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LUKE 24:13-35 = HOPE (The Emmauswalkers...)

#**SERMON=BEFOREHAND:** 3D pictures found in magazines - *are you able to "see" it?* General "rules": *Be relaxed, focus - sometimes some "distance"/stepping back helps a lot to "see" it.* Interestingly: *The first ones to "see" it, are normally children... 3D movies: Glasses...*

#**SCRIPTURE READING:** Luke 24:13-35 (Mark 16:12-13), 2 Cor 1:3-11, Heb 11:1, 6 & 13,
1 Peter 1:3-9

#**SERMON=INTRODUCTION:** B/S in CJ: *How are you? How are things going with you?* When was the last time you really got excited about something concerning your own situation or our country?... *Are you still hopeful or do you feel hopeless - experience despair?..*

+**TRANSITION:** B/S, if we look at **LUKE 24**, we see *a truly hopeless situation...*

+**EXEGESIS & APPLICATION:** We have two men on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus, talking about the events which had happened. Then Jesus joins them. Read v17; in other translations v17 reads: *"And they stood still, looking sad."* We also read in v21 = *"But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. [But now this Man has been dead already for 3 days...]"* Two men in desperation *because of the realities facing them.* Can we expect anything else from them? I mean *with their own eyes they saw how He was mocked, brutally beaten, crucified and eventually buried...* But *are they truly without hope?* I'm asking it because at least they are still talking/thinking about Him; there are still glimmers of hope. *But it doesn't seem to be true, convincing, joyful hope...*

*Don't our lives sometimes look like this - *that we are torn apart in this tug-of-war between hope and despair?* We don't want to forget God is still in charge, 'cause we still believe "some of it is true". *But in essence we've abandoned the thought - we've given up.* I mean it takes one TV news bulletin, one drive through the greater PMB and the realities will convince us to that extent. *I mean - seeing is believing!..* B/S: *What was/is it in your life that has brought you (previously/at the moment) to this point? That which has brought you to the point of "auto-pilot" - you're not living, just surviving?..*

And then *it really becomes complicated* when you are faced with *facts that challenge your despair.* With the Emmauswalkers it was *the women that spoke about angels appearing at the grave and the possibility of an empty tomb (v22-24).* I believe these two men's *"small flame of hope" was fanned for a moment* - that this Jesus could possibly still be alive?... *With us it is the news/report of a miraculous healing or a drought that was supernaturally broken...* Yet, deep down in us "seeing is believing" still outweighs *"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."* (JOHN 20:29). Once again the surrounding "realities" start determining our thoughts/behaviour. Dear B/S in CJ: *How are things with you Spiritually - are you hopeful or do you feel hopeless?..*

*It could be that you want to interrupt me *because you feel I'm confusing faith and hope.* Let me try to explain *my understanding of these two concepts.* B/S in JC: We read in **HEB 11:1** = *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* The Greek word the Hebrew author uses here for substance is *hupostasis* - appearing only once in the Bible and meaning, *literally, "that which stands under and underpinning - a support".* Figuratively (as it is used here) it means *"a guarantee or assurance".* B/S, used in other contexts, the word *hupostasis* means *"title deed" or something very close to it.* May I re-define faith as *the title deed of things hoped for...* What does a title deed in your hand mean? *It means that that which is written on that piece of paper - belongs to you! It means that this piece of paper is the proof that that which is written on it is mine = I have a legal access to that which is written on it!..*

**Why is it NB to understand faith as "the title deed" of things hoped for? B/S: What do we have to prove that the promised salvation, the resurrection from the dead and the glory in heaven are really ours - apart from believing God's Word? After all, we can't see salvation; we can't prove by algebra that we will rise from the dead; we aren't yet treading the plains of heaven. So what do we have? Faith - the title deed of our hope. And faith births hope!..*

One/two remarks re faith. The beginning point of faith is **believing in God's character - He IS Who He says He is. The end point is believing in God's promises - He will DO what He says! And to me that constitutes hope. My shortest definition of hope: The conviction that God will keep/fulfill his promises - concerning the present and the eternal!*

Faith is to see the unseen. The world says "Seeing is believing". Children of the Lord, with this Book in their hands, say "Believing is seeing"...But as we need to know the "general rules" that enable us to see the 3D pictures (relax, distance, focus) - we need to know the "rules to see the Unseen". As we need to put on the 3D movie glasses (otherwise the picture is blurred and we are frustrated), we need to put on our "Kingdom glasses to see the Unseen" (otherwise we will lose our focus/hope).

I believe that at this stage of my preparations, the Holy Spirit told me to "take a step back" and confirm the "basics" before we continue. B/S, faith is "within". As human beings we are capable of many things. We have many faculties that enable us to perform miraculous things - but they are not the faculties we use in relating to God: We cannot touch God; we cannot learn much about Him by exercising our minds. And although we may feel very strong emotions when we worship Him, it is not in the way we "feel" that our relationship with God consists... We relate to God in that inaccessible place we often describe as our "spirit", which men in Biblical times called "the heart". The Israelites were fairly clear as to where in their body their various faculties were placed. For example, they tended to locate feelings and emotions somewhere in the gut or the "bowels" (HAB 3:16/KJV). But the deepest, innermost part of a man - his essential being - they generally described as his heart. That was where the roots of his character and the spark of his life were found. Thus Jesus said: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.**" (MATT 12:34); and in response to the Pharisees' hypocrisy: "**This people honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.**" (MATT 15:8)*

B/S: In "modern" terms, we talk about ourselves as threefold beings - body, soul & spirit (1 THESS 5:23) - detail. Spirit-area: When I'm born again by the Spirit (JOHN 3:3), the Spirit moves (back) in - and I'm truly alive for the first time! In faith I believe that JC has honoured my repentative request for Him to pardon my sins (1 JOHN 1:8-9) and my invitation to come into my life and dine with me (REV 3:20). But now this faith must be fed and renewed.

**(Back to our 3D-/wearing reading glasses-illustration & the Emmauswalkers...) When we wear reading glasses, we sometimes get to a point when we have to go back to the optician, because our eyes have weakened. Then he/she tests our eyes and prescribes a new - adjusted - pair of glasses for us. This enables us to "see" and read again... B/S: If we want to be hopeful children of the Lord - living lives of victory! - we better make sure that our Spiritual eyes are well = that we still have a clear vision. In terms of our Scripture reading and illustration: *Ironically these 2 men are talking to Jesus about Jesus Who died; He stands in front of them and they don't recognise Him! The realities surrounding them, blurred their vision to such an extent, that they couldn't see...* Yes, we have to start by making sure we are truly washed by the blood of the Lamb (repentance) and born again (Spirit filled) = that our Spiritual eyes have been opened, that we are wearing a pair of Kingdom glasses. But then we have to feed, practise & renew this faith.*

***We feed our faith with the Word of God.** Jesus Himself said: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (JOHN 15:7) The Bible is Spiritual food = the Bread of life (DEUT 8:3/JOHN 6:51). Each chapter is a slice, each verse a "mouthful". *Spend time in the secret place - praying.* Remember: *Prayer is not an easy way to get what you want, but the only way to become who you are intended to be. The bride communicating with the Bridegroom... And then we have to put it to practice = do/live it!* "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." (JAM 2:17) B/S, *faith thrives on activity and use; it withers through neglect.* Oneliner re practising faith: *Immediate, radical & practical obedience teaches you more about God and his workings, than 10 years of Bible Study.* I have never grown Spiritually within my comfortzone; it was when God took me out of it - through obedience - that I grew. *You build up a "track record" with Abba;* you learn that you can truly trust Him - *that He is indeed a Promise Keeper* (PROV 30:5 & PS 12:6-7, 18:30) *And this fills you with hope for your present and your future situations.*

Jer 1:12
Rom 4:20
Heb 10:23

***Re your present situation:** What are the challenges you're facing = your "giants"? Do you "hope" you'll come through/survive them? *Is this "hope" of yours anything else/more than nervous optimism?.. Or are you convinced that God will bring you through? Are you filled with true hope because God is faithful - He is trustworthy?..* Remember now: *The "tools" God has given us to live a life of victory are his promises. Living conscious of our promises from Him enables us to live in hope. But the importance of hungering for his Kingdom, while maintaining a heart that is "poor in spirit", cannot be overemphasized.* This condition of heart attracts the unlimited resources of God... Practically: *My "promise chart" x Friday morning prayers...* Oneliner: *Any area of our lives for which we (as children of the Lord) have no hope for, is under the influence of a lie.* True or false?..

***Re future challenges:** God knows about every problem/challenge I'll have to face in future. Remember: *He never wonders - He only knows!* "Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done," (ISAI 46:10) B/S: *It is as if He has gone ahead and brought back what is necessary to get me there; and those are his promises...*

***But does "a living hope" (1 PET 1:3b) necessarily mean everything will be "fine" (according to worldly standard) - that "physically all will be well"? No, but we have a heavenly inheritance!** B/S: *Because we are just "sojourners and pilgrims" (1 PET 2:11) passing through this world, because we are on our way to the new Jerusalem, because of Jesus' resurrection - our hope cannot be taken away/stripped from us. That is why the young German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (at the age of 34, on Sunday, 8 April 1945 - the day before Hitler's firing squad executed him) was able to share 1 PET 1:3 with his inmates. Such is this living hope!* B/S, I've experienced that *life's challenges don't annihilate this hope, on the contrary - it purifies it...*

Pet 1:3-9

*) And because Jesus is coming again... Biblical hope is a future event that is a present tense reality!

***And in the meantime God uses everyday/"small" things to encourage us.** Re the Emmaus walkers: (1) I firmly believe that *when Jesus broke the bread, they saw the scars from the crucifixion on his hands - that was when "their eyes were opened"* (LUKE 24:29b-31a). B/S, do you celebrate the symbols/elements of the Lord's table often? My testimony re *breaking bread daily (Jerusalem, 2005)...* (2) These two men rush back to the other disciples to tell them that... - only to be told (before they could share their story) that *"The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon."* (24:34) *The NBtance of encouraging one another through our testimonies...*

Pet 1:15-16a

+CONCLUSION: My dear B/S in CJ: Do you have a living hope - something that impacts your daily attitude/activities?.. **3D pictures - why is it that children tend to see it first? (MARK 10:14b-15) 3D movies x special glasses** - otherwise it's a confusion/frustration... Children of the Lord, make sure you "use" your title deed to see what is yours in/through JC (2 COR 1:19-20). Bride of Christ: *Put on your Kingdom glasses!.. Amen!* (...\\Preke\\Hoop\\Luk24v13b)

BLESSING: Romans 15:13