

Introduction; Title & context

- a) This text, part of the infancy narrative, known as the Benedictus (v.67-80) and is titled the Song of Zacharias.

This song follows the birth of his son John the Baptist as the result of Gabriel's revelation that his wife would be pregnant even if barren as a result of her prayer to God.

Part of the text is talking about the salvation/messianic expectation and then The B, then Messiah again.

- b) Starts with an explosion of praise/excitement (blessed/praised be to God...)

God has come/redeemed his people

God has raised up a horn of salvation

In the house of David (Messiah known to be a descendant of David)

As he said to holy prophets long ago (told & confirmed to prophets on numerous occ.)

A salvation from enemies/those who hate us

- c) Why praise/excitement in Zacharias' heart

Because finally! God has "come"; Heaven is meeting/visiting Earth in the person of Messiah

This long awaited Messianic Expectation (ME) is here, at hand, being fulfilled

And Zach will be first hand witness of the unfolding of God 'plan

And this is in keeping with what was told by the prophets.

All the building blocks/pieces of the puzzle are in place (forerunner, messiah, timing, etc.)

God has not abandoned his people...and is coming in the person of the messiah

- d) This ME;

Has built over the centuries through the words of the prophets

God revealed to his people he would send a deliverer/redeemer to deliver his

People from their enemies and restore them into pre-eminence.

Many details were given about Messiah; his person, time, place of birth, descendance, etc.

and Israel has not seen that happened yet

This salvation is for 4 purposes (2 pairs of purposes)

1. To show mercy & remember his oath; an expression of compassion & faithfulness on God's part

- a) **to show mercy** (in what way is this ME/salvation package showing mercy to the Fathers) by showing compassion/forgiveness and faithfulness to cov. Despite Fathers/Israel failure, sin and unfaithfulness

1. God made a cov./oath with Abby and David
To subdue enemies, descendants, blessing to nations, throne enduring for ever
These cov. Were rock solid/eternal
2. Fathers of Israel/Israel were unfaithful; examine their lives and history of Israel
In a sense, God was no longer under obligation to keep his part of the deal
3. Despite Fathers/Israel unfaithfulness, God reaffirmed his promises on numerous times and decided to show compassion & be faithful to his cov. And keep their hope up. If compassion/mercy to father, same for Israel, and human kind
4. Now, because of their unfaithfulness, age of the promises & unfulfilled, exile ending descendant on throne, 400 years of silent, Israel has a lot of good reason to doubt God's promise and faithfulness.

b) to remember his oath he pledged

So God showed mercy & remembered, not in the sense that he forgot, but in the sense he was faithful to his promise. 2000 years old promise that God confirmed again and again to Israel.

What God has promised, he also accomplish.

c) Application; did it happen you to doubt God's mercy and faithfulness. Acceptance?

1. Because of your past sins or present struggles (not good enough)
2. Or God is long in answering your prayer
3. Or you are going through a diff. time/darkness and feel abandoned by God
4. This is normal, and the devil loves to make us doubt
5. Remind yourself of one thing Phil 1:6
 - i. Funeral's song by Steve Green; "he who started a good work in you will be faithful to complete it. (but you got to do your part)
 - ii. And also, God never fail to answer our prayers

2. to rescue & to enable;

a provision for deliverance

a) to rescues us from the hands of our enemies/those who hate us

1. Israel has accumulated a good numbers of enemies since the beginning of its existence Starting w/ the Egyptians, on their way to promise land (Sihon & Og), as they entered/conquered the PL (7 nations), and afterwards. Now under Roman rule → pretty isolated and mistreated
2. So, they were promised and expecting a political deliverer/deliverance too. But what was promised to happen in what appeared to be one event in OT was going to take place into 2 events
3. We know from afterwards that Messiah was coming to defeat a greater enemy lurking behind Israel political enemies. → The spiritual enemies of sin, death, and devil. The political deliverance/restoration of KofI was for later, not replaced
So, from that perspective, the ME is not totally fulfilled yet, only partially,
"Already but not yet" (the present age runs along the age to come, where ME will be totally fulfilled and Israel will be restored/re-established)

4. Jesus appeared to destroy the work of the devil & to atone for sin (1Jn. 3:8, 2:2, 4:10)
Ever since the fall of Adam, man became captive to sin & Satan (prince of the air)
& these enemies are still at work today

He came to defeat the enemies of our lives/human kind & give us authority over them

5. **Application;** what about the enemies of our souls/freedom/peace/joy crippling our experience of God's blessings.

Jesus came to defeat that too. On the cross, he bore our iniquities, infirmities, sorrows. Also

Our emo/psycho/spiritual scars, hurts etc.

Because of Jesus, we can experience healing (instant vs process)

(This salvation is not just to deliver, but also to enable/empowerment)

It is a provision for empowerment/ enablement

b) To enable us to serve him w/o fear, in holiness & righteousness

1. Israel was redeemed to serve/worship God (to serve God & be a priest/light to other nations)
2. But God wanted Israel to serve him in a special manner; (serv.charact. by 3 things)
 - a. W/o fear/timidity (that is with courage/boldness)
By being God's chosen people Israel attracted opposition
3. In holiness/righteousness. God insisted to them the necessity of being holy like he was holy. And when they did not respect that, God punished them in diff ways. They even had to be dislodged from their land and sent into exile

4. **Application;** and it is the same for us. It is not just about salvation/eternal life but also service
 - a. Eph. 2:8-10/others passages also re-affirmed this that we are save to serve God/other in all kinds of ways God has prepared in advance for us. And we will be judged on our faithfulness nor effectiveness
 - b. And we are called to provide the same kind of service described by Zach (w/o fear, in holiness & righteousness)
 - i. W/o feat/be courageous; when you take side for God, you will face opposition, and opos. Brings fear and can stop us, but we can overcome it.

Act of courage are still welcomed, but voicing your opinion about ethical matters, that is not welcomed

Courage is rare now a day, and w/ the "politically correct" policy we are told not to be courageous & compromise

- ii. Be holy as I am holy/righteous

We are not talking about self-R

Righteousness is not achieved by doing this or that or not doing this or that (about self-righteousness).

The first line of approach for holiness/righteousness is to say no to temptation.
Do not let it enter/penetrate your heart/mind because you will most likely lose the battle.
You have to close the door of your mind.

Titus 2:9 tells us that the Grace of God that brings salvation has appeared. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness/worldly passion and to live self-controlled, upright, and ungodly lives in the present age.

This is how holiness/righteousness is achieved/attained;
Not by doing certain things and not others like in Lk.18; that would be self-righteousness
By mortifying the flesh/sinful nature; by saying no to the impulse of the sinful nature/temptation, and yes to the HS.

This is how you mortify the flesh, by starving it.

Gen.4; sin is crouching at your door, it desires to have you, but you must master it
Sin is crouching at the door, what are we going to do about it.

Conclusion

The coming of Jesus is the accomplishment/fulfilment of God's promises and faithfulness
The coming of Jesus had practical application for the life of Israel and our life too

It tells us that God has not abandoned his people neither the human race to their fate/
predicament

It is to show mercy/compassion and being true and faithful to his word

It is to rescue from the power of darkness & empower us for service

Benediction; read rest of the passage Lk. 1:76-79