

# Let The Bible Speak Series

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## Surprised At The Sentence

Mt.7:21-23

It is evident from a reading of the text that the people involved were shocked, and surprised at the sentence "depart from me..." The verse contains one of the most tragic thoughts recorded in scripture. Many shall diligently serve God, and do many mighty things in his name, only to discover at last, that they have never really served him at all. But how could this be? The works done by these people, were done in the name of Christ but without his authority or sanction. They acted on their own, without divine approval. In Acts 17:30-31 "The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness..."

There is no truth more clearly taught in God's word, no fact more firmly established, and no warning more emphatic than the truth spoken by Paul in these verses. His audience was composed of leading philosophers of the day, assembled in the greatest center of culture of that time, and at one of the most celebrated centers of philosophic thought of any day---the Areopagus in Athens. To this distinguished group he declared in unmistakable terms that there would be a final judgment for every member of the human race. As plainly as this is taught, there is little doubt that many will be surprised at:

### I. The Reality of the Judgment.

Inspired writers, however, testify to the certainty of the event.

Solomon: Eccl. 12:13-14 "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is man's all; For God will bring every work into judgment including every secret thing, whether good or evil."

Jesus: Mt.12:36-37 "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Paul: 2Cor.5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

Peter: 1Peter 1:17 "And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;"

John: 1John 4:17 "Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world."

Those who believe that this life with its rewards and punishments is all there is, are going to be astonished at the reality of a day of reckoning. As will those who scoff and are skeptical. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying where is the promise of his coming? for since our fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 2Peter 3:3-4

Think of all the atheists, the infidels, the non-believers, those who mocked religion and the bible. What a surprise.

## II. The Time Will Surprise Many.

The world will be shocked when Jesus comes. "But as the days of Noah were, so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be." Mt.24:37-39 What a surprise.

People caught up in all kinds of sordid activity. Others busying themselves with the cares of this life. Of all the millions of people on the earth today, few indeed, give any thought whatsoever about standing before God and accounting for their actions and deeds.

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels, nor the Son, but the..."

Men have tried in vain to predict when Jesus will come to Judge the world:

1. William Miller--one of the founders of Seventh Day Adventist movement predicted March 21, 1844 and later Oct. 22, 1844.
2. Charles Russell, founder of Jehovah's Witnesses Sect claimed the Lord would return in 1874, 1914,.
3. Herbert W. Armstrong---1975
4. Willie Day Smith of Irving, TX April 1, 1980

All of them are wrong. The time is unknown.

## III. The Standard or Basis of Judgment will be a Surprise.

1. Not on the basis of earthly position--Luke 16:25 (Rich man)
2. Not based on lip service--Mk. 7:22-23 "Lord have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name done many wonderful works..."
3. Not on human creeds
4. Not by the articles of men.
5. But the Word of God will be the basis of judgment. James 2:12 "So speak ye and so do as they that shall be judged by the perfect law of liberty."

John 12:48 "...the words I speak unto you, the same shall judge you in the last day."

Rev. 20:11-13 "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works."

The books were opened. Two kinds of books---first the books that contain the records of the deeds of men. God keeps a record of the deeds of all men. (not a literal book) Every man is the author of his own story in life. God accurately records in His book or mind the record of our life. (all our actions both good and bad) Second, the book of life i.e. the book in which God records the names of all the redeemed. Oh, to have our name recorded

there. Rev. 21:27 "But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life."

We all need to remember that God is keeping a record.

Acts 2:38 we will be judged by this verse. Have you repented and been baptized?

Heb. 10:25 we will face this verse, have we forsaken the assemblies of the church?

Mt. 26:26-27 have we kept the communion like it was instituted and delivered. 1Cor. 11:1-2

1Cor.14:35 "Let your women keep silent in the church...It is a shame for a woman to speak in the church." Have you disobeyed this? What about those women who preach today? What a surprise to those who thought their name was there, but it was not.

#### IV. Some Religious Workers Will Be Surprised.

They will find that more than zeal and morality is necessary for salvation.

Mt. 7:21-23 "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord shall enter the ....For many will say unto me in that day, did we not prophecy in thy name..." These people had worked, but they were wrong. They had not been guided by a "thus saith the Lord." So many today are working feverishly, but without divine approval. They will be disappointed, and surprised to find out that the Lord accepts in religion only that which he authorizes.

#### V. Nominal Christians Will Be Surprised.

Perhaps one of the greatest of all surprises. People who belonged to the Lord, but who grudgingly and or carelessly served the Lord. Men and women who were not "fervent in spirit serving the Lord."

Note Mt.25:41-46 (Read these verses)

"When did we see thee?" They asked.

This is the Sunday morning only crowd. The people who never attend gospel meetings because they work or are tired. The people who never visit or try and convert anyone.

Five Foolish Virgins in Mt.25 said "give us of your oil" "our lamps are gone out. i.e. we need some good works."

"It is impossible for one person to impart to another the spiritual power which comes from frequent communion with God's spirit. That can come only from man's own experience of such communion, an experience which requires much time. "Give us of your oil" is a request which no religious person can grant. The refusal of the wise virgins to give of their oil indicates, not want of will, but want of power." Alfred Plummer

"And the door was shut..."

Here is a warning to the good, the respectable, morally upright, and the cultured church member, a warning thundered from the gates of heaven, "there must be oil in your lamps."

And at judgment, we will be surprised and sadly disappointed, if we are in this group.

#### VI. What Will Happen On That Day?

The order of events:

1. The Lord shall descend from heaven. Acts 1:11 "Ye men of Galilee why stand you gazing into heaven, for this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

1Thess. 4:16 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch angel and the trump of God..."

2. The dead will be raised and the living changed. John 5:28-29 "Marvel not at this..."

1Cor.15:52 "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

3. The books will be opened. Rev. 20:12-14 "And I saw the dead standing before God and the books, and another book was opened which was the book of life and the dead were judged out of the things written in the books."

4. There will be universal wailing. Rev. 1:7 "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

5. Before the great judge shall be gathered all nations.

a. You and I shall be there 2Cor. 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ..."

b. Sodom and Gomorrah shall be there Mt. 10:15

c. The people of Nineveh will be there Mt. 12:41

d. The Queen of Sheba will be there Mt. 12:42

e. The antediluvians, the postdiluvians, all races, all nations will be there.

What a mixed multitude, what a gathering..

6. Then the Great Judge "shall separate them one from another" Mt.25:32

A line shall be drawn separating the chaff from wheat, the goats from the sheep, the righteous from the unrighteous. That line shall separate a husband from a wife, parents from children, and friends from friends.

7. Then the great judge shall welcome the righteous into heaven (Mt.25:34)

I have no doubt that the glories of heaven will far exceed our fondest hopes and dreams. Such words as "gates of pearl" "street of gold" etc. were all designed to convey the beauty of heaven. Listen to John's description:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Rev.21:1-4

8. But He shall condemn the wicked to everlasting punishment. Mt. 25:41

Just as heaven will be more than we dreamed or fancied. So hell will be far more horrible than anyone could have imagined. The terror of those lost will be indescribable. The weeping and gnashing of teeth. The screams and agony will be dreadful. If you are not ready to meet Him, make your preparations today. No sin, no life of pleasure is worth risking your soul.