



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Short Study 049: Benedictus

Study Author: Michael Button

Read Luke 1:68-80

Introduction. This is a prophecy spoken by Zacharia, (NIV Zechariah) on the birth of his son John the Baptist. It tells us something of what God has done in sending *His Son* into this world. The Church has given the prophecy the name 'Benedictus.' What does this mean, and why is it so called?

v68 *(God) has visited ... His people.* This was no perfunctory visit (hasty and informal); it was planned long ago. List the previous prior announcements (in the Old Testament) of the 'visit' that you can recall or can find by searching for prophecies about Jesus. Jesus exhorts *us* to visit the sick and the imprisoned because we *care* (Matthew 25:34-36). Do you think God's visit was prompted by His care (1 Peter 5:7)?

v68 *(God) has ...and redeemed His people.* What is meant by 'redeemed'?

v69 *horn of salvation.* A 'horn' symbolises *power* or *strength*. Jesus has the power to save us from sin and its consequences. In the tabernacle, and later the temple, the altar for the burnt offerings was constructed with a short projection, shaped like a horn, on each corner (Exodus 27:2). What was the significance of this?

v69 *in the house of His servant David.* 'House' here means descendants. The Messiah was prophesied to be descended from King David (Matthew 22:42). Look for instances of people addressing Jesus as "Son of David."

v71 *That we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.* Since Zechariah was speaking under the direction of the Holy Spirit, the reference to enemies will not have been to the enemies that opposed Israel, but to spiritual enemies that oppose the Christian. What are these enemies?

v74-75 *Being saved ... (we) might serve Him without fear. In holiness and righteousness* There are three 'fruits' of our salvation mentioned in this passage: service, holiness and righteousness. Think about these three things: To what extent is your salvation producing these in your life (see Philippians 2:12)?

Vs76-77 are about the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. Read about John (in Isaiah 40:1-4 & Matthew 3:1-12) and consider in what way he prepared the way for Jesus.

V78 *the Dayspring from on high has visited us.* 'Dayspring' means the rising sun. (For 'visited' see on v 68). Why is Jesus referred to as the 'Dayspring'?

v79 'Peace' means absence of strife.

To think about: How can I be a 'forerunner' of Jesus, preparing people to receive Jesus, like John the Baptist?

For further study: Read commentaries on the Benedictus.