

Welcome To Sunday Night Bible Fellowship



“We proclaim Him, warning every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man mature in Christ.” Col 1:28

“Are You Ready For The Return Of Christ?”

Luke 12:35-40

May 7, 2023

Luke 12:35-40

35 "Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps lit.

36 "Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks.

37 "Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them.

38 "Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

39 "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

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

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- Jesus transitions right into the subject of His return.
- If you are seeking first the kingdom, giving away your possessions, living a worry-free life, then always having an eye on the future is wise.
- Everything on this earth loses its appeal when you look at the coming of Christ.
- Jesus gives 4 commands that tell us what it means to be ready, as believers, for His coming.

Command #1: Be dressed for action.

"Be dressed in readiness" – literally, "gird your loins"

- That means, pull your long robe, that you wear, and either tuck it under your belt or tie 2 ends together.

How to Gird Up Your Loins



1. The tunic wouldn't allow you to do heavy labor or fight in battle, necessitating the "girding" of one's loins.



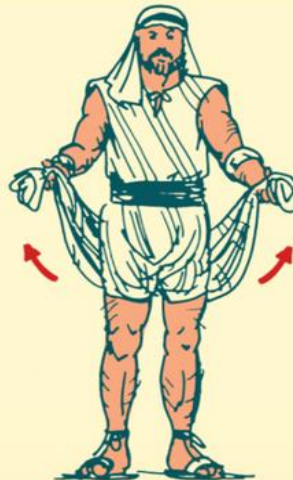
2. First, hoist the tunic up so that all the fabric is above your knees. This will give you mobility.



3. Gather all the extra material in front of you, so that the back of the tunic is snug against your backside.



4. Once the excess fabric is gathered in front, pull it underneath and between your legs to your rear. This feels much like a diaper.



5. Gather half of the material in each hand, bringing it back around to the front.



6. Finally, tie your two handfuls of material together, and you're all set for both battle and some hard labor. Go forth, ye men, and gird up your loins!

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- Either way the meaning is the same. Be ready for who is coming – the King.
- When the King or Queen in the UK arrives at Buckingham Palace, or makes an appearance, everyone is dressed properly and to a "T." Everyone is dressed and ready – staff, servants, policemen, guards (bearskins), soldiers. Everyone is on high alert.
- Be ready - don't have any encumbrances. Be free of any distractions as you wait for His return.

Heb 12:1,2

1 let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus,

- So it is not so much what we are "wearing" when Christ returns but what we are not "wearing."
- When Christ returns, He should find us busy, doing His work, accomplishing His will, actively serving Him.

1 Cor 15:58

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

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Command #2 – Keep your lamps lit.

- No electricity, no flashlights, no headlights, no yard lights, no lamps with bulbs.
- When the sun went down, it was dark.
- All you had was a small lamp that had a wick and some oil in it.
- When you were expecting a guest in the 1st century and they were coming at night, you kept a lamp lit for them.

And in a spiritual sense, to keep your lamp lit means 2 things:

1. Your light is shining before men.

Matt 5:16

16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

2. You are people of the Word.

Ps 119:105

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet

And a light to my path.

- When Christ returns, He should find us busy witnessing and busy obeying His Word.

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Command # 3 – Watch everyday for His coming.

- It's like servants waiting for their master to come home from a wedding feast (3-4 days).
- You know he is coming, you just do not know when.
- They are watching, they are anticipating, they are excited.

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- When the master returns, those who are awake and alert will be blessed beyond measure.
- If that isn't enough, the master will now serve the servants.
- That is like what Jesus did at the last supper when He washed the disciples feet.

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."

Luke 22:27-30

27 "For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

28 "You are those who have stood by Me in My trials;

29 and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you

30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

- **Think about it:** Would Alexander the Great, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Cyrus, any of the Caesars or Herod the Great wait on tables?

“He is so overjoyed when he sees his servants dressed ready for service and keeping their lamps lit, serving their Lord faithfully and waiting for his return that he himself tucks his robe into his belt, invites his servants to sit around his table and then as they sit there wondering what in the world is going on, he begins to serve them. “Would you like this tender steak? How many roast potatoes do you want? Here are the peas, parsnips, the corn on the cob, the carrots and the Yorkshire pudding, the beans and the stuffing. Here is a great silver jug of hot gravy, and tall crystal glasses of water with ice cubes tinkling at the top.” Then he has prepared delicious cheesecake and fresh cream as a dessert, and the best Kenyan deep roast coffee and little bars of peppermint chocolate to complete the meal. The Lord has thought of everything, and now he is hovering around in the background, not intimidating them, not spoiling their meals but everything they want he provides. He gives them personally and individually all this food richly to enjoy. This is his blessing to them because they are dressed ready for service and their lamps are lit and they are waiting for his return.”

- Ligon Duncan

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- The night was divided into four "watches".

The watches were 6–9, 9–12, 12–3, and 3–6.

The second watch was from 9:00 p.m. until midnight.

The third watch was from midnight until 3:00 a.m.

- Regardless of the watch, when Christ comes, our lives will be filled with joy.
- Down through the centuries, there have always been those who have been alert and watching for His return. A small minority.
- We now in the 21st century must take up the watch.

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- The coming of Christ will be as unexpected as a thief comes to rob your house.
- He won't call first, or email, or text.
- He won't give you hints.
- Therefore, you must be alert at all times.
- There will be no warning. No signs of the thief coming.

1 Thess 5:2-7

2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.

4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief;

5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;

6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.

2 Peter 3:10

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.

Rev 16:15

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.")

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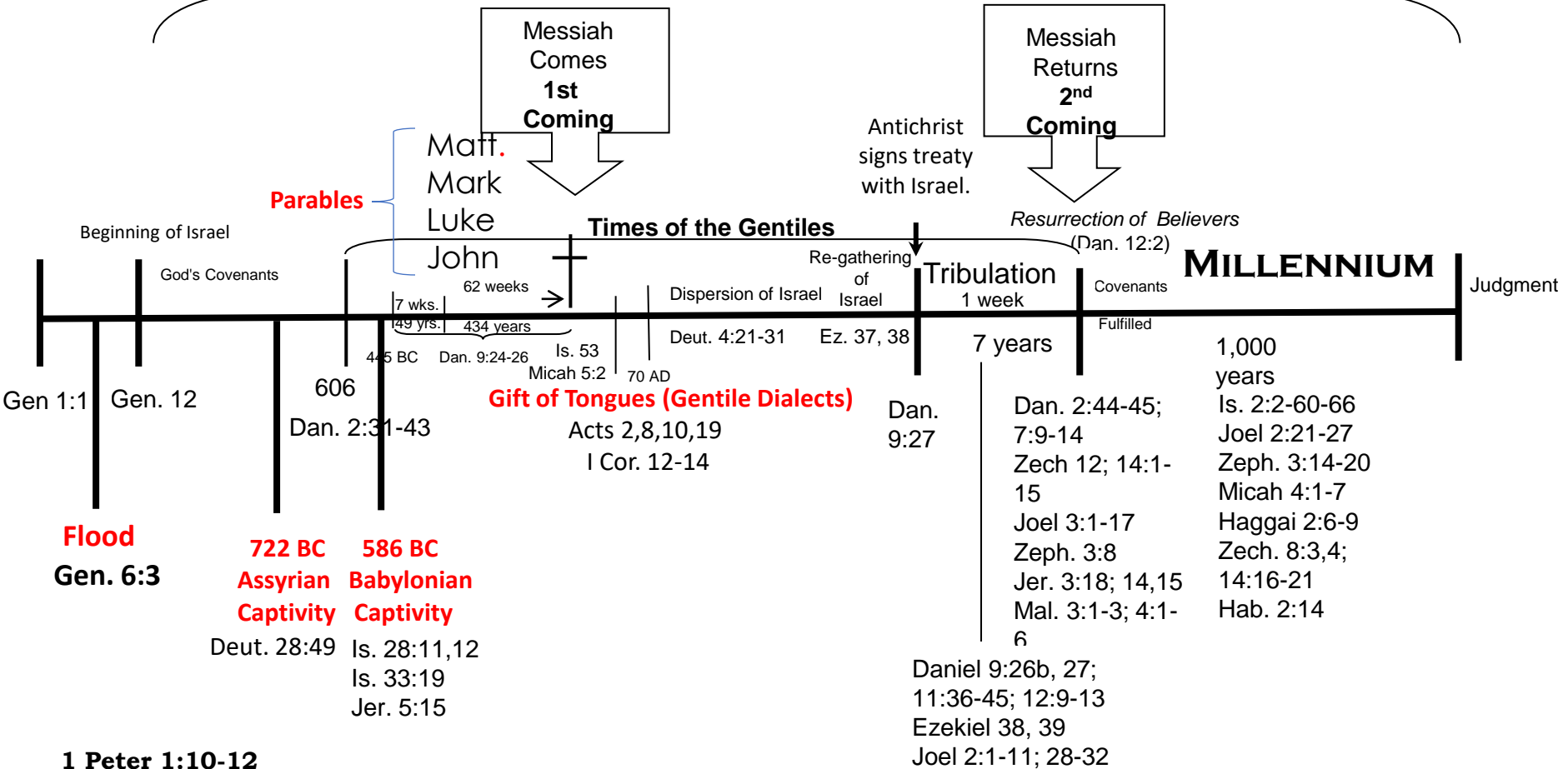
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Command #4 – Expect the unexpected.

- So here is the conclusion to these 6 verses: Be ready because Christ will return at a time you **least** expect it.
- This is called the **IMMINENT return of Christ.**
- What does that mean?

Old Testament & Gospels View of Future Prophetic Events

ISRAEL

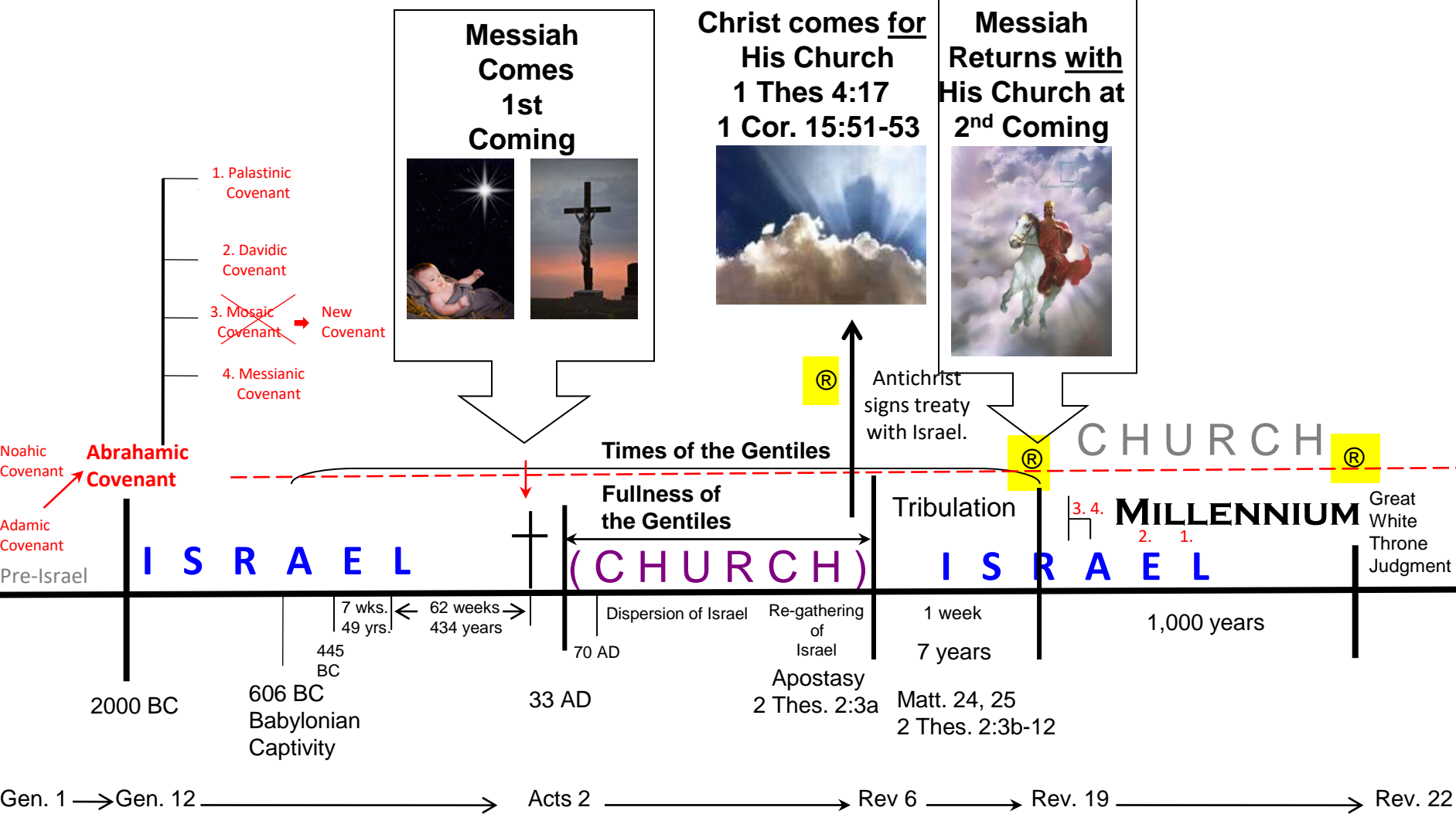


1 Peter 1:10-12

10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.

12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven -- things into which angels long to look.

Comprehensive Biblical View of Future Prophetic Events



® = Resurrection