

THE MESSIAH'S ARRIVAL

The Messiah Promised

Num 24:17 “I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near.
A star will come out of Jacob;
a scepter will rise out of Israel.
He will crush the foreheads of Moab,
the skulls of all the people of Sheth.
Edom will be conquered;
Seir, his enemy, will be conquered,
but Israel will grow strong.
A ruler will come out of Jacob
and destroy the survivors of the city.”

Deut 18:15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him.

Jewish leaders asked John the Baptist if he was that prophet (John 1:21). Peter identified this prophet as Jesus the Messiah and said that heaven must receive him until the time for God to restore everything as thhe promised long ago through the prophets (Acts 3:22).

2 Sam 7:11b-16 The Lord’s promise to David through Nathan the peophet. The bracketed portion applies to his son Solomon who built the first temple. The balance of the prophecy applies to Jesus who said he would build his church

“The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house (*royal household*) for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his *kingdom*. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son.

(When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.) Your house (*royal household*) and your *kingdom* will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.

See also 1 Chron 17:1-14 and Ps 89:3-4. This prophecy was partially fulfilled by David's son Solomon, but according to Luke 1:32-33, it was also fulfilled by Jesus.

Isa 11:1-5 “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—
and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the Earth.
He will strike the Earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

Isa 32:1-2 See, a king will reign in righteousness
and rulers will rule with justice.
Each one will be like a shelter from the wind
and a refuge from the storm,
like streams of water in the desert
and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land.

Jer 33:14-17 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior. For this is what the LORD says: “David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of Israel.”

Ezek 34:23-24 I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the LORD have spoken.

Zech 2:10-13 “Shout and be glad, Daughter Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you,” declares the LORD. “Many nations will be joined with the LORD in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. The LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land and will again choose Jerusalem. Be still before the LORD, all mankind, because he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.”

Zech 8:3 This is what the LORD says: “I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, and the mountain of the LORD Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain.”

The Messiah Arrives in Jerusalem to defend Israel

Ps 2:1-9 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord scoffs at the rebellious nations. In his anger he rebukes them, and in his wrath, he terrifies them. He said he *has set his King on Zion, his holy mountain*. This is the decree of the Lord spoken to the Messiah: “*You are my son, today I have become your father. Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the ends of the earth as your possession. You will break them with an iron rod, you will shatter them like pottery.*”

Ps 110:1-2, 5-6 The Lord God told David’s Lord (the Messiah) that he should sit at his right hand (in heaven) until he makes his enemies his footstool. *When the Lord God extends his mighty scepter from Zion, he will rule in the midst of his enemies.* The Lord God is at the Messiah’s right hand on his earthly throne and he will utterly destroy kings in the time of his wrath. He will execute judgment against the nations, filling graves with corpses. He will utterly destroy leaders far and wide.

The first verse is the Father’s invitation to the Messiah to sit at his right hand on his throne in heaven at the ascension. In the rest of the Psalm,

the Messiah is seated on his Davidic throne as the Father's regent. Cf. Rev 3:21.

Isa 2:19 People will flee to caves in the rocks and to holes in the ground from the fearful presence of the LORD and the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to shake the earth.

Isa 40:4-5 Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Isa 59:20 The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins, *declares the LORD.*

Jer 25:30-33 The LORD will roar from on high; he will thunder from his holy dwelling and roar mightily against his land. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, shout against all who live on the earth. The tumult will resound to the ends of the earth, for the LORD will bring charges against the nations; he will bring judgment on all mankind and put the wicked to the sword, declares the LORD. This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Look! Disaster is spreading from nation to nation; a mighty storm is rising from the ends of the earth." At that time those slain by the LORD will be everywhere—from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be mourned or gathered up or buried but will be like dung lying on the ground.

Ezek 43:2-7 The glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. His voice sounded like roaring water, and the land shimmered from his glory ... The glory of the Lord entered the temple through the east-facing gate ... the glory of the Lord was filling the temple ... *This is where my throne is, where I place the soles of my feet, and where I will live among the Israelis forever.*

Ezek 38:19-20 In my zeal and fiery wrath I declare that at that time there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. The fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the beasts of the field, every creature that moves along the ground, and all the people on the face of the earth will tremble at my presence. The mountains will be overturned, the cliffs will crumble and every wall will fall to the ground.

Ezek 43:1-5 Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory. The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when he came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown. The glory of the LORD entered the temple through the gate facing east. Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

Joel 2:10-11 Before them the earth shakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine. The LORD thunders at the head of his army; his forces are beyond number, and mighty is the army that obeys his command. The day of the LORD is great; it is dreadful. Who can endure it?

Joel 3:14-16 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine. The LORD will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the heavens will tremble. But the LORD will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.

Zech 12:10-12a And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be as great as the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. The land will mourn, each clan by itself, with their wives by themselves.

Zech 14:3-5, 9 I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights on a day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, a short distance east of Jerusalem, and the mountain will be split in two from East to West under his divine feet, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. The Jews trapped in Jerusalem will flee by this valley and the Lord will go and fight the nations who are attacking Jerusalem with all the saints with him. Then the LORD my God will

come, and all the holy ones with him. ... The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name. John said, the armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean (Rev 19:14). The fine linen is defined as the righteous deeds of the saints.

Mal 3:1-2 I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap.

Mal 4:1-6 Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves. Then you will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act,” says the LORD Almighty. “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. “See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.

A ruling Messiah is promised, who will come to fight the nations attacking Jerusalem. The coming of the Lord, as depicted in Rev 19:11-21 riding on a white horse, is symbolic, but it does make it clear that at the end of this age, the Lord Jesus will descend from heaven to Jerusalem during a time of warfare. He will empower the leaders of Judah and they will be victorious (Zech 12:6). He will descend to earth and set foot on the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4), which will split in two to form a great valley from east to west. The New Testament elaborates on this as we will see later.

Prepare the way of the Lord, cries a voice in the wilderness, make straight in the desert a highway for our God (Isa 40:3-5). The glory of

the Lord will be revealed (1 Pet 4:13) and all flesh will see it together (Rev 1:7). Zechariah says that the Lord will come and all his holy ones (Zech 14:5b). The Messiah will come from heaven with his angels, but when he comes to take up residence in the temple at Jerusalem, it is more likely to be the saints, who after their resurrection will be with him always. The Lord told Ezekiel that his servant David would be king over Israel in the land that he gave Jacob (Ezek 37:24). His sanctuary would be among them forever. In the absence of Scriptures declaring that the Messiah will be physically present on earth during the millennium, and in light of Scriptures which indicate that there will be a bright light above Jerusalem (Isa 60:1-3), it may be more likely that the Messiah will rule the world with his saints from New Jerusalem with his sanctuary in earthly Jerusalem, where the nations will come to worship.

The OT contains many messianic prophecies but doesn't distinguish between his two comings. Sometimes the early life of Jesus and his later messianic reign are brought together, as in Zechariah 9:9-10. "See, your king comes to you; righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth."

The NT makes it clear that the Messiah's coming to earth occurs on two occasions. After his birth at Bethlehem, the wise men from the east came and asked where was the one who was born king of the Jews (Matt 2:1-2). The chief priests and scribes informed King Herod that it was prophesied that the Messiah would be born at Bethlehem. Micah's prophecy adds that his existence has been from antiquity, even eternity and that he would be a ruler in Israel (Mic 5:2). However, Jesus was never a ruler during his 38 years on earth; that was to be his role at his second coming. At the end of his brief life, he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey in fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy. The crowds recognized the significance of the occasion and shouted, "Hosanna to the son of David." Verse 9 was fulfilled, but verse 10 remains until his return as King.

NT confirmation of the Messiah's future arrival

Jesus spoke of his glorious return as Messiah several times, disguising his identity somewhat by referring to himself as the Son of Man, Daniel's term for the Messiah. He will with his angels and reward each person according to what they have done (Matt 16:27-28). He will come at the renewal of all things and sit on his glorious throne, and his disciples will also sit on thrones, judging and ruling Israel (Matt 19:28). Presumably his Gentile followers will rule over their own language groups.

The sight of his coming can be compared to that of lightning flashing from East to West. The sun and moon will be darkened and the stars will fall from the sky (Isa 13:10). All the tribes of the land, that is Israel (Zech 12:10), will mourn when they see him coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. He will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect, the Church, from one end of the heavens to the other (Matt 24:27, 29-31).

Luke says there will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. The nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea, possibly due to tsunamis. People will be scared stiff, fearful of what is happening to the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. Then they will see the Messiah coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Christians are advised to stand up confidently with their heads held high, because their salvation is near, they are about to be raptured (Luke 21:25-28).

When Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:12), his disciples were gazing at his departure, when two angels told them that Jesus would return from heaven in the same manner they had seen him departing, physically and supernaturally (Acts 1:10-11). He would even return to the same place (Zech 14:4).

The apostle Paul gives more details about Jesus' return. Jesus will return with the saints, the Church (1 Thess 3:13, 4:14, c.f. Zech 14:5, Rev 19:14). Paul stresses that Christians who are still alive at the Lord's coming, will not precede those who have died. He said, "the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and

the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” (1 Thess 4:16-17). Resurrection precedes rapture in a loud, visible, public event. In his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul says that the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels (2 Thess 1:7-8). He goes on to rule out a pretribulation rapture by saying that Jesus’ coming and our being gathered to him will not happen until the rebellion occurs and the Man of Lawlessness is revealed, the Antichrist who will exalt himself above God and sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thess 2:1-4, 8). The Lord Jesus will overthrow him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by the splendor of his coming.

Peter says the Day of the Lord will come unexpectedly like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare (2 Pet 3:10). However it is not the end of the world, in keeping with God’s promise we are looking forward to a renewed heaven and Earth (Isa 65:17-25).

John, in Revelation, has the last word and his whole book leads up to a climax, the arrival of the Messiah.

When he said Jesus is coming with the clouds (Dan 7:13), and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the tribes of the land will mourn for him, he was quoting from Zechariah 12:10-12. It is only Israel who will see him clearly as he descends to the Mount of Olives.

After the seventh trumpet is blown, angels celebrate the Messiah’s victory over the nations:

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah and he will reign forever and ever. ... We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign” (Rev 11:15-17).

The Kingdom of God has finally been established on Earth replacing all previous kingdoms (Dan 2:44) and Christ will reign with his saints for a thousand years. The nations were angry (Ps 2:1) and God’s wrath has finally come.

Jesus' return is depicted symbolically as a victorious rider on a white horse coming from heaven with the armies of heaven, presumably the saints because they are dressed in fine linen, which stands for the good deeds of the saints. ... On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev 19:11-16).

Daniel had prophesied that the saints of the Most High, (or the saints of the high places), would possess the Messianic kingdom. He said, the sovereignty, power, and greatness of the all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. John refers to these people when he says he saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And he saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands, They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years (Rev 20:4-5)

The future coming of the Lord has two purposes: judgment and salvation. He comes to judge the wicked, rebellious unbelievers who have come to fight a war against God and his Messiah and Israel. He also comes to bring salvation by resurrection and rapture to Christians, many of whom have been slaughtered by the Antichrist. He also comes to rescue Israel, who have been fighting a battle against the nations of the world. His outward display of power and majesty is directed towards the unbelievers, as he comes to destroy them, accompanied by thunder, earthquake, loud noise, windstorm, tempest, and flames from a devouring fire. He comes for his church, but their resurrection and rapture occur in the spiritual realm. The angels will be sent out to gather them from all over the world. They will meet the Lord in the air and will be with him forever. However, the Bible does not say anywhere that Jesus is coming to take the Church home to heaven. Their home will be in the other-worldly New Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from God.

Isaiah prophesies the Lord's coming as a day of vengeance and pictures the Lord as a warrior who treads the winepress alone, staining his apparel with blood. The grapes in the winepress are symbolic of the wicked, as the Lord tramples them in his anger and pours out their lifeblood on the earth. The Messiah is appalled that no nation supports

him, he must do it alone. He will trample the people in anger and pour out their lifeblood on the earth. (Isa 63:1-6). John sees a vision of an angel, not the Lord, swinging his sharp sickle and harvesting grapes, throwing them into the great winepress of God's wrath. The grapes were trampled in the winepress outside Jerusalem and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as a horse's bridle for 180 miles (Rev 14:17-20). Whether the Lord or an angel, the vision is a symbolic description of judgment on the wicked, especially those who fight at Armageddon.

Isaiah sums up the Lord's battle with the nations, also known as Armageddon as follows: "The Lord is coming with fire, and his chariots are like the whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For with fire and with his sword the Lord will execute judgment on all people, and many will be those slain by the Lord" (Isa 66:15-16).

Malachi 4 says that the day of the Lord is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and evildoers will be like stubble. They are ripe for judgment when the Messiah arrives in flames of blazing fire. But for those who fear the Lord, the sun of righteousness, interpreted by many in the early church from Justin downwards to be the Messiah, will arise with healing in his wings. The sun will burn, but its rays will bring healing to Israel who will be empowered by the Lord. They will go out leaping like calves from the stall and tread down the wicked as the Lord gives them victory.

Glory, Noise, and Retribution at the Messiah's Return

The OT concept of the Messiah's coming is one of vengeance and judgment on all mankind. Listen to the prophets shout their warnings concerning the end of the age:

Isaiah 2 - People will flee to caves in the rocks and holes in the ground from the fearful presence of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to shake the earth.

Isaiah 66 - See, the Lord is coming with fire, his chariots like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For with fire and with his sword the

Lord will execute judgment on all people, and many will be those slain by the Lord.

Jeremiah 25- The Lord roars from on high, he thunders from his holy dwelling and roars mightily against his land. He shouts like those who tread the grapes, shouts against all who live on the Earth. The tumult resounds to the ends of the Earth, for the Lord brings charges against the nations; he brings judgment on all mankind and puts the wicked to the sword. ... Look! Disaster is spreading from nation to nation, a mighty storm is rising from the ends of the Earth. At that time those slain by the Lord will be everywhere - from one end of the Earth to the other. They will not be mourned or gathered up or buried, but will be like dung lying on the ground.

Ezekiel 38 – The fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the beasts of the field, every creature that moves along the ground and all the people on the face of the Earth will tremble at my presence. Mountains will be overturned, cliffs will crumble and every wall will fall to the ground.

Joel 2 – The Lord thunders at the head of his army, his forces are beyond number, and mighty is the army that obeys his command. The day of the Lord is great, it is dreadful. Who can endure it?

Joel 3 - The Lord roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem. The Earth and the heavens tremble. But the Lord will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.

Where is the Messiah's destination?

Isaiah 60 – See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you (Jerusalem) and his glory appears over you.

Ezekiel 43 - I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the East. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory. ... The glory of the Lord entered the temple through the gate facing East and filled the temple. ... "This is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among Israel forever."

Malachi 3 – Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple ... but who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears?

Zechariah 14 - On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will split in two from East to West.

Building on the OT foundation, the NT has much to say about the Lords's coming. It makes clear that it is the coming of the Messiah and that the Messiah is Jesus.

Luke 21 - There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and on Earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. It is at that time they will see the Messiah coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

2 Peter 3 - The present heavens and Earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. ... The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

Luke 17 – The Messiah in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. ... It will be as in the days of Noah when the flood came and destroyed them all. It will be as in the days of Lot when fire and sulphur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

2 Thessalonians - When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels, he will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Those who accompany him

Zechariah said, “Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him” (Zech 14:5). ‘Holy ones’ could be translated as ‘saints,’ but it is more likely that Zechariah has angels in mind. Jesus said that the Son of Man would come with his holy angels (Mark 8:38,

Luke 9:26) and that he would send his angels to gather the elect from all over the Earth (Mt 24:31). Paul said the Lord Jesus would be revealed from heaven with his powerful angels (2 Thess 1:7), but he also said that the Lord Jesus will come with all his saints (1 Thess 3:13) and that God would bring with Jesus those who had died in Christ (1 Thess 4:14), bringing them down from heaven to Earth to be resurrected. After the angels are sent out to gather the elect, the dead saints rise from their graves, and the living saints are caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air, all in their resurrection bodies, and from that moment, they will always be with the Lord. Daniel said, Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the Earth will awake, some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. He may have seen the resurrection as one event but the NT makes it clear that there are two resurrections. The righteous are resurrected at Christ's return and they immediately reign with Christ for 1000 years. This is called the first resurrection. The rest of the dead do not come to life until the thousand years are ended (Rev 20:5) after which they are judged at the great white throne judgment.

The resurrection and rapture of the saints is not a drawn out affair. We will all be changed in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet (1 Cor 15:52). And it is at that same last trumpet, when the seventh angel blows his trumpet, that "the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and his Messiah (Rev 11:15). It is the same moment when the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the saints of the Most High (Dan 7:27).

The resurrection and rapture of the saints prepares them for the wedding of the Lamb. They are not only saved from their sins, they are now clothed in immortal resurrection bodies and they are clothed in fine linen, bright and clean which symbolizes their righteous acts. As the Messiah rides forth on a white horse with a sharp sword coming out of his mouth to strike down the nations, his Bride, the armies of heaven, follow him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, bright and clean.

So when Zechariah said that the Lord his God will come, and all the holy ones with him, the 'holy ones' are better interpreted as saints than

angels, for it is the saints who are going to rule the surviving nations with an iron scepter for a thousand years.

“The Lord will be king over the whole Earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name” (Zech 14:9).

In the parable of the sheep and the goats, the Messiah comes in his glory with all the angels and sits on his glorious throne. All the nations are gathered before him and he separates them from one another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He puts the sheep, the recently resurrected righteous, on his right, and the goats, the unbelievers, on his left. Then he says to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’ Those on his left are told to depart from him and go to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, see Rev 20: 5, 12, 15.

Jesus promise to the victorious at Thyatira is that he will give them authority over the nations, they will rule them with an iron scepter and dash them to pieces like pottery. To the victorious at Laodicea his promise is to give them the right to sit with him on his throne, just as he was victorious and sat down with his Father on his throne.

Harmonizing the above verses concerning the angels and the saints who accompany Jesus on his return, we can make the following conclusion. When Jesus descends from heaven, he will be accompanied by myriads of angels whom he will send out to gather his elect from all over the world. The resurrected and raptured saints will then rise to meet the Lord in the air, and from there the Lord will continue his descent to the Mount of Olives, from where he will enter the temple via the east gate. There from Zion he will roar out against the nations who surround Jerusalem.

We have to keep in mind that the number of resurrected saints will number in the hundreds of millions. As they are now immortal beings, their habitation will be heavenly, not earthly. More precisely, they will be inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, the Holy City that comes down out of heaven to earth. The description of the city is symbolic, but its cubic dimensions are 1,380 miles or 2,200 km, so it is huge and will likely rest in the sky above Israel. The New Jerusalem will be

intimately connected to the earthly Jerusalem, the two realms overlapping one another. The inhabitants of the Earth will see it as a bright and glorious light.