

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH WOMBS

*Poems on God's
Unexpected
Coming*

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I

OPENINGS

THEOPHILUS (LOVER OF GOD)

Luke 1:1-4

History.
Told by those
lovers of Adonai
from the underside.

This story.
From the mouths
of the disempowered
and marginalized.

This account.
Transmitted
by handpicked
eyewitnesses.

These bodies.
Trampled
to the ground
by imperial power.

*Have confidence
in what
you hear
from them.*

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH WOMBS

Luke 1:5-25

In the days of empires
and puppet regimes,
God speaks.

Through wombs,
wrested and discarded
because they were unviable.
This is what they do:
the Romes,
the Babylons,
the USAs,
the men—
toss to the side, as detritus,
what they've deemed unfit
to be utilized.

But God speaks through wombs,
birthing prophetic utterances.
The object of public scorn
given the power to name
the happenings of the Lord.
Elizabeth is her name.
Say her name.
It is she who will be
the one through whom
the covenant is kept.

She, like a priestess, speaks her word
while the leading male voices
are shut. Enough
of this unbelieving religion
that masquerades as faith.
Divine favor is placed
on what we have disgraced.

THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH

Luke 1:14-18

I've been told that God shows up
on shores, in boats, with Bibles
and swords.

I've been told that God does
the bidding of kings
seeking to plant their flag on my soil.

I've been told that God snuggles up to
power that delights to
kill bodies like mine.

But that's not what Gabriel said.

Gabriel said that God's prophet
will have the spirit of Elijah,
bringing life to widows' households.

Gabriel said that God's prophet
will possess the power of the Tishbite,
tearing down monuments to the god of domination.

Gabriel said that God's prophet
will be filled with the Holy Spirit,
committed to speaking out against Ahabs and Jezebels.

Thus saith the LORD.

NAZARETH

Luke 1:26

South central Galilee.
God comes to the southside.

Selah

Not to gentrify.
Not to church plant.
But to plant the seed
of righteous revolution.

Salvation is from the southside,
not from those
from the outside.

Selah

THEOTOKOS (GOD-BEARER)

Luke 1:26-38

Young. Brown.
From *that* side of town.
And now
with a baby
on the way.

You call her blessed?
I've heard her called worse things.

Thot

Ho

Bust-down

Tramp

No wonder she is troubled
by this greeting.
But they can't see
what You see.
What do they know?
She is holy.
Theotokos.

Overshadowed.
The Spirit hovers,
and she is covered.
Ready to birth
new creation.
Delivering us
salvation.

SAY HIS NAME

Luke 1:31-33

What did you say his name was?
I heard of him before.
Ain't that the little boy
who kicks it down by the corner store?

What was his name, you say?
Isn't that the homie
that used to live
around the way?

Say his name again?
Oh yeah,
that dude.
That's so and so's friend.

I swear, I know his name.
I thought he was the one
who got locked up
when the Feds came.

What's his name?
How could I forget. My bad.
He's the one whose name was trending,
preceded by a hashtag.

Everyone knows his name,
and make no mistake,
his momma always told us
her baby boy would be great.
#sayhisname

LEAP!

Luke 1:39-45

The dream
is no longer
deferred.

So we *leap!*
We can't help it!

It rises up from within.
From deep, guttural places.
You can't contain our dance!

Feel the pit-pat!
Hear the tip-tap!
That's the rhythm of freedom.

Let the babies dance!
Let them tell us of salvation.
Let them lead us to liberation!

The babies are inviting us
into the dance of a future
on the threshold of birth.

And we will *leap!*
We will *leap!*
We will *leap!*

All the way there!

THAT GIRL CAN SING!

Luke 1:46-56

I mean, she can sang!
She has a voice
that can shatter shackles.
Her tune is no soothing lullaby;
it thunders down
through the arena of time.

Sing, Mary! Sing!

Like Fannie at the marches.
Like the High Priestess of Soul
belting out her *Black Gold*.
Like Hannah breaking bows
of mighty warriors.

You betta sing, Mary!

Watch out! The sound of her voice
will cast them down! Way down!
No doubt they will try to quiet you,
soften you, make you into
a domesticated maiden,
but we're gonna play this song.

Go on, Mary!

Bless our ears with your sonic theology.
Lift us up with your melodic doctrine.
Magnify! Magnify!
This voice is magnificent.

HE'S NOT LIKE HIS FATHER

Luke 1:57-66

She looks at his face on the eighth day:

*This boy is different from his father. I
can see it in his eyes. His soft eyes
speak of infinite possibilities. It's silly,
but with his smile he seems to be
telling me not to believe only in the logical.
No, this boy is not like his father.*

She squints her eyes at his tiny face:

*He really doesn't look like a Zechariah.
He reminds me more of Uncle Elijah,
maybe Cousin Malachi, but different.
What is it? There's a determination
in his babyface. And there's so much grace.
So much grace all over him.
I think I'll call him John.*

She looks at them, the ones puzzled at her choice:

*Yes, I know his name is not the same
as the relatives. And I know,
this naming thing is delicate. But sometimes
you have to make a break in order to change
the trajectory of the story. And let me tell you,
this boy is going to change the game.
So remember the name.*

FAITH OPENS MOUTHS

Luke 1:67-80

unclenches jaws
and minds
that could not
fathom

the chasm
between my hopes and
what's actually possible
being closed

because old dreams
don't resurrect or
sprout anew they
remain barren

where and when
they passed away
but faith opens
mouths

and grounds and
skies and wombs
and tombs and
hearts

to fresh starts
and fresh words
that speak of
things impossible

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