

## Luke 1:69-80

Zechariah's Benedictus

**What are you so afraid of? Have you ever been asked that before? Well What ARE you so afraid of? What does fear do to us. It can be crippling. It can keep us from trying things we would like to do. Maybe it's something silly like snakes or maybe it's your fear of never being able to retire, financial stability, something happening to your spouse or kids that locks you up in fear and keeps you from enjoying the right now.**

I was fearless as a kid and young adult then I had a daughter. I remember one particular night a couple of friends of mine and I decided to climb up the inside of an abandoned water tower. We climbed up a very tall ladder that you got to by crawling through a manhole sized opening at the base of the tower. So, with a flashlight in my mouth I started the long journey to the top. The echoes of our voices were terrifying the echoes created more echoes. Then there was one more dangling ladder that lead out to the outside of the tower. Some of you are anxious just listening to me talk about this. I was fearless. **Nothing was going to get in the way of the adrenaline I craved as a younger person.** Now I am irrationally afraid of stupid things like spiders. I came home from work one night and Angie had some friend over and they were in the back yard. We had a Jurassic demon spider build a web between us and our neighbors that you could almost use as a hammock. Well I had forgotten about it and walked right in the middle of it. It wrapped around my head like a Qdoba burrito. Nothing tells your wife you are her knight in shining armor like me sprinting into the back-yard throwing arms in the air screaming "get it off me!" I feel like I walk through life like that at times.

**In this passage we see that God saves, He redeems, and He keeps His promise and because of that we can serve him fearlessly!**

**Verse 74 is the main point of today's passage. If you hear 1 thing today hear that God saves you so you can fearlessly serve Him in holiness and righteousness all of your days.**

**There are many of us who live with anxiety and fear that this sounds great but can it really happen? Maybe you feel like you are slave to fear. There is hope.**

I told Brian one night while I was in the hospital that I was looking forward to getting back and preaching. Today is a huge answered prayer in my life. Today is I have really enjoyed walking through the first chapter of Luke. We have witnessed some really incredible things thus far in this book. We have witnessed an angel showing up in the temple and telling an old priest he and his wife would conceive and would name the boy John and he would prepare the way for the savior Jesus. Then Zechariah doubts and is silenced as a mute for Elizabeth's whole pregnancy. We witnessed the same angel Gabriel show up to a teenager named Mary who was a virgin and tell her she was going to miraculously give birth to this savior named Jesus who was actually the son of God. Gabriel declares to Mary that **NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD.**

We witness Mary going to visit Elizabeth (John's mom) and the baby in Elizabeth's belly leaps in her womb because He already knew of the baby Mary was carrying as the one he would prepare the way for.

We witness Mary's song of rejoicing about what God has done.

Then we witness the birth of Zechariah and Elizabeth's son. Zechariah names the boy John and His silence ends, and he can talk, and he worships God!

And today we will witness Zechariah's response to the promise God made him and the rest of mankind by worshipping him.

**Today I hope you witness and experience that God does save, and He does redeem, and He is faithful to keep His promises, so we are freed to fearlessly serve Him.**

**I want to look at how witnessing what God has done and promised affects how we will be able to serve him and serve him without fear.**

I remember very vividly the day Kaelyn and Brooklynn were born. Both were very different days, but I remember them well. I remember holding Kaelyn in my arms as she slept and realizing it was moments like these that made my dad weep as he listened to a song called butterfly kisses right before my sister got married. **The birth of our children is one of the biggest moments of responding in worship that we get in our lives and Zechariah is about to hold the baby that God is going to use to prepare the way for Jesus who will die and rise again to save you and me!**

Zechariah has been mute for nine months and gets to experience the birth of his Son and upon naming him John his voice is given back to him and he sings a prophecy as a proud and blessed new dad! Listen to this song through that knowledge. Hear the words of a proud daddy as he worships God for what He has done and what He is about to do.

The promise that God kept to Zechariah.  
(Lk 1:13-15).

13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.  
14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15 for he will be great before the Lord.

So, what Has God done here. Zechariah Sings. He probably held baby John in the air like Rafiki held baby Simba in Lion King

**(Luke 1:68-75)**

68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
for he has **visited** and **redeemed** his people

69 and has raised up a horn of **salvation for us**  
in the house of his servant David,

70 as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

71 that we should be **saved** from our enemies

and from the hand of all who hate us;  
72 to **show the mercy promised** to our fathers  
and **to remember his holy covenant**,  
73 the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us  
74 that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,  
might serve him without fear,  
75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

## **Worship**

**Zechariah responds full of the holy spirit in worshipping God for who He is and what he has done.**

This is the essence of what worship is! If the Holy Spirit lives in us as believers, He will move us to worship! **When we worship this way in all areas of our life by remembering who God is and that he keeps His promises our struggles and anxieties and strife will seem insignificant next to God's glorious power. When we forget who God is, we will be overwhelmed by our circumstances.**

Brian and Janet talked a couple of weeks ago about **Mary's song which was about God meeting personal needs where just a few verses later Zechariah praises God for raising up the Messiah!**

Zechariah's prophetic song

God is not only keeping his promise to Zechariah that he is holding his baby John in his arms as he worships but God is also keeping his promise to Abraham thousands of years ago. A long line of promises to show mercy going back to the garden when sin entered the world through Adam and Eve.

Redemption would come thousands of years later through the sacrifice of God's Son. He points toward this with Abraham and his son Isaac. But God shows mercy and points toward his own Son

**(Ge 22:15-18)**

15 And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven 16 and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, 18 and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

As we worship this morning let's look at some of the things this passage tells us about who God is and what He has done.

1. He is here. He is present. He has visited his people.
2. Vs. 68-69 He has saved us and Redeemed us
3. Vs. 72 He has shown us mercy
4. He has remembered His promises and kept them. He is trustworthy

**Why has He done these things? Why does he save and redeem and keep His word to us?**

Verse 74-75

74 that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,

might serve him without fear,  
75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

He saves and redeems and keeps His promises to us, so we are free to serve Him fearlessly. He gives Himself freely and like we heard last week isn't silent anymore, so we can be filled with fearlessness in serving and obeying him all our days. We will talk more about what this means in just a few minutes.

At this point in Zechariah's song he changes from the past tense to the present and future tense about 1. John 2. Jesus.

**ASHLEY ASKING FOR PRAYER THAT GOD WOULD LET THEM CONCEIVE MOMENT SILENCE IN THE ROOM. We connect with that.**

I can see Zachariah holding his son in his arms rejoicing and letting God's promise of this sweet baby boy sink in deep into his heart saying  
AND YOU, CHILD WILL BE CALLED THE PROPHET OF THE MOST HIGH!

**Luke 1:76-77**

76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,  
77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins

**John's purpose in his life was to herald the arrival of Jesus.  
be a sign that (something) is about to happen.**

**So How was John going to do this?**

**(Lk 1:80)**

And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

**John lived in the wilderness growing and becoming strong in the spirit. His Greatest love was the trinity. His greatest Joy was seeing Jesus becoming Messiah.**

**(Jn 3:28-30) flash forward**

28 You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him.' 29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. For this reason, **my joy has been fulfilled.** 30 He must increase, but I must decrease."

SO John was to herald the arrival of Jesus the Messiah **by proclaiming the need of salvation through forgiveness that was going to come through the death and resurrection of Jesus.**

**Do you know you need to be forgiven? That seems like a silly question, but do you really know your need of forgiveness and salvation? If you do know that need do you know how deep that need goes?**

**Illus.** When I woke up after being in a medically induced coma for 10 days a few months ago I was very confused (understatement) and not in a very good mood

(also understatement) I was now awake, so it must be time to go home right? Nope. 10 more days in the hospital and about a month more of dialysis. I didn't know where I was. I didn't know I had come so close to death as I had. I didn't know how long I was unconscious. I had trouble remembering Angie's name who I have been married to for 16 years. I didn't know that my muscles had atrophied enough where I couldn't stand up or walk or shave or shower...I was convinced that I was fine and therefore ready to come home. I barely remember being taken to dialysis my first day out of the ICU and I was super salty and aggravated. I thought at that time Angie was mad at me and had me sent to this room that I had essentially to spend a 4-hour timeout from her getting my blood cleaned and put back into my body. I told the nurse I didn't need this, and I didn't sign up for any of this. She told me she was sure that no one signs up for any of this. Angie and my doctors and nurses were trying to convince me of my sickness that I just couldn't see. 2 days later I woke up aware of what was happening and asked Angie what had happened, and she began to tell me the story of all that had happened. That my mom and my brother had come up from Texas to be with me and that so many of you had been praying for me. And it hit me that I was in need of Jesus to intervene and raise my kidneys back to life. **I began at that moment a different life. The Gospel is That God is infinitely holy, and we need to become aware of our dire spiritual sickness and trust the one who was heralded in by John the Baptist who died for us to fulfill God's promise of mercy and salvation.**

**The Holy spirit through John's life's message is trying to reveal to us our need of salvation through forgiveness of sins.**

My favorite part of this passage is the last 2 verses of Zechariah's song.

**Lk 1:78-79 Focus switches from John to Jesus**

78 because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high 79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

When we witness this sun rise of salvation is when we can experience salvation and his trustworthiness to lead us into the way of peace in any circumstance.

**The sunrise is to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.**

Illus. Have you ever experienced total darkness? Illus. I went to Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico when I was a teen. I remember we took the long tour and got to see some incredible things. On the way to the bottom of the caverns we passed all kind of stone stalactites and stalagmite pools of water deep crevasses and we could see everything because it was lit up. Well at one point they turned off the lights on the tour and I had a profound revelation of what total darkness was like. I imagined the horror of what it would be like to find myself at the bottom of this cave with no lights and no way of knowing how to get out. Those deep pools of water and sharp rock structures and crevasses in total darkness would kill me the only hope I would have of living is LIGHT. because of the tender mercy of our God,

whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high

79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

72 to **show the mercy promised** to our fathers  
and **to remember his holy covenant,**  
73 the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us  
74 that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,  
might serve him without fear,  
75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

**Because of our trustworthy savior and what He did on the cross  
Leads us to serve him in obedience without fear in holiness and righteousness**

There is a way that we can serve God fearfully. When we serve out of guilt or to try and earn God's love and salvation and not out of a response of already having received God's love and salvation we will always wonder how much serving is enough? One of my closest friends used to tell me "I know I just need to get up to the church and do more, so God would be closer to him and speak to him" I would tell him bro you may need to serve more but it is not because god is withholding Himself until you serve more!

Fear holds us captive. Afraid God will condemn us if we don't do enough. If we aren't good enough or don't serve enough in ministry. Guilt is a terrible motivator. When guilt subsides or lessens we will get tired of serving. We can get exhausted trying to serve enough out of this motivation will lead you to become bitter, feel entitled, it can lead to self-righteousness about being better than those who don't serve.

BUT if you have witnessed the goodness of a promise keeping savior who has shown you mercy and lit up a path from the shadow of death into the way of peace your response will be gratitude. Your affections for the one who saved you and forgives you will be great and you will respond in fearlessly serving him in worship

**(1 John 4:18)**

God is Love

18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

I'm no longer a slave to fear I am a child of God and free to fearless serve Him.

Finish with this. I read this week God's salvation is not intended to be kept to ourselves or to be a "private affair" but show God's greatness to all creation so we can fearlessly