

THE IMPORTANCE OF HOLINESS IN THE WORSHIP OF HIS PEOPLE

„to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.” (Luke 1:74-75 NIV)

The priest Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, in his prophecy said in Luke 1:68-69 that the purpose of God's coming was to bring salvation to His people in the descendants of David. Then in verse 70 he said that he got this truth from His Word which was delivered by His holy prophets to the ancestors of the Israelites, but it was only fulfilled some time after John the Baptist was born. Then in verse 71, he says again that the purpose of these promises is to deliver His people from their enemies and all their haters. And in Luke 1:72-73, he stated that God had shown His mercy as He had promised to the ancestors of the Israelites. God bestowed His grace so that the Israelites were free from the hands of the enemy, able to worship God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him throughout their lives (Luke 1:74-75). Zechariah, who served as a priest at that time, declared the fulfillment of that promise in Christ. Jesus Christ has come into the world to bring salvation to all nations. He fulfilled His role as intercessor, or as priest. The job of a priest is to intercede. Likewise, we as His disciples were made a royal priesthood and a holy nation so that we could proclaim His great deeds (1 Peter 2:9). Of course, we can never match God for being the intercessor and priest that He has been. He is the only High Priest who died for the sins of the world and opened the way for a return to the relationship between God and humans and can feel our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:14-15). We who have been called out of darkness into His wonderful light, we too can be used as living stones, for a holy priesthood, for the building of a spiritual house, for offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5). God calls you and me in this day and age to carry out „priestly“ duties (not a position, but a calling in life), namely to offer spiritual offerings, namely to bring prayer, praise and worship in this generation. Paul advises us as God's congregation, so that we make supplications, intercession and thanksgiving for everyone, for kings and for all those in authority (for leaders of nations and states), so that we can live in peace and tranquility in all godliness and honor (1 Timothy 2:1-2). In other words, we as His royal priesthood, a holy nation, must go before God with the same holy heart as Zechariah, namely to offer intercession for all people. Isn't this an amazing privilege and an incredible responsibility. Therefore let us grasp the vision and mission of the Kingdom of God. The question now is, as a congregation of God who has been called and chosen to be a holy priesthood, have you offered spiritual offerings, including praying personally and praying together (in family & in congregational life) for the salvation of those who are lost and actively telling of His glory and His wonderful deeds among all nations? May we be used as living stones for the building of a spiritual house, for a holy priesthood that can glorify His name. Amen!

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