



## **Zechariah's Song of Prophetic Praise (Benedictus)**

### **Key idea:**

After a season of silence and deep meditation, Zechariah erupted in a song of praise for God's saving work, which had been prophetically promised, and was now coming to fulfillment with the birth of John who would prepare the way for Jesus the Messiah Who would save God's people.

### **Key text:**

Luke 1:67-79

His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: <sup>68</sup> "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. <sup>69</sup> He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David <sup>70</sup> (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), <sup>71</sup> salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us — <sup>72</sup> to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, <sup>73</sup> the oath he swore to our father Abraham: <sup>74</sup> to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear <sup>75</sup> in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. <sup>76</sup> And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, <sup>77</sup> to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, <sup>78</sup> because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven <sup>79</sup> to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace."

### **Key points:**

1. Zechariah's song (the Benedictus) is a powerful summary of Old Testament prophecies and promises about the coming Messiah.
2. Zechariah used the 9 months of silence to meditate deeply on God's Word - and we should follow this example during times of difficulty or discipline.
3. God is faithful to fulfill His covenant promises through Jesus Christ.
4. The central message of Advent is God's tender mercy and salvation for humanity.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Zechariah used his time of silence for deep meditation on God's Word. How can we create intentional times of silence and reflection in our busy lives?
2. The sermon mentioned that Zechariah's song is a summary of the Old Testament. What parts of the Old Testament story stood out to you in this song?
3. How does understanding God's faithfulness to His covenant promises in the past affect your trust in Him for the present and future?
4. Zechariah prophetically blessed John the Baptist for his calling. How can we speak words of blessing and encouragement to others, especially younger generations?
5. The sermon emphasized God's "tender mercy" towards us. How does this concept of God's character challenge or comfort you?
6. Jesus is Emmanuel (God with us). How much changes if I switch the preposition "with" to "against", or "above"? Which preposition do I think most people would connect with God's relationship with us?
7. How does the message of Advent - God with us (Emmanuel) - impact your daily life and relationships?

### **Practical Applications:**

1. Set aside 10-15 minutes each day this week for silent meditation on a specific Bible passage or promise of God.
2. Practice speaking words of blessing to at least one person each day, whether a family member, friend, or colleague.
3. Reflect on areas in your life where you struggle to believe in God's tender mercy. Bring these to God in prayer, asking Him to deepen your understanding of His love.
4. Choose one way to practically demonstrate God's mercy to someone else this week (e.g., forgiveness, acts of kindness, words of encouragement).
5. As a group, discuss how you can collectively share the message of God's salvation and tender mercy with others in your community during this Advent season.