



## ¿Bienaventurado El Que Guarda Sus Ropas?

(Serie “Las Palabras Duras de la Biblia”, #19)

[Audio del Sermón](#)

### Apocalipsis 16.12–16 (RVR60)

<sup>12</sup>El sexto ángel derramó su copa sobre el gran río Eufrates; y el agua de éste se secó, para que estuviese preparado el camino a los reyes del oriente. <sup>13</sup>Y vi salir de la boca del dragón, y de la boca de la bestia, y de la boca del falso profeta, tres espíritus inmundos a manera de ranas; <sup>14</sup>pues son espíritus de demonios, que hacen señales, y van a los reyes de la tierra en todo el mundo, para reunirlos a la batalla de aquel gran día del Dios Todopoderoso. <sup>15</sup>He aquí, yo vengo como ladrón. Bienaventurado el que vela, y guarda sus ropas, para que no ande desnudo, y vean su vergüenza. <sup>16</sup>Y los reunió en el lugar que en hebreo se llama Armagedón.

What does it mean to stay awake? Does it mean that the blessed Christian will not be asleep in bed when Christ returns? How might a Christian be naked at such a time? Are we to fear this coming happening when we are in the bath? Particularly because the verse is an exhortation from Christ himself, we readers of Revelation want to be sure of what this means.

The context of this verse is the pouring out of the first six bowls of the final judgment of God. The previous verse mentioned that the way has now been prepared for the final battle of “the great day of God Almighty.” The next verse describes the gathering of the nations for that battle, which will not take place until Revelation 19:11–21. Yet when that battle does take place the people of God are with their king, so they obviously have been gathered together, an event often referred to as “the rapture” (Mk 13:27; 1 Cor 15:51–52; 1 Thess 4:16–17).

### Marcos 13.27 (RVR60)

<sup>27</sup>Y entonces enviará sus ángeles, y juntará a sus escogidos de los cuatro vientos, desde el extremo de la tierra hasta el extremo del cielo.

### 1 Corintios 15.51–52 (RVR60)

<sup>51</sup>He aquí, os digo un misterio: No todos dormiremos; pero todos seremos transformados, <sup>52</sup>en un momento, en un abrir y cerrar de ojos, a la final trompeta;

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porque se tocará la trompeta, y los muertos serán resucitados incorruptibles, y nosotros seremos transformados.

### 1 Tesalonicenses 4.16–17 (RVR60)

<sup>16</sup>Porque el Señor mismo con voz de mando, con voz de arcángel, y con trompeta de Dios, descenderá del cielo; y los muertos en Cristo resucitarán primero. <sup>17</sup>Luego nosotros los que vivimos, los que hayamos quedado, seremos arrebatados juntamente con ellos en las nubes para recibir al Señor en el aire, y así estaremos siempre con el Señor.

The wider context of this verse is the sayings of Jesus that he would come “like a thief” (Mt 24:43; Lk 12:39; compare Mk 13:32–37).

### Mateo 24.43 (RVR60)

<sup>43</sup>Pero sabed esto, que si el padre de familia supiese a qué hora el ladrón habría de venir, velaría, y no dejaría minar su casa.

### Lucas 12.39 (RVR60)

<sup>39</sup>Pero sabed esto, que si supiese el padre de familia a qué hora el ladrón había de venir, velaría ciertamente, y no dejaría minar su casa.

This image is picked up by Paul (1 Thess 5:2, 4; compare 2 Pet 3:10) and has already been mentioned once by John (Rev 3:3).

### Apocalipsis 3.3 (RVR60)

<sup>3</sup>Acuérdate, pues, de lo que has recibido y oído; y guárdalo, y arrepíentete. Pues si no velas, vendré sobre ti como ladrón, y no sabrás a qué hora vendré sobre ti.

The point of all of these sayings is that a thief does not announce his coming, but surprises the inhabitants of the house by coming when they are out or least likely to suspect his or her presence. Stealth and surprise are the chief weapons. To say that the day of the Lord is like this is to say that it too will come when least expected. As Jesus noted, no one knows the day or the hour (Mk 13:32);

### Marcos 13.32 (RVR60)

<sup>32</sup>Pero de aquel día y de la hora nadie sabe, ni aun los ángeles que están en el cielo, ni el Hijo, sino el Padre.

Those who have claimed to have calculated it have always been proved wrong. But this does not mean that one cannot be prepared; instead it means that one must always be prepared, like servants waiting up through the night for their master to return from a party (Lk 12:35–40).

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### Lucas 12.35-40 (RVR60)

#### El siervo vigilante

<sup>35</sup>Estén ceñidos vuestros lomos, y vuestras lámparas encendidas; <sup>36</sup>y vosotros sed semejantes a hombres que aguardan a que su señor regrese de las bodas, para que cuando llegue y llame, le abran en seguida. <sup>37</sup>Bienaventurados aquellos siervos a los cuales su señor, cuando venga, halle velando; de cierto os digo que se ceñirá, y hará que se sienten a la mesa, y vendrá a servirles. <sup>38</sup>Y aunque venga a la segunda vigilia, y aunque venga a la tercera vigilia, si los hallare así, bienaventurados son aquellos siervos. <sup>39</sup>Pero sabed esto, que si supiese el padre de familia a qué hora el ladrón había de venir, velaría ciertamente, y no dejaría minar su casa. <sup>40</sup>Vosotros, pues, también, estad preparados, porque a la hora que no penséis, el Hijo del Hombre vendrá.

John has been writing about the gathering of the world's armies and the final battle between the beast and Christ. The alarming events in the world or even the expectation that this gathering must take place before Christ could return could distract his readers from their central focus, namely faithfulness to and expectation of Christ. He, not the armies of the antichrist, is to be their central concern. Therefore it is quite appropriate that the voice of Jesus himself interject a warning in the middle of the gathering storm, just as he previously interjected a blessing about the death of Christians to contrast with that of the destruction of "Babylon" ([Rev 14:13](#)).

### Apocalipsis 14.13 (RVR60)

<sup>13</sup>Oí una voz que desde el cielo me decía: Escribe: Bienaventurados de aquí en adelante los muertos que mueren en el Señor. Sí, dice el Espíritu, descansarán de sus trabajos, porque sus obras con ellos siguen.

The warning is to "stay awake" or "watch." The image is that of the watchmen at their posts, alert for any sign of their lord and expectant of his coming. As we saw above, this picture is drawn from the sayings of Jesus. This alertness, of course, implies that the Christian will be found doing what the master has commanded him or her to do, which includes sleep at appropriate times. The wakefulness, then, is not the avoidance of physical sleep, but a moral wakefulness that does not allow the world to lull one into a laxity about the directions that Christ has given and the standards he has set.

The picture of the watching servant is connected to that for nakedness. When lying down to sleep, a person would take off the outer garment and use it as a blanket, or perhaps lay it aside altogether and sleep under a blanket or covered in straw (as rabbi Akiba and his wife were forced to do since they had only one outer garment for the two of them). A poor person's clothing was his or her most valuable possession; a thief would not miss the chance to steal it upon breaking into a house during the night (see [Lk 10:30](#)).

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**Lucas 10.30 (RVR60)**

<sup>30</sup>Respondiendo Jesús, dijo: Un hombre descendía de Jerusalén a Jericó, y cayó en manos de ladrones, los cuales le despojaron; e hiriéndole, se fueron, dejándole medio muerto.

Likewise if a person were asleep but would have to rush out in an emergency without taking the time to get clothed, he or she could lose the outer garment (see **Mk 13:15–16**).

**Marcos 13.15–16 (RVR60)**

<sup>15</sup>El que esté en la azotea, no descienda a la casa, ni entre para tomar algo de su casa; <sup>16</sup>y el que esté en el campo, no vuelva atrás a tomar su capa.

To be without that outer garment in public would be to be “naked” in terms of that culture (something like being in a shopping mall clothed only in underwear in our day). Jesus thus counsels keeping one’s “clothes with him” or “guarding their clothing” to prevent the surprise of the moment finding them “shamefully exposed.” The Mishnah reports that the captain of the temple would go around at night and, if he found temple police asleep at their posts, take their clothing and burn it, forcing them to leave the temple naked. In this text the surprise of the moment finds the believer similarly “undressed.”

The clothing of the Christian is mentioned several times in Revelation. Those in the church of Sardis whose deeds are not right have soiled clothes, while the worthy ones will be dressed in white (**Rev 3:4**).

**Apocalipsis 3.4 (RVR60)**

<sup>4</sup>Pero tienes unas pocas personas en Sardis que no han manchado sus vestiduras; y andarán conmigo en vestiduras blancas, porque son dignas.

The church of Laodicea is naked and needs to purchase white clothing to wear (**Rev 3:17–18**).

**Apocalipsis 3.17–18 (RVR60)**

<sup>17</sup>Porque tú dices: Yo soy rico, y me he enriquecido, y de ninguna cosa tengo necesidad; y no sabes que tú eres un desventurado, miserable, pobre, ciego y desnudo. <sup>18</sup>Por tanto, yo te aconsejo que de mí compres oro refinado en fuego, para que seas rico, y vestiduras blancas para vestirte, y que no se descubra la vergüenza de tu desnudez; y unge tus ojos con colirio, para que veas.

The martyrs under the altar are clothed in white (**Rev 6:11**), as is the multitude before the throne (**Rev 7:9**).

**Apocalipsis 6.11 (RVR60)**

*"Y se les dieron vestiduras blancas, y se les dijo que descansasen todavía un poco de tiempo, hasta que se completara el número de sus consiervos y sus hermanos, que también habían de ser muertos como ellos.*

**Apocalipsis 7.9 (RVR60)****La multitud vestida de ropas blancas**

*<sup>9</sup>Después de esto miré, y he aquí una gran multitud, la cual nadie podía contar, de todas naciones y tribus y pueblos y lenguas, que estaban delante del trono y en la presencia del Cordero, vestidos de ropas blancas, y con palmas en las manos;*

The key to the image of clothing is found in **Revelation 19:8**, in which the bride of Christ is given “fine linen, bright and clean” to wear. Then comes the comment “Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.” If one is not acting righteously, which means following the commands of Christ, he or she is naked before him, and his coming will leave such a person “shamefully exposed.”

**Apocalipsis 19.8 (RVR60)**

*<sup>8</sup>Y a ella se le ha concedido que se vista de lino fino, limpio y resplandeciente; porque el lino fino es las acciones justas de los santos.*

The two parts of the warning, then, fit together. The coming of Christ cannot be calculated. Certainly the last thing that John wishes is that his readers would try to calculate the time of that coming using the images in his book. That would be to put their focus on the world and the evil personages rather than on Christ. The goal of the whole of this book is that, given the ultimate end of all of the principalities and powers of this world and the final triumph of Christ, Christians will remain faithful whatever the cost. They are to be prepared for the coming of Christ at all times. This means not only expecting this coming verbally or doctrinally, but also living a life appropriate to that expectation. This means living in obedience to Jesus, however crazy such a lifestyle might appear in the light of the values of this world, and “clothing oneself” with righteous deeds. It is for such people that the coming of Christ will not be something for which they are unprepared. Instead, they will joyfully welcome it and, fully “clothed,” join their Lord’s throng as he completes his conquest of the world and ends this age.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. et al. *Hard sayings of the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996. Print.

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