

Zacharias: I No Longer Fear the Silence

*Selected from the collection
"VOICES OF THE NATIVITY"*

By Jill Lamkin

Length: 3 pages of dialogue (1072 words)

Performance time: About 7 minutes

The Story

After many months of silence, Zacharias lifts his tiny son in his arms and speaks: "You, my child...are one who prepares the way for our Lord...so that all who live in silence will hear His voice." Zacharias now knows peace ... and is quiet, not silent.

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My own words sound strange to my ears. For almost a year, I have been without a voice. I had more to speak of during those months than ever before, but I was silenced. I pointed, nodded, gestured and wrote. People made whatever sense of me they could. Still, there was no way to express all that had happened. Even now that I have a voice, the words to describe it sometimes escape me. But I will try to find them, because I want you to know...I want you to know of the tender mercy of our God. I want you to know His great faithfulness to me and to my people.

I had only known His silence. I performed my duties in the temple, but I only heard His silence. I had prayed for our Messiah to come. Again, I heard silence. I had prayed for a child...only silence...and then I saw the angel...and then I heard my own silence...and then (*Slowly nods head.*), then I understood.

The silence of my voice made room for the singing of my soul. What couldn't come out, went deep inside. Words of praise found their home in me and whispered to a heart that had long ago covered its ears with doubt. So much happens in silence...so much is prepared...so much is given...so much waits to be revealed. I no longer mistrust the silence. Instead I wait with it...and rest with it. I need it. The silence draws me to the treasure it holds. I imagine silence to be like a dark, still night waiting to be penetrated by song...or a silent sleep waiting to be broken by the hungry cry of an infant. (*Smiles.*) That is something I can imagine very vividly.

Our son, John, is nine days old today. It was only yesterday that I received my voice back. During Elizabeth's entire pregnancy, I was silent. Even though she understood the reason for it, I sometimes wondered if she felt abandoned by me. When she was sick and exhausted and tearful, I was silent. When she was elated with the wonder of her pregnancy and the anticipation of our son...I was silent. I could weep quiet tears with her. I could smile at her. I could hold her, but I could not speak to her.

End of Freeview

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