

Read Luke 3.1-6

You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.

This reading from Luke's gospel tells us a bit about John the Baptist. John was the son of Elizabeth and Zechariah. He felt that God was calling him to go into countryside near the River Jordan and tell people about God. John encouraged people to think about the bad things they had done. He wanted them to say sorry to God for what they had done and start to lead a new life, living the way that God wanted them to live. John encouraged people to be baptised in the River Jordan, as a sign that they were starting a new way of life.



Do you know what a prophet is? There are several prophets named in the Bible – for example, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel. Can you find the names of any other prophets? The prophet Isaiah said that someone would go out into the wilderness and help to prepare for the Lord, the Messiah. John the Baptist was that person. John is also described as a prophet. John said that there would be signs that the Messiah (Jesus) was coming. What sort of signs was John talking about? There are lots of signs in shops, schools, and our homes at the moment that tell us that Christmas is coming. In what way are these signs different from the ones that John the Baptist talked about?

As John prepares the hearts and lives of the crowds around him for Jesus' coming, we are also in a time of preparation for Christmas. This time of Advent is about preparing for the festivities, but it is also about preparing for the true meaning of Christmas - the message of love and hope which Jesus brings. How can you bring that meaning into your preparations?

Activities

- Create your own Christmas cards this year. Include within them your favourite Bible verse or an encouraging message from Scripture, to tell others about Jesus.
- If you are buying or making Christmas gifts this week, could you also buy for someone less fortunate than yourself? Try to buy an extra toy or create a box of goodies for a local children's charity, so that you can help those in need this Christmas.

Prayer

Dear God,
you prepared people for the coming of your Son
through the message of prophets like John the Baptist;
through stories told and retold;
through the written word;
and through the spoken word.

Help us to hear your word and prepare to welcome Jesus at Christmas. Amen