

LUKE 1:78-79 - “The Dayspring Has Arrived”

Here we have old man Zacharias, elated over the birth of his first and only child, John. The name was given to them from God Himself, and his name certainly reflected what was taking place. John means, the Lord is gracious. It was a reminder that God is a gracious giver. Definitely seen in the fact that Zacharias and Elizabeth were given a child in their golden years. This was a gift from God. And John would not be an ordinary man, he would be the forerunner of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. And filled with elation and thanksgiving, Zacharias sings out, but this is more than just a song, it is a prophecy of something, correct that, Someone even greater who would come!

Zacharias, filled with the Spirit, and inspired by the Lord, speaks out and speaks of a turning point in human history – a day of visitation!

It’s a theme in his prophecy.

And this morning I want to focus on just a couple verses.

Verse 78 starts, *Through the tender mercy of our God...* Here’s the reality: the world was in a dark and uncertain time.

There had been no prophecies uttered, no revelation from heaven in some 400 years. The Jews were feeling the squeeze of oppression from the Romans. It was a time of darkness and doubt. And yet, it was no wonder. The people had repeatedly turned away from the Lord; they had walked in disobedience. They were marred from their own ways of wickedness.

Everything that they were dealing with was simply a product of their own doing. They were getting what they deserved.

Yet here we see the mercy of God being revealed. Mercy is not getting that which we deserve. And at a time when the populace was turning away from the Lord, God mercifully turns toward them!

And in these dark days of uncertainty, God decides to send His only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ to come to this world to save it. This was the turning point!

Zacharias says *with which the Dayspring...* What’s this term about? Dayspring? This simply meant the spring of the day, the time when the light began to shine forth at dawn and break into the day. You see, with Jesus about to come to this world as a little baby boy, it marked the visitation of God to humanity through this promised Messiah Jesus Christ – it was the dawning of a new day!

This echoed Old Testament prophecy:

- **Num. 24:17**, *“I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.”*
- **Isaiah 60:1**, *“Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.”*
- **Malachi 4:2**, *“But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.”*

And as we walk through these two verses, I want to bring to your attention 4 points:

1) The PERSON – Dayspring (Jesus Christ)

- These verses that we just saw in the O.T. are all pointing to Jesus Christ. He is the Dayspring. He is the dawning of a new day. In Him and only in Him do we have hope of a new beginning!
- He says in **John 10:10**, *“I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly.”*
- **2 Cor. 5:17**, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*

2) The POSITION – from on high

- Think about what Jesus sacrificed to come and rescue us. He stepped down from heaven to come to a fallen world. That’s like living in Hawaii and deciding to go vacation in the remotest corner of Siberia. (Actually it’s nothing like that because we can’t even find a comparable difference for what Jesus went through).
- But the fact of the matter is, Jesus left a position of glory and prestige, to come to a broken and fallen world marred by sin and rebellion.
- He sacrificed all not only on the cross, but in simply coming here. As Paul wrote in **Phil. 2:7**, *“He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.”*

3) The PLAN – visited us

- So here’s the deal, mankind was struggling. They had become slaves to their own appetites; walking in disobedience and bringing hurt to their own lives. God desperately wanted to communicate His heart to them; to save them! The problem was the world was not listening. They were caught up in their own stuff and were simply going through the motions of having a relationship with God. But it had become dry and lifeless.
- God desired to come to this world and reveal to mankind personally Who He was and what His heart was. And this gets very personal, because He came for us – you and me!
- Could you imagine if you were at home and heard a knock at the door and it was Jesus. That would be quite a visit. And yet, that’s what He did more or less 2000 years ago to show God’s grace, truth and love.
- Now, let’s look at why He did this:

4) **The PURPOSE – to give light and peace**

- These were dark days of moral degeneracy and depravity. The world was sitting in darkness – far from God. And He came to shine the light into the darkness and repel it away.
- **Isaiah 9:2** says, *“The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.”*
- Isaiah is speaking of Jesus Christ who was to come. Isaiah said that this light would come from beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles. Jesus ministry originated there. He was a great light for the world.
- T.V. show about lighting up your house over Christmas. Some people go to great lengths to put some lights up over Christmas, but it all pales in comparison to the great light that came to this world, and continues to shine upon humanity to reveal sin and show the Saviour!

...to guide our feet into the way of peace.

- Here again was the situation, man was at a loss for peace.
- You may think, I’m a good person, I have nothing to worry about. But we have all violated God’s commands. We all stand guilty in ourselves before God. There’s no peace in that. **Eph. 2:12-14** paints for us quite clearly our past position and our present reality through Jesus Christ. *“that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation.”*
- The angels sang out that night, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.”*

The purpose for Jesus coming was certainly to shine in our darkness, not to condemn or criticize, but to say, this sin is keeping you from peace with God. There’s only one way to experience peace. And that is in Christ. People are lacking in peace because they are alienated from God. That’s the deepest need of man. And without the forgiveness of sin, and the understanding of God’s grace – there is no peace. Jesus has come to show the way, for He is the way the truth and the life!

Some years ago at a Resort Area along the East Coast, a small community was having an open town meeting about some financial problems that they were facing. Among the two dozen or so people was one man no one seemed to know who was apparently visiting in that area & had just dropped in on the meeting.

He started to make a comment once as various projects were considered, but he was interrupted and brushed aside; so for the rest of the time, he kept still, & he left early.

Just as he went out someone arriving late came in, & said breathlessly, “What was he doing here? Is he going to help us?”

The rest of them said, “Who are you talking about? Who was that man?” The person who had just arrived said, “You mean you don’t know? That was John D. Rockefeller.

His yacht is in our harbour. Didn’t you get his help? In despair someone said, “No, we didn’t get his help; we didn’t know who he was!”

Have you ever wanted to kick yourself in the Seat of the Pants, because you missed a golden opportunity? I think all of us can relate here!

Has an opportunity ever knocked on your door & you were so caught up in other things, that it slipped through your fingers? I’m convinced that it has happened to all of us!

Well here’s the opportunity of a lifetime. The Dayspring has arrived; the dawning of a new day. It’s an opportunity to realize that the life lived now without hope or certainty, can be turned around. That you can from this point on experience the peace of the Saviour Jesus Christ, who has come for us to bring us into a right relationship with God. Sin has gripped humanity and alienated us from God. But Jesus, the Light of the world has come to break the grip of sin and offer forgiveness to those who believe. Don’t shut Him out today. Don’t miss out on this opportunity to know true life and life everlasting!

Let it be a new day for you!