

December 2

Isaiah 60:1-3 (CEB)

Arise! Shine! Your light has come; the Lord's glory has shone upon you. ² Though darkness covers the earth and gloom the nations, the Lord will shine upon you; God's glory will appear over you. ³ Nations will come to your light and kings to your dawning radiance.

As a young girl I was a member of Girls Auxiliary – GA's. Each week we began our meetings by reciting our watchword – “Arise, shine for your light has come.” Isaiah 60:1. Truthfully, I recited the verse along with the other girls, but I had no idea what the words actually meant. I was simply enjoying the company of the other girls in the group - girls the same age as Mary.

I've often said God has to hit me upside the head with a 2 x 4 to get my attention. Mary's 2 x 4 came in the form of the angel Gabriel. I can't imagine what Mary thought, how her life would suddenly forever change. But she rose to the occasion and shined a light for others to follow. Maybe faith is not seeing the whole picture, but rather glimpsing small segments and knowing God will provide what is needed.

Honestly, I can't imagine any of Mary's life! What would I do, how would I feel, and what would I think? Traveling in her final months of pregnancy, experiencing labor with only Joseph to help, delivering a baby in a shed, and having to use a feeding trough as a cradle - it's unfathomable. I can't conceive losing a child for three days; I can't comprehend my child performing miracles, and it is absolutely beyond belief how traumatic it would be to see my child suffer an excruciating death before my very eyes.

Each week we opened our GA meetings with our watchword; we ended our meeting with our song – “We've A Story to Tell to the Nations”. Again, I didn't really know what the words implied; I just knew the song and enjoyed singing. Now, as an adult I see the light, I recognize the need to rise to the occasion. I may not understand the journey Mary traveled in life, but I do understand my own. Whether I was aware of it or not, God has been with me throughout my personal journey and I have a story to tell!

~ LaDonna Butts