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Poem

DECEMBER 10

Mindful

The best love I ever had
was a poem made from my own words.

My beau was not a poet,
so he recombined things I'd said and gave me,

seen and cherished,
back to myself.

I was Mary,
child from my own genes
given back,
fragile and divine;

I was God,
song from my own deeds
given back,
filled and lifted up.

Love is this: mindful
favor, attention with regard,

a foreign text taken into gentle hands,
held on the tongue,

recited in the blood, understood, finally,
in new-blessed translation.

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A DAILY "ABOUT THIS POEM" HELPS YOU EXPLORE AND APPLY THE POEM. IT ENRICHES READING, INVITES REREADING, AND PROVOKES GOOD CONVERSATION.

About This Poem

I believe we all fear our own insignificance. Who am I to say I matter? Why do I deserve attention or respect? When I've felt most loved, it's been a matter of being seen, known, heard, and reflected. Someone has "phrased me" back to myself in a way that helps me see and believe my worth. When I feel most effective in my love for others, I've been able to take them in, and reiterate them to themselves in a way that lets them know I've noticed them, borne witness to what they felt or experienced. I believe one of the most powerful sentences we can say to each other is "I see you."

Revisiting Mary's song, it's such a potent piece of poetry and praise because she is expressing how fully she sees, and is seen by, God. God is mindful of her state. He reveals her strengths to her, and her value, in ways she didn't understand before. And she returns the favor in kind. She reflects back to God exactly whom she knows Him to be. How could God receive that with anything but joy?

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THE POEM AND "ABOUT THIS POEM" OPEN FRESH ACCESS AND INSIGHTS INTO BIBLE VERSES SURROUNDING THE NATIVITY STORY AND JESUS' WORDS ON JOY.

Scripture

Luke 1:46-55, New International Version

And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.

His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors."

Consider giving a gift subscription - invite a friend to read along.

A PERSONAL PRAYER ACTS AS AN "ABOUT THIS SCRIPTURE," MODELING REFLECTION AS IT TURNS TO MEDITATION AND INVITES CONVERSATION WITH GOD.

Prayer

Lord,

I see You. You long to come close to me with the same longing a mother feels to come close to her infant. You're as mindful of me as a young mother. You know what I need before I identify it. Sometimes You supply it even before I notice my lack, and sometimes You wait for me to learn what it is and ask for it by name. You know my moods and expressions, what makes me fussy and what soothes. You have done a great thing for me in dignifying me as worthy of Your notice. That truly makes me blessed.

Help me see my reflection in You. Help me trust just how mindful of me You are. Let that prompt joy in me in the same way I take joy in being known by a friend or partner. Fill me with awareness of Your attention, and let that satisfy my hunger for significance and love. Then let me return my appreciation to You by rejoicing in Who You Are.

Amen.

Enjoy the conversation.