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Subject: LESSONS FROM THE "N" MEN

As a rule, I choose not to go back and comment on the comments, remarks or responses to the write ups I post. For one thing, I figure that I have already “made my point” so why belabor the issue, “hugging” email space in the process and clogging up peoples’ email boxes more than I already do. For another, (and I trust and hope that this is something that those who respond to my postings have come to understand), the whole “Thank-You-For-Thanking-Me” thing just “turns my neck”! I cannot tell you all how much I appreciate your appreciation; God knows that I do, and from time to time, I do send private responses, but given the frequency/volume of my postings, I believe it would be Ridiculous (with a capital “R”!) to keep responding to every response – because “too much of a thing *would be* a disease”!

That said, this is going to have to be one of those rare occasions when I revisit a topic and I have chosen to do so because it became so glaringly obvious from the responses I got **on** and mostly **off** line after the “**DEM**” posting, that I had “struck a nerve”. The real eye opener came from the emails, phone calls and texts I got from **NON** Sakerettes – both **male** and female, to whom I never sent the email in the first place! (OH the power of that “**FORWARD**” button!!) I decided, after an “ear and eye full”, that an encouraging “follow up” might not be a bad idea, because it *can* be an uphill task to keep your chin up and your nose to the grind when you are surrounded by people whose own insecurities, paranoia, narrow-mindedness and – let’s just call a cutlass a cutlass – ENVY, cause them to see your every progress or success as nothing else but a threat to *their* position, career, or status, if not their very existence!

- Open your Pharmacy after years of blood, toil and sweat, and their response is “**NA SOMTING DAT?**”, as they hurry to buy their DARAPRIM and COD LIVER OIL from everywhere else *but* your pharmacy! In fact, if feeva catch dem for weekend and na your Pharmacy be “Pharmacie de Garde”, dem go bettah suffer de sick till Monday morning or drive from Douala to Edéa for go buy de merecine for dey!!
- Let someone commit the Cardinal Sin of praising you for an honest achievement in their presence, and you can literally see the blood drain from their face, with some major “tie face like one bundle koki” going on!
- You finally find the love of your life and send out your “Wedding Bells”, and it’s “**HMMM! MARRET DON CHEAP! AH SURE SAY DE MAN NA BOY-BOY FOR G.R.A., (or PLANTON FOR P&T)**”!!! (And this is coming from someone who is on eHarmony.com night and day searching for the elusive husband be he in Guantanamo Bay or Kondengui, or whose own marriage “chakara-tion” made front page news in “THE DEBUNSCHA HERALD” for 2 weeks straight, or whose current husband is no “SUPER MAKIA”, to put it mildly!!!!)
- You can hardly hold your excitement as you enthusiastically share your plans to go back to school to get your “GRADE 2” (Teaching Certificate) and the smile is quickly wiped off your face and the wind completely taken out of your sails with an “**AH BEG, FIND PLACE SHIDDON! YOU WEY YOU REPEAT CLASS 7 THREE TIMES**”??!!

- Young, starry-eyed Boni (as in Boniface) takes the floor at his Kontri Meeting and proceeds to succinctly outline a blueprint for socio-economic development that has the potential to move the village from the Stone Age into the 23rd Century! He is “rudely interrupted” by “PUMP BREEZE”/“FORCE VIE” Thaddeus, whose stature and ego are so reminiscent of Napoleon Bonaparte’s, blasting a “**WHEN PEOPLE DEM DEY TALK; YOU TOO WAN TALK**”?? And poor Boni is chided and reminded that his great-great-great-great-great grandfather 67 times removed, (as in all de way back to de Tower of Babel), was a slave so “**WHO BE YOU FOR EVEN COUGH FOR BETTAH PEOPLE THEIR MIDDLE**”??!! Result?? The village looks exactly the way Mungo Park, Dr. Livingstone, Vasco Da Gama, Ferdinand Magellan and Zintgraff left it, except for a slight increase in the number of pit latrines and Tilley lamps (as in “TRUKANG”s). Oh, I almost “frogot” the major “highlight”: Sales of “**MOON TIGER**” Mosquito Repellent Coils have increased significantly; WHAT PROGRESS! HIP, HIP, HIP ... *HOORAY*??!
(Let’s not even look into the fact that this Thaddeus is the same dude who, when he was reprimanded for taking a good 2 months off to “go home” and bury the same mother he had already buried on 5 separate occasions in his 5 previous jobs - complete with “krobo for head”, accused his onyibo boss of *discrimination* and racism! AH KIÉ!!

This “follow up” is therefore meant to further encourage and strengthen the resolve of those who, (like Lizzy Bronte, The Limbe Diva, Dolly Lambe, Anike Nokuri, Sis Aggie Bongang, Mbone Ngalame, Kah Walla et al, indicated in their comments on this subject), stoically refuse to be dissuaded, daunted or paralyzed by the “GO SLOW” vibes that the negative people around them send out, as they pursue their Dreams, Aspirations and God-Ordained & Driven Missions. This “encouragement” comes to you all courtesy of two fine men I have chosen to call “**THE N MEN**”; they are **NOAH** and **NEHEMIAH**.

1. NOAH: I’m starting with him just because he is the better known of the two. We have heard the “Noah and the Ark” story so often that I think we tend to just gloss over it, (like we sadly do with many other “Sunday School Stories”), and in so doing, we miss the depth and scope it carries as a GREAT LESSON IN DETERMINATION, COURAGE, FAITH & RESOLVE in very hostile conditions. Come along and let’s revisit the story, particularly the circumstances surrounding the building of that ark!

To do that, I’ll start with 3 intriguing verses tucked away in Genesis 2:4-6 that state the following:

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. **For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth**, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. ⁶ **Instead, springs^[a] came up from the ground and watered all the land.**

From this point, all the way to Genesis 6:8-13 when Noah first comes onto the “stage”, I see absolutely no indication that God stopped this amazing “**SUBTERRANIAL IRRIGATION SYSTEM**” of His! What this would mean therefore is that, UP TO THAT POINT, NO ONE HAD ANY CLUE **WHAT** MBUA as in **RAIN SEFF-SEFF** WAS! Imagine therefore, how ridiculous Noah must have looked to his whole “quartier”, as he built this HUGE **SEA** Craft (on top de driest sand-sand),

which was the length of 1 and a half football fields and as high as a 4 (some say 3) storey building, announcing to people who had never seen “this his thing” called rain, that a FLOOD of epic proportions was going to come and destroy the entire world!! We can only thank God that there was no **CENTRE JAMOT** then, because that is where he may have “landed”. (Maybe this is a good time to wonder how “MBOMA”s were “borning” at the time, since, according to the Primary School “rhyme”: “RAIN DI FALL; SUN DI SHINE! MBOMA DI BORN FOR BUSH”, rain is a vital part of the MRP, as in “The **Mboma Reproductive Process**”! Or wehda de 2 parameters no get for occur simultaneously oh?) A-a-a-anyway, what we can take away from NOAH who, by the way, makes it into the esteemed Hebrews 11 **FAITH HALL OF FAME** is that, we are to stick with our God-given mission, even in the face of ridicule and setbacks!

2. NEHEMAIAH: The background story is that Nehemiah, who was on exile in Babylon, got permission from King Artaxerxes whose Cup Bearer he was, to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the city wall which lay in ruins. As if that was not a daunting enough task, along came this man called SANBALLAT (Governor of Samaria) who is, most definitely, the prototype of “DEM”! Here’s what the very first verse of chapter 4 says:

¹ When **Sanballat** heard that we were rebuilding the wall, **he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews,** ² and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, "**What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?**"

This “hater” and naysayer was ably supported in his taunting of Nehemiah and the Jews by another member of the “DEM” Club called Tobiah the Ammonite, who added his own pepper to the mix with:

"What they are building—if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!"

Now, let’s take a look at Nehemiah’s reaction to the situation, and hopefully learn how to tackle our own issues.

PRAY: That’s the very first thing Nehemiah did, and that’s what he did several times afterwards: “Hear us, O our God, for we are despised ...” was his cry to God, and he was able to forge ahead and build the wall to half its height for starters!

STRATEGIZE, HAVE A PRACTICAL PLAN: Nehemiah did NOT just pray and expect angels to come down and build the wall while he and his Jewish compatriots gulped down a crate of JOBAJOS each at the “Drown Your Problems & Sorrows In Mimbo” OFF-LICENCE in Three Corners, Jerusalem!; When he heard that the now super furious Sanballat and a host of others were plotting together “to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it” they “prayed to our God **and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.**

Nanu koti, Papa!! And here's what else this genius of a Mola did:

Therefore I **stationed** some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, **posting** them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. ¹⁴ After I **looked things over**, I **stood up** and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "**Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.**"

RESULT??

¹⁵ When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his own work.

And how did he proceed thereafter??

¹⁶ From that day on, **half** of my men did the work, while **the other half** were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah ¹⁷ who were building the wall. **Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other,** ¹⁸ **and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked.**

I have respect for the Winston Churchill, George Washington and Lafayette but I have to say my headtie goes off to COMMANDER NEHEMIAH, Man of Character, Perseverance, Determination and Prayer; Cool, Calm and Collected under pressure; Brilliant Planner, Motivator and Organizer. What an example to emulate!

Now, to conclude, I have to say that, while for some of us "DEM-ness" has become second nature, (practically a way of life), there is a certain amount of it "latent" in each one of us, or at least lurking or crouching at the doors of our hearts, just waiting to emerge and pounce if we allow it to. Here then, is some advice which I believe might help cure us of our "DEM-ness". It is, of course, unsolicited, but na who go cam moof ma hand for dis keyboard??:

God doesn't create duplicates! He is a ONE-OF-A-KIND (as in "no get pair") type MANUFACTURER who "breaks the mould", so to speak, once He "produces" each one of us. He does not have a factory line that churns out 30 St. Pauls, 50 Billy Grahams, 18 Martha Stewarts, 118 Nelson Mandelas or 110 Hitlers for that matter! He put each one of us on this planet with a unique purpose to fulfill: You cannot fulfill mine and I cannot fulfill yours, no matter how hard we both try!

News Flash! A Hair Dryer will NEVER be an Electric Shaver! It doesn't matter how long you lift your arm and point it at your armpit; e no go moof no one eye "bia-bia" for dey!!! But do these 2 instruments each serve a **useful but distinct purpose**? MOST CERTAINLY! That is precisely why the electric shaver should not waste its precious "barbing time" envying the hair dryer! God endowed every single one of us with talents and the sooner we discover and use ours for His Glory and the benefit of others (which is why He gave us the talents in the first place) de bettah! There *is* such a thing as being "cut out" and anointed to do something; That "THING"

comes to you, even if not effortlessly, NATURALLY!! (No be pawa-pawa!) Let me break it down the best I can:

- If, every one of the 12 times you carried your moïn-moïn to a gathering, NO ONE MAN no pass for corner de pan, but all of Wilhelmina's 10 trays were completely empty before MC wan even talk sey time for ITEM 11 don reach, you probably need to come join me in the "AH COOK FUFU; E TURN TO STARCH! AH COOK AGIDI; E TURN TO WAX" Camp! So cooking is not your forte; AND SO?? Buy a ready-made cake from COSTCO next time, and let's move on, instead of turning into "DEM" and finding fault with Wilhelmina's skirt, weave, smile, slippers and heaven alone knows what else!! By the way, walking around the hall and telling everyone who is blissfully smacking their lips, licking their pan and thanking the Lord for 'Mina's culinary skills that: "Me and Wilhelmina, we be dey one dormitory for Saker; E be get witch and e be dey piss for bed is so NOT the thing to do either, – as in NOT COOL, Massa! You, on the other hand, can balance a budget with your eyes closed, wey your hand no even touch de ledger; Do that with all the pride and joy in the world, to the Glory of God and for the benefit of your fellow man and community!

King David was a Man after God's own heart right? After he unified Israel, he brought the Ark of The Covenant to his new Capital, Jerusalem, and went ahead to purchase land to build a Temple for God, worthy of housing The Ark. He got stone cutters, iron, bronze, logs – you name it, ready; But what was YAHWEH's decision on the matter?

"You are not to build a house for my Name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in my sight. ⁹ But you will have a son who will be a man of peace and rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon, ^[a] and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign. ¹⁰ **He is the one who will build a house for my Name."**

TO EACH HIS OWN UNIQUE TASK & PURPOSE!

PEACE,
Egbe Mbiwan Monjimbo

p.s. Just to give you a better appreciation of Noah's accomplishment, check out these pictures of the ark a Dutch man (Johan Huibers) has built, following the same scale God gave to Noah, (See the exact, very precise, measurements in Genesis 6: 14-16). Keep in mind, of course, that Johan's replica is **HALF** the length of Noah's Ark, and that Noah had no power drills and hi-tech equipment in *his* day! By the way, did you know that NOAH'S ARK was exactly 6 times longer than it was wide, and that, that is the same ratio used today by modern ship builders??!! GOD **IS** TRULY AWESOME & HIS WORD **IS** INDEED, TRUTH.

<http://litl-luther.blogspot.com/2008/09/man-builds-noahs-ark-to-exact-scale.html>