

The Time of Visitation

By Rich Jacobs, M.D.

When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation." **Luke 19:41-44, NASB**

- To whom is Jesus speaking? Why is He upset?
 - Did Jesus witness anything different as He approached Jerusalem than He had witnessed when He approached Jerusalem during the previous two years? How many times a year do you think Jesus went to Jerusalem?
 - What is this "time of your visitation"? How is this time more significant than any other previous time? (*Hint*: See **Luke 13:6-9**)
 - Do you think the "time of your visitation" has a purpose? Explain.
 - Do you think the time before the time of visitation as a purpose? What is it?
1. The scenario depicted in **Luke 19**
 - a. Spoken by Christ at the end of three years of ministry, fulfilled prophecy regarding the Messiah, with teaching, and miracles. Israel ignored all this and rejected Jesus as Christ and as their Lord.
 - b. **Luke 19:41-44** is preceded by the Lord's parable of the rejected king who brings retribution (**Luke 19:12-27**), the events of Palm Sunday (**Luke 19:28-38**), Christ's rejection of the leaders of Israel (**Luke 19:39**).
 - c. Christ's prophecies in **Luke 19:41-44**, were literally fulfilled in 70 A.D., when Roman legions under General Titus laid siege to Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple and the city.
 - d. The Greek phrase that is translated "*the time of your visitation*" could also be translated "the season of your inspection" (τὸν καιρὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς σου).
 - i. The concept outlines a process by which God graciously teaches us what we need to know to live righteous lives.
 - ii. The concept also implies that God's grace provides a "season" when judgment will be withheld to give us time to learn holiness. This season of grace ends with a "time of inspection" or test, leading to judgment.
 - Can you think of any other Biblical examples of "grace --> instruction --> inspection --> judgment"? (*Hint*: See **Genesis 18:20-19:25**)
 - During the time of grace, God's instruction comes through His Word, the counsel and power of the Holy Spirit, and the experiences, ministry, and support of others. Which of these elements can you identify in the Biblical example(s) you just identified?
 - iii. Grace is part of God's plan for His people, but it exists for a purpose that is tested by God. During God's grace, He prepares us for that test, which is related to his plan and purpose. This is well illustrated in God's dealing with Israel.
 2. God's "preparation" of Israel for the "time of your visitation" includes
 - explaining God's plan and purpose for Israel (Who and Why)
 - instructing and teaching Israel all that God requires of them ("What, When, How),
 - coaching, reminding, and exhorting Israel about their purpose and role (Reminders and Reinforcement),

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- reinforcing their faith through divine intervention and miracles (Encouragement and Exhortation),
- giving Israel promises and warnings as incentives (Motivation).
- judgment (Testing and Consequences)

Deuteronomy illustrates how God graciously prepared of Israel for her calling using these techniques.

- a. Explanation of God's plan and purpose for Israel

"Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." **Exodus 19:5, 6**

- b. God's instructions and teaching to Israel on God's requirements.

Then Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully. . ." **Deuteronomy 5:1**

- c. God's coaching, reminding, and exhortation

You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. "You shall write them on the doorposts of you house and on your gates. . ." **Deuteronomy 6:7-9**

- d. God's reinforcement of their faith and proof of His power

Moreover, the LORD showed great and distressing signs and wonders before our eyes against Egypt, Pharaoh and all his household; He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers. **Deuteronomy 6:22, 23**

You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD. Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. . . "He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint. In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end. Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' **Deuteronomy 8:2-4, 15-17**

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- e. God's promises and warnings

Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face. Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them. Deuteronomy 7:9-11

See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today; and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known. Deuteronomy 11:26-28

- 🕒 Read **Deuteronomy** for the context and details of the verses referenced above.
- How is grace related to the times of God's instruction, exhortation, promises and warnings?
 - How does judgment related to the "time of visitation"? Explain.
 - How is grace related to judgment? Explain.
 - What do you conclude is the purpose of grace? of the time of visitation? of judgment? Explain.
 - How does all of this relate to **Luke 19**, above?
3. The largely gentile Church has been "grafted" onto Israel (see **Romans 11:17-24**).
- Do you think God interacts with the Church in a way that is similar to His interactions with Israel?
 - Do you think God's grace could have another purpose other than your personal salvation? Explain.
 - Could this purpose imply God has things we must learn and apply as part of His purpose and plan? Explain.

Now read the following scripture verses that God has given to the Church.

But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. 1 Peter 2:9, 10

- How does **1 Peter**, spoken to the Church, compare with what God said to Israel through Moses? Explain.
- Although we are saved by grace and not by works (**Ephesians 2: 8,9**), does this mean nothing is required of us? (*Hint: see Ephesians 2:10*)

Review the following scripture verses

For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do

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you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? . . . But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.

Romans 6:14-16, 22

*For this is the will of God, your sanctification . . . **1 Thessalonians 4:3***

*For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. **1 Thessalonians 4:7***

*. . . God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. **1 Thessalonians 2:13***

*Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. **Hebrews 12:14***

- What do you conclude requires of Christians? Why do you think He imposes this requirement on us? How is this similar to His requirement of Israel? Explain
- From all this, what do you conclude is the purpose of grace? Explain.

Review the following scripture verses

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. **1 Corinthians 5:10***

*Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. **1 Peter 2:12***

- Do you think there is a “time of visitation” for Christians? Explain.
- What is the purpose of this “time of visitation”? What is the significance of all this to you and your present Christian life? Explain.
- In light of what you’ve just learned, what must you do? When must you do it? Why?