

Before the Break of Day

Why the Servant Seeks the Secret Place Before Sunrise

Foundation Scripture

Mark 1:35 *And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*

Introduction

- He rose before the light after a night of ministry, when He had every human reason to sleep.
- He came out of that hour knowing to go on to the next towns, so the dark hour set the course of the day.
- We are not looking at the where of the solitary place. We are looking at the when and the how.
- Our crossing today is from the solitary place you are drawn into, to the solitary watch you choose.

The Steps in the Silence

- **Rising up.** It is a resurrection word. Every **early** rising is a small resurrection, and no one woke Him.
- **A great while before day.** The Greek says exceedingly while it was still night. This is firstfruits.
- **He went out, and departed.** Two verbs of motion. He put real distance between Himself and the demand.
- **Into a solitary place.** It is the wilderness word, the place emptied of every competing voice.
- **And there prayed.** The grammar is continuous. He kept praying, and everything else served this.
- Luke shows it was His settled habit, not a mood that visited Him on a good day.

Luke 5:16 *And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.*

Secrets in the Syllables

- **Proi.** The last of the four **night watches**, the one that stretches toward the **dawn**.
- **Shakam.** To **rise early** is tied to the shoulder, to load the burden and set out with purpose.
- **Shachar.** To seek earnestly comes from the very word for **dawn**. Seeking and **daybreak** share one root.
- **Boqer. Morning** means to break forth, to cleave open. The day breaks and the fast breaks in the same hour.
- **Qadam.** To prevent the **dawning** is to go before it. The psalmist beat the **sunrise** to the throne.

Psalms 119:147 *I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.*

- The Greek *orthros* means **daybreak**, and *orthrizo* means to rise at **dawn**, and so to seek eagerly.

Luke 21:38 *And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.*

Why the Son Sought Solitude

- He wanted communion before the crowds, and He would not meet the people until He had met God.
- He wanted direction before the day, so the demands could not set His agenda.
- He wanted intake before output, going in to be filled before He poured out again.
- He walked in dependence, doing nothing of Himself but what He saw the Father do.

John 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

- He gave the firstfruits of the day, before anything else could lay a claim upon it.
- He wanted stillness for a sharpened ear, where no other voice could rival the Father.
- He gained the resolve to refuse the good that was not His assignment.
- He rose out of hunger and not habit. It was love, and not law, that drew Him out.

The Servants of the Sunrise

Abraham the Answerer

Abraham rose early to **obey**. He went out on **the morning** of his hardest test without delay.

Genesis 22:3 And Abraham **rose up early in the morning**, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Moses the Meek

Moses rose early to **receive**. The greatest encounters with God were kept for **the morning**.

Exodus 34:4 And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses **rose up early in the morning**, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

David the Devoted

David rose early to **seek and to worship**. No one wakes him. He wakes himself and sings before the day has proved anything.

Psalms 63:1 O God, thou art my God; **early will I seek thee**: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

Psalms 57:8 Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: **I myself will awake early**.

Job the Just

Job rose early to **intercede**. He carried his household before God, and he did it continually.

Job 1:5 And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and **rose up early in the morning**, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Hannah the Honored

Hannah rose early to **worship**. She was remembered in that very **morning**, and Samuel came of it.

1 Samuel 1:19 And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.

Salvation in the Shadows

Part of the Red Sea

- At the Red Sea the LORD looked in the last watch of the night and troubled the host of Egypt.

Exodus 14:24 And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians,

- The Hebrew *hamam* means to break the ranks and rout an army by panic, and the wheels came off.

Jacob and the Blessing

- Jacob wrestled through the night, and the blessing came at the breaking of the day.

Genesis 32:26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

Manna in the Morning

- The manna was gathered fresh before the sun waxed hot and melted it.

Exodus 16:21 And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

Mary Magdalene and the Empty Tomb

- The stone was already rolled away while it was yet dark.

John 20:1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

Mark 16:2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

- This is why the psalmist could say that joy belongs to the **daybreak**.

Psalms 30:5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Supply for the Seeker

Fresh Mercy

- He gives fresh mercy, gathered at its first appearing.

Lamentations 3:22-23 It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

Satisfaction

- He satisfies **early**, so that the whole day may be lived in gladness.

Psalms 90:14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Wakens the Ear and Instructs the Tongue

- He wakens the ear before He instructs the tongue, and the order is fixed.

Isaiah 50:4 The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth **morning by morning**, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

Gives Direction

- He gives direction before decision, showing the way before you must walk it.

Psalms 143:8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness **in the morning**; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Found by the Faithful

- He gives Himself to be found by the one who seeks Him first.

Proverbs 8:17 I love them that love me; and those that **seek me early** shall find me.

From Shackles to Sanctuary

- The solitary place received is the one you are driven into, and God turns it into holy ground.
- The solitary place chosen is the watch you enter by the deliberate action of your own will.
- No one exiled the Lord Jesus to that hour. He wanted the Father more than He wanted His rest.
- The one who chooses it takes up the posture of the watchman on the wall.

Psalms 130:6 My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that **watch for the morning**: I say, more than they that **watch for the morning**.

- The four watches are even, midnight, cockcrowing, and **morning**, and the awake servant meets Him at the door.

Mark 13:35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or **in the morning**:

- This is the watchmen and intercessor's charge, to keep the wall and give Him no rest until He performs it.

Isaiah 62:6-7 I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

- Your solitary place is simply wherever no other voice is competing for you.
- David fed in the dark hours, in a dry place, and called it the richest portion of the meal.

Psalms 63:5-6 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee **in the night watches**.

Start Where You Stand

- This is not a yoke. The Lord Jesus did not **rise early** out of obligation, and neither should you.
- The point is not the hour upon the clock. The point is the priority of the heart.

- Do not measure yourself against another servant's watch. Ask the Lord what your watch is for.
- When you miss a **morning**, He is not counting. His mercies are new the very next **morning**.
- Isaiah set the perfect peace and the stayed mind six verses from seeking Him **early**.

***Isaiah 26:3** Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

***Isaiah 26:9** With my soul have I desired thee **in the night**; yea, with my spirit within me **will I seek thee early**: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*

A Final Word

- Every step, the rising, the timing, the going out, the departing, served two words. And there prayed.
- The **dawn** has never once failed to break, and neither will He fail to meet the one who seeks Him.

***Hosea 6:3** Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared **as the morning**; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.*

***Mark 1:35** And **in the morning, rising up a great while before day**, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*