

# Glad Tidings

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

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## The Day Of Visitation

(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*). But Peter also reminds us that the excellent character of living can cause those who sees 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 potentially silences closed minded charges and opens hearts to glorify God. 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*).

In Scripture, God’s visitation also conveys 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*). Zacharias later explains this work of God will occur “*because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high shall 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 therefore 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 that the excellent character of the Christian,

the response of glorifying God, and experiencing the day of visitation are integrated with one another, how should we interpret Peter?

If “the day of visitation” is 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. Acknowledging this, he 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 process of influence is under consideration in *I Peter 3:1-6*. In marriage, the unbelieving husband is gained for Christ by seeing up close the meek spirit of the Godly wife. May we all live godly lives before our neighbors, so that “the day of visitation” will be a positive one for them, regardless if the day of visitation is the day “of Judgement” or “day of Redemption.”