

Sermon:- Philippians 2:5-11 Luke 1:19-80

Pre-Christmas Praise!

Praising God is not always easy. We have two songs of praise in today's passage. Mary and Zechariah praise God.

Elizabeth and Mary

A joyful meeting sets the scene

Mary and Elizabeth meet

- Elizabeth's baby leaps (!) (Luke 1:41)
- Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:41)

Elizabeth recognises blessedness Mary "Blessed are you among women," (Luke 1:42)

And her unborn child : "and blessed is the child you will bear!"

Mary's Song

In response Mary praises the Lord

- a) She has a strong sense of being blessed (Luke 1:46)
 - a. Because God **has been** mindful of the humble state of his servant (v47)
- b) She knows that across time she will be seen as blessed (Luke 1:48)

*Because God **has done** great things for her*

Why has God done this?

Because God is holy. ie his holiness is demonstrated in the banishment of his enemies (Ps 99:1-3)
(Luke 1:49)

God is merciful. ie his gracious faithfulness to those who fear him. (Luke 1:50)

What has God done?

Reversed circumstances (Luke 1:51-53)

scattered proud

a) brought down rulers

a) hungry filled

b) lifted up humble

b) rich empty

Acted positively (v54-55)

helped his servant Israel

and been merciful.

Zechariah's Song

What has God done?

- He has come to redeem. (Luke 1:68) This implies that he has come to recreate us to what we can & should be.

- He has raised a horn of salvation. (Luke 1:69) A horn of salvation is a powerful (horn) saviour .

What is God bringing?

- Salvation **from** enemies (Luke 1:21) but who are they.
- Mercy **to** Our Fathers (Luke 1:72). He is remembering his covenant.
The result of his coming depends on the response
 - a) “Believers” *“**Blessed** is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!”* (Luke 1:45) - Elizabeth
 - b) “Fearers”: *“His **mercy** extends to those who fear him”* (Luke 1:50) - Mary
 - c) “Knowers”: *“to give his people the knowledge of salvation”:* (Luke 1:77)
Zechariah

Goal?

In order to enable us

- to serve God without fear (Luke 1:74)
- in holiness and righteousness all our lives. (Luke 1:75)

fulfilment of Old Testament promises (David, Abraham etc)

But first...

AND what about John

- prophet. (Luke 1:76)
- prepare the way for the Lord (the day of the Lord) (Luke 1:77)

Give people knowledge of salvation

- through forgiveness of sins
- because of God’s mercy

Israel’s real enemies are internal not external

Focus of the messiah is forgiveness of sins not restoring the physical land

Depend on mercy (Luke 1:78)

We were living in darkness.

Shadow of death(Luke 1:79)

Now peace

Light. (Luke 1:79)

What are we praising God for this Christmas?

Salvation, Joy, Peace, Forgiveness, Life, Light, Mercy, Redeem, Mercy, Love