

# “Praise Be to the Lord” (Benedictus)

CANTICLES OF CHRISTMAS · LUKE 1:67-77 · DECEMBER 11, 2022 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

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*“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.” (Luke 1:68)*

## **The Gift of Appropriate Humbling** (Luke 1:5-22)

- The gift of discipline and silence
- The gift of time and reflection

## **The Gift of God’s Redemption in the Coming Messiah** (Luke 1:67-75)

- The gift of redemption and salvation through David’s line
- The gift of mercy and rescue
- The gift of serving God without fear and with goodness

## **The Gift of the Miracle Child Who Prepares the Way** (Luke 1:76-80)

- The gift of knowing God’s ways
- The gift of receiving God’s forgiveness and mercy
- The gift of God’s light over death’s darkness

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. When have you experienced God’s goodness after a long time of waiting? What happened?
2. This weekend we continue the journey of Advent and our preaching series, “Canticles of Christmas,” by turning to the song of Zechariah based in Luke 1:67-79. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through His Word, and then, whether you’re on your own or with a group, read that text aloud.
3. If you’re not familiar with the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth, it may be helpful to read Luke 1:5-25 and 1:57-66. Based on what you read in this story, what do you think God might have been doing in Zechariah through the experience of being unable to talk?
4. One of the biggest moments in the story of Elizabeth and Zechariah’s child is the naming of the child in Luke 1:60, 63. Why do you think this might have been a big deal?
5. Have you ever had an experience like Zechariah in your life with God? What happened?
6. As Zechariah’s voice returns, he immediately speaks words of praise to God. The first half of Zechariah’s prophecy (1:67-75) focuses on God’s goodness, specifically referencing God’s promises to David (2 Samuel 7:12-16) and Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). Read those passages and reflect on what Zechariah is saying will come true in the days to come?
7. The second part of Zechariah’s prophecy (Luke 1:76-79) looks toward the role that John will play in the work of the coming Messiah. What do you notice about John’s role and what that shows about the Messiah?
8. What is one thing God is revealing to you through this study? If you’re on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

## **DIG DEEPER**

- Memorize all or part of today’s text, Luke 1:67-79.
- Continue with the devotional that accompanies Advent and this series here: [eastbrook.org/devotionals/](http://eastbrook.org/devotionals/).
- Draw, ink, or paint Zechariah exclaiming his message or the content of what Zechariah describes in his song in Luke 1:67-79. Take time to talk with God as you depict the scene in your own way. What is God speaking to you through this?
- Listen to a musical rendering of this song, such as: “Benedictus” by Ralph Vaughan Williams as performed by the Choir of St. Michael at the North Gate: [youtube.com/watch?v=feBexmmxpjo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feBexmmxpjo)