

The Day of Visitation

*A Message from
Pastor Doug Riggs*

Transcribed, Illustrated and Edited by
John Mark

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From the audio podcast *The ByteShow with GeorgeAnn Hughes*

There's a phrase in 1st Peter that has gripped me for many years and I thought I'd just read the passage to see what the listeners' awareness or thoughts are on this phrase. It's in 1 Peter 2:11 and it begins with "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lust which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they carefully observe (scrutinize) them, glorify God in ***the day of visitation.***"

Years ago when I came across that, I began to look at that particular phrase. The Greek term comes from the same word we get as *a bishop – an overseer, episkopos (ἐπίσκοπος)*, and *the day of visitation* refers to the day in which the Lord oversees His interest in affairs with regard to His people. But I didn't know until some careful study that this phrase is a very highly loaded theological term that's used throughout the Old Testament. In order to understand what Peter meant by this, I had to go back in the Old Testament to see how it was used. It was really an eye-opener to see the tremendous scope and breadth of this term as to how it was used in various contexts throughout the Old Testament. So when Peter used this phrase, his readers knew what it meant. The only Bible they had was the Old Testament. The New Testament was still being written, and they knew; Peter understood. But we are sixty generations removed from that generation, so we have to go back and see the framework this represents. And so, hopefully this will begin to have more meaning to God's people, especially as we approach the end of this dispensation that will result in the Lord returning for His church.

Without actually going to the term *the day of visitation* - the whole context of the Peter's epistle is really talking about the suffering that is going on amongst the people God that is testing and purifying their faith so that in the revelation of Jesus Christ, He would be glorified in His saints who will be glorified with Him. It's

an appeal to be ready for this final salvation that is coming to the church. We know that the context is in 1 Peter 4:7, "The end of all things is at hand..." Even more persecution is coming according to 1 Peter 4:12-19. And in that same context, Peter says, "It is time for judgment to begin at the household of God," that is, the family God, "...and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?" The context is suffering as it relates to the preparatory process that we're all going through to prepare us for our eternal vocation in God's Kingdom.

The day of visitation, what does this mean? In order to understand this we have to first of all see what it means in terms of its usage in scriptures. By the way, *the day of visitation* has never occurred. In the Bible, the term *visitation* is never referred to as a future time in eternity, or a time of judgment of rewards. It is always within the context of history. That which Peter is writing about, he was anticipating; he is living with the expectancy that the Lord is going to return in his lifetime. We know that from 1 Peter 4:7 where he says, "The end of all things is near (at hand); therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer." From his perspective the Lord is coming within the context of his generation. And so, in that context, he is writing to encourage believers who are suffering; he is writing to give them an understanding of why they're suffering as it relates to the coming of the Lord.

To summarize this for people who really need to get a grip on what is going to be coming on this world in the very near future, for us as believers, we need to be reminded this term *visitation* has a two-fold meaning: 1) to those who are not prepared - those who are in a state of apostasy or have defected from the Lord - then it's a time of judgment - and we're talking about historical judgment; and 2) to those who have been following the Lord, and not that any of us are perfect, but we have a heart open to the Lord and are in submission to Him, it will be time of visitation of blessing and deliverance. It is blessing and vindication and the confirmation of one's destiny to those who are walking with the Lord. It is like a two-edged sword. The day of visitation is when God breaks into history, depending on where you are - that will determine how that day of visitation will affect any individual or any church.

The Day of Visitation
2-Fold Meaning:
1: Judgment to those in apostasy - unprepared
2: Blessing / vindication / confirmation of destiny to those walking with the Lord

When we take that principle forward to Revelation 2 and 3, we see that the Lord is addressing the churches of Asia during the time of John; but it's also a prophecy that characterizes and outlines the entire history of the church, and also reveals the conditions of things at the end as well. It is really when this all comes forward into our generation that it represents *the day of visitation*.



This same term is used throughout the Bible as a coming day of judgment. In fact, if you were to go through Jeremiah - and I'll just name some of the passages for those that are really serious about Bible study - this is usually translated *punishment* or *time of punishment*. It's the same Hebrew word in Jeremiah 11:22, Jeremiah 23:2 and 12; and there are passages such as Jeremiah 29:32, 46:25, and

50:18. These passages refer to the coming judgment on Judah for their own disobedience to the Lord.

But we also have passages that refer to God's coming judgment upon the whole world. This is known in terms of biblical eschatology - or the study of last things - as *the day of the Lord*, or as Zephaniah refers to it, as *the great and terrible day of the Lord*; and this is usually translated *a time of punishment* by passages such as Isaiah 13:11, Isaiah 24:21 and 22, which are tremendous passages. And then compare these with Isaiah 27:1 where God will judge Leviathan - a mythopoetic reference to Satan in the time of coming judgment. There are other passages that I could cite, but I will leave them out. But often when you find the term *punishment* - that is a use of the term.

The New Testament word *visitation* is *episkopē* (ἐπισκοπή) which is in the Greek; but the Hebrew equivalent to that term in the Old Testament is the word *pāqad* (פָּקַד) as the verb, or *p^aqudâ* (הִפְקִדָּה), and is the same thing. So, I'm going to actually be giving a little definition based upon the Old Testament equivalent to which Peter is referring. For example, on an individual basis, what happens when the Lord *visits* someone who is in great need or in distress and is looking for the Lord to intervene in their life?

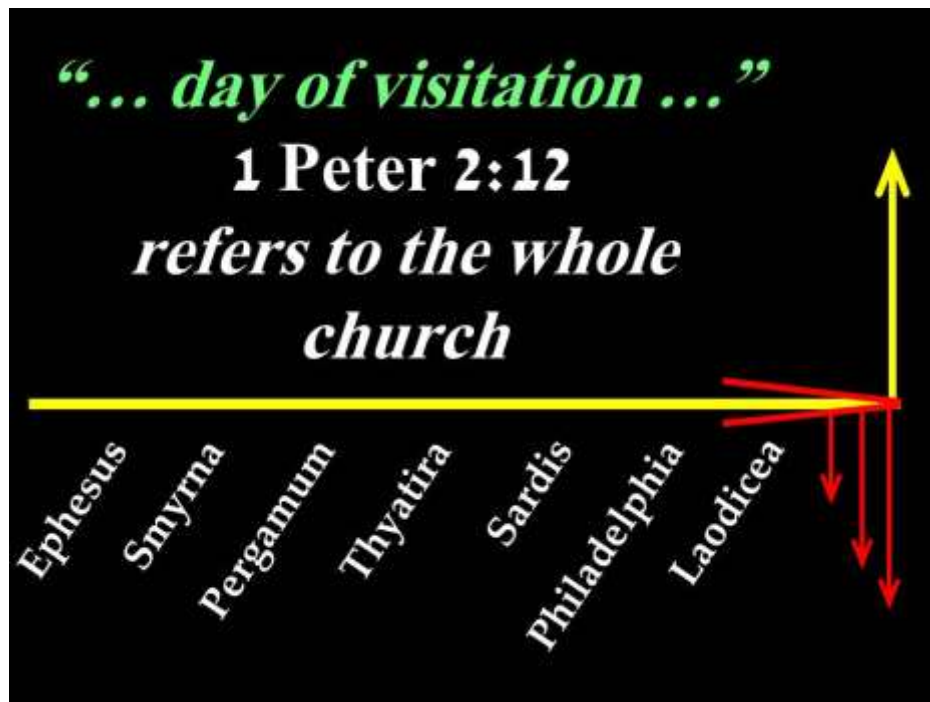
God made a promise that Sarah would bear a son



We see in Genesis 21 the fulfillment of the promise that God made to Sarah. God promised Sarah that she would conceive and give birth to the promised child that would bring forth Messiah - referring to Isaac. And so, in Genesis 21:1 it says, "Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as

He had promised.” I'm reading from the New American Standard Bible. The word *took note* is literally *visited*; He *visited* Sarah - so God intervened and He fulfilled the promise, and her life was changed forever – forever!

Peter talks about *a day of visitation* - that's with reference to the whole church. We are facing days that when God breaks into history, *the day of visitation* when it finally comes on the church corporately and globally, it will bring everything to consummation and prepare the church for rapture. The church must be prepared, but there's no one individual or group of believers that can do this. God must intervene and be *the* catalyst to bring everything forward to consummation. That's how that word is used on an individual basis.



There are two things about the coming of the Lord: one is that we see that when He comes for the church, the church is caught up to meet Him in the air - and that revelation was given uniquely to Paul in 1 Thessalonians - we see that that is a special revelation that was given him by the word of the Lord, and that *catching up* is *in the air*. Not everyone is going to see it; they will *meet the Lord in the air*. But for the second coming, we see from passages like Colossians 3:4 and 2 Thessalonians 1:10, when Christ returns *with* His bride *with* His saints, and He comes to be glorified in them, He returns to earth and ‘every eye will see Him’ (Revelation 1:7); and so, I refer that to the second coming. But as to the coming of

the Lord, there are two phases. There is His coming *for His church*; and then when He returns *with His church* to this earth to establish His Kingdom. Usually we understand the second coming as that which is a reference to Jesus Christ returning from heaven to this earth to destroy the armies of Antichrist and to establish His Kingdom.

The Coming of the Lord
2-Phases:
1: Christ comes
FOR His church
(Col. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:10)
2: Christ comes back
WITH His church
(Rev. 1:7)

1 Peter 1:5 says that we as believers “are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” This salvation is not just an initial born-again event, but it's an eschatological event; it is that salvation which includes the Lord coming for His church - and he says in this context, “to be revealed in the last time,” or *the last strategic season of extremity and crisis* is the word for *time* there. He wants believers to be prepared; and he says it's going to be revealed - or unveiled - in verse 5, and he talks about the coming revelation of Jesus Christ.

If you look at verse 13 of Chapter 1, he says, “Therefore, prepare (gird) your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Not to be too technical, but the little word *at* does not exist in the original; it's *in* the revelation. In other words, when we look at the coming revelation of Jesus Christ, that is a growing phenomenon where God the Holy Spirit is increasing the unveiling of the person of Christ to believers. This will culminate at the end as the revelation of Jesus

Christ produces a manifestation of a testimony that will be a result of *the day of visitation*.

Now, when we put 1st Peter together with 2nd Peter, we see that the culmination, or the final manifestation of that which he refers to as *the day of visitation* will be Jesus Christ arising as the morning star in the hearts of His people. That is found in 2 Peter 1:19 where he says that 'we do well to pay heed to the prophetic word which has been made more sure,' and he's referring to Jesus Christ on the mount of transfiguration where He was transformed; and in that context we see Him coming in power and glory to establish His Kingdom. It's like a prophecy. He says, "So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts."

All these terms that he uses, whether *day of visitation* or *morning star*, he knew exactly what they meant. His readers knew what they meant, those who had a Jewish background. The *morning star* in Numbers 24:17 refers to a noble kingly figure that would arise to rule the world, referring to Jesus Christ; but *the morning star* also is a double reference to Jesus Christ as 'the root and offspring of David,' and we see that combination of themes coming together in Revelation 22:16, where Jesus declares, "I am the root and the descendant (offspring) of David, the bright and morning star." So what Peter is saying here is that as we progressively become a partaker of the divine nature - and this is a result of God the Holy Spirit revealing Christ in our hearts - that it is a growing, progressive phenomenon. And then the final revelation of Jesus Christ that he refers to in 1 Peter 1:13 will be when He comes at the second advent - but leading up to that, there is the growing revelation that will produce the manifestation of Jesus Christ as a testimony.

Obviously there is no individual group or denomination or church that could ever bring this about. We are so weak and impotent when it comes to any kind of Christian testimony that even comes close to what we see in the Book of Acts. It's going to require an intervention of God - a final *visitation* in the midst of this age's worst darkness - and when I say *darkness*, I'm not talking about the tribulation period - but about the darkness that is at the end of the church age that will finally culminate in the appearance of the man of sin, the Antichrist himself.

So what is God going to do to offset this darkness? He's going to have to intervene in history. And the first intervention is with the church, and the Church is His primary object of focus. If you look at 1 Peter 4:12-13, in the midst of suffering that was occurring to believers during the time of Peter's writing, he says, "Beloved, do not be surprised (or shocked) at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange (foreign) thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also..." not 'at the revelation of His glory,' the original is "in the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation." Many will say, 'Well, that's going to be the rapture!' But leading up to that there is the revelation of His glory in our hearts. We see that in Revelation Chapter 1 - actually the first three chapters - the Book begins with the title, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. That revelation first must have a full completion in the church and then through the church, as God's vessel, that revelation of Christ will be revealed to Israel and the nations. So, there's going to be a revelation of His glory *in time*. This will be the result of God's *visitation*.

This is probably somewhat foreign to many, but if we get back into the writings of Peter, we remember that he's writing to people in his generation that were expecting this to happen. And here it is - some sixty generations since then - and it hasn't happened. As to *the day of visitation*, now we understand this is the final eschatological - or end-time - move of God in the church to bring about that testimony in a remnant that will consummate the age. But if you read in the same context of 1 Peter 4:12, notice verse 17: "For it is time..." - remember this is in the context of the revelation of Jesus Christ - "... it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God." And what time is that? 1 Peter 4:7, "The end of all things is near..." - "It is time for judgment to begin with the household of God..." - or 'the family of God,' the church, "... and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?" That's *the day of visitation!* The day of visitation is a time of judgment; but to those that have been prepared by God, it will be a time of vindication and blessing.



I just mentioned this is a brief review; hopefully that this is not going to be too much in depth for those who don't have a frame of reference. But it is something that I have lived for all my life as a Christian when I first discovered this, that God has a plan at the end of this age for the church called *the day of visitation*. It has never happened in history and that day of visitation coincides with the final phase of the church age when it's very dark - because the morning star, using that imagery that Peter mentions in 2 Peter 1:19, in the physical realm, that refers to Venus. Venus does not appear on the horizon until the very end of the night; and when it appears, the coming day, the sun - which would be analogous to the coming of the Lord to establish his Kingdom on earth - the morning star appears on the horizon and all other stars are eclipsed. It comes right at the very end of a long night which means that the church is going to pass through its greatest suffering - it's greatest tribulation *prior to* the great tribulation which is going to come upon Israel and the nations. It says, "it is time for judgment to begin with household of God." It doesn't begin with Israel and the nations. The day of visitation upon the nations and Israel is the time of the tribulation period. But the church must pass through a time of darkness leading up to, and preparing a way for the man of sin to be revealed.

Once you see this eschatological framework, you have a solid grounding in where you are in history; you have a clear understanding of God's purpose and end-time plan for Israel and the nations which comes after this; but God's whole focus is on bringing the church to completion - bringing the church "to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13); of Christ being fully formed in His people (Galatians 4:19). This is the key because Christ in His people is the revelation of His glory. The church is the chosen instrument to reveal the glory of

the Messiah. That's found in 2 Thessalonians 2:14, Colossians 3:4, and 2 Thessalonians 1:10. When He comes, He will come to be glorified in His saints - and this is so tremendous. With all the confusion that is out there and fear of believers going through the time of Antichrist, I do not see that at all in the scriptures; but that does not mean that the church is not going to pass through a time of great suffering - that is a part of *the day of visitation*.

Day of Visitation on the Church
God bringing church to completion:
“... to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ...” Eph. 4:13
“..... until Christ is (fully) formed in you.....”
Gal. 4:19

Day of Visitation on Israel & the Nations
the “man of sin” appears
The Tribulation

Throughout history, great revivals have been in a representative way a visitation of God. When we seek revival, it is a time when God intervenes - He breaks in, and our lives are changed forever. It's a day of visitation. When Peter talks about *the day of visitation*, this is an eschatological event that is global; it involves the entire church. There have been representations of this - in fact what's going on in China now is a visitation of God. There are 800,000 to 1,000,000 people a month coming to Christ. This visitation is unprecedented; this is a visitation for the church that will be equated to a visitation when God comes to visit this world in judgment during the great tribulation - that's also called a visitation, as I cited those passages in Isaiah 24 where it's translated *punishment*. It is the final move of God to move history forward to the manifestation of His Kingdom. If you look at Revelation, the whole Book is titled *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. That revelation of Jesus Christ is first to the church.



And what is the revelation of Christ in Chapter 1? There are over 30 references in Revelation Chapter 1 to the Old Testament there. It's like a picture that unfolds from the Old Testament. We see Christ there in that high priestly garment that represents who He is as a King and a Priest and a Judge. In fact, the very garment, the language that describes His priestly garment that He is wearing is actually used in the Greek translation in Ezekiel 9, and is a passage of judgment. But the point is, that when we see the features of Christ there in Revelation 1, we see Him in the fullness of who He is as Son of Man coming in power and great glory. That's who He is as the morning star. And here He is measuring the churches according to Himself. In Revelation 2 and 3 we see a piece of that Revelation 1 being projected into the churches where the churches are being measured and judged according to that revelation. The day visitation will be the final consummation of this process.

God is going to have in the end a church that will be representative of this Christ; in the fullness of that glory there is going to be a testimony. There are going to be people who embody this in terms of the testimony, the remnant; and there will be churches that are going to represent this Christ in His moral and spiritual glory. This will be God's answer to [The Black Awakening](#) (the book by Russ Diszdar), the great judgment that is coming upon the world, and it begins with the church first, Peter says.



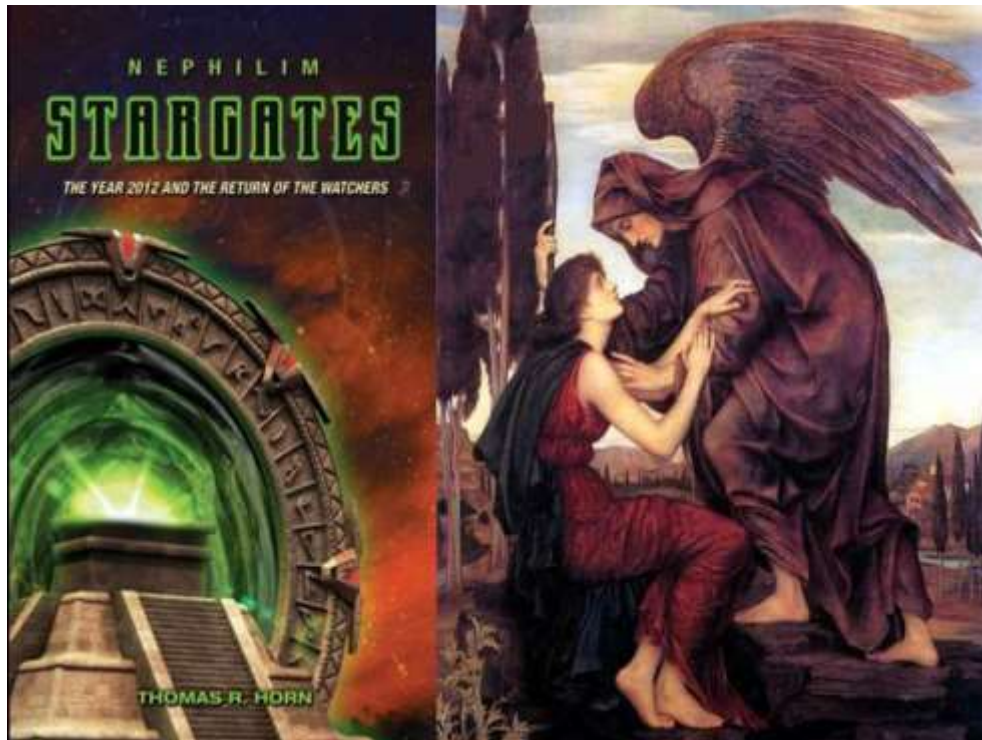
God's answer will be to bring forth the revelation of this Christ in Revelation 1 in His people at the end. That's what we should be living for - living daily in dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus as Man says that 'I can do nothing apart from the Father,' John 5:19 and 30. 'I can do nothing!' In His humanity which was sinless, He could do nothing; He lived in perfect submission and dependence upon the Father. So, when we think about Christ in His humanity living in this relationship with the Father, this is how God wants to see His church recovered, living in this kind of relationship corporately together as assemblies of God's people in submission and dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and the result will be the revelation of that Christ which we see in Revelation 1.

I believe that we are on the very precipice of this *day of visitation*. It will be *His* work. If you look at that passage in 1st Peter, again, the day of visitation can be defined in this way - in the revelation of Jesus Christ which will eventually culminate in heaven. It says, 1 Peter 1:13 "Therefore, prepare (gird) your minds for action, keep sober (alert) in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you..." not *at*, but "... *in* the revelation of Jesus Christ." In other words, the day of visitation will be the final revelation of Jesus Christ – that's Revelation 1:1 - that will bring the church to completion; that will culminate in the fullness of that revelation when we're at the right hand of God the Father and at the judgment seat of Christ, and in eternity. But notice, it's *the grace to be brought*. The day of visitation is going to be a special bringing in of grace so that the age can be consummated.

What took place in the Book of Acts will be surpassed by the day of visitation at the very end at the close of the church age, and we're so close now - because think about this: Israel is back in the land, and Jesus said in Matthew 24, 'This generation that sees all these signs' that He mentioned in Matthew 24, 'This generation will not pass away!' He didn't say how long a generation is. He said 'this generation will not pass away.' We go back to 1948; '...they will not pass away until all these things be fulfilled.' We are living in the generation of the return of the Son of Man. We don't know when that will be, but we live in the generation.

That means for the church, the day of visitation is right up on us. I'm not setting any kind of a date, but with the things that are coming upon us and with the inevitable financial collapse that is just being postponed by these bailouts, when it finally does come, you take people like Shiff and Celente, these economic forecasters, when it does it occur, this economic collapse, it will far exceed anything that happened in the Great Depression. Celente says that there will be massive riots; there will be race wars; there's going to be chaos and probably ultimately martial law. In that kind of environment, God's answer is the morning star; God's answer is the day of visitation. In fact, that is a part of visitation.

Perilous times will set in (2 Timothy 3:1). That same word is used in Matthew 8, *extremely violent*. The word *perilous times* in 2 Timothy 3:1 is the same word that is used for the demoniac in Matthew 8 where it's translated in the New American Standard Bible, *extremely violent*. Jesus said, "And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man" (Luke 17:26), referring to the second advent. 'Just as it was, so it shall be...' - and what does Genesis 6 say about the days of Noah? There was great *violence* in the earth (verse 11 and 13), and it grieved God that He'd even created man (verse 6); and He determined to blot man out (verse 7). The word *violence* in the Hebrew is *ḥāmās (חַמָּס)*, and it means a kind of violence that represents human bloodshed. These are the days of Noah. Additionally, in that context you have the reemergence of the phenomenon that produced the *Nephilim* on earth in those days, the union of fallen angels with women producing this hybrid offspring, called *Nephilim*. We are living in that time; this is what Tom Horn has written about it in [Nephilim Stargates](#).



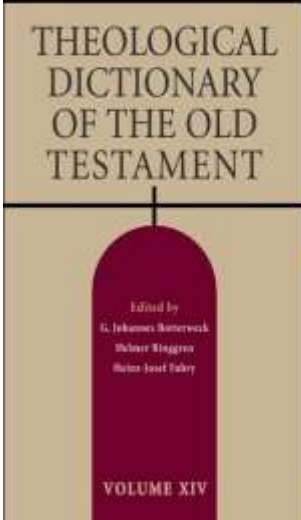
Now, going back to *the day of visitation* - these are just some notes that I have taken from the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. These are for people that really want to study the word and this is not really designed to be just a little sermon or anything, but it gives you a background so we can see what Peter meant when he talked about the coming *day of visitation*.

“This verb that is used for *visitation* - *to visit* (*pāqad* - *פָּקַד*) seems to be a word with a double meaning in the Hebrew. One must assume the presence of the basic meaning that is then construed differently in different contexts. One such basic meaning might well be to examine closely, whereby the judgment or decision issuing from such an examination is included.”

I just read from Genesis 21:1 where the Lord *visited* Sarah, and here's a footnote:

“That particular term often describes divine intervention for blessing or cursing or judgment. It indicates God's special attention to an individual or a matter always with respect to His people's destiny. He may *visit*, that is, *destroy* the Amalekites; He may *visit*, that is, *to deliver* his people in Egypt. Here in Genesis 21:1 He *visits* Sarah to allow her to have the promised child. One's destiny is changed when the Lord *visits*.” That's a quotation from the Net Bible.

The Day of Visitation



THEOLOGICAL
DICTIONARY
OF THE OLD
TESTAMENT

Edited by
G. Johannes Botterweck
Helmer Ringgren
Hans-Joachim Fabry

VOLUME XIV

Hebrew: the verb
פָּקַד (paqad) means
to visit; to examine
closely

To Visit = deliver His
people in/from Egypt

For example, in Job 31:13, Job says, “If I have disregarded the right of my male servants or my female servants when they disputed with me, then what will I do when God confronts me in judgment, when He intervenes? How will I respond to Him?” There again is *visit* with *God* as the subject. It means any divine intervention for blessing or cursing (judgment); anything God does that changes a person’s life. Here Job refers it *to visit - to judge*.

We see throughout the Old Testament so many passages that use this term, and when it's a judgment passage, it is usually translated in most our translations as *punish*. God punished the nation of the Assyrians; you see it used in Isaiah 10:3 when He *judges*, or He *punishes*. When He comes to judge the world in righteousness (Psalm 9:8; 96:13; 98:9; Acts 17:31), He will visit and punish them. That is *the day of visitation*.

Here's the important thing to me when I began to study this. For Peter, when he uses that term to live uprightly, to live in reverential fear of the Lord as he says in 1 Peter 1, so that in the day of visitation the pagans (the unbelievers) who are scrutinizing your behavior, they will glorify God in the day visitation (1 Peter 2:12). What does that mean? Something's going to happen in the day of visitation that will so strengthen God's remnant that the testimony of Jesus will go forth and it will bring in the ‘fullness of the Gentiles’ (Romans 11:25). Those who are now unbelievers will become believers and the church will be completed; the fullness

of Gentiles will come in because the church will have 'attained the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,' that's Ephesians 4:13 compared with Romans 11:25. So the day of visitation is the divine initiative; it is the catalyst to bring forth the completion of the testimony of Jesus.



Going back to the historical background of this particular term: when the children of Israel are still in Egypt and when Joseph was dying, and they're blessed because Joseph has come to power, and Joseph is now giving his last words to his family. It says in Genesis 50:24, 'Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely take care of (*visit*) you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.'" And then in Genesis 50:25, 'Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take care of (*visit*) you, and you shall carry my bones up from here.'" *He shall come to you* is the verb *pāqad* (פָּקַד) - He will *visit* you – *visiting, He will visit you*; that means to intervene for blessing or cursing. Here Joseph announces that God will come to fulfill the promises by delivering them from Egypt. The statement is emphasized by the use of the infinitive absolute of the verb, *God will surely visit you*.

So what happened 400 years later? How do we see the children of Israel? The Pharaoh that they once knew that was friendly has died and we see in the beginning of the Book of Exodus the conditions that are oppressing God's people, and they are suffering greatly. We see in Exodus 1 that they are under great distress.

Exodus 1:8 and following says, 'Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come, let us deal wisely with them, or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land."

'So they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them (the children of Israel) with hard labor (they became slaves). And they built for Pharaoh storage cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel. The Egyptians compelled the sons of Israel to labor rigorously; and they made their lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and bricks and at all kinds of labor in the field, all their labors which they rigorously imposed on them.'

Their situation was very severe; and when we come to the end of Exodus 2:23, it says, 'Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out (notice, it's a corporate cry); and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God. So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God saw the sons of Israel, and God (knew; had intimate knowledge) took notice of them.'

So what's next? Along comes Moses, and he just happens to see this thorn bush - it's aflame, and it doesn't go out - and we know God is revealing Himself in this thorn bush. Who's the thorn bush? 'That's you, Moses! You're a curse without Me; you've already proved that. Without My presence, you're just a thorn bush; but with My presence, I am here.' And He tells Moses, 'I have come down - I have heard the cry of My people - I have come down to deliver them.' And then He says to Moses, 'You go! I have come down.' Now He commissions Moses. Well, Moses is pretty shocked by all this and basically says later on that he's not the man, that God needs to find somebody else. He says He's come down - He's come down to deliver His people.

He says in Exodus 3:6 "'I am the God of your father,'" after appearing to Moses in the bush, "'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'" Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.' He called him from the bush, and what did He go on to say? He says in verse 7, "'I have surely seen the

affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians...”

When Jesus comes to rescue His church at the end of this age, it'll be no different than the children of Israel that were in captivity; it will be a deliverance. According to 1 Thessalonians 1:10, He will rescue His church, His people, from the coming wrath. It is a deliverance. He says, 'I've seen their affliction. I've come down to deliver them from the power, the authority, of the Egyptians.' It's not the Egyptians for us; it'll be the god of this world, the system of Antichrist that is emerging that is going to become more hostile toward any Christian - any believer. This is coming on the horizon.

And Moses said to God, 'Who shall I say sent me?' And God said, 'I am who I am! I am the eternal everlasting God. I made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and I have come down. I've heard the cry of my people and I've come in response to their cry in My faithfulness to the promise I gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.'

Exodus 3:15, 'God, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations."

Now notice verse 16: "Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, "I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt.'" The word *concerned* is *visiting* - *I have visited you*. What does that mean? The nation is being formed; their destiny will be changed forever. It will result in a mighty deliverance. It means God is breaking into history. He is overseeing His affairs, and He brings judgment upon the Egyptians on one side, He *visits* the Egyptians with judgment and death, and in the same process He *visits* His people and He delivers them. It's a two-edged sword. It says in Exodus 12:12 that He judged the gods of Egypt; He judged them. This particular term is used two other times in Exodus.

In Exodus 3:16, which I just read, 'Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, "The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and

Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, 'I am indeed concerned about you (I have attended carefully to you) and what has been done to you in Egypt.'"

I just want to stop right here and say two-thirds of the church in the world is suffering for their faith. Nothing is going to change. There have been more martyrs in the last century than all combined centuries put together. And so, ultimately, when we talk about the rapture or the Lord coming for His people, it is *a deliverance*; because more and more is the hostility of this world and the hostility of Satan.

Why did Pharaoh refuse so vigorously to let God's people go? Because he would lose face; the whole economy depended upon their slave labor. If you remove all these Israelites, the whole nation is going to collapse. But more important than that is that you remove the nation of Israel, history moves forward towards Satan's ultimate demise, because the seed of the woman is in that nation and the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15) is captured. And so God said to Moses, 'You go tell Pharaoh, "let My son go! Let My son go - my firstborn.'" That is Exodus 4:22, 'Let my son go!' In other words, all Israel is referred to as 'My son – My firstborn.' That seed is there in the firstborn, so he (Satan) wants to keep that captive so that that which will be the ultimate destruction of him and his kingdom will be contained in captivity. And so, God intervenes and He moves forward; the same way when the church is caught up to the throne into heaven. Once the church is in heaven, the church will displace principalities and powers. It is the destiny of the church, and no other people, to displace principalities and powers.

In 1 Corinthians 6:2-3, Paul says to the Corinthians who were taking other believers to the law courts and trying to settle civil cases, 'What are you doing? Do you not know that you, the saints, will judge the world? Do not know that you saints will judge angels? How much more the matters of everyday life? You wouldn't be doing what you're doing if you knew the high calling to which you were called!'

So, since Satan knows this - the last generation of the church - he will seek to hold them down in captivity and not let them go; and it will require a *visitation* of God to force the adversary to release that last generation to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Satan is not going to let go of the church without a fight! Why?

Because the church is God's chosen instrument for the complete destruction and the removal of him from heaven.



The church is the criterion; we know that from 1 Corinthians 2 and 3 compared with Daniel 7. It's hard for us to understand this, but once we get a revelation of the body of Christ, and knowing that the head, Christ, and His many membered body make up one Christ, referred to as *the Christ* in 1 Corinthians 12:12, then we see that the return of Christ at the Second Advent to this earth will be the result of Satan already cast out of heaven. Where is Satan when Jesus returns to this earth? He's already on earth! Why? He's been cast out of heaven in the middle of the Tribulation. How did he get cast out? He can't be cast out until the church is in heaven with Jesus Christ. The church is the instrument through which God will displace him. It's the same principle; the same antagonism to keep a grip and a hold on the seed of the woman as in Egypt, and it will be the same in the end.



But we are Christ's seed; we are the seed of the Messiah; we know that from Galatians 3:16 and verse 29. So, here's what this passage says in Exodus 3:16:

“This verb, *pāqad* (פָּקַד), has traditionally been rendered *to visit*. This only partially communicates the point of the word. When God visited someone, it meant that He intervened in their lives to change their circumstances or their destiny. When He visited the Amalekites [as I noted earlier in 1 Samuel 15:2], He destroyed them. As we noted when He visited Sarah, He provided the long awaited child (Genesis 21:1). It refers to God's active involvement in human affairs for blessing or for cursing (judgment). Here it would mean that God had begun to act to deliver the Israelites from bondage and give them the blessings of the covenant that He had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This term *to visit* is joined here...” [it gives a grammatical term I won't go in to – it says the infinitive absolute] “to underscore the certainty of God's purpose of the intervening. ‘I have indeed visited you.’ And so God has intervened, and in this particular grammatical form, makes His statement very emphatic with great force showing that the Lord is determined to carry out His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The same word is used in Genesis 50:24 that we notice.

Peter talks about the day of visitation; he's talking about a time of deliverance that the church is going to need prior to that. It's like the church is going to have

to go through her own tribulation in advance of the tribulation that Israel and the nations will go through in Daniel's seventieth week, known as the Great Tribulation. 'Judgment begins first with the household of God' (1 Peter 4:17), and so all Satan's attention will be focused on the church leading up to the rapture.

Then there will be a pseudo peace, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3, when they're saying 'peace and safety!' The enemy can't say 'peace and safety' while the church is here (Psalm 2:1-3); the church is a restrainer to evil, it's like salt and light. You remove salt and light, then they can say, 'peace and safety!' It's when they're saying, 'peace and safety,' then sudden destruction will come upon *them* like a woman with child. Who are *them*? Those that are here on earth that are worshipping Antichrist.

1 Peter 2:12
"...the day of visitation..."
1 Thess. 5:1-3 "Peace and safety..."

**The church is restraining evil
(Church Age)**

**Israel / the Nations:
The Tribulation (Daniel's 70th Week)**

It's really important that we understand eschatology. I'm not trying to get too much into that right now, but this whole matter of visitation – it's also used in Exodus 4:31; it's also used again in Exodus 20:5. In the judgment passage in Isaiah 5, there are five 'woes' and another two in Isaiah 10. What will you do in the judgment day when destruction arises from a distant place? So there in Isaiah 10:3, the word *visitation* is used for *punish*. In fact, in the Qumran, that is the Jewish community that was part of the Jewish remnant during the time of our Lord, the Essenes, the Qumran; in the Qumran, this is how they understood this term:

“This term *to visit* and *visitation* refers to the final decision at the end of days. The community ...” the remnant of Jews, “...the community rule teaches that the course of this age stands under the sway of two spirits until the time of His visitation. This decision will be to the advantage of the righteous, (that would be like the overcoming remnant) bringing them peace and to the disadvantage of the wicked, bringing them plagues and eternal shame and destruction.”

That's a quote from the Qumran.



Revelation 1 through 3 represents both the historical and the final day of visitation upon the churches in preparation for the Lord's return for His church. The churches are judged by Jesus Christ in Revelation 2 and 3 *before He judges the nations*, Revelation 6 through 19. Jesus Christ is the standard of judgment, Revelation 1.

This is a lot to follow, but I'm going to take this term over into the New Testament now so we can see that when Jesus came to this earth as Savior, He came to none other than 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matthew 10; 6; 15:24). When He came to Israel, what was the response? Those who were awake to Him - those who were watching - they understood what this meant. You take Zacharias who was the father of John the Baptist - notice what he said in Luke 1:67. Here's how he understood the birth of Jesus Christ to that generation of the Jews who were in captivity; they were under the heel of Rome and they were looking for a deliverer – at least some of them were. Here's what he says, beginning in Luke 1:67 - John's father, Zacharias, 'filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He has *visited us...*" - it's the same verb as *pāqad* (פָּקַד), only it's *episkeptomai* (ἐπισκέπτομαι), a Greek term, and it's the verbal form of what we have in 1 Peter 2:12 where Peter talks about the day of *visitation* (that's the noun). Here he says, "...He has *visited* us and accomplished

redemption for His people.” So, you see *visit* and *redemption (deliverance)* is associated as a consequence of *visitation*. He “has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant.” He was speaking like an orthodox Jew.

And you go on and you read down – it’s a wonderful praise he gives. He says that John the Baptist will be the prophet of the Most High, verse 76, and he will go before the Lord to prepare His ways; and verse 77-79, “To give to His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise from on high will *visit us*, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

The coming day of visitation - this is so strategic; people need to understand - ask the Lord: “Show me what this day of visitation is going to mean!” If you are in a place of hopelessness; if you’re in a place of despair; if you're in a prison camp in North Korea; if you're locked up in a prison and that's where you’re being starved to death; if you're locked up in a prison in China: the day of visitation will be *the day of your vindication!* It'll be the day that God will vindicate you. Instead of being in darkness, that day of visitation will result in God actually shining upon you - and shining through you as the morning star (2 Peter 1:19). There's the visitation. Jesus visited that first generation.



Now notice at the end of His earthly ministry to the Jews - notice what is stated about His visitation. This is in Luke 19:41-44. It’s very, very important. Just before He goes to cross: ‘When He (Jesus) approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it.’ He spent almost three and a half years and on the whole, the nation did not repent. Some came to Him, but the majority did not. He ‘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." The day that He entered was at the end of the four-hundred eighty-three years prophesied by Daniel (Daniel 9). After that day, the prophetic clock stopped and Daniel's 70th week has been on hold ever since.

Then He says, "But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies (the Romans in 70 A.D.) will throw up a barricade (siege mound) against you (Jerusalem), and surround you and hem you in on every side (this took place under Titus with his legion in 70 A.D. – Jesus is prophesying), and they (the Roman legions) 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*."

The *visitation* was meant to bless and bring deliverance and redemption and light, as we saw in Luke 1. That visitation becomes judgment; the same thing when Peter talks about the day of visitation, he's expecting that the Lord will return for His church sometime soon and in relationship and in connection with the Lord's coming for His church, and is a final preparatory event; he talks about the day of visitation. They all knew what it meant.

Hopefully this brief discussion will help us better understand that this is a loaded term and that that day of visitation has never happened on a corporate global level in all of history. There has been a measure of visitation of God in China producing miraculous results, but it's never been a corporate worldwide event; and when it's corporate, it'll be God's final move when He breaks into history and He moves everything forward to consummation.

Now to Him who is able (who has omnipotent power) to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now (for us today) and forever. Amen. (Jude 24-25)