



12/23/25

*Do you believe it's already 2 days until Christmas? Wow. This season has flown by. In spite of the difficulties with Tim's mom's health, we still believe this is the "most wonderful time of the year." Yes, we live in a broken world, and yes, our Lord so lovingly came to redeem us from this broken world. I pray you're not experiencing any of the brokenness right now... but if you are... I pray that the comfort of knowing this struggle is only a drop in the ocean of eternity in the presence of God will sustain you and give you peace. He came to bring us peace... even peace in the midst of the storm. Praise His name.*

*Merry Blessings,  
Jonna*

*Luke 1:67-80*

*Wow... once Zechariah opened his mouth, he had a lot to say! No complaints. No commands. All praise and prophecy. I imagine this man who had loved God even when he didn't understand God's plan, had just spent the last 9 months growing closer to God, humbled before Him, and deeper in faith than ever before. What did he have to say, and what can I learn from his words?*

*Vs. 67 ~ First, let me not miss that everything that came out of his mouth in the next 13 verses was Holy Spirit inspired. He was filled with the Holy Spirit. In Ephesians 5:19, I'm called to be filled with the Holy Spirit, meaning that I do not try to control Him, but I allow Him to control me. That takes humility, trust, and surrender. O Lord, I want to be filled with You! More of You, less of me.*

*Vs. 68-75 ~ First, Zechariah's prophecy was focused on the Lord. I wonder if he understood that what he was prophesying was much bigger than what would happen in the here and now, and that it reached much farther than his people, the Israelites. I imagine in God's mind it didn't matter that he understood the whole picture... Zechariah was on a "need to know" basis, and he was being faithful to what the Holy Spirit placed on his heart. This, I'm sure, pleased God.*

*This is what Zechariah prophesied about the Lord ~*

- *Blessed be the Lord for visiting (caring for) and redeeming His people. No matter what Zechariah understood, he definitely understood that we have no hope apart from the Lord, and that He cares for us personally. I think it's interesting that Z said God had already redeemed His people even though the fulfillment of this prophecy had not yet come. But when God says it, it's as good as done. And I know this because I have the rest of the story. Zechariah, being as old as he was, didn't see this promise fulfilled in his lifetime. But it was still true. Also... this redemption, praise God, is for ALL who place their faith in Jesus!!!*
- *God has raised up a horn of salvation for us through David as prophesied by the holy prophets. A horn symbolizes victory. Again, this is so cool... Jesus was still in Mary's womb at this point! This is truly prophetic... not yet fulfilled when Z spoke it... but definitely fulfilled 33 years later... for ALL who believe and confess Jesus as Lord.*
- *Zechariah spoke to being delivered from enemies, those who hate him and his people. This is where I think he may not have understood how far reaching this prophecy went. Deliverance is from a much more severe enemy, the devil. God is able to deliver from the physical AND the spiritual realm. Nothing is too difficult for Him.*
- *This salvation from the enemies was not based on entitlement or earning God's help. It was His mercy that brought Jesus to us.*
- *God swore an oath to Abraham 2000 years earlier (4000 years ago for me), that He would deliver His people from their enemies for a purpose... that we might serve Him without fear. Colossians 1:13-14 says, "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." God did not deliver me so that I would have freedom TO sin, but so that I would be free FROM sin. This freedom allows me to serve the Lord without fear... trusting that no one is greater than Him. I am always serving someone, not myself... I'm either serving the devil or the Lord. Jesus set me free so that I could serve Him. He is an awesome Master... He set me so free that I would serve as an adopted child with full rights and privileges of one born to the Lord.*
- *God made it possible for His people to serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness, not just for our days on earth, but forevermore. Jesus made me holy when He died on the cross for my sins. He gave me the free gift of righteousness that I could never earn for myself. He declared over me what He is now doing in me! This gives me so much HOPE!!!*

*Vs. 77-79 ~ Then Zechariah turned to his baby boy and spoke Holy Spirit inspired prophecy over him.*

- *John would prepare the way for the Most High, Jesus. What an incredible honor. Today, I have the honor of continuing the ministry given to John by "testifying to the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).*
- *John would give the knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of God. His people, like all people, had a veil covering their minds and hearts. They didn't even realize how desperately they needed God's forgiveness and tender mercy. God used John to open minds so that they could receive the truth. God has continued that ministry for 2000 years. One thing that has really impacted me as I consider God's mercy and my sin is that I still don't realize how deep my sin goes. Romans 14:23 says that "Anything done without faith is sin." Yikes!!! Lord, rather than live in shame for my sin, please help me live with a heart of praise for Your mercy! Please grow my faith!!!*
- *Through God's tender mercy, the sunrise, the true light, Jesus, shines His light on everyone who sits in darkness and in the shadow of spiritual death, eternal separation from God, not so that we can see how hopeless we are... but so that He can light the way and guide our feet to His peace. John was not the light. Jesus was. But John pointed to the light. John 1:6-8 says, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was NOT the light but came to bear witness about the light." He did it so faithfully.*

*O Lord, there is no greater calling than to reflect Your light as the moon reflects the sun. I pray that I will not be blind to all You are. I pray that I will be faithful to You as John was... even when it cost him his earthly life. I know he is celebrating in heaven with You even now.*

*Vs. 80 ~ Isaiah 40:3 says, "A voice cries: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'" I wonder if the people thought that prophecy was just symbolic. But as is true in all of God's word... If the plain sense makes sense, don't make any other sense. The plain sense is, John grew up and became strong in spirit... the Spirit of the Lord... and he lived in the wilderness (desert) until he started his public ministry. In fact, Matthew 3:1-2 says, "In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" God thought of everything. He planned everything. He perfectly carried out everything He said He would, down to the smallest detail.*

*O Lord, I praise You for caring for us, for redeeming us through Your own Son. I praise You for Your forgiveness and tender mercy. I pray that I will respond to all Your goodness by serving You without fear.*