



Daily Reflections

December 16, 2020

Scripture

Luke 1:18-23

The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time."

Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

When his time of service was completed, he returned home.

Our Scripture Reflection

If I were Zechariah, my head would be swimming and I would feel shell-shocked! What amazing words, what amazing promises about a son who is not yet born! But instead of rising to faith, Zechariah sinks to doubt.

What a contrast with Mary, who when the birth of Jesus is announced, doesn't respond with "How can this happen?" like Zechariah, but "How will this happen?" and, "I am the handmaiden of the Lord. May it be to me as you have said" (1:34, 38).

I find it amazing, but true to life, that upright, moral people can be so filled with unbelief, so immersed in a secular, scientific world-view, that they are unable to bring themselves to believe that God can work a contemporary miracle.

At Zechariah's statement, filled with unbelief, you can almost see the angel, who considers himself questioned by this mere mortal, draw himself up to his full height and say:

I am Gabriel (The name means "God's valiant one.").

I stand in the presence of God. He is a messenger by appointment from God's Himself to Zechariah. How dare Zechariah question God?

I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. God has specifically sent him to tell the Good News to Zechariah -- and Zechariah blows it!

During this time, outside the Temple....

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The week is over, and Zechariah returns from his awesome experience in the Holy Place to the small highland village he calls home.

Food for your Journey

This is an old, old story. But it deserves to be shared with each new generation. A woman of immense wealth dreamed she went to heaven and was met by the angel Gabriel, who proceeded to give her a tour of the celestial city. First, she saw a palatial estate that belonged to her former maid. Then Gabriel showed her a mansion, where her former chauffeur lived. Finally, Gabriel gave her a sneak preview of her home - a shack in the back of the maid's palace.

Taken aback, the woman protested: "But I lived in a palace on earth!"

The angel Gabriel replied, "I'm sorry. This is the best we could do with the material you sent up."

The Bible invites us to store up treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God and Father, Help me during this holy season to surrender my life completely to You and Your plan for me. May I grow in my ability to trust You in all things. Amen