

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XII

March 23, 2003

No. 12

## THE DAY OF VISITATION

By: Jerry Fite

**W**e know that our manner of living has the power to shame those who call us evil doers (I Peter 3:16). Peter also reminds us that such excellent character of living has the power to cause those who see our deeds to glorify God: *“having your behaviour seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation”* (I Peter 2:12). The character of the Christian life is powerful in silencing the blasphemer, and causing God to be glorified in honest hearts. but what is this day of visitation?

The Greek word translated “visitation” is “EPISKOPE”. This word denotes “that act by which God looks into and searches out the ways, deeds, character, of men in order to adjudge them their lot accordingly, whether joyous or sad” (Thayer, p. 242). The process of “inspection”, “investigation” and “visitation” is conveyed in the word.

Sometimes the day of visitation points to the day when God investigates the character of men

in Judgment. Those not ashamed, and who do not blush shall fall *“at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith Jehovah”* (Jeremiah 6:15). The idol, and the idolater will both *“perish”* in *“the time of their visitation”* (Jeremiah 10:15).

God’s visitation also conveys in Scripture the visitation of God’s mercy and redemption. Zacharias praises God in anticipation of the work of his son John and the coming of Jesus when he says, *“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; for he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people”* (Luke 1:68). He later sees their work of God being brought forth *“because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high visit us”* (Luke 1:78).

In Christ, God was bringing to his people *“this day”* of *“peace”*. Jerusalem was blind to this fact, causing Jesus to cry over it. Destruction was ahead of Jerusalem *“because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation”* (Luke 19:42, 44).

Since “the day of visitation” can be viewed as a visitation

of “judgment” or “mercy”, we look to the context of a passage to determine the meaning of the day of visitation. Seeing the excellent character of the Christian, glorifying God, and experiencing the day of visitation are integrated with one another.

If experiencing the day of Judgment, then one is going to know the character of the Christian is inspired by the Lord before whom he is about to be judged, and will give God the glory. Either it will be too late for his salvation, or before the day of judgment, he will have become a Christian influenced by the life of the Christian.

Or, the godly influence of the Christian is instrumental in one being won to Christ, and therefore enjoying the visitation of God’s mercy in forgiveness when he obeys the Gospel. This is under consideration in I Peter 3:1-6, with the unbelieving husband being gained by seeing up close, in the marriage relationship, the meek spirit of the Godly wife. May we all live godly lives so that the day of visitation will be enjoyed by our neighbors.