

## **Advent – The husbands: Joseph and Zacharias**

For the retelling of the historical account of Christmas, Literally the first noel, there are 2 women that become pregnant. Elizabeth and Mary. And they get a lot of attention, rightfully so.

But there are 2 husbands also. And they are not throw away characters. They are essential to all that is happening.

### **Joseph**

Joseph we don't know that much about. We know he had several prophetic dreams, and that he is of the line of David.

But we can infer some things. He must have been an amazing, righteous man. God chose him to raise, provide for, and protect the Son of God. Joseph had to train Jesus how to make money, how to live, and how to be a man. He trained him how to study the Torah. Joseph taught Jesus how to go through puberty. Joseph had to have been an amazing father. And an amazing husband.

### **Zacharias**

Zacharias was a priest. He was called righteous. He was faithful with what he did and he was faithful to Elizabeth through hard times.

Both husbands had encounters with an angel. Let's see how that went.

## **Before the Encounter**

### **Zacharias**

**Luke 1:5-7** There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup> And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of

the Lord blameless. <sup>7</sup> But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

- Zacharias was considered righteous. He obeyed the law of God.
- His wife was also considered blameless.
- But they were childless. Being childless was considered a curse from God. And they are old. Past childbearing years.

Zacharias had 3 options of what he could do in this situation:

- Divorce. It was lawful for a man to divorce a barren woman
  - For better or for worse. What do we do when for worse comes to our house?
  - It may be "lawful" to do something, but is it best to do that?
- Give up. Stop pursuing it. Stop asking God for it.
  - Zacharias means "The Lord Remembers." Probably Satan whispered the opposite.
- Go to God. Even when it seems hopeless. Go to God.

Zacharias went to God

- **Luke 1:11-14** Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup> And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. <sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup> And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.
- Your prayers are heard
- He did not give up praying. Even when it was hard. He still sought God.

## Joseph

**Matthew 1:18-19** Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

- Joseph... being a just man
- Joseph faced a real dilemma – because he was just, he could not marry an adulterous woman. That would be breaking the law.
- But also, if he divorced her, she could be rejected and stoned to death.
- He would be derided by friends. Possibly be rejected by family.
- Possible harm to his business. His reputation.
- Even though he was hurt, he still wanted to protect Mary. No revenge.
- A righteous person does not seek revenge.

So what does Joseph do?

- He considered his options.
- He did not act rashly. No rash decisions.
- He did not honestly consider the option that Mary became pregnant by the Holy Spirit and was to mother the Son of God – but I feel like we can give him that one.
- But the very next verse says that God spoke to Joseph while he was considering these things.

## The Encounter

### Zacharias

**Luke 1:13-17** But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup> And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. <sup>15</sup> For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. <sup>16</sup> And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup> He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, *“to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,”* and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

- The angel tells Zacharias that his prayers are being heard, and now they will be answered. But not just in any normal way, but way beyond your expectations.

- Zacharias and Elizabeth will have the second Elijah. The messenger to prepare the way of the coming Messiah.

## Joseph

**Matthew 1:20-21** But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

- Joseph also has his prayers answered.
- Joseph is trying to make the best decision possible with the information he had. The angel fills in the missing pieces for him.
- God does this when we seek Him. He fills in the information we need.
  - He sees the bigger picture
  - He knows our hearts.

## The Responses

### Zacharias

**Luke 1:18-20** And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." <sup>19</sup> And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. <sup>20</sup> But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

- Zacharias does not believe the message
- This is what he has been praying for. And now that it is being answered he can't believe.
- Gabriel points out that the fact the he, an angel, is delivering this message ought to be proof enough. Instead, the sign of being a mute is given to him.
- Don't give up on your prayers.

## Joseph

**Matthew 1:24-25** Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, <sup>25</sup> and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

- As soon as Joseph woke up he immediately obeyed.
- Correlation between God speaking and our obedience.
- Joseph did not actually see an angel. It was a dream. Zacharias saw an angel and still did not believe.
- Joseph acted with restraint. He did not know Mary even after marrying her.
  - It is absolutely possible to be sexually pure.
- He named Him Jesus – not Joseph Jr. Not his name. Joseph was not concerned about passing on his legacy. This was God's legacy.

## This is Lordship

Jesus is Lord.

Joseph shows us that Jesus is Lord.

Lord means master. To make Jesus your Lord is to obey Him.

Have you made Jesus your Lord?

**Romans 10:9-10** because, **if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord** and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

## Lord of My Life

In order to declare Jesus as Lord of my life, first I must look at what makes up my life

- How I spend my time
  - Work
  - Relaxation
  - Hobbies
  - Housework
  - Helping others
  - Church
- How I spend my money
  - Bills and household
  - Fun stuff
  - Missions giving
  - Tithing
  - Eating
- With whom do I spend my life?
  - Wife
  - Friends
  - Co-Workers
  - Family
- Essentially to make Jesus Lord of my life, I must make Him Lord of how I spend my life – in all these ways
- But doesn't this start to sound either a little impossible, or maybe a little like legalism? Is there a way to make Jesus Lord without having to make it work? Hebrews 4:10 says we are to cease from our work.

**John 14:15-16** "If you love Me, keep My commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

- We are able to keep His commandments because His life is in us. He lives His life through us.

Making Jesus Lord is allowing His spirit to live through you.

When we are filled, when we will lay down our lives and allow the life of Christ to live through us, making Him Lord is easy. Without the empowerment, the only way to do it is through a lot of rules, hard work, self-motivation/condemnation. But in Him, it will manifest in our lives.

So what does it mean when there are areas in our lives where we are having a difficult time accepting Him as Lord – giving Him complete Lordship?

- It means one or more of a few things:
  - Maybe we have a misconception of who God is in some area
  - Maybe we believe a lie about who we are in some area
  - Maybe we are trying to control something or have fear in our lives that prevents us from releasing control
  - We simply aren't considering all aspects of our lives from a correct perspective. Maybe we are only looking below the line.

If there are those areas, it's ok. When we surrender, He is right there, waiting.

- **Luke 1:63-64** And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. <sup>64</sup> Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue *loosed*, and he spoke, praising God.
- **Luke 1:67-68** Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: <sup>68</sup> "Blessed *is* the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people,

Jesus Christ came into this world to be Lord of all. Christmas is a reminder.  
Be like Joseph. Surrender to Him as Lord.