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HAPI Holidays: Vision on a silent night

Tidings of great joy!

Friends, the \$12,500 **Match4Moms** was achieved and surpassed! We have accomplished \$30,000 towards a goal of \$50,000 since October. Congratulations and THANK YOU! You're a great team. Continue to watch the fundraising meter on www.haitianartisans.com for the progress and invite others to participate.



Enjoy this offering of photos and music, featuring stages of the current clinic development and the faces of moms, babies and staff: http://youtu.be/tn_zp4oXE3E

My holiday message for 2013 is personal. Sometimes, we have experiences in life that continue to unfold their revelation and teach us through every 'season.' This year, as HAPI has focused on mothers and infants and envisioned a facility to help them 'start right' with good prenatal health and safe deliveries, I have reflected more frequently on a spiritual vision visited upon me one 'silent night' nearly 10 years past. I hope that it holds meaning for you!

Peace and joy,
Valerie



Vision on a silent night

“Silent night.” Those who have experienced a newborn babe can appreciate the flush of parental bliss when, finally, “all is calm!”

Our son, Joshua, afforded few of those moments. One evening, he drifted to sleep early and Jacson and I were grateful for the opportunity to have a quiet conversation. I was laying on my side, head propped up on my hand, fully awake.

Without premonition, I was awake but not ‘present.’ Instead, I was floating above a darkened room. A single woman was standing near the window, weeping. The small amount of light entering through the blinds showed a very pregnant profile. I was confused. This woman could not be me and yet I *felt* the anguish pouring out of her soul as if it came from my own.



I became aware of another presence. This presence was assuring the woman that all children were a gift from God and would be welcomed and celebrated by Heaven’s angels. The woman was in disbelief and she cried out, “If that is true, show me how the angels celebrate the birth of every child!”

Immediately, the darkened room was gone. I was enveloped in LIGHT! It was a brilliant, yet soft, white light. I couldn’t understand it because it was not like a beacon of light that I could walk toward. No, it was *as if I was part of the light*, or, I mused that it was if I were standing in the filament of a light bulb.



As amazing as the light was, it was the *sound* that filled me with such immeasurable joy! The song of the angels filled the light though not with words of any language I could decipher. They were celebrating, welcoming, affirming *life!*

I became aware of the presence of the Holy One in our midst.

My mind went in rapid succession through three Bible verses as I tried to make sense out of the experience:

Isaiah 6:3: *And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory."*

Psalms 42:1: *As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.*

Romans 8:26: *...the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.*

I surrendered into those “wordless groans.” I could literally feel and hear my physical body producing a sound unfamiliar to me, coming from deep inside. I had every reason for wanting to return to my family, my newborn babe, *but I could not even bring them to my mind*. The only thing I wanted to do was to fall down and worship God with my whole being. I was in the presence of perfect LOVE.

That’s when Jacson started calling my name. I was torn from the embrace of the heavenly realm and present again in my room. I had no idea how long I had been gone. It seemed like at least 15 minutes but Jacson said that, no, it had only been a fleeting moment. My eyes had remained open, as if I had only paused, until the groaning started. I had mixed feelings about returning, wishing I could have glimpsed just a little bit more....



For days, weeks and months afterwards, I would close my eyes and try to recall the detail of the light and the sound of those angels’ voices. I never wanted to forget. A part of me yearned to “cross over” again—and *a part of me was afraid to*—because it scared me that while I was there I could not think of my family or anything from my earthly life to pull me back.

I was reluctant to share this experience, so intimate and precious and opposite of logic and science! I had no medical conditions before or after, so it wasn’t one of those ‘near death’ experiences now hitting the best sellers’ list. For nearly 10 years, I have pondered: *what was it?* What am I supposed to take away from that? What or who did the pregnant woman represent?

Two years after the occurrence, Joshua was diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder: was this a message to encourage me?



More recently, I’ve wondered if it was a pre-cursor for the work we are doing together for moms in Haiti. Every time the staff sends me a photo of one more baby born, I remember that vision on a silent night and know angels are rejoicing. Race, economic status, nationality, gender, ability, political affiliation do not exist in that realm ...

Galations 3:28: *There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Today I woke and thought: "Maybe that message wasn't for me alone. Maybe I have been a very slow messenger!" Maybe this message is for YOU!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



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