

Read: Luke 1:68-75

Redemption's Song

Luke 1:68

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What is your favorite song? Why is it your favorite? Is it because it has a good beat? Does it have a beautiful melody? Is it because of the words or the story the song tells?

Today's Bible reading is a song. It is called the Benedictus (beh-nuh-dik-tuhs). It was first sung by a man named Zechariah, who was the father of John the Baptist. When you get a chance, read through the whole song. You can tell Zechariah was excited, wasn't he? He was full of joy! He wanted to praise and thank his God! Why?

Well, God had just blessed Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, with a son, even though they were old. Through the angel Gabriel, God had told him that his son was going to be the one who would prepare the way for the Savior. Not only did Zechariah have the birth of a son to celebrate, he was rejoicing that his Savior was coming soon! So many reasons to be excited and rejoice. So, Zechariah sings!

He sings about how God was keeping the promises he had made through the Old Testament prophets. He sings about how God is coming to show mercy and rescue him and all people from their spiritual enemies. He sings about how God is sending a Savior to redeem them. To redeem them means to buy back. For example, let's pretend you lost your favorite toy or electronic device. You looked everywhere but couldn't find it. Then, weeks later, you happened to see your toy at the thrift store. To get it back, you would have to pay for it. So, you *redeem* it, you buy back what was originally yours.

Our sins separated us from God. We were lost. So, God redeemed us. He paid the price that it cost to forgive our sins so that we could be his again. Jesus, that special child Zechariah was looking forward to and who we just celebrated being born in Bethlehem, redeemed us.

At Christmas, it isn't just Zechariah who should be excited and singing for joy. We are too! We sing for joy with Zechariah because the Savior, who redeems us from our sins, is born!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Zechariah sang a song of praise. Can you sing your favorite Christmas song?
- To *redeem* means to *buy back*. Do you need to pay anything for your sins? Why not?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What is a favorite Christmas song you love to sing? (And if a child wants to sing it, let them!)
- What price did Jesus have to pay to buy you back?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Zechariah was excited that God was keeping his promise to send a Savior. Can you list another promise God makes to you that he kept?
- We often try to make up for the things we do wrong. Why doesn't that work? What did Zechariah's song tell us to do instead?

Closing Prayer:

Praise be to you, Lord, because you have come to your people and redeemed us. You have redeemed me and rescued me from my spiritual enemies. You have filled my heart with joy! Enable me to serve you in all I do. Amen.