

COMMUNITY living out the gospel with one another in our homes GROUPS

Date: 12/04/2022

Sermon: God Has Remembered

Text: Luke 1:57-80

Speaker: Ted Rastatter

Questions: Keith Fitzpatrick

Sermon Summary and Text Overview

Two Sundays ago, we read that Zechariah, while serving in the temple, had been silenced by the Angel Gabriel for not believing the angel's words. When many months had passed, eight days after the birth of his and Elizabeth's son, John the Baptist, Zechariah's ability to speak – and likely hear – was restored. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Zechariah prophesied!

Read Luke 1:68-79, Zechariah's prophesy, aloud.

Israel had last heard from the Lord through the prophet Malachi about 430 years before. Through Zechariah, God had broken his silence.

Many Christians – maybe all of us – have had times in our lives when we believe, like Israel did, that God is distant or has forgotten us. When God is silent, we can be prone to believe that he removed his favor from us. Many psalmists described the pain of feeling distant and forgotten by God.

Zechariah's prophecy reminded Israel, and reminds us, that God never departs from us and he never forgets us, even when he is silent for a time. In this text we see that God had remembered his people, and the time of salvation was at hand (v.69).

Questions

1. In Luke 1:72-73, Zechariah says that God *remembered*. What does it mean for God to *remember* his people? Does he simply recall his promises, or is there more?
2. Read Exodus 2:23-24. In what way is Christmas like a new Exodus?
3. Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt like God had gone silent? Read Psalm 44:23-26. Have you ever felt this way? When/how did you realize God remembered you?

4. According to Zechariah's prophesy, why has God chosen to act (to remember) on behalf of his people? (v.72-73)
5. What drove God to make this promise (oath, swore, v.73) to Abraham on behalf of his people? (v.78...remember the Hebrew word *Hesed*?)
6. When, with tender mercy, did God decide to make an oath and to fulfill his promise to us (Ephesians 1:4-5 and Romans 5:8-10)? If God determined to save us before the earth's foundations while we were still sinners, is there anything you or I can do to earn (or lose) his gift of grace?
7. And finally, Psalm 149:4 states that "the LORD takes *pleasure* in his people." To whom is the focus of God's gift of salvation, according to God? Is it man or God?

Peter tells us in 2 Peter 3:8-10, "the LORD is not slow to fulfill his promise, as some count slowness..." So, If the LORD has been silent with you lately, pray, go to his word, and hear him.