

## **Zacharias' Benedictus**

*Songs of the Nativity, Part Four*

Luke 1:67-79

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### **I. Introduction**

### **II. Benedictus**

#### A. A Horn of Salvation (1:68-75 cf. Gen 3:15; 12:2-3; Ps 89:19-29)

The theme of God as Redeemer or Savior permeates Zacharias' song. He begins by noting that God has raised up a horn of salvation for us (v.69). A horn is a crown of glory, a manifestation of strength, a display of wisdom and power. Think of an animal with his horns. This horn that God is raising up is coming from *the house of David* (69b) – even as God promised throughout the prophets that he would. God promised, *since the world began*, that He would send the seed of the woman to crush the head of the seed of the serpent and reverse the devastation wrought on earth by the serpent. This promise was clarified and expanded over time, centering in the Person of the Messiah. God's purpose in sending the Messiah would be to *save us from our enemies and from the hand of those who hate us* (71). This king would so act that God's people need no longer fear the onslaught of the enemy but face such enemies with courage and boldness.

#### B. The Prophet of the Highest (1:76-79)

Having praised God for His mercy, Zacharias now turns his attention to his son John and proclaims John's relation to this work of God. The key to peace in many Jews' minds was the destruction of the Roman power over the Promised Land. Get rid of Rome and peace would reign. Zacharias was too steeped in the Scriptures to fall prey to such folly.

1. To prepare the way of the Lord (Mal 3:1)
2. To give knowledge of salvation...

3. To give light to those who sit in darkness...

Our problem as human beings is that we are guilty in the sight of God and in bondage to the ruler of darkness, powerless in the face of death. We are afraid. But Jesus came to change all that; He does in fact change all that. Through the cross we have forgiveness. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us. Through the resurrection we have new life and the power of death is broken. Light has broken in on our darkness. We need not be afraid. So what if we die? We shall rise again glorious and incorruptible.

4. To guide our feet into the way of peace.

### III. Serving without fear

A. I am not ashamed (cf. Rom 1:16-17)

B. Delivered from fear (cf. Mt 10:24-31)

1. Definitively

First, Zacharias' words are fulfilled definitively through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus has delivered us from the need for fear. If we live, we are the Lord's and if we die, we are the Lord's. Death has no more the final word. For we who are in Christ we need not fear! Jesus has risen and so we too shall rise! Even if we die, in Christ we shall live forevermore! So even in times of strife and conflict, persecution and suffering Zacharias' words are fulfilled in Christ – we can serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness all our days. Praise God!

2. Progressively

Second, Zacharias' words shall receive their fulfillment over time. God's promise is that through our faith in God and through our fearlessness and boldness in the face of death, God will transform all the earth. *All the families of the earth shall be blessed through Abraham.* The knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. We can expect that over time the violence of our enemies will be subdued as the Prince of Peace extends His sway throughout the earth. We needn't fear.

### IV. Conclusion