

The Messiah, a complex figure, has been seen as the Deliverer, a child of prophecy, a teacher of righteousness, and the suffering servant who atoned for sins. This multifaceted identity strengthens the tapestry of redemption history.

This session explores "The Return and Fulfillment of Messianic Prophecies", representing the culmination of centuries-old promises and expectations. The Second Coming is not just a sequel but the climax of redemption history. Grounded in Scriptural prophecy, it promises hope and renewal, and fulfills humanity's yearnings for a just, peaceful utopia with a benevolent King.

The return of the Messiah is key to God's promises, restoring creation, establishing God's kingdom, and reigning supreme over all. This chapter weaves prophetic texts to illustrate the world's future at the Messiah's return, including His glorious return, the judgment of nations, everlasting peace, and fulfillment of God's promises.

The Messiah's return offers hope to a weary world and assures God's justice. It's the ultimate fulfillment of humanity's desire for a better world. The story that began in a garden and journeyed through a cross will end in a Kingdom where every tear is wiped away, and death is no more.

DANIEL 7:13-14

The "night visions" that Daniel speaks of began in Daniel 7:1. These visions consisted of four beasts, each representing different kingdoms and thrones. The four beasts were a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a "dreadful and terrible beast". These symbolic beasts each had distinct characteristics and were presented in a sequence, leading up to the vision of the "Son of man".

The "Ancient of Days" is introduced in verse 9 and is acknowledged by both Jews and Christians as God Almighty, the one "from everlasting to everlasting" (Psalm 90:2). God occupies the judgment throne, which "was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire" (as depicted in Ezekiel 1:15-20) and "ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him" (v. 10) for judgment.

One could assume, although it is not the only possibility, that this scene described in Daniel's night visions takes place on Earth. This assumption is based on the overarching context of the visions, which are predominantly focused on Earthly events and kingdoms. The reference to the "fiery flame" throne with wheels in verse 9 further supports this interpretation, as similar imagery is used in Ezekiel 1 to describe a divine presence interacting with the Earthly realm.

If this interpretation is correct, then it raises intriguing questions about the nature of the Second Coming and the establishment of the Kingdom. Specifically, it suggests the possibility that God Almighty could return to Earth at the time of the Second Coming. This would be a profound event, marking a direct divine intervention in Earthly affairs on a scale not seen since the miracles of the Exodus.

In verse 13, the "Son of Man" is introduced, contrasting the four beasts. This figure approaches the Ancient of Days "with the clouds of heaven," suggesting either an ascension towards the Ancient of Days or a descent from heaven. Again, my interpretation leans towards the latter scenario.

For our discussion, it is significant that the Son of Man comes "with the clouds of heaven". This scenario doesn't fit an "any man" view of the coming Messiah. However, it does fit with the description of Jesus, who ascended to heaven in the clouds and will return in the same way. Our Jewish friends should grapple with the presentation as it is described in Daniel. In what way does the Jewish understanding of the Messiah's appearance align with what is described in Daniel?

Matthew 24:30-31 describes a scene where "the Son of Man" comes on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and he sends out his angels with a great sound of a trumpet to gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. This is clearly a reference to the Second Coming of Christ, as it depicts Jesus returning in a visible and glorious manner, much like what was prophesied in Daniel 7:13-14.

In Daniel's vision, "one like the Son of Man" comes with the clouds of heaven, is presented before the Ancient of Days, and is given dominion, glory, and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. The parallels between these two passages strongly suggest that they are describing the same event.

Both passages involve an individual referred to as the "Son of Man" coming with the clouds of heaven, indicating a divine, heavenly figure. Both involve the Son of Man receiving a kingdom or gathering his people, indicating a sovereign,

reigning figure. And both indicate that this event will be visible to all people, and will have a significant impact on all nations and languages.

Therefore, it can be inferred from these similarities that Matthew 24:30-31 and Daniel 7:13-14 are referring to the same event, i.e., the Second Coming of Christ. This event is depicted as a glorious, powerful return of Christ to earth, where he will assume his rightful place as the reigning King, gather his people, and establish his kingdom. See also Matthew 16:27-28.

The crucial question appears to be whether the event in Daniel 7 signifies the Second Coming or the end of the millennium. I have placed it at the Second Coming.

However, this interpretation is not without its challenges and should be considered alongside other scriptural evidence. At issue is the fact that it is clearly the Son of Man who judges the nations in Matthew 25:31-32, while in the Daniel vision it appears to be the Ancient of Days who does the judgment (v. 10). It is possible, however, that the Son of Man is first given the kingdom by the Ancient of Days, and then the Son of Man performs the judgment. For those who would argue that this is not the Second Coming, I suppose that Revelation 20:12 would be the greatest support, since in that verse, at the Great White Throne judgment, the newly resurrected dead "stand before God; and the books were opened," which is similar to Daniel 7:10, in which the tens of thousands stand before God "and the books were opened."

However, Daniel 7:11 appears to reference the Second Coming, not the Great White Throne judgment. In this verse, "the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame". This aligns closely with Revelation 19:20, which refers to the Second Coming, clearly before the thousand-year reign.

All in all, while the evidence might not be conclusive to the point of being undeniable, it seems that Daniel 7:13-14 is about a glorious arrival of the Messiah in what Christians would call the Second Coming. Therefore, those who are looking for a Messiah should be expecting one who will make a stunning appearance, coming on the clouds of heaven, rather than slowly rising to prominence as a leader among men.

Nissan Dovid Dubov, an orthodox Jewish writer, explains

One of the principles of Jewish faith enumerated by Maimonides is that one day there will arise a dynamic Jewish leader, a direct descendant of the Davidic dynasty, who will rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, and gather Jews from all over the world and bring them back to the Land of Israel.

All the nations of the world will recognize Moshiach to be a world leader, and will accept his dominion. In the messianic era there will be world peace, no more wars nor famine, and, in general, a high standard of living. ¹

This view, while similar to the Christian view, does not have the dramatic arrival of the Messiah. Such an arrival seems prophetically required by a literal view of Daniel 7.

Furthermore, Jesus declared, "ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64), seemingly linking Himself with Daniel 7:13-14. In fact, the connection was so compelling that the high priest protested, exclaiming, "He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy" (Matt. 26:65).

ZECHARIAH 14:4

The prophecy in Zechariah 14:4 presents a dramatic scenario where the "feet" of the Lord will stand on the Mount of Olives, leading to significant geographical changes in the area. This is seen by both Jews and Christians as a Messianic prophecy, as yet unfulfilled.

Confirming this verse and its context as Messianic, we Mendel Dubov, a Jewish orthodox writer who says, "*As one of the last prophets, much of Zechariah's recorded prophecies speak of the distant future—the time of Moshiach and the dramatic events that will surround it.*" ²

¹ FN1: "What Is the Jewish Belief About Moshiach (Messiah)?" by Nathan Dovid Dubov, [Chabad.org](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/108400/jewish/The-End-of-Days.htm), https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/108400/jewish/The-End-of-Days.htm. Accessed 28 March 2024.

² Mendel Dubov, "Gog and Magog," [Chabad.org](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/4511335/jewish/Gog-and-Magog.htm), https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/4511335/jewish/Gog-and-Magog.htm. Accessed 28 March 2024.

Further evidence of the Messianic interpretation of Zechariah 14 is the fact that as many as 150,000 Jews are buried on the Mount of Olives in expectation of this being the place of the Messiah's arrival. Mordecai Ruben, another Orthodox Jewish writer, states, "*Many Jews throughout the world seek burial there, partly due to the tradition that at the time of Moshiach's arrival, this is where the resurrection of the dead will begin.*" This tradition is derived from Zechariah 14, with no other testimony in Hebrew Scripture attributing such significance to the Mount of Olives.³

Placed together with the Daniel passage, we learn that Messiah will arrive "with the clouds of heaven" (Dan. 7:13) and "his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives." This requires the glorious physical arrival by One with "feet," which in both Christian and Jewish doctrine would only be true of the Messiah.

In fact, Jewish writer Tzvi Freeman says, "

Someone who believes G-d has a body will have a big problem with the belief that G-d is one. A body or form is a limitation. It implies a force of some sort outside of G-d. In consequence, if G-d would have a body, there would be at least two gods.

So belief that G-d has no body or form is an essential component of belief that G-d is one.⁴

Since the One arriving on the Mount of Olives has "feet," it must be the Messiah. Since Messiah arrives "with the clouds of Heaven," He must have a glorious arrival. Yet at the same time the Scripture speaks of the humble arrival of the Messiah. For example, Zechariah 9:9 says, "behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass." This first arrival on the Mount of Olives was fulfilled with Jesus on what is remembered today as Palm Sunday. The second arrival, described in Zechariah 14, will be fulfilled at the Second Coming. Other passages also speak of the humble arrival and nature of the Messiah, such as Isaiah 53:2-3 and Micah 5:2. How can Messiah have both an humble arrival and a glorious one? One possibility, and that which I think is most robust, is to argue for *two comings* of the Messiah.

During the ascension on the Mount of Olives, two men (presumed to be angels) announced that Jesus, who they had just witnessed ascend to heaven, "shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). This statement supports the notion of two arrivals of the Messiah as suspected by a close review of prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures. In fact, Acts 1:12 confirms that the ascension occurred on the Mount of Olives, suggesting that Jesus will return to this same location, which would align with Zechariah 14:4.

ISAIAH 2:1-4

Isaiah 2:1-4 presents a vision of the restoration of the temple in the last days. The prophetic imagery in this passage describes the establishment of the Lord's house on the highest of mountains, an exalted place where nations will flow to it. The temple is depicted as a focal point of worship, learning, and justice. The people are eager to learn the ways of the Lord, to walk in His paths, and to receive His law from Jerusalem. This is a time of peace, when the instruments of war are transformed into tools of agriculture, signifying the cessation of war and conflict.

For most Christians, except those who hold to an amillennial interpretation, this passage is seen as a reference to the physical restoration of the millennial temple. Such an event is understood to occur after the Second Coming of Christ, thus serving as evidence of His return. The Messiah is seen as the one who brings about this restoration, establishing a time of peace and righteousness.

The role of the Messiah in this restoration is further emphasized in the subsequent verses of Isaiah 2. Specifically, verses 19-20 read: "And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he arises to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats." These verses depict a time of great repentance, when people abandon their idols out of reverence for the glory of the Lord.

³ Mordecai Ruben, "15 Jerusalem Facts Every Jew Should Know." [Chabad.org](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/4066879/jewish/15-Jerusalem-Facts-Every-Jew-Should-Know.htm). https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/4066879/jewish/15-Jerusalem-Facts-Every-Jew-Should-Know.htm. Accessed 28 March 2024.

⁴ Tzvi Freeman, "G-d According To The Jews." [Chabad.org](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/433240/jewish/God.htm). https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/433240/jewish/God.htm. Accessed 28 March 2024.

The overall imagery of these passages from Isaiah 2 present a vivid picture of the Messiah's coming in glory. His arrival instigates a time of profound transformation, marked by the establishment of the temple, the cessation of war, the spread of the Lord's law, and a widespread turning away from idolatry. These changes underscore the magnitude and impact of the Messiah's return, reinforcing the expectation of His glorious Second Coming.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (1772-1810) was a prominent Hasidic rabbi and the founder of the Breslov Hasidic movement. His writing on Isaiah 2 confirms this Messianic view. He writes,

“The Moshiach will come suddenly. There will be a great cry that the messiah has come. Everyone will throw aside his business. The banker will cast aside his business, and the candle-maker will cast aside his wax. As the verse says, “They will cast aside their gods of silver and gold” (Isaiah 2:20).”⁵

Notice that Rabbi Nacham views the passage as the arrival of the Messiah, an arrival which is glorious and majestic. As in the Zechariah passage, one must reconcile both the humble birth and life of the Messiah with the majestic arrival of the Messiah.

⁵ Rebbe Nachman, CHAYEI MOHARAN II, p. 74, #145.