



Daily Reflections

December 19, 2017

Scripture

Luke 1: 5-25

In the days of Herod, King of Judea,
there was a priest named Zechariah
of the priestly division of Abijah;
his wife was from the daughters of Aaron,
and her name was Elizabeth.

Both were righteous in the eyes of God,
observing all the commandments
and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly.

But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren
and both were advanced in years.

Once when he was serving as priest
in his division's turn before God,
according to the practice of the priestly service,
he was chosen by lot
to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense.

Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside
at the hour of the incense offering,
the angel of the Lord appeared to him,
standing at the right of the altar of incense.

Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him.
But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah,
because your prayer has been heard.
Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son,

and you shall name him John.
And you will have joy and gladness,
and many will rejoice at his birth,
for he will be great in the sight of the Lord.
He will drink neither wine nor strong drink.
He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb,
and he will turn many of the children of Israel
to the Lord their God.
He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah
to turn the hearts of fathers toward children
and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous,
to prepare a people fit for the Lord."
Then Zechariah said to the angel,
"How shall I know this?
For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years."
And the angel said to him in reply,
"I am Gabriel, who stand before God.
I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news.
But now you will be speechless and unable to talk
until the day these things take place,
because you did not believe my words,
which will be fulfilled at their proper time."
Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah
and were amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary.
But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them,
and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary.
He was gesturing to them but remained mute.
Then, when his days of ministry were completed, he went home.
After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived,
and she went into seclusion for five months, saying,
"So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit
to take away my disgrace before others."

Our Scripture Reflection

Two holy people living holy lives in faith and obedience to the Lord. In those days that is what people did. God was their all in all. Yet it was in the ordinariness of their lives that God intervened with suddenness and shock.

Zechariah's response to the Angel's announcement indicates that he and his wife had long accepted their childless state of existence. But God had a plan and timing did not matter. Things happened as they always do on God's time table. Their job was to trust. Elizabeth's words reveal the attitude of a true believer: "So has the Lord done for me at a time when He has seen fit." If we could only have such humility and trust in the Lord.

Food for your Journey

Four police officers rushing to an overturned car in an icy Utah river say they all heard the same thing: a mysterious female voice calling out "Help," from inside the vehicle.

But the driver of the car was dead and her 18-month-old daughter, while still alive, couldn't have been the speaker.

It was a mystery that continues to haunt the officers -- and may never be explained. ...

Nobody knows exactly how the infant survived hanging upside down for nearly 14 hours in her car seat with no food or water. As she dangled, icy water rushed just below her head through broken car windows as the vehicle sat perched on the bank and rocks. The temperatures were near freezing throughout the night and through the morning.

"It's heartbreaking. Was she crying most the night?" said [Officer Tyler] Beddoes, a 30-year-old father of two. "It's a miracle ... She was needed for sure elsewhere."

--"Utah officers say mysterious voice called them to rescue baby trapped inside car," Fox News, March 10, 2015. foxnews.com. Retrieved April 15, 2015.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, Help me to surrender my life to You completely and know within the depths of my heart that You are in control. Amen.