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## JOHN 19:38-20:10 = RESURRECTION (From tragedy to triumph!)

#SCRIPTURES: John 19:38-20:10, Psalm 31:8-9, 1 Peter 5:10 & Romans 8:28

#SERMON=INTRODUCTION: Young people can spend quite some time on discussing what is *the right "brand" of clothing* to buy - let alone the time they spend searching for it! A few years ago the so-called "*with-it*" brands, were (for example) *Reebok* tekkies, *Lacoste* shoes, *Levi* jeans and a *Nike* hoodie/top. These days the popular brands are a *Polo* top, *Calvin Klein* shirts, *Country Road* chinos & *Nike* shoes (*Old Khaki, Puma, K Way, etc/etc*)...

But I wonder whether young people know that *their grandparents (+/-30 years ago) also made véry sure they wore the "right clothes"* (not "*right brands*", 'cause there weren't any!) - *but then not to "jols/parties" but to their graves*. They were so concerned about being "put to rest"/in their coffins in their chosen "outfits", that they made sure their children knew where it was kept (normally in the coffin, stored in the shed)... If we had the opportunity to choose whether to discuss *either "coffin clothes" or "modern brands"*, I'm convinced that 90% of us would choose the latter; *I mean - just discussing "coffin clothes" could feel to some eary...*

+TRANSITION: But B/S, the apostle John was an exception - *to him burial linen/a shroud was a symbol of hope/victory! Initially it was a sign of tragedy, eventually - a sign of Life!*

The question is: *Can that also be true for me/us, that symbols of tragedy/death can become symbols of hope/life?* I mean, at some point during our lives, all of us were confronted by tragedy/death. May I humbly ask - what were yours: *The "dogtag"* of a deceased son during military service on our country's borders, *an ID wristband* sent by the hospital of a family member that was admitted - but never discharged, *a summons* from court = *divorce decree?*.. *Can these tragic things really "...work together for good..."? How far does God's promise in ROM 8:28 stretch/reach?* Do the words "*...all things work together for good...*" include tumors&terminal diagnoses, bankruptcy&insolvency, rejection&betrayal (etc/etc)? The apostle *John would have answered "Yes!" To prove his point, he would have taken us back to a certain weekend in history...*

+EXEGESIS&APPLICATION: When we read **JOHN 19:38-40**, we realise that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus came to serve/honour Jesus. When He was alive, they were hesitant, but with His death they became brave! There they are, walking with the body of their Saviour bound in strips of linen (**19:40**). [*By the way*: John mentions that Nicodemus brought a balm mixture of +/-50l - *that much normally only for royalty*]...B/S, John is an eyewitness to all of this - as he was during the past 3 years. Earlier this week he witnessed a "parade" where the general public declared this "Carpenter from Nazareth" (entering Jerusalem on the back of a donkey) to be King! *And now, only 5 days later, this "King's" broken body is carried away in a blood soaked shroud! Can things change só dramatically só quickly?..*

This brings us to *the reality of our own situations*: We "walk the walk" with JC - *He is truly King of our lives* = everything is under control, we indéed experience "*life in abundance*" (**JOHN 10:10**)... *And súddenly there is an abrupt end to all of this: An accident* where lives are lost, the discovery of *a spouse's infidelity*, the sheriff at the farmgate with *an attachment order*, a land *restitution claim* (etc/etc). B/S, am I right in saying that *a large part of the crises we face, is the suddenness of it...*

\*Back to *John - what did he do when they carried his friend/King away?* We don't really know - nothing is mentioned in the Bible *re* his "Shabbat activities". What we dó know, however, is that *when it became the 3rd day - he still was in the vicinity*. When Mary Magdalene had the "empty tomb encounter", she found him (and Simon Peter) still around.

*\*Why didn't he leave? I mean, he had good reason to: Who knows whether His religious enemies wouldn't consider arresting some of his followers - and even crucify one of them to "drill" the message home?.. Furthermore: JOHN 20:9 = "For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead." In other words: What we know today (that all of this was part of Jesus conquering Satan/death), John&Co didn't know/understand then; he didn't "hang around", waiting for Jesus to be resurrected.. Once again the question: Why didn't he leave? We can only speculate: Possibly because of his very close relationship with Jesus/his Friend; I mean, he was used to be close to Him - in the upper room, in Gethsemane, at the foot of the cross... B/S, did he really/truly understand Jesus? No. Was he glad Jesus allowed the religious people to hurt Him so much? No. But did he leave/run away? No. And yet, his attitude/reaction during the midnight crisis surrounding Jesus? He remained/"lingered" in Jesus' Presence. He didn't love Jesus because he needed Him - he needed Jesus because he loved Him!..*

And us - would we have "lingered around" in His Presence? How do we react when it becomes "Saturday" in our lives? If we get caught between yesterday's tragedy and tomorrow's (unexpected) triumph - what do we do? Do we leave/forsake God, because we feel He has let us down? Or do we also "linger around" - even though nothing makes sense?.. John decided to stay: and because he chose to remain in the Presence of the Son of God, he was around to witness the resurrection miracle the Sunday morning.

*\*Re the linen cloths lying in the tomb - specifically the handkerchief (20:5-8): The original Greek helps us in understanding this situation. The term John uses here, implies they weren't hastily pulled off/thrown down (as thieves would have done), but they were folded in their creases = put down neatly after they were taken off. Therefore 20:7-8 says that "...the other disciple [John] went in also; and he saw and believed." Incredible, the 3-days-ago symbols of tragedy, become symbols of triumph!*

*\*Bride of the Groom, we believe in the risen/living Lord Who used tomb linen/"coffin clothes" to proclaim victory&life - in fact, to transform a man's (John's) life. Sounds a little bit peculiar, doesn't it? But that's typically God - He is inclined to such practices. Let me remind you: In His hands empty wine urns at a wedding, become symbols of Power (JOHN 2:1-12). The apparent pitiful/beggarly 2 coins/mites of a widow, become symbols of commitment (MARK 12:41-44). An instrument of death (cross), becomes a symbol of Love (etc)...*

*\*Now the question remains: Can God do something similar in my/your lives? Can He take that which is today a symbol of death in my life and transform it into a symbol of triumph tomorrow? For sure - it is a 100% certainty! It is one of His promises - see **ROM 8:28**. I asked earlier: What do you do if you're caught between today's tragedy and tomorrow's triumph? That implies a miracle! **PROV 30:5** = "**Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.**" Let's do a test and replace the words "all things" with my/your crisis: "And we know that hospitalization/illegal occupation of farmland/financial shortfalls/rejection&betrayal work together for good to those who love God, who are the called according to His purpose." The "good" of it, lies not in the crisis itself - but in that/the growth which the Holy Spirit will achieve in my life if I submit myself in humility to His mighty hand during this trial. B/S, linger in His Presence!..*

**+CONCLUSION:** Death is at work around us - the media "spreads" it's odour. Bride of the eternal Groom, no matter how difficult/challenging your situation might be - please remember in/through JC, you might be only a Saturday away from a "resurrection" miracle in your life! **EPHES 1:18-20** - that resurrection Power resides in us! From tragedy to triumph. In the new Jerusalem, only one "brand" - wedding garments! Amen. (...!Preke\Opstanding\Joh20v7b)