

8:18-24 when all the creation shall be liberated from the bondage of corruption which has come upon it as the result of sin and the consequent curse. The Redeemer is here proclaiming the coming of the day when the dreadful results of sin will be completely abolished, when all His people will receive the resurrection body and will no longer be subject to the infirmities of the present age.

The first phrase in verse 2 speaks of "the acceptable year of the LORD, and the second speaks of "the day of vengeance of our God." God pours out His favor over a long period, but His vengeance is concentrated into so brief a time that by comparison it may be spoken of as only a day.

The phrase "acceptable year" is rather hard to translate. More literally it would be "year of acceptance." The word rendered "acceptance" may mean "favor" (so American American Standard Version); it is once translated "self-will" (Gen. 49:6). It contains the note both of God's sovereign pleasure and of His favor toward those He blesses. It is a favorite word of Isaiah; he uses it many times, particularly in the latter part of the book. In Isaiah 60:7 it is translated "acceptance"; in Isaiah 60:10 it is translated "favor."

The passage is quoted by Luke as having been read by our Lord in the synagogue at Nazareth. Surely His words, "Today hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21), leave no question as to the fact that it is the Redeemer who is speaking in this passage. Everything up to this point is included in the message that He proclaimed at Nazareth, and during His earthly life He also proclaimed the matters contained in the following one and one-half verses. Thus "the day of vengeance of our God" was clearly included in Christ's preaching on numerous occasions, e.g. Matthew 11:20-24; 24:6-29.

Our Joy in Christ

Complete fulfillment of verses 2c-3 must await the return of Christ. In the present age many mourn and are weighed down with the spirit of heaviness. It is at Christ's return that He "shall wipe away all tears" (Rev. 21:4) and shall give to all His followers "the oil of joy and the garment of praise." Yet the blessings here described, although not fully realized