

"ASHIA! NA ROAD FOR ALL MAN, MAMMY" ... AND SO??

These words usually come “accessorized” with a sympathetic hug as the person who speaks them attempts to help you deal with the pain you feel after losing a loved one. I have absolutely NO DOUBT that they mean well when they say that, just as I believe that whoever composed the familiar Bakweri dirge which cites “NANU NDI E SZRE WELI” (Na so de werld e dey), as a good reason to “KAKA MWEMA” (tie ya heart oh!), really means to soothe a grieving heart.

BUT, when you have lost someone dear to you, especially one who never even made it anywhere near the “THREE SCORE AND 10” referenced in the Bible, how much solace or comfort is it really, to simply “know” or be “reminded” of the curt, “dry”, OBVIOUS fact that EVERYONE does have to die one day? We all know that, already, yet it still never takes away the HURT & PAIN when death comes calling!!

Now, with “ASHIA” having also been branded as “E NO DEY HELEP” (even though NJOUME MAURICE, right in the Middle of his “MAÏMOUNA” song says “BUT E DEY COOL HEART OH, BROHDA”), WHAT could actually give one some PEACE, some HOPE, some COURAGE in the midst of the DESOLATION, DESPAIR, DISILLUSIONMENT, DREAD, DEPRESSION and DESPERATION we feel in our very bones and deep down in our very souls when we are grieving?? Let me share what works for me ...

REWIND back to ...

THE FOOT OF THE CROSS: MOTHER MARY watches her innocent, 33 year old First Born Son hang, beaten to a pulp and stark naked, on a cross, and she can do absolutely NOTHING to help. She does NOT even have the “luxury” of cradling HIM in her arms on a hospital bed or organizing a “Die House” and Funeral in His Honor. Her Son’s DEAD! I doubt that if anyone had said “Na so de werld e dey”, it would have helped any. In fact, even AFTER He resurrected, he still LEFT again when He ASCENDED into HEAVEN 40 days later and she (who had now become part of the Apostle John’s household as per Jesus’ instructions from his agonizing position on the Cross), did LOSE her Son ...AGAIN!!

REWIND back to ...

HÔPITAL CENTRAL YAOUNDÉ, JANUARY 1st 1981: MA MBIWAN sits completely speechless, tearless and numb next to her lifeless 21 year old, supposed-to-be-graduating-in-June, only son, his cold hand clasped in hers. Her oldest daughter is “displaying” away, somersaulting & screaming her very life and soul away with indescribable shock and grief. Her youngest daughter looks at all 3, and just GROWS UP, MATURES 50 years in the space of a couple of minutes. The story of that day is way too long to be recounted here, but let’s

FAST-FORWARD to ...

A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER: The Funeral Service Program for ACHA MBIWAN is being put together. Ma MBIWAN has still not said or even wept much. She has been in this frightening DAZE ... where the SILENCE and NUMBNESS are anything BUT reassuring! And then, right in the middle of that “planning” session, she puts in pretty much her one “REQUIREMENT” and it is that the hymn “IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL” be sung!!!! HABA!!! Saying I was STUNNED is putting it VERY, VERY, VEEEEERRRRY, MILDLY. I was like “IT IS WELL WITH YOUR SOUL, KEH?”

You see, what sustained that Dear Woman till she was finally reunited a little over a year ago now with her son, is the PROMISE, the HOPE that comes with EASTER SUNDAY, which I actually prefer to refer to as “RESURRECTION SUNDAY”! For her, and for me, what helps me cope FAR BETTER than any “NA ROAD FOR ALL MAN OH!”, “ASHIA MAMMY!” or “NA SO DE WERLD E DEY” ever could, is the BLESSED, SOOTHING and CALMING assurance that, based on the VICTORY of THE ONE WHO ROSE FROM THE DEAD ON THE THIRD DAY, that VERY FIRST EASTER SUNDAY MORNING some 2,000 years ago and who NOW SITS TRIUMPHANT AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, I will, in fact, get to see my LOVED ONES who have died in the Lord again when THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND! That’s it!! This JESUS CHRIST who conquered death also made this Statement with a REASSURING PROMISE before He left this world:

"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3>If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." (JOHN 14: 2-3)

In this month of APRIL alone, I know of 6 MOTHERS (2 of them SAKERETTES: Sisters Bertha EFFANGE & Prudentia Nyajro NWAYI) who like MOTHER MARY and MA MBIWAN mentioned above, have lost ADULT Children. I am positive there are others. There are also those I know of, who have very recently LOST their Sister, (CASPAS), Parents, (NTUBAS, EPIES, SHUS, ELANGWES), Grand Child (Sis NDOME ESAKA EKOBENA), and, in the case of one of 2 of our SAKERETTE Sisters and Our Former Principal, their SPOUSE (Sisters Francesca Ngoh NTUBA and Franka Hongla BIAKA, & Mr. WITT)! They will all be spending this EASTER without their Loved Ones for the very first time!

To them I say "ASHIA", and true, "NA SO DE WORLD E DEY", and "NA ROAD FOR WE ALL", BUT I also hasten to remind them that this parting, PAINFUL & DREADFUL as it is, is only TEMPORARY, all because of what was ACCOMPLISHED when THE ANGELS ROLLED THE STONE AWAY that EASTER SUNDAY MORNING!

Don't know about you but I SERVE A RISEN SAVIOR and I have every intention of THANKING & HONORING HIM with my presence at His Sanctuary this EASTER MORNING 2014, BOUBOU, LAPPA, HEADTIE, COSH-COSH, HAND BAG, YERRING, MUSANGA 'N ALL firmly in place!!! In fact, if I stop right here, I just might beat Sango Pasto himself to the Church's "Door Mot"!!! (SEE UPDATE/"PROOF" BELOW!! LOL!)

HAPPY RESURRECTION SUNDAY, Y'ALL!!!