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Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2010 3:23 PM
To: 'exsa_usa@yahoogroups.com'
Subject: MY TAKE ON THE 5th COMMANDMENT!

This past Sunday, our Pastor announced that he plans on launching a 10 part series of sermons on The Ten Commandments beginning in February. I didn't quite catch what he said right after because my brain immediately started working overtime, (like the average P.W.D or P.M.O. worker), trying to list them all from memory. Do weti, do weti, I could only remember 9! I would have gone on racking my brain to try and remember the missing one but I noticed that the repetitive counting I was doing ON MY FINGERS, was clearly making the congregation members around me nervous. (You don't come and sit in a church pew dressed in your AFRICAN attire and start counting up to 9, over and over again, and expect your American co-parishioners to remain calm; NOT in post-Christmas Day 2009 America!) Na e way, once ah reach house, ah go straight for Exodus 20, for a quick review. I certainly don't want to be like Kameron, (one of my students) who, when I asked (during a lesson on possessive adjectives) if anyone knew **The Lord's Prayer**, raised both hands enthusiastically in typical "I Miss! I Miss!" style, only for him to JUMP UP when called and say – with all the pride and confidence in the world, "NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP, I PRAY THE LORD MY SOUL TO KEEP"!!!

Well, I am pleased to report that I can now list all 10 Commandments. For some odd reason, though, I "lingered awhile" on the 5th – the only one of them all that has a promise attached to it: **"Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you."**

First of all, I reflected on the fact that the Commandment DOES NOT include any pre-conditions or pre-requisites for extending or showing this honor! It does not say we should honor our parents **IF** they were/are nice to us. It just says to honor them, PERIOD. I guess that means that, even though your father "suffered" your mother unti-i-i-il ..., and spent every franc he ever made on "shah" and "fo-fo", you are still not justified in paying a group of banga-smoking "bolo boys" 3 "kolo fap" (3,500Fr.) each to "time" the man as he leaves LIDO BAR at 4 in the morning, and give him a "snake beating" that would land him in Hôpital Général's "Réanimation"!!!

And what if, as I suspect, we are expected to extend this "Honor" thing to Parents-in-law as well?! I suppose that would mean that quite a few of us are going to have to repent for all the catarrh blowing we have been doing into our mother-in-law's corn chaff and ndole, to repay her for constantly complaining that her pikin "don dry finish like one eye bamboo" since he married us!

This is exactly where this email was supposed to end oh! UNFORTUNATELY for wuna all, some pikin wey e be miss e Semester Exam yesterday due to beleh bite don cam for make up de exam and so I am stuck here invigilating a 4 hour exam with 1 candidate sitting – please excuse the G.C.E. Board terms.

Let's see With the time I've got on my hands, it couldn't possibly hurt to "delve" into The Different Ways we honor our parents, which are so many and so varied no one could possibly come up with an exhaustive list. However, there are a few things that I have been blessed to see many of you, my ExSSA-USA Sisters, do, that deserve to be mentioned.

Therefore, **I SALUTE**

1. All of you whose Moms and/or Dads are currently living (or have lived) under your roof. Some of you have spoiled them so much that when they send pictures of themselves to their “bohs” back home, no one can even recognize them, with all the “permed” and “jerry curled” hair, Versace spectacles, jeans, “cyclists” (as in leotards), and “cutex-ed” finger nails! Who didn’t see the picture of Judith Foyabo, Nabila Ndumbe & Ethel Caspa’s Mom looking 10 times younger and more branché in her OPEN BACK than all her 3 daughters combined?
2. All of you who can drive blind-folded to the WESTERN UNION or MONEYGRAM office near your home or “work place” because you have driven there a zillion times to send money home for your parents’ upkeep.
3. All of you who have bulldozed the “caraboard” house your parents raised you in and built a “mansion” in its place because you are not content to live in luxury here while Rémé and Répé still have to carry a bush lamp in the dead of night to see their way to the pit latrine for “back compound”!
4. All of you who have made sure, by buying her a gas cooker and microwave, that Mammy’s days of wiping tears and catarrh on her kaba sleeve as she struggles with a 3 stone fireside are over!
5. All of you whose parents cannot “wait make Sunday reach” to proudly show up for Church Service in BAYÉLÉ, FIANGO, DOWN BEACH or ÉTOUG-ÉBÉ dressed in the outfits (complete with feathered hat) that you send/bring them on a regular basis! Before anyone can even say, “Aunty, I like your blouse”, Aunty don already tell you, with the broadest smile on her face, how wey “na mah pikin for America sen’am (bring’am) for me oh!”
6. All of you students and others who may **not yet** be able to do “any of the above” for your parents, but are working HARD to get there. (One day, one day oh, my sisters!)

Besides, many of you have not kissed this “honoring thing” goodbye (as in palava finish) just because your Mom and/or Dad has passed on already! Besides seeing to the weeding and tidying of those gravesides so that they stay in pristine shape, you have continued to make sure that their LEGACY is PRESERVED! (Talk about refusing to just “find place shiddon”!) You are more than welcome to try but there’s no way anyone could convince me:

- That, as Kingue Quan ran down the street with that Olympic Torch in his hand, Mr. and Mrs. Mondoa didn’t run over, (Jacobi in tow), to find Mr. and Mrs. Quan over on “Jasper Street” so they could “eh-lay” each other and say “we grand-pikin don do am oh!” OR

- That, the day Sister Aggie Bongang will be done with her residency and is all set to practice medicine in this U.S. of A., Mama Susannah Fomukong (who just “transferred” to The Great Beyond only yesterday-yesterday) will not “display” for middle “Crystal Junction”!

In fact, I wouldn’t be the least bit surprised if it turns out that there is a Parents Of (Ex)Sakerettes Meeting “Over There”, with BABA, as the Chief Whip! The Bible says clearly that there are no tears, no pain, and no sorrow in Heaven. It doesn’t say there’s no LANGA, which is why I pity the parents up there who **DID NOT** send their children to Saker because when our distinguished papa and mama dem di pass go their “Senior Service” (as in High Class) meeting, the “lebbers” can only drool helplessly as they go by, whispering “Had I known”!

Now, time for a moving “Honor” story which just has to be told, whether the “participants” in the story like it or not!

Just the other day, my poor Sister Didi, whose forte is NOT story telling (most engineers just aren't story tellers), took a RECORD 20 minutes to tell me how the **TAKUSI's** - all 6 of them, including our own Aunty "Ma" (Njowo) and Aba (Makia), almost "killed" their mother with a SURPRISE 65th Birthday Party in Houston! May they all be forgiven for lying to their mother and making the poor woman cook and then wear white for a "Saker Meeting" in Marie's house, only to get there and find out "Alfred Saker" was nowhere in sight! De poor Mammy glad sotey wey e neva even see half di cinima!! Did the poor soul know that her 4 sons (and their spouses) had secretly flown into town and were hiding upstairs!! No-oh! Ah neva sure yet which one for betta for Mammy e heart; de come down de stairs one boy pikin after de ohda, which is what happened, thereby sending crescendo-ing shockwave after shockwave to the poor lady's heart, or just bringing the whole battalion in at the same time!! Now that I think about it, they chose the better option because otherwise, Mammy would definitely have had a MASSIVE "HARRATTACK"! As for de "burning planti and plum" speech wey Genevieve Makia make dat evening; make e only know say e go back mah box Kleenex when ah cam Houston for July – God willing!!

Kudos "boh" Marie and CAT NJOWO, Aba and CAT MAKIA, and your siblings for letting your SWEET MOTHER know she did not waste ... (weti be 9 x 6 eh? Make ah find calculator quick-quick) ... 54 months of her life vomiting and eating Calabar Chalk for nothing!!!

Let me just say this in conclusion: **OUR KIDS (NEPHEWS & NIECES) ARE WATCHING** oh! Me ah no sure me say de "Do as I say and not as I do" thing go waka! Dis palava na "Monkey see, Monkey do!" Good luck to you if your contingency plan for retirement consists of the "Blunt Method", whereby you call a Family Meeting with your "Americanized" kids and inform them that you are not saving a dime because **THEY** are your 401k! I have a feeling you would be better off if they learned, **from the example you are currently setting or have set with their grand-parents**, how they ought to handle you - with the proper TLC - when those golden AARP years come along! Just my thoughts!

Love y'all!!

Egbe Mbiwan Monjimbo