

Hitler's Most Stunning Surprise

Hitler's most stunning surprise at the end of World War II was called the Battle of the Bulge.

For the offensive to be successful, four criteria were deemed critical: the attack had to be a complete surprise; the weather conditions had to be poor to neutralize Allied air superiority, the progress had to be rapid, and Allied fuel supplies would have to be captured intact along the way because the combined Wehrmacht forces were short on fuel. Before the offensive the Allies were virtually blind to German troop movement. Orders were typically transmitted using telephone and teleprinter, and a special radio silence order was imposed on all matters concerning the upcoming offensive. German units assembling in the area were even issued charcoal instead of wood for cooking fires to cut down on smoke and reduce chances of Allied observers deducing a troop buildup was underway.

A few preparations underway were observed and reported, but the Allied command's reply was succinct: "Let them come." They thought there was nothing to fear.

The Germans achieved a total surprise attack on the morning of 16 December 1944, due to a combination of Allied overconfidence, preoccupation with Allied offensive plans, and poor aerial reconnaissance due to bad weather. 16 December 1944 at 05:30, the Germans began the assault with a massive, 90-minute artillery barrage using 1,600 artillery pieces across an 80 mi front on the Allied troops facing the 6th Panzer Army.

The Germans' initial attack involved around 410,000 men; just over 1,400 tanks, tank destroyers, and assault guns; 2,600 artillery pieces; and over 1,000 combat aircraft, as well as large numbers of other armored fighting vehicles (AFVs).

While having the effect of keeping the Allied aircraft grounded, the weather also proved troublesome for the Germans because poor road conditions hampered their advance. Poor traffic control led to massive traffic jams and fuel shortages in forward units.

The U.S. 99th Infantry Division, outnumbered five to one, inflicted casualties in the ratio of 18 to one.

On 23 December the weather conditions started improving, allowing the Allied air forces to attack. They launched devastating bombing raids on the German supply points in their rear, and P-47 Thunderbolts started attacking the German troops on the roads. Allied air forces also helped the defenders of Bastogne, dropping much-needed supplies—medicine, food, blankets, and ammunition. A team of volunteer surgeons flew in by military glider and began operating in a tool room. By 24 December the German advance was effectively stalled short of the Meuse.

From among the Americans' peak strength of 610,000 troops there were 81,000 battle casualties, including at least 8,400 killed. The "Bulge" was the largest and bloodiest single battle fought by the United States in World War II and the third-deadliest campaign in American history.

The Battle of the Bulge was a stunning surprise until it was launched. But as soon as it began, the world knew it!

The Bible has some critical information for us to understand regarding an even more stunning surprise:

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief...

God has given us signs to know when it is near, but it's exact timing is a secret until he comes. Yet as soon as he arrives everyone will know! Look how His “thief-like” apparition unfolds:

... in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.” (2 Peter 3:10 NAS95)

“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him,” (Revelation 1:7 NKJV)

“For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” (Matthew 24:27 NKJV)

“And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth....Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.” (Revelation 16:18–20 NKJV)

Sequence of Events

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”
(1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 NKJV)

Those who are righteous and alive will ascend to Jesus, those who were righteous and died will be resurrected and ascend to Jesus.

“whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:” (2 Thessalonians 2:8 KJV)

Those who were wicked and alive will be killed by the brightness of Jesus coming. The dead wicked who were already dead, stay dead. No one will be left alive on the earth after Jesus coming.

The righteous will stay with Jesus for 1000 years in heaven.

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection... they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:6 KJV)

After the thousand years, Jesus comes to earth again to wake up the wicked dead who are still on the earth:

“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” (Revelation 20:5 KJV)

“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth... they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” (John 5:28–29 KJV)

Those wicked will gather and try to attack Jesus and the saints:

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan ... shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.” (Revelation 20:7–8 KJV)

At this time God rains fire from heaven and devours them. This is hell.

“And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” (Revelation 20:9 KJV)

Hell lasts a limited amount of time. Afterward, Jesus re-creates the earth and no evidence of sin remains!

“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.” (Revelation 21:1–4 KJV)

The question in my heart is: how can I avoid being disastrously surprised and caught unprepared by this momentous event?

**“But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:4 NKJV)**

Some people, though they don't know the exact day or hour, have been reading their Bibles, they know the signs of the times, they have been preparing for this event. And they are getting ready day by day. The exact timing they don't know but they will be found ready because they are always in a state of readiness. Others will be surprised who are not in a state of readiness, and their surprise will be disastrous, like the Allied forces caught during the Battle of the Bulge. Here is how we can be prepared:

Bible Study

“Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” (Acts 17:11 NIV11-GK)

There will be many deceptions and miraculous events at the end of time and if you do not know your Bible, you will be deceived!

“For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” (Matthew 24:5 KJV)

“For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” (Revelation 16:14 KJV)

Prayer

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.” Colossians 4:2-6 ESV

“With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints” (Ephesians 6:18 NAS95)

Sharing

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16 NKJV)

“The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself.” (Proverbs 11:25 NKJV)

Baptism

“He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mark 16:16 NKJV)

Why?

“how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.” (Acts 10:38 ESV)

“Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:3-4 NKJV)

Does it matter how you are baptized?

“There is .. one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all...” (Ephesians 4:4-6 NKJV)

“Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was **much water** there. And they came and were baptized.” (John 3:23 NKJV)

“When He had been baptized, Jesus **came up** immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”” (Matthew 3:13-17 NKJV)

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went **down into** the water, and he baptized him.” (Acts 8:35-38 NKJV)

It was not until the Council of Ravenna in 1311 AD, that sprinkling and pouring were officially accepted as equally valid as immersion in the rite of baptism, but without any Biblical justification. “Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down.” (Mark 7:13 NET)

“Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38 NRSV)

Is it ever right to get re-baptized?

“And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.” And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?” So they said, “Into John’s baptism.” Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” (Acts 19:1–5 NKJV)

Who should be re-baptized

1. If never buried
2. If never accepted Jesus
3. If fallen away from Jesus
4. If never taught to keep all the commandments

“He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mark 16:16 NKJV)

“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16 NKJV)

Would you like to take this step today?