

The Shining Sun

*And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace. ~ Luke 1:76-79*

Growing up in San Diego, Christmas time was usually very comfortable weather wise (well, every day was....) This was a big transition for me when I moved to Minnesota for college and stayed for 25 years.

It was common for me to spend Christmas Eve with my church family in Minnesota and then fly to San Diego on Christmas Day to be with my family of origin.

One year, the weather in Minnesota was particularly cold. When my husband and I left the airport that Christmas morning it was 80 degrees BELOW zero. Even for Minnesotans, that was tough. I had a terrible cold and cough, felt miserable, and couldn't wait to get home.

Four hours later, we stepped off the plane in San Diego into 80 degrees ABOVE zero. What a difference! We had planned on renting a car so we could do some sight-seeing while we were there, and had reserved an economy car. But as we soaked up the sun, we became giddy at the drastic change, and when we saw that sporty convertible car in the lot, we didn't have to say a word... we looked at each other and laughed. We knew... we had to rent the convertible.

No one in San Diego would appreciate driving with the top down as much as we did that year. We laughed all the way to my parent's house as the sun beamed down on us and our colds dried up.

The power of the sun is unmistakable.

Our scripture reading today comes from the song Zachariah sang after being mute for months when he questioned the angel about his wife, Elizabeth's pregnancy. During those months, he had come to understand that the son he and Elizabeth would have was destined to be a prophet and prepare the way for the Messiah.

*the rising sun will come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in darkness (Luke 1:78)*

Zachariah's son John prepared the way for Jesus - who is the sun who came from heaven. His glory is like the warm sun shining on those who were living in sub-zero temperatures and stepped into its healing light.

When I think of that moment of feeling the welcomed sun on my skin, it reminds me of people who are still living in darkness in the world and need to experience the warmth of Jesus in their life. They need the sun to shine on them.

May we be the light of the world, and may we shine so those living in darkness will see the Great Light and will experience the peace that comes from His presence.

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