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Sunday 12 April, 2020

SUNRISE WORSHIP

It was early in the morning. Still dark. The dawn just starting to cut through the fog. The air hung heavy with expectation, as if the earth itself were holding its breath. The echoes of the cross linger. His voice still rings out: *It Is Finished. Into your hands I commit my spirit.*

The story comes to us in pieces and fragments, hints and images: A lady, body aching from incessant sobbing, grief weighing down every step, walks with determined step towards a hidden vineyard-garden, passing grapes ready for the harvest. As each early riser passes by, her heart aches with these words:

HYMN - Were you there, when they crucified my Lord

She reaches the garden tomb. She stops in her tracks. Her heart misses a couple of beats. All she can see is a stone, rolled away exposing an open grave, the elite Roman guards asleep at its side. Just visible through the open grave, a pile of clothes, neatly folded inside the empty tomb. She can hear her heart beat louder. Christ is missing! MY LORD! MISSING!

In the midst of unbearable angst and excruciating pain, she missed it! She missed hearing the whole world holding its breath, the stars hesitate, the sun linger on the faint horizon

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daring to expose its full strength, while creation fills it's lungs, the air swells, preparing the whole earth to proclaim:

Christ is Risen!

He has defeated death!

This is resurrection morning. Mary, the first one headed out to the tomb to anoint her Lord's body is the one in shock. It is absolutely amazing that the law of God is etched in her heart and mind: *"on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed."*¹ Jesus affirmed this law, *"Take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses, every fact may be confirmed"*.²

So, *"on seeing (what she saw) she ran, found Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved (John), and told them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they have put him!"*

Mary had to have two witnesses to confirm the fact! This is serious - Jesus is missing! The two witnesses arrive, look around for themselves. Peter leaves perplexed, but John *saw and believed ... the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead*, then together with Peter, they went home.

Dear Mary, stricken with grief that her Lord and Master was taken away. She pops her head into the grave. Two white-

¹ Deuteronomy 19:15

² Matthew 18:16

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robed angels asked what she was looking for. She walks out and Jesus asks her, *Whom are you looking for?*

Among all the things we remember about a person, their voice is special. *Mary!* and that's when she recognises Jesus.

Isn't it strange, we rarely set out to find the miraculous, let alone expect it, yet unless we are open to the miraculous, we will never experience God!

This is a Truth - Everything God does is a miracle!

As we close this short time of early morning worship, don't ask God for a miracle to prove He is God. Pray and ask God to open your eyes, heart and mind to everything around you, because everything is a miracle!

PRAYER

May God meet and greet you in the quiet stillness of the morning. May He fill you with His presence, that you may never doubt the miracle of miracles, His love for you!

LOVE SURPRISES!

AMEN