

When My Adopted Son Asked, 'Where Were You the Night Before I Was Born?'

I remember the night before my son was born. Only I wasn't there. I was in a prayer room.

I remember because it was a powerfully sweet night; later, I would write down every moment in a journal. I was leading prayer while my friend, Daphne, sang behind me with only a few people in the room. Like all of our prayer sets, I was praying for *life*.

My eyes were shut tight as I prayed, and in my mind I saw a gas station with rain coming down. Only the rain wasn't rain. The rain was hearts.

I had a sensation of compassion and love come over me. I remember being encouraged by Jesus as I prayed. I was confident that, though I'd been waiting a long time for the dreams that He put inside me to come into existence, He would refuel me and my capacity to love would be great. He would pour out love that I couldn't hold back.

I had been aching for the "family" part of my life to begin: The husband, the children. At that time, I ached mostly for children. That whole season I dreamed in babies. I ached for babies. I remember wondering *what was going on* because I cried every night. I cried and I prayed.

Looking back now, that was the entire season that our son would have been in the womb. I was burdened in prayer for his life and children I had never met. And knowing what I know now, it's a miracle my son was even born.

My promise was born in the prayer room. In my loneliest of

times, in my most uncertain of times, while I was in the prayer room, God saw me and He gave me a son. Only I didn't know it yet. It would be years later I would find out how God had already answered me.

My son and I often talk about life before having each other. He asked me what I was doing long before I met him. He might remember a bad memory, retell it and then ask me, "Where were you, Mommy?"

A question like that deserves a pure and true answer—an answer that isn't neatly sized-down with a tidy response. So I tell him the truth.

I open up my heart and explain how I was crying every day on my way home from work. I tell him how I would go home to my empty apartment and I cried there too, every night while I prayed, waiting for him and waiting for "Daddy" to come into my life. He loves that part. He loves hearing that I cried and prayed for him before I ever knew him. He loves hearing that I did the same for Daddy.

He loves to hear that he is so valued and he is so desired that I couldn't go to sleep without crying in prayer for him. Because in every way, Braxton knows what it's like to wait. He understands what it is to wait and wait and wait for something wonderful to come, for life to change, and wait for a dream to come true.

"You know what I did on nights when I felt alone and I was afraid?"

"What did you do, Mommy?"

"I laid in bed and asked Jesus to hold my hand."

"Did He do it? Did He hold your hand?"

"Yes. I held my hand open and closed my eyes. I could feel Him holding it. He took my fear."

Braxton had asked me multiple times to take him back to the apartment where I cried and prayed for him and Daddy. There were two different apartments during that season of my life and he wanted to see both of them. And so I did. I've literally taken our son to my past apartments because it meant that much to him.

It's invaluable to know that my season of burden is a joy and a gift to my son, so much so that he had to lay eyes on it. He had to go back to it to see the realness of what I lived. He wanted to imagine me before Daddy—walking through the door, longing for them to come.

"Where else did you cry for me, Mommy?"

"I cried in the shower. I cried a lot in the shower."

Yet, his wait was different than mine. I don't know that he will understand until he is older or even remember how much worse his wait was than mine. But for now, my tears translate to his tears. My nights of loneliness and fear translate to his nights of loneliness and fear. My ache for a son and husband translates his ache for a mom and dad.

He is understood. He is loved. He is treasured. He is long awaited. He is chosen. And my son is satisfied to know where I was when all the "life before family" was happening. And one day he will read his Mommy's journals and see how God's plans and answers are beautifully unfathomable and radically perfect.

"Do you know what the angels and all of heaven did the day you were born?"

"No. What did they do, Mommy?"

"They cheered and they danced because you *finally* came into the world. They did that because there would never be anyone like you born ever again."

“Really?”

“Mmhm... Do you know what I was doing the night before you were born?”

Excitedly with a cute little smile, “What were you doing?”

“I was in a small room praying and singing to Jesus. The angels were there too, smiling knowing you were coming. It was so beautiful that I wrote it down.”

“Wow. That’s nice, Mommy!”

Our lives will never be the same. I’ll never stop thanking God for my husband and my beautiful son and all the other children He brings to us however He wants to bring them. Adoption is a miracle. Adoption was planned before the Earth was even formed.

God knew we would need rescuing and we would need a relationship with Him as our Father. He chose us. And somehow in our tiny hearts, He broke us open and gave us a greater capacity to do what we see Him doing. The rescued, rescue others. The adopted, adopt others. The loved greatly, greatly love others. It’s all a part of His divine plans.

And so I often wonder who this son of ours will be when I tuck him into bed. As he prays to ask Jesus, “Please give us 20 babies!”

I wonder who this long-awaited, rescued, adopted, loved greatly, chosen boy will be one day. And so—taking a page from Luke 2:19—I treasure up all these things, pondering them in my heart. {eoa}

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