

Series Series: The Canticles of Advent

Sermon title: The Benedictus

Scripture reading: Luke 1:57-80

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

December 5, 2021

S.C. Brown, Pastor

Opening Scripture:

Psalm 148

Introduction:

We are continuing our study in the songs of Advent. We began last week by looking at Mary's *Magnificat* and today we will look at Zechariah's song, the *Benedictus*.

There are many songs in the Bible.

There are 150 in **Psalms** alone.

For example...

The Songs of Moses & Miriam in Exodus 15 after God parted the Red Sea and then brought the waters back down on Pharaoh and his army.

They sang, "I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."

The Song of Deborah and Barak in **Judges 5** after God delivered them from the hand of the king of Canaan. They sang, "Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes; to the LORD I will sing; I will make melody to the LORD, the God of Israel."

The Song of the women after David's victory over Goliath and the Philistines in **1 Samuel 18**. The women sang, "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

Now the songs in the Bible come after God has visited his people in a special way, in a powerful way to deliver his people.

Do you know which place in the Bible we see the most songs together in the biblical narratives?

At the birth of Jesus.

Why?

Because here....God is visiting his people to deliver them in the most powerful way he ever could....

in person. God the Son incarnate.

Jesus Christ the Messiah has arrived.

Let's pray.

As we take a look at Zechariah's song today, let's look at a little background to what's going on.

Let's just read the Scripture itself in [Luke 1:5](#)

5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. **6** And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. **7** But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

8 Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, **9** according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. **10** And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. **11** And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. **12** And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. **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. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be

filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. **16** And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, **17** and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

18 And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." **19** And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. **20** And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." **21** And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. **22** And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. **23** And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

57 Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. **58** And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and

they rejoiced with her. **59** And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, **60** but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." **61** And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." **62** And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. **63** And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. **64** And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. **65** And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, **66** and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

So, this is the context and the reason why Zechariah is going to break out into praise after over 9 months of silence.

I want you first to see that like Mary.....

I. Zechariah Magnifies God for his Provision of the Messiah.

Now, Zechariah (through the Holy Spirit) uses a literary device called a *Chiasmus*, where words are used in pairs and work from the outside to the inside....to bring focus to the middle.

Visit	Verses 68 & 78
His people	Verses 68 & 77
Salvation	Verses 69 & 77
Prophet	Verses 70 & 77
Hand of our enemies	Verses 71 & 74
Father	Verses 72 & 73
Covenant/ Oath	Verses 72 & 73

67 And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

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.

Zechariah's prophecy is drawn from the well of his vast knowledge of the Old Testament.

And his focus is on the fact that God's covenant promises are being fulfilled; the covenants with Abraham and with David.

First, a king who will come in the line of David.

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;

A horn symbolizes strength; strength to conquer enemies. Of course the greatest enemy is the great serpent, Satan.

Secondly, an offspring of Abraham will come to bless the nations, creating a new nation who walk by faith as Abraham did.

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.

This is a reference to **Genesis 22:16-18** where God 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.”

Zechariah breaks out into spontaneous praise to God and utters a prophecy because he understands in this moment that all of God’s promises from Abraham to David are being fulfilled right now and he can taste it, it is so near. The Messiah is coming soon!

Can you imagine what this old priest Zechariah is feeling?

The moment he has been waiting for his entire life has arrived. So, he does the correct thing.

He magnifies God for his provision.

But that is not all he magnifies God for.

His old wife has had a baby and God has seen fit by his grace to cause his son to have a part in God’s plan.

II. Zechariah Magnifies God for Privileging his son, John.

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, **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."

Where Mary praised the Lord for privileging herself, in Zechariah's case, it's his son.

His son is the one spoken of in **Malachi 3:1**, 'Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.'

APPLICATION

If you are not a Christian, Zechariah preaches good news to you.

Jesus is the one promised in the Old Testament Scriptures who would come to deliver [us] from the hand of our enemy Satan.

He is the one who came to (**verse 77**) give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins.

He did this because of his tender mercy. (**Verse 78**)

He came to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death....to guide your feet into the way of peace.. (**Verse 79**) that all who believe in Christ Jesus might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. (**Verse 74**)

Christians, we have a lot to praise and magnify the Lord God Almighty for this Advent.

He has **Provided** Jesus for your sins. You are greatly blessed and you have every reason to rejoice.

Privilege- How privileged are you and I to know Jesus? You are chosen by God.

One final song in **Revelation 15:3-4**.

The Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb

Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."