

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

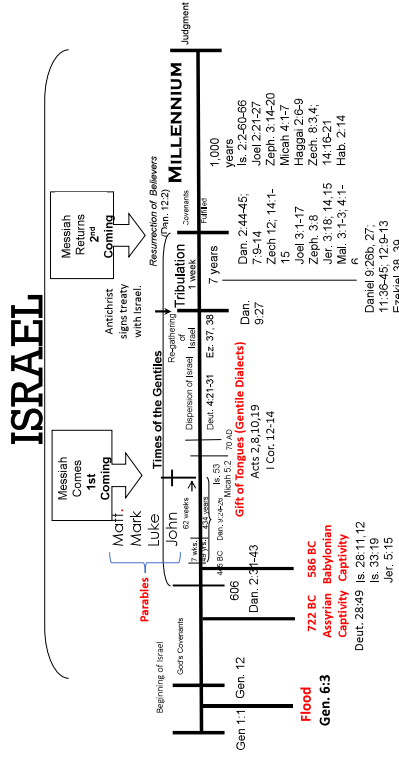
"Are You Ready For The Return Of Christ?"

Part 2

Luke 12:35-40

May 14, 2023

Old Testament & Gospels View of Future Prophetic Events

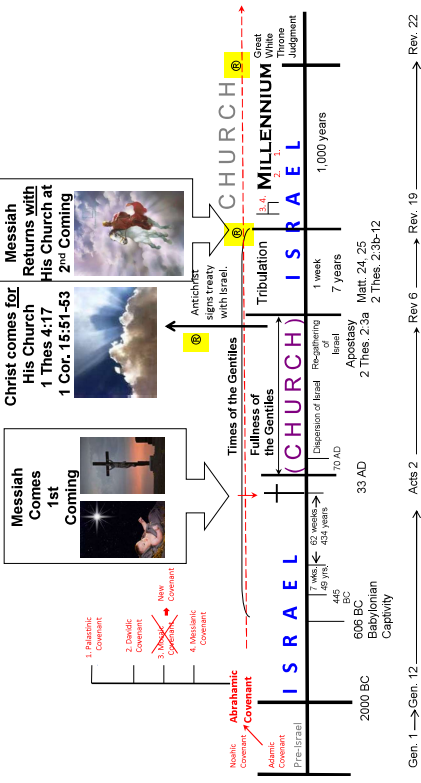


1 Peter 1:10-12
 10 As for this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries,
 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.
 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.

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."

Comprehensive Biblical View of Future Prophetic Events



We, who believe in the rapture of the Church, say that it is "imminent."

The Meaning of Imminency

Oxford dictionary defines "imminency" as:

- Hanging over one's head, ready to fall or overtake you, something that could happen at any moment.
- Other things *may* happen before the event, but nothing else *must* take place before it occurs.
- If something else must take place before an event can happen, then that event is not imminent.
- The necessity of something else occurring first, destroys the concept of imminency.
- When an event is truly imminent, a person never knows exactly when it will occur.
- A. T. Pierson stated, "Imminence is the combination of two conditions: certainty and uncertainty. By an imminent event we mean one which is certain to occur at some time, but uncertain at what time.

"Some people are happy to set dates. How many goofy people have come along and done that? Then they get all their followers on the roof with their pajamas on ready for the rapture that never happens. And then there are those people who somehow want to offer themselves as profoundly insightful so that they can see in every single current event in every newspaper some fulfillment of some prophecy.

But we know the Second Coming begins with one monumental event, the rapture of the church. That event is secret and mysterious and no sign precedes it, just the trump and the voice of the archangel and we're gone.

We are told in the Scripture that it's going to happen at a time we don't expect and a time we don't know. We are also told that we are to be ready. Every generation is to be ready. This is a reminder that what our Lord is talking about here is something that is a signless event. That is to say there is no way to predict it. There is no way to anticipate it.

"Do you think He's coming this year?" "Do you think He's coming in the next five years?" I will tell you this: He is coming at an hour we don't expect. He could come at any time. We all are always to be ready. With every generation for 2,000 years since Jesus first said this, we have all lived in the imminent reality of an event that has no precursors, that has no signs."

- John MacArthur

Three Reasons the Rapture Could Happen Today

Reason 1: The Rapture is a signless event.

Unlike the Second Coming, no signs will precede the Rapture. This is called the doctrine of *imminency*—that is, the Rapture is imminent; it could happen at any moment. Specifically, nothing in God's prophetic program must take place as a prerequisite to the Rapture. Things *may* happen but nothing *must* happen. That means we don't know when it could happen. It could be today or years from today.

Without any warning, Jesus Christ will return to rapture His saints and take them to heaven. Christians must live prepared lives, ready to meet their Savior at any moment.

- David Jeremiah

"If you are a believer today and are trusting Christ, you are next on the program of God — as far as prophecy is concerned. I believe it is tissue-thin between where we stand today and the Rapture of the church. There are no signs, no Tribulation, no *anything* to be fulfilled before Jesus takes the church out of the world."

- J. Vernon McGee

"The rapture is a signless event, thus there are not and never will develop signs of the time indicating that the rapture is near. This is true because the rapture is imminent, it could happen at any moment. It is impossible for an imminent event to have signs. If signs are related to an event then it would indicate that it was near or not near and thus could not happen until after the signs were present. Thus, signs would have to precede the event which would mean that the event could not happen at any moment until after the signs appeared. Since the rapture is said in the New Testament to be an event that could occur at any moment, without warning (1 Corinthians 1:7; 16:22; Philipians 3:20; 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; James 5:7-9; 1 Peter 1:13; Jude 21; Revelation 3:11; 22:7,12,17,20) then it cannot be related to any signs at all."

- Tommy Ice

"The purpose of Bible prophecy is not for us to make a calendar, but to build character. Paul emphasized this fact in both of his Thessalonian letters, and our Lord warned us not to set dates for His coming (Matt. 24:36, 42). Date-setters are usually upsetters. . . ."

- Warren Wiersbe

Paul

1 Cor 1:7-8

7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Cor 15:51-52

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

Titus 2:13

13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

Col 3:4

4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Phil 3:19

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

Phil 4:5

5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.

Peter

1 Peter 4:7

7 The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.

1 Peter 5:4

4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

James

James 5:7,8

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.

John

1 John 2:18,28

18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

28 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.

1 John 3:2-3

2 We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Rev 3:11

11 I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

Author of Hebrews

Heb 10:25

25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Acts 1:6,7

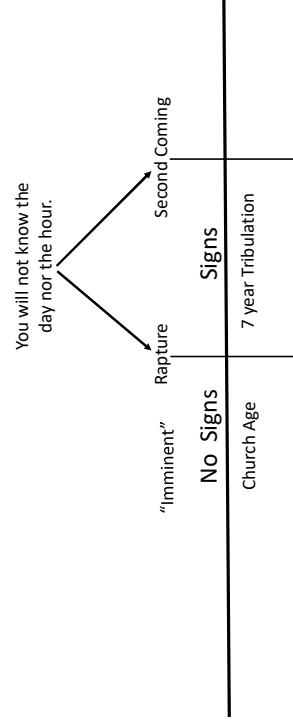
6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

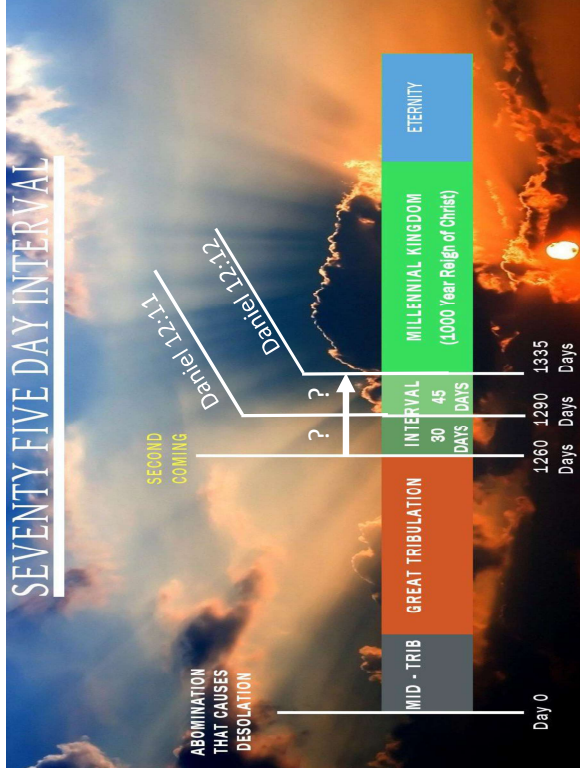
"times" – χρόνος – a space of time – seasons, like the "Christmas season."

"epochs" – αἰρεος – short time, event, to set a date, like Christmas Day.

- The disciples in the first century could have been saying, "This world is such a mess, Christ has to come back in the next 5 years. Society is corrupt with immorality, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, transgenderism, government is corrupt with Herod, Nero and the like, and the Church has so many problems. Its 1 minute to 12." But they never said any of that. And now 2,000 more years has gone by. Have things grown worse? Yes they have. Can they grow even more worse? Yes they can. Words like "worse, "bad" or even "good" are all relative terms. They are not absolute.
- We say "He has to come back real soon." But He doesn't. Don't put God in a box.
- People who insist on focusing on signs are really post-tribulationists.
- If you do not believe in "imminency" just say it. You can't have it both ways.



"Be ready for the last moment
by
being ready every moment."



“Last Days”

Heb 1:1-2

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,
 2 in these **last days** has spoken to us in His Son,

1 Peter 1:20-21

20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these **last times** for the sake of you
 21 who through Him are believers in God,

2 Peter 3:3-4

3 Know this first of all, that in the **last days** mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,
 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?"

1 John 2:18

18 Children, it is the **last hour**; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the **last hour**.

Jude 17-18

17 But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 18 that they were saying to you, "In the **last time** there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts."

1 Tim 4:1-3

1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in **later times** some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,
 2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience

3 men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

2 Tim 3:1-5

1 But realize this, that in the **last days** difficult times will come.
 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, brutal, haters of good,
 3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossipers, without self-control, 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
 5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

3. It has no biblical basis.

- Scriptures are often taken out of their context and bent or mis-applied to prove their point (Matt. 24 – that chapter is not for the Church Age. It describes the signs during the Tribulation period when the Church has already disappeared in the Rapture.)

Matt 24:15,29-31

15 "Therefore when you see the **ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet,
 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.

Why is sign-chasing, newspaper headlines sensationalism, approximate date setting so bad?

1. It makes an already skeptical world even more skeptical and hinders the gospel.
- 2 Peter 3:3
 3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,
 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?"
2. Because it proves you have missed the point. Knowing that Christ will return should not drive us to the newspapers, but to the Bible to make us holy & godly.
- Steadfastness: "Be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand" (James 5:8).
- "And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, **Occupy till I come.**" (Luke 19:11)
- Kindness: "Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!" (James 5:9).
- Prayer: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers" (1 Peter 4:7).
- Faithfulness in assembling together and encouraging one another: "Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:24–25).
- Holy conduct and godliness: "Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness" (2 Peter 3:11).
 "Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Peter 3:14).
- Purity and Christlikeness: "When He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:2–3).

The collage features several prominent headlines from 'The Morning News' City Edition. The largest headline is 'MULTITUDES MISSING'. Other headlines include 'DISASTER STRIKES EARTH: Hundreds Of Wrecks Drivers Missing', 'POLICE UNABLE TO CONTROL MOBS, LOOTING', 'PANIC AND TERROR WORLDWIDE: Many Hospital Patients And Babies Suddenly Disappear', and 'GRAVES SPLIT OPEN'. The collage also includes a 'CITY EDITION' label and a 'Price 10 Cents' tag.

4. It is a waste of time.

- The world is changing and shifting all of the time – leadership, politics, economic conditions, alliances.
- All through Church history, you can find individuals and small groups of people speculating on how current events are fulfilling prophecy.
- Every one of them makes the claim – “Conditions have never lined up like this before.”
- The red heifer, the rebuilding of the temple, Israel back in the land, the great reset, digital currency, globalism, AI, etc. etc. etc. are being promoted as the for-sure signs that this is the generation that will see the return of Christ.
- I’ve seen it all before with Hal Lindsey and his book, “The Late Great Planet Earth.” “Fig Tree Generation”
- Saying that the signs occurring during the Tribulation have a foreshadow back into the Church age is problematic – 1. Many of the signs could be true in many past generations (wars, earthquakes, etc.). You say, “but they are increasing.” OK, but that is subjective. That is relative. At what point do we know that the frequency indicates that now we know that this is it?

Application

1. The imminent return of Christ directs our focus away from greed, money, material possessions, and worry and places it on something that could take place at any second.
2. There are no signs of the times because we are not in the time of the signs.
3. Are you ready to meet Christ at His coming?

Jesus Is Coming Again

1. Marvelous message we bring,
Glorious carol we sing,
Wonderful word of the King,
Jesus is coming again!

Chorus

Coming again, Coming again,
May be morning, may be noon,
May be evening and may be soon!
Coming again, Coming again;
O what a wonderful day it will be -
Jesus is coming again!

2. Forest and flower exclaim,
Mountain and meadow the same,
All earth and heaven proclaim,
Jesus is coming again!

Chorus

Coming again, Coming again,
May be morning, may be noon,
May be evening and may be soon!
Coming again, Coming again;
O what a wonderful day it will be -
Jesus is coming again!