

Bible Studies for Life: December 25

Submission to God in Place of Fear • Luke 1:26-38

By Becky Brown



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The Christmas story is a prime example. In chapter one of the Gospel of Luke, the father-to-be of John the Baptizer is Zacharias. After speaking to Daniel in Babylon about 500 years earlier, the angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias in the temple

in Jerusalem to deliver a much prayed-for birth announcement.

“Do not be afraid, Zacharias. Your prayers have been heard. Your wife, Elizabeth, will bear you a son and you will call him John” (Luke 1:12-13).

Six months later, Gabriel was sent to Nazareth in Galilee to deliver another birth announcement to a virgin girl named Mary. She was engaged formally to Joseph of the house and family line of King David of the tribe of Judah.

“Do not be afraid, Mary, the Lord is with you. You are highly favored. You will conceive in your womb and bear a son. You shall name Him Jesus” (Luke 1:30).

Nine months later at the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, the unnamed angel of the Lord along with a whole host of other angels appeared to shepherds on the nearby hillside and declared, “Fear not... this is good news of great joy for every person... the long promised Savior has been BORN FOR YOU!” (Luke 2:9-10, emphasis mine).

Zacharias and Mary and those shepherds showed the world how to respond to the Lord of all angel announcements: denounce the fear, submit to the Lord, and get busy following the instructions!

Zacharias went home to his elderly, barren wife Elizabeth. Mary offered her womb to carry the Savior. Those crusty shepherds ran to see the baby in the manger and departed to become the first witnesses of His birth.

When God reveals His will to us and we offer Him our full and complete surrender, fear melts!

The name, “Mary,” means sorrowful bitterness. Mary would certainly see plenty of sorrow as the mother of Jesus, but her joys would certainly outweigh those sorrows.

She would hear the first cries of Jesus in Bethlehem and be an

eyewitness to His final cries at Calvary. She would live to rejoice at the news of the resurrection and surely was present at His ascension just prior to Pentecost.

She would live to become a member of the early church as described in the books of Acts. This all started when she let her fear be swallowed up by her faith in full submission and surrender to the Angel dispatcher.

In Genesis 3:15, God told the serpent the “seed of woman” would one day destroy evil. In Genesis chapter four, God gave Seth in place of Abel. Seth means, “one given in place of another.” This was a direct reference to the sacrificial life of Jesus.

In Genesis chapter 12, God told Abraham that through his descendants, the entire world would be blessed. Jesus would come from the tribe of Judah, son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham. In 2 Samuel 7, God promises King David that his “house” will be established forever through One Who was to come.

I believe Mary knew about these ancient promises. I believe when Luke tells us Mary “pondered” these things in her heart that God was helping Mary to connect the prophetic dots to realize the gravity of Who she was holding in her arms.

In answer to the wonderful song, “Mary, Did You Know?” I reply, “Oh, YES, she did!” To the angel she said, “Be it done unto me according to your word.” She declared herself to be the female servant of the Lord Most High.

All of her humanly-perspective questions disappeared as she expressed her willingness to serve the Lord in this unique way. To be the mother of the Savior of the world was her crowning joy.

In Luke 1:37, Gabriel said to Mary, “With God, nothing is impossible.” I wonder if Mary remembered the Lord had the same

message for Abraham in Genesis 18:14, "Is anything too difficult for the Lord? Sarah is going to have a son!"

Don't be afraid...

... of the unknown.

... of God's plan for you.

... of the seemingly impossible.

Punch out fear with "S-U-B-M-I-S-S-I-O-N." Have a MARY Christmas!

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