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Good Friday

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Today he who hung the earth upon the waters is hung upon the Cross.

He who is King of the angels is arrayed in a crown of thorns.

He who wraps the heaven in clouds is wrapped in the purple of mockery.

He who in Jordan set Adam free receives blows upon his face.

The Bridegroom of the Church is transfixed with nails.

The Son of the Virgin is pierced with a spear. ¹

At first it was hard to look up

It was like looking into the sun

It hurt the eyes to look up

One could only make swift glances and then one had to look away, pinching the eyes closed, and there remained burned on the retina black images of bodies on black crosses surrounded with aureoles of brightness

It hurt the eyes to look up

It was like looking into the sun

It was hard to look up at first

Then the day slowly darkened

It wasn't so much the sky clouding over

It was more like the sun dimming

It was more like the sun going out

It was the dark slowly overcoming the light

It was the dark consuming the light

The dark had always been there
But the light had outshone it
Even when the dark seemed triumphant
And lowered the world into dark ages
Even then the light always returned to drive the dark back
And the dark waited for another time

This was the time! The dark had been there...waiting
Now the dark was rising hungrily
Now the dark was consuming the light
Black bodies on black crosses on a black hill
No bright aureoles burned into the sky
The dark was no longer waiting
The dark was consuming the light

The true light had come into the world
The true light that was in the beginning with God
The true light that pierced the primordial darkness
The true light that divided off the night
The true light which enlightens everyone
The true light which is the life of all people
The true light had come into the world

But the world loves darkness rather than light
All who do evil hate the light
The light exposes their evil
It is hard to look into the light
It is easier to shut the eyes

It is easier to live in the darkness

When there is light in the world we are driven to consume it

When it takes the form of truth we are driven to manipulate it

When it takes the form of goodness we are driven to soil it

When it takes the form of beauty we are driven to ravish it

When it takes the form of righteousness we are driven to
pervert it

When there is light in the world we are driven to consume it

God is light; in God there is no darkness at all

When we consume the light we consume God

In the Name of God we declare “just wars” so that we may be
justified in killing those who threaten us.

In the Name of God we declare that democracy is the public
face of the gospel so that we can boast the superiority of our
society

In the Name of God we declare that a free market is the
fullest expression of liberty so that we can justify the wealth
of the few

In the Name of God we contend for our “rights” so that
we do not need to care for the neighbor

In the Name of God we declare our subjugation of the
earth so that we can justify raping it

In the Name of God we have made the cross, for God’s ancient
people the Jews, not a sign of redemption but a sign of terror
and holocaust

In the Name of God we declare ourselves the elect so we may be
justified in despising those who are different

God is light; in God there is no darkness at all

When we consume the light we consume even God

The dark is consuming the light

 The light is no longer piercing the dark

 The light is no longer enlightening anyone

 The light that came into the world to be the life of all
 people is dying

 The dark is consuming the light

The day is as dark as the night

We pray for morning

O God, have mercy

NOTE

- ¹ Hymns for Good Friday, Orthodox. *The Oxford Book of Prayer* (Oxford University Press, 1985), #648.