

Luke 1:78

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

Analysis

Salvation comes 'through the tender mercy of our God' whereby 'the dayspring from on high hath visited us.' 'Tender mercy' (Greek 'splagchna eleous,' bowels of mercy) indicates deep compassion. 'Dayspring' (anatole) means sunrise/dawn, symbolizing Christ as light breaking into darkness. The phrase 'from on high' emphasizes heaven as the source—salvation descends from God, not ascending from humanity. The verb 'visited' (episkeptomai) indicates divine intervention in human affairs. This verse beautifully expresses that salvation originates entirely in God's compassionate initiative, bringing light to those in darkness. Christ's coming is compared to sunrise—inevitable, powerful, illuminating, life-giving.

Historical Context

The imagery of sunrise after darkness resonated with Israel's hope for deliverance. Christ as 'dayspring' fulfilled prophecies of light coming to those in darkness (Isa 9:2; 60:1-2; Mal 4:2). His advent brought spiritual illumination after centuries of prophetic silence.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does the image of 'dayspring' or sunrise teach about Christ's coming and work?
2. How does salvation originating in God's 'tender mercy' shape our understanding of its source?
3. What does it mean that Christ 'visited' humanity from heaven?

Interlinear Text

διὰ	σπλάγχνα	έλέους	θεοῦ	ἡμῶν	ἐν	οῖς
Through	the tender	mercy	God	of our	whereby	
G1223	G4698	G1656	G2316	G2257	G1722	G3739
ἐπεσκέψατο	ἡμᾶς	ἀνατολὴ	ἐξ	ὕψους		
hath visited	us	the dayspring	from	on high		
G1980	G2248	G395	G1537	G5311		

Additional Cross-References

2 Peter 1:19 (Parallel theme): We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Malachi 4:2 (Parallel theme): But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

Colossians 3:12 (References God): Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Ephesians 5:14 (Parallel theme): Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Numbers 24:17 (Parallel theme): I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

Philippians 2:1 (Parallel theme): If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

Revelation 22:16 (Parallel theme): I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Isaiah 11:1 (Parallel theme): And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

1 John 3:17 (References God): But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Zechariah 6:12 (Parallel theme): And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: