

More Than a Manger #4
The God Who Prepared a Savior

Word

Scripture Reference

Luke 1:57-80

Discussion Questions

1. How do you prepare for a special event? Do you plan in detail ahead of time, or do you wait until the last minute?
2. In His sovereignty and omniscience, God had everything planned out to save mankind from sin even before He created the world. His special gift to us was planned thousands of years before the first Christmas actually happened. It was not a random occurrence or a whim. Read Luke 1:57-80. Why did Zacharias' and Elizabeth's relatives and neighbors think that God had shown Elizabeth great mercy (v. 57-58)? What happened on the eighth day after their baby's birth? How did their relatives respond when they were told that the baby wouldn't be named after his father Zacharias? The couple was presented an opportunity to carry the family's name through their baby, but they chose to obey God's instruction to name him "John" instead. Discuss how this affected the people in the region (v. 59-66)
3. God orchestrated John's birth in a way that it will attract people's interest, causing them to wonder about John's future and paying close attention to his life. As the forerunner to Jesus, John generated quite a strong following from infancy, and from his story we see the God who is meticulous in His work and who doesn't do things haphazardly, especially in preparing for us a Savior. We see that God prepared a Savior for us from before time, something that Zecharias acknowledged (v. 67-70). Discuss how marvelous it is that God knew man would fall into sin, and that He already had a contingency plan even before He created everything in this world. How does this knowledge challenge what you

know about yourself? God knew you even before you were born. Why should this truth encourage you (Jeremiah 1:5; Ephesians 1:4)? In light of this truth, how then should you live your life?

4. God prepared a Savior for us for an eternal purpose (v. 71-75). He enabled those who know Him to serve Him. You have captured who God is when you serve Him by serving others. What was the salvation that Zacharias described (v. 71, 74)? Is salvation just a one-time event? How does Ephesians 2:10 describe a child of God? What should you be doing as you walk with Him now and in eternity? Do you consider it a privilege to serve God? What have you planned so you can serve Him this Christmas?
5. Lastly, God prepared a Savior for us for an earthly mission (v. 76-80). What was the earthly purpose of John's life (v. 76-77)? What would be John's message to the people? What does the Bible say should be your most important mission on earth? As a believer, how does it make you feel to be given such an important role—to share the Gospel with others—in God's plan to save mankind from their sins?

Walk

God needed to send His Son Jesus Christ into the world because of mankind's sin problem. He who is sovereign had prepared a Savior for us from before time for the eternal purpose of serving Him and for an earthly mission of sharing His way of salvation to others. How would you describe God's continuing work in your life? How can you be more like Zacharias in your devotion to God? Think of someone with whom you could share the Good News this Christmas season.

Worship & Prayer

Father, it's so easy to focus on the festivities and merry-making this Christmas season and forget that it's all about You, about Your sovereignty, your wisdom, your power, your love, your forgiveness, your grace and mercy. Thank You for Your Word that reminds me. Thank You for Your Son who died in the cross in my place so that You can call me Your child. Thank You for the assurance that sin no longer has a hold on me. Thank You for that freedom, Lord. Give me the strength I need to live in obedience to You, and the confidence to share with others about Your gift of a Savior this Christmas. In Christ's name. Amen.