

## ***BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL***

*(Luke 1:67-71)*

If we are to sing this Christmas, we must sing songs of praise for the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank God, the Bible has its own list of inspired Christmas songs such as the Song of Mary known as Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), the Song of the Angels known as Gloria (Luke 2:14) and the Song of Simeon known as Nunc Dimittis (Luke 2:29-32). There's another Christmas song in the Gospel of Luke which is called Benedictus which means "Blessing." This is the Song of Zechariah which begins with this benediction, "*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*" (Luke 1:68). This Advent Song teaches us this glorious truth: **Once we believe what God has done to save us in Christ, we are compelled to bless the Lord in jubilant praise.** The first section of Zechariah's song in Luke 1:67-71 presents two compelling reasons why we must joyfully praise the Lord.

**1. *God has redeemed us from the* \_\_\_\_\_.**

By sending the angel Gabriel, by giving Zechariah and Elizabeth a baby in the person of John the Baptist, and most significantly by putting His Son Jesus in the womb of Mary, God was visiting His people in order to save them (Luke 1:5-68). Salvation is not a human work, nor a human exertion, but a divine visitation. We are saved only through God visiting and coming to us in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God's saving act is also defined by Zechariah in terms of redemption (Luke 1:68,77). Redemption literally means release from bondage through the payment of a price. Under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, Zechariah blessed God not for redemption from political oppression, but for redemption from the tyranny of sin (John 8:34; Psalm 19:13; Romans 6:12). Divine redemption is the glorious work of our Lord Jesus Christ in setting us free from our slavery to sin's penalty and power through His sacrificial death on the Cross. The price of our redemption is the very precious life of our Redeemer (Titus 2:13-14; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 1:5; 5:9; Romans 6:22)

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**2. *God has raised up our* \_\_\_\_\_.**

Zechariah used a very striking imagery to identify the Savior that God has raised up. He called Him the horn of our salvation, which is an imagery of magnificent strength and mighty power to conquer enemies (Luke 1:69; 2 Samuel 22:3; Psalm 18:2). This promise of a Powerful Conqueror and a Saving King who will reign forever is issued in the Scriptures as God's Covenant with David (2 Samuel 7:11-13; Psalm 132:11,17). This divine promise of an enduring kingdom and an eternal King was fulfilled by our Lord Jesus Christ who is God's anointed Messianic King (Luke 1:31-33). In His first coming, our Lord Jesus conquered the spiritual enemies of our soul, namely sin, death and Satan (Hebrews 9:26; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14-15). Hence, if you are in Christ, you must bless the Lord in jubilant praise for God has already redeemed you and delivered you from the domain of darkness and transferred you to the kingdom of His beloved Son (Colossians 1:13-14).

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