Judgment Day Surprises

Intro: Acts 17:30-31 “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”; Heb. 9:27 “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” From these Scriptures, as well as many others that could be given, we see that the day of judgment is a time appointed in the providence and wisdom of God.

1. Although the Lord has revealed many things in reference to that day, never-the-less some things connected with that day shall prove surprising to many.
2. Our purpose shall be to notice some of these surprises.

I. The Reality of That Day.
A. This is an age of skepticism and infidelity.
   1. God has abundantly taught a judgment day in His Word
      a. 2 Pet. 3:3-4 “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”
      b. Yet comparatively few believe it.
   2. Even some who claim to be preachers of the gospel refuse to believe in this Biblical doctrine.
      a. Thus it is not surprising that so few church members believe in that day.
      b. But, many who do believe in that day, by their actions manifest to others that they do not.
B. Imagine then, their surprise to find the day of judgment a reality.
   1. Rev. 6:16-17 “And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”
   2. How it behooves us, therefore, to prepare.

II. The Time.
A. We have ever had time setters, and they are with us today, but the time will prove surprising to all of us.
   1. Mark. 13:32 “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.”
   2. 2 Pet. 3:10 “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”
B. Again, how it behooves us to prepare; Mark 13:33 “Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.”

III. The Purpose.
A. It is not, as some seem to think, a day of inquiry: to test, try, or determine the guilt or innocence of the individual.
   1. Our state is known at the time of death: in fact daily.
      a. John 3:18 “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
b. 2 Tim. 2:19 “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

2. What then is the purpose of the judgment?
   a. “The act of placing an individual in one classification or another and telling why he has been so classified.”
   b. Mat. 25:31-46 “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
   c. Illustration: prisoner before judge to receive sentence.

B. What shall our state be in that great day.

IV. THE STANDARD OR BASIS.
   A. John 12:48 “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”
   B. Rom. 2:16 “In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.”
      1. Not morality, sincerity, honesty, feelings, creeds, manuals, disciplines, etc.
      2. Nor by preachers, councils of men, or any man; Rev. 20:11-15 “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. 12 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. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

V. BY FAR THE GREATEST SURPRISE SHALL COME TO THOSE WHO ARE REJECTED.
   A. Mat. 7:21-23 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
   B. Mat. 25:31-46 “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them
one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an huner, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

C. In connection with this, how many of those who are rejected shall be surprised to find no second chance shall be offered them.

Conclusion: Friend, do you think you can be saved without strict obedience to the gospel? If so, you too shall be surprised; 2 Cor. 6:2 “(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”; Heb. 4:7 “Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”