

Week 20

5/9/11

**James:** Thank you so much for this opportunity to share this time with you. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have Naomi Zacharias. Her father, Ravi Zacharias has been our guest many times. He is probably one of the most respected philosophers in the world. He is one of the most brilliant people on planet earth, and his daughter is a whole lot more beautiful than he is handsome! And she is here with us and she has written a book. Now I want you to get this title because I want to ask her about it, *The Scent of Water -- The Scent of Water*. Would that get your attention?

**Betty:** Yeah, it definitely would.

**James:** I want to know what she is talking about. She is going to take us on this journey that she takes us on in the book and I can tell you, it is amazing for the daughter of a minister and someone who has served in many different capacities related to ministry that she would end up in some of the places she ended up in to hear unbelievable stories of grace and love -- like brothels, like places where children had been abandoned or abused or hurt or used. In many of the places we have traveled to, and you our viewers have inspired us to care about because we know God does. Well, would you welcome Naomi Zacharias to *LIFE Today*? Naomi, we're glad to see you!

**Naomi:** It's great to be here. Thank you!

**James:** I wonder if your dad and mom are surprised that you would be so impacted by some of these places that have been so devastated. Were they surprised first of all that you were actually going to look into the situation and the way it impacted you? Or was it just something that they kind of observed on your journey through life?

**Naomi:** I think they were a little terrified at first.

[Laughter]

But I think I've kind of always -- that's been my personality since day one, there has been a part of me that I think has always scared my dad to death. So in that way I don't think he was very surprised. But the truth of it is I think it was very much my parents that prepared me to go in this kind of direction because of the way they raised

me. I talk in the book about just my dad and just who he is, he was born and raised in India, and just has this incredibly deep way of seeing people in the world. I just felt like I was brought up with, to see the world as this huge vast place that could be explored. Like something that I could never quite capture but something that would never cease to amaze me, as something that I should fully strive to participate in. So I think it was very much him.

**Betty:** So you grew up with the adventurous heart so to speak?

**Naomi:** Yes. I think this kind of work is interesting. The book was in some ways therapeutic for me to write because I was very scared to do it at first and partly because I have a father who is an author and a sister who is an author and I never thought I would write. It seemed kind of intimidating. That wasn't what I saw as my place. What made me want to do it was just feeling like these stories deserved to be told. That these people that I had met had impacted my life so deeply I felt a responsibility to share that with others because I feel like it would impact their life in the same way. So I think it was really that that drew me to it.

**James:** I want to ask you about this title. Are you headed there toward it because I alluded to it; I want to know what drew you to that.

**Naomi:** The title is vague and I have to admit I have kind of a soft spot for things that aren't so obvious and have to be a little bit discovered so I was kind of searching for something like that in a title. But I finished the whole book and still didn't have a title. I was sitting down with my mom one night just looking through the Bible trying to find a verse that I felt like would be a good fit for the book. We came across this verse in Job and this is my paraphrase of it. But basically it says even if a tree dies and its roots decay at the very scent of water it will come back to life. That was perfect because it perfectly captures what I've witnessed in these lives, both women and people who have suffered just some of the most unspeakable tragedies and horrors in life. But I loved what the verse said. Like not even at water but at the scent of water it will come back to life and having had a chance to witness that in other people's life, it helped me to actually see that in my own, it was the perfect verse for the description of the book.

**James:** You referenced when we were having a meal together before we came out, we come together and we had this little exchange just talking about the needs of the world and the heart of God and you referenced the difference where we work in the people who are in the sexual trafficking area in Mumbai, in India, in Thailand, some of these other areas, where really it is tragic and impoverished and then you talked about

Amsterdam and the way they glorify the sin and the sensuality, the two different pictures, but yet something quite remarkable you saw in something that happened in Amsterdam. Tell us about it.

**Naomi:** I think any one of those settings, it is horrible and it is awful and I think it is so hard when you're standing there to make sense of what you're seeing. But we were talking about how Mumbai, things are just dark and the women are behind bars and it has its own kind of horrific thing to it when you see them actually trapped in it. Amsterdam was traumatizing -- I would use that word -- in a very different way because it is so celebrated. And it is like flashing lights, it is neon lights, it is music, it is a party. There are 400 windows with a woman behind each one and they're organized by nationalities, so if you want a girl from Eastern Europe you go to this section, if you want a girl from Africa, you go to this section. It is like a shopping mall of human beings. Every time I go, still, because I go there each year, it is still one of the places that I feel like takes me the largest number of days to really kind of process it and feel like I can actually speak again because it really does affect you so much. But one of the first times I was there I ended up meeting a girl who was working behind one of the windows, and her story is in the book and her name in the book is Annie. She invited -- I was there with a friend. Wellspring doesn't -- we don't start our own projects in these places but we come alongside organizations that are already doing the work. So I was there to visit one of those groups called Scarlet Cord. I was there with their director walking through the district and this girl Annie invited us in and asked us to sit down and started to tell us her story. She would go back and forth. In one moment, it was like this fragile child, and in the next moment it was this fierce angry person. She said, "I tell girls that start to work here, I tell them three things: Never trust a man. He will only hurt you. Don't do drugs, it will make it worse. And number three, always carry a can of petro with you so that you can set them on fire if they do try to hurt you." She wasn't kidding. I wasn't quite sure how to respond to it, but there was this fierceness and yet this brokenness at the same time. She was sharing her story with us and what had happened. It was actually her husband that had put her in the red light district. She was from Malaysia and had met this guy, this Dutch guy who had come through her country. And very long story short he had asked her to marry him and her family encouraged her to go, it was a great opportunity and so she did thinking this just would be a dream come true and a new life, and gets to this new country where she doesn't speak the language, she doesn't know anyone, her passport is taken from her and he puts her behind a window. So that's how she ended up working there. She told us her story and all that had happened. And at one point my friend said to her, "Have you ever considered going to church?" She told us, she said, "I believe in God. I think about him each night when I try to wash this horrible dirty feeling off of me after a night's work." But her idea of God was a combination of

several different religions. There was a little bit of Buddhism in there and that kind of thing and so it was a bit of a mixture. So my friend said, "Well, have you ever considered going to church?" She laughed. She shook her head and she said to us, "You tell me. If I walk into one of your churches, will they see me as a woman or will they see me as a prostitute?" I didn't answer right away because I'm not sure I'm not proud of the answer to be honest. My friend was honest with her and said, "Well, some people would see you as a prostitute but they would be wrong. It is not how Jesus would see you, he would see you as a person." She said, "No, no! The problem with your people is you tell me that I should leave but you never want to let me forget where I came from either." It was so -- I've never forgotten that. I don't think I'll ever forget those words, it was so convicting because she was right. We do it to each other and we do it to other people and it is not a reflection of God. It is not a reflection of Christ. Her words were very heartbreaking, I think but I have actually prayed that I would never forget them because I think they are an important reminder for all of us of what we are supposed to be showing of the love of Christ and how we sometimes fall very short.

**James:** I want you to repeat what she said again. I want to be sure everybody in the television audience heard it. What did she say again?

**Naomi:** She said, "The problem with your people is you tell me I should leave but you never want to let me forget where I came from either."

**James:** I -- by the grace of God, I'll live the rest of my life to reveal the grace of God that covers. And I want to live to be a part of such glory, such grace from God resting on his people, released through his people so that the world sees him high and lifted up; not the one that shames and blames but who took the shame and the blame. And may God help us to quit shaming and blaming what he died to cover and release us from. I... Naomi, I know your dad loves us and we love him. We prayed with you years ago when you were just on your journey in life as a beautiful woman working actually in Washington in the White House, and we just began to pray with you on your journey. What you just said, and what you've written, if the church will hear it, we can change that story where it would be the song of the soul set free, the song of the little sheep coming back into the fold coming under the shelter of the almighty not the shame of a religious body. You know Jesus said, "Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, you won't experience kingdom living." You're going to have the righteousness of God, not more rule keeping so you could be smug and look down on others. Don't you long to see -- I see you contributing that that the church be freed from this religion and get into

relationship and from this self-righteousness to reveal the righteousness of God. Isn't that what your heart is?

**Naomi:** I think it is heartbreaking to see and it makes me so sad. I think it is sad when you're on the receiving end of it and it is sad when you hear people say things like that. Part of the reason it is so sad is that you know, like that's not who God is -- it is not who Christ is. When you realize that we can somehow, maybe with all of our good intentions and not realizing it but how we can so misrepresent the beauty of his grace and the power of redemption, that I think is one of the main messages I've taken away from doing this kind of ministry and this work is just feeling that conviction of so badly wanting to try to be that kind of reflection and extend that kind of grace and hope.

**Betty:** That's a lesson that we need to learn because what if we had been that young woman? Would we not so much want it to be forgiven?

**Naomi:** I think what you're saying is so important because I think that's one thing... on that visit with the red light district especially that I walked away with was for one, just realizing we're all broken and we're all in need of grace in this very grand kind of rescue. But I think the other thing was... I think the first time I went there was a part of me that was intimidated and kind of intimidated by these women because if I were to be honest, what they did made me feel threatened. They were a little scary to me because of what they did. It threatened the things that made me feel secure. When I went there, I just saw them as human. They weren't out to get me. This was not some personal attack on me or the things that I held dear. They were battling their own hurts, their own wounds, they're own broken dreams and I saw them as very human. When I heard their stories, I couldn't help but be painfully aware that I too, would be in that same situation, and you realize how little actually separates us as human beings.

**James:** And you know the fact is even those of us in the church, at least it is true of me, I have missed the mark some, I have failed, I've disappointed God, disappointed others, disappointed Betty. I want to be loved too. I know you've had some setbacks that you wouldn't have expected in your life's journey and you don't want anybody to look down. You want people to lift you up in all your journey. You know we actually, when we met with you before we were praying with you about your future and I see you're with child, and sitting out here is your husband Drew McNeal. Would you welcome Drew? Drew, wave at us. Let me tell you, you did good! You are a very smart young man and you are working with Wellspring too, which is -- by the way there is the web site. This is a part of -- ministry part that is called alongside people that they

come alongside of, which is the same thing we do with *LIFE Outreach*. We find someone doing the work effectively. We don't duplicate, we don't try to do something else when something is doing well if we can make it more effective or expand their effectiveness -- that's what Wellspring does. You find someone that is effective in the field and then Ravi Zacharias, International Ministries with Wellspring, and there is the web site, if people want to know some specifics, and how they can be involved, do you occasionally even have people go with you to assist?

**Naomi:** I do, actually. Several different times of the year people will go on a trip with me. But if you'll go to the web site it will have all the projects laid out so people can choose -- when we started it, we really wanted to be able to give people the confidence that they needed to be able to give to these kind of needs. Feeling like there are a lot of people out there who believe in these kind of needs, they want to participate but they're not sure how. So our role, we felt was in due diligence and finding people that were already doing the good work. But not necessarily in making -- different causes reach different people and I think that's part of God's plan to have people respond to the variety of needs. So we don't want to focus on one but rather find their thing and help people to be able to identify with what it is God has called them to. So whether it is children who have been orphaned and abandoned, or women who have been trafficked or HIV care or domestic violence, they can find a project that is what they're looking to participate in and we can help facilitate that process.

**James:** I'm going to ask that you be sure the web site is there and clearing you up time to get it down. I know that our accounting office, oftentimes, they will watch from the building next door where administration is and they see me over here with people. And they'll see me -- we just help everybody. They'll sometimes go, "There he goes again! Wanting everybody to watching to help whatever is going on." Let me tell you something, as long as I've got a way to point and I've got a finger to point and I see him in them and I see -- I believe you've got the wisdom and insight to know when I see something I identify with, we not only trust God, we trust you with God. We trust you to follow God. So that is a place you may want to look and you may find something -- you may be led to help Ravi in some way. Let My People Think: That's the incredible broadcast. He packs Princeton or Harvard University where they can't even get in and they're captivated by a man who just shows them Jesus. So you visit that web site. Would you join Betty and me in just saying thanks to God for Naomi? And thank you, Naomi for sharing. Thank you for going on the journey and for just being a beautiful expression of the love and life of God and the grace of God. And I'll remind you again, *The Scent of Water*, you can also find it on the web site we mentioned, as well as in the bookstores. Naomi, Betty and I really saw what you're seeing and we saw it years ago. And I was a crusade evangelist preaching in the

coliseums and stadiums and really, winning hundreds of thousands of people to the Lord, and God showed me I was so serve others, although I would be a spokesman, I was to be a servant above all, to you. That's why *LIFE Today* is here, that's why you would meet Naomi on *LIFE Today* because we want to bless you. That's why Beth Moore -- that's why Beth joined us in teaching God's Kingdom in You and why she is here every week because we want to give you water while we also encourage you to give water and food and help others who need to be rescued. We're doing all of that together and I want to thank you for it. But I want to show you something and Naomi you're going to really appreciate what you're about to see because you're going to see a need that love and only love can clearly and effectively meet. As a matter of fact, you're going to see a little arm on which this little string bracelet was tied. You're going to see it. You'll see it in a few minutes. Don't take your eyes off this little child. As a matter of fact, Betty, we'll notice closely, I want you to look at this little child's eyelashes. Some people say, "That's eyelashes to die for!" This little girl will die without God's love through you. So many like her! Watch!

#### **On the mission field:**

**Tammy:** There's a story of Lucia who is nine months old. I've never seen anything like that up close. I never got to hold a baby like that. She only weighed just a little over six pounds. She was starving to death. I never want to speak death but to be honest with you, I think it moved me so much because I don't know how much longer that baby has to live. There are hundreds of children that I met this week that are in that same -- in that same circumstance or they're heading there. Every six seconds a child dies from malnutrition. This is real. This is absolutely real. Could I change that? Could we change that?

**End of clip**

#### **In the studio:**

**James:** Boy, I tell you, that little arm was about the size of my finger. Betty, we saw that brief glimpse of the graves. I can remember that little child like Lucia with those eyelashes and I thought, so many girls wish they had pretty eyelashes but at least they have eyes they can blink. I thought, God, I want those little girls to grow up! I watched Tammy Trent, her husband drowned years ago. She said, "I never got to hold my baby like that," basically is what she is saying. But Tammy, you're so precious as a Christian witness. You're putting God's arms around a lot of little children every time you go and work with us and the missionaries on the mission field. Betty, I'm appealing to all of our viewers today, give Lucia and many others a chance. Would you, please? I

plead the cause of the innocent, the helpless. And God, I've been so blessed! I've been blessed to bless. I really believe God blesses us by blessing others. And I believe he blesses people that bless others. I believe it is more blessed to give than to receive. When we release it is amazing how when you become interested in what God is interested in, it is amazing how he seems to focus on your interests, your concerns. Join him in his concern. Join the missionaries, the heart cry of God you heard through Tammy. Put arms around these children. Let's feed them. The missionaries have located hundreds of thousands of children, that's just a little representative of those children you saw. Would you take three, five, or ten by making a gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 to feed those children for the next few months? Would you do that? Would you please reach out and touch someone with love? If your heart's broken and you dialed that number, paid for by love, you say, "Pray with us." That even today while we appeal for those in need 80% of the calls, if it is typical, will be people calling to say, "Will you pray with me?" Yes! Yes! But would you today say, "I want to be an answer to someone's prayer? I want to be an answer to a heart cry? I want to give food." Could you help us take care of 100 kids? Make a \$1,000 gift? Care for ten by giving \$100? Can you do it? Will you? \$30 or \$50 for three or five children to feed them for the next months: it's not asking much but it is sure giving a lot. Would you dial the number? Use your bankcard like a check. Please do it. Start moving. Put feet to somebody's prayers and be an answer, meet that need. Write a check, make it to *LIFE* or go online LifeToday.org, but make that special gift please. We've got some gifts for you. God's Kingdom in You -- being revealed through you. It will be a blessing to you. We want to send you the CD's or DVD's. Jim Hylton's book, "Where Heaven Touches Earth": The Supernatural Skyline. Thank you for helping us share life. Thank you for your love.

**Begin video clip:**

**Announcer:** At this very moment a child is drawing her last breath struggling to stay alive due to a lack of food. Sadly, this impoverished child is not alone and without our help, many like her throughout Africa face death as well. Today you can make a difference. You can save a life! *LIFE's* mission feeding teams are in place right now ready to answer the hunger cries of half a million children throughout remote areas of Angola, Mozambique, and Sudan. With previous food reserves gone and Southern Africa facing its worst conditions and food shortage in more than two decades, we desperately need to replenish our supplies for the feeding programs immediately! Your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for three full months. With your gift we'll send you the God's Kingdom in You audio series and companion scripture guide. James and Betty Robison, along with Beth Moore, inspire you to live every day in the power and presence of God. With

your gift of \$125 or more to help feed ten children you may request both the video DVD and audio series with scripture guide. As a bonus we will also send you Jim Hylton's new book, the supernatural skyline. Finally, please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help save the lives of 100 children and be sure to request the beautiful new "Heart of the Father" bronze sculpture. Please call, write, or make your secure gift online.

**End of clip**

**In the studio:**

**James:** We know you give to bless and you don't give because you're going to get something. We're giving to you because we want to bless you. We want you to know God's kingdom power and presence in you, living in his presence in the present; incredible transforming truth. Beth Moore, Betty and I sharing. Jim Hylton's book, The Supernatural Skyline: Where Heaven Touches Earth. Tremendous! Jim has been used twice in my life to solely direct me in the beauty of our Lord and this book will be a great blessing. If you'd like to have Naomi's book, The Scent of Water, we will be glad to send it to you today if you just help us feed some of those children. Betty and I want to say thanks to Naomi. Would you join us in saying thanks to Naomi? Will you give our regards to Ravi and to your family? Drew, thank you for being here with us. You've got a beautiful girl! You did good! Thank all of you so much for helping us share life. Thank you for the gift you make, the gift of life.

>> When God said, "No. I didn't call you to Los Angeles to be relevant, I've called you to be revolutionary."

**Announcer:** Finding the one great thing you were made to do in this world -- tomorrow!