

Study Hints for Thinking Further
International Bible Lessons

Luke 1:57-58, 67-79

Sunday, December 15, 2013

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be the answers to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

**Five Questions for Discussion
and Thinking Further**

1. In what way did God show mercy to Elizabeth?

In her old age, God gave Elizabeth a son, a special prophet who would prepare the way for the Messiah; furthermore, the mother of her Lord visited her before Mary gave birth to Jesus.

2. What evidence does Luke give that Zechariah was probably deaf as well as mute, unable to speak?

In Luke 1:62, the people motioned to Zechariah to find out what name he wanted to give his child rather than ask him verbally. He may have been deaf due to old age, rather than made deaf and mute by the angel. Gabriel did speak to Zechariah in the temple, but surely an angel could make himself heard by a deaf person. The Bible says that the angel made him mute for not believing his message from God. The Bible does not say that the angel also made him deaf, but the Bible does not tell us everything we might want to know.

3. Why did Zechariah give a prophecy about his son, John, and the Messiah who was yet to be born?

From the moment he could speak again, Zechariah began praising God for the birth of his son. After the people began to ponder what kind of person John would become, “Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:” (Luke 1:67).

4. How does God want you to serve Him?

“Without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days” (Luke 1:74-75). After we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and He fills us with the Holy Spirit, we can love and serve God and others the way He wants us to according to the Scriptures.

5. How does Zechariah say John will prepare people to meet the Lord? Can believers do this today? Give a reason for your answer.

John will “give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins” (Luke 1:77).

Yes. We can teach the truth about Jesus, Who is the Way of Salvation. We can teach that Jesus came to save His people from their sins through His death and resurrection. We can teach that God expects believers to quit practicing sin. God wants us to turn to Jesus ask Him to forgive us, to save us from all of the eternal consequences of sin, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and to empower us to love and serve God and others in accordance with the Scriptures. Believers can pray for the Holy Spirit to help them do all of these things daily.

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