

The Coming of the Lord

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Introduction

The Jehovah's Witnesses misuse the words "soul" and "spirit," giving one definition to all occurrences of the word.

Adherents of Realized Eschatology make the same mistake in their restrictive definition of "the coming of the Lord." He came. He comes. He will come.

Old Testament

Judgment upon the Nations

In the Old Testament, "*the day of the Lord*" oft refers to God's judgment upon the nations (Isa. 13:6-9; Joel 2:1-2; Obad. 15-17; etc.)

Isaiah 13:6-9 ... 6 Wail, for the day of the Lord is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. 7 Therefore all hands will fall limp, And every man's heart will melt. 8 They will be terrified, Pains and anguish will take hold of them; They will writhe like a woman in labor, They will look at one another in astonishment, Their faces aflame. 9 Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it. (NASB95)

Joel 2:1-2 ... 1 Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of the Lord is coming; Surely it is near, 2 A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, So there is a great and mighty people; There has never been anything like it, Nor will there be again after it To the years of many generations. (NASB95)

Obadiah 15-17 ... 15 "For the day of the Lord draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head. 16 "Because just as you drank on My holy mountain, All the nations will drink continually. They will drink and swallow And become as if they had never existed. 17 "But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, And it will be holy. And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions. (NASB95)

The Coming of the Messiah

In Holy Scripture, “*the coming of the Lord*” (or other similar expressions) oft refers to the Messiah: He came, He comes, and He will come.

He Came/He Has Come

His Physical Incarnation

The incarnation of Christ was foreshadowed in prophecy (Isa. 7:10-16; 9:6-7; Mic. 5:2-4; Acts 7:51-53), and fulfilled in the fulness of time (Matt. 1:18-25; John 1:1-18; Gal. 4:4-5; Eph. 2:13-18).

Isaiah 7:10-16 ... 10 Then the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, 11 “Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; make it deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” 12 But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord!” 13 Then he said, “Listen now, O house of David! Is it too slight a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well? 14 “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. 15 “He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good. 16 “For before the boy will know enough to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken. (NASB95)

Isaiah 9:6-7 ... 6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this. (NASB95)

Micah 5:2-4 ... 2 “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.” 3 Therefore He will give them up until the time When she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren Will return to the sons of Israel. 4 And He will arise and shepherd His flock In the strength of the Lord, In the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. And they will remain, Because at that time He will be great To the ends of the earth. (NASB95)

*Acts 7:51-53 ... 51 “You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did. 52 “Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced **the coming of the Righteous One**, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; 53 you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it.” (NASB95)*

Matthew 1:18-25 ... 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. 19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. 20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." 22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." 24 And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, 25 but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus. (NASB95)

*John 1:1-18 ... 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. 6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light. 9 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. **11 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.** 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 John testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.' " 16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. 17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him. (NASB95)*

Galatians 4:4-5 ... 4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (NASB95)

*Ephesians 2:13-18 ... 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. 17 **And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace***

to those who were near; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. (NASB95)

His Earthly Ministry

“The coming of the Lord” (or similar & related phrases) is also used of Christ’s earthly ministry (Mal. 4:1-6; Matt. 18:11; 20:26-28; Mark 10:45; Luke 19:10).

*Malachi 4:1-6 ... 1 “For behold, **the day is coming**, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and **the day that is coming** will set them ablaze,” says the Lord of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.” 2 “But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. 3 “You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing,” says the Lord of hosts. 4 “Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. 5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before **the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord**. 6 “He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.” (NASB95)*

Matthew 18:11 ... 11 [“For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.] (NASB95)

Matthew 20:26-28 ... 26 “It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (NASB95)

Mark 10:45 ... 45 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (NASB95)

Luke 19:10 ... 10 “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (NASB95)

His Church/Kingdom

The coming of the Lord also has reference to the establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost (Dan. 7:13-14; Matt. 16:16-19; 16:28; Mark 9:1; John 14:25-31; Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:6-8; 2:1-4).

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. (NASB95)

*Matthew 16:16-19 ... 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. 19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." (NASB95)*

Matthew 16:28 ... 28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." (NASB95)

Mark 9:1 ... 1 And Jesus was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power." (NASB95)

*John 14:25-31 ... 25 "These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. 27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful. 28 "You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and **I will come to you.**' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29 "Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe. 30 "I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; 31 but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here. (NASB95)*

Luke 24:45-49 ... 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 "You are witnesses of these things. 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (NASB95)

Acts 1:6-8 ... 6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (NASB95)

Acts 2:1-4 ... 1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled

with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. (NASB95)

He Comes

The Lord comes in judgment upon individuals (Acts 5:1-11; 12:20-23), churches (Rev. 2:5, 16; 3:11), and nations (Matt. 24:15-35; Rev. 16:13-16).

Individuals

Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)

Acts 5:1-11 ... 1 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, 2 and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? 4 "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." 5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it. 6 The young men got up and covered him up, and after carrying him out, they buried him. 7 Now there elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 And Peter responded to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for such and such a price?" And she said, "Yes, that was the price." 9 Then Peter said to her, "Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out as well." 10 And immediately she fell at his feet and breathed her last, and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. 11 And great fear came over the whole church, and over all who heard of these things. (NASB95)

Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:20-23)

Acts 12:20-23 ... 20 Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; and with one accord they came to him, and having won over Blastus the king's chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by the king's country. 21 On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. 22 The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" 23 And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died. (NASB95)

Churches

Ephesus (Rev. 2:5)

Revelation 2:5 ... 5 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. (NASB95)

Pergamum (Rev. 2:16)

Revelation 2:16 ... 16 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. (NASB95)

Philadelphia (Rev. 3:11)

Revelation 3:11 ... 11 'I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. (NASB95)

Nations

Jerusalem and the Nation of Israel (Matt. 24:15-35)

Matthew 24:15-35 ... 15 "Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. 17 "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. 18 "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. 21 "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. 22 "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. 23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. 24 "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 "Behold, I have told you in advance. 26 "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them. 27 "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. 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 trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. 32 "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; 33 so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. 34 "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. (NASB95)

Rome and the Roman Empire (Rev. 16:13-16)

Revelation 16:13-16 ... 13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; 14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. 15 (“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.”) 16 And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon. (NASB95)

He Will Come/He Is Coming

The New Testament often refers to the second coming of Christ (Matt. 16:26-27; 25:31-33; 26:64; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 9:26; 18:6-8; James 5:7-11; etc.).

Matthew 16:26-27 ... 26 “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds. (NASB95)

Matthew 25:31-33 ... 31 “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. 32 “All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; 33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. (NASB95)

Matthew 26:64 ... 64 Jesus said to him, “You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” (NASB95)

Mark 8:38 ... 38 “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” (NASB95)

Luke 9:26 ... 26 “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. (NASB95)

Luke 18:6-8 ... 6 And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge said; 7 now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? 8 “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” (NASB95)

James 5:7-11 ... 7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. 8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the

Lord is near. 9 Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. 10 As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful. (NASB95)

Christ is coming again to receive his own (1 Thess. 4:13-18), and to judge all mankind (2 Thess. 1:6-12), and to destroy the world (2 Pet. 3:10-13).

To Receive His Own

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ... 13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will 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. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. (NASB95)

To Judge All Mankind

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12 ... 6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed. 11 To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

To Destroy The World

2 Peter 3:10-13 ... 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. 11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 13 But according to

His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. (NASB95)

Conclusion

As we have seen, “the coming of the Lord” can have different meanings, depending upon the context. Let us learn from God’s past judgments, and prepare for the last judgment.