

# The Jewish Concept of Two Messiah's

## Sanhedrin 98a

Now Ya'akov sent Judah, once again taking a leadership role, ahead of him to Joseph to get directions to Goshen. The rabbis recognized the many similarities between Joseph and Jesus (I list **eighty ways** in which **Joseph foreshadows the life of Christ** in my commentary on **Genesis**). They believe that **Genesis 46:28-29a** teaches that there will be **two Messiahs**. They teach that Joseph would receive the Kingdom *before Judah*, because Joseph was in Egypt *before Judah*. They believe that a descendant of Joseph will be the first Messiah, or the **suffering Messiah** (Isaiah 53), and the second Messiah, a descendant of Judah, and then David, will be the **kingly Messiah** (Psalm 72). When they arrived in the region of Goshen, Joseph quickly had his chariot made ready and went to Goshen to meet his father Isra'el.

Because of their inability to see the two separate comings of Jesus Christ, the rabbis teach that there are two Messiah's, the **suffering Messiah** of Joseph and the **kingly Messiah** of David (Matthew 9:27). They taught that it was a messianic term, which needed to be directed toward a descendant of King David and therefore called him *Meshiach ben-David*, or Messiah Son of David (Tractate Sukkah 52a). They teach that how the Messiah comes will be based on merit, or what the Jewish people have earned. If they are worthy, one like a son of man will come in all His glory on the clouds of heaven (Daniel 7:13-14); but, if they are not worthy, Messiah will come in humility riding on the colt of a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).

In the discussion regarding this verse in the Babylonian Talmud (Sanhedrin 98a) a story is told of the Persian king Shevor, who asks: *Why doesn't your Messiah come riding on a horse? If he lacks one, I'll be glad to provide him with one of my best!*

The rabbis teach that "the Messiah's donkey," will be multicolored.

Today, the phrase "the Messiah's donkey" is used to refer to someone who does the 'dirty work' on behalf of someone else.<sup>1732</sup>