



# World Christian Fellowship

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## Zacharias 04 Praise- Introduction Luke 1:67-80

**Luke 1:67-80**, *Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: <sup>68</sup> "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people, <sup>69</sup> And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David, <sup>70</sup> As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began, <sup>71</sup> That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us, <sup>72</sup> To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant, <sup>73</sup> The oath which He swore to our father Abraham: <sup>74</sup> To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, <sup>75</sup> In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. <sup>76</sup> "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, <sup>77</sup> To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, <sup>78</sup> Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; <sup>79</sup> To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace." <sup>80</sup> So the child grew*

*and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.*

The Latin word for "blessed" is **Benedictus** hence this song is known as Benedictus of Zacharias.

Zachariah's praise to God.

**V 69** he records the name of David.

**V 73** he records the name of Abraham

**V 77** he records the forgiveness of sin.

Zachariah, in his song of praise here, is linking it to very specific covenants given in the Old Testament.

Covenant to David,

Covenant to Abraham, and

Covenant about the forgiveness of sins, the New Covenant.

We can divide Zachariah's praise then into those three parts.

Fulfilment of the Davidic Covenant,

Fulfilment of the Abrahamic Covenant, and

Fulfilment of the New Covenant.

All these three covenants are what we would call salvation covenants, / saving covenants.

These covenants have to do with blessings that come by salvation.

No one will experience the fullness of the Davidic Covenant apart from salvation. Everyone who is saved will participate to one degree or another in the fulfilment of the Davidic Covenant.

No one will enter into the full blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant apart from salvation and all who believe will to some degree enter into the fullness of the promises and blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant.

No one will either experience the Davidic Covenant or the Abrahamic Covenant if they do not experience the forgiveness of sin provided in the New Covenant.

So, these are covenants which have to do with salvation!

The Davidic Covenant is universal, insofar as it relates to the universal and eternal rule of Jesus Christ.

The Abrahamic Covenant is national, insofar as it deals primarily with promises made by God to Israel for blessing.

The New Covenant is personal, in that it deals with how God works for the forgiveness of sin in the life of an individual.

The Davidic Covenant, universal,  
The Abrahamic Covenant, national,  
The New Covenant, personal.

They are not exclusively that but that is the main feature of those covenants.

Luke begins is the flow of the story of salvation. But Luke wants to be sure that no one assumes that this is something new. He wants us to know that this is something that fulfils something very old. Luke wants us to understand that the coming of the forerunner, John the Baptist, the coming of the Messiah, Jesus, inaugurating the fulfilment of God's promised redemption is the fulfilment of Davidic Covenant, Abrahamic Covenant and New Covenant features.

Luke wants us to understand from this great Benedictus by Zachariah that Christianity is not an aberration, it is not some new religion but rather Christianity, the coming of Messiah and His work is the fulfilment of Davidic promise, Abrahamic promise, and the promise of a New Covenant.

Now, in the Old Testament there basically are six covenants.

In the Scriptures, God continually refers to Himself as a covenant-keeping God. Repeatedly God's faithfulness to His covenant is reiterated.

**Lamentations 3:23**, *They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*

Repeatedly Scripture talks about God being faithful to His covenant, to His irrevocable promises which He made.

There are six specific covenants in the Old Testament.

1. Noah
2. Moses
3. Priest
4. David
5. Abraham
6. New

### **1. Covenant with Noah- Genesis 9**

The first covenant in the Old Testament is God made with Noah. He made an irrevocable pledge to Noah that He would never again destroy the world by water. God set a rainbow in the sky as a symbol of that irrevocable promise.

In the end when the world is destroyed, it will be destroyed not by water but by fire.

### **2. Covenant with Moses- Exodus 19-24**

The next covenant that is a covenant that God made with Moses in Exodus. He gave the Law and that is called the Mosaic covenant.

The Mosaic promise in which God gives His Law and promises obedience will bring blessing and disobedience will bring punishment or cursing.

That is God's irrevocable promise, and it is still true.

You obey God's law, you will be blessed.

You disobey God's law and you will be judged.

### **3. Priestly Covenant- Numbers 25**

The third covenant that a priestly covenant. God pledges irrevocably to grant to His people Israel a priesthood. That is irrevocable. There will be a priesthood given to the people Israel and in the end. Of course, even in the Millennium there will be a priesthood as the prophets indicate.

- The irrevocable promise that God gave to Noah, He will not destroy the world.
- An irrevocable promise that God gave to Moses, obey His law you are blessed, disobey, you are cursed.
- An irrevocable promise to the people that there would be a perpetual priesthood right on into the final and glorious kingdom of the Messiah.

Now those three promises are not salvation promises.

They are not the means of salvation are not inherent in them.

- ✓ Salvation is not an issue with Noah.
- ✓ Salvation is not an issue with Moses because you cannot be saved by the law.
- ✓ Salvation is not an issue in the priestly covenant as well.

The other three covenants, Davidic Covenant, Abrahamic Covenant, and New Covenant are connected to salvation.

- The Davidic Covenant cannot come to pass until there is salvation.
- The Abrahamic Covenant cannot come to pass until there is salvation.
- The New Covenant is a covenant of salvation, which affects all the rest because until you come to the salvation provided in the New Covenant, you cannot receive the benefits of the Abrahamic or the Davidic covenants.

Without this basic understanding on this covenant, we will not be able to understand the song of praise by Zacharias.

Luke begins his gospel as God steps into history.

- Gabriel announces the birth of the forerunner of the Messiah.
- Gabriel announces to Mary the birth of Messiah.
- Miraculous conception of Elizabeth.
- Miraculous conception in virgin Mary.

God's great plan of redemption as to its fulfilment is being launched is not new, but this is the fulfilment of the Davidic promise, the Abrahamic promise, and the new promise of Jeremiah 31.

The praise of Zachariah falls into those three parts.

1. The first part deals with Davidic fulfilment,
2. The second part deals with Abrahamic fulfilment and
3. The third part deals with the fulfilment of the New Covenant.

It is very important because it shows that Christianity, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, and what He did was the fulfilment of everything promised in the Old Testament.

### **Zachariah and Elizabeth.**

He was a priest, and they were barren all their life, maybe in their 70s. The angel Gabriel appears and says that they are going to have a son and this son is going to be the forerunner of the Messiah.

A little while after that Elizabeth becomes pregnant. She is bearing this great son who is going to be the forerunner of the Messiah.

The angel Gabriel comes back and comes to a virgin, Mary, in the city of Nazareth in Galilee and he tells her without the aid of a man but by the work of God a child will be created in her womb who will, in fact, be the Messiah Himself, the Redeemer, the Saviour of the world.

**Luke 1:57-66**, John the Baptist was born.

So, we have the fulfilment of the first promise of Gabriel that Elizabeth and Zachariah would have a son and it is fulfilled. When we get to chapter 2, the promise to Mary will be fulfilled and we will look at the birth of Jesus.

For all the nine months of Elizabeth's pregnancy, her husband Zachariah has been deaf and mute. He has been unable to hear and speak and that because God judged him. God literally, miraculously silenced the man and made him deaf for nine months because of his unbelief.

But at the birth of his son the chastening ended, and verse 64 says, when John was born his mouth was at once opened, his tongue loosed, and he began to speak in praise of God. Nine months of pent-up praise and finally God miraculously opened his mouth and the praise gushed out of his mouth.

This is a reasonable response to what is going on.

It is a marvellous thing because a son is born.

It is a more marvellous thing because it is miraculous to this old couple.

But there is something even more marvellous is that the son being born signals the coming of Messiah, which signals the coming of redemption to Israel, salvation, the Redeemer, and therefore the fulfilment of Davidic, Abrahamic and New Covenant promise.

This is a time for praise and the praise of Zachariah is not about a barren father and about a barren mother having a baby.

- It is not about an old man and an old woman having a baby.
- It is not about removing the stigma of barrenness.
- It is not about adding joy to the family.

It is all about covenant fulfilment and that because it is redemption that is coming. The forerunner will announce the coming of the Saviour who will deliver and rescue Israel and fulfil God's covenants.

Such songs of deliverance occur in the Old Testament.

Moses was involved as the leader of Israel in the greatest historical deliverance that God ever did. The children of Israel probably numbered two million. They had been in Egypt for 430 years, functioning as slaves.

There they are down in Egypt as slaves, or about to lose their identity to be literally subsumed or absorbed in Egyptian culture. God after 430 years decides it is time now to let them out of Egypt and let them go, but this is no small situation.

God in the most unbelievable display of power, rescue power, deliverance power, God shows how He can save His people,

rescue His people by getting those two million people out of Egypt without violence.

God does so by introducing into the life of the Egyptians ten devastating, deadly plagues. He takes the normal elements of nature and turns them into fierce and monstrous powers of death. By the end of it, the last plague, God sends an angel of death to in one night execute every firstborn in Egypt.

By the time that bloodbath is over, Pharaoh is glad to see the Jews go and the two million of them leave Egypt unscathed, only to run into the Red Sea, and then Pharaoh changes his mind, takes his army, and decides to pursue them.

By the time he reaches them God has parted the Red Sea and they walk across dry land to the other side. Pharaoh, who thinks he can follow, marches his army to the middle of the sea and the whole army is drowned and thus does God deliver Israel from Egypt.

They knew God had the power to deliver, the power to save, the power to rescue His people.

They were waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue them. They were thinking of another sort of political rescue, that the Messiah would come, and He would create some fatal blow in the heart of Rome, and He would rescue His people from Roman bondage and from the oppression that came to them by the

hatred that existed among many peoples all around them, for they were greatly hated.

They were longing for the Messiah to bring rescue and redemption.

When Moses was on the other side of the Red Sea in Exodus chapter 15, they sang a song of Praise to God.

**Exodus 15:1-2**, *Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying: "I will sing to the Lord, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!"<sup>2</sup> The Lord is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him.*

The song of Moses and they were singing about the greatness of God's redeeming His people from Egypt. (**Exodus 15:1-18**)

Another wonderful act of redemption we find in **Judges 5**.

God redeems His people Israel from ravaging pagans and Deborah who was a judge in Israel, and Barak, who was a great military leader, sing a song of praise to God.

**Judges 5:3**, *"Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! I, even I, will sing to the Lord; I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel.*

Judges 5:1-21 is the full song.

Another song of praise by Hannah about God's salvation.

### **1 Samuel 2:1-9.**

Hannah sings about God's salvation.

**1 Samuel 2:1**, *And Hannah prayed and said: "My heart rejoices in the Lord; My horn is exalted in the Lord. I smile at my enemies, Because I rejoice in Your salvation.*

Song of salvation for God delivered her from barrenness and God delivered her from a stigma.

Another wonderful story of Solomon in 2 Chronicles chapter 5. The temple is built, and God has delivered Israel from the difficulty of not having a temple and not having a place to worship. Solomon calls on the great choir of Israel and all the great trumpeters, the whole group come together, and they offer God thanksgiving for all that He has done for Israel, for all His deliverances.

**2 Chronicles 5:13**, *indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,"*

The book of Psalms contains 150 psalms, that is the songbook of Israel. There is just one after another celebrating the delivering, rescuing, saving, redeeming power of God for His people. You sing all through Psalms the new song and the new song is a song of redemption. It is the song that you sing after the old condition is changed.

They have been under bondage and they have been redeemed. In the newness of their redemption and salvation they sing a new song.

Zachariah as a Jewish man, as a priest, understanding that, launches into a song of salvation.

When the angel told Mary that she was going to have the One who would be the Messiah and the Redeemer, the Saviour, she sang.

**Luke 1:46-47**, *And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord,"<sup>47</sup> And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour.*

Mary sang the new song of salvation.

Elizabeth even burst forth in a prophecy, glorifying God.

Simeon offers God a hymn of praise later in Luke 2:25-32.

We have five hymns of praise:

1. Mary,
2. Elizabeth,
3. Angels,
4. Simeon, and
5. Zachariah.

We should not be surprised about songs of salvation.

We are going to be singing them forever.

Revelation 5 and take a glimpse of heaven. John was given a picture of heaven. He was allowed to see heaven first-hand in a vision.

**Revelation 5:9**, *And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,*

It was the song of salvation.

So, God's people through all redemptive history and throughout all of eternity are going to sing the wonders of God's saving power.

We are not surprised then that Zachariah, knowing that the birth of this little boy John, whom he may have been holding in his arms when he offered this praise, certainly it indicates that he speaks in the first person to him.

Zacharias realizes that this little baby, John, is the forerunner of the Messiah, that Mary who's been living with them for three months is to be the mother of the Messiah, therefore redemption is near.

Zachariah knows his son is the forerunner.

He knows Mary is pregnant with the Messiah.

He knows that it is only a matter of time till the child, the Messiah, will be born, just a few months.

He also knows that this is the fulfilment of Old Testament promise. As I said, this is a Jewish man, not just a Jewish man, but this is a man who is expert in the Old Testament.

### **What did the priests do?**

Two weeks a year they were in Jerusalem offering sacrifices. The rest of the time they were in the hill country around Judea in his little village and he was the spiritual counsellor and the teacher of the Old Testament. He was the one who explained the issues of the Scripture to the people and who helped them understand their problems in the light of God's revelation.

So, he knew his Old Testament, he understood Davidic promise, he understood Abrahamic promise and he understood the New Covenant.

He breaks forth in a form of praise that links up with those great promises of God. This then is a very important portion of Scripture.

Four hundred years though and

- no dawn of Messiah,
- no Saviour,
- no Redeemer,
- bondage under the Greeks,
- under the Romans,
- hated,
- oppressed,
- no deliverance,
- no salvation.

But Luke is telling us 400 years is over and salvation is coming; and it is coming with the forerunner, John, who will point to the Messiah, Jesus, who is in fact the Redeemer. The salvation of God was about to come. The dawn was about to break. The Sun of Righteousness was about to rise with healing in His beams. The light was almost ready to come to end the long night of darkness.

Zachariah knew it because the angel had told him. He had told Mary, and Zachariah was now aware of the whole plan.

So, the song was sung by Zacharias.

This song is all about salvation!

All about the salvation of God fulfilling the promise to David, the promise to Abraham, and the promise of New Covenant forgiveness.

The story of Jesus is a story of salvation.

The Magnificat of Mary looked at individual salvation, "*My soul exalts the Lord, "My spirit rejoiced in my Saviour."* The Magnificat of Mary looked at individual salvation.

The great praise, the Benedictus of Zachariah, looks at collective salvation. He sees the fulfilment of Davidic promise, which is universal, the fulfilment of Abrahamic promise, which is national, both being fulfilled through the personal promise of the New Covenant.

Whole song is a song of redemption.

**V 67**, *Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:*

Zacharias, the father of the new-born little baby, John, was filled with the Holy Spirit.

This is the third time.

First, **Luke 1:15**, *For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.*

John the Baptist would be filled with the Holy Spirit while he was still in his mother's womb.

## **Why did he need to be fulfilled with the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb?**

Because later he made a silent declaration.

There was John the Baptist inspired by the Holy Spirit to make a prophetic kick, affirming from the womb that indeed the child of Mary was the Messiah.

Second, Elizabeth was filled with Holy Spirit.

**Luke 1:41**, *And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.*

Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit!

She spoke the Word of God, a blessing on Mary and on her child.

Third, Zacharias is filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.

In each instances the Spirit of God came in a unique way, filling the little infant in the womb, and using the infant to make a physical confirmation of the fact that Mary's child was indeed the Messiah.

The Spirit filled Elizabeth and out of her mouth came the Word of God blessing Mary and the child.

Here He fills Zachariah and out of his mouth comes the very Word of God. It said he prophesied.

Prophecy does not mean to predict the future. It simply means to speak before.

His words were influenced by the Holy Spirit. That is why he was filled with the Holy Spirit so that what he spoke was the Word of God.

*"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel."*

He is talking about the God of Israel, the God of the Old Testament, Jehovah. He blesses the God of Israel.

We find that all through the Old Testament. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.

**Psalm 41:13,**

**Psalm 72:18,**

**Psalm 106:48,**

**1 Kings 1:48,**

He is blessing the God of Israel. God is the God of Israel, and salvation.

**John 4:22,** *You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.*

The whole of salvation has come through Israel.

**Romans 9:4-5,** *who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; <sup>5</sup> of whom are the fathers and*

*from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.*

All of it came through Israel, the adoption, everything God funnelled through Israel.

It was that Israel was the means to the end. Through Israel came the Messiah. Through Israel came God's law, God's promises, God's covenants, all of it. It was the God of Israel who uniquely used Israel as a witness nation to reach the world.

*"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel."*

Why is he blessing God?

Benedictus, the Latin word for blessed

*"For He has visited us."*

God had visited him, sending His angel, sending His Word, working miracles, two miracles of conception and a miracle of silence and then a miracle of speech on his case.

That is an Old Testament phrase. The Old Testament makes much about divine visitation, about a divine visit, a visit from God.

Sometimes for judgment as in **Exodus 32:34**.

On the other hand, in **Exodus 4:31**, **Ruth 1:6** and other places you have God visiting with grace.

The supernatural has invaded the natural. God is at work. This is a common Old Testament expression.

In the New Testament it is used only by Luke and once in Hebrews.

"He has visited us and has accomplished redemption for His people."

Zacharias has not seen this redemption yet. The baby is just newly born in his hands here and this baby is the forerunner of the Messiah who is not even born yet, let alone having achieved His deliverance.

He is so sure and certain of it because the miraculous has confirmed that God is at work, the angelic has spoken on behalf of God. He knows that redemption is near.

Luke's gospel is all about redemption.

**Luke 21:28**, *Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."*

Luke 2:38, *And coming in that instant she gave thanks to [li](#)the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.*

**Luke 24:21**, *But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.*

The whole of believing Israelites, in fact the whole of the nation of Israel were waiting for the Sun to rise with healing, they were waiting for the Messiah, the Deliverer, the Redeemer, the Saviour.

They were looking at it politically.

They were looking at the Messiah to come and destroy the Roman power the way God had destroyed the Egyptian power. Release the people from bondage, set them free to prosperity and the fulfilment of all promise.

They were looking for the kingdom in which the Son of David would rule the whole world and rule it forever.

They were looking for the fulfilment of Abrahamic promise, blessing and blessing and blessing and blessing.

They were looking at it externally.

They really were not aware of the fact that they were not going to be able to have the fulfilment of the Davidic, or the Abrahamic covenant unless they came through the New Covenant, unless their sins were forgiven.

Luke is particularly concerned that we understand Jesus as the Saviour, Rescuer, and Redeemer. He speaks of Jesus as Saviour, or saving some thirty times, many more than all the other gospels.

**Luke 19:10**, *for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

The theme of Saviour, Rescuer, Deliverer, Redeemer looms large in Luke's wonderful gospel.