



# Week one:

## Biblical Prayers

### Zechariah's prophetic prayer

- **Welcome (5-10 minutes)**

Each person writes their name on a strip of card and then as it passes round the group, a positive statement or message of hope for that person is written by each group member. Each of you should have as many statements as there are people in the group!

(eg *This year, you will grow in faith and confidence ...*)

- **Worship (10-15 minutes)**



*Our Father in heaven,  
Reveal who you are.  
Set the world right;  
Do what's best— as above, so below.  
Keep us alive with three square meals.  
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving  
others.  
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.  
You're in charge!  
You can do anything you want!  
You're ablaze in beauty!  
Yes. Yes. Yes.*

(Mtt 6 9-13 MSG)

- **Word (50 minutes)**

Listening to and understanding God is an important part of praying. Zechariah had doubted the angel's Godly word that he & Elizabeth would have a child in their old age. This song is one of great faith and encouragement as he recognises the importance of John's coming.

Read the passage:

#### *Zechariah's Song Luke 2 (NIV)*

*67His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:  
68"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,  
because he has come and has redeemed his people.  
69He has raised up a horn of salvation in the house of his servant David  
70(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),  
71salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—  
72to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant,  
73the oath he swore to our father Abraham:  
74to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear  
75in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.  
76And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,  
77to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,  
78because of the tender mercy of our God,  
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven  
79to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the path of peace."*



- Talk about how doubt can leave you speechless. It could be a doubting in your abilities or understanding. How do you deal with doubt?

Zechariah celebrates his breakthrough of understanding with this song of praise. Through it he shows his understanding of God's intentions for his people.

- Underline the prophetic elements of Zechariah's song. Now talk about which ones you are drawn to and why you like them.

A  
B  
C  
D

There had been no prophecies in Israel for many years. In his word to Zechariah, God was breaking his silence. God was about to do a new thing, king David would have a new heir, the messiah.

- The kingly line of David had brought hope and prosperity to the Jewish people, but it had dwindled in recent times, old areas of blessing could once again burn bright. Pray together for areas of seeming dereliction/ruin to be once again ignited with the flame of God. (ensure a good mix of world wide and very local, personal areas)

**pray**

1  
2  
3

Zechariah prophecies a revelation of God's strength in verse 69. In Jesus the whole of creation would be reconciled to God. In Verse 76 & 77 Zechariah forth-tells the role that John will play in the new era.

- Talk together about the role your group could have in repairing hearts and minds to receive Jesus. This is not necessarily an obviously Churchy activity.
- Each member of the group should think of a sentence that describes a new excitement they have found in God.

This passage shows great excitement about God doing a new thing. Zechariah is excited, even proud, of the role his son John will play in it.

- Look at verses 78 & 79, write a list of hopes that you have for God's kingdom for the church of which you are a part.

- **Witness (20 – 25 minutes)**

Today's passage has been all about 'new hope' over the coming weeks, you will talk about, pray about and plan an outreach event/activity that will point people in the direction of Jesus.

**Talk to the other groups if you wish, maybe work together**

**... the challenge is to do something!**

- **Time for refreshments, you've earned them!**

