glorious coming of the Son of Man (vs. 30c) and to the victorious trumpet sound of the angels (vs. 31a). By using this sharp contrast, Matthew wants to reveal more effectively the glory and joy of the Parousia.

In conclusion, the tribes of the earth in Matt 24:30 are not limited to the tribes of Israel, but extends to all those who are not saved at the moment of the Parousia. The mourning in Matt 24:30 is the worldwide wailing for their fixed judgment by the coming of the Son of Man. The function of the mourning in Matt 24:30 not only indicates judgment, but also contrasts the remorseful mourning of the earth to the glorious coming of the Son of Man from heaven.

Based on the study of this section, I drew two trajectories: the chronological trajectory diagram 5 and the logical trajectory diagram 6.

---


Chronological Trajectory Diagram 5: The Mourning of the Tribes

- Isa 13:1-20: Mourning of Babylon
- Isa 15:3: Mourning of Moab
- Isa 24:1-23: Mourning of the earth
- Isa 65:13: Mourning of the wicked people
- Jer 4:8; 6:26; 9:10: Mourning for Israel
- Ezek 27:31: Mourning of Tyre
- Jer 49:3: Mourning of Ammonites
- Zech 12:10-14: Mourning of Israel for Him they pierced
- 1 En 100:4-9: Woe to sinners blazing flames
- 1 En 102:1-3: Luminaries-faint, Sinners-accused, Angels-fulfill their orders, Terror of fire, Great fear
- Sib Or 3:670-79: Wailing and tumult of all the souls
- Matt 24:30: Then all the tribes on the earth will mourn.

- 2 Bar 48:30-42: Many will weep blood, judge
- 4 Ezra 6:20-24: Natural disorder, Trumpet sound
- 4 Ezra 13:16-19: Woe to all People
Mourning of the wicked people

Jer 49:3
Mourning of Ammonites

Zech 12:10-14
Mourning of Israel for Him they pierced

Sib Or 3:670-79
Wailing and tumult of all the souls

Matt 24:30
Then all the tribes on the earth will mourn.

Rev 1:7
Rev 18:11,15,19
Rev 6:15-7
Mourning of tribes
Mourning of Babylon
Mourning for fear

4 Ezra 13:16-19
Woe to all People

Weep and gnash

Qumran Literature
CD 2:6-7, pit of fire
IQS 2:4-8; 4:12, multitude plagues

Rabbinic Literature
The eschatological mourning seldom occurs. Follows OT motifs

238 A->B allusion
A->B possible allusion
A........B echo
A<->B not clear which one influences the other

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**Logical Trajectory Diagram 6:**

**The Mourning of the Tribes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mourn for Israel</th>
<th>Jer 4:8; 6:26; 9:10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mourn of Israel for Him</th>
<th>Zech 12:10-14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Sackcloth, in ash, bitter lamentation, mourning as for an only son. Mourn for repentance of Israel. | Pour out a spirit of compassion when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly. |

**Apocalyptic Literature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mourn of Sinners on the Judgment day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 En 102:1-3</th>
<th>Luminaries—faint</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinners—accused</td>
<td>Angels—fulfill their orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terror of fire</td>
<td>Great fear, panic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 En 100:4-9</td>
<td>Woe to sinners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blazing flames</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sib Or 3:670-79</th>
<th>Wailing and tumult—boundless earth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 Bar 48:30-42</th>
<th>Many will surely weep at that time turbulence, blood, judge, consume.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 Ezra 6:20-24</th>
<th>Natural disorder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet sound aloud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Ezra 13:16-19</td>
<td>Woe to all people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And then all the tribes on the earth will mourn.

**Mourn of Babylon**

**Mc**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mourning of the tribes</th>
<th>Mc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mourning of Babylon</th>
<th>mourningdarkening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Isa 13:1-22 Is

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Mourning of Israel for His pierced: Zech 12:10-14

And all the tribes on the earth will mourn. Zech 12:10-14

Isa 13:1-22
Isa 15:3

Isa 24:1-23
Ezek 27:31

This motif occurs in the following ways:

This motif occurs in the Old Testament.

Mourning of the Tribes on the Day of the Mourning of Babylon
Mourning of the Tribes on the Day of the Mourning of Tyre

Mourning of the Tribes on the Day of the
Mourning of Babylon
Mourning of the Tribes on the Day of the
Mourning of Tyre

And when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly.
Mourning of the Tribes on the Day of the Lord

Mourning of Babylon
Mourning of earth
Mourning of Tyre
Mourning of Ammonites
Mourning of Wicked People

Isa 13:1-22
Isa 15:3
Isa 24:1-23
27:31
Jer 49:3
Isa 65:14

New Testament

Mourning of tribes
Rev 1:7; Mt 24:30

Mourning of Babylon
Rev 18:11,15,19

Mourning for Year
Rev 6:15-17

Weep and Gnash

This motif occurs seldomly and follows the Old Testament motif

Rabbinic Literature

Mourning for Judgment
CD 2:6-7, pit of fire
IQS 2:4-8; 4:12 multitude plagues

Quanran Literature

Mourning of earth darkening
Isa 24:1-23

Mourning of Babylon mourning ensign darkening
Isa 13:1-22

Mourning for Babylon
Rev 18:11,15,19

Mourning for Judgement
CD 2:6-7, pit of fire
IQS 2:4-8; 4:12 multitude plagues
Scene IIb (24:30c): Coming of the Son of Man on the Clouds of Heaven

The second part of the second scene is the climax of the Matthean Parousia scene. While the tribes of the earth will mourn (ΚΟΨΟΥΝΤΩ) with terror for their fate, they will see (ΩΨΟΝΤΩ) the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with glory and power. As indicated in the previous section, the sign of the coming of the Son of Man might be the glorious clouds of heaven. While the tribes of the earth are mourning because of the sign, they will also see the Son of Man coming on the clouds with great glory. In fact, therefore, the clouds is not the main theme in this scene. The coming of the Son of Man, the Parousia itself, is the climax of the scene. Nevertheless, the clouds of heaven is still the clearest sign of the Parousia. Why do the clouds perform so important a role for the coming of the Son of Man? How do the clouds become such a decisive sign of the Parousia? We begin with a study of the background concept of the clouds motif to explore the relationship between the clouds of heaven and the Parousia.

The figurative use of clouds is little developed in Greek. But in all times and places some mythical imagination has been occupied with the shapes of clouds. In the Greco-Roman world, the religious connection to the cloud is

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1Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:9; 1 Thess 4:17; Rev 1:7; 14:14,15,16.  
2Oepke, "ΝΕΦΕΛΗ, ΝΈΦΟΣ," 4:902.
rooted in primitive animism, because from the cloud came rain, lightning, hail, and destructive floods. The sinister thunder cloud is particularly "numinous in its effects."¹

Old Testament Background

In a recent work, J. Luzarraga offers the first extensive monographic study ever published on the theme of the biblical cloud.² In the first part, he examines the five main Hebrew words used for cloud in the Old Testament.³ The most popular term for cloud in the Old

¹Ibid., 903. Clouds have a religious significance because of human dependence on them and the fear of sinister thunder clouds. There is no cult of the clouds in Greece, but the thunder cloud seems to be personified in the Gorgons, the storm cloud in the Harpies. There is a goddess Nephele, is a nymph who accompanies Artemis. The cloud is also the chariot of the gods and heroes.


³Luzarraga, 16-41. According to Luzarraga: (1) מ"ן is used only in the plural and only in the poetic books, in contexts which present the clouds as formed and "lifted up" by God (Jer 10:13, 51:16; Ps 135:7); (2) מ"נ probably means "vapor" or "mist" and can thus share in the idea of "cloud" inasmuch as it contains rain. It occurs as the first word of Gen 2:6 and was possibly understood there as meaning "cloud" by the author; (3) מ"ו can be rendered "skies" or "clouds." It shows the cosmic reality which God's power has established for man to contemplate (Ps 77:18; Deut 33:26; Prov 8:28); (4) מ"נ means "thick cloud." It can also express a height inaccessible to man (Job 20:16). Lucifer thought before his fall: "I will ascend above the tops of מ"נ"; (5) Probably all the shades of meaning attributed to the different terms for "cloud" can be
Testament is | | | |. Its eighty-seven appearances are scattered throughout the biblical material.¹

As table 10 shows, in the Old Testament clouds are used twenty-two times literally² and twenty-nine times figuratively. They are figures of height,³ sky,⁴ transitory things,⁵ and darkness.⁶ Swiftness and refreshment are represented by the wind and rain. The chariots of the destroyer are as swift as clouds.⁷

But in the Old Testament, a somewhat different understanding of clouds may be detected in the theophany passages. I observe that in the Old Testament the cloud imagery was utilized about 137 times, of which 51 uses applied to natural phenomena or its figurative use. The

found applicable to | | | |. In the metaphorical usage, it serves to describe the looming darkness of the "Day of Yahweh," as a judgment mood.

¹Vine, 38.


³Job 20:6; 38:37; Ps 56(57):10; Isa 14:14; Ezek 31:3,10,14.


⁵Prov 25:14; Hos 6:4; 13:3; Job 7:9; 30:15.

⁶Eccl 12:2; Ezek 34:12.

⁷Job 37:11; Isa 60:8; Jer 4:13; Ezek 38:9,16; Prov 16:15; Isa 18:4; 44:22; Jer 4:13.
approximately 80 remaining cases generally associated clouds with the theophanies.¹

Table 10.—Clouds in the Old Testament (LXX)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>νεφέλη</th>
<th>νέφος</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literal</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiomatic (figurative)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theophany</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eschatology, Day of Lord</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The clouds in the theophany

In the Old Testament, the most important motif employing clouds is theophany. No other literature uses so consistently the metaphor of the cloud to describe theophanies as Israel does.² The theophany on Mount Sinai (Exod 19:16-21) set the pattern for so many other theophany passages. With the thick cloud on Sinai, Yahweh came down

¹Exod 16:10; 24:15,16,16,18, 34:5;40:34,35,36,37, 37,38; Lev 16:2; Num 9:15;16,17,17,18,19,20,21,21,22; 10:11,12,34; 11:25; 12:5,10; 14:10,14,14; 16:42; Deut 1:33; 31:15,15; Josh 24:7; Judg 5:4; 2 Kgs 22:12; 3 Kgs 8:10,11; 2 Chr 5:13,14; Job 22:14; 26:9; 38:1; 40:1(6); Pss 17(18): 11,12; 35(36):5; 76(77):17; 77(78):14; 96(97):2; 98(99):7; Isa 4:5; Nah 1:3; Lam 3:44; Ezek 1:4; 10:3,4; Dan 7:13, and other covenant cloud passages.

²Luzarraga, 38.
to impart the law to His people (Exod 19:16). At the making of the covenant, the dark cloud on top of the mountain conceals and displays the presence of Yahweh (Exod 19:16; 24:15; Deut 5:19-22). The Sinai theophany serves as a confirmation of the making of the covenant between God and Israel.

God's presence is made manifest and His glory revealed in a cloud. God Himself was present in the cloud,\(^1\) and His glory filled the places where the cloud was (Exod 16:10; 48:30; Num 10:34). The divine glory is also veiled in clouds, shines forth from them, and retreats into them. In the case of theophany at Sinai, we are told that "there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount" (Exod 19:16).

The pillar of cloud plays an important part in the theophany scene as well as a symbol of God's covenant in the Exodus and desert journey.\(^2\) It was also a symbol of God's

\(^1\)Exod 19:9; 24:16; 24:18; 33:9; 34:5; 40:34,35.

\(^2\)Exod 13:21-22; 14:19-20; 33:9-10; Num 14:10; Deut 31:15; Neh 9:12,19. Luzarraga, 101-212. Luzarraga distinguishes the text which refers to the cloud as "covering" from others which concern the cloud as "pillar." According to him, from a thematical viewpoint, the pillar motif appeared with the following traditions: (1) The cloud as pillar in the crossing of the sea (Exod 14:19,24); (2) The cloud as guiding pillar in the desert (Exod 13:21; Deut 1:33; Ps 78:14); (3) The cloud as a protecting canopy (Isa 4:5) or covering over Israel (Num 14:14; Ps 105:39); (4) The cloud as covering the ark and the temple (Exod 40:34; 1 Kgs 8:10; Num 9:15); (5) The cloud as oracular pillar in the desert (Exod 33:9), the vindication of Moses (Num 12:3), and the instruction to Joshua (Deut 31:15). A good example of the combination of traditions can be seen in
guidance and presence to the children of Israel in their journeys to the Promised Land.¹

Ps 97:1-6 constitutes a clear example of the theophany.

The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad! Clouds and thick darkness are round about him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. Fire goes before him, and burns up his adversaries round about. His lightnings lighten the world; The earth sees and trembles. The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of all the earth. The heavens proclaim his righteousness; and all the peoples behold his glory.

The magnificent portrayal of Yahweh's coming in "clouds and thick darkness" is reminiscent of the Old Testament theophany. This description goes back to Israel's experience at Mount Sinai which was also used to designate the way later Jewish interpretation unites the two representations of pillar and of "covering" into one single cloud, which takes two different forms—one for the march, and one for the encampment. See Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 6 vols. trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947), 3:235.

¹The pillar of cloud points the way on the march out of Egypt. When they were pursued by the Egyptians, the pillar of cloud moved between the army of Egypt and the people of Israel (Exod 14:19). It accompanied the people throughout the journey (Num 14:14; 10:36). At each special revelation, it rested on the tent of meeting (Exod 33:9; 40:34; Lev 16:2; Deut 31:15). It gave the sign for breaking camp (Exod 40:36; Num 9:15). It serves each individual theophany which is significant in the history of the covenant (Exod 16:10; 34:5; Num 11:25; 17:7; 14:10).
the awesome nature of the Day of the Lord by later prophets.¹

The closest image to the Son of Man coming on the clouds in Matt 24:30 appears in Dan 7:13-14. The One like the Son of Man who comes with the clouds of heaven in Dan 7:13 receives His power from the Ancient of Days. Daniel sees in a vision the figure coming with the clouds of heaven: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man" (Dan 7:13). The accompaniment of the clouds in His appearance also serves to give the figure a sense of majesty and seems to imply that the origin of the figure may be celestial² rather than earthly.³ The term "clouds" is also vital to understanding the relation between Dan 7:13 and Matt 24:27-


²R. B. Y. Scott, 129. Scott points out three reasons why the clouds are not clouds of nature ordinarily visible, but are clouds in heaven seen in the vision around the throne of God. First, the scene in Dan 7:13-14 is a picture which the Divine Being is surrounded by the heavenly hosts. Second, the traditional clouds of the Old Testament theophanies provide the spectacle of the unseen world. The third reason for considering the clouds of heaven as the background of the celestial scene is the relationship of Dan 7 to Ezek 1, God's throne vision.

³Joseph Ahn, 159; Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament, 233. But Gundry suggests that we can understand "nothing else than that He comes earthward to receive the dominion over the earth."
31. Only Daniel uses the vocabulary νεφελών τοῦ οὐρανοῦ in the Old Testament, and only Matthew uses νεφελών τοῦ οὐρανοῦ in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:30).

The clouds as a vehicle

The clouds also function as a vehicle for the Lord (Ps 104:3; Isa 19:1) and His dwelling place (Ps 99:7). A clear expression occurs in Isa 19:1: "Behold, the Lord is riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt: and the idols of Egypt will tremble at his presence, and the heart of Egyptians will melt within them." The Lord riding upon a swift cloud indicated a coming in judgment against the Egyptians. The clouds often appear when God descends on the earth. In this tradition, the cloud is described as the vehicle of Yahweh's descent.¹ In Exod 19:9, Yahweh has

¹Moses Stuart, 340. Stuart collects the cases of God's descent from the Bible. When Babel was built, "the Lord came down to see the city and the tower" (Gen 11:5); again, He said: "let us go down and confound their language" (Gen 11:7); when Sodom and Gomorrah had provoked His righteous anger, He said: "I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry which has come to me" (Gen 18:21); when Israel was oppressed by the Egyptians, God said to Moses: "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians" (Exod 3:8); the Lord came down upon Mt. Sinai (Exod 19:18-20); again, in writing the Law a second time, "He came down" on the same mountain (Exod 24:5); when Miriam and Aaron murmured against Moses, "the Lord came down in the pillar of a cloud" (Num 12:5); Isa 64:1-3 says: "0 that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at thy presence. . . . Thou camest down, the mountains quaked at thy presence."
declared that He will descend in a "thick cloud." Also in Exod 34:5, the downward movement of the cloud is presupposed: "And Yahweh descended in the cloud."

The clouds and of the Day of the Lord

The characteristic of the clouds in the prophets is their emphasis on the negative aspect of the clouds. The prophets picture the "Day of the Lord" as a "day of clouds" (Ezek 30:3). It is a "day of darkness and gloom," and a "day of clouds and thick darkness" (Joel 2:2). It is a "day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, and a day of clouds and thick darkness" (Zeph 1:15). Whether the picture of a "day of clouds" indicates a fearful judgment or the Old Testament theophany, in any case, the cloud in the Old Testament is commonly associated with the divine presence.

In conclusion, the clouds of the Old Testament mainly indicate the glory and majesty of God, and confirmation of the covenant in a theophanic motif. In the message of the prophets, the clouds have the tone of terror and fearful judgment in the Day of the Lord.

The Clouds in the Apocalyptic Literature

Compared with the Old Testament, Apocalyptic literature shows little interest in the cloud. Denis' concordance lists twenty Greek passages in the Apocalyptic
literature, and I found ten others. The theophany motif of clouds is not prominent in late Judaism, the interest being focussed on the cloud of the judgment and terror of the last days. Table 11 shows that the judgment motif is more predominant in the Apocalyptic literature than in the Old Testament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>OT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theophany</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literal meaning</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Day of the Lord</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiomatic (figurative)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Dennis, 562. The 10 passages are: 1 En 41:3; 60:20; 108:4; 2 En 29:4; Jub 1:2-3; Ps-Philo 11:15; 13:2; Sib Or 3:85; 4 Ezra 13:1-4; 15:34-45; 56:3-6.


Sib Or 3:805 tells of clouds in relation to eschatological war and judgment. Sib Or 1:217-19 mentions the covering function of the clouds at the Flood. Jubilees describes the clouds as a symbol of theophany, when it tells about the Sinai event (1:2-3). Pseudo-Philo refers to the clouds as God's dwelling place and a sign of theophany: "And all the people stood far off, but Moses drew near the cloud, knowing that God was there" (11:15). In Ps-Philo 13:2, God's presence is indicated by clouds covering them all. In connection with Dan 7:13, it is observed that the coming with the clouds is an exclusively divine attribute.

In 1 Enoch the clouds are not prominent, but the visionary significance of the cloud is not overlooked. The seer saw the clouds several times in his vision: The clouds were calling Enoch in a vision (14:8); they carried the souls (18:5); he saw something like an invisible cloud, completely dark, because of its depth (108:4).

Compared to the few uses of "cloud" as a vehicle in the Old Testament, Apocalyptic literature uses the motif frequently. The function of clouds as chariots is revealed in the Testament of Abraham (8:3; 10:2; 12:1; 12:9). Michael received the Lord's command to take up Abraham and show him everything, then he left and took Abraham up unto a cloud and bore him up to the river Oceanus. As Abraham wanted to see the place of judgment, Michael took him onto a
cloud, and carried him to Paradise. Sometimes clouds are
personified: the clouds called Enoch (1 En 14:8), and they
will be filled with joy (TLev 18:5).

A significant change occurs in the later Apocalyptic
literature. In 4 Ezra and 2 Bar, the clouds manifest a
terrible judgment tone. A well-known instance appears in
4 Ezra 13:1-5:

After seven days I dreamed a dream in the night; and
behold, a wind arose from the sea, and stirred up all
its waves. And I looked, and behold, the wind made
something like the figure of a man come up out of the
heart of the sea. And I looked, and behold, that man
flew with the clouds of heaven; And whenever he turned
his face to look, everything under his gaze trembled,
and whenever his voice issued from his mouth, all who
heard his voice melted as wax melts when it feels the
fire. And after this I looked, and behold, an
innumerable multitude of men were gathered together from
the four winds of heaven to make war against the man who
came up out of sea (italics mine).

According to Michael Stone, this vision has
attracted a good deal of attention because of the "redeemer
figure in it who is symbolized by a human form in the
vision, thus reminiscent of the Son of Man of Dan 7, of 1 En
37-71, and of the New Testament." The seer had a dream
vision in the night. He saw a stormy wind that appeared to
rise from the sea, and a figure resembling a man whose

---

1One thing interesting is that the author of Tab(A)
saw the clouds as the glory of divinity surrounding the
chariot of cherubim, not as the chariot itself (Tab[A] 9:8;
10:1; 15:2; 15:12).


3Stone, Fourth Ezra, 382.
vehicle of flight was the clouds of heaven.\textsuperscript{1} His face and voice made everyone tremble. An innumerable host, representing all the nations of the earth, made war against the man, but they were destroyed by the stream of fire coming out from his mouth. However, this scene in the Dream Vision section is much different from that of Dan 7:13. \textsuperscript{4} Ezra 13:1-5 emphasizes the judgment imagery of a man who flew with clouds of heaven, while in Dan 7:13 the Son of Man is revealed as the One who was given dominion and glory from God. However, the mention of clouds carrying the Son of Man, with its theophanic significance, hints at the supernatural or divine character of the figure.\textsuperscript{2}

In 2 Bar 53:1-74:4, Baruch sees a "vision of a cloud from which bright and dark waters alternately pour."\textsuperscript{3} The cloud consists of thirteen parts: twelve parts alternately black and bright, and finally one part very black.\textsuperscript{4} The real interest is in the cloud of the wilderness.

And I saw a vision. And behold, a cloud was coming up from the great sea. And I was looking at it, and behold, it was entirely filled with black water and

\textsuperscript{1}Accepting the request of Ezra, an interpretation is spoken to him in 4 Ezra 13:21-50: The man rising from the depth of the sea represents the Messiah whom the Most High has kept hidden through many ages but who will be revealed at the right time. He is the instrument through whom the Most High will deliver His creation and provide a new order for those who survive. He was called "my Son."

\textsuperscript{2}Stone, Fourth Ezra, 384.

\textsuperscript{3}Klijn, 1:615.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid., 641.
there were many colors in that water. And I saw that the cloud was rapidly passing in a quick run and covering the whole earth. And it happened after this that the cloud began to pour the water that it contained upon the earth. ... For at first, it was very black until a certain time. And then, I saw the water became bright, This, now, happened twelve times, but the black were always more than the bright. And it happened at the end of the cloud that, behold, it poured black water and it was much darker than all the water that had been before. And fire was mingled with it. ... It brought about devastation and destruction.1

Chaps. 56-74 interpret the symbols of chap. 53. A great cloud which came up from the sea extends the length of the world. The first black water on the top of the cloud is the transgression which Adam committed.2 The vision is interpreted as a historical overview, beginning with the time of the sin of Adam and culminating in the messianic kingdom. The final waters were the tribulation and the messianic reign. The tribulation will be a time of evil and confusion (chaps. 70-71).

The image of clouds in 2 Baruch differs from that of the Old Testament. First of all, the clouds came out from the great sea, not from heaven. It is not a theophany sign of covenant, but a shadow of evil and terrible judgment. The Old Testament clouds are a symbol of His presence, and in a few passages are a symbol of His judgment. But here

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22 Bar 56:6: "For when he transgressed, untimely death came into being, mourning was mentioned, affliction was prepared, illness was created."
the clouds are described as the judgment itself, and a representation of sin.

4 Ezra 15:34-45\(^1\) speaks of the ominous storm clouds. He describes terrible clouds whose appearance is very threatening, full of wrath and storm (15:34-35). They shall pour out a heavy tempest upon the earth. And "great and mighty clouds, full of wrath and tempest, shall rise, to destroy all the earth and its inhabitants, and shall pour out upon every high and lofty place a terrible tempest" (15:40-41). The writer interprets the clouds as divine judgments—the sword and wrath of God—brought upon the earth because of sin.\(^2\)

It is significant to find from the above examination that 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch bear witness to a new type of messianic consciousness and expectation, though they had been developed from Dan 7.\(^3\) The Messiah is not described

\(^1\)Cf. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," 1:520. According to most scholars, the original Jewish document known today as 4 Ezra was composed about A.D. 100. Chaps. 15-16 are an appendix, and were added near the middle or in the second half of the third century by one or more unknown Christian writers.

\(^2\)4 Ezra 15:41-43: "And great and mighty clouds, full of wrath and tempest, shall rise, to destroy all the earth and its inhabitants, and shall pour out upon every high and lofty place a terrible tempest, fire and hail and flying swords and floods of water, that all the fields and all the streams may be filled with the abundance of those waters. And they shall destroy cities and walls, mountains and hills, trees of the forests, and grass of the meadows, and their grain."

\(^3\)Caragounis, 143.
as the coming King on the cloud, but a terrible Judge coming up from the sea, though it is not easy to determine the role of the Messiah in the total eschatological thought of 4 Ezra.\textsuperscript{1} The clouds are not a glorious theophanic sign of covenant, but a symbol of evil and terrible judgment. It is significant if we accept that 4 Ezra was written after the Gospels, and that some portion of 4 Ezra is Christian interpolation. The cloud concept of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch reflects the widespread phenomenon regarding the messianic mood of their time. It shows that Judaism around A.D. 100-200 was not "monolithic as has sometimes been assumed," and that there were "different trends, different theologies, and different messialogies."\textsuperscript{2} The other interesting phenomenon is that the focus of the cloud motif of 4 Ezra is still on judgment, even though it was written after the second century, and was influenced by the New Testament writers. The other possible assumption is that the emphasis on the clouds in 4 Ezra is probably a counter-reaction to the Christianity who expected the advent of Jesus on the clouds of heaven. However, this phenomena shows that the Apocalyptic literature belongs to a same stream in spite of their difference of dates.

\textsuperscript{1}Metzger, 1:521. The role of the Messiah is difficult to assess in 4 Ezra. However, Metzger observes that though the Messiah is not the exclusive center of 4 Ezra, he plays a significant role in the author's eschatological scheme.

\textsuperscript{2}Caragounis, 144.
In conclusion, the clouds in the later Apocalyptic literature are not a theophanic sign of covenant, but a shadow of evil and terrible judgment. Though this literature retains the theophany motif when it retells the Old Testament story, it interestingly develops a peculiar character, describing the clouds more as an evil omen, a representation of sin, and the judgment itself. A continuity with the Old Testament is that the cloud motif of the Apocalyptic literature was also influenced by Dan 7:13-14. Some discontinuities from the Old Testament are: (1) the clouds in the Apocalyptic literature are not a theophanic sign of covenant, but a shadow of evil and terrible judgment; (2) in some judgment passages, the clouds of the Apocalyptic literature come from the great sea, not from heaven (4 Ezra 13:1-5; 2 Bar 53:1).

The Qumran Literature

In the Qumran literature, clouds are not significant. According to the Graphic Concordance to the Dead Sea Scrolls,\(^1\) Qumran literature has five passages: (1) 1QH 10:25--[and its crown] (shall reach) to the

\(^1\)James H. Charlesworth, Graphic Concordance to the Dead Sea Scrolls (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1991). This concordance is the only one available to all editions of Qumran sectarian texts published before 1990.
(clouds); (2) 4Q506 126 1.2\textsuperscript{1}--in a pillar of the cloud; (3) 11QtgJob 29:2\textsuperscript{2}--(He) scatters his light from the clouds; (4) 4Q156 1:4\textsuperscript{3}--smoke of fragrances before Yahweh; (5) 4QtgJob 1 1:2\textsuperscript{4}--cloud over him. Some other cloud motifs are found in the Qumran literature. Clouds are described as clouds of dew covering the earth,\textsuperscript{5} revealing God's holiness and glory.\textsuperscript{6} The cloud is used as a symbol of height in 1QH 10:25.

It seems that there is no connection between clouds and the Messiah in Qumran literature, though one of the most important and most frequently discussed subjects in Qumran eschatology is the messianic belief.\textsuperscript{7} There is no "Messiah's coming on the clouds" motif in the Qumran literature.

The Rabbinic Literature

The rabbinic literature generally reflects the Old Testament motifs on clouds, but the motif of "Messiah coming with clouds of heaven" is not prominent because the rabbis

\textsuperscript{1}Paroles des Luminaires (DJD 7:168-170).

\textsuperscript{2}Sokoloff, 143.

\textsuperscript{3}Tarquem du Lévítique (DJD 6:86-89).

\textsuperscript{4}Tarquem de Job (DJD 6:90); Job 3:5.

\textsuperscript{5}1QM 12:9; 19:2.

\textsuperscript{6}4Q504 Fr.6.

\textsuperscript{7}LaSor, 98.
did not envision the divine figure of the Messiah coming from heaven.

As in the Old Testament, the cloud in rabbinic literature is the theophanic sign. Midrash tells that on the third day, Abraham saw a luminous cloud enveloping the Mount Moria, and he recognized the place and said: "It appears that is the place where the Holy One, blessed be He, told me to sacrifice my son." A midrashic tradition based on old sources explains this more precisely:

On the third day of his journey, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place at a distance, which God had told him. He noticed upon the mountain a pillar of fire reaching from the earth to heaven, and a heavy cloud in which the glory of God was seen.²

Clouds are the clouds of glory.³ In this

¹Midrash Gen Rabbah 56:1.

²Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, 1:278. Midrash, Gen Rabbah 56:1: "And saw the place afar off. What did he see? He saw a cloud enveloping the mountain, and said: 'It appears that is the place where the Holy One, blessed be He, told me to sacrifice my son.'"

³ In the Midrash, clouds were used as "clouds of glory: Gen Rabbah 48:6, 56:1, 62:4, 73:10, 74:3; Exod Rabbah 2:4, 24:2, 25:7, 26:2, 32:5; Lev 25:5, 27:6, 34:8; Num Rabbah 1:2, 2:6, 13:20, 19:16, 19:20, 20:19, 21:22; Lam Rabbah 1:56, 2:17; SS Rabbah 1:7,3, 2:5,3, 4:5,2, 4:6,1; Eccl Rabbah 7:2,4. See Ginzberg, 1:21-6:158: Clouds of glory accompanied Israel (3:49, 6:20); clouds of glory protected Aaron (3:277, 6:96,112); clouds of glory vanished after Aaron's death (3:49,330-33); clouds of glory enveloped the bodies of Adam and Eve (1:74); clouds of glory awaited Joseph's coming (2:182); God revealed Himself to Joshua in clouds of glory (6:158); clouds of glory over the tree of life (1:21); the radiance of clouds of glory (3:236); serpents were burned by clouds of glory (3:335); the miraculous powers of clouds of glory (2:374-5); the time of the creation (5:109).
perspective, the Targum reads in Isa 35:10 that "a cloud of glory extends over the heads of the ransomed."\(^1\) They protected Abraham, Moses, and Aaron.\(^2\) In the wilderness, the Israelites had manna, the quails, the well, the Tabernacle, the Shechinah, the priesthood, a Kingdom, and clouds of glory.\(^3\) Tosefta **Sotah** 4:2 states seven glorious clouds which protected Israel in the wilderness:

> So the Omnipresent gave his children seven glorious clouds in the wilderness, one on their right, one on their left, one before them, one behind them, one above their heads, and one as the presence among them. And the pillar of cloud (the seventh) which went before them would kill snakes and scorpions and burn off thorns, brambles, and prickly bushes and level down high places and raise up low places for them, so making them a straight path (italics mine).\(^4\)

The themes of the divine illumination from the pillar of cloud and of the divine protection manifested in the covering cloud are used in the rabbinical writings to

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\(^1\)The Isaiah Taroum, The Aramaic Bible, vol. 2, trans. Bruce D. Chilton (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1987), 70. Isa 35:10, "And the redeemed of the Lord shall be gathered from among their exiles, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be theirs, that does not cease, and a cloud of glory shall cover your heads."

\(^2\)Ginzberg, 1:192-6:135: Abraham was protected by clouds (1:192, 303; 5:213); Clouds saved Joshua from the threats of Israel (3:465); the sons of Moses were protected by a cloud (4:317); Israel was protected and cared for by clouds (3:21,36,43,49,54,57,64,235,236,263,316,330-33,374, 383; 6:20,23,24,26,52,72,90,94,110,113,114,135).

\(^3\)Midrash **Exod** Rabbah 2:4.

\(^4\)Tosefta **Sotah** 4:2.
express the special care God will take of Israel in eschatological times.¹

Some references in rabbinic writings are thought to refer to Messiah's decent on the clouds. In Midrash Rabbah Num 13:14 in answering the question, How do we know that he will hold sway on land? the author supports his contention by citing Ps 72:11 and Dan 7:13 and 2:35:

Because it is written, "All kings shall prostrate themselves before him; all nations shall serve him" and it also says, "Behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man . . . and there was given unto him dominion . . . that all the peoples should serve him. And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (italics mine).

Here, not only the Son of Man but also the stone cut without hands is interpreted messianically. It is true that the author understood Dan 7:13 messianically, but it is doubtful that he believed the Messiah was coming on the clouds from heaven.

In B. T. Sanh 98a, the Son of Man is described as the One coming with the clouds of heaven:

Alexandri said: R. Joshua b. Levi pointed out a contradiction. It is written, in its time (will the Messiah come), whilst it is also written, I (the Lord) will hasten it! If they are worthy, I will hasten it: if not, (he will come) at the due time. R. Alexandri said: R. Joshua opposes two verses: it is written, And behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven.

¹Midrash Gen Rabbah 62:4, n. 3: "According to the rabbis, a well followed Israel throughout their wanderings in the desert, during which time they were also protected by clouds of divine glory. These ceased on the deaths of Miriam and Aaron respectively, yet they were vouchsafed to Israel again, but finally ceased on Moses' death."
heaven; whilst it is written, (behold, thy king cometh unto thee . . .) lowly, and riding upon an ass! If they are meritorious, (he will come) with the clouds of heaven; if not, lowly and riding upon an ass. King Shapur said to Samuel, "Ye maintain that the Messiah will come upon an ass: I will rather send him a white horse of mine." He replied, "have you a hundred-hued steed?" (italics mine).

Does the rabbinic literature present the Messiah as coming down with clouds of heaven or not? Since the context clearly indicates that R. Joshua was discussing the timing of the Messiah's advent, not His nature, this passage might refer to the "clouds" as symbolizing the speedy coming of the Messiah in contradistinction to the slow pace, symbolized by the "ass." This interpretation is supported by the earlier part of the passage quoted, in which the words "I will hasten it" are in contrast to "in its time."\(^1\)

The other possible meaning of this passage is that in one case He will be a figure of lowliness, and in the other, a figure of glory. Therefore some scholars propose that it should be taken as symbolic.\(^2\) Even so, it is not deniable here that the cloud was used somewhat messianically.

In the Midrash on Ps 21:7, R. Samuel ben Nahman joins Dan 7:13 with Jer 30:21. He adds: "Behold in what manner? The angels shall bring him into the midst of them." This suggests that the clouds are symbolic of angels and that the coming is not an advent to the earth, but rather a

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\(^1\)Glasson, *The Second Advent*, 244.

\(^2\)Ibid.
man-like figure's approach to God. The author of this midrash thought that the man-like figure was to be interpreted as the people of Israel.

In the B. T. Sanh 96b-97a, Messiah is called "Bar Nafle" (son of cloud):

R. Nahman said to R. Isaac: "Have you perhaps heard when Bar Nafle (Son of the Clouds) will come?" "Who is Bar Nafle?" he asked. "The Messiah." he answered, "Do you call the Messiah Bar Nafle?" --"Even so," he rejoined, "as it is written, In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David ha-nofeleth (that is fallen)."¹

Bar Nafle was a most unusual title for the Messiah. The literal meaning of the term is "son of fallen." There are two contradictory interpretations of this passage. B. T. Sanh 96b translated by Isadore Epstein provides a footnote explaining that Bar Nafle is generally assumed to represent the Greek υἱὸς νεφέλων the son of clouds, and R. Naḥman gave a Hebrew connotation.² C. Caragounis also maintains that R. Naḥman is apparently aware of the clouds figure in Dan 7:13 as a messianic designation, and Bar Nafle is a transliteration of the Greek word νεφέλη translating יִּישוּע in Dan 7:13.³ According to him, if we interpret the term as "the son of fallen," it is clearly unsuitable as a messianic title, even though it refers to David's Tabernacle.⁴

¹A footnote mentions υἱὸς νεφέλων as a possible derivation of "Bar Nafle." The Babylonian Talmud, 28:654.  
²Ibid.  
³Caragounis, 134.  
⁴Ibid.
On the other hand, M. Casey proposes that R. Nahman's answer gives us no hint that he has Dan 7:13 in mind. He argues that if the title meant "son of the cloud," a different explanation from the context would be expected.¹ Why did R. Nahman quote Amos 9:11 which mentions David's fallen tent instead of Dan 7:13, if he was thinking of the "son of clouds"? Moreover, it is difficult to see why the Greek νεφέλη should be used instead of the Hebrew or Aramaic יד. Casey, therefore, concluded that this saying does not provide satisfactory evidence of the use of Dan 7:13 or any evidence of the "Son of Man on the clouds" concept in Judaism.² However, if Bar Nafle is a corruption of the Greek word for cloud, "νεφέλων," it probably points to pre-Jamnian origins because the Talmud obviously contains many pre-Jamnian traditions.

There are other rabbinic passages that refer to the Messiah as "Anani" and find allusion to this figure in Dan 7:13. In a passage in the Targum 1 Chr 3:24, the Messiah is called "Anani," that is, "man of the clouds." Tanhuma Toledoth 6:20 is a parallel case.³ In Tanhuma, Dan 7:13 is quoted as scriptural support for the interpretation of "Anani" in 1 Chr 3:24 as the Messiah. The reason for the

¹Casey, 92.
²Ibid.
quotation of 1 Chr 3 in this midrash is that this passage of Scripture contains a family tree of the Davidic line. It was natural that Jewish interpreters should conclude that the Messiah was to be found at the end of the Davidic line. In explicating Anani, the last in a list of David's descendants, the author asks, "Who is Anani?" He answers: "This is the Messianic King as stated in Dan 7:13; As I was looking on in a vision at night, behold, along with Anani of heaven, one like a human being (was coming)." The rabbi of Tanhuma thought that Anani (He of the clouds) was a messianic title. Therefore, Caragounis concludes that both B. T. Sanh 96b and Tanhuma Toledoth 20 are clear instances of the messianic interpretation of Dan 7:13.¹

In conclusion, it cannot be denied that the rabbis sometimes used the cloud motif messianically based on Dan 7:13. The cloud-messianic passages may be vestiges of an earlier conception based on Daniel which fell out of favor after Jamnia. However, even though it may be true that the specific passages are the messianic applications with the cloud motif, it is still doubtful that the passages indicate the divine figure of the Messiah coming on the clouds from heaven.²

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¹Caragounis, 136.

²The Messiah was to be a human being for Jews. He would be of David's line. And considering that this is shown both by Jewish literature (Ps Sol 12:4, 21, 23; T Jud 22-24; 4 Ezra 12:32) and the popular conceptions which we find in the Gospels (Mark 10:45; 11:10; 12:35; Matt 12:23;
sometimes referred to as the Messiah, there is no clear
divine messianic coming on the clouds of heaven based upon
the clouds of Dan 7:13.\(^1\) Moreover, there is also no
indication in rabbinic literature that the Messiah will come
down on the clouds of heaven in relation to the cosmic
signs. Some new elements in the rabbinic literature are the
personification of the clouds and the protection of God's
people by the clouds.

The Cloud Motif in the New Testament

It is clear, then, that the New Testament had
inherited a colorful and complex tradition concerning
clouds.\(^2\) Table 12 shows that the use of cloud motifs in
the New Testament seems at first glance to be distinctive.
The New Testament employment of the word "cloud" mainly
occurs on three levels.

The clouds in theophany\(^3\)

The cloud of the transfiguration is without doubt a
theophanic cloud from which God speaks as from His dwelling

\(^1\) Hare, The Son of Man Tradition, 20.

\(^2\) Paul S. Minear, Christian Hope and the Second

\(^3\) Matt 17:5,5; Mark 9:7,7; Luke 9:34,34,35; Rev 10:1;
11:12.
Table 12.—Clouds in the New Testament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>OT</th>
<th>Apocalyptic</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theophany</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literal meaning</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Day of the Lord and Judgment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiomatic (figurative)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parousia</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

place. At the transfiguration of Jesus, a bright cloud overshadows Jesus, since the voice comes to the disciples out of the cloud (Matt 17:1-5). But the differences from the Old Testament theophany are striking. In Matt 17 there are no trumpet sounds, fire, and shaking. Only the bright cloud overshadowed the disciples, and it is significant that they saw no one but Jesus (Matt 17:8). However, as D. A. Hagner observes, the narrative of the transfiguration of Jesus contains a number of "apocalyptic-like motifs":

e.g., the glorious appearance of Jesus, the bright clouds, and the appearance of the key figures of the past, Moses and Elijah. In Rev 10:1, John saw a mighty angel coming down

1Hagner, 70.
The clouds of idiomatic (figurative) usage

Luke 12:54 refers to the weather. Certain teachers are called "waterless clouds, carried along by winds" (Jude 12). The writer of Hebrews says that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses (Heb 12:1).

The clouds of the Parousia

A new element is added to the eschatological meaning of the cloud in the New Testament. The old motifs are now linked to the person of Jesus. When Jesus tells the high priest, "Hereafter you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt 26:64, Mark 14:62), and when He describes the Parousia (Matt 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27), He refers back to the prophecy of Dan 7:13-14: "And behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man... And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom." He himself is the Son of Man who will come with the clouds of heaven.

Another dramatic event involving the cloud may be found in the narrative of the ascension (Acts 1:9). We

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1 Oepke, "νεφέλη, νέφος," 4:909.

2 John Gillman, "Signals of Transformation in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-8," CBQ 47 (1985): 277. He maintains that, in Acts 1:9, concerning the ascension of Jesus, the cloud motif has 3 interrelated functions: (1) it serves as a
are told in a very brief manner that the Lord was taken up
to glory from the apostles (Acts 1:9,10). As He ascended, a
cloud took Him out of the disciples' sight, but it was not
originally a veil or vehicle of rapture. The apocalyptic
motif of cloud is explained by the angels: "This Jesus, who
was taken up from you into heaven, (thus) will come in the
same way as you saw him go into heaven." And when He comes
again at the Parousia, there will be clouds.\(^1\) It is
repeated in Rev 1:7: "Behold He is coming with the clouds."
Therefore the clouds of heaven become the most strong and
visible sign of the Parousia of the Son of Man in the New
Testament.

The first Thess 4:16-17 gives a vivid picture of the
Parousia:\(^2\) when the Lord Himself will descend from heaven
with the sound of the trumpet of God, then those who are
alive shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in
the air. This is not simply an illustration of clouds as

\[^2^\text{Leon Morris, The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984), 136-48; Hartman, 181-89; Joseph Ahn, 200-10.}^2\]

\[^1^\text{Matt 24:30; 25:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; 1 Thess 4:17; Rev 1:7.}^1\]
convenient vehicles for transportation through space, but clouds as a "regular feature of biblical theophanies."¹

One thing significant here is that the cloud motif is transferred to the ascent of Christians. The believers do not "disappear" into the clouds nor are they clothed in the clouds.² Rather, they shall be caught up in the clouds to "meet the Lord."³ Matt 24:30 provides a striking visual image traditionally associated with the Second Coming. What is the meaning here of "coming with the clouds"? After studying its relationship with Dan 7:13, Scott concludes that the clouds in Rev 1:7 are not clouds of nature ordinarily visible, but are clouds in heaven seen in the vision around the throne of God.⁴ In Rev 14:14-16 the Christ who comes again in power and glory is already described as the One who sits on the cloud. The Lord


²Gillman, 278.

³Bruce, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 102. In Hellenistic times, when a king or royal family paid an official visit (προσόντις) to a city, "the action of the leading citizens in going out to meet him and escort him on the final stage of his journey was called the ξυπνησις (meet)."

⁴R. B. Y. Scott, 129-32. According to him, the first reason is that the scene in vss. 13-14 clearly is an extension of that in vss. 9-10, which pictures the venerable Divine Being surrounded by the heavenly hosts. Second, the traditional cloud symbolism of the Old Testament theophanies is provided also in the language of the vision. The reason for considering "the clouds" as the background of the celestial scene is the relationship of Dan 7:13.
appears now as the King of kings, who sits on a white cloud having the sharp sickle of the reaper. His crown is not a wreath, but a gold crown. The white color of the cloud corresponds to the fact that this coming is a genuine triumph.¹

Thus, the return of Christ "on the clouds of heaven" is a familiar image in the New Testament. This designation is not meant only as a simple indication of an appearance in nature. The clouds of heaven are more than a mere terrestrial phenomenon. Thus Christ's coming on the clouds is the "indication of His appearance in glory in this world."²

In conclusion, the New Testament use of θέαλη is somewhat different from the judgment tone of the Apocalyptic literature,³ but generally follows the theophany motif of

¹ The color white belongs in Revelation always and only to the things of heaven. White (λευκός) is throughout Revelation the color of lucid splendor, purity, the symbolic image of glory (2:17; 3:4; 4:4; 5:18; 6:11; 7:9; 19:14; 20:11), and the prevailing color in the appearances of Christ (1:14; 14:14; 19:11). White is also the color of the garment of the saints in heaven (3:4, 18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13; 19:14). The throne of God is white (20:11). In the letter to the church at Pergamum, those who overcome are promised "a white stone." The white garments are only from God (3:18; 6:11). The color of the cloud on which the Lord will sit is white (14:14).

²Berkouwer, 164.

³In the Apocalyptic literature the clouds are not a theophanic sign of covenant, but rather a shadow of evil and terrible judgment. They are described as the judgment itself, and a representation of sin, whereas the New Testament uses the clouds mainly as the Parousia sign.
the Old Testament from an external standpoint. However, the "consistent application to Christ gives a new significance to the ancient motifs."\(^1\) The motif of theophany is thus deepened and broadened in the New Testament. The emphasis is on the "actuality of Christ's coming in glory and splendor."\(^2\) Thus theophany becomes Christophany.

Some continuities with the Old Testament are found:

1. the cloud in the New Testament has the Old Testament motifs: motif of theophany, the Day of the Lord, and the Danielic Son of Man;
2. the Son of Man on the clouds in the New Testament is the same divine Son of Man in Dan 7:13.

The New Testament also exhibits continuities with the Apocalyptic literature:
1. both corpora have theophanic motifs, and are influenced by the Danielic Son of Man;
2. the clouds of the Son of Man are a terrible judgment sign which makes the tribes of the earth mourn in both corpora.

The discontinuities from the Old Testament cannot be overlooked:
1. all the cloud motifs in the New Testament are concentrated to the Parousia, and its consistent application to Christ gives a new significance to the ancient motifs;
2. the emphasis is only on the coming of the Son of Man in glory and splendor;
3. the coming clouds are not only an indication of His appearance in glory in

\(^1\)Oepke, "νεφέλη, νέφος," 4:910.
\(^2\)Berkouwer, 164.
this world, but also the place where the Christians meet their Lord. The discontinuities from the Apocalyptic literature are also striking: (1) the main function of the clouds in the New Testament is not judgment, but to indicate the coming of the Son of Man and His glory and great power; (2) the Parousia clouds in the New Testament indicate the glorious appearing of the Son of Man and the Christian ascension in the clouds, whereas the clouds in the Apocalyptic literature are evil omens and judgment itself.

The Meaning of the Clouds in Matt 24:29-31

As we have seen in the Old Testament, the clouds are an emblem of God's presence and the majestic glory of God moving toward the earth. The clouds in the later Apocalyptic literature are not a theophanic sign of covenant, but a shadow of evil and terrible judgment. In the New Testament, consistent application to Christ gives a new significance to the ancient motifs. In Matt 24:30, the Son of Man comes "on (ἐπὶ) ¹ the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."² The motif of theophany is thus

¹It is doubtful whether sharp distinctions are to be drawn between this expression and "in (ἐν) the clouds of heaven" (Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27), or "with (μετὰ) the cloud of heaven" (Mark 14:62; Rev 1:7). Hare, The Son of Man Tradition, 170.

²Cf. Matt 26:64; Rev 14:14-16.
deepened and broadened in Matt 24:30. What is the specific connotation of the term "on the clouds of heaven" in the descriptions of Christ's coming in Matt 24:30?

The parent passages of the Matthean cloud motif are probably Exod 19:9-21, Isa 19:1, and Dan 7:13-14. Matt 24:30 commonly contains a mood of theophany, vehicle, and glorious majesty with Exod 19:9-21. Matthew also uses the motif of the Day of the Lord. The cloud of heaven is a terrible sign for the tribes on the earth who reject the Son of Man. More than that, one of the most characteristic elements of Matthew's account is that he adopted clearly the motif of the Danielic Son of Man directly to the coming of Christ. The term "clouds of heaven" is theophanic language, and is vital to understanding the relationship between Dan 7:13 and Matt 24:27-31. It is significant that only Daniel uses the vocabulary ἱππεῖα τοῦ σώρανου in the Old Testament, and only Matthew uses ἱππεῖα τοῦ σώρανου in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:30). Matthew's use of Dan 7:13 in Matt 24:30; 26:64; and 28:18 presupposes that the passages speak of a messianic or eschatological figure of superhuman proportion. The accompaniment of the clouds in

1Exod 16:10; 19:9-21; 34:5.

2Isa 19:1 (a swift cloud which comes to Egypt); Joel 2:2 (a day of clouds and thick darkness); and Zeph 1:15 (a day of clouds).

3Hartman, 166. According to his literary study, Matt 24:29-31 is a midrash of Daniel, especially Dan 7:8-27; 8:9-26; 9:24-27; 11:21-12:3.
His appearance also serves to give the figure a sense of majesty and seems to imply that the origin of the figure may be celestial rather than earthly. The discontinuities from the Old Testament are also significant. In Dan 7:13, the Son of Man comes to the Ancient of Days, not down to earth; the place is in heaven, not on earth; and there are no celestial signs before His coming in Dan 7. The focus of the cloud motif in Matt 24:30 is on the Parousia itself, and the coming cloud is a fulfillment of the covenants God has made with men.

As indicated, the clouds of heaven in Matt 24:30 are a terrible sign for the tribes who reject the Son of Man, as in the Apocalyptic literature. They cause anguish and mourning. But while the judgment motif is predominant in the Apocalyptic literature, the clouds of Matt 24:30 emphasize the coming of the long-awaited Lord. His coming on the clouds does not focus on the judgment or punishment, but on His power and glory as in Dan 7:13-14. It is significant that only Matthew describes the cloud as bright (Matt 17:5). By adding the term "bright," Matthew emphasizes that the cloud is no ordinary cloud or judgment cloud, but the visible glory of God.¹

Since Matthew belongs to the New Testament era, it generally contains the New Testament eschatological themes. However, Matthew also has some other characteristics. Only

¹France, 263; Lenski, Matthew, 658; Carson, 386.
Matthew designated Daniel and uses \( \text{νεφέλων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ} \) in the Olivet Discourse. Therefore, the clouds are especially important in the Matthean Parousia scene as a sign of the Son of Man and an expression of glory and majesty of the coming Son of Man. The clouds of heaven in Matthew are not explicitly connected with the resurrection of the saints or the ascension of the Christians as in Pauline writings.

The development of the language and concept is found outside the Apocalyptic literature. In the Apocalyptic literature, the colorful concept of the cloud motif in the Old Testament lost most of its meaning because of the extreme emphasis on judgment. The clouds are a terrible omen of judgment coming up from the sea.\(^1\) It is probably not a development but a deviation from the Old Testament. On the other hand, the New Testament writers used the Old Testament motifs, but developed and deepened the cloud concept by connecting the clouds to the Parousia. The terrible, thick clouds become glorious and bright white clouds heralding the coming of the Son of Man.\(^2\) In the Matthean Parousia scene, the clouds become the most important setting of the Parousia. The clouds are a heralding sign, providing the glorious and majestic setting for the coming of the Son of Man.

\(^1\) Bar 53-72; 4 Ezra 15:34-45.

\(^2\) Matt 17:5; Rev 14:14.
Where did Matthew, then, get his idea of the descent of Jesus on the clouds of heaven? First of all, it probably comes from the Old Testament motif of "coming down of the Lord on the clouds." Second, it comes from the Danielic Son of Man, though nowhere in the whole range of the Old Testament prophecy, the Apocalyptic, and the Qumran literature is there a clear indication of the "descent of the Messiah on the clouds of heaven." Most of all, it comes from Jesus Himself. Based on the saying of Jesus, the early Church perhaps expected the descent of Jesus on clouds from heaven. Therefore, though Matthew uses Old Testament motifs and terms, the concept "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven" came from his Christian perspective.

What, then, are the meaning and function of the clouds in Matt 24:30? Minear, in his book *Christian Hope and the Second Coming*, well summarizes the basic functions of the cloud of heaven in Matt 24:30. According to his observation, the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven signifies that His return will mark a decisive event in God's dealings with men. The clouds are an "emblem of

1Glasson, *Second Advent*, 173. But it is used of God, particularly in reference to the coming Day of the Lord.


4Ibid., 125.
God's sovereign power and majestic glory moving toward the earth."¹ They are signs of the "heavenly Kingdom, eternal dominion, and judgment which God has given to the Son of Man."² Second, the advent will be a direct fulfillment of the covenant with Moses and Israel at Sinai,³ and at the same time, with the people of God throughout the ages. Third, for those who have scorned God's will and have grown impatient and skeptical, the cloud looks dark and ominous on the horizon as in the Apocalyptic literature, and all tribes will mourn when it comes. Lastly, to the people of God, the coming clouds are a sign that at last the time comes when they meet the long-expected Lord in the clouds. Thus the cloud becomes the home of the saints, an abiding rendezvous with the Son of Man.⁴

Most of all, the creativity of Matthew must be understood in the Parousia scene itself. The coming of the Son of Man on the clouds is located between the mourning of the tribes and the great trumpet call of the angels. The two scenes are contrasted vividly by the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds. These clouds of heaven are chariots of God's glory, which in a unique way embody the divine

¹Ibid., 124.
²Ibid.
³The clouds on which the Son of Man comes will be the same clouds that had filled the Tent of Meeting whenever the people heard and obeyed the voice of God.
⁴Ibid., 126.
majesty and power. They carry profound associations of glory and power, judgment and blessing. The image also preserved the "reality of God's abiding presence."¹

In conclusion, the motif of "the clouds of heaven" in Matt 24:30 follows the motif of theophany and the Day of the Lord of the Old Testament and Danielic Son of Man figure. When the first-century readers encountered the cloud scene in Matt 24:30, they did not imagine the ordinary clouds which we see everyday. They automatically pictured the glorious clouds of theophany in the Old Testament and the celestial divine cloud of Daniel. But the striking difference is that the clouds of heaven in Matt 24:30 are completely focused on the second coming of the Christ. In this context, theophany becomes Christophany.

Based on the study of this section, I drew two trajectories: the chronological trajectory diagram 7 and the logical trajectory diagram 8. The former shows the development of the motifs and concept chronologically, the latter indicates the logical relationship of the motifs. The colors demonstrate the path of the motifs and make it easier to trace the motif according to the path.

¹Ibid., 123.
Exodus
16:10, The glory of the Lord in the cloud
19:9–21, A thick cloud
34:5, Lord came down in the cloud

Num 10:34
The cloud of the Lord was over them

Joel 2:2
A day of clouds and thick darkness

Zeph 1:15
A day of clouds and thick darkness

Ezek 32:7, Ezek 30:3
Cover sun with clouds
A day of clouds

Jub 1:2–3
Sinai theophany

Matt 24:30; 26:66
The Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with Power and great glory

Matt 17:1-9
The clouds of theophany

Mark
13:26-clouds of Parousia
9:7-clouds of theophany

Luke
21:27-Clouds of Parousia
9:34-theophany

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coming

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A---->B allusion
A---->B possible allusion
A<---B not clear which one influences the other

---

Num 10:34
The cloud of the Lord was over them

Zeph 1:15
A day of clouds and thick darkness

Ezek 30:3
A day of clouds

Jub 1:2-3
Sinai theophany

Matt 24:30; 26:64
The Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with Power and great glory

Matt 17:1-9
The clouds of theophany

Mark
13:26-clouds of Parousia
9:7-clouds of theophany

Luke
21:27-Clouds of Parousia
9:34-theoph.

Acts 1:9
Cloud took Him out of sight

Revelation
1:7, He is coming with clouds 14:14-16, on the cloud One like a Son of Man

Thess 4:16-17
In the clouds to meet the Lord in the air

---

Quarum Literature
Clouds are not significant. No divine connection between the clouds and the Messiah.

B.T. Sanh 96b-97a Bar-Nafel
Targum 1 Chr 3:24 Anani
Midrash Gen Rab 56:1-theophany
Tosefta Sotah 4:2

Rabbinic Literature

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Logical Trajectory Diagram 8: The Coming of the Son of Man on the Clouds of Heaven

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle</th>
<th>Theophany</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ps 104:3; Isa 19:1 Exod 19:9; 34:5 The Lord is riding a swift cloud. I am coming to you in a thick cloud.</td>
<td>Exod 19:16-21 A thick cloud+trumpet Ps 97:1-6 Clouds and thick darkness are round about Him. Exod 16:10 Glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud Num 10:34 The cloud of the Lord was</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apocalyptic Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Danielic Son of Man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Ezra 13:1-5 Flew with the clouds of heaven from the great sea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Judgment Clouds

| Sib Or 1:217-19 War and judgment 2 Bar 53-72 A cloud coming up from the great sea 4 Ezra 15:34-45 Great clouds full of wrath & tempest |

Theophany

| Jub 1:2-3 Sinai theophany Ps-Philo 11:15 Clouds—God’s dwelling place |

Vehicle

| TAb 8:3; 10:2; 12:1; 12:9. Michael took Abraham up unto a cloud. |

---

With the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man and he came to the Ancient of days.

The Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Matt 24:30

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The Coming of the Lord

Theophany

With the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man and he came to the Ancient of days.

Matt 24:30

Danielic Son of Man

Bar Mea 96b-97a

Midrash Gen Rab 56:1

Targum I

The Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Matt 21:10

Clouds and thick darkness are round about: Him.

Lk 16:10

Glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.

10:34

The cloud of the Lord was like a great fiery ball and shining bright.

Den 7:13-14

With the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man and he came to the Ancient of days.

Joel 2:2

A day of clouds and darkness.

Ezek 30:3

A day of clouds.

Zeph 1:15

A day of clouds and darkness.

JQumran I

Clouds are significant divine doxology between the Old and the New Testaments.

OT motifs to the Person of Christ. Twenty-First Century Biblical Christology.

New Testament

Textual Transfiguration

Midrash Gen Rab

Midrash I: Targum 1 Chr 10:34

Clouds are round about Him.

Ezek 1:26

Rev 4:6

Rev 11:12-15

Rev 21:27; 22:1

Mark 13:26

Matt 24:27; 21:27


Matt 24:34

Matt 24:30

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Mr allusion contrast
A .......B echo
not clear which one influences the other

- **Dan 7:13-14**
  - With the clouds of
  - heaven there came
  - one like a son of
  - man and he came to
  - the Ancient of
days.

- **The Day of the Lord**
  - Joel 2:2 A day of clouds and thick
darkness
  - Ezek 30:3 A day of clouds
  - Zeph 1:15 A day of clouds and thick
darkness

- **Quarcan Literature**
  - Clouds are not
  - significant. No
  - divine connection
  - between the clouds
  - and the Messiah

- **New Testament**
  - Theophany
    - Transfiguration
      - Matt 24:30; Mark
      - 9:7; Luke 9:34
  - Parousia Sign
    - OT motifs linked
to the Person of
  - Christ. The clouds
  - focus on the
  - coming of Christ.
    - Matt 24:30; 26:64;
    - Mark 13:26; Luke
    - 21:27; Acts 1:9
    - Thess 4:6-17
    - Rev 1:7; 14:14-16

- **Danielic Son of Man**
  - Bar Nafle
    - B.T.Sanh 96b-97a
    - Anani
    - Targum 1 Chr
    - 3:24

- **Theophany**
  - Midrash Gen Rab
    - 56:1

- **Clouds of Glory**
  - Targum Isa 35:10
  - Tosefta Sotah 4:2

- **Rabbinic Literature**

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In Scene III, the Parousia reaches its finale. The Son of Man sends out His angels with a loud trumpet call, and they gather His elect from all over the world. The events of Scene III must occur simultaneously with Scene IIb because there is no reason to have an interval between them.

Scene IIIa: The Great Trumpet Call

Scene III begins with the great trumpet call. The Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven will send His angels with the great trumpet call. Not only will all see His return but they will hear the loud trumpet that announces His arrival. What is the function of the great trumpet call in the Matthean Parousia scenes? How is it related to the coming of the Son of Man and to the gathering of the elect? In the ancient world, the trumpet was not used primarily as a musical instrument. Its main task was to give signals in war, whether to change guard, or to prepare for attack or retreat, or to terrify or deceive the enemy. In times of peace, it is mentioned in mourning.


2Gerhard Friedrich, "σάλπιγξ, σάλπίζω, etc.,” TDNT, 7:73.
processions and triumphs. At the games, the trumpeter summoned competitors and gave the signal to start. The hours were announced by trumpet signals. To understand the great trumpet call of Matt 24:31, therefore, it is important to study the biblical background of the trumpet.

Old Testament Background

The terms ἁλπιγξ, ἀλπίζειν are used in the LXX 124 times to express six different Hebrew terms for horns or trumpets. The most common Hebrew words are ἐφυσ and

1 M. J. Harris, "Trumpet," DNTT 3:873; Friedrich, 7:75.

The terms ἁλπιγξ, ἀλπίζειν, are used 134 times in the LXX to refer to a trumpet or to the act of trumpeting. This total can be broken down into 83 occurrences of ἁλπιγξ; 51 of ἀλπίζειν.

3 The 6 Hebrew equivalents are: ק ש, לֵוֹ, כ נ, הלּ, מ ל, ת כ.

4 Walter A. Elwell, ed., Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 2:1510. It means originally the curved "ram's horn," then more generally "horn" or "wind instrument." "Shofar is mentioned in the Bible 72 times, more than any other Hebrew instrument. It is the only instrument of ancient Israel which survives in its original form and is still used in Jewish liturgy"; Encyclopedia Judaica (New York: Macmillan Co., 1971), 14:1443: Rabbi Judah states, "The shofar of Rosh Hashanah must be of the horn of a ram, to indicate submission." Traditionally a ram's horn is sounded on those days because of its connection with the sacrifice of Isaac. The Bible refers to two kinds of shofar sounds: teki'ah and teru'ah (Num 10:5-8). The Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 4:9 describes the teki'ah as a long blast and the teru'ah as three wavering crying blasts.
The terms describe certain types of wind instruments, including the simple ram's horn as well as the more refined metal horns used for coronation and priestly activities in the temple.

In Old Testament times, the trumpet was used on numerous occasions in the affairs of Israel. The trumpet sound was deeply related to the life of the Israelite. Joseph Seiss states the important use of the trumpet in the activities of the Israelites:

Trumpets are expressive instruments. The voice of the trumpet is the most significant voice known to the Holy Scriptures. God Himself gave His ancient people very special directions with regard to the use of the trumpet. It is itself described as a cry—a loud and mighty cry—which related only to important occasions. The time of solemnity—a time for men to bestir themselves greatly in one way or another.

At this point, Paul Minear proposes the necessity of a background study of the trumpet call:

In apprehending the full impact of the trumpet blast on the imaginations of Israel, one needs to keep in mind these and many other allusions accruing from the long history of exile and exodus, warfare and wilderness,

---

1It is the long straight "trumpet" made of beaten silver and used mainly for religious, not martial purposes. This occurs some 30 times in the Old Testament. The etymology is difficult. The word is probably connected with the Arabic hṣr, whose basic sense is "narrow." It is a long, narrow, straight instrument of metal, made from silver (Num 10:2), to be distinguished from the 衅, the curved ram horn. When used in the temple, the shofar was usually sounded in conjunction with the trumpet: Cf. Friedrich. 7:76; B. T. Rosh Hashanah 27a.

covenant and cultus. If one gathers together all these allusions he will be better prepared to understand the prophetic announcement of a day of terrible judgment ushered in by the ominous warning of the trumpet.¹

The trumpets in the Old Testament are found in six major settings that illuminate the theological significance of the use of trumpet.² Table 13 shows the settings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>Ωαλπιγξ</th>
<th>Ωαλπιζειν</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liturgy, worship</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coronation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signaling</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theophany, judgment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eschatological use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Minear, *Christian Hope*, 195.

²The use and significance of the horn and trumpet are summarized under six headings by Friedrich in *TDNT*, 7:78-81: (1) The horn and the trumpet in war (Judg 3:27; 6:34; 1 Sam 13:3; Jer 4:5; 6:1,17; 51:27; Hos 8:1; Amos 3:6; Ezra 7:14; 33:3; Neh 4:12. (2) The horn and trumpet on solemn occasions in peace (2 Sam 15:10; 1 Kgs 1:34,39,41; 2 Kgs 9:13; 11:14; 2 Chr 23:13). (3) The cultic significance of the trumpet and the horn (Num 10:10; Lev 23:24). (4) The sounding of horns at theophanies (Exod 19:16,19; Zech 9:14). (5) The eschatological significance of the horn (Joel 2:1; Zeph 1:16; Isa 27:13; Zech 9:14). (6) The horn and the trumpet as musical instrument (Dan 3:5,7,10,15; 2 Chr 5:13; Ps 150:3; Num 10:3).
Table 13 shows that the most dominant setting is that of liturgy and celebration. They worshiped God "with the sounding of the trumpet." The second setting was of war and other battle contexts. The third case was the coronation of kings. The fourth function of the trumpet sound was the signaling of important events. While signaling was intimately related to both battle and warning, a separate category is needed because it indicated the gathering of God's people. The fifth motif was theophany.

1Paulien, 206. The term "liturgy" means temple rituals, hymns, and related activities. It is also significant to note that many of the "war" passages have liturgical connotations in the light of Num 10:8,9.

2Before the Ark of the Covenant: 1 Chr 15:24,28; 16:6; Worship in the Temple: Num 10:8,10; 4 Kgs 12:13; 1 Chr 16:42; 2 Chr 5:12,13; 7:6; 20:28; 29:26,27,28; Ezra 3:10; Neh 12:35,41; Num 10:10; Feasts: Lev 23:24; 25:9,9; Ps 80(81):3; Num 10:10; Ps 80(81):3; Praising and Thanksgiving: 2 Kgs 6:15; 1 Chr 13:8; 2 Chr 15:14; Neh 8:15; Ps 46(47):5; 97(98):6,6; 150:3; Dan 3:5,7,10,15; Isa 44:23.


5Gathering: Num 10:2; Isa 27:13; Num 10:3,4,5,6,7; Isa 27:13; scattering: 2 Kgs 20:1; warning: Hos 5:8; 2 Chr 13:12; Isa 58:1; Neh 4:18(12); Hos 5:8.

6Num 10:2,3,4,5,6,7; Isa 27:13.
and judgment.\textsuperscript{1} The last case was the eschatological mood.\textsuperscript{2}

Table 13 clearly indicates the spiritual significance of the trumpet. The figures show that the predominant usage of trumpets in the Old Testament was a spiritual one in the context of the covenant.\textsuperscript{3} Whenever the covenant between God and His people was renewed, the renewal was welcomed by the blast of trumpets.\textsuperscript{4} The use of the trumpet at the various feasts was important in the context of the liturgy.

The cultic significance of the trumpet and the horn is clear in the Old Testament. Probably this is one of the most important backgrounds of the trumpets of Matt 24:31. They were blown at the new moon (Num 10:10; Ps 81:3). The trumpet announced the New Year's feast, which was a day of commemoration (Lev 23:24; Num 29:1). At the Passover, the Levites blew the ceremonial trumpets and the sacrifices began.\textsuperscript{5} The Feast of Trumpets designated the beginning of one of the most important months in the Jewish calendar (Lev

\textsuperscript{1}E.g., theophany: Exod 19:13,16,19; 20:18; Ps 50:1-6; judgment: Jer 51:27; Ezek 33:3-6.

\textsuperscript{2}Isa 27:13; Joel 2:1,15; Zeph 1:16; Zech 9:14.

\textsuperscript{3}Paulien, 206.

\textsuperscript{4}The story of the inauguration of the Mosaic covenant on Sinai preserved a prominent place for trumpets, accompanied by thunder, lightning, earthquake, cloud, and the holy trembling of the people (Exod 19:16,17).

\textsuperscript{5}Schauss, 53.
23:24-25). This month was begun by the observance of the blowing of trumpets and the offering of prescribed sacrifices to the Lord (Num 29:1-6). There is no ceremony so characteristic of the Rosh Hashanah festival as the blowing of the trumpet. The Day of Atonement was also marked by the sounding of the horn or trumpet (Lev 23:24-25; Num 29:1).

Most important for the development of the shofar's role in the liturgy of Rosh Hashanah was the ancient practice of announcing the new moon with the sounding of the shofar. Since the first day of Tishri assumed special spiritual significance, the sounding of the shofar on that day also assumed deeper meaning, and it became "intimately

1The origin of the custom of blowing the shofar on the first of every month, and especially loudly and alarmingly on the first day of the seventh month, is not entirely clear. We have to take for granted that this custom once was connected with the New Moon ceremonies and beliefs.

2Schauss, 159.

3Ibid., 181: At the Feast of Tabernacles "a merry throng gathers for the procession from the Mount of the Temple down to the spring of Shiloam. Leading the procession is a priest bearing a large golden ewer, in which he drew the water to be poured on the altar. . . . Priests carrying silver trumpets blew the ceremonial calls."

4Mishnah Rosh Hashanah, 3:3: "The shofar [blown in the Temple] at the New Year was made from the horn of the wild goat, straight, with its mouthpiece overlaid with gold. And at the sides [of them that blew the shofar] were two [that blew upon] trumpets. The shofar blew a long note and the trumpets a short note, since the duty of the day fell on the shofar."
associated with the central theme of the religious New Year.\textsuperscript{1}

The trumpet was also blown on joyful occasions: "With trumpets and the sound of the horn, make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!" (Ps 98:6). When Solomon's temple was dedicated, 120 priests blew on trumpets (2 Chr 5:12,13; 7:6), and when the foundation of the new temple was laid, the trumpets of the priest sounded forth again (Ezra 3:10).

Second, besides liturgical use, the trumpet was used as a signal of war. More than forty-three Old Testament references mention trumpets in regard to war and other battle contexts. The trumpet signaled a call to arms (Judg 3:17; 6:34; Neh 4:18-20), a warning of impending war (Jer 6:1; Ezek 33:3-6; Hos 5:8), a retreat (2 Sam 13:3), and the disbanding of forces (2 Sam 20:1,22). Its voice alarmed the enemy (Judg 7:8; 16:22) and was a fearful symbol of war itself (Jer 4:19-21). But the trumpet at war also frequently had a spiritual component, for the battle trumpets of Israel were to be handled only by the priests (Num 10:8-10).\textsuperscript{2} The purpose of the blast, as at the beginning of battle, was that God should not forget them but keep them in mind. When the priests blew the trumpet, they

\textsuperscript{1}Abraham E. Millgram, \textit{Jewish Worship} (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), 237.

\textsuperscript{2}Yadin, 113.
were calling on God to remember His covenant with His people.\footnote{Millgram, 239: "The sound of the shofar also brings to God's remembrance that exalted moment in the annals of Israel when 'a very loud blast of the horn' (Exod 19:16) was heard at Mount Sinai, and the children of Israel entered into an everlasting covenant with God. . . . This remembrance, too, awakens God's attribute of mercy on behalf of the children of Israel."} The principal difference between the practice in Israel and other nations, concerning the use of trumpets in battle, is in Israel's religious attitude.

Third, trumpets were prominent also in the coronations of the king.\footnote{Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet were directed to anoint Solomon King over Israel, and blow with the trumpet (1 Kgs 1:34). It is also written: "They blew the trumpet, and proclaimed, Jehu is king (2 Kgs 9:13).} Since the king was understood to be Yahweh's servant and representative, the coronation trumpet became a proclamation of Yahweh's future kingdom. As with judgment, this understanding of trumpets became increasingly important in New Testament times.\footnote{Paulien, 209.}

Fourth, the trumpet was fundamentally a signaling instrument. The trumpet was the signal of the gathering of the people.\footnote{Num 10:2; Isa 27:13; Num 10:3,4,5,6,7; Isa 27:13.} God had commanded Moses to make two silver trumpets for the calling together of the congregation at the Tent of Meeting (Num 10:1-3). They were employed in summoning the congregation, breaking camp, sounding the alarm in time of war, and celebrating festivals. Many of
the major civil and religious activities of the nation were governed by the sounding of trumpets.¹

Fifth, trumpets are associated with theophany and judgment in the Old Testament.² The shofar is first mentioned in Exod 19:16 at the theophany on Sinai.³ The sound of trumpets probably denotes the inexpressible voice of God. It is associated with the manifestation of the terrible majesty and power of God.⁴ Trumpets were also employed literally and symbolically to warn of judgment. Jeremiah mentioned them with regard to the future judgment of Babylon (Jer 51:27). Ezekiel warned the people to prepare for the impending judgment (Ezek 33:3-6). While the

¹The first mention of the trumpet, as well as a good summary of its main use, is found in Num 10:1-10: "The Lord said to Moses, 'Make two silver trumpets; of hammered work you shall make them; and you shall use them for summoning the congregation, and for breaking camp. And when both are blown, all the congregation shall gather themselves to you at the entrance of the tent of meeting. But if they blow only one, then the leaders, the heads of the tribes of Israel, shall gather themselves to you. When you blow an alarm, the camps that are on the east side shall set out. And when you blow an alarm the second time, the camps that are on the south side shall set out. An alarm is to be blown whenever they are to set out. But when the assembly is to be gathered together, you shall blow, but you shall not sound an alarm.'"

²Friedrich, 7:80; Paulien, 209; Gibson, 38.

³Exod 19:16-19: "On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast; so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. . . . And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder."

⁴Gibson, 35.
theophany and judgment motifs are relatively rare in the Old Testament, it became perhaps the predominant emphasis in the New Testament. The use of trumpets to reveal the theophany and to warn of judgment became the background of the eschatological interpretation of the trumpets.

Finally, the trumpet is used in an eschatological setting in four important eschatological passages in the Old Testament (Isa 27:13, Joel 2:1,15; Zeph 1:16, Zech 9:14). The imagery of darkness and clouds alludes to the eschatological scene which would herald the destruction on the Day of Judgment\(^1\) and the ultimate return to Zion (Isa 27:13).

As Gibson summarizes, each of these passages adds significant details to the symbolism of trumpets with regard to "God's dealings with Israel and the world in the events leading up to the advent of the Messiah."\(^2\)

The Jubilee trumpet is also important to understanding the eschatological meaning of the trumpets in terms of liberty and returning. Lev 25:9-10 declares:

> Then you shall send abroad the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall send abroad the trumpet throughout all your land.

\(^1\)The Day of Yahweh will be announced by the sound of the horn. The same signal will usher in the Last Judgment. Zeph 1:14-16: "The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter, the mighty man cries aloud there. A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements."

\(^2\)Gibson, 43.
And you shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a Jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his family.

The year of Jubilee\(^1\) was initiated by the sounding of trumpets on the Day of Atonement in the beginning of the fiftieth year. By the sound of the Jubilee trumpet, liberty was proclaimed to all Israelites who were in bondage to any of their countrymen, and those who had been compelled through poverty to sell their ancestral possessions received them back. The Jubilee trumpet announced that the period of "slavery" was over and the land would be restored to the "original owners." Thus, even in the Old Testament the trumpet of Jubilee was spiritualized to indicate liberty from sin and sorrow.

This study of the Old Testament background shows that the predominant usage of trumpets in the Old Testament was a religious one in the context of worship and covenant. But in the eschatological sense related to the feasts and the gathering, the trumpet calls the people to return to the

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\(^1\)The year of Jubilee was the fiftieth year occurring after seven times seven years from its inauguration. The name was derived from the custom of proclaiming it by a blast on the trumpet. Elwell, 2:1226: "The sacred trumpet gave its name to the year of the ram's horn, the jubilee year—a year to which the people of God were summoned in a striking and holy way. It was not simply a release from labor, not just a rest, but a year belonging to the Lord"; cf. Geoffrey Wigoder, ed., The Encyclopedia of Judaism (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1989), 392; .
life of a New Day, a New Sabbath, a New Year, a New Moon, and a new Jubilee.

The Trumpet in the Apocalyptic Literature

In the Apocalyptic literature, trumpets continued to appear with the same religious significance as in the Old Testament, but there was some transformation of meaning. The trumpet became more associated with the judgment as we can see in table 14.¹

Table 14.—Trumpets in the Apocalyptic Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
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<th>Apo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liturgy and worship</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War, destruction</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coronation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signaling</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theophany, judgment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eschatology</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹The statistics were obtained from Albert-Marie Dennis' concordance; James H. Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha; and my own research.
In the Psalms of Solomon, the sound of the trumpet is used both as an announcement of war and calamity, and as an omen of judgment (8:1-8). When we compare Ps Sol 8:1-8 with the joyful sound of trumpets in the biblical Psalms, we can perceive the difference in tone.

Ps Sol 8:1-8

My ear heard distress and the sound of war, the blast of the trumpet sounding slaughter and destruction.

The sound of many people as of a violent storm, as a raging fire storm sweeping through the wilderness.

And I said to my heart, Where, then, will God judge it? . . . God exposed their sins in the full light of day; the whole earth knew the righteous judgments of God.

Psalms

God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, Sing praises! (47:5-6)

Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our feast day. (81:3)

With trumpets and the sound of the horn, make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord! (98:6)

Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp. (150:3)

The Apocalypse of Abraham 31:1-8 depicts ten eschatological plagues which fall on the heathen and are followed by a divine trumpet blast and the arrival of God's "chosen one":

And then I will sound the trumpet out of the air, and I will send a chosen one, having in him one measure of all

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1The Psalms of Solomon, written during the first century B.C., as a whole do not belong to apocalyptic literature, but because of Ps Sol 17, they are included.

2Wright, 2:658, n. 8: "This Psalm contains specific historical references to the capture of Jerusalem and the Temple by Pompey. Because of their sins, the Jews were drugged by God and offered no resistance to the Roman army until they reached the Temple."
my power, and he will summon my people, humiliated by the heathen. And I will burn with fire those who mocked them and ruled over them in this age and I will deliver those who have covered me with mockery over to the scorn of the coming age (31:1-2).

Here again a trumpet is associated with the eschatological judgment. It is significant here that the trumpet blast heralds the "chosen one" and summons God's people. If this is not a Christian interpolation, it provides a "remarkable parallel to the New Testament Parousia passages."1

The Apocalypse of Zephaniah, composed somewhere between 100 B.C. and A.D. 175,2 also has a remarkable series of trumpet events in sections 9-12. The basic theme of the book is a divine judgment which faces all people. In the trumpet scenes, there are further descriptions of "punishment for sinful souls and mention of a final day when the Lord will judge."3 The text ends with four trumpet scenes in which the episodes are introduced by a great angel who blows on a golden trumpet.4

1Paulien, 213.
2Wintermute, 1:500.
3Ibid., 502.
4Ibid., 498-99. The scenes appear in the following order. The first trumpet heralds the author's personal triumph over his accuser in the judgment (chap. 9). The second pronounces the opening of heaven (chap. 10). In this episode the seer once again sees the fiery sea and the sinners who are tormented in it. The third trumpet calls the saints to intercessory prayer (chap. 11). The fourth and final trumpet introduces a discussion of the end (chap. 12), and signals the coming wrath of God.
One of the standard judgment scenes with trumpet sound is found in the Testament of Abraham.¹

Behold two angels with fiery aspect and merciless intention and relentless look, and they drove myriads of souls, mercilessly beating them with fiery lashes. . . . And between the two gates there stood a terrifying throne with the appearance of terrifying crystal flashing like fire. And upon it sat a wondrous man, bright as the sun, like unto a Son of God. On the table lay a book whose thickness was six cubits, while its breadth was ten cubits. On its right and on its left stood two angels holding papyrus and ink and pen. On his left there sat a fiery angel, altogether merciless and relentless, holding a trumpet in his hand [italics mine], which contained within it an all consuming fire for testing the sinners.²

The emphasis on judgment on the basis of deeds is notorious in this book. It is likely that one of the main purposes of the original author was to describe the judgment scene and thus to indicate on what basis all individuals would gain either life or punishment.³

In Sib Or 4:173-175,⁴ there will be a very "great sign with sword and trumpet" at the rising of the sun, and He will destroy everything by fire, and it will be smoking

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¹Sanders, "Testament of Abraham," 1:875. It seems best to assume a date for the original of A.D. 100, plus or minus 25 years.

²TAb 12:1-11.


⁴Collins, "Sibylline Oracles," 1:382. Sib Or 4 was composed about A.D. 80.
dust (4:173-175). Without doubt, the eschatological judgment is revealed in these passages.¹

In the Book of 4 Ezra 6:18-24, the trumpet sound also describes the time of judgment, when the books are opened, the trumpet will sound, and all the world will be struck with terror at the sound of it. Two parallel passages in the New Testament show us the significant difference of tone as follows:

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**4 Ezra 6:23-24**

and the trumpet shall sound aloud, and when all hear it, they shall suddenly be terrified.

At that time friends shall make war on friends like enemies, and the earth and those who inhabit it shall be terrified, and the springs of the fountains shall stand still... .

**New Testament**

At the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed (1 Cor 15:52).

Who are left, shall 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. Therefore comfort one another with these words (1 Thess 4:16-17).

In summary of the trumpet tradition in the Apocalyptic literature, we note some significant change of the concept of the meaning of trumpets.² The passages just

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¹ Also in Sib Or 8:239, composed A.D. 175, the trumpet blast has a place in the description of judgment along with cosmic disasters: "A trumpet from heaven will issue a most mournful sound, wailing for the defilement of limbs and the woes of the world" (8:239).

² The meaning of trumpets in the Apocalyptic literature was not, however, limited to judgment. Ps Sol 11:1 connects the trumpet sound with the good news and the gathering of the people of God. Pseudo-Philo, written around the time of Jesus, describes the feast of trumpets (13:6), and in his story of Deborah, he associates trumpets...
examined underline the fact that trumpets are increasingly associated with judgment as we move from the Old Testament era through the period of the Apocalyptic literature. The association of trumpets with judgment and the eschaton are the predominant emphases.\footnote{Paulien, 210-13.} The blowing of trumpets in the setting of worship services in the temple is not prominent in the Apocalyptic literature; it has lost its joyful sound at various ceremonies.

The continuity of the Old Testament is that the trumpets have significant spiritual meaning in the life of Israel in both corpora. Some discontinuities are not to be overlooked. The Apocalyptic literature emphasizes the judgment function of the trumpets, while the predominant usage of trumpets in the Old Testament is a spiritual one in the context of the covenant. The Old Testament trumpets lost their joyful sound in the Apocalyptic literature.

The Qumran Literature

In the Qumran literature, the Hebrew term נשים was generally used as the trumpet of Sabbaths,\footnote{4QM3 1 1:13.} the trumpet with a gathering for praise and worship in thankfulness for God's deliverance of Israel under Deborah. The Life of Adam and Eve (first century A.D.) contains two trumpet passages. The archangel Michael sounded his trumpet calling the angels (22:1), and an angel sounded the trumpet to announce an important decision (37:1).
of war,¹ the trumpet of gathering,² the trumpet of calling,³ and others.⁴ The author of the War Scroll allots a large amount of space to the description of the trumpets, to their names, duties, and inscriptions. He also throws much light on the problems of the organization of the army and the congregation, tactics, and duties of the priests in battle.⁵

Five different kinds of trumpets are mentioned: the trumpets of summoning the congregation, the trumpets of remembrance, the trumpets of fanfare, the trumpets of pursuit, and the trumpets of withdrawal.⁶ At the sound of the trumpet of summons, the soldiers get ready to go to battle, and at a second signal the army approaches the enemy. While all were silver trumpets, they were blown in a

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¹IQM 3:2, (1) the trumpet of ambush, (2) the trumpet of withdrawal; 3:3, (1) the trumpets for summoning, (2) trumpet of formation, (3) trumpets of the man; 3:4, trumpet of the camp; 3:5, the trumpets for their expeditions 3:6, the trumpets of battle array; 3:7, the trumpets for calling; 3:8, (1) trumpets of the slain, (2) trumpets of ambush; 3:9, trumpets of pursuit; 3:10, (1) trumpets of withdrawal (2) trumpets for the way of return; 7:13, (1) the trumpets of summoning, (2) the trumpets of remembrance, (3) the trumpets of fanfare, (4) the trumpets of pursuit, (5) the trumpets of withdrawal; 7:14, the trumpets of summoning; 7:15, blow the trumpets; 7:17, the trumpets of battle array.

²CD 11:22.

³4QM6 12 4:3.

⁴4QM6 9 3:2; 11 4:3 (the trumpets of the return).

⁵Yadin, 87.

⁶IQM 7:11-20.
different manner in different situations (7:13). While the main emphasis in the War Scroll is on battle, it should not be ignored that these were covenant wars commanded by the priests and thus are probably based on Num 10:1-10.

The Rabbinic Literature

In the Rabbinic literature, most cases of trumpet sounding are used at the temple. The blowing of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah was carefully regulated by the rabbis of the Talmud. Every detail was fully prescribed for the shofar service—never less than twenty-one blasts in the temple in a day and never more than forty-eight. B. T.

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1Yadin, 92-99.
2Ibid., 113; Paulien, 215.
3Mishnah Tamid 7:3: "Two priests stood at the table of the fat pieces with two silver trumpets in their hands. They blew a prolonged, a quavering, and a prolonged blast. . . When they reached a break in the singing they blew upon the trumpets and the people prostrated themselves; at every break there was a blowing of the trumpet and at every blowing of the trumpet a prostration."

4Mishnah Sukkah 5:5: "On all days they blew twenty-one blasts: three at the opening of the gates, nine at the morning Daily Whole-offering, and nine at the evening Daily Whole-offering. At the Additional offerings they blew nine more blasts. On the eve of Sabbath they used to blow six more blasts, three to cause the people to cease from work and three to mark the break between the sacred and the profane. If the eve of Sabbath fell within the [week of the] Feast, they blew forty-eight blasts: three at the opening of the gates, three at the upper gate, three at the lower gate, three at the water-drawing, three at the Altar, nine at the morning Daily Whole-offering, nine at the evening Daily Whole-offering, nine at the Additional-offering, three to cause the people to cease from work, and three to mark the break between the sacred and the profane."
Rosh Hashana 11b refers to the trumpet blowing on the New Moon: "Blow the horn on the New Moon... In that day a great horn shall be blown."

The rabbis not only regulated the ritual of the shofar service, but filled it with much spiritual significance. The shofar therefore became the symbol and assurance of God's mercy and forgiveness. They thought that by the sound of the shofar, God transfers His mode of judgment from justice to mercy.¹

Midrash Rabbah Num 15:13-16 tells that when Moses was about to die, God hid the trumpets which Moses had made in the wilderness,² so that he might not sound a blast upon them bringing the Israelites to him, in fulfillment of the verse, "Neither is there dominion in the day of death."³ When Moses was about to depart from this world, he said: "Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers" (Deut 31:28). But while he was still living, the

¹Willgram, 238-39: The concept implies that when God hears the shofar sounded in the synagogues, "He leaves His throne of justice, as it were, and occupies the throne of mercy."

²According to Num 10:1-10, God commanded Moses to make two silver trumpets for summoning the congregation, and for breaking camp. When only one trumpet is blown, the leaders, the heads of the tribes of Israel, shall gather themselves to Moses. If both are blown, all the congregation shall gather themselves to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

³Midrash Gen Rabbah 96:3.
trumpets were divinely stored away. Thus, Midrash Rabbah pictures the trumpet as a symbol of authority from God to gather His people.

According to B. T. Shabbath, the trumpet was used as a detailed signal to prepare the Sabbath and a Jubilee. A priest, standing on a high tower of the Temple, blew a trumpet as a signal to put away all work and to begin the Sabbath rest. The Talmud states that it was not a Jubilee unless they blew the trumpet. It also teaches the use of the shofar in the New Year feast.

1Midrash Num Rabbah 15:13-16.

2Mishnah Sukkah, 5:5; see Schauss, 13; B. T. Shabbath 35b: "The School of R. Ishmael taught: six blasts were blown on the eve of the Sabbath. When the first was begun, those who stood in the fields ceased to hoe, plough, or do any work in the fields, and those who were near [to town] were not permitted to enter [it] until the more distant ones arrived, so that they should all enter simultaneously. But the shops were still open and the shutters were lying. When the second blast began, the shutters were removed and the shops closed. Yet hot [water] and pots still stood on the range. When the third blast was begun, what was to be removed was removed, and what was to be stored away was stored away, and the lamp was lit. Then there was an interval for as long as it takes to bake a small fish or to place a loaf in the oven: then a teki'ah and teru'ah and tek'ah were sounded, (tek'i'ah is a long blast; teru'ah is a series of very short blasts, all counted as one. These three were blown in rapid succession and one commenced the Sabbath."

3B. T. Rosh Hashanah 9b.

4Ibid., 27b, 29a. 34a.
Why was the trumpet blown? The Mishnah explains that it was because of God's remembrance of His people. The Talmud also states that the trumpet is blown in order to confuse the Accuser, so that he will not bring his charges against the Jews before God in the day of judgment. Hearing so much trumpet blowing, Satan believes that the Messiah has arrived and the end of his power on earth has come.

According to the prayer Shemoneh 'Esreh, God himself will "sound the great horn for our freedom"; this blast is to announce the ingathering of the exiles and not specifically the resurrection of the dead.

Sound the great horn for our freedom; raise the ensign to gather our exiles, and gather us from the four corners of the earth. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who gatherest the dispersed of thy people Israel (italics mine).

---

1B. T. Rosh Hashanah 16a: "R. Abbahu said: Why do we blow on a ram's horn? The holy One, blessed be He, said: 'Sound before me a ram's horn so that I may remember on your behalf the binding of Isaac the son of Abraham, and account it to you as if you had bound yourselves before Me.'"

2Ibid. 16b: "R. Isaac further said: If the shofar is not sounded at the beginning of the year, evil will befall at the end of it. Why so? Because the Accuser has not been confused."

3Joseph H. Hertz, The Authorized Daily Prayer Book (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1948), 143. Next to the Shema, the Eighteen Benedictions are the most important part of Jewish Service. In simple speech, these oldest congregational prayers of the Synagogue satisfy the cravings of a pious heart for communion with God, and give expression to praise, thanksgiving, confession, and petition.

4Ibid., See the Tenth Benediction.
In sum, the rabbinic literature generally follows the Old Testament trumpet motif except for a few occasions that are not found in the Old Testament. Some new elements are: (1) by the sound of the shofar, God transfers His mode of judgment from justice to mercy;\(^1\) (2) the trumpet is an authority from God to gather His people;\(^2\) (3) the trumpet recalls God’s remembrance on His people;\(^3\) and (4) the trumpet sound confuses the Accuser, Satan.\(^4\)

The Trumpets in the New Testament

In the New Testament the term σώλπιγς/σωλπίζω appears twenty-three times. Of the twenty-three occurrences, sixteen are found in Revelation.\(^5\) Table 15 shows that except the theophany and judgment trumpets of Revelation (15 times),\(^6\) the Parousia theme is significant in the New Testament. The role of the trumpet in Revelation is well described in Paulien's and Gibson's dissertations.\(^7\)

\(^1\) Millgram, 238-39.
\(^2\) Midrash Num Rabbah 15:13-16.
\(^3\) B. T. Rosh Hashanah 16a.
\(^4\) Ibid. 16b.
\(^5\) σώλπιγς, 1:10; 4:1; 8:2, 6, 13; 9:14. σωλπίζω, 8:6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13; 9:1, 13; 10:7; 11:15.
\(^6\) σώλπιγς: Rev 1:10; 4:1; 8:2, 6, 13; 9:14; σωλπίζω: Rev 8:6, 7, 8, 10, 13; 9:1, 13; 10:7; 11:15.
\(^7\) Paulien, 221-29; Gibson, 60-281.
Table 15.—Trumpets in the New Testament

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<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>OT</th>
<th>Apocalyptic</th>
<th>NT</th>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>The sign of the Parousia</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

John uses trumpets in a worship setting,¹ and as a symbol of judgment (8:2–11:18). They are used for heralding a theophany (1:10), and in celebrating enthronement (11:15). Two occasions, Matt 6:2 and 1 Cor 14:8, express simple, non-theological uses of the trumpet.² Heb 12:19 alludes to Exod 19:13–19. The cloud, the darkness, and the storm are all theophanic phenomena. The author of Hebrews contrasts

¹Paulien, 223: "Revelation, as we have seen, is filled with worship and prayer. The entire book is placed in a setting that is based on the Old Testament tabernacle and temple cultus. . . . The worship scenes of Revelation are central to the Author's purpose."

²In Matt 6:2, the trumpet sound is probably metaphorical for calling attention to oneself. In his discussion of tongues Paul uses the metaphor of the war trumpet (1 Cor 14:8) to show that proclamation in the congregation must be clear. If the trumpet does not give a definite signal, the troops will not prepare for battle.
the security of the one who accepts Christ to the terror and
gloom of the people who stay at the mountain of the law.

The trumpet appears four times in the New Testament
in connection with the Parousia (Matt 24:31; 1 Cor 15:51,52;
1 Thess 4:16). This feature of the last trumpet heralding
the Last Day is referred to three times by Paul in his
fuller treatment of the resurrection of the dead.¹

In 1 Cor 15:51,52, Paul refers to the Parousia:

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep,
but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the
twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the
trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised
incorruptible, and we shall be changed (italics mine).

At the sound of the trumpet, the dead are raised. This
revelation pertained to the transformation that some
believers would experience at the time of the resurrection
of the just. The last trumpet means not the last in a
series of trumpet blasts, but as an eschatological signal
which sounds forth at the end of the age.² Here Paul
emphasizes the transformation of believers, rather than the
gathering of them.

¹Minear, Christian Hope, 199: "In the letters of
Paul the accent falls on the trumpet as the signal of
resurrection and reunion. When the Lord descends from
heaven with "a cry of command, 'He will bring the trumpet of
God. This will spell out the reunion of all who are in
Christ, the dead and the living, who will always be with the
Lord (I Thess 4:16).'"

²Hans Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians, Hermeneia--A
Critical and History Commentary on the Bible, trans. James
Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 291; Friedrich,
87.
Another outstanding example is found in 1 Thess 4:16,17:

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

This passage also calls attention to the resurrection and transformation of believers. The gathering together into the presence of the Lord is the culmination of these events. The Lord here is none other than Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Thess 2:19). He descends from heaven with (1) a shout of command, (2) the voice of the archangel, and (3) the trumpet call of God. Since Rev 1:10 speaks of "a great voice, as of a trumpet," some maintain that they are two ways of expressing one thought. But the trumpet call has something different from the voice of the archangel. It contains colorful and spiritual inheritances from its previous apocalyptic traditions.

Paulien well summarizes the significance of the New Testament trumpet in terms of the Christocentric eschatology of the New Testament when he states:

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1Bruce, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 101.

2Morris, The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, 143. Morris distinguishes the three sounds. The "shout" denotes an authoritative utterance by a military officer to his soldiers. Probably the owner of the "shout" is the Lord. The voice of the archangel will be a very great voice, an archangel type of voice. The trumpet of God has a different tone from the others.
In the New Testament, the things of Yahweh and the things of Israel are applied to Jesus Christ. Theophanies become Christophanies. The Day of Yahweh becomes the Day of Jesus Christ. The eschatological event is the Parousia of Jesus. As the blowing of trumpets in the Old Testament related to the things of Yahweh and Israel, so in the New Testament they are related to Jesus and His people.¹

In conclusion, it can be said that even though the term "trumpet" is not used frequently in the New Testament except in Revelation,² it is used in certain highly significant passages relating to Parousia events. The trumpets in the New Testament are significantly related to the coming of Jesus and the gathering of His elect. Some continuities of Matt 24:31 with the Old Testament are: (1) the Parousia trumpet in the New Testament contains all the trumpet motifs of the Old Testament as a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies; and (2) although the judgment motif is dominant in Revelation, John also uses trumpets in a worship setting, as in the Old Testament. The continuity with the Apocalyptic literature is that the judgment motif of the trumpet is dominant in the Apocalyptic literature and in Revelation.

The discontinuity from the Old Testament is that in Revelation the emphasis is on the theophany and judgment that played a minor role in the Old Testament. The discontinuity from the Apocalyptic literature is that the

¹ Paulien, 347.
² The term trumpet is used only 7 times in the New Testament outside of Revelation.
trumpet of the New Testament focuses on Jesus and His people. The parallel passages (4 Ezra 6:22-24; 1 Cor 15:50; 1 Thess 4:16-17) show us a significantly different tone.

The Meaning of the Trumpet in Matt 24:29-31

As we have seen, the trumpet sound was deeply related to the life of the people of God and was the most significant voice known in the Scriptures. A study of the Old Testament background shows that the predominant usage of trumpets in the Old Testament is a religious one, in the context of worship and covenant. In the Apocalyptic literature, the association of trumpets with judgment and the eschaton are the predominant emphasis. In the New Testament, the trumpet is used in certain highly significant passages relating to the Parousia events.

In the Matthean Parousia scene, the sound of a loud trumpet is a characteristic eschatological figure in Matt 24:29-31:1 "And He will send His angels with a loud trumpet

1The term trumpet is only mentioned twice in the Gospels. Both of these uses are found in the Gospel of Matthew (6:2; 24:31). The usage of 6:2 is probably metaphorical for calling attention to oneself, as in ancient literature, since no literal use of trumpets in connection with almsgiving is clearly attested. See France, 131. But the reference to trumpet sounding here is difficult to interpret. Many commentators still say this refers to "the practice of blowing trumpets at the time of collecting alms in the Temple," but no Jewish sources confirm this. Others suggest that this is a reference to a horn-shaped collection of boxes used at the temple. See also Carson, 164.
call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."

What is, then, the continuity and discontinuity of Matt 24:31 with the other apocalyptic tradition? The parent passages of Matt 24:31 are perhaps Exod 19:16-19 and Isa 27:13 saying: "And in that day a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were driven out to the land of Egypt will come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain at Jerusalem."

Matthew alone contains a reference to the "great trumpet (σῶλπηγγός μεγάλης)," an expression occurring only in Isa 27:13, and the gathering of the elect. In the parent passage, Isa 27:13, and in Matt 24:31, we realize that the great trumpet is also connected with the gathering motif.

Matt 24:31 has some continuities with the Old Testament. The trumpet motif of Matthew follows that of the Old Testament, though theophany becomes Christophany, and the Day of the Lord becomes the Day of Christ in Matt 24:29-31. Matt 24:31 also has the same terms and ideas of Isa 11:10-16 and 27:13: great trumpet, ensign, remnant, gather, and four corners. Some discontinuities are also significant. The trumpet sound of Matt 24:31 is distinctive in that it contains all the elements of the trumpet of the Old Testament, and makes it a proclamation of the Christophany by combining the traditional roles of trumpet with Parousia. The trumpet in Matt 24:31 is the final sound
indicating the fulfillment of the covenant, feast, war, prophecies, and gathering.

It is interesting that not only in the Old Testament, but also in Jewish Apocalyptic literature, the trumpet motif is often associated with the gathering of the dispersed. It is significant that in the Tenth Prayer of the Eighteen Benediction, the great trumpet, the ensigns, and the gathering appear in the same sentence.¹ The significant discontinuity from the Apocalyptic literature is that the Apocalyptic literature focuses the judgment function of the trumpet, whereas the trumpet of Matt 24:31 is the signal of the joyful gathering of the people of God. Since the trumpet in Matt 24:31 is not related to the judgment, but to the gathering of the elect, the Matthean Parousia scene lacks the judgment tone of the Apocalyptic literature.

The continuity with the New Testament is that, besides the judgment trumpets of Revelation, Matt 24:31 and two Pauline passages (1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:16) have the same Parousia motif: the coming of the Son of Man with the sound of the trumpet. Some discontinuities of Matt 24:30 from the New Testament are also found. The primary

¹Hertz, 143: "Sound the great horn for our freedom; raise the ensign to gather our exiles, and gather us from the four corners of the earth. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who gatherest the dispersed of thy people Israel (italics mine)."
difference is that Matthew does not connect the trumpet with the resurrection or physical transformation of the saints. The function of the trumpet is to emphasize the gathering of the elect by contrasting the victorious trumpet sound with the mourning of the tribes, and with the gathering of the elect.

The development of the term and motif from the Old Testament to Matt 24:31 is not clear in the trumpet motif. It seems that the later apocalyptic traditions lost the meaningful tones and colorful theological significance of the Old Testament trumpets.\(^1\) The most significant development occurs in Matt 24:29-31 which recovers the colorful meaning of Old Testament trumpets by connecting the trumpet to the other five signs of the Parousia.\(^2\)

It is significant to find that, in Matt 24:31, the predominant emphasis is on the last gathering of the elect at the time of the Christophany.\(^3\) The great trumpet call, contrasted with the mourning of the tribes, is the signal

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\(^1\)The trumpets in the Old Testament are found in six major settings that illuminate the theological significance of the use of trumpet: (1) liturgy and celebration; (2) war and other battle contexts; (3) coronation of kings; (4) signaling; (5) theophany and judgment; and (6) eschatological mood.

\(^2\)The other five signs are: (1) the darkening of the heavenly bodies, (2) the sign of the Son of Man, (3) the mourning of the tribes on the earth, (4) the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven, and (5) the gathering of the elect.

\(^3\)Mounce, Matthew, 227; Lenski, Matthew, 949; Bruner, Matthew, 874.
for the elect to gather from the four corners of the world (Matt 24:31). In this way, in Matt 24:31, the very trumpet that makes the people tremble in the Apocalyptic literature announces the coming of the Son of Man and the gathering of His elect. The trumpet of Matt 24:31 indicates a deliverance of universal scope, not from physical bondage temporarily, but deliverance from bondage to sin and to Satan forever. It is the joyful sound of everlasting Jubilee. For just as Zeph 1:16 and Joel 2:1 spoke of the trumpet as heralding the Day of the Lord, so too did Jesus in Matthew connect the coming of the Son of Man with a "fanfare of trumpets."  

Perhaps the most significant work is to seek Matthew's intention in the unique structure of the Matthean Parousia scene. First of all, Matthew inserted this peculiar term "the great trumpet call" as a premonitory setting to the gathering. By connecting the trumpet with the gathering motif, he makes the gathering meaningful with all the Old Testament trumpet motifs. In the Old Testament, the trumpets had religious and eschatological meanings. It was the signal of the New Moon, New Year, and Jubilee. It was the signal of the gathering of the people of God. Since the trumpet of the Matthean Parousia scene comes from the Old Testament trumpet motif, the trumpet of Matt 24:31 inherits these meaningful nuances of the Old Testament

1Minear, Christian Hope, 196-97.
usages. Second, by inserting the trumpet motif, Matthew emphasizes that the gathering is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.

In conclusion, the trumpet sound of Matt 24:31 is distinctive in that it contains all the elements of the trumpet motif of the Old Testament. Matthew's real intention is not a mere combination but to make the gathering of the elect more meaningful using the Old Testament trumpet motifs. Contrasting the victorious trumpet sound with the mourning of the tribes, and contrasting the sending of His angel with the gathering of the elect, Matthew describes the Parousia of the Son of Man in a most vivid and dramatic way. Moreover, Matt 24:31 combines the traditional role of the trumpet with the Parousia, and makes it a proclamation of the Christophany. These elements make the Matthean Parousia scene characteristic among the other apocalyptic traditions.

Based on the study of this section, I drew two trajectories: the chronological trajectory diagram 9 and the logical trajectory diagram 10. The former shows the development of the motifs and concept of the trumpet chronologically, the latter indicates the logical relationship of the motifs. The colors demonstrate the path of the motifs and make it easier to trace the motif according to the path.
Logical Trajectory Diagram 10: The Great Trumpet Call

Old Testament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theophany, Judgment</th>
<th>War</th>
<th>Trumpet+Gathering Motif</th>
<th>Liturgy, Worship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exod 19:19</td>
<td>Num 10:9</td>
<td>Sound an alarm with trumpets</td>
<td>Ps 47:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>You may be remembered before the Lord.</td>
<td>Num 10:8-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lev 23:24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apocalyptic Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theophany, Judgment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ps Sol 8:1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounding slaughter and destruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ap Zeph 9-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sib Or 8:239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most mournful sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ApAb 31:1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 plagues-trumpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAb 12:1-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A fiery angel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holding a trumpet 4 Ezra 6:23-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suddenly terrified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet+gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps Sol 11:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ApAb 31:1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signalling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect.

Matt 24:31
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trumpet+Gathering Motif</th>
<th>Liturgy, Worship</th>
<th>Day of the Lord</th>
<th>Joyful Sound</th>
<th>Signalizing</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alarm Trumpets</td>
<td>Ps 47:5</td>
<td>Joel 2:1,15</td>
<td>Before King</td>
<td>Gathering</td>
<td>1 Kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lev 23:24</td>
<td>Num 10:8-10</td>
<td>Zeph 1:16</td>
<td>Ps 98:6</td>
<td>Num 10:2-7</td>
<td>2 Kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Trumpets</td>
<td>Lev 23:24</td>
<td>Zeph 9:14</td>
<td>New Temple</td>
<td>Scattering</td>
<td>1 Kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priests shall blow the trumpet</td>
<td>Jer 5:27</td>
<td>Zeph 1:16</td>
<td>2 Chr 5:12,13</td>
<td>2 Kgs 20:1</td>
<td>2 Kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feast trumpets</td>
<td>Ezek 33:3-6</td>
<td>Joel 2:15</td>
<td>Ezra 3:10</td>
<td>Warning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet blast</td>
<td>Isaiah 27:13</td>
<td>Joel 2:15</td>
<td>Hos 5:8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect.

Matt 24:31

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**Trumppet Call**

A → B allusion
A → B possible allusion
A → B not clear which one influences the other

**Liturgy, Worship**

Ps 47:5
Num 10:8-10
Lev 23:24
Ps 98:6
Zeph 1:16
Zech 9:14
Ps 98:6
Jer 5:27
Ezek 33:3-6
Ezra 3:10

**Day of the Lord**

Joel 2:1,15
Before King
Zeph 1:16
Ps 98:6
Zech 9:14
New Temple
Jer 5:27
2 Chr 5:12,13
Ezek 33:3-6
Ezra 3:10

**Signal**

Gathering
Num 10:2-7
Scattering
2 Kgs 20:1
Warning
Hos 5:8

**Coronation**

1 Kgs 1:34
2 Kgs 9:13

**Qumran Literature**

Covenant War

Most cases are war trumpets in 1QM

**New Testament**

Theophany, Judgment

A voice like a trumpet
Rev 1:10; 4:1.
The seven trumpets
Rev 8:2,6,7,8,10,13; 10:7; 11:15.

Parousia

Great trumpet call
Matt 24:31
The last trumpet (resurrection)
1 Cor 15:52
The Lord descends with the sound of trumpet
1 Thess 4:16

**Rabbinic Literature**

Liturjge, Worship

B.T. RH 11b
B.T. Shabbath 35b
Mishnah Tamid 7:3

Signal

Shemone 'Esreh trumpet+ensign
+gathering exile

Peculiar

God's authority
Judgment to mercy
Confuses Satan

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Scene IIIb: Gathering the Elect

The second part of Scene III pictures the gathering of the elect from the four corners of the world. The gathering becomes more vivid, promising, and impressive by the great trumpet call which is sounded at the first part of Scene III. The gathering of the elect is the last majestic and dramatic scene of the glorious finale of the Matthean Parousia scene. To understand this final stage, a background study of the vocabulary and motif is necessary.

The Old Testament Background

In the LXX, we find ἐπισυνάξειν nineteen times\(^\text{1}\) for the translation of twelve different Hebrew terms,\(^\text{2}\) and ἐπισυναυχήσει, one time (2 Mac 2:7). However, the term ἐπισυνάξειν is used eschatologically only in a few cases.\(^\text{3}\) Therefore I have traced the eschatological "gathering motifs" in the Old Testament because here the motif is more important than the term itself. The "gathering of Israel" is frequently pictured in the Old Testament as an event of

\(^{1}\text{Hatch and Redpath, 534. Gathering in general (3): Gen 6:16; 38:29; Isa 9:5; 52:12; Gathering People (13): } \text{Kgs 18:20; 2 Chr 5:6; 20:26; Ps 30:13; Mic 4:11; Hab 2:5; Zech 12:3; 14:2; Jer 12:6; Ezek 16:31; 40:12; Dan 3:2; 11:34; Eschatological Gathering (3): Pss 101(102):22; 107(106):47; 146(147):2.}

\(^{2}\text{Pss 101(102):22; 107(106):47; 146(147):2.}

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the end-time.1 The motif, ingathering of the exile, is first mentioned in Deut 30:3-5. After the details of the destruction and exile are described (Deut 28:63-68; 30:1), the promise is given:

Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes, and have compassion upon you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there he will fetch you (italics mine).2

The total picture is of a repentant people being restored to their homeland.3 The gathering from the uttermost part of heaven is a parallel term to Matt 24:31.

Some passages found in the Psalms describe the restoration of Zion and the ingathering of exiles. In Ps 50:5, God gathers His faithful ones who made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. The Psalmist prays in 106:47 to gather them from among the nations. The redeemed will say that He "gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south" (Ps 107:3). The joy and thanksgiving of the restoration of Zion is well expressed in Ps 126:1-2: "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our


2Deut 30:3-4.

mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy."

Isa 11 is recognized as a messianic oracle. The poem predicts the restoration of the Jewish monarchy in the person of a king sprung from the family of Jesse.¹ The passage from Isa 11:10-16 is united by the "single theme of Yahweh's gathering the scattered exiles of His people."²

In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; Him shall the nation seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious. In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant which is left of his people from Assyria. . . . He will raise an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. . . . And there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant which is left of his people (italics mine).

It is significant that some key words and motifs in Matt 24:29-31 are found here: ensign, remnant (elect), gather, four corners of the earth. God will raise an ensign for the nations, will "assemble the outcasts of Israel," and "will gather the dispersed of Judah" from the "four corners of the earth." But the discontinuities from Matt 24:29-31 are also striking. The trumpets are not found. He gathers


²Watts, Isaiah 1-33, 180.
only the dispersed Israel. The ensign is not a sign but the Root of Jesse Himself.

Isa 27:12-13 is perhaps the best parallel to Matt 24:31. It connects "a great trumpet" to the gathering and worship.

In that day from the river Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt the Lord will thresh out the grain, and you will be gathered one by one, 0 people of Israel. And in that day a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were driven out to the land of Egypt will come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain at Jerusalem (italics mine).  

It might be well to note that the purpose of the gathering is not a reestablishment of the kingdom in Canaan, but worshiping the Lord on the holy mountain. This suggests a characteristic of the gathering in Matt 24:31. To be able to be "in his presence is life of the highest order."  

However, Isaiah's prophecies of Israel's gathering of the great dispersion does not mean exclusively the physical descendants of Jacob. Isaiah describes that many non-Israelites would be gathered to worship the God of Israel. Isa 56:6-8 declares the motif:

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1Hans K. LaRondelle, The Israel of God in Prophecy: Principles of Prophetic Interpretation (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1983), 153-54: "The deepest intention of Isaiah's prophecies concerning Israel's gathering from the dispersion undoubtedly implies an apocalyptic perspective. . . . This universal perspective is expanded in Isa 24-27, the so-called Isaiah-Apocalypse. . . . This apocalyptic unit culminates in God's trumpet call to gather Israel into His everlasting kingdom."


3Watts, Isaiah 1-33, 351.
And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, every one who keeps the sabbath, and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer. . . . for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered (italics mine).¹

When foreigners join themselves in faith and obedience to the Lord (Isa 56:3), the Lord will give those foreigners "a monument and a name better than sons and daughters . . . an everlasting name" (Isa 56:5).² In this way Isaiah unfolds how God's universal outreach to the world, as indicated in His covenant with Abraham (Gen 12:2,3) and Israel (Exod 19:6), will be ultimately fulfilled through a new Israel. "The essential characteristic of this new Israel is not ethnic descent from Abraham, but the faith of Abraham, the worship of Yahweh."³

In Jeremiah, there will be an ingathering of exiles. The house of Judah will be brought out from among the nations to those lands where they were banished, and will be

¹Isa 56:6-8
²Cf. Jesus' prayer in John 17:20: "I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word." The foreigners are described in four ways: they join themselves to Yahweh, that is they become proselytes; they minister to Him; they love the name of Yahweh; and they become His servants. This group included all who keep the Sabbath holy and who hold fast His covenant. See Watts, 249.
³LaRondelle, 88.
led back to Zion.¹ The prophet Ezekiel, who was himself deported to Babylon in 597 B.C., also predicted that "a new, spiritual Israel shall return from exile in all nations to their homeland."² Ezek 11:17-20 says:

I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations. And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. . . . They shall be my people, and I will be their God.

Ezekiel's focus in his restoration promise is not primarily on Israel's return to her homeland, but on her return to Yahweh.³

In Micah, the Lord will assemble all of Jacob (Judah) and also collect the remnant of Israel (2:12). Then the lands of Judah and Israel will give forth a great noise because of the multitude of people, as does a pasture filled with "sheep" (2:12).⁴ Zech 2:10 is also significant because it uses the term "four winds of the heaven," though

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¹Jer 12:14; 23:3; 29:14; 30:3; 32:37; 46:27.
²LaRondelle, 89.
³William H. Brownlee, Ezekiel 1-19, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 28 (Waco, TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1986), 164: "It is only this new heart that will enable the Jews really to become God's people in full obedience and in covenant relationship."

⁴"In that day, He will gather those who have been driven away, and the lame He will make the remnant" (Mich 4:6); "He will make the dispersed of Israel into a strong nation and He Himself will rule over them on Mount Zion "from this time forth and for evermore" (Mich 4:7). Here God's promise to gather the remnant Israel into a safe place is expressed well.
the term "gathering" is not used. The biblical conception of the earth is that it is made of four quarters, the four directions from which the winds blow. Therefore "four winds of the heaven" indicates "from every place under the sky,"\(^1\) and it only emphasizes the preceding phrase by pointing to "every remote part under the heavens."\(^2\)

In summary, the Old Testament frequently uses the "gathering of the elect" motif. God will gather His remnant as His possession. The gathering does not promise a kingdom on the earth, but provides an opportunity to worship God on the holy mountain. The name "Israel" in the Old Testament is used in more than one way. It stands for literal Israel, but also, in Isaiah, for spiritual Israel. Whenever the Old Testament prophets portray the eschatological remnant of Israel, it is always characterized as a "faithful, religious community which worships God with a new heart on the basis of the new covenant" (Jer 31:31-34).\(^3\)

The Gathering of the Elect in the Apocalyptic Literature

In general terms it may be said that Jewish eschatology and the restoration of Israel are almost

\(^1\)Carson, 506

\(^2\)Lenski, Matthew, 950.

\(^3\)LaRondelle, 90.
The gathering of the elect was a wide-spread belief, which already occupied a large place in the prophetic books, and prevailed among the Jews in the Tannaitic period. At this point Klausner observes:

This was the deep-rooted conviction that the dispersion of Israel would in the Messianic age return from the four corners of the earth to Palestine. If we remember that the dispersion of Israel, the Diaspora, was extensive and widely scattered, and that both before and after the destruction of the Temple the number of Jews who lived outside Palestine was much greater than the number in the Palestine, we shall not be surprised that the Jews saw in the eagerly awaited ingathering of exiles a miraculous accomplishment that could only be brought about in the Messianic age.

How can it be fulfilled? Who will accomplish this miracle? According to the Shemoneh Esreh, it is God Himself who will "sound the great horn for freedom" and lift up the ensign to gather the exiles, and gather us from the "four corners of the earth" just before the Messiah's coming.

That God Himself will lead His elect to their promised land can be shown by many passages in the

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2The Tannaitic period spanned the period from the death of Hillel and Shammai (about 10 A.D.) to the death of Judah Hanasi (after 200 A.D.). The Tannaitic scholars are the successors in authority and tradition to the Soferim (Ezra to 3rd cent. B.C.) and of the Zugoth (to Hillel, 1st cent. B.C.). The teachings of all three groups are found in the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Midrash compilations. See The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, 1943), 10:170.

3Klausner, 470.

4Hertz, 470.
Apocalyptic literature. Jub 1:15-17, composed during the second century B.C.,\(^1\) predicts that Israel will turn to God, and He will gather them from among the Gentiles:

> And afterward they will turn to me from among the nations with all their heart and with all their soul and with all their might. And I shall gather them from the midst of all the nations. And they will seek me so that I might be found by them. When they seek me with all their heart and with all their soul . . . And I shall build my sanctuary in their midst, and I shall dwell with them. And I shall be their God and they will be my people truly and rightly.\(^2\)

The elect shall inherit the earth (1 En 5:7). All those who have been destroyed and dispersed will be gathered together with "all the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky"; and the Lord of the sheep rejoiced with great joy because they had all become gentle and returned to his house" (1 En 90:33).

In Ps Sol 8:27-30, the author turns to the Lord in a prayer for redemption, which he connects with the ingathering of exiles: "O God, turn your mercy upon us, and be compassionate to us! Gather together the dispersed of Israel, with mercy and goodness, for your faithfulness is with us." Ps Sol 11 deals exclusively with the gathering of Israel from east, west, and north, as well as "from the isles afar off." In Ps Sol 11:1-3, the term "trumpet" and the gathering motif appear together:

\(^1\)Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature, 78-79. Several factors indicate ca. 175 and 100 B.C.

\(^2\)Jub 1:15-17.
Sound in Zion the signal trumpet of the sanctuary; announce in Jerusalem the voice of one bringing good news, for God has been merciful to Israel in watching over them. Stand on a high place, Jerusalem, and look at your children, from the east and the west assembled together by the Lord. From the north they come in the joy of their God; from far distant islands God has assembled them (italics mine).

This gathering motif is also found in the messianic chapter, Ps Sol 17. The King, the Son of David (17:21), will "gather a holy people," and He will "judge the tribes of the people" that have been made holy by the Lord their God (17:26). This apparently refers to the regathering of the purified, refined tribes of Israel. The gathering motif of this psalm has some parallels to that of the Old Testament and Matt 24:31, but with an important distinction. There is here no concept of two corresponding levels of reality: the heavenly and earthly. That is the reason why the gathering motif is not to be connected to other Parousia signs.

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1Ibid, 207-8. Although the Messiah is a human being, a member of the family of David, the author attributes to him certain semi-divine characteristics. He will gather the dispersed (Ps Sol 17:26, 40-41) and will judge the tribes of the people (17:26,29).

2He will distribute them upon the land "according to their tribes"; the alien and the foreigner will no longer live near them (Ps Sol 17:28). Ps Sol 17:44 notes that the blessing of those who are born in those days is to see "the good fortune of Israel which God will bring to pass in the assembly of the tribes." There will be no unrighteousness among them in his days, for "all shall be holy, and their king shall be the Lord Messiah" (Ps Sol 17:32).

3Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature, 209.
A Sibylline Oracle contains references to a new temple and to other aspects of Israel's restoration. In 3:294, the seer states that "the Temple will again be as it was before." ApAb 31:1-2 describes the trumpet call and the gathering of God's people:

And then I will sound the trumpet out of the air, and I will send my chosen one, having in him one measure of all my power, and he will summon my people, humiliated by the heathen. And I will burn with fire those who mocked them and ruled over them in this age (italics mine).¹

In this passage, the trumpet and gathering motifs appear in one scene as in Matt 24:31. The two passages differ in that one states that God will send His chosen one, and He, not angels, will gather God's people.

Fourth Ezra emphasizes "the expectation of the attack of the nations (the war of Gog and Magog) in the Days of the Messiah," and in connection with this, "the gathering of the exiles and the return of the Ten Tribes."² The days are coming when the Most High will deliver those who are on the earth. At that time, an innumerable multitude shall be gathered together from the four winds of heaven to make war against Him (4 Ezra 13:5). But He will destroy them and gather to himself another multitude that was peaceable; these are the Ten Tribes which were led away from their own land into captivity (4 Ezra 13:29-40).

²Klausner, 363.
In sum, the gathering of the elect is a prevalent belief in the era of the Apocalyptic literature. Although there are numerous references which are very general to the reassembly or gathering of Israel, the expectation of the restoration is limited to the twelve tribes of Israel.¹ There are some continuities with the Old Testament: (1) in the Day of the Lord, God will gather the dispersed of Israel; (2) the eschatology and the restoration of Israel are almost synonymous in both corpora; and (3) it was the deep-rooted conviction that the dispersion of Israel would in the messianic age return from the four corners of the earth to Palestine in both literatures. Some discontinuities from the Old Testament are not overlooked: (1) in the Apocalyptic literature, the gathering is limited to the twelve tribes of Israel; and (2) in the Apocalyptic literature, there is no concept of the spiritual people of God.

The Qumran Literature

In the Qumran literature, the Hebrew term יָעַבֶּד was used as follows: 1QM 3:10 (God has gathered); 1QM 14:5 (assembly of nations He has gathered); 1Q69 8 1:2 (gather);² 4QCat-a (gather).³ Another term, יָעַבֶּד, appears

¹Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 96.
²Fragments hébraïques (DJD 1:148).
³Catena (A) (DJD 5:73).
in 4Q515 19 1:1 (they have gathered).¹ We should note that in the Qumran literature nothing is said about the gathering of the Jewish Diaspora, which generally figures large in the hope for the end-time restoration.²

**The Rabbinic Literature**

After the New Testament era, one of the great themes of the messianic legend cycle is the ingathering of the exiles from the four corners of the earth. Ever since the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans in A.D. 70, the Jews have prayed three times a day for the ingathering, which is for them synonymous with redemption.³

Nickelsburg sums it up in this way:

> Much of post-biblical Jewish theology and literature was influenced and sometimes governed by a hope for such a restoration: a return of the dispersed; the appearance of a Davidic heir to throw off the shackles of foreign domination and restore Israel's sovereignty; the gathering of one people around a new and glorified Temple.⁴

The expectation that all twelve tribes will be assembled is continued in the rabbinic literature.

> In the Talmud, the ingathering of the exiles is regarded as belonging to the messianic age, and the Talmud does not therefore regard the return, following the

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¹Groupe en petite écriture (DJD 7:300).
²Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 98.
³Hertz, 143.
proclamation of Cyrus, as the ingathering of the exiles. Therefore the Talmud states that "the day of the ingathering of the Exiles is as great as the day on which heaven and earth were created."¹

According to Mekhilta Pischa 14:20,² the redemption itself will come suddenly. The return of Israel from its exile will be like a triumphal procession. It quotes from Isa 35:10: "How about the future? Scripture says: 'And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing into Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.'"

The return to Palestine of the Ten Tribes is also foretold by the Mishnah Sanh 10:3, even though R. Akiba opposed it. The concept became increasingly linked with the messianic idea.

The Ten Tribes shall not return again, for it is written (Deut 29:27-28), "And he cast them into another land like as this day." Like as this day goes and returns not, so do they go and return not. So R. Akiba says. But R. Eliezer says, "Like as the day grows dark and then grows light, so also after darkness is fallen upon the Ten Tribes shall light hereafter shine upon them."³

¹B. T. Pesahim 88a.


³Mishnah Sanh 10:3.
Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai, an apocalyptic hero in the second half of the second century, said:

When the Israelites will be in distress, they will return and cry out from hunger and from thirst. Then the Messianic King will sprout forth there, as it is said, He comes with the clouds of heaven (Dan 7:13), and it is written after it, to him will be given the sovereignty (Dan 7:14). . . . And the holy One blessed be He will whistle and gather together all Israelites and bring them up to Jerusalem, as it is said, I will whistle to them, and I will gather them (Zech 10:8, italics mine).

Thus, while the Qumran community thought that they were the elect, in the rabbinic literature, the remnant are exclusively the exiles, the Ten Tribes.

The "Gathering the Elect" Motif in the New Testament

Συγκέντρωσον (gather) is used sixty-two times in the New Testament: ἐπισυγκέντρωσα, six times, and the noun form

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1George W. Buchanan, Revelation and Redemption: Jewish Document of Deliverance from the Fall of Jerusalem to the Death of Nahmanides (Dillsboro, NC: Western North Carolina Press, 1978), 403. Rabbi Shimon Ben Yohai belonged to the second half of the second century. He was considered less than orthodox because of his mystical views. He was sentenced to death by the Romans because of his anti-Roman activity so he fled for his life and lived, with his son Eliezer, in a cave for thirteen years. His mysticism, nationalism, and his thirteen years spent in a cave made him an ideal figure for apocalyptic heroism.

2Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai, quoted in Buchanan's book Revelation and Redemption, 403.

3It seems that there are not any significant differences between συγκέντρωσον and ἐπισυγκέντρωσα, for συγκέντρωσον also has eschatological meaning, indicating the gathering of the wheat at the last day (Matt 3:12; 13:30).
A few of these are used eschatologically. Three categories can be classified as the eschatological "gathering of the elect" motif: (1) the gathering of the elect at the coming of the Son of Man (Matt 24:31; Mark 13:27); (2) the gathering of the wheat at the last day (Matt 3:12; 13:30); and (3) the believers' being gathered to Him at the coming of the Lord Jesus (2 Thess 2:1).

In the first category, Matt 24:31 and Mark 13:27 say that the Son of Man will send His angels to gather the elect when He will come on the clouds of heaven. The second motif deals with Jesus' saying about gathering the wheat at the last day. He will clear His threshing floor and gather His wheat into the granary, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire, and the "unquenchable fire" signifies

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1 Twenty-six times in Matt; 7 in Mark; 9 in Luke; 8 in John; 11 in Acts; 1 in 1 Cor; 1 in 2 Thess; 1 in Heb; 6 in Rev. In Matthew, gathering refers to people (13:2; 22:10), or things (birds, 6:26; fish, 13:47; vultures, 24:28). There are frequent references to the assembling of the religious leaders (2:4 22:34,41; 26:3,57; 27:17; 27:62; 28:12). The nations will be gathered together at the last judgment (25:32), and the Messiah will gather the wheat into His barn (3:12; 13:30). ἐπισυνάγωγη is used in Jesus' lament over Jerusalem (Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34), in eschatological passages speaking of the gathering of the elect (Matt 24:31; Mark 1:33; Luke 12:1).

2 In Matt 3:12 the "unquenchable fire" signifies eschatological judgment (Isa 34:10; 66:24; Jer 7:20).

3 Carson, 316. From this parable, we learn two facts: (1) the grain will be gathered first into the granary, and the chaff, away from the grain, is collected and burned; (2) "harvest" is a common metaphor for the final judgment (Matt 9:37-38).
eschatological judgment. Therefore, this is the eschatological gathering for redemption and judgment. The third motif appears in 2 Thess 2:1, which refers to the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ)" and the "believers' assembling (ἐπισυναγωγής) to meet Him." Here it is clear that ἐπισυναγωγή is a part of the παρουσία. This is the great event he has described more fully in 1 Thess 4:16-17; the gathering of those in Christ to meet Him in the air.

Though the term "gathering" does not appear there directly, 1 Cor 15:52 and 1 Thess 4:16-17 describe the Parousia similarly. When the Lord will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and the last trumpet will sound, the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive shall be caught up "together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

Who are the elect in the New Testament? In the Old Testament, they are the dispersed twelve tribes of Israel. But, as we have studied in the section of the Old Testament background, some Old Testament prophets do not focus their promises and predictions on the remnant of Israel as an

1Isa 34:10; 66:24; Jer 7:20.

21 Thess 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are above, who are left, shall 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."
independent political state, but on Israel as a restored spiritual people of God, gathered from the four corners of the world.\(^1\)

We also note in the New Testament that spiritual Israel in many respects has taken the place of literal Israel.\(^2\) According to Matthew, Israel broke the covenant of God, and therefore God could not but "rent the vineyard to other tenants" (Matt 21:41). The task of Israel must be replaced by the spiritual Israel. Paul stressed this point in Romans\(^3\) and Galatians.\(^4\)

For Jesus, the true descendants of Abraham were ultimately defined, not by the blood of Abraham, but by the


\(3\) "For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal" (Rom 2:28-29). In Rom 9:7-8, Paul describes the fact as follows: "Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. . . . In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of promise who are regarded as Abraham's offsprings." Other pertinent passages include Rom 4:11,16, 18; 9:7-8.

\(4\) To the Galatians Paul wrote, "And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (3:29). Paul calls the Galatian church as "the Israel of God" (Gal 6:16). Therefore we observe that some of the promises directed to literal Israel in the Old Testament are regarded by New Testament writers as having been fulfilled in spiritual Israel.
faith of Abraham (Matt 12:47,50). As the Messiah, Christ was sent to fulfill Israel's covenant promises of the gathering of Israel, but more than that, to gather the Gentiles to Himself. John explains that Jesus died "not for the nation only, but to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad" (John 11:52). Christ proclaimed that His mission was intended to benefit all people: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32).

The New Testament also clearly explains that the final gathering of the elect will be fulfilled through the glorious coming of Christ (Matt 24:31; Mark 13:27; 1 Cor 15:51-58; 1 Thess 4:16,17). When Jesus touched upon this theme in the context of the eschatological discourse, He reinterpreted Israel's hope in a profound way. Until that time, the Temple of Jerusalem had been the visible center for the gathering of the scattered chosen people. But the Temple would be totally destroyed, there would not be left here "one stone upon another, that will not be thrown down" (Matt 24:2). The destruction of the Temple, however, would not result in their permanent dispersement. On the contrary, it will be followed by the regathering of the new people of God around the Son of Man, that is, around Jesus at the Parousia.

In summary, the purpose and identity of the gathering of the elect in the New Testament is clear. It is
the gathering of all the believers who are prepared to meet the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven (Matt 24:31; Mark 13:27; 1 Thess 4:17; 2 Thess 2:1). The purpose of the gathering is to meet the Lord in the air. There are some continuities with the Old Testament: (1) in both corpora, God will gather not only physical Israel, but also the spiritual people of God; and (2) God will gather them from the four corners of the world on the Day of the Lord. A continuity with the Apocalyptic literature is that both corpora generally follow the Old Testament motif of gathering the elect.

The discontinuities from the Old Testament are: (1) the gathering in the New Testament is the gathering of all the believers who are prepared to meet the coming of the Son of Man; (2) in the New Testament, the gathering will be at the Parousia. Some discontinuities from the Apocalyptic literature are found: (1) the Apocalyptic literature focuses on the return of the dispersed Israel, and restoration of Jerusalem; and (2) in the New Testament, the Son of Man is the center of the gathering, not Jerusalem.

The Meaning of the Gathering of the Elect of Matt 24:29-31

The regathering of the dispersed Israel is an essential and traditional theme of Jewish eschatological hope, as we have seen above. The Old Testament promises that God will gather His remnant as His possession on the
Day of the Lord. The gathering of the elect is also a prevalent belief in the era of the Apocalyptic literature, but the expectation of the restoration is limited to the twelve tribes of Israel. The gathering of the New Testament is the gathering of all the believers who are prepared to meet the coming of the Son of Man.

In Matt 24:31, we have these words: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." At the sound of the eschatological trumpet call, the angels will be sent to the four winds to gather God's elect. The expression denotes that they shall be gathered from all parts of the earth where they are scattered. The word "heaven" is here used to denote the visible heavens or the sky, meaning that

1. The trumpet was used in ancient Israel to gather God's people for religious purposes and to signal activities on the battlefield. In speaking of a time yet future when the Israelites will be gathered, Isaiah says: "you will be gathered one by one, O people of Israel. And in that day a great trumpet will sound" (Isa 27:13). For detailed information, see previous trumpet section.

2. The angels are heavenly beings sent out to gather the elect in the gathering inaugurated by the blast of the trumpet.

3. In the Old Testament, recurring expressions are: "to scatter to the four winds" (Jer 9:15; 18:17; Ezek 5:10,12; 12:14; 17:21; Zech 2:10), or "to gather from the four winds" or "from the extremities of the earth" (Deut 30:3-4; Isa 11:12; 27:13; 56:8; Jer 23:3 29:12; 31:8 Ezek 11:17; 20:34,41; 28:25; 34:13).
through the whole world He will gather them. The scene depicted is clearly that of the return of Christ at the end of history. The motif of the gathering is thus deepened and broadened in the Matthean Parousia scene.

The parent passages of Matt 24:31, the Old Testament passages which have contributed most to the wording of this "gathering," seem to be Isa 11:10-16 and 27:13. Some key words and motifs in Matt 24:29-31 are found in these passages: ensign, trumpet, remnant (elect), gather, four corners of the earth.

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1Carson, 506; Lenski, Matthew, 950.

2Another factor that has led some to refer to vs. 31 to the events at the second coming and the inauguration of the consummate kingdom is the use of the term "angels." Many passages in the New Testament indicate that the angels will have a prominent part at the second advent (Matt 13:39,41, 42,49; 16:27; 24:31; 25:31; Mark 13:27; Luke 9:26; 1 Thess 4:16; 2 Thess 1:7; Rev 14:17,18,19). According to Matt 13:41-42 Christ will send His angels to gather the wicked out of His Kingdom and cast them into a furnace of fire. Another passage on the same thought is 2 Thess 1:7-10: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels."

3Gundry, Hartman, Lane, and Hare suggest that the possible Old Testament allusions are Zech 2:10 and Deut 30:4. All these passages are united by their having themes and key words in common. Zech 2:10 reads: "I shall gather you from the four winds of the heavens." And in Deut 30:4 we find: "If your dispersion is from one end of the heaven to the other end of heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you." See Gundry, 55; Hartman, 158; Hare, 171: William L. Lane, The Gospel of Mark, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974), 472. But if we consider the whole Parousia scene, I think Isa 11:10-16 and 27:13 are the more likely allusions.
It is true that Matt 24:31 follows the Old Testament gathering motif: God will gather the remnant of His people. However, the discontinuities are also significant. First of all, the Old Testament theme of "gathering the elect" from the exiles does not fully correspond to what we find in Matt 24:31. The return to Palestine under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. and under Ezra in 458 B.C. was only a pale reflection of the glorious return envisioned by the prophets.\(^1\) Furthermore, the Jews did not experience the material prosperity and fertility predicted by the prophets (Isa 35:1; 61:4). Therefore, it can hardly be disputed that the restoration prophecies were not completely fulfilled in the post-exile period, and that it is appropriate to look for a fuller fulfillment at a later time.\(^2\) On the other hand, the gathering of Matt 24:31 is the complete fulfillment of the prophecy of the gathering.

The second discontinuity is that the remnant of Israel in the Old Testament is the remnant of the spiritual Israel in Matt 24:31. Third, the people of God will gather not at Jerusalem (Zion), but before the Son of Man. The

\(^1\)Gowan, Bridge between the Testament, 40: "The return was no triumphal journey and Zion was not glorified. The Jews in Jerusalem eked out an existence without a temple or a king or prosperity or peace."

\(^2\)Hebrews explains that all the fathers of the faith did not receive the things promised, but they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, and "looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb 11:10).
final gathering will be fulfilled through the glorious coming of Christ. Fourth, it is significant that the themes of repentance and judgment are largely absent from Matt 24:31. In this sense, Matthew does not follow the traditional means when he describes the gathering of the elect.

The Apocalyptic literature and Matt 24:31 have the same Old Testament terms and motifs: gathering, trumpet, and four winds. Parallel passages to Matt 24:31 are frequently found. The combination of the trumpets and the gathering is also found in Ps Sol 11:1 and ApAb 31:1-2. However, some significant discontinuities are found between them. While the Apocalyptic literature focuses on the return of the dispersed Israel and the restoration of Jerusalem, in Matt 24:31 the remnant is not the literal Israel, but all the believers who are prepared to meet the coming of the Son of Man. Instead of Jerusalem or the Temple, Jesus Christ is the center, the essential standard, and the sign of the gathering of the elect.

Since Matthew belongs to the New Testament era, Matthew shares the same terms and concepts with other writers of the New Testament to describe the gathering.

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The center of gathering is the coming of the Son of Man. The elect is all the believers, the spiritual Israel. However, some Matthean characteristics are found in his peculiar structure of the Parousia scene.

What, then, is the meaning and function of the "gathering of the elect" motif in Matt 24:31 on the basis of the above study? We can find some clues in Matthew itself to interpret the meaning of the gathering of the elect. In Matthew, the true descendants of Abraham were defined, not by the blood of Abraham, but by the faith of Abraham (Matt 12:47,50). Since Israel rejected the Messiah, she lost this privilege. Jesus' verdict to the guilty people was: "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it" (Matt 21:43). In this light it becomes evident that Christ was convinced that He was sent to redeem "all nations" (Matt 28:19). Therefore, the elect of Matt 24:31 means all the believers who have received Christ (John 1:12).

The creativity of Matthew is fully revealed in the structure of Matt 24:29-31, his Parousia scene. Combining the trumpet sound with the gathering motif, Matthew endows

1Matt 24:31; Mark 13:27; 2 Thess 2:1.

2The only other reference to the elect is in Matt 24:22 where we learn that the tabulation is shortened in order that the elect might be saved. However, the elect are not positively identified in this discourse.
the gathering motif with the rich meanings that the Old Testament trumpets contain. Now, the gathering becomes a real worship at the Temple,\textsuperscript{1} a joyful celebration of the feast,\textsuperscript{2} the glorious coronation of the King,\textsuperscript{3} the final victory from the war, and the gathering for the Christophany.

All of the actions are attributed to the Son of Man: He not only comes, but He gathers the elect through the ministry of the angels, and the elect are "His."\textsuperscript{4} Since the One who gathers the elect will come on the clouds of heaven, His gathering and triumph are reminiscent of the classic formulation of the enthronement of that mysterious, transcendent figure "like a Son of Man" who was given authority, glory, and sovereign power in Dan 7:13-14. This is the fulfillment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament. It is the glorious finale of the Parousia scene.

Based on the study of this section, I have drawn trajectory diagrams 11 and 12.

\textsuperscript{1}Num 10:8,10; 4 Kgs 12:13; 1 Chr 16:42; 2 Chr 5:12,13; 7:6; 20:28; 29:26,27,28; Ezra 3:10; Neh 12:35,41; Num 10:10; Feasts: Lev 23:24; 25:9,9; Ps 80(81):3; Num 10:10.

\textsuperscript{2}Kgs 6:15; 1 Chr 13:8; 2 Chr 15:14; Neh 8:15; Pss 46(47):5; 97(98):6,6; 150:3; Dan 3:5,7,10,15; Isa 44:23.

\textsuperscript{3}2 Chr 23:13; 3 Kgs 1:34,39; 4 Kgs 9:13; 11:14.

\textsuperscript{4}LaRondelle, 154: "Christ refers here, not to an ethnic Israel, but to 'His elect.' This messianic Israel will be gathered, not to the Middle East, but 'from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.' This is Christ's final application of Isaiah's gathering promises."
Chronological Trajectory Diagram 11:
The Gathering of the Elect

Ps 107:3
Gathering from east west, north, south

Deut 30:3-5
Gathering from the uttermost part

Isa 11:10-16
Ensign, gather remnant, 4 corners

Isa 27:13
The great trumpet call gather

Isa 56:6-8
Gather outcasts and foreigners

Ezek 11:17-21
Gather a new spirit people of God

Jub 1:15-17
I shall gather them from the midst of all the nations

Ps Sol 11:1, Gather trumpet east, west, north
8:27-30 O God gather Israel

1 En 5:7, The elect inherit earth
90:33, returned to his house

ApAb 31:1-2
I will sound the trumpet...He will summon my people

4 Ezra 13:5
Multitude of men were gathered together from the four windows of heaven

Matt 24:31
With a loud trumpet call, they will gather His elect from the four windows of heaven to the other

Matt 3:12; 13:30
Gathering the whole

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Isa 27:13
The great trumpet call
 Gather from the uttermost part

Deut 30:3-5
Gathering from east, north, south

Ps Sol 11:1, Gather trumpet east, west, north
8:27-30 O God gather Israel

Isa 56:6-8
Gather outcasts and foreigners

Ezek 11:17-21
Gather a new spirit people of God

Ps Sol 11:1, Gather trumpet east, west, north
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1 En 5:7, The elect inherit earth
90:33, returned to his house

4 Ezra 13:5
Multitude of men were gathered together from the four windows of heaven

Matt 24:31
With a loud trumpet call, they will gather His elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other

Matt 3:12; 13:30
Gathering the wheat

Mark 13:27
Gathering the elect at the Parousia

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about 30:3-5

out of the most part

Isa 56:6-8
Gather outcasts and foreigners

Ezek 11:17-21
Gather a new spirit people of God

1 En
5:7, The elect inherit earth 90:33, returned to his house

Matt 24:31
With a loud trumpet call, they will gather his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other

Matt 3:12; 13:30
Gathering the wheat

Mark 13:27
Gathering the elect at the Parousia

2 Thess 2:1
Our assembling to meet him
### Logical Trajectory Diagram 12: The Gathering of the Elect

#### Old Testament

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<th>Restoration</th>
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#### Apocalyptic Literature

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</tbody>
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Diagram 12: The Gathering o t the Elect

=^B allusion
A****
->B possible allusion
A . ...
->B not clear which one influenc
Mr
■ ■— Universal Gather in< F Return to God

Messianic Oracle

Restoration

Bnsign/ reanant,
gather, 4 corners

The great trumpet
call, gather

The foreigners who
...I will gather
the outcasts of
Israel.

Isa 11:10-16

Isa 27:13

Isa 56:6-8

Gather a new spirit
people of God.

Ezek 11:17-21

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ather His elect from the
our winds, from one end

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Sheaoneh 'Bsreh

Return of the Exi:

Matt 24:31
Great horn
Ensign
Gather exiles

B.T.Peschim 88a rel
Mekhilta Pischa 14
Mishnah Sanh 10:3 :

344

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A→B allusion  A********B contrast
A→B possible allusion  A........B echo
A→B not clear which one influences the other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restoration</th>
<th>Universal Gathering</th>
<th>Return to God</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The great trumpet...</td>
<td>The foreigners who ...</td>
<td>Gather a new spirit people of God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all, gather</td>
<td>I will gather the outcasts of Israel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa 27:13</td>
<td>Isa 56:6-8</td>
<td>Ezek 11:17-21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quaran Literature
No gathering motif
They thought they were the elect.

New Testament
Gathering the elect at the Parousia
Matt 24:31
Mark 13:27
Gathering the wheat
Matt 3:12; 13:30
Gathering believer at the Parousia
2 Thess 2:1

Rabbinic Literature
Shemoneh 'Esreh Return of the Exiles (ten tribes)
Great horn Ensign Gather exiles
B.T.Peschim 88a return of exiles Mekhila Pisha 14:20 Mishnah Sanh 10:3 return 10 tribes
CHAPTER IV

THE PLACE OF MATTHEW 24:27-31 IN
THE APOCALYPTIC TRADITION

In chapter 3, we learned how each item of the apocalyptic vocabulary developed from the Old Testament to Matt 24:29-31.¹ We have traced its continuity and discontinuity, and made two trajectory diagrams for each apocalyptic term.² The main purposes of this chapter are to synthesize a combined trajectory based on chapter 3 and to find the place of Matt 24:29-31 in the apocalyptic tradition. A further objective is to discover the functions which the six apocalyptic terms of Matthew have in the Matthean Parousia scene.³ Diagram 13 is a synthetic trajectory based on the results of chapter 3. The colors indicate the six motifs of Matt 24:29-31.

¹Six apocalyptic terms have been traced from the parent passages to Matt 24:29-31. The apocalyptic tradition in this dissertation contains the Old Testament, the Apocalyptic literature, the Qumran literature, the New Testament, and the Rabbinic literature.

²The two trajectory diagrams are: the chronological trajectory diagram and the logical trajectory diagram.

³The six apocalyptic terms are: (1) the darkening of the heavenly bodies, (2) the sign of the Son of Man, (3) the mourning of the tribes, (4) the clouds of heaven, (5) the great trumpet call, and (6) the gathering of the elect.
The Day of The Lord

Num 10:1-10

Qumran Literature

No Motif of Specific Parousia Signs

New Testament

Parousia signs

A. Gospels, Acts
   Mark 13:24-27
   Luke 21:25
   Acts 2:20
   Darkening, clouds, gathering.

B. Paul
   1 Cor 15:51,52.
   1 Thess 4:16.
   Clouds, trumpet, gathering.

C. Revelation
   Darkening, clouds, bloody moon, falling stars.

Rabbinic Literature

Generally follows OT motifs, and reflects Dan 7:13. But no motif of divine messiah coming from heaven.
The Characteristics of the Apocalyptic Tradition in Trajectory Diagram 13

Old Testament

We see in the synthetic trajectory diagram 13\(^1\) that nearly all the vocabulary of terms, motifs, and imagery found in Matt 24:27-31 can be traced back to the Old Testament as its original source. All the parent passages of the six apocalyptic signs are found in the Old Testament. Although all the elements can be found in various places of the Old Testament, nowhere do we find them put together and applied as we see them in Matt 24:29-31.

In diagram 13, we have found that all the apocalyptic signs of Matt 24:29-31 appeared in three main contexts in the Old Testament: (1) theophany (Exod 19:11-24), (2) the Day of the Lord,\(^2\) and (3) the Danielic Son of Man (Dan 7:13-14). The motifs of the "cloud" and the "trumpet" are generally the characteristic signs of the theophany (Exod 19:11-24; Dan 7:13); and the motifs of "the darkening of the heavenly bodies," "the mourning of the tribes," and "the gathering of the elect" are the outstanding signs of the Day of the Lord. The motif of "the clouds of heaven" in Matt 24:30b seems to be influenced significantly by the Danielic Son of Man (Dan 7:13-14).

\(^1\) Throughout the following discussion, reference is made to diagram 13.

As we observe in diagram 13, the Old Testament does not present a systematic sequence of the scene of the Day of the Lord as the Parousia scene in Matt 24:29-31. Isaiah is the only book to include all six motifs that appear in Matt 24:29-31. Joel 2 is a significant eschatological chapter which has three motifs out of the six. The other books exhibit only a few motifs of the Parousia signs.

One of the significant characteristics of the apocalyptic signs found in the trajectory, in my judgment, is that the Old Testament apocalyptic motifs and terms are not rooted in a symbolic vision, but in historical events. For example, the parent passages of the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars are found in the context of the primal darkness (Gen 1:2) and Exodus event (Exod 10:21-23; Ezek 32:7). The thick darkness which covered all Egypt for three days (Exod 10:22) was not a metaphor but a historical reality for the people of Israel. The trumpet sound and clouds over Mount Sinai were not an illusion but a real event which they could see and hear. The people of Israel, therefore, were hoping that "through God's grace this event might become again and again a powerful reality for the life

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1(1) Darkening of the heavenly bodies, Isa 13:10; 24:1-10; 34:4; (2) sign of the Son of Man, Isa 11:10-12; 18:3; (3) the mourning of the tribes, Isa 13:1-20; 15:3; 24:1-23; 65:13; (4) the clouds of heaven, Isa 19:1; (5) the great trumpet call, Isa 27:13; (6) the gathering of the elect, Isa 11:10-16; 27:13; 56:5-8.

2Joel 2:1 (trumpet); 2:2 (clouds); 2:10 (darkening of the heavenly bodies).
of the nation."\(^1\) The motifs of "mourning" and "gathering" are also from their experience of deportation. Therefore the signs were not mere symbols for the people in Old Testament times, but the literal reality of their experience. The apocalyptic signs could take place in any time and in any place to reveal God's presence and the glorious power of the Day of the Lord.

The Apocalyptic Literature

As we have found in diagram 13, the apocalyptic terms and expressions are emphasized and further developed in the Apocalyptic literature. There are continuities as well as discontinuities with the Old Testament. The Apocalyptic literature generally follows the Old Testament motifs and uses the traditional language and imagery of theophany and the Day of the Lord to describe the coming of God or Messiah. Several double lines originate in the Old Testament passages: there will be fainting of all the luminaries with great fear, and the stars will fall; the last day is a day of anguish and turmoil for the wicked as in the Old Testament;\(^2\) the trumpet shall sound aloud on the judgment day; and with the trumpet sound, God will gather His people.\(^3\) The "Danielic Son of Man figure" with the

\(^1\)O. Betz, 89.


\(^3\)Ps Sol 11:1; ApAb 31:1-2.

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clouds of heaven is also found in some "Son of Man" passages.\(^1\)

However, in the Apocalyptic literature there are also significant discontinuities from the other literature. They use the same traditional language to describe the Day of the Lord, but the pictures they draw are different.\(^2\) According to diagram 13, the most characteristic element of the Apocalyptic literature is the emphasis on judgment. Every apocalyptic sign is pronounced with the tone of judgment.\(^3\) For example, the sun, moon, and stars in the Apocalyptic literature are not only darkened, but also alter their order, or interchange their activities.\(^4\) Therefore the cosmic signs in the Apocalyptic literature are not a premonitory prelude to the coming of the Lord, but the judgment itself and the end of the cosmic order. The other clear example is found in the motif of the trumpet. The Apocalyptic literature also emphasizes the judgment function


\(^{3}\) Gowan, Bridge between the Testament, 360-61: "The writers of apocalyptic literature, without exception, were confronted by critical problems of world history and of personal existence. ... It is a commonplace to speak of the pessimism of apocalyptic thought. ... There are no calls to action in apocalyptic in order to carry out a program to make the world a better place. The power of evil is too strong for that."

of the trumpets,\(^1\) whereas the predominant usage of trumpets in the Old Testament is a spiritual one in the context of the covenant. Clouds are another motif which retains the mood of the terrible judgment.\(^2\)

Is there any development of concept from the Old Testament to the Apocalyptic literature? It seems in diagram 13 that though the language and expressions in some sense are developed from the Old Testament,\(^3\) it does not seem that the concept has been developed. Rather, the Apocalyptic literature emphasized judgment so extremely that it lost the rich meaning of the Old Testament apocalyptic terms and deviated from the Old Testament concept.

The Qumran Literature

The Qumran literature generally follows the Old Testament tradition in many aspects, but it also exhibits distinctive aspects. The most distinguishable discontinuity of the Qumran literature from the Old Testament is that it is difficult to find the apocalyptic signs of the Day of the Lord, notwithstanding that the Qumran community was one of

\(^1\)Ezra 6:21-24; Sib Or 4:173,175; 8:239; Ps Sol 8:1-3; Tab 12:8-11; ApAb 31:1-2; Apo Zeph 9:1; 10:1; 12:1; Greek Apo Ezra 4:36; Ps-Philo 11:4.


\(^3\)Hartman, 101. Hartman observes that the Apocalyptic literature added "new and fanciful elements, which are not taken from the Scriptures, and mixed them with the Old Testament motifs."
the most eschatological societies in history. Although the six apocalyptic motifs are direct signs of the Day of the Lord or the coming of the Lord, the Qumran community might not have the conception of the catastrophic end of history or glorious return of the Messiah on the clouds. As LaSor observes, the Qumran eschatology was earthly messianic, but not apocalyptic. Therefore we cannot find any line in the trajectories indicating a significant apocalyptic relationship between the Qumran literature and the others.

The Rabbinic Literature

According to the results of the previous study, the rabbinic literature generally reflects the Old Testament motifs except for a few developments. We can draw a few lines between the Old Testament and the rabbinic literature, but they are not significant to the Parousia scene. Dan 7:13 is often quoted messianically, but it is doubtful

1LaSor 93; Davies, "Eschatology at Qumran," 39; John J. Collins, The Apocalyptic Imagination, 139.
2LaSor, 104.
3E.g., (1) By the sound of shofar, God transfers His mode of judgment from justice to mercy (Millgram, 238-39); (2) Trumpet is an authority from God to gather His people (Midrash Number R. 15:13-16); (3) Trumpet recalls God's remembrance on His people (B. T. Rosh Hashanah 16a); (4) Trumpet sound confuses the Accuser, Satan (B. T. Rosh Hashanah 16b).
that there is a motif of "the divine Messiah coming on the clouds of heaven" in the rabbinic literature. Therefore I do not analyze the rabbinic apocalyptic vocabulary again in this chapter.

The New Testament

It seems that the New Testament also follows the Old Testament motif. According to diagram 13, in the New Testament the Parousia signs are mainly present in three categories: (1) the Gospels,1 (2) the Pauline writings,2 and (3) Revelation.3 Each category has its own peculiar characteristics. In the Gospels, the Parousia signs follow the Old Testament motifs, but the focus is on the coming of the Son of Man. Paul connects the clouds and trumpet call with the resurrection, and emphasizes the physical transformation of the saints. It is significant that Paul does not mention the celestial signs as a sign of the Parousia. It seems that Paul emphasizes not the scene of the Parousia, but the function of the Parousia, focusing on the transformation of the saints. It is interesting that the writer of Revelation seems to use the terms and motifs that are common to the Apocalyptic literature. He uses the bloody-moon motif (6:12) and mentions the falling stars

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21 Cor 15:52; 1 Thess 4:16.
The following chart shows that as we move in the direction of Revelation, the Parousia scene takes an catastrophic coloration.

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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>dark</td>
<td>dark</td>
<td>dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon</td>
<td>dark</td>
<td>dark</td>
<td>bloody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stars</td>
<td>dark</td>
<td>fall</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most significant discontinuity of the New Testament from the other apocalyptic literature is that all the apocalyptic signs of the New Testament are focused on Christ, the Son of Man coming on the clouds from heaven (Matt 24:30). All prophecies in the Old Testament are fulfilled in the person of Christ, and all signs are applied to Christ in the New Testament. As Beasley-Murray observes, New Testament eschatology is "marked off from all other eschatological thought precisely by its Christocentric emphasis." In this sense, theophany becomes Christophany, and the Day of Yahweh becomes the Day of Christ. Thus, the concept of the apocalyptic vocabulary is deepened and broadened in the New Testament.

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1Rev 6:13; 8:10,11; 9:1.


In conclusion, the parent passages of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:29-31 are found in the Old Testament. It seems that the emphasis of the judgment in the Apocalyptic literature is not a development, but a deviation from the Old Testament concept. New Testament writers seem to be trying to return it to the Old Testament track by the Christocentric perspective.¹

Continuity and Discontinuity of the Apocalyptic Vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 in the Apocalyptic Tradition

After observing the characteristics of each body of apocalyptic literature in diagram 13, the next step should be to expound on how the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:29-31 is related to the other apocalyptic traditions in the trajectory, because the Parousia signs of Matt 24:29-31 are my main concern.

The Apocalyptic Vocabulary of Matt 24:29-31 and the Old Testament Apocalyptic Passages

In diagram 13, we see that over twenty double lines from the Old Testament apocalyptic passages extend to the signs of Matt 24:29-31. Is Matt 24:29-31 a midrash of the Old Testament as Hartman² and Gundry³ observe? Diagram 13

¹The New Testament writers do not use the clouds and trumpets as judgment motifs. All the signs are focused on the Parousia in the New Testament.

²Hartman, 165-67. He concludes that Matt 24:29-31 has as its foundation an exposition or meditation based on texts in Daniel about the last things, especially Dan 7:8-27; 8:9-26; 9:24-27; 11:21-12:13.
shows clearly that the parent and root of Matt 27:29-31 is the Old Testament. It also demonstrates that Matt 24:29-31 has many continuities with the Old Testament. For example, diagram 13 shows that the Matthean motif of the darkening of the heavenly bodies mainly comes from Isaiah and Joel.¹ The Exodus event of Exod 10:21-23 and Ezek 32:7 is the root of this motif. We find five double lines connecting the Old Testament passages and Matt 24:29, and all the lines come from the motif of the Day of the Lord, for the darkening of the heavenly bodies is one of the peculiar signs of the Day of the Lord of the Old Testament.² The Old Testament and Matt 24:29 are in continuity in that the sign is that of the Day of the Lord, and that it is not a celestial disorder,³ but a sign heralding the Lord's coming to deliver the righteous and to judge the wicked.


²The theophany passages do not have the celestial signs. See Exod 19:1-20; Pss 18:7-15; 50:1-6; Isa 30:27-33; 66:15-16.

³Ezek 32:7-8: "When I blot you out, I will cover the heavens, and make their stars dark: I will cover the sun with a cloud, and moon shall not give its light" (italics are mine).
Diagram 13 shows two double lines and three single lines connecting Matt 24:30a to five Old Testament passages.\(^1\) Two double lines also extend from Isa 13:10 and 24:1-10 to the mourning motif. They have the most significant continuity with Matt 24:30b because both combine the darkening motif with the mourning concept. The cloud motif in the Old Testament has a point of continuity with Matt 24:30c in that the cloud is commonly associated with the divine presence. We see several double lines reaching to the cloud motif of Matt 24:30c from the Old Testament passages. Matt 24:30c has continuity with the Old Testament in that the cloud motif has the concept of divine presence, the majesty of the Son of Man, and the glorious coming of the Day of the Lord.

The predominant usage of trumpets in the Old Testament is a spiritual one in the context of worship, covenant, and gathering. Matthew uses the Old Testament trumpet motif. Five double lines joining the Old Testament to Matt 24:31 show how Matthew is intensively indebted to the Old Testament.\(^2\) The trumpet motif in the Old Testament has a continuity with Matt 24:31 especially in that the great trumpet call is connected with the gathering motif. It signals the last gathering of the elect at the Day of the Lord.


But the discontinuities of Matt 24:29-31 from the Old Testament are also significant. These discontinuities come mainly from Matthew's Christian perspective and his peculiar structure of the Parousia. They can be summarized in three characteristics. First, all the signs of Matt 24:29-31 are focused on Christ. Christ is the center and goal of the signs. Second, no systematic sequence of the Parousia scene appears in the Old Testament as in Matt 24:29-31. Third, the premonitory character of the signs are predominant in Matt 24:29-31. All the signs exist only to picture the Parousia as more vivid and glorious. In other words, Matthew makes his peculiar structure of the Parousia by using the Old Testament language and motifs intensively. In the Matthean Parousia structure, the coming of Christ is highlighted most effectively.

The Apocalyptic Vocabulary of Matt 24:29-31 and the Apocalyptic Literature

If Matt 24:29-31 has significantly different structure and concepts from those of the Old Testament apocalyptic motifs, where did Jesus in Matthew get these ideas and concepts?

Diagram 13 shows that Jesus in Matthew made considerable use of apocalyptic motifs and imagery--the
darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars, etc.—familiar to His hearers with their background of the Old Testament and the extra-canonical Apocalyptic literature so popular in first-century Palestine. Jesus in Matthew thus borrowed the terminology of His day to express His ideas. This is one reason why His message was accepted and promoted.¹ There is abundant evidence in the Gospels that He used the current popular conceptions as convenient vehicles for teaching the truth.² Is Matt 24:27-31 a development from the Apocalyptic literature?

It is true that the Apocalyptic literature is an outgrowth from the Old Testament. Rowley observes that apocalyptic is the child of prophecy.³ Some continuities

¹Glover, 53.

with the Apocalyptic literature are found in Matt 24:29-31 because they have the same root. Both corpora have the same Old Testament terms and motifs: trumpet, gathering, and four winds. However, the discontinuities of Matt 24:29-31 from the Apocalyptic literature are striking. According to diagram 13, the most characteristic element of the Apocalyptic literature is its emphasis on the judgment. The Parousia signs are not only signs but also the judgment itself in the Apocalyptic literature.

The discontinuities of Matt 24:29-31 from the Apocalyptic literature do not consist of language and terms, but rather the conceptualization which the terms express. In other words, the material, the Old Testament vocabulary, is the same, but the form into which the material is shaped and the contents which the form contains are different. Diagram 13 shows that the discontinuities between the Apocalyptic literature and Matt 24:29-31 are so serious that

it is not reasonable to accept the Little Apocalypse theory.¹

The reason for the difference between the biblical apocalyptic tradition and the later Apocalyptic literature is that the view of history in the latter became more pessimistic and despairing. Ladd describes their desperation thus:

The sufferings of God’s people were so inexplicable that they concluded history was utterly abandoned to evil and could no longer be the vehicle of the kingdom. Salvation would come only beyond history, in a transcendental world which would be inaugurated by a cosmic catastrophe terminating history and introducing an entirely different order of existence.²

Since their view of history was so pessimistic, the last judgment is the most characteristic doctrine of the Jewish Apocalyptic literature.³ The apocalyptists all look forward to a great judgment at the end of history when men and nations shall be judged by God.⁴ The judgment is the great event towards which the whole universe is moving.⁵

¹Cf. Adela Y. Collins, The Beginning of the Gospel, 73-91. In her closely reasoned analysis of Mark 13, she argues that the evidence for the "Little Apocalypse theory" is not compelling and rests on a dubious attempt to disassociate Jesus from eschatology.


⁴Rowley, 174.

⁵Ibid; Hagner, 57. Hagner summarizes the characteristic of the Apocalyptic literature like this: "Central to apocalyptic is the disclosure that in the near future God will demonstrate his faithfulness to the promises
This conception is well described in 4 Ezra 7:70: "When the Most High made the world and Adam and all who have come from him, He first prepared the judgment and the things that pertain to the judgment." Therefore, the most relevant terms to express the essence of the Apocalyptic literature are "transformation and judgment."

What, then, is the relationship between the Apocalyptic literature and Matt 24:29-31? Is there no connection between them? Does Matt 24:29-31 adopt directly from the Old Testament all the elements of the Parousia scene without any contribution of the Apocalyptic literature?

Terms and concepts have their own history and genealogies. Even though Matt 24:29-31 employs the same terms in the Old Testament, the forms and nuances of the terms are somehow influenced by the stream of contemporary ideas. Even if the New Testament writers intentionally tried to avoid the influence of the Apocalyptic literature, as the evidence seems to suggest, the minds of the readers were already saturated in the contemporary thought.

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of scripture by the final transformation of the present order into a radically new age wherein the righteous will finally be blessed and the wicked judged."

1Hagner, 57.

2It seems that Paul and the Gospel writers intentionally avoid the catastrophic expression. They do not use the disarray of the cosmic signs. They even do not use the bloody moon motif which the Old Testament uses.
Therefore, one of the reasons that the writers of the Gospels and Revelation adopted the falling-star motif and bloody-moon with the darkening of the sun and moon may be that they were using a common tradition reflecting the catastrophic trends of the Apocalyptic literature.

Hartman observes that the motifs of the Apocalyptic literature originally were derived from the Old Testament, but the expressions for these motifs lost their association with specific Old Testament passages.\(^1\) The Apocalyptic literature added new and fanciful elements, which were not taken from the Scriptures, and mixed them with these traditional motifs. He finds examples of how the traditions were supplemented and embellished by these new associations with Old Testament texts.\(^2\) But diagram 13 shows that if there is a contribution of the Apocalyptic literature to the formation of Matt 24:29-31, it is not in content, but in form and expression, because the difference of the concept is so serious. For example, Matthew's adoption of the falling-star motif from the contemporary apocalyptic tradition somehow supplements and contributes to the shape of Matt 24:29-31. However, it is only a matter of expression and framework, not of the concept of Matt 24:27-31. Even though the falling stars are a catastrophic

\(^1\)Hartman, 101.

\(^2\)Ibid.
expression, Matthew does not use it to emphasize the judgment, but to make the Parousia scene more dramatic.


If the Apocalyptic literature is an outgrowth from the Old Testament, the New Testament is another outgrowth which also has grown out from the Old Testament. Although both of them are branches from a common trunk, the differences are striking. While the Apocalyptic literature added some fanciful elements which the Old Testament did not have, the New Testament does not try to transform the Old Testament motifs and concepts, but only applies them to Christ as a fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies and covenants.¹ In this point, Matt 24:29-31 has continuity with the other New Testament books.

However, the Matthean Parousia scene (Matt 24:29-31) also has significant discontinuities from the other Parousia passages of the New Testament. The main differences come from Matthew's peculiar structure of the Parousia scene. First, nowhere else in the New Testament is there a Parousia scene composed of six apocalyptic motifs as we find in Matt 24:29-31. Second, no other New Testament book has so highlighted the coming of the Son of Man by contrasting the signs. For example, the celestial signs have both aspects in Matt 24:29: the darkening of the worldly light and the

¹Morris, New Testament Theology, 121.
dawning of the True Light. After the darkening of the celestial bodies, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven more brightly. Third, only Matthew uses \( \text{\textit{υἱός θεοῦ}} \) in the Olivet Discourse. The clouds are especially important in the Matthean Parousia scene as a sign of the Son of Man and an expression of the glory and majesty of the coming Son of Man.

If, simultaneously, there are striking continuities and discontinuities in Matt 24:29-31, and if the continuities come from the Old Testament, where, then, have the discontinuities originated? Diagram 13 shows that they are Matthew's creation. His creativity makes the Parousia scene so characteristic, systematic, and dramatic that nowhere do we find a single parallel from biblical and non-biblical literature. Where, then, does his creativity come from? First of all, Jesus Himself is the source of the Matthean Parousia scene, for Matthew was a disciple of Jesus who was able to listen to Him. Second, his Christian perspective is the foundation of his creativity. Matthew's Christocentric eschatology and his desire to enliven the promise of Jesus, make the Parousia scene characteristic. Third, it comes from Matthew's intention to move his readers into an overwhelming feeling of reality of the Parousia by helping them see and hear the vivid Parousia scene.

If the Old Testament is the roots and trunk, and the New Testament and the Apocalyptic literature are the
branches, Matt 24:29-31 is a flower having six colors blown onto the trunk and branches.

So far, we have studied the characteristic elements of each body of the apocalyptic tradition and the continuity and discontinuity of Matt 24:29-31 with that apocalyptic tradition. The next section deals with the meanings and functions of the six apocalyptic terms in the structure of the Parousia scene.

The Significance and Function of the Six Apocalyptic Motifs in the Matthean Parousia Scene

What, then, are the role and functions of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 in the Matthean Parousia scene? It is natural that the six signs and the structure of Matt 24:29-31, which the six signs constructed, reflect Matthew's intention and theological emphasis. Therefore, it is important to study the functions of the six signs in the Parousia structure on the basis of the previous study.

It is widely recognized that Matthew is a literary masterpiece.¹ Almost all scholars agree that Matthew has carefully, even meticulously, structured his Gospel.² It is evident that this work was very carefully and

artistically arranged by Matthew.¹ F. C. Grant points out that "the Gospel is clearly the work of a first-rate literary artist and teacher, who has reflected long and deeply upon the substance of the Christian Gospel."²

David Bauer demonstrates that the Gospel of Matthew is constructed according to four major structural elements: (1) repetition³ of comparison,⁴ (2) repetition of contrast,⁵ (3) repetition of climax,⁶ and (4) climax with inclusio.⁷


²Ibid.

³Bauer, 13: "Repetition involves the repetition or re-occurrence of the same or similar terms, phrases, or other elements."

⁴Ibid., 14, 57-63: Comparison is the association or juxtaposition of things which are alike or at least essentially similar. Bauer illustrates: (1) comparison between the Mission of Jesus and the Mission of the Disciples, (2) comparison between the ethical behavior of Jesus and the ethical expectation for the disciples, and (3) the role of filial languages in the comparison between Jesus and the disciples.

⁵Ibid., 14, 66-71. Contrast is the association of opposites or of things which are dissimilar. In Matthew, the primary contrast is in fact between Jesus and His opponents, and other contrasts generally underscore this primary one.

⁶Ibid., 15, 73-108: Climax is the movement from the lesser to the greater to the greatest. Repetition of climax with preparation and causation means: (1) There are general headings which are expanded in the material that follows in each case; (2) that each of these sections builds toward its respective climax; and (3) the previous section provides the cause or basis for the next section.

⁷Ibid., 18, 109-134.
Table 16 shows that the Parousia passage (Matt 24:29-31) has the typical Matthean structure. It shows that Mark also has three scenes, whereas Luke has only two scenes. However, both scenes are much less vivid than Matthew's scenes. It is significant to find that Matthew inserts his peculiar vocabulary into every scene to make the Markan Parousia scenes more vivid and picturesque—a more dramatic scenario than found in the other Synoptics. The intention of Matthew becomes clearer when we concentrate on his peculiar terms in the structure of Matt 24:29-31.

Table 17 exhibits how Matthew put his peculiar terms into the Parousia scenes. In this structure, the repetition of comparison stands out. Matthew compares the darkening of the heavenly bodies (Scene Ia) with the mourning of the tribes (Scene IIa), and compares the appearing of the sign of the Son of Man (Scene Ib) with the coming of the Son of Man (Scene IIb).

The repetition of contrast is more striking. Matthew divides the Parousia signs into three scenes. In the first scene, he brings two motifs into contrast: darkening and appearing. After the darkening of all worldly light, the sign of the Son of Man then appears in heaven. By this vivid contrast, Matthew highlights the appearing of the sign of the Son of Man on the background of a dark heaven in which all the lights are diminished.
### Table 16—A Comparison of the Synoptic Parousia Scenes

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<tr>
<td>Immediately after the tribulation</td>
<td>After tribulation</td>
<td>1. The sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of heavens will be shaken</td>
<td>Great distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of heavens will be shaken</td>
<td>1. The sun will be darkened, the moon will not give it light the star will be falling, powers in the heavens will be shaken</td>
<td>1. There will be signs in sun and moon and stars. Powers of the heavens will be shaken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scene II</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory</td>
<td>2. They will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory</td>
<td>2. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scene III</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. And He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call</td>
<td>1. Then He will send out the angels</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. And they will gather his elect from the four winds</td>
<td>2. And gathering his elect from the four winds</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 17.— The Three Parousia Scenes of Matt 24:29-31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene I (24:29-30a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Darkening of the Sun, Moon, and Falling of Stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Appearing of the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene II (24:30b-30c)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Mourning of the Tribes of the Earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Coming of the Son of Man on the Clouds of Heaven with Power and Great Glory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene III (24:31)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Sending His Angels with Great Trumpet Call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Gathering of the Elect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the darkening of the celestial bodies, the sign of the Son of Man will appear as more bright in heaven. These are the signs indicating the nearness of the Parousia; at the same time, they are a setting which makes the coming of the Son of Man brighter by contrast and thus more dramatic.

In the second scene, the spectacle becomes more dramatic. Matthew sets up a contrast between earth, where all the tribes will mourn, and heaven, where the Son of Man is coming on the clouds with glory and power. Here the earth filled with mourning is in striking contrast to the heavens filled with glory and power.

In the third scene, the contrast between the mourning of the tribes and the great trumpet call is outstanding. God's angels are sent to the ends of the earth with a great trumpet call, and they gather the elect from
the four winds. Here again, the dispersion of angels and
the gathering of the elect are contrasted. The great
trumpet call reminds us of the theophany, the Day of the
Lord, the covenant, the New Moon feast, and the joy of
Jubilee. The sound of the trumpet proclaims the coming of
the King and His redemption (gathering). In Christ, the
judgment trumpet of the Apocalyptic literature becomes the
sign of the gathering of the elect for salvation at the time
of Christophany.

Table 18 shows that the Parousia signs will appear
by turns in heaven and earth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Signs</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Sense</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scene I</td>
<td>a Darkening of sun, moon, star</td>
<td>Heaven</td>
<td>See</td>
<td>Dark</td>
<td>Premonitory scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b Sign of the Son of Man</td>
<td>Heaven</td>
<td>See</td>
<td>Bright</td>
<td>Main event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene II</td>
<td>a Mourning of the tribes</td>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Hear</td>
<td>Dark</td>
<td>Premonitory scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b Coming of SM on the clouds</td>
<td>Heaven</td>
<td>See</td>
<td>Bright</td>
<td>Highlight event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene III</td>
<td>a Great trumpet calling</td>
<td>Heaven</td>
<td>Hear</td>
<td>Bright</td>
<td>Premonitory scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b Gathering the elect</td>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>See</td>
<td>Bright</td>
<td>Last event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first sign of each scene is a premonitory
setting to make the second sign of the scene, the main
events of the Parousia scene, more vivid and dramatic. It is an intentionally well-organized structure to present a vivid picture to readers.

As we see in table 18, the things that Matthew really wanted to highlight are the main events of each scene: (1) the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, (2) the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, and (3) the gathering of the elect. The other three signs are stage settings to make these main events more impressive and dramatic.

We should also note that repetition of climax is clear in the passage. Each scene has its own climax and each climax moves quickly toward a great climax. The pivot climax is the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. The trumpet and gathering are the results of the coming of the Son of Man, and at the same time the climax of redemption history. After all, the appearing of the person of Christ will be the climax of the Parousia scene. The long-awaited Parousia of the Son of Man, to whom was given the kingdom, is the main theme of Matt 24:27-31. As we have seen, Matthew combines theophany signs with the signs of the Day of the Lord, and links them to the motifs of the Danielic Son of Man figure. However, this is still not enough for Matthew to describe the Parousia of the Son of Man. Therefore he uses four peculiar apocalyptic terms (which do not occur in the Olivet Discourse of the other Synoptic Gospels) to make the
Parousia scene more vivid. The result is a powerful
dramatic structure.

It is noteworthy that a sign or a term acquires a
multiplied and amplified meaning when it is located in the
Matthean Parousia structure. For example, when Matthew
inserted the term "trumpet" into the third scene of the
Parousia structure, instantly the trumpet of Matt 24:31a is
not a common trumpet any longer. The trumpet acquires all
the rich heritages from its trajectory. It has an abundant
inheritance from the antecedent literature. Furthermore,
the trumpets have acquired various additional aspects full
of significance by being connected with the other five
motifs in the well-structured Parousia scene.

Therefore one important thing for understanding Matt
24:29-31 here is not the identification of the signs, but
the function of the signs in the Parousia setting. The only
thing that Matthew wants to highlight by using all the
functions of the signs is the coming of the Son of Man on
the clouds with power and great glory.

However, the Matthean Parousia scene was provided
not merely for its vividness and reality in the imagination
of his reader. First, the vividness of the Matthean
Parousia was provided for the purpose of encouragement. As
Hagner observes, the primary purpose of apocalyptic thought
generally is the encouragement of a religious community in
the face of present suffering and persecution. Matthew too used the apocalyptic perspective to this end, because the original readers of Matthew were "Jewish-Christians who found themselves experiencing considerable hostility from their non-Christian Jewish brethren, as well as from pagan Gentiles." Second, it is also provided for the purpose of paraenesis, or exhortation to moral conduct. Indeed, this is one of the "main pillars of Matthew's apocalyptic perspective." The vivid reality of the Parousia with its imminence inevitably demands of the Christians a moral and spiritual decision in every moment. Matthew believed that the vivid description of the imminent Parousia encouraged his readers to keep watch.

1Hagner, 58, 75. Hagner points out that the alienation and the experience of hostility and persecution have been shown to be the key sociological factors that stimulate apocalyptic thought and form apocalyptic movements.


3Hagner, "Apocalyptic Motifs," 75.

4Ladd, "Why Not Prophetic-Apocalyptic?" 199. The Jewish apocalyptic writers are little concerned with ethical conduct: "With the exception of Enoch 92-105, there is almost no ethical exhortation in the entire corpus on non-canonical apocalyptic literature, and it is notable that this material lacks many of the usual characteristics of the apocalyptic genre."
Summary of the Synthetic Trajectory

1. All the apocalyptic vocabulary and motifs found in the apocalyptic tradition can be traced back to the Old Testament.

2. No apocalyptic tradition has a systematic sequence of the signs of the end-time as Matt 24:29-31 has.

3. All the apocalyptic signs belong to three main motifs of the Old Testament: (1) theophany, (2) the Day of the Lord, and (3) the Danielic Son of Man.

4. The most characteristic element of the Apocalyptic literature is judgment. Every apocalyptic sign is pronounced with the tone of judgment.

5. The Qumran literature has no motif of specific Parousia signs.

6. All the Parousia signs in the New Testament focus on the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven.

7. The rabbinic literature generally follows the Old Testament motifs, and reflects Dan 7:13, but it does not have significant Parousia signs.

8. Matt 24:29-31 has six Parousia signs, and they are the most systematic sequence of the Parousia scene in the apocalyptic tradition. Besides Matt 24:29-31, Isaiah is the only book which contains all six signs.

10. All the vocabulary of terms, motifs, and imagery found in Matt 24:27-31 can be traced back to the Old Testament as its original source.

11. It seems that Exod 19, Dan 7:13-14, Joel 2, and Isaiah were Matthew's main sources.

12. If there is a development of the apocalyptic terms and motifs from the Apocalyptic literature to Matt 24:29-31, it is not that of contents and concept, but that of expression and framework.

13. Matthew shares with the rest of the New Testament books the same eschatological themes and motifs: Christocentric eschatology.

14. In Matt 24:29-31, most apocalyptic signs and motifs are gathered and reconstructed for the coming of the Son of Man by insertion of peculiar terms and motifs.

15. Matthew gathered the traditional terms, motifs, and ideas, and reconstructed them to make the Parousia audible, visible, and more colorful by using comparison and contrast.

16. A term or a motif acquires multiple and amplified meanings in the Matthean Parousia structure by connecting with and contrasting to the other motifs.
17. The vivid reality of the Parousia with its imminence inevitably demands of the Christians a moral and spiritual decision in every moment and encourages them to keep watch.

Some Suggestions for the Problems of Matt 24:27-31

As I traced briefly in chapter 1, there are at least five main views of the understanding of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31: (1) Jesus was mistaken in His view (Schweitzer and Straus); (2) it was interpolated from the Apocalyptic literature (the Little Apocalypse theory); (3) all the signs of Matt 24:29-31 were fulfilled symbolically at the destruction of Jerusalem (historicist); (4) it is the detailed scenario of the final events (the popular apocalyptic eschatology); and (5) it blends the destruction of Jerusalem into the event of the Parousia (prophetical perspective). The result of this study makes possible some suggestions for understanding and resolving these issues.

1. All the apocalyptic motifs and terms are not rooted in symbolic visions but in real events. The people of Israel anticipate that the events would occur repeatedly in their nation's history. Furthermore, in the structure of the Parousia signs of Matt 24:29-31, the signs are a premonitory setting of the main event. The premonitory
setting cannot be a symbol. Therefore, pure symbolism in the interpretation of Matt 24:29-31 cannot be reasonable.

2. As we found in the trajectory, there is no evidence that Matt 24:29-31 was influenced by the concepts of the Apocalyptic literature. Matthew probably used the same language and some expressions of the Apocalyptic literature, but the contents and concepts which the language and framework contain are different.

3. The main concern of Matthew is not to explain the identity of the signs or to provide a timetable. His chief purpose is to paint the coming of the Son of Man in bright colors and to move his audience into the glory of the Parousia.

4. Considering the structure of Matt 24:27-31 which is connected by ἐκ τῆς, and the nature of the signs, the Parousia is not an event which occurs over a long timespan through the ages.

5. The Parousia is a once-for-all event. It cannot be an object of double interpretation. It cannot be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, and at the same time, to the coming of Christ.

6. The tribes who will mourn and the gathered people will not be limited to the people of Israel.

7. If we interpret the Parousia event literally, it has not happened yet. Therefore, it must be an event in the future.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

One purpose of this study was to attempt to discover the continuity and discontinuity from antecedent literature in the use of apocalyptic vocabulary in Matt 24:27-31 by tracing its possible literary allusions or parallels in the canonical\(^1\) and noncanonical literature.\(^2\) Another purpose was to determine Matthew's usage of apocalyptic terms and motifs, and to discover the place and the function of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31. This process involved three steps, each of which was generated by the preceding one.

The first step (chapter 2) was an examination of the term "Parousia" because it is the key to understanding the meaning and structure of Matt 24 in general and Matt 24:27-31 in particular. The more I analyzed the structure of Matt 24, the more I realized that Matthew intentionally adopted the term, because he uses it four times in a single chapter, whereas the other Gospel writers omit it. We have known

\(^1\)The Old and New Testaments.

\(^2\)The Apocalyptic literature, the Qumran literature, and the rabbinic literature.
that the term "Parousia" was the technical term to express the arrival or visit of the emperor in New Testament times. We also recognized that the background of the Parousia concept comes from three Old Testament eschatological motifs—theophany, the Day of the Lord, and the Danielic Son of Man—because Matthew describes the Parousia of Christ with the language of those motifs. By tracing the signs and characters of three motifs of the Old Testament, we could grasp the picture of the Parousia which Matthew wanted to describe.

In the second part of chapter 2, we found that Matthew used the term Parousia intentionally wherever he wanted to distinguish the Parousia signs from other end-time signs. Therefore if we understand the importance of the term Parousia, we can understand the structure of Matt 24, gaining important clues to decoding some problematic passages. ¹ Few have studied the importance and function of the term Parousia in the structure of Matt 24 in this manner.

The second step (chapter 3) investigated the continuity and discontinuity of the six apocalyptic terms²

¹Since the term "fig tree" and "this generation" do not belong to the Parousia section in Matt 24, we cannot apply them to the Parousia event as some have.

²(1) The darkening of the heavenly bodies, (2) the signs of the Son of Man, (3) the mourning of the tribes, (4) the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven, (5) the great trumpet call, and (6) the gathering of the elect.
of Matt 24:29-31 to understand the Matthean Parousia signs more clearly. It was an attempt to discover the root and branches of each of the Matthean Parousia signs by tracing the trajectory from their past.

To do this, I compiled two appendices as basic materials of this study: a Greek-Hebrew Glossary and the Frequency Chart of the Parousia Signs. These appendices are the basic materials of my statistical tables and the tracing of the terms. Based on the study results, I made two genealogical trajectory diagrams at the end of each section: the chronological trajectory and the logical trajectory. In chapter 4, I also made a synthetic trajectory diagram from the twelve trajectories of chapter 3 in order to grasp the whole picture. I believe that the appendices and the trajectories will be the ground work for other studies on the apocalyptic vocabulary.

The first sign of the Parousia, the darkening of the heavenly bodies, is not a cosmic upheaval which disrupts the cosmic order. It is also not a symbol, but a real historical event, a premonitory setting of the main event which is the wrath of God or judgment. The Jewish Apocalyptic literature emphasizes the catastrophic judgment character of the cosmic signs. Matt 24:29-31 adopts the Old Testament motifs of the cosmic sign and makes the darkening a most effective setting for the appearance of the bright sign of the Son of Man. It presents a vividness and
contrast and is an impressive prelude to the Matthean Parousia scene.

The second sign of the Parousia, the sign of the Son of Man, is one of the most enigmatic features of Matthew's version of the eschatological discourse. After tracing the antecedent tradition, I concluded that the sign of the Son of Man of Matt 24:29-31 is the glorious clouds, indicating the coming of Jesus. The unique sign in heaven at theophany is the clouds in the Old Testament. The New Testament usually mentions clouds in heaven whenever it describes the Parousia. This fact becomes clearer in the Matthean Parousia scene of Matt 24:29-31. The sign of the Son of Man must be contrasted to the darkening of Matt 24:29, and must be the cause of the mourning of the tribes. Thus, it is probably the bright, white clouds (Matt 17:5; Rev 14:14) heralding the coming of the Son of Man. It is significant that only Matthew describes a cloud appearing at the moment of Jesus' transfiguration as "a bright cloud" (Matt 17:5).

The third sign of the Parousia, the mourning of the tribes, contains an eschatological meaning in relation to the Day of the Lord in the apocalyptic tradition. The mourning of the people in the Old Testament is the eschatological wailing for both Israel and all the nations who do not obey God. The Apocalyptic literature only illustrates the mourning of the nations, emphasizing the aspects of judgment and punishment. The eschatological
mourning in the Gospel and Revelation is not the mourning of repentance, but the mourning of the unsaved on the day of judgment in relation to the Parousia. Matthew shares this same view with other New Testament writers. However, Matthew's unique contribution is that he inserted this term into his peculiar structure of the Parousia to emphasize the glory of the coming of the Son of Man and the victorious trumpet call of the next scene.

The fourth sign of the Parousia, the clouds of heaven, is an emblem of God's presence and majestic glory of God moving toward the earth in the Old Testament. However, the clouds in the later Apocalyptic literature are not a theophanic sign of covenant, but a shadow of evil and terrible judgment. In the New Testament, consistent application to Christ gives a new significance to the ancient cloud motifs. The clouds are not only an indication of the divine presence and glory, but a clear sign of the coming of the Son of Man. In Matt 24:29-31, the clouds of heaven have a peculiar function. Matthew endows the clouds with a special character of celestial majesty by adopting the term "clouds of heaven" from Dan 7:13-14. For Matthew, the clouds of heaven are the most clear sign of the Son of Man, providing a majestic and celestial glory to the coming of Christ.

The fifth sign of the Parousia, the great trumpet sound, is significantly related to the life of the people of
God. We have found at least six usages of trumpets in the Old Testament. But in the Apocalyptic literature, the Old Testament trumpet motif lost its multiple meanings and was mainly associated with judgment. In the Matthean Parousia scene, the sound of a loud trumpet reacquires the rich significance of the Old Testament trumpet motif by combining the traditional role of trumpet with the Parousia and by making it a proclamation of the Christophany.

The sixth sign of the Parousia, the gathering of the elect, is an essential and traditional theme of Jewish eschatological hope as we have seen. In the Matthean Parousia scene, the gathering of the elect is the great finale of the redemption drama. It is not the gathering of the twelve tribes of Israel, but the gathering of all believers who are elected by accepting the gospel.

The third step (chapter 4) of this study was concerned with finding the place of Matt 24:27-31 in the apocalyptic tradition by synthesizing a combined trajectory based on chapter 3. We found that the parent passages of Matt 24:27-31 are from the three main apocalyptic motifs of the Old Testament: (1) theophany (Exod 19:11-24), (2) the Day of the Lord,¹ and (3) the Danielic Son of Man.

This study also shows that no significant Parousia signs were found in the Qumran literature, though the Qumran

society was one of the most eschatologically oriented communities in history. The rabbinic literature also does not exhibit any significant Parousia signs, except for some cloud passages reflecting Dan 7:13-14. Both corpora have no Parousia scene in terms of the coming of the Messiah from heaven with glory and majesty, as Matt 24:29-31 describes. As LaSor points out, their eschatology was probably earthly messianic, but not apocalyptic.

The most characteristic element of the New Testament is that all the apocalyptic signs are focused on the Parousia of Christ. All prophecies in the Old Testament are fulfilled in the person of Christ, and all signs are applied to Christ in the New Testament. In this sense, theophany becomes Christophany, and the Day of Lord becomes the Day of Christ. Matthew shares this Christocentric element with the other New Testament writers. However, the synthetic trajectory diagram shows that Matt 24:29-31 occupies a unique place in the apocalyptic tradition because Matthew's creative, systematic scene of the Parousia is composed of six apocalyptic motifs having multiplied and amplified functions, which none of the other apocalyptic tradition has.

In the second part of chapter 4, I conclude that the function of the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:29-31 is also unique in the apocalyptic traditions. Matthew is a literary masterpiece. It is quite significant to find that
Matthew inserted his peculiar vocabulary into every scene to make the Markan Parousia scene more vivid and dramatic.

What we found from the tracing of the six apocalyptic terms of Matt 24:29-31 is significant for understanding the Matthean Parousia scene and for resolving the difficult problems in interpreting Matt 24:29-31.

First, this study shows that determining the degree of the continuity and discontinuity is difficult because the language and concepts are interwined with each other. To determine the chronological development of the motifs is also difficult because the dates of some corpora are uncertain and overlap each other, and because sometimes the later literature more strongly reflects the earlier motif. Furthermore, the concepts differ from each other and even new concepts appear between the apocalyptic traditions. However, the trajectories show that there has been a development of some expressions and frameworks of the apocalyptic motifs. For example, even though pottery is made from the same clay, its form and content varies according to its function. Likewise, the apocalyptic traditions use the same material—the Old Testament apocalyptic vocabulary—but the forms takes shape according to the contemporary need. We can call the phenomena a development. But the development of the framework and expression is one thing and the development of concept is another. Therefore, if there is a development between the
Old Testament and the Apocalyptic literature, and between the Apocalyptic literature and Matt 24:29-31, it is only in terms of expression and framework, not concept. The trajectories show that the concept of the Parousia is the main reason of the discontinuities of the concept. The vocabulary is old, but what is expressed with it is new, though there was partial preparation for it in some of the intervening traditions.\(^1\) It cannot be said, however, that the antecedent formed a trajectory that pointed inevitably to all that we see in this passage.

Second, we also found that Matt 24:29-31 is significantly different in many ways from the Apocalyptic literature. According to the trajectories, the most characteristic element of the Apocalyptic literature is the emphasis on the judgment. Every apocalyptic sign is pronounced with the tone of judgment. The sun, moon, and stars are not only darkened, but also alter their order, or interchange their activities. The clouds become the terrible omen of judgment. The trumpet sound is the judgment call. Therefore, in the Apocalyptic literature, the apocalyptic signs are not a premonitory setting for the Parousia, but a consequence of sin and the judgment itself. Besides that, in the Apocalyptic literature, some fanciful expressions are found here and there to describe the

\(^1\)E.g., the falling-star motif.
end-time signs, whether the literature is earlier\textsuperscript{1} or later,\textsuperscript{2} as we have seen in chapter 3. On the other hand, the Parousia signs of Matt 24:29-31 are not a judgment but premonitory setting to make the Parousia more vivid by using the Old Testament apocalyptic terms. The reason for the difference between the Apocalyptic literature and Matt 24:27-31 mainly comes from the difference of the view of history. The Apocalyptic writers came to despair of history. A catastrophic end of history and the judgment are the most predominating concept of the Apocalyptic literature. Accordingly, the Jewish apocalyptic writers are little concerned with ethical conduct which is important element in the Matthean eschatology. Therefore, it is highly doubtful that the concept of Matt 24:29-31 was influenced by or interpolated from the Apocalyptic literature.

It is also possible that Matthew shares a common apocalyptic tradition reflecting the catastrophic trends of the Apocalyptic literature, or possibly Matthew wanted to use contemporary language to effectively communicate to his readers, who could not escape fully from the contemporary apocalyptic atmosphere. This may explain why Matthew used the falling-star motif in the Parousia scene. In this

\textsuperscript{1}E.g., 1 En 80:4-8; Sib Or 3:670; Ps Sol 8:1-8.

\textsuperscript{2}Sib Or 5:475; 8:239; 4 Ezra 5:4-5; 6:23.
sense, the Apocalyptic literature contributed to the expression and framework of the Matthean Parousia scene.

Third, one of the most significant things we found in the trajectories is that the apocalyptic vocabulary of the Old Testament lost its rich meaning and multiple aspects in the Apocalyptic literature. This is the primary reason that one hesitates to admit a development between the Old Testament and the Apocalyptic literature. It seems that the New Testament made a development from the Old Testament in that all the signs and prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled in the person of Jesus. But the most significant development is found in Matt 24:29-31. The rich apocalyptic terms and motifs of the Old Testament are multiplied and amplified in the characteristic structure of the Matthean Parousia signs by connecting with and contrasting with the other signs.

Fourth, one of the significant points clarified in the trajectories is that the traditional apocalyptic terms and motifs did not originate from symbolic visions, but from real historical events. To the people of Israel, the cosmic signs were not a symbol of turmoil, but real historical events occurring at the time of Exodus. They saw the clouds and heard the trumpet call at Mount Sinai. They expected that these signs might appear again and again as a evidence of God's presence. A New Testament passage (2 Pet 3:4) shows that the people of Israel still expect a real
catastrophic event occurring before the Parousia. This fact is proved again in the structure of the Matthean Parousia scene: people will see, hear, and feel the Parousia. This concept is important for the interpretation of the Parousia because if we can interpret the signs symbolically, the coming of the Son of Man itself also becomes a symbol, as Kik claims.¹

Fifth, I also realized that no element of time-setting is found in the trajectories. Matthew's main concern is not to explain the identity of the signs or to provide a timetable, but to paint the coming of the Son of Man in bright colors and to move his audience into the glory of the Parousia. Determining the timetable is not Matthew's intention. Considering the structure of Matt 24:27–31 which is connected by ἐκλήσια τοῦτο, and the nature of the signs, the Parousia is not an event which occurs over a long timespan through the ages, but an event occurring almost simultaneously. The Parousia is a once-for-all event. It cannot be an object of double interpretation. It cannot be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem and, at the same time, to the coming of Christ. If we interpret the Parousia

¹Kik states that the symbols are used to represent the end of the old dispensation. The sun of Judaism has been darkened; the falling of the stars means the passing away of the Jewish nation. The clouds are not the sign of the Parousia; they only refer to His judgment and power. Cf. Kik, 128–142; Gaebelein, The Gospel of Matthew, 506.
event literally, it has not happened yet. Therefore it must be an event in the future.

Sixth, the vividness and imminence of the Matthean Parousia scene constantly gives encouragement to the community in the face of the present sufferings and seriously demands of the Christian a moral and spiritual decision in every moment by creating the eschatological tension.

Why do continuity and discontinuity appear in Matt 24:29-31? This study has shown that two great factors make the Matthean Parousia scene unique. The first is intensive continuity with the Old Testament. The vocabulary and motifs of the Old Testament, from its prophetic and apocalyptic standpoint, provide the framework of the Matthean Parousia scene. Matthew combines almost all the apocalyptic vocabulary and motifs of the Old Testament into his Parousia scene, and portrays that all the Old Testament prophetic terms and apocalyptic signs are met and fulfilled in the Son of Man, who will come on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. This is the main reason that Matt 24:29-31 exhibits more continuity with the Old Testament than any other passage in the New Testament.

The second factor is the striking discontinuity of the Matthean Parousia scene from the other forms of the apocalyptic tradition. Matthew forms a creative and systematic structure of the Parousia. What is the source of
his discontinuities? Diagram 13 clearly shows that they come from Matthew's own creativity. Where, then, does his creativity originate? The source of the Matthean Parousia scene must be Jesus Himself, for Matthew was one of His twelve disciples. His Christian perspective is the foundation of his creativity. Two main elements which distinguish Matt 24:27-31 are the Christocentric eschatology of Matthew and his intention to make the Parousia of Jesus vivid and dramatic by inserting his four peculiar terms into each scene of the Parousia and by contrasting these terms and motifs to move his readers into an overwhelming feeling of reality. What we have learned here is that it is not enough to interpret the apocalyptic vocabulary of Matt 24:27-31 in the light of the apocalyptic tradition, it is especially necessary to read the apocalyptic vocabulary in the light of Jesus. These are Matthew's main contribution in the description of the Parousia.

It is Matthew's continuity with the Old Testament which gave him the form, the vessel in which his message was contained. It is his discontinuity from the other apocalyptic traditions which gave him that originality which was such a marked feature of his Parousia scene. In this way the Parousia scene of Matt 24:27-31 is distinguished from other apocalyptic literature. Therefore, if the apocalyptic passages of the New Testament and Apocalyptic
literature are branches outgrown from the trunk of the Old Testament, Matt 24:27-31 is an apocalyptic flower blossomed on the trunk and branches.

The main strength of this study is its attempt to discover the meaning and function of the apocalyptic vocabulary in Matt 24:27-31, not by particular theological interpretive schemes, but by tracing the concept from its antecedent literature and finding its branches and root.

However, the results of this study suggest many areas for further research. Since this study was limited to the study of Matt 24:27-31 and was only a basic approach to understanding the Matthean Parousia signs, this dissertation could be complemented by further study on the other portion of Matt 24 and its Synoptic parallels. The determination of the degree of the chronological development needs further clarification by discovering new evidences which may help fix the dates. A better knowledge of Matthew's awareness of the contemporary literature would allow for the clarification of the influence from the Jewish Apocalyptic literature. A study of the Matthean community and its situation would give light for further understanding Matthew's intention in providing such a distinguished Parousia scene.
APPENDIX 1

Greek-Hebrew Glossary of the Parousia Signs

I. ἀλίος
A. New Testament
ἀλίος is used 33 times to refer to the sun.

B. LXX and Hebrew Old Testament
ἀλίος occurs 150 times in LXX to refer to sun. The term ἀλίος in the LXX is the translation of ten different Hebrew words, representing nine different roots: (1) רַע, (2) הנש, (3) רביה, (4) חָרָם, (5) הנש, (6) וַתָּכְבָּה, (7) וַתָּכְבָּה, (8) בתן, (9) סֹפְרִים, מְשָׁפֵר. The most popular term in the LXX, as in the Hebrew Old Testament, is סֹפְרִים. Its 136 occurrences are scattered throughout the LXX.

C. Qumran Literature
4Q503 65 1:4, "Sun, Blessed be the God of Israel."
4Q164 1 1:4, "like the sun with all its light."

II. σελήνη
A. New Testament
σελήνη occurs 9 times and in association with ἀλίος in the New Testament.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\text{DJD}\ 7:125.\]
B. LXX and Hebrew Old Testament

It occurs 31 times in LXX for the translation of Hebrew word, לֶחֶם, הָגֵז. The term הָגֵז is used in most cases (30 times).

C. Qumran Literature

IQS 10:5, "(monthly) seasons on the day of the new moon."

4Q502 27 1:3, "all the troops of (month)"1

III. ἀστήρ, ἀστρον

A. New Testament

In the New Testament ἀστήρ and ἀστρον occur 27 times.

B. LXX and Hebrew Old Testament

LXX uses ἀστήρ 21 times and ἀστρον 25 times. They represent five Hebrew words: (1) כֹּל, (2) מַעְקֵד, (3) מָקֵד, (4) קוֹדֶשׁ, (5) פָּרַשׁ. but in most cases the LXX uses ἀστήρ for the Hebrew term כֹּל (39 times).

C. Qumran Literature

1QM 11:6, "There shall come forth a star out of Jacob."

4Q175 1:12, "A star shall come out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel."

CD 7:19, "The star is the Interpreter of the Law who shall come to Damascus; as it is written, 'A star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.'"

1QH 1:12, "the stars to their paths, [the clouds] to their tasks."

1Rituel de Mariage [DJD 7:90].
4Q502 27 1:4, "... with the stars of heaven"¹
11QtgJob 30:5, "the morning stars shone together, and all of God's angels shouted in unison."²

IV. ΚΟΠΤΩ, ΚΟΠΕΤΌΣ (mourning)

A. New Testament

ΚΟΠΕΤΌΣ (mourning) is noun form of ΚΟΠΤΩ (mourn). According to Liddell and Scott ΚΟΠΤΩ means (1) "smite," "cut off," "strike," and "beat," and (2) mourn for any one.³ In the New Testament ΚΟΠΤΩ occurs eight times, and appear exclusively in the Synoptic Gospels and Revelation.⁴ The noun form ΚΟΠΕΤΌΣ is used only once (Acts 8:2).

B. LXX and Hebrew Old Testament

In the LXX ΚΟΠΕΤΌΣ occurs fifteen times, and ΚΟΠΕΤΈΙΝ eighty-four. The exact equivalent of ΚΟΠΤΌΜΑΙ in the strict sense is the Hebrew לֵךְ. In the broad sense, however, the words ΚΟΠΤΌΜΑΙ, ΚΟΠΕΤΌΣ correspond to Hebrew terms for mourning, esp. the verb לֵךְ. The Hebrew Bible uses לֵךְ 38 times, and לֵךְ 15 times, to refer to "mourn" or "mourning." But in the LXX, ΚΟΠΕΤΌΣ, ΚΟΠΕΤΈΙΝ are not translating לֵךְ at all, and are mostly used for לֵךְ (27 times) and לֵךְ (15 times).

¹"... avec les étoile[s du ciel]," Rituel de Mariage [DJD 7:90].
²Michael, Sokoloff, The Targum to Job from Qumran Cave XI (Jerusalem: At Ahva Press, 1974), 86.
³Liddell and Scott, 979.

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times), and are predominantly used for mourning in general. The other terms indicating "mourning" are as follows: נכן (12), בחיך (18), חניך (5), ו買って (4), וקנף (3).

C. Qumran Literature

1QH 11:22, "sorrow and groaning upon the funeral harp"
4Q378 14 1:3, "mourning for Moses"¹
4QCat-a, "to the heads of mourning"²
6QApH 2 1:3, "mourning and weeping"³

V. Βεφέλη, Βεφος

A. New Testament

The Greek word Βεφέλη occurs 26 times to refer to cloud or clouds in the New Testament, and Βεφος only once time to describe many witnesses like the clouds (Heb 12:1).

B. LXX and Hebrew Old Testament

In LXX Βεφέλη is used 111 times and Βεφος 26 times as the term indicating clouds. Βεφέλη is mainly used in theophany scene, whereas Βεφος in literal or figurative meaning. According to a concordance⁴ the term Βεφέλη is

²Catena (A), [DJD 5:67].
³DJD 3:128.
used as the translation of 7 Hebrew words; (1) הַנֶּבֶר (2) נַעֲמַת (3) נַעֲמַת שֵׁם (4) בַּעֲמַת (5) גָּלְחָן (6) גָּלְחָן שֵׁם (7) גָּלְחָן שֵׁם שֵׁם. The most popular term on cloud in the Old Testament is נַעֲמַת. Its 87 appearances are scattered throughout the biblical material.¹

C. Qumran Literature

According to the Graphic concordance to the Dead Sea Scrolls,² Qumran literature has five נַעֲמַת passages:

(1) 1QH 10:25, "[and its crown] (shall reach) to the [clouds]"

(2) 4Q506 126 1:2,³ "in a pillar of the cloud"

(3) 11QtgJob 29:2,⁴ "(He) scatters his light from the clouds"

(4) 4Q156 1:4,⁵ "smoke of fragrances before Yahweh"


²James H. Charlesworth, Graphic Concordance to the Dead Sea Scrolls (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1991). The Qumran Graphic Concordance is the only one available to editions of all Qumran sectarian texts published before 1990. These editions (The Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project will publish two different concordances of the Qumran sectarian documents) contain the previously published sectarian writings of the Qumran community and similar documents which the Qumran Covenanters not only inherited but also edited. As a result, this concordance is based on 223 texts and over 3,500 fragments; it contains more than 59,000 individual entries.

³Paroles des Luminaires [DJD 7:168-170].

⁴Michael, Sokoloff, The Targum to Job from Qumran Cave XI (Jerusalem: At Ahva Press, 1974), 143.

⁵Targum du Lévitique [DJD 6:86-89].
(5) 4QtgJob 1 1:2,¹ "cloud over him"

VI. σοληπίγξ, σοληπίζειν (trumpet)

A. New Testament

Matthew use σοληπίγγας in Matt 24:32, general singular feminine of σοληπίγξ. In the New Testament the terms σοληπίγξ/σοληπίζω appear 23 times. Of the 23 occurrences, 16 are found in Revelation.

B. LXX and Hebrew Old Testament

The terms σοληπίγξ, σοληπίζειν, is used 134 times in the LXX to refer to a trumpet or to the act of trumpeting. They are the translation of 6 different Hebrew terms for horns or trumpets. The 6 Hebrew equivalents are: רעש, הָשָׁו, קַר, קַרְבָּנָא. The most common Hebrew words are רעש and קַרְבָּנָא.

C. Qumran Literature

Qumran literature generally uses קַרְבָּנָא.

1QM 3:2, (1) the trumpet of ambush, (2) the trumpet of withdrawal.
3:3, (1) the trumpets for summoning, (2) trumpet of formation (3) trumpets of the man
3:4, trumpet of the camp
3:5, the trumpets for their expeditions
3:6, the trumpets of battle array
3:7, the trumpets for calling
3:8, (1) trumpets of the slain, (2) trumpets of ambush
3:9, trumpets of pursuit
3:10, (1) trumpets of withdrawal (2) trumpets for the way of return
7:13, (1) the trumpets of summoning, (2) the trumpets of remembrance, (3) the trumpets of fanfare, (4) the trumpets of pursuit, (5) the trumpets of withdrawal
7:14, the trumpets of summoning

¹Targum de Job [DJD 6:90]; Job 3:5.
7:15, blow the trumpets
7:17, the trumpets of battle array

4Q53 1 1:13, "the trumpets of the Sabbaths"¹
4Q56 9 3:2, "on the trumpet"²
4Q56 12 4:3, "the trumpet of the calling"³
11 4:3, "the trumpets of the coming back"⁴
CD 11:22, "trumpets of assembly"

1QM 8:11, "the sound of horns"

VII. ἐπισυνάγω, ἐπισυναγωγή (gathering)

A. New Testament

Συνάγω (gather) is used sixty-two times in the New Testament, ἐπισυνάγω six times, and the noun form ἐπισυναγωγή two times.

B. LXX and Hebrew Old Testament

In the LXX, we find ἐπισυνάγειν 19 times for the translation of Hebrew terms, לָגוֹ, כָּנָב, סֵעֶר, קָסָף, אֶבֶן, בֶּן, שֵׁן, כְּנָפָה, מְנָחָה, חָוָה, שֵׁלָמָה, and ἐπισυναγωγή one time (2 Mac 2:7). The verb ἱδομένη is mostly used of God's ingathering of Israel's dispersion (Jer 29:14; Ezek 11:17; Isa 56:8; Ps 106:47).

¹DJD 7:49-53.
²DJD 7:61.
³DJD 7:62.
⁴DJD 7:62.
C. Qumran Literature

1QM 3:10, "God has gathered"
1QM 14:5, "assembly of nations He has gathered"
1Q69 8 1:2, "gather"¹
4QCat-a, "gather"²

4Q515 19 1:1, "They have gathered."³

¹Fragments hébraïques [DJD 1:148].
²Catena (A) [DJD 5:73].
³Groupe en petite écriture [DJD 7:300].
APPENDIX 2

Frequency and Meaning of the Apocalyptic Vocabulary in the Apocalyptic Tradition

I. Sun, Moon, and Stars in the Apocalyptic Tradition

A. Sun (Ἠλως) in the LXX (150)

1. Literal Meaning (66)


Daylight, Noon (6): 2 Kgs 12:11,12; Neh 8:3; Job 8:16; Ps 57(58):8; Cant 1:6.


Helio Polis (6): Gen 41:45,50; 46:20; Exod 1:11; Jer 50(43):13; Ezek 30:17.

2. Object of Worship (8)

Deut 4:19; 17:3; 4 Kgs 21:3; 23:5,11,11; Jer 8:2; Ezek 8:16.

3. Idiomatic Usage (65)

This world (under the sun): Eccl 1:3,9,13,14; 2:11,17,18, 19,20,22; 3:1,16; 4:1,3,7,15; 5:13,18; 6:1,12; 8:9,15,15,17; 9:3,6,9,9,11,13; 10:5,7.

Righteousness: Mal 4:2; Isa 60:20.

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Strength: Judg 5:31; Cant 6:9(10).

Life: Ps 71(72):5; Eccl 6:5; 12:2.


4. Sign of the Day of the Lord (11)


B. Moon (Ωσιάμην) in the LXX (31)

1. Literal Meaning (12)

Moon Rising: None

Moon Set: None

A Direction: None

A Heavenly Body: Gen 37:9; Josh 10:12,13; Job 25:5; 31:26; Ps 8:3; 73(74):16; 120(121):6; 135(136):9; 148:3; Jer 38(31):35.

Season: Ps 103(104):19.

2. Idiomatic Usage (6)

Life: Ps 71(72):5; Eccl 12:2.

Eternity: Pss 71(72):7; 88(89):37.

Beauty: Cant 6:10.

3. Object of Worship (4)

Deut 4:19; 17:3; 4 Kgs 23:5; Jer 8:2.

4. The Sign of the Day of the Lord (10)

C. The Stars (ἀστήρ, ἀστρον) in the LXX (46)

1. Literal Meaning (11)

Star Rising: Neh 4:21

Star Set: None

A Direction: None

A Heavenly Body: Gen 1:16; 37:9; Job 3:9; 9:7; Ps 8:3; 135(136):9; 148:3; Isa 45:12; Jer 8:2; 38(31):35.

2. Object of Worship (3)

Deut 4:19; Isa 47:13; Amos 5:26.

3. Idiomatic Usage (22)


Representatives of Supernatural Being or Leader (6):


Clean and Beauty (2): Job 25:5; Dan 12:3.


4. Signs of the Day of the Lord (5)

Isa 13:10; 34:4; Joel 2:10; 3:15; Ezek 32:7.

D. Sun in the Apocalyptic literature (116)

1. Literal Meaning (78)

1 En 14:18,20; 17:4; 18:4; 41:5,8; 69:20; 72:3,11,21,23,25, 29,31,33,37; 73:3,6,7,8; 74:6,9,10,11; 75:6; 100:2; 106:5,10; 2 En 11:3,3,4; 12:2; 15:2,2,4; 29:3,6; Sib Or 3:21, 93, 221,385,494; 4:13,174,191; 5:209,238, 258,346,421,512,526; Jub 2:8; TAB(B) 4:4,5; TLev 11:4; 18:3,4; TJud 25:2; TNap 3:2; TBen 8:3; Ps Sol 2:11,12; 4:19; 8:8; 2 Bar 6:1,2,5; 7:1,2,4,5; 8:1,3,4,6,7; 9:8.
2. Idiomatic (figurative) Usage (21)

Sib Or 3:652; LAE 36:1; Jub 8:4; Tab(A) 7:2,3,4,6,8; Tab(B) 7:5,7,9,14,15,16; Tnap 5:1,2,3,4; Tlev 4:3; 14:3; TJud 24:1.

3. Eschatological Upheaval (15)

1 En 80:1-4; 80:4-8; 102:2; Sib Or 3:65; 3:710-14; 3:796-803; 5:418-20; 5:475-80; 5:513-17; 8:203,232; Tlev 4:1; TMos 10:4-5; Ps-Philo 19:13; 4 Ezra 5:4-5.

4. Others (2)

Servant to men: Ps-Philo 32:9-10.
Burning sun: Sib 5:510.

E. Moon in the Apocalyptic literature (61)

1. Literal Meaning (32)

1 En 41:5,8; 69:20; 72:3,37; 73:2,7; 74:3,11,14,16; 75:6; 78:4,11,11,13,14; 79:3; 2 En 13:1; 16:1,1,8; 29:3,6; Tnap 3:2; 3 Bar 9:1,8,8; Sib Or 3:21,713; 5:361; Jub 2:8.

2. Idiomatic (figurative Usage (13)

LAE 36:1; Jub 8:4; Tab(A) 7:2,5,6,8; Tab(B) 7:5,9; Tnap 5:1,2,3,4; Tlev 14:3.

3. Eschatological Upheaval (14)


4. Others (2)

Bright moon: Sib Or 5:510

F. Stars in the Apocalyptic literature (60)

1. Literal Meaning (19)

En 14:8,11,17; 18:4; 43:1; 69:21; 72:3; 75:1,6; 2 En 11:3,3,3; 3:3; 29:6; Sib Or 3:22; 3:334; 4:14 Jub 2:8; 3 Bar 9:1,8,8; Tnap 3:2.
2. **Idiomatic (figurative) Usage** (19)


**Falling Stars (eschatological events):** Sib Or 2:202; 5:17; 8:190-94,341.

**Messiah:** TLev 18:3; TJud 24:1.

**Others:** Jub 8:4; Ps Sol 1:5; TAb(A) 1:5; 4:11; 8:5; Tab(B) 7:8.

3. **Eschatological Upheaval** (16)


4. **Battle of the Stars** (6)

**Israel's side in battle:** Ps-Philo 31:1; 32:11; 32:18.

**Attack Babylon:** Sib Or 5:155-159.

**Stars in battle:** Sib Or 5:214,514.

G. **Sun** (נער) in the Qumran Literature

A heavenly body: 4Q503 65 1:4; 4Q164 1 1:4.

H. **Moon** (מְלֶמֶת) in the Qumran Literature

Time and season: 1QS 10:5; 4Q502 27 1:3.

I. **Stars** (ירק) in the Qumran Literature

1. **Literal Meaning**

A Heavenly Body: 1QH 1:10-13; 1Q34 2:1; 4Q502 27 1:4; 4Q503 65 1:4.1

2. **Idiomatic (figurative) Usage**

**Leader:** 11QPsar 27:1; 11QtgJob 30:5.

**Obey to God:** 1QM 18:5.

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1*DJD* 7:125.
A Star out of Jacob: 1QM 11:6; 4Q175 1:12; CD 7:19.

J. Sun in the New Testament (33)

1. Literal Meaning (12)


2. Idiomatic (figurative) Usage (12)

Grace: Matt 5:45.
Happiness: Matt 13:43
Heat: Rev 7:16
East: Rev 7:2; 16:12.


4. Eschatological Sign (6)


K. Moon in the New Testament (9)


4. Eschatological Sign


L. Stars in the New Testament (27)

1. Literal Meaning (7)

Matt 2:2,7,9,10; Act 27:20; 1 Cor 15:41,42.
2. Idiomatic (figurative) Usage (13)


Satanic leader: Jude 13; Rev 8:10,11; 9:1.

Number: Heb 11:12.


5. Eschatological Sign (4)


II. Mourning of the Tribes in the Apocalyptic Tradition

A. Mourning (ΚΟΠΕΤΟΣ, ΚΟΠΕΤΟΣ) in the LXX (99)

In the LXX ΚΟΠΕΤΟΣ occurs fifteen times, and ΚΟΠΕΤΟΣ eighty-four.

1. Mourning for death or disaster (22)


2. Smite, Beat, Cut off (55)

Gen 32:8; Exod 27:20; 29:40; Lev 24:2; Num 13:24(23),25(24); Deut 19:5; 25:18; Josh 10:20; 11:8; Judg 1:4,5,17; 6:30; 9:48,49; 20:43; 2 Kgs 5:20,24; 3 Kgs 5:6,6,11; 11:15; 12:24; 4 Kgs 19:23; 2 Chr 2:8,9,16(15); 31:1; 34:4,7; Judg 15:5; Esth 5:14; Hag 1:8; Zech 14:12; Isa 9:10; 10:15; 14:8; 32:12; 37:24; 44:14; Jer 23:29; 26(46):5,13,22; 29(47):6(5); 31(48):2,37; 48(41):5; 51(44):8; Ezek 9:5,7,8; 39:10.

3. Mourning for fast or repentance (4)

Zech 7:5; Ezek 6:9; 20:43; 24:23.

4. Mourning of the Tribes on the Day of the Lord

B. Mourning (ΚΟΣΤΩ, ΚΟΣΤΟΣ) in the Apocalyptic literature (7)

1. Mourning or lamentation on lawless deeds

Sib Or 5:193.

2. Beat, cut off


C. Mourning (ΛΟΜ) in the Qumran Literature (5)

1. Mourning for death, disaster, sorrow (5)

1QH 11:22; 21:13; 4Q378 14 1:3; 4QCat-a; 6QAp 2 1:3.

D. Mourning (ΚΟΣΤΟΣ ΚΟΣΤΩ) in the New Testament (9)

1. Mourning for death, disaster, sorrow (4)


2. Smite, Beat, Cut off (1): Matt 21:8

3. Mourning for fast or repentance (2)

Matt 11:17; Mark 11:8.

4. Mourning of the Tribes on the Day of the Lord (2)

Matt 24:30; Rev 1:7.

III. Clouds (ypedan, Yephos) in the Apocalyptic Tradition

A. Clouds in the LXX (137)

1. Literal Meaning (22)


2. Idiomatic (figurative) Usage (29)

Height (7): Job 20:6; 38:37; Ps 56(57):10; Isa 14:14; Ezek 31:3, 10, 14.


Swiftness (5): Job 37:11; Isa 60:8; Jer 4:13; Ezek 38:9,16.


Darkness (2): Eccl 12:2; Ezek 34:12.

3. Theophany (61)

Exod 16:10; 24:15,16,16,18; 34:5; 40:34,35,36,37,37,38; Lev 16:2; Num 9:15,16,17,17,18,19,20,21,21,22; 10:11,12,34; 11:25; 12:5,10; 14:10,14,14; 16:42; Deut 1:33; 31:15,15; Josh 24:7; Judg 5:4; 2 Kgs 22:12; 3 Kgs 8:10,11; 2 Chr 5:13,14; Job 22:14; 26:9; 38:1; 40:1(6); Pss 17(18):11,12; 35(36):5; 76(77):17; 77(78):14; 96(97):2; 98(99):7; Isa 4:5; Nah 1:3; Lam 3:44; Ezek 1:4; 10:3,4; Dan 7:13.

4. Covenant (18)

Cloud with the rainbow (5): Gen 9:13,14,14,16; Ezek 1:28.

Cloud in Mt. Sinai (3): Exod 19:9,16; Ps 104(105):39.

The Pillar of Cloud (10): Exod 13:21,22; 14:19,24; 33:9,10; Num 14:10; Deut 31:15; Neh 9:12,19.

5. Vehicle (2)

Ps 103(104):3; Isa 19:1.

6. Signs of the Day of the Lord (5)

Joel 2:2; Zeph 1:15; Ezek 30:3,18; 32:7.

B. Clouds in the Apocalyptic literature (32)

1. Literal Meaning (6)

1 En 41:3; 60:20; 100:11; 108:4; Sib Or 5:425; 3 Bar 10:6.

2. Theophany (5)

2 En 29:4; Sib Or 5:66; Jub 1:2-3; Ps-Philo 11:15, 13:2.
3. **Judgment** (9)


5. **Vehicle** (5)

1 En 18:5; TAb(B) 8:3, 10:2, 12:1, 12:9.

6. **Others** (6)

**Glory**: TAb(A) 9:8; 10:1; 15:2,12.

**Calling**: 1 En 14:8.

**Joy**: TLev 18:5

C. **Clouds ( zdjęć) in the Qumran Literature** (7)

1. **Literal Meaning** (4)

**Dew covering the earth**: 1Qm 12:9; 19:2; 4QtgJob 1 1:2.

**Smoke**: 4Q156 1:4.


3. **Idiomatic (figurative) Usage** (2)

**Height**: 1QH 10:25.

**Brightness, Glory** : 11QtgJob 29:2.

D. **Clouds in the New Testament** (27)


2. **Idiomatic (figurative) Usage** (3)

**False teacher**: Jude 12; 2 Peter 2:17.

**Multitude**: Heb 12:1.

3. **Covenant** (2): 1 Cor 10:1,2.

4. **Theophany** (9)

Matt 17:5,5; Mark 9:7,7; Luke 9:34,34,35; Rev 10:1; 11:12.
5. **Eschatological Sign** (12)

Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:9; 1 Thess 4:17; Rev 1:7; 14:14, 14, 15, 16.

IV. The Trumpet in the Apocalyptic Tradition

A. **The Trumpet** (σάλπιγξ, σαλπίζειν) in the LXX (134)

1. **Liturgy, Worship** (36 + 11 = 47)

Before the Ark of the covenant (3, 1): (1) 1 Chr 15:24, 28; 16: 6; (2) 1 Chr 15:24; 2 Num 10:3, 4.

Worship in the Temple (14, 5): (1) Num 10:8, 10; 4 Kgs 12:13; 1 Chr 16:42; 2 Chr 5:12, 13; 7:6; 20:28; 29:26, 27, 28; Ezra 3:10; Neh 12:35, 41; (2) Num 10:10; 2 Chr 5:12, 13; 7:6; 29:28.

Feasts (3, 2): (1) Lev 23:24; 25:9, 9; Ps 80(81):3; (2) Num 10:10; Ps 80(81):3.

Praising and Thanksgiving (16, 1): (1) 2 Kgs 6:15; 1 Chr 13:8; 2 Chr 15:14; Neh 8:15; Pss 46(47): 5; 97(98):6, 6; 150:3; Dan 3:5, 7, 10, 15; Dan (Th) 3:5, 7, 10, 15; (2) Isa 44:23.

2. **Signal of War** (27 + 22 = 49)


3. **Coronation** (2 + 5 = 7)

(1) 4 Kgs 11:14; 2 Chr 23:13; (2) 3 Kgs 1:34, 39; 4 Kgs 9:13; 11:14; 2 Chr 23:13.

---

1σάλπιγξ + σαλπίζειν = total

2(1) σάλπιγξ, (2) σαλπίζειν.
4. **Signaling** (6+6=12)

**Gathering:** (1) Num 10:2; (2) Num 10:5,6,6,6,7.
**Scattering:** (2) 2 Kgs 20:1.

**Warning:** (1) Hos 5:8; 2 Chr 13:12; Isa 58:1; Neh 4:18(12).

5. **Theophany and Judgment** (8+1)

(1) Exod 19:13,16,19; 20:18; Jer 28(51):27; Ezek 33:3,4,5,6.
(2) Ezek 33:3.

6. **The Day of the Lord** (5+5=10)


B. **Trumpet in the Apocalyptic literature** (16)

1. **Theophany and Judgment** (12)

   1 En 6:21-24; Sib Or 4:173,175; 8:239; 4 Ezra 6:18-23; Ps Sol 8:1-3; TAb 12:8-11; Apo Ab 31:1-2; Apo Zeph 9:1; 10:1; 12:1; Greek Apo Ezra 4:36; Ps-Philo 11:4.

2. **Signaling**

   LAE 22:1-3; 37:1; Ps Sol 11:1.

3. **Feast of Trumpet:** Ps-Philo 13:6.

4. **Praise:** Ps-Philo 32:18.

C. **Trumpet (קָנָן, נַחֲלָת) in the Qumran literature** (18)

1. **Qumran literature usually uses קָנָן.**

   Trumpet of War: 1QM 3:2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10; 7:13,15,17.

   Trumpet of the Sabbaths: 4QM 3 1:13.


   Trumpet of Calling: 4QM 6 12 4:3.

   Others: 4QM 6 9 3:2; 11 4:3 (the trumpets of the coming back)

2. **נַחֲלָת:** 1QM 8:11 (the sound of horns)
D. The Trumpet in the New Testament (22)

1. **Idiomatic Usage** (2)
   
   (1) 1 Cor 14:8 (2) Matt 6:2

2. **Theophany** (3)
   
   Heb 12:19; Rev 1:10; 4:1.

3. **Judgment** (13)
   
   (1) Rev 8:2,6,13; 9:14; (2) Rev 8:6,7,8,10,13; 9:1,13; 10:7; 11:15.

4. **The Sign of the Parousia** (4)
   
   (1) Matt 24:31; 1 Cor 15:52; 1 Thess 4:16  
   (2) 1 Cor 15:52

V. The Gathering of the Elect in the Apocalyptic Tradition

A. **The Gathering** (ἐπισυνάω, ἐπισυναγωγή) in the LXX (19)

1. Gathering in general (3)
   
   Gen 6:16; 38:29; Isa 9:5; 52:12.

2. Gathering People (13)
   
   3 Kgs 18:20; 2 Chr 5:6; 20:26; Ps 30:13; Mic 4:11; Hab 2:5; 
   Zech 12:3; 14:2; Jer 12:6; Ezek 16:31; 40:12; Dan 3:2; 
   11:34.

3. Eschatological Gathering (3)
   
   Ps 101(102):22; 107(106):47; (146)147:2.

B. The Gathering (ἐπισυνάω, ἐπισυναγωγή) in the Apocalyptic literature (7)


2. Gathering of the dead soul (4)
   
   1 En 22:3,3; 27:2,2.

3. **Harvest** (1): 3 Bar (Greek) 15:2.
C. Gathering in the Qumran Literature (6)

1. "ןָחַך"
IQM 3:10; 1QM 14:5; 1Q69 8 1:2; 4QCat-a; 5QJN 1 1:18.

2. "בָּנָה"
4Q515 19 1:1

D. The Gathering (Ἐξαγωγή, ἐπισυνάψις) in the New Testament

1. Gathering People (3)
Mark 1:33; Luke 12:1; Heb 10:25.

2. Eschatological Gathering (5)
APPENDIX 3

Matthew's Compilation of the Apocalyptic Signs
in Matt 24:29-31

Table 19.— The Signs of the Theophany Passages

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</table>

Observation: Table 18 shows that the theophany passages do not have the celestial signs, the motif of the mourning of the tribes, and gathering of the elect idea.
Table 20.—The Signs of the Day of the Lord Passages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Isa 13 8-16</th>
<th>Jo 2 1-22</th>
<th>Jo 3 1-21</th>
<th>Isa 24 1:10</th>
<th>Ez 32 7-18</th>
<th>Isa 27:13</th>
<th>Zel 4 1-21</th>
<th>Am 5:18-9</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Observation: Table 19 shows that the characteristic signs of the Day of the Lord are the darkening of the heavenly bodies; the mourning of the tribes; and gathering of the elect. The Day of the Lord is the judgment day that God destroys the sinners on the earth. It is equally evident that the Day of the Lord is the day of restoration (Joel 2:18-3:1). The cloud, fire, shaking, and trumpet motif appear in both categories; theophany and the Day of the Lord. The motifs of lightning, thunder, storm are not found in the signs of the Day of the Lord.
Table 21.—The Parousia Signs of the New Testament

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<tbody>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mourning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gathering</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clouds</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
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</table>

Table 22.—A Comparison of the Parousia Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OT motif</th>
<th>Signs</th>
<th>Matt 24:27-31</th>
<th>Dan 7:13-14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Signs of Theophany</td>
<td>Came down</td>
<td>Will come down</td>
<td>Came to God</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exod 19:16-20</td>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>Trumpet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ps 18:7-15</td>
<td>Clouds</td>
<td>Clouds, Heaven</td>
<td>Clouds, Heaven</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ps 50:1-6</td>
<td>Lightening</td>
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<td>Ps 97:1-6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Power, Glory</td>
<td>Dominion, Glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa 30:27-33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isa 66:15-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mic 1:2-7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Signs of the Day of the Lord</td>
<td>Sun, Moon, Stars</td>
<td>Sun, Moon, Stars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joel 1:2, 3-4</td>
<td>Mourning tribes</td>
<td>Mourning tribes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa 13:2-16</td>
<td>Gathering Elect</td>
<td>Gathering Elect</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Observation: Most signs and terms are collected in Matt 24:27-31 to describe the Parousia of the Son of Man, whereas the other New Testament writers use only partial signs. Not only this, Matthew borrows two elements from Dan 7:13-14: (1) clouds of heaven and (2) glory and dominion.
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Primary Sources


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