

“The Day of Salvation”

Ellet J. Waggoner
The Signs of the Times | January 27, 1887

A SUBSCRIBER asks, “What day is the psalmist speaking of in the twenty-fourth verse of the 118th psalm?”

The question is easily answered if we consider the context, which is as follows: —

“Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, *and* I will praise the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD, through which the righteous shall enter. I will praise You, for You have answered me, and have become my salvation. The stone *which* the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing; it *is* marvelous in our eyes. This *is* the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps. 118:19-24).

The subject under consideration is salvation, for which the psalmist is praising the Lord. This appears still more clearly when we read the entire chapter. He recognizes the fact that salvation comes through Christ, by saying: “The stone *which* the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.” The fact that the subject of salvation is under consideration, and that he says, “Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, *and* I will praise the LORD,” is evidence that the psalmist is not speaking of any special literal day, but that *he uses the word “day” in the sense of a period of time*, as in Prov. 24:10; Eccl. 7:14, and other places. Just as there is no special day of the week when men may have prosperity or adversity, so there is no special day when men may enter the gates of righteousness or may seek salvation. Ever since the fall, men could enter the gates of righteousness at any time they chose. Thus it will be until probation ends.

And so the day spoken of here by the psalmist, is the day of salvation of which Paul speaks in 2 Cor. 6:2, for he says: “For He says: In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” That this is not limited to any particular day, nor even to what is called the Christian dispensation, may be seen from the fact that these words were written seven hundred years before Christ, and are quoted by Paul. (See Isa. 49:8).

Again, the day spoken of is the day in which the stone, which the builders rejected, becomes the headstone of the corner. **It is the day of salvation, that is, the whole period of time in which God’s grace is manifest toward sinners, that Christ is**

the head of the corner, because the entire plan of salvation centers in Him. Paul says to the Ephesians: “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*” (Eph. 2:19, 20). This shows that Christ was the corner-stone in the days of the apostles and prophets, and this is only in harmony with what Paul says in 1 Cor. 3:11: “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Again Christ refers to the same day to which David does, in John 8:56, where he said of the Jews: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.” **Abraham saw the day of salvation, and entered into the gates of righteousness.** The gospel was preached unto him (Gal. 3:8) and he rejoiced in it, as did David. To say that John 8:56 refers to a certain day of the week, would make nonsense of the text; but no more than it would to limit Ps. 118:24 in like manner.

With the above explanation it is unnecessary to enter into an argument to show that the day to which David refers is not the first day of the week. Indeed, that has been shown already. It is not on Sunday or upon any other special day of the week alone that men can enter into the gates of righteousness and rejoice because of salvation. **But “now”—that is, the present time, this period of probation—“now is the accepted time;” “now is the day of salvation;”** therefore Paul says: “Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.”