



One of the remarkable things about the Bible, especially prophecy, is its SURPRISING nature. Things come to eventuate exactly as scripture foretells, and we find ourselves (or those at the time it occurs) as absolutely surprised and not really expecting it!

For example, even though there was a great deal of Messianic expectation when Jesus was born, and the ancients understood the prophecies given, in Isaiah for example, where *"a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and his name shall be called Immanuel"* – that is "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14), when Jesus did come to this earth and was born as a baby boy in Bethlehem, it really came as a surprise.

When you read the gospel accounts, you soon pick up on that sense of surprise from Mary's visitation by the angel Gabriel, from Joseph's experience, from the shepherd's in the field to the arrival of the wise men.

When Jesus came it was a surprise.

It also happened in the discourse when Jesus repeatedly told his disciples that he would be handed over to the Gentiles, he would

suffer, be killed and that he would be raised three days and three nights later. I don't think that the disciples, as the scriptures attest to, really understood or fully comprehended what Jesus was foretelling.

Thus when you read the gospel accounts when early on that Sunday morning, long after Jesus had been resurrected, the people immediately involved were nothing less than surprised! The angel at the tomb spoke to the women and they were surprised. The disciples were surprised. They only understood what actually happened some time after those events occurred.

I think Jesus understands that "sense of surprise" we experience. When Jesus was telling his disciples about the upcoming resurrections, as cited in John 5:28-29, he said, *"Don't be amazed; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice – and come out, those who have lived righteously to a resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to a resurrection of judgment."*

And here Jesus prefaced his words by saying, *"Don't marvel"* or *"Don't be amazed!"*

So, one day in the future, when we find ourselves participating in either of those resurrections, we'll probably find it "surprising" – more surprising and amazing than we can ever imagine today.

The last book of the Bible is part letter, part prophecy and part apocalypse. The Book of Revelation is prefaced by telling us of "*things that must soon take place*", and so over the years theologians and scholars alike have disagreed and debated whether these mysterious things and events in Revelation happened completely in the past or whether they exist yet in the future. But, the bottom line is, that even though we know that Jesus Christ is coming as "*King of kings, and Lord of lords*", in might and in power and in glory, his coming is probably going to happen in a way that we really don't fully comprehend or imagine today. We'll probably be more surprised than anything else.

So when the day comes and the words of God become fulfilled, may we all be more than pleasantly surprised.

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