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

Connecting the Covenantal Dots, Part 1
Scripture: Luke 1:67-75
Code: 90-433

I want you to open the Scripture, this morning, to the first chapter of the gospel of Luke. Luke chapter 1, Luke chapter 1, this is a long chapter, it has 80 verses in it. We're just going to go to the very end of it and I want to read you the closing words of this chapter, words that fit perfectly into the little series we're doing to lay the groundwork for our study of Christ in the Old Testament. We've called this little series, "Finding the Lord Jesus Christ in the Old Testament." This would be message number four in that brief series, which is really the foundation of the groundwork for going to the Old Testament and finding Christ in all the places that He has so majestically presented there.

But the text that is before us we'll pick up in Luke chapter 1 at the point of the birth of John the Baptist that would be verse 57.

"The time had come for Elizabeth to give birth and she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her and they were rejoicing with her. And it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child and they were going to call him Zacharias after his father.

"But his mother answered and said, 'No, indeed, but he must be called John.' And they said to her, 'There is no one among your relatives who is called by that name.' And they made signs to his father as to what he wanted him called. And he asked for a tablet and wrote as follows, 'His name is John.' And they were all astonished. And at once his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed and he began to speak in praise of God. Fear came on all those living around them and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea. All who heard them kept them in mind, saying, "What then will this child turn out to be? For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him.

"And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied 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 in the house of David, His servant.

"As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old. Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us, to show mercy toward our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham, our father, to grant us that we being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.

“And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go on before the Lord to prepare His ways, to give to His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins because of the tender mercy of our God with which the Sunrise from on high will visit us to shine upon those who sit in darkness in the shadow of death to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the child continued to grow and to become strong in spirit and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.”

It was not long ago that I had a conversation with a Jewish rabbi. Maybe one of the most well-known rabbis in America. This rabbi had shown an interest in me and invited me to a very significant event which he sponsored in the city of Seattle and I flew up there. And I sat among some very gracious and lovely Jewish people and Jewish leaders, some of them well known in radio and other areas of our culture.

And I sat with the rabbi and the…I said, “You’ve asked me to be the speaker at this event, and this is a fund-raising event for the things that you’re interested in.” And he said, “Yes.” And I said, “You know I’m a Christian and I have to take the opportunity in the midst of all your Jewish friends to present the reality that Jesus Christ is your long-awaited Messiah.” And I said, “You know that.” He said, “If you didn’t do that, you wouldn’t be the man I think you are. So let us evaluate that. You feel free to do what you must do.”

And so I stood and I proclaimed the gospel in the midst of what I was speaking about. Very gracious. After that, he came to visit me here in the office and he sat down and he said, “I understand the Old Testament, I’ve spent my whole life in the Old Testament, but I don’t understand how a Jewish rabbi should view the New Testament. How…how am I as a Jewish rabbi to understand the meaning of the New Testament in connection with the Old Testament.

I said, “Great question. And the answer is, get in the sandals, get in the sandals of Zacharias because Zacharias understood exactly what was going on with the arrival of Messiah as it related to the Old Testament.” This is the first bridge in the New Testament from the Old to the New. And it comes from this very ordinary guy. Yes he’s a priest, but there are lots of priests, lots of them, thousands of them in Israel. He happens to have as his little domain the synagogues in the hill country of Judea, but he’s a very common man. In fact, in some ways he less than common because he’s reached senior citizenship, we might say, he’s in his seventies or eighties, and he and his wife Elizabeth have been deprived of any children and since in their minds children were a blessing from the Lord, he is a priest who is unblessed, and he and Elizabeth have to probably often explain why they have been deprived of this privilege and why it doesn’t necessarily speak evil of them, as if God has withheld blessing because there’s something wrong. It’s been a hard life to be in the public eye and to be expected to be the one who represents God and to be in the category of the unblessed.

And all of that sets the stage for the arrival of an angel. And the angel arrives and addresses Zacharias, picking him out of the crowd at a time when he's down in Jerusalem doing his annual duty of serving at the temple, which all the orders of the priests did during their two-week period each year.

And the angel comes to Zacharias and the angel says, "You and Elizabeth are going to have a child." A miracle…a miracle child. "And your child is going to be great, going to be strong in the Lord, he's going to be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb and he's going to be the forerunner of Messiah. He is going to be the one who announces the arrival of Messiah, which, of course, the child did when he grew up as John the Baptist, and that day by the Jordan River pointed to Jesus when He showed up and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." And then he said, "He must increase, and I must fade away." But this was the announcement of that.

The Old Testament, the Jewish Old Testament had closed with Malachi, the last prophet. And Malachi had said, "The Son of righteousness will rise with healing in His beams," and that was a Messianic statement. Called the Son of righteousness, and here down in verse 79, again the shining of the Sunrise from verse 78 is the fulfillment of that Messianic prophecy, the Son of righteousness will rise. And Malachi closes his book by saying that, and then saying, "And before the Messiah will come one like Elijah who will announce his arrival." That was 400 years before this happened. Four hundred years of silence, God hasn't spoken, there has been no word from heaven, no angel has showed up. And then all of a sudden out of nowhere to this very ordinary man comes an angel and says, "You and Elizabeth heretofore barren are going to give birth to a son. This son is going to be that Elijah-like prophet that was predicted by the final words of the Old Testament and he is going to be the one who will declare the arrival of Messiah.

So here you have this man Zacharias who is so overwhelmed by this that he doesn't believe it, he can't process it and so in disbelief he's punished and he's not allowed to talk about it until the child is born.

Now if you're 70 or 80 and you've spent your whole life trying to explain away why you don't have a child, and now you're going to have a child and you can't tell somebody, that's a constant pain and a constant reminder that it's better to believe and obey.

Finally, when the child is born, his tongue is loosed. And what comes out of his tongue is an affirmation of the realities of Old Testament prophecy that are coming to pass by the arrival of John and Jesus. So here you have an Old Testament theologian, his whole life is in theology, both he and Elizabeth are in the Aaronic line. They've had priests in their family all the way back to Aaron. They know what has been passed down about the Old Testament. They're the first bridge from the Old into the New. And it's good for us if we're going back to the Old to connect with that point.

And as we've been learning, we're trying to build a connection between the New and the Old. We have for 43 years have studied Christ in the New Testament, we've seen Him historically in the gospels, theologically in the epistles, eschatologically in the book of Revelation, but that's not the full picture. We have to see Him prophetically in the Old Testament.

But you really can't find Him fully in the Old Testament until you know Him well from the New. So once the picture is clear in the New, then you can find Him in the Old. You remember 2 Corinthians 3 where Paul says, "As long as you're just reading the Old, reading Moses, the veil is over your face and the veil is removed in Christ." So now we, with 43 years under our belt, 43 years of the New Testament, I figured out this week, I told the man that that's five—I think it worked out to five-point-five verses per sermon in the gospels and four-point-something in the epistles. So we've gone at it about five verses at a whack for 43 years. And the picture of Christ in the New Testament is clear to us and now we can go back to the Old and fill in all the magnificent glories and majesties of Christ that are disclosed for us there. It's not backwards, it's the only way you can go. You can't find Him everywhere He is unless you know precisely what He looks like.

So here is Zacharias who gives us another perspective on that. He doesn't know anything about Jesus. Jesus hasn't been born. But he knows what is about to happen because he knows his Old Testament. He knows his Old Testament. And what is this but a song? It is a song and it like so many songs in the scripture; it is a song of salvation. Scripture is filled with songs of salvation. This is one of those, verse 68 talks about redemption; verse 69 makes reference to salvation. Salvation again in verse 71, salvation again in verse 77, it's a song of salvation like so many other songs.

Well, it hasn't been long in this same chapter, back in verse 46, when Mary sang a song and hers was a song of salvation, "My soul exalts the Lord and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." You'll find all kinds of songs of salvation in the Old Testament. And, by the way, you'll find a lot of them in the book of Revelation because we're all going to sing the songs of salvation around the throne of God. Zacharias bursts out in a song of salvation.

The content of this comes right out of his own heart. Yes it's inspired by the Spirit, of course. He's filled with the Holy Spirit. He prophesies, that is he's given the words to say, but they're not foreign to him, they're familiar to him. Why? Because his mind has been his whole life saturated in the Old Testament and when he bursts into this Spirit-controlled spontaneous praise, what comes out is Old Testament Scripture. And it comes out in three waves. The first part of what he says comes from the Davidic Covenant. The second part of what he says comes from the Abrahamic Covenant. And the third part of what he says comes from the prophecies of the New Covenant. The Old Testament is loaded with revelation on the Davidic Covenant. The Davidic Covenant appears in 2 Samuel chapter 7, it's repeated in 1 Chronicles, it's repeated in Psalm 89. And there are at least 40 other references in the Old Testament to the Davidic Covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant comes first in Genesis 12,

it's repeated eight times all the way to Genesis 35 and then referred to all through the Old Testament and the New, familiar covenants. And there's a third covenant that's in his mind, it's the New Covenant, Ezekiel indicated the elements of the New Covenant. Jeremiah indicated the elements of the New Covenant. These are very familiar to this man who is an Old Testament scholar.

So, when he finds out that the forerunner is going to be his son, and by the way, a relative by the name of Mary is going to be the mother of Messiah, he knows that all these covenants are about to come to fulfillment. And he just pulls out all of the salient elements of these wonderful covenants from the Old Testament, covenant in this sense, God promises to do something. God promises to do something. A covenant is a promise from God…a promise from God.

Let's begin by looking at verse 68. The reason I say it's a song of salvation is because it starts, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel." That was a common way to begin a Psalm. That was a common way to begin an Old Testament song of praise and adoration and worship to God. And then he says, "For he has visited us." That also is a very common Old Testament expression meaning God showed up…God showed up.

Now remember, 400 years have gone by since God said anything. The Old Testament canon closed 400 years earlier. Nothing has been said for 400 years. In the sense of that expression "God has visited us," we haven't had a visit in four centuries. And now God has come. God has spoken in the form of an angel and the promise of a forerunner, and in the declaration of the Messiah to follow. And Zachariah knows exactly what this means. What it means is, the Covenants are about to be fulfilled. This is the connection between the Old and the New from a Jewish perspective. I said to my rabbi friend, I said, "If you understand this, you're ready to read the New Testament and make the connections between the New and the Old. Zacharias builds you the bridge."

I told him, "You know…I know you understand the Davidic Covenant, I know you understand the Abrahamic, I hope you understand the New Covenant." I threw in a few other covenants, the Noahic, which doesn't play into this. I talked about the Mosaic. You know those. You know what they mean to the Jewish people, you know what they mean to the world. You know what they mean to redemption. You know what they mean to God. You only need to understand that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of all of them and then you have the link. And so I gave him a stack of CDs to listen to from the time that I went through this, I don't know, 12-13 years ago when we went through Luke and I think I did six hours on those verses that we read this morning. Relax. You want the full picture; you can get ahold of those.

Now, it's a song, it's a song of worship. I wish I could convey to you how excited Zacharias must have been, which was what made that unique little discipline of God so fascinating. The man had just been told that his son was going to be a forerunner of the Messiah, to say nothing of the fact that he was barren, was going to have a son, and he couldn't tell anybody about anything. And he had to go

around making sign language and he didn't know sign language. And, of course, his wife had to do all the talking and that in itself is…a certain level of suffering, because, you know, we're so prone to want to correct them, aren't we, guys? I mean, that's the way it goes.

So what does Zacharias recognize? Zacharias recognizes that God has come and God has visited and this means redemption. That's what he says. He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, past tense as if it's happened. I love that aspect of the Greek language that sort of proleptic aorist where you can talk of something that hasn't happened as if it has happened because of such assurance of its reality. Zacharias has that assurance. Why? Because he's a true believer in the true God and he's a true believer in the Word of God. And if God said it, it will happen and it's done. He anticipates its reality even though it hasn't taken place. He has accomplished redemption for His people, redemption means rescue at a high cost. Inherent in redemption is a high cost, a redeeming price. It is a synonym for salvation which he makes reference to immediately in verse 69 and has raised up a horn of salvation for us. He understands that this redemption and this salvation is coming through one person. He understands that. He's never read any New Testament book. There aren't any. He's never read any of the gospels, he's never heard Jesus, he doesn't know anything other than the Old Testament and he knows that in the Old Testament salvation is connected to a very powerful person, that's what horn means. Horn is the key, it is a common Old Testament expression for a powerful person drawn out of the animal Kingdom, in which great animals are enable to kill their victims by the use of horns.

And all through the Old Testament, horns are equated with power. You have a statement in the Psalms, "The Lord is the horn of my salvation." There's another statement in the Psalms, "I will cause the horn of David to come forth." So there was I the mind of the Jews the realization that there was coming a rescuer, there was coming a deliverer, and that deliverer was none other than the Messiah who was promised to David, and promised to Abraham. He knew that. He got that. Jeremiah chapter 50, verse 34 says, "The Redeemer is strong…the Redeemer is strong." That's what the horn conveys. So he knew it would take a strong horn to rescue Israel, to bring salvation. And not just individual salvation, as he talks about later, the forgiveness of sins, but to save them, verse 71, from all their enemies and all the hands of those who hate them. What kind of a powerful person is this? There had never been anybody like this who could come and wipe out all their enemies, who could neutralize all those who hate them, who could defend them on a national level, who could extend his power to an international level and also accomplish individual salvation through mercy and make people righteous and holy. He had a view of the Redeemer, the Redeemer who would come.

I'd like to think, though he doesn't refer to it, that he had a correct interpretation of Isaiah 53, the sermon of Jehovah who would come and bear our sins and be bruised for our iniquities, chastised for our peace. The horn of salvation, an individual powerful enough to save the nation, save the world and save individuals. The great Messiah, the rescuer, the deliverer. That's what this song is about. He knows this is about to happen. What an amazing perspective.

And what it does tell us is that from the Old Testament, you could draw conclusions about the Messiah, that He would be a Savior and a Redeemer on a massive level, mighty and powerful, to affect individuals and the nation and the world because all of that is in the covenants to David, to Abraham, and to the prophets that we call the New Covenant. So magnificently Jewish is Zacharias, and so well-schooled in the knowledge of the Old Testament. He sees what is happening in his life as the unparalleled, unequalled event of all redemptive history, the arrival of Messiah in fulfillment of three great covenants. And his language in the first part is language directly connected to the Davidic Covenant. In the middle it is language directly connected to the Abrahamic Covenant and the final verses are directly out of New Covenant passages in the Old Testament. So he connects all of this with those three great covenants.

Now let me talk a little bit about those covenants. Let's look, first of all, at verse 69b. As he refers to the arrival of this horn of salvation, this powerful Redeemer, he says he's going to come from the house of David. In the house of David, his servant, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of Old. He's coming from the line of David. He knew what every Jew knew, that Messiah would come from the royal line of King David. He knew then that his son was wasn't going to be the Messiah because both he and his wife, Elizabeth, came from the line of Aaron, chapter 1 verse 5. They weren't in the Davidic line. But all the people knew, all the Jews knew that the Messiah would be a Son of David. In fact, in Psalm 132 and verse 17, Messiah is called "The Horn of David—the Horn of David," the powerful one who comes in the line of David. If you go back to 2 Samuel chapter 7, and we won't take time to do that, but if you go back to 2 Samuel 7, where this covenant with David is first made, you remember the Lord says to David, "I'm going to give you a son, a powerful son but a frail son and a sinful son, but nonetheless a powerful son, and that's Solomon."

But then he talks about another son, a greater son who will have a Kingdom that never ends. The Son of David with the everlasting Kingdom and it's not Solomon. Solomon's Kingdom was a very temporary Kingdom; in fact he shattered the kingdom because after him it was a divided kingdom because of his sinfulness. Yes he would have a son, a temporal son, that's Solomon. 2 Samuel 7, verses 12 to 15. But when you get to verse 16, you go from the near fulfillment to the far, there will be a greater than Solomon who will rule and reign in righteousness, listen, over the whole world forever.

This is later called a covenant in 2 Samuel 23:5, it is one of the biblical covenants because it is called a covenant. It is an irrevocable promise to the people of God and to the world, for that matter, that from the line of David in the future will come a great horn, a powerful king, a powerful ruler, a powerful redeemer, a powerful Savior who will establish an everlasting Kingdom. That is repeated in 1 Chronicles 16, it is repeated in Psalm 89, as I told you, there are at least 40 Old Testament passages that prophesy the reality of all of these Davidic promises. Part of it you find in the very familiar passage we often consider at Christmas in the ninth chapter of Isaiah, just to show you that it does come from the prophets as Zacharias said. "This child will be born to us, a child will be given to us,

the government shall rest on his shoulders, his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace, there will be no end to the increase of His government or peace on the throne of David and over His Kingdom to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore, the zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this." That's an affirmation by the prophet Isaiah of the Davidic fulfillment.

Now what is in this Davidic Covenant? Obviously we don't have time to cover absolutely everything that would be asking way too much. But within that Davidic Covenant are some massive and amazing promises. I jotted down just a few to think about. The Lord will establish His Messiah as King. The Lord will defeat all of Israel's enemies. Israel will enjoy great prosperity. Jerusalem will rise to world preeminence. These are from all different Old Testament passages related to the Davidic promise. The center of the world will be the Kingdom and Jerusalem. Gentiles in the Kingdom will receive blessing. Worldwide peace will prevail. Moral and spiritual conditions will be on the highest plain since the Fall of Adam. Leadership in the Kingdom will be by the Messiah Himself and those surrounding Him. People will live long lives. Knowledge of the Lord will be universal. Nature will enjoy a renewal. Animals will be tamed. Sorrow and mourning will disappear and the Lord Himself will judge sin Himself in His Kingdom. These are all part of that promised Kingdom.

You say, "Well what Kingdom is that?" Well it starts in the Millennial Kingdom with a thousand-year reign of Christ according to Revelation 20 in which all those temporal aspects of those promises will come to pass. And it's followed by the everlasting Kingdom in the New Heaven and the New Earth. So once it starts at the beginning of the Millennium, it is an eternal Kingdom. It changes from this earth to the new heaven and the new earth, but it is nonetheless the eternal reign of Christ and it's launched at the beginning of the Kingdom by His return.

Now look, our friend, Zacharias, doesn't get all of that. He doesn't know all of that. He doesn't realize that there is going to be a coming and a death and a resurrection and centuries and millennia will go by before the King comes back to establish His Kingdom. All he knows is that the Kingdom was promised and he now knows that the Kingdom is about to be fulfilled in his mind because the king is about to arrive. That's why it's so important that the lineage of Joseph in Matthew be taking him back to the line of David, to David and that the lineage of Mary go back to David in the book of Luke. Both genealogies show us that they both descend from David. He expects then the full disclosure of the massive blessings of the Davidic Kingdom and it's a Kingdom that lasts forever.

What is inherent in that Kingdom is the salvation of the nation of Israel, is the destruction of all Israel's enemies, their Messiah comes, He establishes a righteous Kingdom and rules that righteous Kingdom forever. And as I said, all the components of that are delineated in the prophets, many, many times and in many, many places. So he gets it. He realizes precisely what is happening. Verse 71, "Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. It's coming, our promised deliverance."

In a sense, the Davidic Kingdom is bigger than that. There's a national aspect, but there's an international aspect. There's a global aspect and there's a universal aspect because it's a Kingdom that is eternal and in that Kingdom in its eternal form, he rules over everything ultimately and finally. So Zacharias is singing a song of salvation because he sees it in fulfillment of the unilateral, unconditional promise of the Messiah's coming that God gave to the Old Testament prophets. It is now about to happen. You can barely even comprehend the excitement of this very ordinary common man that this had been brought into his life.

But he also understood it in regard to the Abrahamic Covenant. Let's look at the next verse—verse 72. He sees in the coming of Messiah not only the universal rule of Messiah, yes it's redemption, yes it's salvation, but with regard to David, it's about deliverance from our enemies, salvation from our enemies, and all the people who hate us. It's national…national deliverance that extends into world rule because He rules the world and He rules the New Heaven and the New Earth and He rules forever. Has no bounds of His Kingdom, there is no end and there is no boundary.

But he also sees it with regard to the Abrahamic promise in this way, to show mercy toward our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham, our Father, to grant us that we being rescued from the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.

You know, the Davidic Kingdom has to do with what He's going to do globally, what He's going to do with the world in the end. It's about His universal, limitless rule. But the Abrahamic Covenant, Zacharias sees in its element of salvation for his people. He sees it in a more personal way. He's going to come and he's going to cause us to be able to serve Him without fear. Yes, we will be rescued from the hand of our enemies. Yes, He did swear that to Abraham. He swore that all the people who blessed Israel will be blessed, and those who curse Israel will be cursed. He repeated the promises to Israel again and again and again. And he repeated them first to Abraham, then Isaac, then Jacob, then Joseph and that's what he means in verse 72 when he says, "To show mercy toward our fathers and remember his holy covenant which he kept repeating throughout Genesis. He will be merciful. He will do what He swore to Abraham, and reiterated to the rest of the fathers. He will rescue us ultimately from the hand of our enemies but this in mind that we might serve Him without fear.

What had been the history of Israel? Serving the Lord, but always seeming to be one step away from divine judgment. Always one step away from divine judgment. Why? Because whatever holiness and righteousness they had, was so short-lived, so temporal, so brief. Verse 75, "The time will come under Messiah that we'll serve Him with no fear of judgment." Why? We'll serve Him in holiness and righteousness, not for a little while, not as a best effort, but all our days. Something is going to happen to transform us. Something is going to happen to change us. And it's going to be mercy.

That's why I say, this is a true Old Testament saint because he was one who knew that salvation was an act of mercy, not something you earned by your works.

What is in the Abrahamic Covenant? What is in it? It is an irrevocable, unilateral, eternal promise from God and it promises descendants and a great nation. And we've all seen that fulfilled. It promises a land and the land extends deep into the Middle East Arab territories that God had promised and will one day give back to Israel. It contained, according to Genesis 12 and then in Genesis 13, 15, 17, 25, 28, 35 reiterated all these parts. It promises personal blessing, personal salvation, personal protection. And it promises a Redeemer. Abraham's seed, and Paul says in Galatians, "Not seeds as many, but seed, that's the Messiah, it promises one seed coming out of the loins of Abraham as well as out of the loins of David. And that's why the genealogies go back through David to Abraham. The Messiah will be a Son of David, Son of Abraham; He will be the seed of Abraham who brings salvation and redemption. He will be the Redeemer.

And so, Zacharias is lit up with joy because finally is going to come the Redeemer, the Savior who will not only rescue us from the hand of our enemies, but will enable us to serve Him without fear of them coming against us in judgment. God used in His judgments on Israel for the most part the nations around them to be the instrument of His wrath. We won't have that to fear because in holiness and righteousness, we'll live before Him all our days. He was waiting for a true salvation, a consummate salvation, a real righteousness; a real holiness that He knew couldn't be attained but could be brought by Messiah.

I would like to think that he had a good idea of Isaiah 53 and he had a great clear vision of what all those sacrifices that he was making throughout his entire life as a priest pointed to the one final sacrifice for sin. He sees the arrival of the Messiah, listen, as the ultimate Old Testament event. We think of it as a New Testament event. It's the ultimate Old Testament event. God made a promise to Abraham; we've all been waiting for that holiness. We've been waiting…Paul put it this way, "So all Israel will be saved." And it will happen. "They'll look on Him whom they've pierced, " Zachariah 12:10 meaning the Son of God, "They'll look on Him whom they've pierced, they'll mourn for Him as an only Son and a fountain of cleansing will be opened and they'll be washed from their sins." You see that in chapter 13 of Zachariah, in chapter 14 the Kingdom comes. What's going to happen is prior to the Millennial Kingdom, in the period the Bible calls the Tribulation, the salvation of Israel as a unit, as a nation will take place. The rebels will be purged out, the prophet said. And then the Jews will be saved. A hundred and forty-four thousand Jews will preach the gospel, twelve thousand from every tribe. Two Jewish witnesses in the city of Jerusalem will be seen by the whole world. They'll be killed and rise from the dead. An everlasting angel flying in the sky will proclaim the gospel. And the end result and you can see it at the end of chapter 11 of Revelation, there's going to be salvation comes to Jerusalem. And when Israel is saved and the fountain of cleansing is open to them, then the Lord will come and start His Kingdom. Zacharias, I think, was…are you ready for this?...was a premillennial Jewish priest. And he was looking for the fulfillment of the Davidic and the fulfillment of

the Abrahamic Covenant.

But there was an issue. There was no fulfillment up until this time. The Jews had waited and waited and waited and waited millennias since Abraham. Nothing had happened. So how was it going to come?

Well they had decided that the means that God had given them to effect the inaction of those covenant promises, the key to having the Davidic Covenant operational and the Abrahamic Covenant operational was another Covenant. And it was the Mosaic Covenant. They decided that the Sinaitic Covenant, the law that God had given on Mount Sinai was the means by which they could please God so that He would bring about the fulfillment of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenant. So they strapped up their sandals, tightened down their headband, gritted their teeth and tried to keep the Law. It doesn't work. By the deeds of the Law nobody is going to get justified. They became legalists thinking they could activate the Davidic promises and the Abrahamic promises through the Mosaic threats. And they worked at it.

I have to say something for Zacharias. In the middle of that, because that was the nature of the religion in which Zacharias lived, right? Do you think that God chose Mary pretty carefully for her spiritual character and her true understanding and her true love for God and as a truly saved Jewish girl? I do. And I think the same thing about Zacharias. I think Zacharias got it because he says zero about the Mosaic Covenant, nothing. The Law was given to render us…what?...saved? No, to render us lost, sinful. He moves immediately to the New Covenant in verse 76 and the rest of this is all New Covenant language. What is the New Covenant? The New Covenant is the only Covenant of salvation. The New Covenant, Ezekiel, Jeremiah is the promise of salvation. And when that salvation comes to Israel, then and only then will the fountain of cleansing be open to them, then the Davidic promises, the Abrahamic promises will come to pass in their fullness and they will go on forever and ever. And not just for Israel, but all of the seed of Abraham by faith, it means all of us, and all of those who come under the rule of Messiah, Jew and Gentile. So the New Covenant is the most important and wonderful and Zacharias was a New Covenant guy.

Now this is the best part of the whole thing. But we're done, for today. We don't have time. So next time, for those of you who came to the conference, just hang around for a while and we'll get you to the next level. I can't jump into the New Covenant in just a few minutes. So when we come together, we'll wrap up our little preparation series by looking at the praise of Zacharias for the realities of the New Covenant by which all the promises to Abraham and David in their full expression are extended not only to Jews but to Gentiles. Let's pray.

We have been so refreshed, Lord, this morning in the praise to You and fellowship and just a joy, the exhilarating joy of hearing the truth, seeing the amazing reality of Scripture's veracity, integrity, authenticity, how the ancient book and the second book, the New Testament, are in perfect accord, in

perfect harmony because they come from the same author. How blessed we are to have this vast grasp of redemptive history in all its parts and wonderful it is to be standing on the bridge between the Old and the New. In the case of Zacharias, looking from the Old toward what hadn't happened, but how consistent the Word of God is. How it vindicates itself with its own words. We thank You for the promises that You have made of salvation and the forgiveness of sins, that Zacharias knew were imminent but hadn't seen. We've seen them. We know about his son, John. We know that he preached repentance and faith in God. We know that he condemned works/righteousness and told those who were the propagators of that that they ought to run from the fires of hell. We know what happened when the one to whom he pointed came, the Lamb of God. We know about His death and we know about His resurrection, we know about the salvation that comes to those who put their trust in Him. We have the full picture. We thank You that like it says in Hebrews 11, those on that side of the cross were not perfected without us. We thank You that we're so privileged in all the history of the world to be on this side of the cross and even so far down the line in the progress of understanding Holy Scripture that we have this vast grasp of these truths. Thank You for the illumination of the author of Scripture, the Spirit who writes also illuminates. We know that we're a part of something that is divine and supernatural and not human. That these miracles and prophecies give testimony to you, O blessed Holy Spirit, as the author of Scripture. We thank You that we have been given the full story in Christ and that we have come to know Him and to love Him and to serve Him and to honor Him and to obey Him because of Your sovereign and mighty grace on our behalf. Fill us with joy in believing and in obeying and in serving and in worshiping.

I pray for those who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, who are looking from a distance and cannot even comprehend what Zacharias could comprehend. I pray, Lord, that today the truth of Christ might come to them with full understanding, full clarity, full conviction, full power and that Your Spirit would give them life and light and sight. This would be the day of salvation. Lord, use us to proclaim the glories of this salvation, far and wide, in the fulfillment that we know to be true concerning Christ. Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2015 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).