

The Lord has Visited His People

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[0 : 00] Well, let's turn back together to Luke's Gospel, Chapter 1, and we're going to consider some of the content of verses 67 to 75.

Beginning with the words, Blessed be the Lord, he has visited his people.

Or simply, as the original has it, he visited his people. The phenomenon of God visiting his people is something that we can see right from the beginning of the history of mankind on the earth.

And in our translation here, and in many of the translations you have, Blessed be the Lord, God of Israel, for he has visited his people.

And that inclines us to think about something past and finished, it's over. But it's simply he has visited, in the sense, he visited. He's done again and again what he did at the beginning.

[1 : 46] He visits, he visited his people. And we're to think about this visitation as something that's not just in the past and finished, but something the Lord does again and again.

Of course, we look to the past, we learn from the past, our Christian faith rests on the visits of God to his people along the way of history.

But I'm serious about his visits. He visited, he visited, he visited. And each time he visited, something dramatic happened.

That's why, it's perhaps not as common now as it used to be, and that's a pity, the old preachers would pray for a visitation. They often said in prayer that the Lord would visit us, that he would allow us to experience his visitation.

And they were thinking, biblically and theologically, that God would come down, as it were, that he would move. Of course, of course, God is with his people.

[2 : 59] God is in his people. Those who are the Lord Jesus Christ. God dwells not only among them, but in them by faith. Christ in us, the hope of glory, and so on.

There are many things we can say like that. But that doesn't mean that he will not or cannot visit his people again and again, in a dramatic way, in a manifest way.

If you think about it, this is something that we think about in ordinary life. I think most of us like a visit from friends, from family.

And we enjoy visits from people. And it's something we enjoy again and again. We can look back and say, yes, I remember that visit very well.

But we can look at all the occasions on which family and friends and loved ones visited us. And not to enjoy that means that somehow or another we've lost track.

[4 : 10] It's something we need. It's something we ought to enjoy. We should enjoy. Some of us know very well, of course, some more than others perhaps, that visitors can choose awkward times.

They may choose to come on the Lord's Day in the afternoon. And it's capersia for the evening service because they've appeared. Maybe the prayer meeting night. And these things can be awkward. But the point is here that we enjoy visits.

And the people of God in ages past, down to the very present time, have enjoyed the visits that the Lord has given his people.

These dramatic, as it were, visits that he makes. And his people are aware that he's there in that place and that he's there to bless his people.

In fact, if you go back to what is probably the oldest psalm in the Psalter, Moses' psalm, you remember that Moses himself prayed.

[5 : 21] In fact, he said, how long, Lord, let it repent you for your servants. Visit us. Satisfy us early with your goodness.

He wants the Lord to visit his people. Now, Moses, nobody saw the Lord the way Moses saw him. Moses spoke to him as a man speaks to his friend for forty days and forty nights in the Mount Sinai.

And yet this Moses, towards the end of his days, is asking the Lord to return, to visit, to manifest his presence by one of these visitations.

But here, of course, in the passage that's before us, what we've got is a priest becoming a prophet for this special occasion.

We're told at the beginning of the passage we're looking at, Zachariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied. Zachariah was of the priestly line.

[6 : 33] That's why, you remember, he was struck dumb in the temple because he doubted that Elizabeth could have a child in her old age.

And here he is, ten most praising God. And he's filled with the Holy Spirit.

And he prophesies. Blessed is the name of the Lord God of Israel. For he has visited and redeemed his people.

Blessed is the Lord God of Israel. He prophesies. Because the Lord has visited his people. The four centuries of prophetic silence from Malachi has suddenly been broken.

And it's been broken by a priest who becomes a prophet. Yes, I know. The angelic messengers spoke.

[7 : 39] But here's a man, a mere man, a man assigned to this task. The Lord has visited his people.

And it's a very special visit. The Lord God of Israel, the great shepherd king of Israel, has now visited his people. The silence is broken.

And the Lord is speaking. And he's speaking about this visitation. He has borne with the rebellion and the wanderings of his people.

He has had regard for the faithful among his professed people. And he's now visiting. The time has come. The Lord, the shepherd king of Israel, has come.

Blessed is the Lord God of Israel. He is now acting for his people. And our Savior himself stressed this whole idea of visiting.

[8 : 45] In fact, he even said about his people that they should be recognized as those who visit. Those who have need. Matthew 25, 36. I was sick and you visited me.

But here, the emphasis is on the Lord himself has come. He is visiting his people. He has visited them.

The time has arrived for this special visitation. And he himself, the Lord, the shepherd king of Israel, has arisen on his people with healing in his beams.

Just as Malachi had said. He himself fulfills a prophecy that he himself took our infirmities upon him.

He took our sins and our sorrows. He made them his very own. The time has come. The time of visitation. And as Zechariah unpacks in this interesting little passage.

[9 : 53] As he unpacks the nature of his coming. He blesses God for that coming. And I think, you know, when we sing the Psalms and we sing about the Lord in relation to ourselves.

We ought to remember more just how he visited his people. I will bless the Lord at all times. As I recall the great things he has done.

How he fulfilled his word. Time doesn't permit it. Time is whizzing on. But the name Zechariah. And I'm sure the Lord chose this.

He chose Zechariah. He didn't have to choose Zechariah. But he did. And the name Zechariah in the Hebrew means the Lord remembers.

Interesting. The Lord remembers. And Zechariah was allowed, you see, to say, the Lord remembers. The Lord visited his people.

[11 : 01] And raised up a horn of salvation for us. In the house of his servant David. As he spoke, the Lord remembers. As he spoke by the mouth of his holy servants.

His holy prophets. And so on. So there is something here to praise the Lord for. To remember what he's done. And how he has fulfilled his own word.

And the second thing. The Lord redeems his people, you see. He has visited and redeemed his people. And that's important in the context.

The Lord himself has come with this in mind. The Lord God of Israel. And he's come to redeem his people.

This identifies the work of the Lord in coming in this special visitation. He comes to redeem his people.

[12 : 06] The same time has come. And this emphasizes that the Lord himself sovereignly and unconditionally redeems his people.

We're not redeemed by silver or gold, said Peter. We're not redeemed by our vain traditions. We're redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord himself.

Of the Lord God of Israel. Who has come in the flesh. And Zechariah has heard enough. To know. That this is a very special visitation.

In the purpose of God. God's plan. God's plan. Is unpacking you see. To bring salvation. To the people of Israel.

And to be God's salvation. To the ends of the earth. You find that. We'll not look at that today. But you find it there.

[13 : 14] Towards the end of the passage. To give light to those who sit in darkness. And in the shadow of death. And he's touching there you see on. Isaiah 9.

The people who sat in darkness. Have seen a great light. In Galilee. Of the Gentiles. And the prophet. By the spirit.

Or the priest who became the prophet. Is caught up as it were. In this vision. Of what the Lord has now. Begun to fulfill. In this great visitation.

And he sees. That the time has come. For the Lord himself. To enter into human experience. In order. To be our redeemer.

And so that Israel. Believing Israel. And believing Gentiles. Will become partakers. Of the promises that pertain. To the true Israel of God.

[14 : 16] You remember how. Paul talks about that in Ephesians. As who were far off. And being made nigh. Through the blood. Of Messiah.

The Redeemer. And you see this of course. This is not just something. Zacharias is. By the spirit. You find it in Luke 2.

Verses 25 to 38. Simeon. Old Simeon. And old Anna. Who were there. In the temple. Area. Serving the Lord. Praying.

And fasting. And praying. And so on. Waiting for what? The redemption. Of Israel. Waiting for that visitation.

For the Redeemer to come. And the context shows us. That this is not. About. Simply.

[15 : 11] A territorial renewal. For Israel. That is not in the. In Zacharias. Vision here. The principle thing. Is.

A visitation. That will. Bring. Spiritual. Life. And liberty. Joy. And peace. Because it will release the people from.

The striving in the flesh. To fulfill the laws demands. And escape the curse. This is. Liberation from all that is.

Is. Is. Is. Natural. In religion. In relation to God. That some or whatever. We can manage ourselves. To win God's favor.

No. No. He's come. In this special visitation. To redeem. This was the apostolic. Message. Message.

[16 : 08] This was a burden. The Savior himself said. The son of man. Is come among you. To. Not. Not. To be served. But to serve. And to give his life.

A ransom. He comes to redeem. From the curse of the law. To pay our debt. To the broken law. To set us free.

And faith is to apprehend that. And rest on it. He redeems us. From the curse of the law. And therefore we ought to say. With understanding and faith.

He has come. And in him there is plenteous redemption. And he will redeem. The Israel of God. Believing Jews and Gentiles.

From all. Their iniquity. Thirdly then. He saves. His people. You see it there. He has raised.

[17 : 08] At verse 69. He has raised up a horn. Of salvation for us. In the house of his servant. David. See how.

Closely the spirit keeps. Zechariah. To history. To redemptive history. You see. It's all connected.

It's that golden chain. And he goes back. And he says. The Lord is fulfilling. His very word. He has raised up a horn. Of salvation for us.

The horn is a symbol. Of strength. And power. And he says. He has raised up a horn. Of salvation for us. One who is mighty to save.

And he has done it. In fulfillment. Of the word he spoke. By his holy prophets. Without realizing it.

[18 : 07] In prayer. I slipped into. David's. Words. In 2 Samuel 7. And I'll mention them now. That from verse 11.

Of 2 Samuel 7. David. David scans back. And he looks at all the Lord did for him. And he's confident. That the Lord will raise up.

One to sit on his throne. Who will be the everlasting king. And whose kingdom. Will be everlasting. And. And. And.

And. And. And. And. Zachariah is saying. Believe it. The time has arrived. God. Is fulfilling. His word. There's a touch too.

In this. On to. Isaiah 11. 10. Where the root of Jesse. Jesse was David's father. Where the root of Jesse.

[19 : 06] Shall reign. Over. The nations. And they will hope. In his name. Paul tells us.

In Romans 15. 12. Rejoice. O you Gentiles. With his people. He has raised up. A horn.

Of salvation. For us. But it is in the house of David. Which he promised. Would happen. And so we're to.

We're to be caught up in this. And bless the name of God. That he has provided for us. A savior. Who is the Lord. Who is Yeshua.

The Lord who saves. And he is the Messiah. And usually. A week or two on. And we'll be thinking. About these wonderful words.

[20 : 02] For unto you is born this day. In the city of David. A savior. Who is Messiah. The Lord. The Lord saves.

His people. He came to save. And he is mighty to save. And our message to people. All around us. Is they need to be saved. They need to be delivered.

From the consequences. Of being a sinner. From the womb. Originally. And actually. In their transgressions. And we are to gladly embrace this for ourselves.

This is the basic. But it's vital. It is simply to be embraced. It is a faithful saying. Said Paul. First Timothy. One.

Fifteen. It's a faithful saying. It's worthy of all acceptance. Embrace it in your heart. That Messiah Jesus. Came into this world. To save.

[21 : 03] Sinners. Not to give them the option. But bless his name. To do it. And we are to take him at his word.

And said. Lord save me. Make me to know. That you are the horn of my salvation. That the demands of the law.

Are met in you. In the altar of Calvary. I am free. From the curse of the law.

Because you have saved me. He only. Our salvation is. Said the psalmist. And he daily.

Loads us. With his benefits. Lastly then. The Lord forgives. His people. You see it there.

[22 : 04] In the passage. And that's important. You see. You see. We've passed over.

Much of what he says. Fulfilling his word. By raising up a horn of salvation. In the house of his servant David. There is a lot of ramifications.

Following these verses. From verse 70. Through. But in the whole context. He wants us to remember.

That the coming. Of the Lord himself. Was to give knowledge of salvation. To his people.

By the remission. Verse 77. Of their sins. Through the tender mercy of God. With which the days spring.

[23 : 00] That's the Lord Jesus Christ. Has visited us. We have in him. The remission.

The forgiveness. Of sins. And this he promised. To the fathers. And this he fulfills. Because it's a covenant commitment.

Verse 73. The oath. Which he swore to our father Abraham. That in his seed. That in his seed.

In the Lord who became. Flesh for us. In that Lord. In Abraham's great seed. We would know the forgiveness.

Of sins. And it's interesting of course. That John. The baptizer. Zachariah's son.

- [24 : 01] Was given the privilege. To call people to repentance. So that they would know. In the Lamb of God. The forgiveness of sins. It was John the Baptist.
- Don't forget. Who said to his own disciples. Look. Behold the Lamb of God. Who takes away the sin of the world. It is in him.
- We have the forgiveness of sins. Through faith. In his blood. In other words. In his atoning day. And it's true.
- That all this. Would become much clearer. When Jesus. Would accomplish that work. We're importing. Back in here. The.
- The historical. Reality. That the fact. That the work. Has been done. And we're seeking. To open this passage up. To show ourselves. Just. How.
- [24 : 59] The prophet. Zachariah. Saw. These things. By the spirit. That this. Special. Visitation. Would bring.
- Such. Blessing. And the fulfillment. Of all these promises. Jesus. And.
- One can't help. But think. That. When. When you think about. The death. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. On Calvary. One can't help.
- But think. That the. Priests. Must have had. Some. Transforming. Experience. When the veil. Of the temple. That thick.
- Curtain. Thick. As thick as. The thickness. Of a palm. Of one's hand. And that curtain. Was. Went. From the top. To the bottom. And the holy of holies. Was. Laid open.
- [25 : 57] The way. In. To the holy place. Where God. Himself is. Is open. For us. We have a new. And living way. Said the writers. The Hebrews.
- Through. The Lord Jesus. Through the Lord. Who visits. And who visited. His people. And we have. The forgiveness.
- Of sins. Through faith in him. And we're simply. To. To take him. At his word. And receive. The blessing. He gives.
- But you see. As we leave it. This takes us. Back. To the whole. Phenomenon. To the whole. Reality. Of God.
- Visiting. People. And his people. In particular. And it ought to make us. Prayerful. Daily.
- [26 : 53] Looking for. Him. To come. And to visit us. Visit us personally. With his salvation. But to visit. Our families.
- And congregations. And communities. As he did. In the past. He is not just. The God. Of the past. As the secularist. Would say. He's outlived. His usefulness. He is the God. Who is eternally present. Before whom. The ages. Long gone. Are totally. Open to us. As is the future.
- This is the God. With whom we have to do. Lord. Visit us. And grant us. Your salvation. Amen.
- [27 : 49] Amen. I mean. I mean.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.