

Why Doesn't God Do Something

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God... (Isaiah 61:1-2)

Luke's gospel records that Jesus went into the synagogue at Nazareth on one occasion, as was his custom, and asked for the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled it until he found the place where these words are written. Turning to this very spot, he read this passage about the Spirit coming upon him, anointing him, and that he was called to preach the gospel, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, etc. He stopped reading in the middle of a sentence, after the comma following the words, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Then he closed the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, sat down, and said, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your hearing.

Note carefully where he stopped reading. He did not go on to read, and the day of vengeance of our God, because when he first came he introduced the day of God's favor, the day when God withholds his judgment.

This is the answer to the question people are asking, Why doesn't God do something? The answer is, because he is giving people everywhere a chance! When he starts judging, he will judge the whole world—everybody in it, without exception. Only those who have already bowed to his will will escape the penalty of that judgment. Then he will begin the day of vengeance of our God, the phrase Jesus did not read that day in the synagogue. This comma has been called the longest comma in history. The year of the Lord's favor now covers almost two thousand years of time, but it will be followed by the day of vengeance of our God.

Notice the contrast between the year of his grace, and the day of vengeance. God does not like vengeance. He does not delight in judgment. Isaiah calls it his strange work. But it must be done eventually, though it will be kept as brief as possible. This is what prophecy records as the time of the end.

Thank you, Father, for this honest and searching book. How beautifully it describes the program of history, much of which still lies unfulfilled; yet how marvelously I see you there, and begin to understand the majesty and the mercy of your Being. Help me to adjust my life accordingly, to come humbly and contritely before you to obtain the mercy I so desperately need.