

LUKE: THE SON OF MAN, THE SAVIOR HAS
COME, WEEK 7

TITLE: THE BENEDICTUS

TEXT: LUKE 1:67-80

INTRODUCTION: (1) R. KENT HUGHES WRITES IN HIS VOLUME 1 COMMENTARY OF LUKE, THAT, **"THE NIGHT BEFORE THE SUNRISE OF JESUS' BIRTH HAD BEEN LONG AND DARK."** (AND IT WAS)

* BUT THE LIGHT WOULD COME FOR ACCORDING TO **ISAIAH 9:2, "THE PEOPLE WHO WALK IN DARKNESS WILL SEE A GREAT LIGHT; THOSE WHO LIVE IN A DARK LAND, THE LIGHTS WILL SHINE ON THEM."**

** AND THEN IN OUR TEXT FOR TODAY IT SAYS IN LUKE 1:78&79 THESE WORDS:

V. 78 – BECAUSE OF THE TENDER MERCY OF OUR GOD, WITH WHICH THE SUNRISE FROM ON HIGH WILL VISIT US,

V. 79 – TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, TO **GUIDE OUR FEET INTO THE WAY OF PEACE.**”

*** AND BELOVED THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD WOULD COME, THE DAYSPRING, THE SUNRISE, THE RISING OF THE SUN, THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY WAS NEAR, BUT SOMETIMES ITS VERY DARK BEFORE DAWN.

**** WELL, IT WAS A DARK TIME IN ISRAEL, FOR GOD HAD NOT SPOKEN THROUGH A TRUE PROPHET FOR 400 YEARS.

(2) HOWEVER, THE FAITHFUL REMNANT OF **GOD’S PEOPLE KNEW THE MESSIANIC SUNRISE** WOULD COME, BECAUSE 400 YEARS EARLIER, THE PROPHET MALACHI HAD CLEARLY PROMISED IN **MALACHI 4:2, “THAT THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL RISE WITH HEALING IN ITS WINGS.”**

* SO DESPITE 400 LONG YEARS OF DARKNESS,
GOD'S PEOPLE WERE LOOKING FOR THE
SUNRISE.

** FOR AFTER 400 YEARS, THERE HAD BEEN
GLIMMERS OF LIGHT INDICATING THAT DAWN
WAS IMMINENT.

*** AND SPECIFICALLY WHAT I AM TALKING
ABOUT WAS GABRIEL'S ANNUNCIATION OF JOHN
TO ZECHARIAH, GABRIEL'S ANNUNCIATION OF
JESUS TO MARY, THE MEETING OF TWO
PREGNANT MOTHERS, ELIZABETH'S LOUD
JOYFUL PROPHECY, MARY'S MAGNIFICAT, THE
BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST, ALL RECORDED IN
LUKE CHAPTER 1.

**** AND BELOVED, **"THE BRIEF MOMENTARY**
FLASHES WERE SIGNS THAT STEADY RAYS OF
MESSIANIC SUNLIGHT WOULD SOON SHINE
FROM THE HORIZON," AGAIN QUOTING R. KENT
HUGHES.

(3) AND GET THIS! WITH THE BIRTH OF JOHN IN OUR STUDY LAST SUNDAY, A FAINT GLOW WAS PERCEPTIBLE. **FOR AT JOHN THE BAPTIST'S** CIRCUMCISION, THE WORDS WERE RAISE, WHAT THEN IS THE CHILD GOING TO BE?

* WELL, OLD ZACHARIAS, SPEECHLESS FOR 9 TO 12 MONTHS BECAUSE OF A LACK OF FAITH, BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF, THEN RESPONDED IN FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE, HIS TONGUE THEN WAS LOOSED, AND GAVE THE FINAL SONG BEFORE THE SUNRISE.

** ZACHARIAS STOOD AS THE MOUTHPIECE FOR GOD, AND HE BECAME A DIVINE SOLOIST, SPEAKING FOR GOD, PRAISING GOD WITH A HOLY SONG.

*** **AND LIKE MARY'S SONG BEFORE HIM, HIS** TOO WAS FILLED WITH O.T. SCRIPTURE.

*** AND THIS JOYOUS SONG OF PRAISE HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN CALLED THE BENEDICTUS.

**** THE REASON BEING THE FIRST WORD IN V. 68 OF OUR TEXT TODAY IS THE ENGLISH WORD BLESSED, AND IN LATIN IS THE WORD BENEDICTUS.

(4) AND **THE BENEDICTUS IS ZACHARIAS' SONG** OF PRAISE, OF BLESSING, OF BENEDICTION TO THE LORD. **THIS IS ZACHARIAS' HYMN OF** THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE TO THE LORD IN RESPONSE TO ALL THAT THE LORD GOD WAS DOING AT THIS TIME IN FULFILLING HIS PLAN OF SALVATION.

* THE BENEDICTUS IS A TRIBUTE OF PRAISE TO GOD FOR THE SALVATION OF SINNERS.

** IT IS DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE O.T., DRIPPING WITH O.T. QUOTATIONS AND ALLUSION. IT IS FILLED WITH TRUTH.

*** THEREFORE, WE CAN SAY THE BENEDICTUS IS A RESPONSE, EVEN AN OUTBURST OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP PROMPTED BY THE ASTOUNDING EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN LUKE 1.

**** AND NOTE, IN CONTEXT, IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR LUKE TO INCLUDE THIS SONG OR HYMN OF PRAISE AT THE OUTSET OF HIS GOSPEL, SINCE IT CLEARLY LINKS CHRISTIANITY TO THE O.T. SALVATION COVENANTS LIKE THE DAVIDIC AND ABRAHAMIC COVENANTS.

(5) AND MORE SPECIFICALLY, THE COMING OF **CHRIST'S FORERUNNER, JOHN, ANNOUNCED THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S COVENANT PROMISE OF REDEMPTION IN THE NEW COVENANT THROUGH THE MESSIAH, JESUS CHRIST, SIGNED WITH HIS BLOOD.**

* NOW WITH THOSE INTRODUCTORY TRUTHS **BEFORE US, I'VE SIMPLY TITLED OUR STUDY** TODAY, THE BENEDICTUS.

** AND I HAVE 3 POINTS IN MY OUTLINE.

*** NO.1 PRAISE FOR SALVATION, VV. 67-75; NO. 2 PRAISE FOR THE SENT ONE, JOHN, VV. 76&77; AND NO. 3 PRAISE FOR THE SUNRISE, VV. 78-80.

**** AND WITH THOSE POINTS TO DIRECT OUR **STUDY, LOOK AT V. 67, WHERE WE'LL** BEGIN TODAY IN STARTING TO SEE OUR FIRST POINT, PRAISE FOR SALVATION.

I. PRAISE FOR SALVATION, (READ V. 67)

A. NOW ZACHARIAS THE FATHER OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER, LIKE HIS SON WHO WAS FILLED WITH **THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM HIS MOTHER'S WOMB**, AND LIKE HIS WIFE WHO WAS FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT IN LUKE 1:41, IS ALSO FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

* SO THE DIVINE POWER OF GOD TAKES OVER, ZACHARIAS AND HIS WORDS ARE LED, CONTROLLED AND DIRECTED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, SO THAT HE PROPHESED.

** AND THE VERB PROPHESED HERE LIT. MEANS TO PROCLAIM, TO SPEAK FORTH, TO EXPOUND, TO GIVE DIVINE REVELATION.

*** THEREFORE ZACHARIAS SPOKE REVELATION FROM GOD, HE SPOKE THE VERY WORD OF GOD, WHICH IS RECORDED FOR US. AND WHAT HE SAYS STARTS IN V. 68. LOOK AT V. 68 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 68. NOW HERE THE BLESSING, THE PRAISE, THE SPIRITUAL GLORIOUS EULOGIZING OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL BEGINS.

* AND NOTE THAT ZACHARIAS RIGHTLY VIEWS **GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION**, SALVATION, AS THE UNFOLDING OF HIS PROMISES TO ISRAEL, AS THE GOD OF ISRAEL.

** FOR AS THE LORD REMINDED THE SAMARITAN WOMAN IN **JOHN 4:22, "SALVATION IS FROM THE JEWS."**

*** AND THROUGH THEM CAME THE O.T. COVENANTS, THE LAW, THE PROMISES, THE TEMPLE SERVICE AND JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF. CHRISTIANITY WAS NOT A NEW RELIGION, BUT RATHER A FULFILLMENT OF EVERYTHING PROMISED IN THE O.T.

**** SO SALVATION WAS COMING. IN FACT, THE FIRST THING THAT ZACHARIAS PRAISES GOD FOR IS THAT GOD VISITED HIS PEOPLE IN V. 68.

1. THEREFORE, WHAT IS SALVATION?

* WELL, IT IS SOMETHING THAT COMES FROM GOD, AND NOT FROM US. SALVATION IS NOT A HUMAN INVENTION, BUT A DIVINE VISITATION.

** IT IS NOT SOMETHING WE ACHIEVE BY GOING TO GOD, BUT SOMETHING GOD HAS DONE BY COMING TO US IN JESUS CHRIST. GOD BECAME MAN TO SAVE PEOPLE. GOD VISITED US. **THAT'S PRETTY** NEAT TO THINK ABOUT.

*** BUT ALSO UNDERSTAND WHEN GOD VISITED US, HE CAME TO SAVE HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS, JEWS AND GENTILES.

**** IT IS TO SAY, THAT THE SALVATION THAT COMES FROM GOD, IN FULFILLMENT OF O.T. PROMISES – WHICH MEANS DELIVERANCE, NOT POTENTIALLY BUT ACTUALLY FOR HERE IN V. 68 ZACHARIAS CALLS IT REDEMPTION.

2. AND REDEMPTION MEANS A RELEASE FROM SLAVERY, A RELEASE FROM BONDAGE THROUGH THE PAYMENT OF A PRICE.

* AND REDEMPTION FREES SINNERS FROM SLAVERY TO SIN.

** BELOVED, ZACHARIAS IS PRAISING GOD FOR SALVATION. HIS PASSION IS NOT THE BIRTH OF HIS SON JOHN, BUT THE PERSON THAT WILL COME AFTER HIS SON, THE SAVIOR, THE SON OF GOD.

*** AND ZACHARIAS CONTINUES TO PRAISE GOD FOR SALVATION IN V. 69. LOOK AT V. 69 PLEASE.

C. READ V. 69. NOW WHAT DOES THE WORD HORN HAVE TO DO WITH SALVATION HERE?

* WELL, THE WORD HORN IS A COMMON METAPHOR FOR POWER BECAUSE OF THE GREAT STRENGTH OF THE HORNED ANIMALS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

** SO THE HORN WAS A PICTURESQUE O.T. EXPRESSION OF POWER AND STRENGTH AND HERE ZACHARIAS APPLIES IT TO JESUS CHRIST, NOT HIS SON JOHN.

*** AND WE KNOW THAT, FOR THE HORN OF SALVATION COMES THROUGH THE HOUSE OF DAVID, **GOD'S SERVANT, AND JESUS CHRIST** WOULD BE FROM THE HOUSE OF DAVID, THE LINEAGE OF DAVID.

*** AND HERE JESUS CHRIST THE HORN OF SALVATION, DESCENDENT OF DAVID, WOULD LOWER HIS HORNS, DRIVE OUT HIS ENEMIES AND DELIVER HIS PEOPLE. HE WILL REDEEM HIS PEOPLE, SALVATION IS THE THEME, AND PRAISE IS THE RESPONSE BY ZACHARIAS. WITH THAT SAID, LOOK AT V. 70 PLEASE.

D. READ V. 70. NOW THE O.T. PROPHETS ACTUALLY PREDICTED THE COMING OF THE OFFSPRING OF DAVID, THE MESSIAH.

* AND THAT THE PROPHETS ARE FROM OLD, FROM AGES GONE BY REMINDS US THAT GOD FULFILLS THE PROMISES BY THE PROPHETS IN THE PAST.

** AND THAT THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE MUST BE UNDERSTOOD IN TERMS OF WHAT GOD HAS SAID AND DONE IN THE PAST, SPEAKING THROUGH THE PROPHETS.

***** AND I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE THE TIME** TODAY TO TALK ABOUT ALL OF THE O.T. PROPHECIES THAT POINTED TO THE MESSIAH COMING, FOR MOST OF YOU KNOW THERE ARE MANY.

**** BUT NOW ALL THOSE PROPHECIES ABOUT THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH ARE ABOUT TO BE FULFILLED, AND ZACHARIAS IS EXCITED ABOUT THAT AND PRAISES AND CONTINUES TO PRAISE THE LORD FOR SALVATION. LOOK AT V. 71 PLEASE.

E. READ V. 71. NOW IS THIS SALVATION TALKED ABOUT IN V. 71 A POLITICAL SALVATION FROM THE PHYSICAL ENEMIES OF THE JEWS, AS MOST JEWS WERE LOOKING FOR A POLITICAL DELIVERER FROM ROME, NOT A DELIVERER FROM SIN.

* OR WAS THIS SPIRITUAL SALVATION FOR THE JEWS? WELL, WITHOUT QUESTION GOD DELIVERED HIS PEOPLE, THE JEWS IN THE PAST FROM ENEMIES WHO HATED THEM LIKE THE EGYPTIANS, THE CANAANITES, THE ASSYRIANS AND THE BABYLONIANS.

** AND OBVIOUSLY THE GREAT ENEMY IN **ZACHARIAS' DAY WAS ROME. AND THERE MAY** BE A HINT OF THAT IN V. 71.

*** HOWEVER, SALVATION FROM ROME WILL NOT SAVE ANYBODY FROM SIN.

**** AND CONTEXTUALLY SALVATION FROM SIN IS THE THEME, SPIRITUAL DELIVERANCE. IT IS CALLED REDEMPTION IN V. 68, IN V. 69, A HORN OF SALVATION, IT IS CALLED MERCY IN V. 71, AND RESULTS IN SERVING THE LORD IN HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN V. 75.

1. SO WHEN ZACHARIAS SPOKE OF DELIVERANCE, OF SALVATION, HE MAY HAVE HAD THE POLITICAL SALVATION HISTORY IN HIS MIND ABOUT ISRAEL.

* HOWEVER, HE CLEARLY WAS LOOKING FOR A MORE LASTING LIBERATION, ONE THAT WOULD BRING FREEDOM FROM SIN. LOOK AT V. 72 PLEASE.

F. READ V. 72. NOW CLEARLY IN VERSES 72&73, THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT IS IN VIEW, A COVENANT, AN AGREEMENT THAT GOD SOLEMNLY PROMISED TO ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB, PROMISING BLESSING TO ISRAEL, THOUGH GENTILES CAN ENTER INTO THOSE BLESSINGS THROUGH FAITH.

* FOR GALATIANS 3:6&7 SAYS:

V. 6 - **"EVEN SO ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

V. 7 - THEREFORE, BE SURE THAT IT IS THOSE WHO ARE OF FAITH WHO ARE SONS OF ABRAHAM."

** AND MY POINT IS BELIEVING JEWS AND GENTILES ARE THE TRUE SPIRITUAL SONS OF ABRAHAM BECAUSE THEY FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE OF FAITH, FOR ABRAHAM WAS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH IN GENESIS 15:6. ALSO QUOTE ROMANS 4:20-22.

*** NOW WITH THAT SAID, THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT IS PRIMARILY A COVENANT OF MERCY.

*** FOR IT REVEALS THAT GOD IS A GOD OF GRACE, THAT HE IS GRACIOUS AND COMPASSIONATE TO UNDESERVING PEOPLE, PEOPLE THAT DESERVE WRATH.

**** AND THUS THE STREAM, THE FLOW OF **MERCY THAT BEGAN WITH GOD'S BLESSING OF ABRAHAM** FLOW DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES TO PURCHASE REDEMPTION, FORGIVENESS AND ETERNAL BLESSING TO ALL WHO HAVE FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE PROMISED MESSIAH.

1. SO GOD MADE A HOLY COVENANT WHICH STARTED WHEN ABRAHAM WAS CHILDLESS, THAT HE WOULD MAKE A GREAT NATION OF HIM AND THAT ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH WOULD BE BLESSED THROUGH HIM, QUOTE GENESIS 12:3.

* **NOW IT'S INTERESTING IN THE N.T., IN GALATIANS 3:8, THE APOSTLE PAUL IDENTIFIED THE PHRASE, IN YOU (ABRAHAM) ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH WILL BE BLESSED, AS THE GOSPEL BEFOREHAND TO ABRAHAM.**

** FOR GALATIANS 3:8&9 SAYS:

V. 8 – THE SCRIPTURE, FORESEEING THAT GOD WOULD JUSTIFY THE GENTILES BY FAITH, PREACHED THE GOSPEL BEFOREHAND TO **ABRAHAM, SAYING, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU."**

V. 9 – SO THEN THOSE WHO ARE OF FAITH ARE BLESSED WITH ABRAHAM, THE BELIEVER.

*** NOW THE GOOD NEWS TO ABRAHAM WAS NOT THE NEWS OF POLITICAL BLESSING, BUT THE NEWS OF SALVATION FOR ALL NATIONS, NOT JUST JEWS AND THAT SALVATION COMES BY MERCY AND GRACE ALONE, THROUGH FAITH ALONE BY CHRIST ALONE. THUS THE O.T. PREDICTED THAT GENTILES WOULD RECEIVE THE BLESSING OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, AS DID ABRAHAM. SPIRITUAL SALVATION FROM SIN IS **THE ISSUE AND THAT'S WHAT ZACHARIAS IS** PRAISING GOD FOR. LOOK AT V. 73 PLEASE AS WE CONTINUE TO SEE THIS.

G. READ V. 73. NOW HERE IN V. 73, WE HAVE A DEFINITION OF A COVENANT AND WHAT IS A COVENANT?

* A COVENANT IS AN OATH, LIT. A PLEDGE, A PROMISE IN WHICH GOD MAKES TO SOMEONE, SOMETHING HE SWEARS BY, SOMETHING HE GIVES HIS WORD ABOUT TO SOMEONE, IN THIS CASE, ABRAHAM.

** A COVENANT IS A SOLEMN PROMISE BY GOD, AN OATH, SOMETHING HE SWEARS BY, AND AS I SAID LAST SUNDAY, GOD ALWAYS, ALWAYS, KEEPS HIS WORD. AND OBVIOUSLY HE DID WITH ABRAHAM AS WITH ALL OF HIS OTHER COVENANTS.

*** NOW WHAT WOULD THIS COVENANT OR SOLEMN PROMISE DO? WHAT WOULD THIS SOLEMN OATH GRANT? WHAT WOULD IT GIVE? WELL, THE ANSWER IS IN VV. 74&75. LOOK AT V. 74 FIRST PLEASE.

H. READ V. 74. NOW THE PURPOSE OF SALVATION, THE PURPOSE OF THE OATH WITH THE SPIRITUAL CONTEXT OF SALVATION, WHICH I HAVE ATTEMPTED TO COMMUNICATE IS **SERVICE AND LIVING FOR GOD'S GLORY.**

* IT IS WHOLE HEARTED SERVICE TO THE LORD IN COMPLETE LIBERTY OR FREEDOM FROM ALL BONDS OF SIN, GUILT, PUNISHMENT, CURSE, SATAN AND ETERNAL JUDGMENT.

** SALVATION IS BEING RESCUED FROM THE ENEMY OF SIN, THE DEVIL, THE WORLD, THE FLESH, TO SERVE GOD WITHOUT FEAR OF JUDGMENT, WITHOUT FEAR OF THE DEVIL.

*** AND THAT AGAIN THE PRIMARY MEANING OF SPIRITUAL SALVATION IS THE CONTEXT IS BROUGHT FORTH IN V. 75. LOOK AT V. 75 PLEASE.

I. READ V. 75. NOW WHEN WE ARE SAVED FROM OUR SINS, HOW DO WE SERVE GOD? THE ANSWER IS IN HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS ALL OF OUR DAYS.

* TO SERVE GOD IS TO GLORIFY HIM IN OUR WORSHIP AND IN EVERYTHING ELSE WE DO, LEADING HOLY RIGHTEOUS LIVES. HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS ARE RESULTS OF SALVATION.

**** AND GOD'S GOAL IS FOR US TO LIVE FOR HIS GLORY, NOW AND IN HEAVEN LATER. GOD'S SALVATION IS FOR OUR SANCTIFICATION NOW, AND THIS ALWAYS LEADS TO SERVICE. WE WERE SAVED TO SERVE GOD ALL OF OUR DAYS IN HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS WAYS.**

*** AND IN VV. 67-75, ZACHARIAS PRAISES GOD FOR SO GREAT A SALVATION. HIS HEART IS FULL, FOR GOD IS KEEPING HIS COVENANTS, FULFILLING HIS PROMISES AND PRAISE FLOWS FROM HIS HEART AS HE IS FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

**** BUT THE PRAISE DOES NOT END IN V. 75, IT CONTINUES IN VV. 76&77, BUT SHIFTS GEARS AND FOCUSES ON THE ROLE HIS SON JOHN PLAYS IN THIS GREAT SALVATION. SO LOOK AT **V. 76 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, PRAISE FOR THE SENT ONE,** THE SON OF ZACHARIAS, JOHN.

II. PRAISE FOR THE SENT ONE, (READ V. 76)

A. NOW ZACHARIAS WAS EXPERIENCING A ONCE IN A LIFETIME ELEVATION OF HIS SOUL, AND AS HIS EYES LOOK TO HIS NEWBORN SON THAT HAS JUST BEEN CIRCUMCISED AND SET APART TO THE LORD, HE SAYS TO HIM IN PRAISE TO THE LORD.

* YOU SON, YOU MY MIRACLE CHILD OF MY OLD AGE WILL BE CALLED THE PROPHET OF THE MOST HIGH, ELEVATED TERMS THAT STRESS **GOD'S ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY**, GOD MOST HIGH, EL ELYON.

** AND AS I SAID IN MY INTRODUCTION, THERE WAS 400 YEARS OF DARKNESS FOR ISRAEL, NO PROPHET OF GOD SPOKE FOR 400 YEARS.

*** BUT NOW GOD WOULD END 4 CENTURIES OF REVELATORY SILENCE.

**** **AND JOHN'S MINISTRY WOULD BE TO GO ON BEFORE THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO PREPARE HIS WAYS, IN FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE THROUGH MALACHI 3:1, "BEHOLD, I AM GOING TO SEND MY MESSENGER, AND HE WILL CLEAR THE WAY BEFORE ME."**

1. AND JOHN WAS THE FORERUNNER, THE PROPHET WHO WENT AHEAD TO PREPARE THE WAY. HE WOULD DO PREPARATORY WORK BY CALLING PEOPLE TO REPENT FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD WAS AT HAND.

* JOHN WOULD DO PREP WORK FOR JESUS AND THE SALVATION HE WOULD BRING, TO GIVE HIS ELECT THE KNOWLEDGE THEY NEEDED, TO TURN ON THE LIGHT FOR GREAT LIGHT WOULD FOLLOW HIM, THE GREATER ONE THAT WOULD FOLLOW. LOOK AT V. 77 PLEASE.

B. READ VERSE 77. NOW THE SALVATION THAT JOHN WOULD PROCLAIM AS A FORERUNNER TO THE SAVIOR, WAS NOT A SALVATION FROM EARTHLY ENEMIES, IT WAS NOT A NEW FORM OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

* RATHER, JOHN WAS CALLED TO GIVE KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION TO HIS PEOPLE (GOD'S **CHOSEN PEOPLE, THE ELECT**) IN THE FORGIVENESS OF THEIR SINS.

** AND BELOVED, FUNDAMENTALLY, SALVATION IS THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

*** **AND BY AND LARGE, THE PEOPLE OF JOHN'S** DAY WERE LOOKING FOR THE WRONG KIND OF SALVATION AS MOST PEOPLE ARE IN OUR DAY.

**** THEY WERE THINKING PRIMARILY IN POLITICAL TERMS, THEY WANTED A BETTER ECONOMY AS PEOPLE IN OUR DAY, AND MORE PERSONAL FREEDOMS, AS THEY ARE ERODING, IN OUR DAY. BUT THAT KIND OF SALVATION IS NOT WHAT GOD HAD IN MIND.

1. PEOPLE NEED THE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR SIN AND THEIR NEED OF THE ONLY SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST. AND JOHN WAS SENT TO CALL PEOPLE TO REPENT OF THEIR SINS AND LOOK TO THE LIGHT, THE ONLY SAVIOR. JOHN WAS NOT THAT LIGHT, BUT WAS SENT TO BEAR WITNESS OF THAT LIGHT.

* JOHN 1: 6-8 SAYS ABOUT JOHN -

V. 6 - THERE CAME A MAN SENT FROM GOD, WHOSE NAME WAS JOHN.

V. 7 - HE CAME AS A WITNESS, TO TESTIFY ABOUT THE LIGHT, SO THAT ALL MIGHT BELIEVE THROUGH HIM.

V. 8 HE WAS NOT THE LIGHT, BUT HE CAME TO TESTIFY ABOUT THE LIGHT.

** SO JOHN WAS THE SENT ONE, TO PREPARE PEOPLE FOR THE LIGHT, AND ZACHARIAS WILL CONTINUE TO PRAISE THE LORD IN HIS BENEDICTUS IN VV. 78&79 THAT THE LIGHT WILL FOLLOW JOHN. ZACHARIAS WILL PRAISE GOD FOR THE SUNRISE. LOOK AT V. 78 TO BEGIN WITH PLEASE.

III. PRAISE FOR THE SUNRISE, (READ V. 78)

A. NOW IT IS GOD'S TENDER MERCY THAT MOVES HIM TO SHOW COMPASSION TO LOST SINNERS.

* AND FORGIVENESS IS THE SUPREME **EXPRESSION OF GOD'S COMPASSIONATE MERCY** FOR SINNERS AND NOTHING IS MORE WONDERFUL FOR A SINNER THAN TO RECEIVE MERCY.

** NOW ZACHARIAS CONTINUES TO THINK HOW **WONDERFUL GOD'S MERCY IS, AND HOW GOD** WILL VISIT PEOPLE IN THE DARK WITH HIS LIGHT.

*** IT IS TO SAY, THE SUNRISE WOULD COME. FOR ZACHARIAS IDENTIFIES THE MESSIAH AS THE SUNRISE OR DAYSPRING IN THE KJV AND NKJV, AND THE RISING SUN IN THE NIV.

**** AND THIS PARTICULAR WORD TRANSLATED IN THE WAYS I HAVE JUST MENTIONED LIT. MEANS RISING IN THE GREEK AND REFERS TO THE FIRST LIGHT OF DAWN.

1. NOW THE RISING OF THE FIRST LIGHT COMES FROM ON HIGH, WHICH MEANS OUT OF OR FROM THE HEIGHT AND MAKES REFERENCE, REFERS TO HEAVEN.

* AND THUS ZACHARIAS DEPICTS THE MESSIAH, THE SAVIOR AS A GREAT LIGHT FROM HEAVEN WHO WILL SHINE THE LIGHT OF SALVATION UPON PEOPLE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS. LOOK AT V. 79 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 79. NOW THE DAYSPRING, THE SUNRISE, THE RISING SUN, THE LORD JESUS, WILL SHINE HIS LIGHT UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

* THUS, THE BRIGHT MORNING STAR, REVELATION 22:16, THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IN MALACHI 4:2, AND THE ONE WHO IS THE MORNING STAR IN II PETER 1:19, WILL RISE ON THOSE IN DARKNESS, IN SIN, IN **THE SHADOW OF DEATH, DEATH'S DARKNESS.** FOR THERE IS DANGER, FEAR, HOPELESSNESS BECAUSE OF THE DARKNESS OF SIN. FOR WHEN YOU WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH WITH NO SAVIOR, IT IS DARK, AND THERE IS GREAT FEAR, BECAUSE IT LEADS TO ETERNAL HELL AND YOU ARE ALONE. JESUS SAID ABOUT THE UNSAVED IN MATTHEW 25:46 (QUOTE IT). AND EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT IS CALLED OUTER DARKNESS IN SCRIPTURE, THE SHADOW OF DEATH, MATTHEW 8:12.

** BUT NOT ONLY WILL JESUS SHINE LIGHT ON PEOPLE IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, THROUGH HIS LIGHT, HE WILL LIGHT UP OUR PATHS TO THE WAY OF PEACE.

*** AND LOST SINNERS STUMBLING AROUND IN **DARKNESS OF SIN KNOW NOTHING OF GOD'S** PEACE.

**** QUOTE ISAIAH 57:20&21. ALSO QUOTE ROMANS 5:1.

1. NOW ZACHARIAS IN PRAISE, PAINTS A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF OUR SAVIOR AS LIGHT AND LIGHTENS UP THE WAY TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SIN.

* WITH THAT SAID, LOOK AT V. 80, OUR LAST VERSE FOR TODAY.

C. READ V. 80. NOW WITH THE END OF **ZACHARIAS' BENEDICTUS**, HIS SONG OF PRAISE, WE HEAR NO MORE ABOUT JOHN UNTIL HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY IN LUKE CHAPTER 3, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WHAT IS SAID HERE IN V. 80.

* IN OTHER WORDS, THE BIBLE PASSES OVER HIS CHILDHOOD, REVEALING EVEN LESS DETAIL ABOUT IT THAN IT DOES OF **JESUS' CHILDHOOD**.

** AND ALL THAT IS KNOWN DURING THE YEARS **BETWEEN JOHN'S CIRCUMCISION AND THE** BEGINNING OF HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY IN LUKE 3 IS, JOHN CONTINUED TO GROW PHYSICALLY, AND BECAME STRONG IN SPIRIT SPIRITUALLY, AND HIS HOME WAS IN THE DESERTS, UNTIL THE DAY OF HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY TO ISRAEL, WHICH WOULD HAPPEN IN LUKE 3:2 WHEN THE WORD OF GOD WOULD COME TO HIM WHILE IN THE WILDERNESS AND HE WOULD START PREACHING.

*** SO IN ESSENCE, THE EMPHASIS IS NOT ON JOHN'S INFANCY, BUT HIS MINISTRY IN PREPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD.

IN WRAP UP AND IN APPLICATION: (1) AFTER DARKNESS, THEN LIGHT. AND THIS IS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED FROM YOUR SINS.

* SALVATION IS LIKE THE FIRST GLIMMER OF DAWN AFTER THE BLACKEST NIGHT, AND UNTIL WE COME TO FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, WE ARE LIVING IN THE DARKNESS OF UNFORGIVEN SIN.

** BUT WHEN JESUS RISES IN OUR LIVES, GONE IS THE SHADOW OF DEATH. WE PASS FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.

*** AND BEYOND THAT, IN HIS LIGHT, HE IS ABLE TO GUIDE OUR FEET INTO THE PATH OF PEACE, **GOD'S SHALOM.**

**** SO I ASK THE QUESTION, HAS THE SUNRISE
FROM ON HIGH BROUGHT SIGHT FROM THE
DARKNESS OF SIN?

(2) IS CHRIST YOUR MIGHTY HORN OF
SALVATION?

* HAVE YOU BEEN DELIVERED FROM THE
SHADOW OF DEATH?

** IF NOT, TURN TO THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD
TODAY, AND YOU WILL NOT BE CONDEMNED,
QUOTE JOHN 3:19.

*** **DON'T ALLOW YOUR SIN TO BLIND YOU**
ANYMORE, TURN FROM THE LOVE OF DARKNESS
TO THE LIGHT.

****LAST OF ALL IN APPLICATION: TRUE
BELIEVER, IS YOUR HEART FILLED WITH PRAISE
AS ZACHARIAS' WAS FOR SO GREAT A
SALVATION, SUCH A GREAT DELIVERANCE.

(3) ARE YOU LIVING A LIFE OF THANKSGIVING ALLOWING IT TO OVERCOME COMPLAINING, GRIPING AND DISCONTENT?

* HAVE YOU ALLOWED THE GREATNESS OF YOUR SALVATION TO GRIP YOU AND CHANGE BAD WORLDLY ATTITUDES?

** ARE YOU BASICALLY GRATEFUL OR UNGRATEFUL?

*** BELOVED, LET YOUR SALVATION TODAY BRING FORTH THE OVERFLOW OF PRAISE TO OUR SAVIOR GOD THAT HELPS US BRING LIGHT IN A DARK, DISCONTENT, GRIPING, COMPLAINING, HOPELESS HELLBOUND WORLD.

**** MAY WE TRULY BE THE MOST GRATEFUL PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TODAY IN THE MIDST OF SORROW, PAIN, SUFFERING AND OTHER TRIALS. I CLOSE WITH TWO VERSES: QUOTE PSALM 107:1 AND PSALM 150:6 AND THEN PRAY.