

THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

For a couple of thousand years now Christians have been looking forward to and expecting the return of Jesus Christ. Some people don't think that Jesus is coming back while others claim Jesus already came back. I will approach this subject by the basic questions that Bible students ask themselves while studying the Bible. These basic questions are, "Who?", "What?", "When?", "Where?", "Why?", and "How?" In this case the "Who?" is Jesus Christ, and the "What?" is His return. Now we'll look at "Why?".

Why do Christians expect Jesus to return? Jesus said He would return.

The disciples expected Jesus to return because He said that He would return. John 14:1-3 reads, "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Later we see that Jesus' disciples understood that He would return because they asked Him, "What will be the sign of Your coming?" In Matthew 24:3 we read, "And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?'" If Jesus was not going to return, He should have told His disciples they were mistaken when they asked, "What will be the sign of Your coming?". Instead, Jesus answered the question by telling them what things would first take place, and then concluding when He would return: "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, 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" (Matthew 24:29-30).

The Bible tells us Jesus will return.

The New Testament is scattered with references of the return of Jesus Christ. We as Christians are not building a doctrine on a single isolated Scripture, but rather a central teaching of the New Testament. The following are just a few of these references.

1 Corinthians 15:23: "But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming..."

1 Thessalonians 4:16: "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 shall rise first."

2 Thessalonians 1:9-10: “And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 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.”

Hebrews 9:28: “so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.”

Revelation 1:7: “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.”

Revelation 22:20: “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”

All prophecies have been accurate.

The Bible is full of prophecies that have come to pass just as the Bible foretold. Many of these prophecies are concerning Jesus. For example, before Jesus was born: (1) The Bible declared that He would be born of a virgin; (2) the Bible declared that His bloodline would be traced to Abraham going through David, Jesse, Judah, Jacob, and Isaac; (3) the Bible declared that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem and He would be preceded by a messenger (John the Baptist); (4) the Bible declared that Jesus would be a performer of miracles and teacher of parables; (5) the Bible declared that Jesus would be betrayed by a friend and sold for 30 pieces of silver — furthermore, this money would be thrown down in the house of the Lord and the money would be used to buy Potter's field; (6) the Bible declared that Jesus' hands and feet would be pierced and there would be gambling over His clothing; (7) the Bible also declared that Jesus' bones would not be broken, but His side would be pierced, and there would be darkness over the land; the Bible declared that Jesus would be buried in a rich man's tomb and that He would not remain dead; (9) Jesus himself declared that He would be killed and that He would rise from the dead. Considering that all of these and many more prophecies came to pass just as the Bible declared, it is reasonable to expect that Jesus will return — just as the Bible declares.

The expectation of the return of Christ has been passed down to us by eyewitnesses.

The writers of the New Testament who tell us that Jesus will return were themselves eyewitnesses of the resurrected Jesus. The disciples saw Jesus, die, and then later they spent time with Him, over a period of forty days after Jesus rose from the dead. All of the disciples except John, who was exiled, died as martyrs for their belief that this happened. These men also heard Jesus say that He would return. Since Jesus said He would rise from the dead — and then rose from the dead just as He had said He would, it is reasonable to expect Him to return — just as He said He would. We have the testimony of eyewitnesses; who were willing to die for their belief that Jesus rose from the dead and said He would return.

Acts 5:30-32 (Peter's statement): "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

2 Peter 1:16 (Peter's statement): "For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty."

I John 1:1-2 (John's statement): "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life, and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us."

Acts 4:33 (comment from Luke): "And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all."

It was foretold that there would be those who doubted the return of Jesus Christ.

Peter 3:3-4: "Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming?' For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

Matthew 24:48-51: "But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,' and shall begin to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and shall cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; weeping shall be there and the gnashing of teeth."

Peter 3:8-9: "But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

How do we know Jesus has not already returned?

There are those who claim that Jesus has already returned. One such group is the Jehovah Witnesses. The Watchtower claim that Jesus returned invisibly in 1914. They believe Jesus is invisibly present as King and there is still a time in the future where Jesus will rule over the earth after Armageddon. They do not believe that Jesus physically rose from the dead nor do they believe in a physical return. Consider the following from the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society:

The Greatest Man, 1991, page 132 (PDF pg. 446)

"After the passing of many more years, Jesus provides a series of visions to his beloved apostle, John. By means of these visions that John describes in the Bible book of Revelation, he, in effect, lives to see Jesus return in Kingdom power. John says that 'by inspiration' he was transported forward in time to 'the Lord's day.' What is this 'day'?

"A careful study of Bible prophecies, including Jesus' own prophecy regarding the last days, reveals that 'the Lord's day' began in the history-making year 1914, yes, within this generation! So it was in 1914 that Jesus returned invisibly, without public fanfare and with only his faithful servants being aware of his return. In that year Jehovah gave Jesus the command to go subduing in the midst of his enemies!"

Reasoning from the Scriptures, page 343 (PDF pg. 343)

"What is indicated by 'clouds'? Invisibility. When an airplane is in a thick cloud or above the clouds, people on the ground usually cannot see it, although they may hear the roar of the engines. Jehovah told Moses: 'I am coming to you in a dark cloud.' Moses did not see God, but that cloud indicated Jehovah's invisible presence (Exodus 19:9; see also Leviticus 16:2; Numbers 11:25). If Christ were to appear visibly in the heavens, it is obvious that not 'every eye' would see him. If he appeared over Australia, for example, he would not be visible in Europe, Africa, and the Americas, would he?

"In what sense will 'every eye see him'? They will discern from events on earth that he is invisibly present. Also referring to sight that is not physical, John 9:41 reports: "Jesus said to [the Pharisees]: 'If you were blind, you would have no sin. But now you say, 'We see.' Your sin remains.'" (Compare Romans 1:20.) Following Christ's return, some persons show faith; they recognize the sign of his presence. Others reject the evidence, but when Christ goes into action as God's executioner of the wicked, even they will discern from the manifestation of his power that the destruction is not from men but from heaven." (end quote)

There are a couple of reasons why we should not accept the previous teachings of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society. The Jehovah Witnesses teach that Jesus is Michael the archangel, who is a created being and inferior to Jehovah. They also teach that Jehovah is the only Almighty God, while Jesus is only a mighty god who should not be worshipped. In the Bible we are warned of false Christs: "And Jesus answered and said to them, 'See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.'" (Matthew 24:4-5)

The Jesus in the Bible is not Michael the archangel, or a created being. In fact, He is the creator, almighty God, one with Jehovah. Jesus is also worshipped in the Bible; the Father told the angels to worship Him. (References for all of were given earlier.) The point is that Jehovah Witnesses do not teach the Jesus of the Bible — they teach another Jesus, or a false Christ. We should not trust their doctrine when they are so far off on the fundamentals.

How will Jesus return?

The Bible gives us information as to how Jesus will return. When we look at how Jesus will return it gives us insight to judge as to whether He returned invisibly in 1914, as claimed by the Jehovah Witnesses.

Jesus will return on a cloud.

This was first foretold by Daniel before Jesus was born, crucified, and resurrected from the dead.

Daniel 7:13-14: "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. 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."

Matthew 24:30: "...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." (See also Matthew 26:64, Mark 13:26, Luke 21:27, Revelation 1:7.)
Jesus left bodily and visibly with a cloud and will return the same way.

Acts 1:9-11: "And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.'"

How did Jesus leave? He left bodily and visibly with a cloud. Whether those watching could see Jesus in or on the cloud, this passage does not say. Jesus did go out of their sight, but was it immediately upon being received by the cloud, or as they were "gazing intently into the sky while He was departing"? They obviously saw something that they were watching as Jesus departed. The two men in white clothing even acknowledged that they "**watched**" Him go into heaven. For clarification we will have to look at some other Scripture on the same subject. We are told here that this same Jesus who ascended into heaven will come back, and in the same manner in which He left. I emphasize that Jesus left bodily because we are told that "this Jesus" is the one who will return.

The Bible teaches that Jesus rose from the dead in the same physical body in which He died.

John 2:18-22: "The Jews therefore answered and said to Him, 'What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews therefore said, 'It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken."

When Jesus made this statement, He had a physical body of flesh and bones. This is the temple or body that He said He would raise in three days. Since Jesus said He would raise this physical body, reason and logic tells us it was a physical body, not a spiritual body that was to be resurrected. We can see in Psalm 16:10, Acts 2:27-32, and 13:34-38 this body would never undergo decay. What is the purpose of preserving the body if it is not raised from the dead and being used? Jesus took great pains to show that it was He himself who rose from the dead, and not a spirit. Let us consider the following Scripture:

Luke 24:39-43: "'See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. And while they still could not believe it for joy and were marveling, He said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; and He took it and ate it before them."

Everything Jesus offered them for evidence of His resurrection was of the physical nature. He spoke to them so they could hear and recognize His voice. Jesus showed His wounds from the crucifixion, inviting them to touch Him. In John 20:27 Jesus told Thomas to put his finger into the wounds in His hands and to put his hand into His side. Jesus purposely asked them for something to eat and ate fish in front of them. Jesus declared that a spirit did not have a body of flesh and bones as He had. He did things like this on several occasions over a period of forty days. It is this Jesus, who had His same physical body in which He died, that they watched bodily ascend into heaven in Acts 1:9.

I also stated that we would look at other Scripture to show His return is visible:

Revelation 1:7: “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.”

Following is the Strong’s Greek Dictionary definition of the word “**every**” in Revelation 1:7: “3956 pas (pas); including all the forms of declension; apparently a primary word; all, any, every, the whole; KJV — all (manner of, means), alway (-s), any (one), X daily, + ever, every (one, way), as many as, + no (-thing), X thoroughly, whatsoever, whole, whosoever.”

"Every" eye will see Him: this includes everyone, even nonbelievers — as well as "even those who pierced him". How can this be interpreted as "only his faithful servants being aware of his return", as we are told in The Greatest Man by the Watchtower? If the seeing is not literal then the phrase "every eye shall see Him" means nothing. This passage also tells us that at His return "all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him." Why would "all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him" if they had no idea that Jesus returned, and did not even believe in Him? When Watchtower claims that Jesus returned in 1914, the claim does not include the mourning of all the tribes of the earth.

In the Bible, Peter connects the fact that there were eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Jesus, with His coming again. The Greek word that Peter chose to use and is translated as "coming" in the following passage indicates a physical coming.

2 Peter 1:16: “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.”

Strong’s Greek Dictionary defines this “coming” as “3952 parousia (par-oo-see'-ah); from the present participle of 3918; a being near, i.e. advent (often, return; specifically, of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked); (by implication) physically, aspect: KJV — coming, presence.”

Thayer’s Definitions defines this same Greek word as “3952 parousia -1) presence 2) a coming, an arrival, an advent; the future visible return from heaven of Jesus, to raise the dead, to hold the last judgment and set up formally and gloriously the kingdom of God.”

In 2 Corinthians 7:6-7, the Apostle Paul used this same Greek word (3952) when telling the Corinthians of the coming of his friend Titus: “But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more.”

Clearly the return of Jesus Christ will be physical in nature, the same as the coming of Titus to see the Apostle Paul was physical in nature. That which is physical in nature can be literally seen. To see the return of Jesus Christ will not be just a matter of faith. Believers and nonbelievers alike will literally be able to see His return.

Matthew 24:26-27: "If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go forth, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them. For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be." (See also Luke 17:22-24.)

In this passage, the disciples were told not to believe someone who says that Jesus is “over here”, or “over there”. Why shouldn't they believe them? The passage describes that His coming is like lightning and will be both sudden and visible. Jesus used this example so that they would know with certainty whether He had returned.

Remember this Watchtower teaching from page 343 of Reasoning from the Scriptures: “If Christ were to appear visibly in the heavens, it is obvious that not ‘every eye’ would see him. If he appeared over Australia, for example, he would not be visible in Europe, Africa, and the Americas, would he?” (PDF pg.343)

At first glance this sounds like a reasonable argument. The only problem is that it limits God to what we are able to understand with our human understanding. In the beginning of the Bible, we are told that God spoke, and the universe came into existence. I do not know anybody who can explain how this really worked. We do know that this is what the Bible teaches. We also know that many non-Christian scientists also believe in the beginning of the universe. They call it "the big bang theory." Of course, we know God created the universe. The Bible knew of the beginning of the universe long before scientists even imagined such a possibility. The Bible is confirmed by archaeology and fulfilled prophecy, giving us reasonable evidence to trust it. So, the questions that remain are, does the Bible teach that the return of Jesus Christ will be a secret to many? Or does the Bible teach that every eye shall literally see Him when He returns, including nonbelievers? And finally, can God accomplish something that goes beyond our understanding?

Watchtower also used the argument that “clouds” in the Bible indicate invisibility. **Does a cloud necessarily mean invisibility?**

Luke 21:27: "And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

If this cloud equals invisibility, then how is it that they see the Son of Man “coming in the cloud”?

Revelation 14:14: “And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand.”

If the cloud in this verse were invisible, how would John see one like the son of man, sitting on the cloud?

Revelation 10:1: “And I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire.”

How would John see the angel “clothed with a cloud”, if that cloud made him invisible?

Revelation 11:11-12: “And after the three and a half days the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were beholding them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them.”

If this cloud were invisible, how would their enemies have “beheld them” when they ascended into heaven in a cloud?

These verses make it obvious that use of the word "cloud" does not necessarily mean that something is hidden or invisible.

4. When will Jesus return?

It is amazing when people try to attach a specific date to the return of Jesus Christ. This mistake has exposed false prophets on a few occasions. The Bible not only does not give us a date but is very clear on the fact that we will not know the day of Jesus’ return. Although we do not know the day of Jesus’ return, we do know of things that will take place before He returns. Often the debate among Christians is not so much as to when Jesus will return, but rather the time of the rapture. Many Christians see the rapture as a separate event of the 2nd Coming of Christ. This was an idea developed in the 19th century. Historically the oldest view is that the rapture will occur after the Great Tribulation. The main point is whether the person is pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation or post-tribulation in their theology all of them expect Jesus to physically return.

No one knows the day or hour when Jesus will return.

Luke 12:40: "You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect."

Mark 13:32-33: "But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time is."

Acts 1:6-7: “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority.’”

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3: “Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”

We do know that certain events will take place before Jesus returns.

Matthew 24:15-31: **(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 let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; **(17)** let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; **(18)** and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. **(19)** But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! **(20)** But pray that your flight may 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 shall. **(22)** And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall 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)** If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go forth, 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 shall 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. 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.

In this passage in Matthew, it is clear that the return of Jesus Christ is after “the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet” (verse 15). Furthermore, Christ’s return will be after “a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (verse 21). Finally, the return occurs “when 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” (verse 29).

Some people believed that perhaps Jesus had already returned in the Apostle Paul's day. Paul reminds them that certain events must first take place in the following passage.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5: “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?”

The time of the rapture in relation to the Second Coming of the Lord is debated.

I stated earlier that Many Christians see the rapture as a separate event of the 2nd Coming of Christ. For those who do not know what this is.

The word “rapture” is not in the Bible; rather it comes from the Latin Vulgate. This is a manuscript where the Greek New Testament and the Hebrew Old Testament were translated into Latin. In our English Bible, it is translated as "caught up". In 1 Thessalonians 4:17, “caught up” literally means to seize, to carry off by force, or to snatch out or to snatch away. (rapture)

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: “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 shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

As stated earlier no matter which view one takes as to when this happens all of them believe in a physical return of Jesus Christ.

5. Why will Jesus return?

I am not aware of a Biblical passage which states that Jesus is going to return for any reason. However, we can discover why Jesus is going to return by examining what He is going to do when He returns. For example, if your wife went to the store and you did not know why, but when she came home, she had a loaf of bread and some milk, then you would reach the conclusion that she went to the store to buy bread and milk. The Bible does tell us what Jesus is going to do when he comes back.

Coming to judge the world (punishment and reward).

Matthew 16:24-27: “Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds.”

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: “For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 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.”

1 Peter 5:4: “And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”

Revelation 3:11: "I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown."

Revelation 22:12: "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done."

Coming for his followers:

John 14:2-3: "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

Hebrews 9:28: "so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him."

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17: "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, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. 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 shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord."

6. Where will Jesus return?

To return implies that one first left. Jesus left earth and went to heaven. When He returns, He will come back to planet earth (Acts 1:11, Matthew 24:30, Mark 16:19, Romans 8:34). The question remains, where on planet earth will He return?

Zechariah 14:1-9: "(1) Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. (2) For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. (3) Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. (4) And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. (5) And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! (6) And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. (7) 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. (8) And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. (9) And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one."

In the text we see that "the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!"; "And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one." This is our indication that the text speaks of the day on which the Lord returns

(Compare with 1 Thessalonians 3:13 and Revelation 11:15). The repeating of the phrase "in that day" informs us that the passage is speaking of what will happen during this day, not what will happen over several days or weeks.

Application

The Bible gives us direction in the way that we should behave in many areas of our life. I have selected a few of these passages that are tied directly to His return in the context.

1 Corinthians 4:5: "Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God."

1 Corinthians 11:26: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

1 John 2:28: "And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming."

Peter 3:8-14: "**(8)** But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. **(9)** The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. **(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, on account 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. **(14)** Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless."

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