

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Zachariah's Song of Salvation: The Davidic Covenant

Scripture: Luke 1:67-80

Code: 42-17

We return to the last portion of Luke chapter 1. A couple of months ago we started a study of the gospel of Luke and we are coming to the end of this long first chapter. And up to this point we have pretty much just moved through the narrative, with the exception of Mary's praise back in verses 46 to 55, the story is just an unfolding narrative about the annunciation of a child to be conceived to a barren old couple named Zacharias and Elizabeth. That child was born. That child was John, the forerunner of the Messiah. And then there was an annunciation by the same angel, Gabriel, to Mary that she also would have a conception miracle, only this conception miracle would be without a human father. God Himself would literally plant life in her womb and as a virgin she would bring forth a Son who would be the Messiah, the Savior. And so the narrative is riveting, to put it mildly.

For 450 years there hadn't been a word from God, there hadn't been an appearance of an angel, there hadn't even been a miracle. And now all of a sudden, two miracle conceptions, two visits from the angel Gabriel right out of the throne room of heaven, messages from God. God is invading, God is visiting. The silence is broken and the narrative has been compelling.

But as we come to verses 67 to 80 the narrative stops until it's picked up again in verse 80. And we have here a song or a psalm of praise by Zacharias, the old priest who had become by a miracle of God the father of a son, John, who would be the greatest prophet who ever lived and the forerunner of the Messiah.

Now this song of praise by Zacharias stops us in our tracks. We can't proceed through the story any further until we get a grip on the content of this psalm, this hymn of praise. It's too critical. With the Holy Spirit inspired genius that only a Bible writer can have, Luke--the very, very careful historian--stops us in the narrative and takes us back to the Old Testament and ties us in to three great covenants there by giving us this psalm, this song of salvation uttered by the lips of Zacharias.

It is a monumental moment in the unfolding of the continuity of redemptive history. The coming of Jesus connects specifically to the Old Testament. It is the completion of all Old Testament promise, all Old Testament covenant, all Old Testament hope. It is the completion of the true religious of Judaism. It is the fulfillment of the greatest promises of God. In fact, Zacharias in this psalm of praise sees the coming of Messiah as the fulfillment of the three great covenants that involve salvation in the Old Testament, the Davidic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, and the New Covenant.

You will notice in verse 69 he mentions the house of David. In verse 73 he mentions the earth to Abraham. And in verse 77 the knowledge of salvation that includes the forgiveness of sins. Those are references to the Davidic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, and the New Covenant. In other words, Zacharias knows what is happening. And this comes, this great psalm of praise, immediately after the birth of his son, John, which is discussed in the immediately preceding passage. When that little baby boy was born to his wife, Elizabeth, both of them in their seventies, maybe even in their eighties, never having been able to have a child, miraculously they were able to conceive and now the child is born who is to be the forerunner of the Messiah, who is to prepare the way of the Lord, who is to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and turn the people back to God to get them ready for the arrival of the Savior, the Son of the Most High, the Messiah, the King.

With the birth of that son, Zacharias, that priest, that Old Testament expert who spent most of his time in the Old Testament, most of his time explaining its significance to the people in the little village in the hill country of Judea where he served as a priest, Zacharias knew what was going on. He knew that all Old Testament promise was about to be fulfilled. He knew that his son was the forerunner of the Messiah and the Messiah couldn't be far behind. And he already knew the mother of the Messiah was pregnant, namely Mary. She had just spent three months in their home. He knew the Messiah was coming and with the Messiah would come all the fulfillment of Davidic promise, all the fulfillment of Abrahamic promise and all the fulfillment of the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31.

This was monumental stuff. This was that for which every Jew had hoped and dreamed. This is that for which those looking for the redemption of Jerusalem, as mentioned in Luke 2:38, had hoped for so long. This is that for which an old lady named Anna had 64 years spent in the temple praying and fasting that this would happen. This was the coming of the Messiah. This was the dawn of redemption. This was fulfillment of Davidic and Abrahamic and New Covenant promise. This was the great monumental high point in the saga of God's redemption promised to and through His people Israel.

And so we have to stop at this point. We can't look at this song of Zacharias the way we looked at Mary's song. Mary's praise was personal. She was praising God for sending her a Savior. She was praising God for what He was going to do personally in her life and the lives of others. But Zacharias doesn't give us a personal song, he gives us a song that is as broad as the stream of redemptive history, embracing all those who will come to know God through the means of salvation provided in the Savior. This is sweeping stuff. This is transitional, from the Old to the New. The three Covenants, as I said, are the theme of his great psalm.

There are three other covenants in the Old Testament mentioned as such. There's the Noachic Covenant, a Covenant God made with Noah, never to destroy the world again by water. There is also a Priestly Covenant in the Old Testament that God would provide for Israel a perpetual

priesthood. And there is also the Mosaic Covenant, that is the law of Moses by which God expressed His moral and ceremonial requirements. Now we know that those are not saving covenants. The Noahic Covenant had no saving component. The Priestly Covenant had no saving component. And no one can be saved by keeping the Mosaic Law.

In fact, the people knew that. But there were covenants that embraced salvation. The promise of God to Abraham would only come true through redemption. The promise of God to David would only come through...come true through redemption. And the New Covenant WAS the Covenant that brought salvation, that opened the door to the fulfillment of both the Davidic and the Abrahamic Covenants. So this is a monumental moment and Zachariah, that old priest, knew it. And he also had it reinforced by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and he launches his praise being filled with the Holy Spirit in verse 67, he prophesied, or speaks, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us."

Notice how he talks about it in the past tense, as if it has already happened. Well, in a sense, it has because the child, John, has just been born. In fact, this may well be on the very day of his...on the very day of his circumcision, eight days after his birth which is described in the prior passage. And Zacharias knows that this son is to be the forerunner of Messiah, great in the sight of the Lord, filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb, etc. And with the birth of that son he knows God has begun messianic fulfillment. So he launches into this great benedictus, the Latin for blessed...blesses God for visiting and bringing redemption through the horn of salvation which is a reference to Messiah. The horn of salvation, "horn" being that notation from the animal kingdom that speaks of power, killing power as well as power to move and push and power of authority, expression for power to conquer...a common one in the Old Testament used here to describe the Messiah Himself.

Zacharias then is filled with excitement because the birth of John triggers messianic fulfillment, and he knows it. He knows it. Now the first Covenant that he refers to, we mentioned to you last week, let's look at it this morning.

"He says that the coming of the horn of salvation is...verse 69...in the house of David, His servant, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old." Why does he bring that in? Because this is the fulfillment of Davidic promise, the Davidic Covenant. He knows what every Jew knew that the Messiah would come in the royal line of King David and would restore the kingdom, the great kingdom of David. David was the great king. David was the righteous king. David was the defining king, the king who was God's king, the king who established the great kingdom which began to decline through his son and certainly didn't exist in his predecessor Saul. By the time Solomon got done with David's kingdom, it had been split. By the time the split kingdom disappeared, everything was gone. But the great apex was the kingdom of David. And they longed for the restoration of the greatness of the Davidic kingdom when Messiah came. And the Jews all expected that to happen.

By the way, as a note, somebody might think that Zacharias is giving a song of praise for John, his son. But this makes that impossible because the "horn of salvation" is in the house of David and both Zacharias and Elizabeth, as we learned earlier, were from the line of Aaron. They were both in the priestly line, not at all descendants of David. Clearly he is indicating the Messiah here and not his son. He does refer to his son in verse 76, "A new child will be called the prophet of the Most High." But this is primarily a song about the Messiah.

It also indicates to us that Mary was of the line of David. Mary, as I said, had been three months living with Zacharias and Elizabeth, certainly Zacharias had learned about her background. She had not married Joseph though she was betrothed to him. Zacharias had no way of knowing whether she ever would because it hadn't happened, but she was with child and the child was the Messiah and the fact that he says, "This Messiah is in the house of David" is plenty of evidence that Mary was in the line of David, which I think would be borne out in her genealogy given in Luke chapter 3. So the father of Jesus is indicated by the genealogy of Matthew 1 was in the Davidic line, and he was the legal father, not the physical father. The mother of Jesus was also in the line of David so that from her He received His royal blood. From His father He received His royal right. This was a Son of David. In Psalm 132 and verse 17, Messiah is even called "the horn of David."

Now let's go back to that original Davidic Covenant. Go with me back to 2 Samuel chapter 7...2 Samuel chapter 7. I want you to understand what was going on at this moment in the mind of Zacharias and everybody else who knew about the birth. Now 2 Samuel 7 is one of those most monumental of all chapters in the Old Testament. And I can never come to this chapter without telling you a sort of a personal anecdote from my life. My mentor when I was a student was Dr. Charles Fineberg. He was the most brilliant man I have ever known. He was a Jewish man who had studied fourteen years to be a rabbi. His wife who was also brilliant was raised in the community of Jews that provide the background for the well-known story "Fiddler on the Roof." So they had great heritage.

Dr. Charles Fineberg spent fourteen years studying to be a rabbi and then was converted to Christ. He was so expert in the Old Testament, so knowledgeable in the Old Testament that I never met a man who even came close. He knew the Hebrew as well as he knew English. He read through the Bible four times a year. Had a tremendous ability to grasp Scripture. Sometimes in class we would ask him, "What does 2 Kings 2 mean?" We didn't even know what it said, we were just testing him and out of the air he would pull the Hebrew, recite it and interpret it. He had a great grasp of the Old Testament. And, of course, he was thrilled because he had met the Messiah and seen the fulfillment of all Old Testament hope.

Well, he loved 2 Samuel 7 because of its Davidic element, the Davidic Covenant fulfilled in Messiah. At the time, I didn't understand all about that but he asked me...assigned me to preach my first

sermon in seminary to the students and faculty, he assigned me 2 Samuel 7. I was just a young student, I didn't know much at all, but I knew I needed to do my best so I spent about 30 hours or so to prepare a twenty-five minute message on 2 Samuel 7 because I...the scenario is the students are where you are and behind me is the faculty while I'm preaching. That's how it was. They sat behind the speaker and they had eight-and-a-half by fourteen criticism sheets and they filled them out as you went...there were little boxes and little places they could check and circle about gestures and introduction and intonation and projection and the introduction, conclusion, outline, everything. And so it was a terrible exercise because you're trying to preach and behind you...you know, every time you make a wrong gesture, all their heads go down and all the...and, of course, the students are watching this. So I'm trying to be as passionate as I can and keep their attention on me, if I can, and I'm trying to get through this 2 Samuel 7 passage.

You know, I feel like I delivered my soul and I preached it and I kept the attention. And then when you went out the door the faculty stood at the door and handed you the criticism sheets and that's how it was. I only cared about one and that was Dr. Fineberg's cause I had such great admiration for him.

So I went by the door and he didn't even look at me. Had his head down, he just put the sheet like that...and I took it. And I went down the hall to a corner and I unfolded it and he hadn't checked any boxes, he hadn't marked about gestures, nothing except red ink across the middle, "You missed the entire point of the passage." This is not good. Bad place to do that. Maybe at the Rotary Club, but not there. "You missed the entire point of the passage."

He was so disappointed he called me into his office and it was the greatest lesson I ever learned in seminary because from that day to this I really am concerned to find out what the point of the passage is, as you well know. And that dear man is still sitting on my shoulder making that same speech and will till I die, I'm sure. One of the highlights of my life, when I graduated from seminary he called me into his office and he had a big box full of 35 Hebrew commentaries on the Old Testament that he had used for years and he had all his own markings in the margins and he gave them to me. And he said, "These are mine but I'm giving them to you so that in the future you will have no excuse for missing the point of the passage." This was his legacy to me. And then I think, again, a highlight of my life was when he went to be with the Lord, his family asked me to be the speaker at his funeral. I figure somewhere along the line he must have told them that I had learned to find the point of the passage.

I think I understand the point of this passage now and I think I'll give it to you. Second Samuel 7, it's a wonderful little flow. David the king is in his house and he's in comfort because he's got a strong military position and the enemies are resting. It's kind of a strong position in a cold war kind of thing and he's very comfortable and he's got this incredible palace. The palace of David was quite remarkable. And David's looking around at his palace and he says, "You know, I'm in this palace and

God's in a tent," because the Ark of the Covenant was still in the tabernacle, there was no temple. And he was concerned that he had a house, a palace, and God was in a crummy tent that had been around for a long time and had been basically torn down and set up and torn down and set up and torn down and set up enough that it was pretty...pretty dog-eared and threadbare.

So he went to Nathan the prophet and he had a conversation. He said, "Now I dwell in a house of cedar, the Ark of God dwells in a tent. This isn't right." And Nathan thought it was a great thought and the implication was, I'm going to build God a house, I'm going to build God a greater house than I have, I'm a man, I have a house of cedar, God is God, He deserves something better.

So, Nathan says in verse 3, "Go do all that's in your mind for the Lord is with you." Well the problem with that was Nathan hadn't checked in with God, he exercised a little independent authority and told David that that was a great idea, when, in fact, he hadn't sought the Lord at all.

"So it came about in the same night the Word of the Lord came to Nathan." Nathan comes to him that very night...God comes to him that very night and says, "Say, Nathan, there's another message that I need you to give to David than the one you gave him. You go say to My servant, David, 'Thus says the Lord,' this time. 'Are you the one who should build Me a house to dwell in?'" Come on. "You're a man of blood, a man of slaughter, a warrior, I'm not going to give you that privilege. I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the sons of Israel from Egypt. Even to this day I've been moving about in a tent, even in a tabernacle. Wherever I have gone with all the sons of Israel that I speak a word with one of the tribes of Israel, which I've commanded to shepherd my people Israel saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?' Am I asking for a house of cedar? Am I unhappy with My tent? Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant, David, 'Thus says the Lord of host, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep...David, you remember, was a shepherd...that you should be ruler over My people Israel and I've been with you wherever you've gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you and I will make you a great name like the names of the great men who are on the earth.'"

David, you're going to have a great name. And indeed he does to this day. You're going to be famous. You're going to be world famous and all of that. "I will also appoint a place for My people Israel, I will plant them." I'm going to make your name great, I'm going to give your people, the people of Israel a great land. I'm going to plant them in that land. I'm going to bring them to a place where they'll never be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them anymore as formerly. Wow! This is the Davidic Covenant. I promise a great nation. I promise a perpetual name of David. I promise the land and you'll be in it and you'll be at peace and there will be no conflict and your enemies will not move against you. That's what I promise.

Verse 11, "Even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and I will give you rest from all your enemies, there's coming a time of peace." He's talking about the great Davidic

kingdom. "And the Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you."

You want to make a house for the Lord? I'm going to make a house for you. And what He means here is not just a building, but a massive sphere of rule. I'm going to bring you a kingdom, David, I'm going to bring you a kingdom. I'm going to bring you a kingdom of peace, a kingdom of tranquility, a kingdom where you're no longer at the assault point from your enemies, where no longer those who hate you will persecute you and oppress you and afflict you. I'm going to bring you a kingdom of rest and peace in your own land and you're going to be planted and you're not going to be disturbed. But I'm not going to let you build Me a temple.

Verse 12, "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers...when you die...I'll raise up your descendant after you who will come forth from you and I'll establish his kingdom. He'll build a house for My name." Now that was whom? Solomon, his son. He's going to build that house. And the Solomonic temple was a wonder of wonders, of course. "And he will build a house for My name." And then you go from a near fulfillment to a far one, "And I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever." This is one of the wonderful things about prophecy. It talks about a near fulfillment which is sort of like a small preview what is to come, and a far fulfillment.

Let me tell you something about Solomon's kingdom. He did build a house, but it wasn't forever. The Solomonic temple doesn't exist. The Babylonians reduced it to dirt, to rubble. It doesn't exist. In 586 B.C. the Babylonians demolished the Solomonic temple. I'll tell you something else. Solomon's kingdom didn't last forever. As his life went on, which was a life of sin, the power of the Davidic kingdom even though Solomon was rich and God made him rich because God blessed him in spite of himself, his sin began to eat away at the greatness of that kingdom and it diminished and diminished and diminished until at the end of Solomon's life the great kingdom of Israel, the great Davidic kingdom split. He literally...he literally brought it to an end and the northern part became the kingdom of Israel, and the southern part, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, constituted the kingdom of Judah.

Solomon by his iniquity literally split the Davidic kingdom, it didn't last forever, it just lasted for his life time. And then you have the divided kingdom which lasted for a little while until the northern kingdom became so idolatrous and so sinful that God sent the Assyrians in 722 B.C. and literally swept the northern kingdom away into exile from which they never returned, which left the southern kingdom. But by the time you get to 603, 597 and 586 the southern kingdom is destroyed at the hands of the Babylonians. They're swept away and you have no kingdom in Israel at all, none.

So when he's talking here that the Lord is going to give him a son who will establish the throne of His kingdom forever, it wasn't Solomon. So you go from the near fulfillment, Solomon did build His temple, to the far fulfillment of an eternal kingdom. Solomon is referred to in verse 14 as one who will be a son, but commit iniquity, be corrected. But verse 16 refers to the Messiah who will establish a kingdom enduring forever with a throne established forever. So God said to David...It's a nice

gesture, David, I really appreciate...or Nathan, you tell David it's a nice gesture, I really appreciate you want to build Me a house, you're not going to do that, I'm not letting you build Me a house. I'm going to take that away from you, I'm going to give you something better, I'm going to build a house for you. I'm going to build a house, that is to say I'm going to extend your kingdom through your son, Solomon, and even beyond that, I'm going to bring a greater Son will establish your name and your kingdom forever. And He was talking about the greater Son of David, not Solomon but Messiah.

The Jews understood this as the Davidic Covenant. The word "covenant" is not used there, but it is used in 2 Samuel 23:5 and in 2 Samuel 23:5 you have this word, "For He has made an everlasting covenant with me." That's the last words of David. David refers to that as the Davidic Covenant, ordered in all things and secured. Wow, David said God has made an irrevocable, inviolable covenant with me to give me a greater Son who will establish an eternal Kingdom.

Now listen, folks, this is the Davidic Covenant. It is irrevocable. It is eternal. There will be a King out of David's line who will reign forever.

Now there are at least forty Old Testament passages directly connected to these verses. There's a parallel presentation of the Davidic Covenant in 1 Chronicles 17 verses 4 to 15. There's an explicit reference to the Davidic Covenant in Psalm 89 verses 30 to 37. And the promise was that there would come one out of the loins of David, one in David's line, the seed of David, and God protected the Davidic line through some marvelous, marvelous providential and miraculous means. God protected the Davidic line so that all the way down to the time of Christ the Davidic Line is still pure. And Joseph is in it, and Mary is in it, and Jesus is truly by blood and right to rule a Son of David.

They knew this was going to come. The Jews knew it. In Isaiah chapter 9 they knew a child would be born, a Son would be given, the government would rest upon His shoulders that that messianic government of the whole world, not only Israel, and He would be the wonderful counselor, mighty God, Prince of peace and of the increase of His government there would be no end...of His peace there would be no end, and it would be on the throne of David, Isaiah 9:7. Psalm 2 says He will come and He will rule the nations with a rod of iron. Zechariah said He would descend at some point to establish His Kingdom on the Mount of Olives and He would from that point establish a rule over the world. It's repeated over and over in the Old Testament.

I think of Psalm 110, "The Lord said to My Lord," that is the Father says to the Son, "Sit at My right hand until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet, The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion saying, 'Rule in the midst of Thine enemies.'" The Davidic promise said this, there will come a great King who will establish a Kingdom forever, a Kingdom of peace, of righteousness, of safety, of protection. We will be in the land and we will be preserved in the land, protected from our enemies in the land from which the great King will rule over the entire world.

That's the Davidic promise. And it's all over the place in the Old Testament and Zacharias knew what was happening. The forerunner of the Messiah had been born just a week earlier and he knew that Mary was pregnant with the Messiah and all of the Davidic promise was about to burst into fulfillment. The great universal promises were about to come to pass. Zechariah 14:9 says it this way, "And the Lord will be King over all the earth, in that day the Lord will be the only one and His name the only one." That's the summation of the Davidic Kingdom. The Lord, the Messiah will be King over the earth...a literal earthly messianic Kingdom established on the earth.

Zacharias was excited about this with all those who had been looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. He was thrilled about it. He expected it to come immediately. What Zacharias didn't know is that...was the Messiah would come, the Messiah would be a King...when Jesus was asked by Pilate are You a King? He admitted He was. The King would come, He did have the power to establish His Kingdom, but He didn't establish it. Reason--because the subjects of the King rejected the King. And they culminated with this public outcry, "We will not have this man to rule us." We don't want Him as our King. They killed the King, no Kingdom.

But that doesn't change the promise of God. That doesn't change the irrevocable promise of God because the scriptures tell us that the King will come once more and establish His Kingdom. Zacharias couldn't have seen that gap. Like anybody, he didn't understand all of the nuances of prophetic fulfillment. He could never have anticipated that the long-awaited Messiah would be rejected by His people, that as John puts it, He would come unto his own and His own would receive Him not. He could not have anticipated that they would wind up along with the Romans, executing the King. He could never have imagined anything but other than the King would come, that He would overthrow Rome, that He would bring peace and prosperity to Israel, that He would destroy any hostile enemies and that He would rule the world and of the increase of His government there would be no end and He would rule the world with peace and righteousness. That's all he could have expected. The Davidic Covenant was universal. It covered the whole world in the rule of Messiah.

If you understand a little of the background, I was working...working even as we speak...in the hours, I'm not speaking to you today, I'll be working on a manuscript for a book on the Second Coming that deals with the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and 25. And the disciples said to Jesus, they were in the same situation Zacharias was and everybody else, they said to Jesus...Jesus and the disciples were sitting near Jerusalem and He was pointing to the temple and He says..."See the temple," they're looking down at the glorious Herodian temple that had replaced the Solomonic temple and Jesus says, "I've got to tell you about that temple. There's not going to be two stones stacked up. That temple is going to be flattened...flattened." And they're in shock.

Now we could understand if you went over to Caesarea and flattened the Roman garrison, that's our building, that's the core of the worship of God, supposedly, that's our building. What do You mean?

And when the Messiah comes, doesn't He exalt Israel? You don't come and destroy the temple which is the symbol of the whole nation and its religion.

They didn't get it. So they were saying to Him then, "Then what are we supposed to look for for Your ascendancy? When are You going to ascend and rule? What signs shall we expect? We don't get it." And even after His death and resurrection, it's recorded in the first chapter of Acts, they said to Him, "Will You at this time bring the Kingdom?" They had no way of knowing anything other than that the Messiah will come, fulfill the Davidic Covenant, establish the Kingdom in Israel, take David's throne, rule over Israel and the world, bring a Kingdom of peace.

And the disciples were confused to the very end. And even after, of course you remember, the Messiah died, they were scratching their heads and trying to figure this out. And later on when the apostles were preaching the gospel to the Jews, the Jews were saying, "This can't be the Messiah, it didn't go the way we thought." And they had to preach on things like why Jesus must have suffered and died? So they thought the Davidic Covenant meant He'll sweep in, knock off the Romans, conquer all our enemies, establish His authority, rule with a rod of iron the whole world.

Well He will...He will, but not until they accept Him as the King. Zechariah tells us, the prophet, that "Some day they will look on Him whom they've pierced, mourn for Him as an only Son, and then a fountain of cleansing will be open to Israel." Literally, God will open the heavenly flood gates of saving grace and wash the nation Israel. And at the time when they embrace their King, they will then receive their Kingdom. And if you follow the flow in the New Testament, Romans chapter 11 Paul says there's coming a day when Israel will be saved and grafted back in to the trunk of blessing, using a sort of an agriculture metaphor. When that happens, then the Kingdom comes.

Turn in your Bible to Revelation chapter 19, here is where that moment is described. When you come into Revelation 19, you come to the return of Jesus Christ, His Second Coming. Israel has seen their Messiah, they have believed. By this time, 144 thousand Jews are preaching the gospel all over the world. The book of Revelation tells us two Jewish witnesses in Jerusalem will have such an impact that a great portion of the city of Jerusalem repents and turns to believe the gospel. An angel is flying through the sky preaching the gospel in the mid-heavens so that the gospel is literally being preached all over the face of the earth. People are being converted. At this point Israel is saved, that's when Zechariah's prophecy is fulfilled, "They look on Him whom they've pierced, they mourn, they repent, they embrace Him, they're saved." And at that point we come to the response of the great King when people have acknowledged Him, verse 11 of Revelation 19, heaven opens, a white horse and Him who sat on it called Faithful and True, and that is He is faithful and true to His promises. He is King. He will reign. He comes this time in righteousness. He comes to judge and make war on all the ungodly in the world. His eyes are like a flame of fire. He has many crowns, again speaking of His royalty. He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. I can't tell you how many times people have asked me what that name is.

Verse 13, He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and that's to speak of the battle and the bloodshed that's going to occur when He comes and judges the ungodly. His name is the Word of God. The armies in heaven clothed in fine linen, white and clean, following Him on white horses. Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword. He smites the nation. He rules with a rod of iron. He treads the winepress of the fierce wrath of God. On His robe, on His thigh is a name "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." And that is when He comes in glory, out of heaven, to establish His Kingdom. It is an earthly Kingdom described in chapter 20. He takes hold of Satan, binds him for the thousand-year period, that's why it's called the Millennium, Latin for thousand. He throws Satan into the pit or abyss for that period of time of His rule, establish His thrones, verse 4, and they sat on them, this would be the saints. The Apostles are said to be each given a position over the twelve tribes of Israel in another place of Scripture. There is an exaltation of those who had been martyred and they live, verse at the end of verse 4, "And they reign with Christ for a thousand years." So that is the establishment of His Kingdom, it is still future, it hasn't happened but it will because the Word of God is irrevocable. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance, as it says in Romans.

So the Messiah will come. But Zacharias didn't realize there would be two thousand years between His first coming and Second Coming. He didn't know that, he couldn't have known that. He was so thrilled and so excited to see Davidic Covenant fulfillment.

Go back to Luke chapter 1 for just a moment. It says that He is coming in the house of David, His servant, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old." I want to give you just a quick rundown. There are literally hundreds of Old Testament scriptures that speak about the future Davidic Kingdom, literally hundreds of them. And I would suggest to you that there is a...there's a chart or a listing in the MacArthur Study Bible called "Isaiah's Description of Israel's Future Kingdom." and just in the book of Isaiah there are references to the future Kingdom, as well as in Ezekiel, as well as in Daniel, as well as in other places, Micah and many other places.

Let me tell you just what Isaiah says about it, and I'll just...I won't give you the scriptures, but here's just a list of what Isaiah says about the character of the Messiah's Kingdom when He comes to rule on the throne of David in Israel and over the world. The Lord will restore the faithful remnant of Israel to the Land to inhabit the Kingdom. The Lord will defeat all of Israel's enemies, providing protection of His people. In the Kingdom Israel will enjoy great prosperity of many kinds. The city of Jerusalem will rise to world preeminence. Israel will be the center of world attention in the Kingdom. Israel's mission in the Kingdom will be to glorify the Lord. Gentiles in the Kingdom will receive blessing through the channel of faithful Israel. Worldwide peace and righteousness will prevail in the Kingdom under the rule of the Prince of Peace. Moral and spiritual conditions in the Kingdom will reach their highest plain since the fall of Adam. Governmental leadership in the Kingdom will be superlative with the Messiah heading it up, the perfect dictator who is righteous and true. Humans will enjoy long life. Isaiah says if you die at 100 you die as a baby. Knowledge of the Lord will be universal in the

Kingdom. The world of nature will enjoy a great renewal. A lion will lie down with a lamb and children can play with a poisonous snake. Wild animals will be tame in the Kingdom. Sorrow and mourning will not exist in the Kingdom. An eternal Kingdom as part of God's new creation will follow the millennial Kingdom and the King will judge overt sin in the Kingdom and He'll judge it swiftly.

That's the Kingdom. And it is the Kingdom on which the Covenant of David is fulfilled. God said to David, "I'll give you a King, one of your descendants, who will reign in a Kingdom of peace and righteousness and that will be forever."

By the way, you'll be there. You say, "What if I'm dead?" You remember those people in white linen, those folks coming out of heaven in white linen on white horses that I read about in Revelation 19? That's us returning with Christ. If we're with the Lord when He comes back to establish His Kingdom, we're coming with Him. He comes with His saints, the Scripture says. We'll come back. And you say, "Well what will be our nature in this Kingdom?" Well it will be on earth, the earth will be renovated, it will be changed, as I pointed out with those passages in Isaiah and others. It will be returned to a sort of Eden-like condition. We'll come back. There will be people still alive on the earth at that time, still in their physical form, they haven't died. And when Jesus comes back to set up His Kingdom, He's not going to kill the righteous, the sheep are going to go into His Kingdom, in Matthew 24 terminology. So He comes back, He establishes His Kingdom on earth, there are still living saints. All the ungodly are destroyed, the living saints then go into the Kingdom. Israel has been saved. The saved Israel goes into the Kingdom along with Gentiles who believe and are saved during the time of the Tribulation. But we come back, as well, as glorified saints, then having our resurrection bodies. We will interact with the living saints on earth, similar to the way the angels have interacted with saints in redemptive history. As Gabriel came from the presence of God and had a conversation with Elizabeth and later had a conversation with Mary, so we'll be able to interact and converse with the people on earth. We'll assist Christ in the rule of His Kingdom, as will Israel and as will the saints on earth. So together we'll be the church triumphant, I guess you could say, and the church militant still alive on earth ruling with Christ. All believers of all ages will be collected into that Kingdom.

In fact, the imagery of Revelation in part describes this as a bride. The whole...the whole of all redeemed humanity will ultimately be contained in the bride of Christ that will occupy the bridal city, the New Jerusalem, which hovers over the earth during the Kingdom and from which we will go back and forth to do whatever the Lord wants us to do here on earth during that millennial time. We'll all be there, some alive at that time who come to Christ during the Tribulation, but those of us already with the Lord will return to reign with Him.

Well, Zacharias...you've got to realize, I mean, this is it, folks, this is the greatest moment of redemptive history, this is the apex of everything. And now the forerunner to the Messiah has been born. The Messiah is already conceived by God in the womb of this young thirteen-year-old virgin girl. And the Messiah will soon be born and it's only a few years and I guess Zacharias and Elizabeth

must have had a conversation like...You know, we better start eating healthy, you know, because we're already seventy and we've got to live long enough for this deal to start...hoping they could be around when the Messiah really nailed it and established His Kingdom, they wanted to be there for what they thought would be the overthrow of Rome, the destruction of all the enemies.

Now look at verse 71 and we'll close at this point. What did they expect to happen in the Davidic Kingdom? "Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us." That's right out of Psalm 106:10. It's exactly what was promised. When the Messiah comes and establishes His Kingdom, what it means is salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

You see, they thought, first of all, the Messiah would come and knock off the Romans. They were weary of the hostilities and the assaults and the attacks and the oppression and the murderous intent of Gentile nations against them. They wanted their independence. They wanted their freedom. They wanted the pagans out of their land. They were tired of the Roman idols desecrating their land. They were tired of the Greek occupation. And then they got rid of the Greek occupation for a little while through the Maccabean Revolution and then the Romans came and reintroduced their idolatrous institutions into that land and took away their right to rule and their religion, their freedom. Not only did they have Romans but they had Edomite kings. What could be worse than having an Edomite as your king, the Herods. They felt that when the Messiah comes He's going to establish the Davidic Kingdom and He will rule and all enemies will become subject to Him as He establishes the Kingdom of peace all over the globe. They were excited. This was a great moment for Zacharias and everybody else who knew what was going on.

But it wasn't just the fulfillment of the Davidic, in verse 72 he adds this, there's something else, "He's coming to show mercy to our fathers and to remember His holy Covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham, our father." He realized that this was not just Davidic fulfillment, this is Abrahamic fulfillment.

Now the Abrahamic Covenant was different than the Davidic Covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant didn't talk about a kingdom. The Abrahamic Covenant talked about something else. Let me give you just a summary and we'll cover it next time.

The Abrahamic Covenant was a Covenant God made with Abraham and repeated it to his son, Isaac, and his son, Jacob. In fact, it is reiterated eight times in one book, the book of Genesis. The Abrahamic Covenant was unilateral, that is it was God who made it Himself. It is irrevocable and it is eternal...and in the end it's unconditional, that is--it will come to pass.

And what did it promise? A great nation, a land which they would possess...blessing abundant, unheard of, unequal blessing to them and through them to other nations...and a Redeemer and redemption. The Abrahamic Covenant focused more on blessing. The Davidic, more on a throne

and a rule and sovereignty over the world. And they saw the Abrahamic Covenant as granting them deliverance from the hand of their...the Davidic Covenant, I should say, is granting them deliverance from the hand of our enemies. So they say to grant us that we already being delivered from the hand of our enemies by the conditions of the Davidic Covenant are now able to serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him in all our days. You see, they saw the Abrahamic as now we're enjoying the full service of God, the full blessing of God, the full usefulness to God that was promised in the Abrahamic Covenant. So you can see Zacharias was thinking...Oh boy, not only are we going to have a king, not only are we going to have a sovereign rule over the whole world, but we're going to have blessing and we're all going to be serving God the way He should be served and He's going to pour upon us holiness and righteousness all our days. This is what he thought, and rightly so because this is what God promised...and, folks, this is what God will bring.

The Abrahamic Covenant and the Davidic Covenant haven't yet been fulfilled, but listen to this, they haven't been revoked either. That's why we believe God is still unfolding the future for those wonderful people of Israel. We'll see more as next Sunday we look at the Abrahamic Covenant.

Truly, our Father, the entrance of Your Word gives light. We are thrilled to get a grip on the great sweeping drama of redemption to understand Covenants as You have identified them in Scripture. If all we had was the Noahic Covenant, all we would know was we might perish but it wouldn't be by drowning. If all we had was a Priestly Covenant, we would know that there was somebody to pray for us but we wouldn't have any hope that our prayers would be answered. If all we had was the Mosaic Covenant, we would know that there were laws to obey but we couldn't obey them so all that Covenant would do would damn us. So we thank You that there was also a Davidic Covenant that promised final righteousness and peace over the world of those ruled by the Messiah, who would only enter that Kingdom if they had been redeemed. We thank You that there is an Abrahamic Covenant, that there would be blessing to those of faith who believe. And mostly we thank You that there is a New Covenant that provides the forgiveness of sin and a new heart and the implanting of the Holy Spirit to the mighty work of the Messiah on the cross as He died in our place and rose again. We thank You that it is the salvation provided in the New Covenant that opens the door to the Davidic and Abrahamic fulfillment and the comprehensive character of our glorious eternal redemption. Father, what an immense, glorious unfolding of the saga of salvation the scriptures give to us and we are in awe if not in shock that You have by Your sovereign grace chosen us from before the foundation of the world to participate. We thank You that even though we who are outside the nation Israel cannot claim to be children of Abraham or David, we can by the New Covenant become sons of Abraham by faith and subjects to the glorious Kingdom of Messiah through the grace of salvation. We thank You for this mercy. Fill our hearts with gratitude and with hope for what awaits us in the glories of what we have not yet seen but shall see in surely the not too distant future. Give us the joy of Zacharias over the fulfillment of messianic promise and the glorious fact that we shall participate. Yes this is planned for us by Your great grace. We thank You in the name of our Christ. Amen.

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