

Series: The Child of Promise & Fulfillment – Part 5

Third Sunday in Advent – 2021

Saturday, 12/11 at 4:00 & Sunday, 12/12 at 9:00



Text: Luke 1:76-79 NET

Advent Wednesdays: Service at 11 & 7; Free Meal at 12 & 6

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Today is part 5 of the series: The Child of Promise and Fulfillment.

- Part 1: The reality of **God** adopting **us** into **His family!**
- Parts 2 & 3: God's messenger, *John the Baptizer*, is **promised**; then, *400 years later*, John is **born!**
- Part 4: Our Savior, **the Sun of Righteousness**, is promised!
- Part 5: Today, Zacharias tells what God the Father will do through John and Jesus to gift ✦ forgiveness and ✦ peace to all who are repentant!

The Text (**Luke 1:76-79**): On the day that John was named, Zacharias, *moved by the Holy Spirit*, said these words: **76** **"And you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High. For you**

will go ahead of the **Lord** to prepare **His** ways—⁷⁷ to make known to **His** people that they can be saved by the forgiveness of their sins,⁷⁸ because our **God** is merciful and will let a heavenly **Sun** rise upon us—⁷⁹ to shine on those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

1. **John – The Last and Greatest Prophet:**⁷⁶ “And you, child, will be called a prophet of the **Most High**. For you will go ahead of the **Lord** to prepare **His** ways—
 - a. The Most High: He planned to save us through His Son; then, *at the right time*, God sent John to prepare the way for Jesus, *who is the Lord*.
 - b. OT – NT: An OT summary: *God promised to send His Son*; **a NT summary**: *God did send His Son*.
 - c. John’s rank: God spoke through many prophets to prophecy about Jesus, *but John was the last and the greatest!* John actually ▶saw Jesus and ▶prepared His way. Also, Jesus said, “...there is no one greater than John” (Lk. 7:28).
 - d. John’s preparation: Imagine being a water salesman; what would make your job easy? *It would be easy if everyone was thirsty!* Some of you may be familiar with **Marcus Luttrell**, the Navy Seal known as *the lone survivor*. In 2005 in Afghanistan, after ▶multiple gunfights, ▶multiple falls down a mountain, ▶multiple gunshot wounds, and ▶a broken back, he said: Finding water “**was the only thing I could think about.... All I cared about was the thirst.**”¹ How did John

¹ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/survivor-60-minutes/>

prepare the way for Jesus? By ▶helping people SEE THEIR GREAT NEED, ▶calling them TO REPENT, and ▶pointing them TO JESUS!

2. **Good News – Everyone Can Be Saved:** Zacharias, regarding John’s task: **77** to make known to His people that they can be saved by the forgiveness of their sins,
 - a. Why saving is needed: It’s because of sin, which ▶kills spiritually and ▶condemns eternally. When people think *sin is no big deal*; then they will think *Jesus is no big deal*. Imagine warming yourself at a roaring campfire – *nice!* Imagine being in the roaring campfire – *terrifying!* For all who die without Jesus, the Bible uses words like ☹️eternal punishment, ☹️everlasting destruction, ☹️blazing furnace, ☹️weeping and gnashing of teeth, and ☹️the fiery lake of burning sulfur.
 - b. Forgiveness is being freely offered: Even though ▶all have fallen short of God’s will and ▶all are deserving of a horrible eternity; **all can be saved through God’s gift of forgiveness!**
3. **Salvation – Based on God’s Mercy:** Zacharias, about how people can be saved: **78** because our God is merciful and will let a heavenly Sun rise upon us—
 - a. God’s heart of mercy: **Heart** – is “the deep, inner seat of tender emotions” (Friberg, BW). **Mercy** is “an attitude and emotion roused by the affliction of another” (Friberg, BW).
 - b. A heavenly Sun: As we put heart and mercy together, God, *in the depth of His being*, is greatly concerned about all people. Therefore,

He sent “the Sun of Righteousness [*the heavenly Sun, the dayspring, the morning star*] with healing in His wings” (Mal. 4:2 AAT) – **not** because we are good, **but** because *He is good!*

4. **Light – For Those Who Know the Darkness:** Zacharias, regarding the purpose of God’s Son: ⁷⁹ **to shine on those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”**
- a. Those in *artificial light*: They are the ones who think ♦their sins are no big deal and ♦they will be welcomed into heaven on their own goodness.
 - b. Those *sitting in darkness*: They “**are utterly helpless, tired, worn out, giving up the struggle, hopeless**” (Lenski, 112). They are also in the shadow of death, *meaning death and hell are very near*. Though many unbelievers deny it, *they know death is coming and they are afraid!*
 - c. John’s mission: To guide our feet into the way of peace; ☞not some feeling of calmness, security, or rest, ☞but an actual relationship with God!

Conclusion:

- **Truth** – Unrepentant sinners will be eternally condemned!
- **Relevance** – Believers have God’s forgiveness thru Jesus!
- **Inspiration** – Peace is true friendship with God thru Jesus!

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, we are so blessed to ♦know Your truth, ♦have godly sorrow, and ♦trust in Jesus. *TYSM!* As You were compassionate to us, *help us to be the same to others!*

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