**A Horn of Salvation**

Luke 1:67-80

Key Verse 69

 “He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David”

**Introduction**

 This passage is the song of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist. Zechariah received training from God because of his unbelief. But later, he repented. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied. Through his son’s birth, he realized that God was raising up a horn of salvation, who is the Messiah. God did this for his people, to fulfill His covenant. Through this, Zechariah was filled with hope to serve God without fear all his days and praised God for His tender mercy. Zachariah’s song has been called the Benedictus. We know this is truly a Spirit-inspired prophecy because the focus of this prophecy is Jesus, not Zachariah’s son, John. Zachariah hadn’t seen Jesus yet, but he praised Him, loved Him, and was passionate about Jesus. Living many years after Zechariah, believers now have so much more knowledge of who Jesus is. Knowing all that we do through our study of the Bible, what is our excuse not to praise Jesus as much as we ought to?

1. Read verse 67-71. What prompted Zechariah to prophesy? (62-64, 67) Why did he praise the Lord, the God of Israel? (68-71) How did God redeem his people? (68-70) In what respect did Jesus become “a horn of salvation”? (69) Who do you think our enemies are? (71)

1-1. Read verse 67-71.

 His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:**68** “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.**69** He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David **70** (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),**71** salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us

1-2. What prompted Zechariah to prophesy? (62-64, 67)

* After John the Baptist was born, his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.
* Being inspired by the Holy Spirit, he sang a song that prophesied about both Jesus and John the baptist.

1-3. Why did he praise the Lord, the God of Israel? (68-71)

* Zechariah praised the Lord, the God of Israel because He had come to **redeem His people**. He had **raised up a horn of salvation** for us.
* Zechariah saw the vision that God was redeeming his people through His Son, Jesus Christ. He was raising up a horn of salvation who would save His people from their enemies.
* He praised God for sending the Messiah who would save his people from such miserable conditions as when the Israelites were under the oppression of Pharaoh.

Exodus 2:23-25 says,

 **“**During that long period, the king of Egypt died. **The Israelites groaned in their slavery** and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. **24** God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. **25** So **God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.**”

* God’s people were groaning under the slavery of sin and death.
* Zechariah saw the vision that God would redeem his people and would save them from Satan’s hands. He praised God for His mercy towards his people.
* He praised God, not because he received the precious gift of his son, whom he had longed for for such a long time. Instead, he praised God because he saw God’s vision to save people from their miserable condition through the birth of his son.
* We can praise God from the bottom of our heart when we see the salvation of God through Jesus Christ.

1-4. How did God redeem his people? (68-70)

* “Redemption” - the action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt.
* We were slaves of sin.

John 8:34-36 says,

 **“**Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who **sins is a slave to sin**. **35** Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. **36** So **if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”**

Ephesians 1:7 says,

 “In him we have **redemption** through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.”

Hebrews 9:12 reads,

“He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal **redemption.”**

* Jesus redeemed us from our sin through his blood and we are now free from all our sins and became children of God who would inherit the kingdom of God.

1-5. In what respect did Jesus become “a horn of salvation”? (69)

 ***He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David 70 (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), 71 salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.***

* A “Horn” is the symbol of power (1 Kings 22:11, Dan 8:3) and kingship (Dan. 7:23, 8:20-22).
* King David called God ‘my horn of salvation (2Sa 22:3, Ps 18:2,)
* The Horn of salvation refers to the Messiah, Jesus Christ who would save his people with his power and become king over them.
* ‘In the house of his servant David’ – God promised he would send the savior through the line of David, as David’s descendant. (Ps 132:17, Jer 23:5, Mt 1:1)
* The horn of salvation is more powerful than any enemy, and powerful enough to save his people from all their enemies’ hands.
* Through the Horn of Salvation, we can win absolute victory over all our enemies and evil powers.

1-6. Who do you think our enemies are? (71)

 ***salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.***

* The enemies are Satan and all those who follow him. These evil forces are all working against God and his people. (Mt 13:37-39).
* Satan has power described also with horns. - ‘Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten **horn**s and seven crowns on its heads.’ (Rev. 12:3)
* Satan attacks us in many ways, using his horns.
* But our Horn of Salvation is more powerful than Satan. Once we rely on the power of the Horn, Jesus Christ, we can defeat all of Satan’s attacks.
* According to CNN, (11-24-05) violent extremists like ISIS meet on an open forum, such as on social media sites like Facebook or Twitter. Then they move their conversations to private, using technology called encryption to encode their messages.
* This ability to relay information, undetected, is called ["going dark."](http://money.cnn.com/2015/11/16/technology/terrorists-go-dark/index.html?iid=EL) This trend is one of the most alarming concerns that counter-terror officials worldwide are now facing.
* They worry that due to these emerging tactics, the next terrorist attack will not be preventable -- an anxiety that plagues many since the November 13 attacks in Paris, that claimed 130 lives.
* When ISIS terrorists want to hide what they're saying, they are increasingly turning to [an app called Telegram](http://money.cnn.com/2015/11/17/technology/isis-telegram/index.html?iid=EL).
* FBI Director James Comey has repeatedly said that the use of social media by ISIS is unprecedented in terms of how aggressively it engages with people in the West.
* According to public records, in the U.S. alone, at least 52 Americans have been charged with terror-related crimes and for allegedly supporting ISIS. Intense surveillance by the FBI plays a significant role in finding ISIS supporters.
* Still, the problem is akin to finding a needle in a haystack. And there are a daunting number of haystacks, said Matthew Green, who teaches cryptography and computer security at Johns Hopkins University.
* "Nobody can afford to read every email. There's too much communication for us to listen to it all, even if none of it is encrypted," Green said.
* So is the same with our young people who are using Social media daily. Although there are a number of good aspects to using social media, they are also many negative ways in which these technologies affect our children.
* This is the great challenge that parents are facing today.
* May the Lord help us to not give up but to rely on Jesus, the Horn of Salvation.
* May the Lord help us to keep praying no matter what so that we may serve our Lord God like the king David who prayed earnestly in Psalm 18.

Psalm 18:1-3 says,

####  For the director of music. Of David the servant of the Lord. He sang to the Lord the words of this song when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. He said:

####  “I love you, Lord, my strength. 2 The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

2. Read verses 72-75. What is the purpose of God’s salvation for us? (72-75) What is God’s holy covenant given to Abraham? (72, 73, Gen 22:16-18) What can we learn about God who remembers and keeps his covenant? How does Jesus enable us to serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness and for how long? (74,75)

2-1. Read verses 72-75.

 To show mercy to our ancestors and to remember his holy covenant,

**73** the oath he swore to our father Abraham: **74** to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear **75** in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

2-2. What is the purpose of God’s salvation for us? (72-75)

* **To show** mercy to our ancestors
* **To remember** his holy covenant
* **To rescue** us from the hand of our enemies
* **To enable** us to serve him without fear
* God decided to raise up a horn of salvation, Jesus Christ, based on His mercy. Raising up a horn of salvation was the fulfillment of His covenant.
* God saved his people from our enemies’ hands so that they could serve him and worship him without fear.
* God saved the Israelites from Pharaoh’s hand with the same purpose. God saved the Israelites based on His mercy and covenant given to Abraham.

Exodus 9:13 says,

 “and told Pharaoh “ Let my people go, so that they may worship me”

2-3. What is God’s holy covenant given to Abraham? (72, 73, Gen 22:16-18)

 ***To show mercy to our ancestors and to remember his holy covenant,***

***73 the oath he swore to our father Abraham:***

 ***and said, “I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, 18 and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.” (Gen 22:18)***

* God promised to send a Messiah through Abraham’s descendants to bless all nations on earth.

2-4. What can we learn about God who remembers and keeps his covenant?

* God is faithful and keeps His promise absolutely with zero failure. He never forgets His promise.
* He is mighty enough to keep all His promises. He keeps His promise by any means with His almighty power.
* He is the sovereign Lord. He can fulfill His promise through His sovereignty over all situations and at all times.
* We can have absolute trust in God’s promises because of His faithfulness.

2-5. How does Jesus enable us to serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness and for how long? (74,75)

 ***to enable us to serve him without fear 75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.***

* We were not able to serve God because of our dirty sins and all our unrighteousness. Sinners cannot stand before God.
* Even Zechariah had fear when he came to God in order to fulfill his priestly duties.
* God enabled us to serve him without fear by clothing us with holiness and righteousness through Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9:13-14 says,

 “The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. **14** How much more, then, will **the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!**”

* Through his blood Jesus made us holy, cleansing all our dirty sins. He clothes us with perfect righteousness.
* By faith in Jesus we can come to God boldly and serve him in intimate relationship as His children.
* We can serve God for all our days and eternally, forever. This is the best blessing that we can ever receive from God.

3. Read verses 76-80. Why would the child be called a prophet of the Most High? (76) What would he give his people? (77) What can we learn from the ‘tender mercy of God’? (78) Who does ‘the rising sun from heaven’ refer to and what does he do for people? (78,79) What happened to the child? (80)

3-1. Read verses 76-80.

 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, **77** to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,**78** because of the tender mercy of our God,by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven **79** to shine on those living in darknessand in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.” **80** And the child grew and became strong in spirit ; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.

3-2. Why would the child be called a prophet of the Most High? (76)

 ***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***

* The child will prepare the way for the Lord, Jesus Christ.
* It was the fulfillment of God’s words. (Isa 40:3, Mal 3:1, 4:5)
* John the Baptist was the great prophet (Mt 11:11) for he bridged the Old Testament with the New Testament.
* He prophesied about the Messiah and prepared Jesus’ way directly by going just before him.

3-3.What would he give his people? (77)

 ***to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins***

* The child would give people the knowledge of salvation. He would help people to know how to be saved.
* The core content of the knowledge of salvation is the forgiveness of sins. He would help to know their sins and repent of their sins and believe in Jesus.
* The knowledge of this world has some value. But no amount of worldly knowledge can help people to be saved from their sins.
* Only the knowledge of salvation can help people to be saved.
* Only those who receive forgiveness through sincere repentance and faith in Jesus can receive salvation from God.
* We can prepare the way for Jesus by giving the knowledge of salvation to people who are suffering under their sins.

3-4.What can we learn from the ‘tender mercy of God’? (78)

 ***because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven***

* ‘Tender’ means showing gentleness and concern or sympathy.
* Synonyms of ‘tender’ are motherly, gentle, benevolent and generous.
* God is so gentle and generous and sympathizes with the agonies of people.
* Because of his tender mercy, God sent the Messiah.
* When we believe in his tender mercy, we can come to God for help and grace despite all our sins and failures.
* God’s tender mercy gives hope to all terrible sinners and those who are suffering from many problems.

3-5. Who does ‘the rising sun from heaven’ refer to and what does he do for people? (78,79)

 ***by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven 79 to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace***

* People live in the darkness of sin and spiritual ignorance without knowing how to live.
* People live in the shadow of death. They are suffering from the power of death. They are under great fear, sadness, and hopelessness.
* People don’t have true peace because of their sins, all kinds of problems, and also because of the power of death.
* Jesus is the rising sun who can drive out all these elements of darkness and give us true peace.
* People want peace but can’t find it anywhere.
* When people receive light from the rising sun Jesus, they will find true peace.

3-6. What happened to the child? (80)

 ***And the child grew and became strong in spirit ; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.***

* It shows how the child was prepared to serve the work of God which was to prepare the way of Messiah.
* The child’s spirit was strong and powerful. He was well supported to grow spiritually and have spiritual power.
* We should help our children to be strong in their spirit from their young age in order for them to be prepared to serve God’s work when they grow into adults.
* The child lived in the wilderness - he was separated from the worldly environment.
* He spent time in the wilderness to have fellowship with God by separating himself from all kinds of distractions.
* He focused on listening to God.
* Man can’t become a great servant of God in one day. The person should be prepared first, over time.
* We should focus on spending time with God, removing all kinds of distractions to prepare the way of the Lord.

**Conclusion**

 Jesus is the Horn of Salvation who saves us from all our enemies. We can win the absolute victory in him. We can serve God without any fear, in holiness and righteousness all our days. We can have true peace, being free from all elements of darkness. Praise God for his tender mercy who raised up a Horn of Salvation for us. May God help us to share this knowledge of salvation with many with the power of Holy Spirit. Again king David sang in Psalm 18:46-50, “The Lord lives! Praise be to my Rock! Exalted be God my Savior! **47** He is the God who avenges me, who subdues nations under me, **48** who **saves me from my enemies.** You exalted me above my foes; **from a violent man** you rescued me. **49** Therefore I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing the praises of your name. **50** He gives his king great victories; **he shows unfailing love to his anointed, to David and to his descendants forever.”**

**One word, “a Horn of Salvation”**