

**PREFACE**

We have looked at OT prophecies concerning the passion of the Christ, His resurrection and ascension. Keeping things in roughly chronological order, we next address prophecies concerning His return. Two points as preface:

- I have purposely entitled this study “His *Return*” rather than “His Second Coming” because, as we have seen, the Christ has shown up down here many times throughout man’s history. I also don’t want to get bogged down in an argument about the Rapture (when He shows up, but does not land) and His next coming (when He *does* land on earth). This means that some term Christ’s second coming His *third* coming. Which brings me to my second point.
- In this study we are isolating Messiah’s return and His judgment that follows—without concerning ourselves with a precise order of events for the End Times. That will be covered in great detail during our next class: *The Thessalonian Letters*. Here we are just looking at what the OT has to say about Messiah’s return to earth in glory and power.

OT prophecies and the NT narratives are filled with Christ as the Good Shepherd, Christ as the Suffering Servant, Christ as the one who by His life atones for and redeems sinful man.

After His death, resurrection and ascension, however, we see not a different Christ—as if the foregoing had somehow changed Him—but a new (to man) facet of His personality and work. Christ Jesus, as God, does not change, but different seasons and epochs call for Him to reveal certain aspects of Himself for the fulfillment of God’s plan for this earth. There will come a day when those who thought they had removed a pretender by nailing Him to a tree, will, as Zechariah writes, “look upon [He] whom they have pierced” and will fall on their face before the One who has returned to establish His dominion over all things.

We are going to see this prophesied in two passages from the OT: Daniel 7 and Malachi 3.

**DANIEL 7:13-14: SON OF MAN**

We begin with this returning King still in heaven; Daniel refers to Him as, “One like a Son of Man.” First Daniel, in his vision of the end times, describes (as best he can) the scene in heaven as the “Ancient of Days”—Father God—takes His place upon His throne.

**Read Daniel 7:9-10.**

Personally, I wouldn’t mind being in heaven for this epochal moment. Imagine, the day has come; God Almighty is about to set in motion the events that will establish the eternal “kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ” on earth. You can *feel* the power emanating from His throne:

His throne was ablaze with flames,  
Its wheels were a burning fire.  
A river of fire was flowing  
And coming out from before Him;

The Lord God is attended by “thousands upon thousands, and surrounded by worshipers numbering “myriads upon myriads” [in Hebrew one “myriad” represents ten thousand times ten thousand—or 100 million—so the throne of God is surrounded by “100 millions upon 100 millions.”]

There is great formality and solemnity:  
**The court sat, And the books were opened.**

Then, in v13, someone enters the scene—Daniel describes Him as “One like a Son of Man.”

### **Read Daniel 7:13-14.**

Here is clearly the Christ, for this “Son of Man” is both human (as the title implies) and divine, since “all the peoples, nations and men of every language [will] serve [minister, worship] Him” (v14).

#### **Sidebar: Son of Man**

*Pastor Jeremy:* As Jesus’ preferred self designation “Son of Man” is a very covert and useful messianic title and claim. The reason for that is that this is also the predominant epithet given to Ezekiel in his book. Thus Jesus’ use of the title would set off no alarm bells in the ears of the Pharisees and Scribes. They would hear no overt claim to deity of Messiah-hood. All the while those who followed Jesus with eyes to see and ears to hear would pick up on the true thrust and textual referent of the title “Son of Man.” I think that this is part of what makes Mark 14:55-64 so dramatic and climactic. Jesus finally clearly reveals to the high priest and to the Scribes and Pharisees what he really means by using the title “Son of Man.” Once he understands that Jesus has all the while been using “Son of Man” to claim to be what Daniel spoke of and Ezekiel he flips out. Upon hearing this the High priest tears his garments and based upon that one claim alone condemns Jesus to death.

### **Read Mark 14:55-64.**

So here we have in Daniel 7, as it were, the coronation ceremony of the King before He descends to earth to claim what is rightly His. In Matthew 24 we have the Messiah Himself describing the event.

### **Read Matthew 24:29-31.**

Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah (13:10), but this should also sound familiar from our look at Zechariah.

**In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. (Zechariah 14:6-7)**

And the apostle John witnessed, in the Revelation, the climactic heavenly response when this occurs:

**Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.” (Revelation 11:15)**

### MALACHI 3:1-4: MESSENGER AND PURIFIER

Daniel gives us the scene from heaven's perspective. The prophet Malachi gives us the scene more from the perspective of people on the ground.

#### Read Malachi 3:1-4.

I love v1 of this passage, because it challenges us to reorient the way we think of God's covenantal plan. The verse begins, however, with a reference to the same messenger spoken of in Isaiah 40:

A voice is calling,  
"Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness;  
Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.  
Let every valley be lifted up,  
And every mountain and hill be made low;  
And let the rough ground become a plain,  
And the rugged terrain a broad valley;  
Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed,  
And all flesh will see it together;  
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."  
Isaiah 40:3-5

Namely, John the Baptist, as confirmed by Christ Himself, quoting Malachi 3:1 in Matthew 11.

*"And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple;*

Malachi is not the only OT prophet to mingle the two advents of Christ. And one might look at v1 as a variation on the "now—not yet" construct. Although both in the future to the prophet, the "now" would be Christ's initial incarnation, which began in Bethlehem; the "not yet" would be the time of His return. But let's focus on the latter.

"Lord" (Hebrew, *adon*) here is singular and preceded by the definite article ("the"), which always refers to the divine Lord. Who is speaking v1? "The LORD of hosts." We saw this in Psalm 110.

The LORD says to my Lord:  
"Sit at My right hand  
Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." (Psalms 110:1)

*and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts.*

As in Psalm 110, in Malachi 3:1 the one speaking is Yahweh—i.e., Father God—and the one being spoken of is the Messiah—i.e., God the Son. Here the NASB and ESV are not helpful with **"and** the messenger." The KJVs and NIV are better with "even the M/messenger" and "temple; the messenger" respectively. That is, the anointed One *is* the Messenger now. He is the "messenger of the covenant." But which covenant? Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New? Answer: Yes!

*Walter C. Kaiser:* The covenant referred to here is the single plan of God contained in the succession of covenants that began with the word issued to Eve in Genesis 3:15, continued in the word given to Shem in 9:27, to Abraham in 12:2-3, to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-19, and renewed and enlarged in Jeremiah 31:31-34. This messenger of the covenant is the same person God sent ahead of Israel as they left Egypt (Exodus 23:20-23), in whom Yahweh placed His own "name" (23:21).

There can be no mistaking His identity, for to equate the name of God with His angel or messenger is to call Him divine! The Messiah is the mediator of all the covenants of the Bible; He is the communicator, executor, administrator, and consummator of that divine plan.

My guess is that most of us have grown up thinking that there have been many different covenants throughout the OT—all of which were wiped off the slate with the *new* covenant in Christ. And, in a sense, that is true. But when one traces all these different covenants, examining the details of each one in the context of the entirety of God's word, it becomes clear that really they are all of a piece. Thinking of them as individual covenants leaves us open to imagining that God kept making adjustments, altering the terms of these agreements and promises based on events on the ground. But when one examines His word as a whole, it becomes clear that He has always had *one* plan—one covenant—in mind all along. And that covenant is fulfilled in His anointed One—Christ Jesus.

Verses 2-4 make it clear that Malachi is now *not* referring to Christ's *first* coming; this is not a babe in a manger, a teacher, a suffering servant, but someone coming with frightful judgment.

*But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears?*  
Implied, no one, in themselves.

*For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.*

Verse 3 expands on "refiner's fire," but I think "fuller's soap" could bear some explaining. The NKJV and NIV translate the Hebrew *kabas* "launderer's." But there is more in mind here than just cleaning. To "full" cloth (and especially wool) is to *work* it to shrink and thicken the cloth using moisture, heat, and pressure. If one is using soap, one is indeed cleaning the cloth as well, but what a fuller does is more akin to what we read in Jeremiah 18 that a potter does.

### **Read Jeremiah 18:3-6.**

A fuller takes raw cloth and works it, presses and pulls it, heats it up and soaks it to refashion it into something more useful, more desirable. And that is precisely what the returning Christ will be doing.

*He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the Lord offerings in righteousness.*

For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it;  
You are not pleased with burnt offering.  
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;  
A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.  
Psalms 51:16-17

*Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.*

As the passage continues, Yahweh is still the one doing the talking, and He explains that this is the time of harsh judgment.

### **Read Malachi 3:5-6.**

This return of Messiah is the beginning of the winnowing, the cleansing and cataclysmic upheaval that will culminate in a “new heaven and new earth.”

John the Baptist refers to this day of judgment in Matthew 3. This last prophet did not just announce the arrival of the Messiah as teacher, as suffering Servant and Savior, but as the one who will ultimately judge all people.

**Read Matthew 3:10-12.**

Finally, let's read of this day in the book of The Revelation.

**Read Revelation 6:12-17.**

## Prophecy

### Daniel 7:13-14

13 "I kept looking in the night visions,  
And behold, with the clouds of heaven  
**One like a Son of Man was coming,**  
And He came up to the Ancient of Days  
And was presented before Him.  
14 "**And to Him was given dominion,  
Glory and a kingdom,**  
That all the peoples, nations and men of every language  
Might serve Him.  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion  
Which will not pass away;  
And His kingdom is one  
Which will not be destroyed.

### Malachi 3:1-4

1 "Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will  
clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek,  
will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of  
the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is com-  
ing," says the Lord of hosts.  
2 "**But who can endure the day of His coming? And who  
can stand when He appears?** For He is like a refiner's fire  
and like **fullers' soap.**  
3 "He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He  
will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and  
silver, so that they may present to the Lord offerings in  
righteousness.  
4 "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be  
pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former  
years."

## Christ in the OT

### *Son of Man*

### *Messenger and Purifier*

## Fulfillment or Reference

### Matthew 24:29-31

29 "But immediately after the tribulation of those days  
the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its  
light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers  
of the heavens will be shaken.  
30 "And then the sign of **the Son of Man** will appear in  
the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn,  
and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds  
of the sky with power and great glory.**  
31 "And He will send forth His angels with a great trum-  
pet and they will gather together His elect from the four  
winds, from one end of the sky to the other."

### Jeremiah 18:4-6

4 **But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled  
in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another  
vessel, as it pleased the potter to make.**  
5 Then the word of the Lord came to me saying,  
6 "**Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this pot-  
ter does?**" declares the Lord. "**Behold, like the clay in the  
potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel.**"

### Matthew 3:10-12

10 "The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; there-  
fore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and  
thrown into the fire.  
11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance,  
but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and  
I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you  
with the Holy Spirit and fire.  
12 "His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thor-  
oughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His  
wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with  
unquenchable fire."

### Revelation 6:15-17

15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the  
commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave  
and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the  
rocks of the mountains;  
16 and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall  
on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on  
the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;  
17 **for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is  
able to stand?**"