

Hearing the Angel Voice

Monday, 12/7/09 – Read Luke 1:26-30

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Maybe the angel did not show up with cymbals clashing and trumpets blaring. Maybe the voice of the angel was so soft as to be almost indistinguishable from silence. Maybe Mary heard the words of the angel because she was quiet ... and listening. ... Maybe God speaks to those who listen. Maybe it is those who are listening who hear those wonder-filled words: “you have found favor with God.” ... Between now and Christmas, will you choose some moments when you will be quiet? Some moments when you will listen?

Tuesday, 12/8/09 – Read 1 Kings 19:4-13a

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The prophet Elijah was running for his life, running from Queen Jezebel who wanted to kill him. Elijah ran all the way to Horeb (Mount Sinai, where Moses was given the Ten Commandments). There on the Mountain of God Elijah waited in a cave. He heard the sounds of wind, earthquake, and fire -- but not the voice of God. He did not hear God until he heard “a sound of sheer silence.” ... Advent, the weeks before Christmas, is designed as a time of waiting. Sometimes we have to wait through all the noise that bombards us all the time, just like Elijah waited through wind, earthquake, and fire. Sometimes we have to wait for that singular moment of “sheer silence” when we hear the barely audible voice of God. Is waiting hard for you? In your prayer today, take some moments simply to be quiet and wait.

Wednesday, 12/9/09 – Read Psalm 62:5-8

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: These verses from Psalm 62 are a great prayer for Advent. Today, let these words give expression to your praying. Simply restate them and speak them directly to God -- like: “For you, O God, I am waiting in silence; my hope is from you ...” Try it. Try praying these words, and then jot down your reactions -- your feelings and your thoughts.

Thursday, 12/10/09 – Read Philippians 2:1-11

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The angel spoke to Mary in a way she could hear. This, really, is the whole point of Christmas -- that God chooses to limit himself so that he can come to us in a form we can relate to: a human baby. ... In his letter to the Philippians the Apostle Paul borrowed an early Christian hymn which makes the same point: that the Son of God emptied himself in order to be born in human likeness. ... How has God come to you in a way, in a form, that you can relate to?

Friday, 12/11/09 – Read Luke 1:31-37

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: God comes in a form we can relate to ... and then God pushes out the limits of our expectations. The central idea of Christmas is this: the limitless God has entered into our limited world and thereby shattered the artificial limits that we mistakenly place on our lives. ... Do you ever feel

like God is beckoning you toward some possibility that you are reluctant to entertain? Have you given up dreams because you decided they weren't possible? How would you act differently if you took seriously the words of the angel: "For nothing will be impossible with God."

Saturday, 12/12/09 – Read Luke 1:38

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Mary's response to the angel is so very and wonderfully human. Mary doesn't presume grandeur. She doesn't portray herself as a superhero. She simply places herself in God's service. ... Could you do that? Could you do just that? Would you this Advent simply say, "Lord, here I am, your servant. What do you have for me to do?"

Sunday, 12/13/09 – Read Luke 1:46-55

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Mary's joy finally blooms forth in a magnificent song of praise, "The Magnificat." Read it through again. Read it slowly. Let your heart find its quiet center as you read ... and listen. Listen for the sound of the angel's voice in the phrases of Mary's song. Which phrases speak to you? Pick one or two and carry them with you, ponder them -- and look for ways that they connect to your life.

My Faith Journal, December 6, 2009

Advent 2

The Posture of Angels

What do I hear God saying to me today?

Luke 1:26-38

1 Kings 19:11-13

Philippians 2:5-11

What action do I intend to take this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.