

Preparing for the Christ Child Luke 1:67-80

67 Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: 68 "Blessed is 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, Who have been since the world began, 71 That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us, 72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant, 73 The oath which He swore to our father Abraham: 74 To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. 76 "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, 77 To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; 79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace." 80 So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel. (NKJV)

- I. Now his father Zacharias 67
 - A. You remember Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist who has been born and just now named John.
 - B. He and Elisabeth were very old and had not children.
 - 1. God had chosen them to bear the forerunner of the Messiah.
 - 2. Mark 1:2 . . . "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You." 3 "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'" 4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
 - 3. It was a very well laid out plan by God.
 - a. That the forerunner would come and prepare the people, the material for the new temple, the church.
 - b. And then when Jesus came along he would take that material and assemble His church, His assembly, His congregation.
 - c. But the people had to be prepared, or converted.
 - C. was filled with the Holy Spirit, 67
 - 1. He tells us this to let us know that the things that Zacharias is going to say are not his own but the word of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God.
 - D. and prophesied, saying: 67

1. So what we have is both a forth telling of the Word of God.
2. It is also a foretelling of things to come, that God has revealed to Zacharias.

II. "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, 68

A. That is it? Blessed by God.

1. It hardly seems necessary we have all of this to simply say, "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel."
2. But that is the heart of the message.
3. God deserves all praise and honor of men.
4. The old catechism asks what is the chief end of man? And the answer is, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever."
5. Yes those old generations would not recognize what Christianity has become to today where our religion is all about man instead of God.

B. For He has visited and redeemed His people, 68

1. Isn't that key.
2. God saw the despair of mankind and came down here to make a remedy possible for all who would accept.
3. To redeem us, to buy us back from captors, sin and self-will.
4. The life, the blood of the perfect Lamb of God was the price.
5. But He willingly paid it in order to pay our way.
6. We could have never redeemed our own selves for we were totally corrupt with out hope.
7. But God has provided a way.

III. And has raised up a horn of salvation for us 69

A. The idea of an horn of salvation is the idea of a strong Savior.

1. One who is willing and able to do the job.
2. One who can completely save.
3. One who had overcome every encumbrance to bring us safely home.
4. Yes sir that should get a praise be to God.

B. In the house of His servant David, 69

1. John is not the Savior, but one from the family of David.

2. Jesus was born of the family of David to be the King over all the earth.
3. David was the best and greatest king of Israel.
4. And Jesus comes as his descendant, to fulfill the promises made to David.
5. As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began, 70
 - a. This birth that was about to take place was foretold by God's spokesmen from the beginning of the world.

IV. That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us, 71

A. Our enemies.

1. For the Jews of Zachariah's day it seemed to be the Romans who had ruled over them for some 60+ years.
2. But that was not their true and greatest oppressor.
3. Sin was their greatest enemy, who destroyed lives and families.
4. Sin was the corrupting factor in every society since the beginning.
5. And sin is a terrible master, destroying the lives of those around us.
6. And we do not have the power to deliver ourselves from it.

V. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers 72

A. God has promised to be merciful in almost countless passages in the Bible.

1. God loves to be merciful.
2. He does not show mercy with regret.
3. It is because as we see other places that it is because of His great love for us that He extends mercy.

B. God promised to discipline His people when they go astray.

C. But he also promised to extend mercy.

1. Not a mercy that is deserved for then God would owe us something.
2. Christmas is grand display of God's mercy.
3. Not only to the Jews of that day but for all people.
4. Lu 2:10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

VI. And to remember His holy covenant, 72

A. The oath which He swore to our father Abraham: 73

1. What was that covenant?
 2. In blessing I will bless you and in you all the nations of the earth will be blessed.
 3. So that promise given 2000 years before is about to come true.
 4. Jesus, the seed of Abraham will bring salvation to a world torn by sin.
 5. He will die for our sin, making it simple for us to escape condemnation through faith in His work of redemption on the cross.
- B. To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, 74
1. Might serve Him without fear, 74
 - a. In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. 75
- VII. "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; 76
- A. For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, 76
1. John's ministry would precede Jesus' ministry by about 6 months.
 2. He would gather the people and then point them to the Messiah.
- B. To give knowledge of salvation to His people 77
1. There is no greater need than to know God and be saved by Him.
 2. By the remission of their sins, 77
 - a. To have our sins forgiven, removed.
 - b. Jesus payed and suffered for our sins.
 - c. He paid the price, that is why we praise Him.
 3. Through the tender mercy of our God, 78
 - a. Mercy toward us.
 4. With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; 78
 - a. Dayspring means Messiah, God's anointed one.
- C. To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, 79
1. God gives spiritual sight to His people so we do not walk in darkness any longer.
- D. To guide our feet into the way of peace." 79
1. To bring us into peace with God and peace with ourselves.
- VIII. So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his

manifestation to Israel. 80

We live in such a secular world that to really appreciate Christmas we need to prepare.

Attend all the worship services.

Read the Christmas stories from the Bible, each one, and over and over.

Pray that God would reveal Himself to you this Christmas.

That He would give you peace by the salvation that He alone provides.