

“The Day of Visitation”

by Wayne Goff

“Having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:12).

What is the “*day of visitation*” mentioned here? Some might automatically assume that it is the Judgment Day and several commentators have said as much. However, I believe the context points to the “*day of visitation*” as the day when one is saved by obedience to the gospel. Let’s see why I say this.

First, Peter is telling Christians to behave themselves honorably among unbelievers *even when they speak against Christians as evildoers*. Actions speak louder than words. As unbelievers observe the godly conduct of Christians, they may have a change of heart and turn themselves to the gospel! This thought is also seen in 1 Peter 3 when Peter admonishes believing wives to be submissive to their unbelieving husbands so that they might “*be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear*” (1 Pet. 3:1-2).

Is the word “*visitation*” ever used in the sense of salvation? Yes it is. Jesus’ condemnation of Jerusalem in Luke 19 explains that the city will be totally destroyed “*...because you did not know the time of your **visitation***” (v. 44). Jesus Christ, the true Messiah, was the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecy and of the coming kingdom. When they murdered Him, they missed out on their day of salvation, or visitation. We also see this more plainly in Psalm 106:4 when the psalmist cries out to God: “*...Oh, **visit** me with Your salvation!*” This verb form is also found several times in the New Testament. “*Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has **visited** and redeemed His people*” (Lk. 1:68).

So I believe that Peter is encouraging Christians to behave honorably among their persecuting unbelievers with the hope that such conduct might cause them to obey the gospel and thus “*glorify God in the day of visitation.*”

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