

**THANK GOD THERE WAS NO TRONG-HEAD, OVER-SABI or FEAR-FEAR INVOLVED ...**

**(December 24 2013)**

Showing off is certainly not a virtue, and anyone with some sense would know that a Church Service should be the last place to “show off” but I couldn’t help myself last Sunday!! Let me explain:

When my dear, unapologetic, FORGET WATA-WATA CHRISTIANITY & POLITICAL CORRECTNESS and PREACH-IT-LIKE-IT-IS-IN-THE GOOD BOOK, Pastor took to the pulpit and announced that the text he was going to be preaching from was LUKE 2, and followed that announcement with his usual: “Open your Bibles to \_\_\_\_, and please stand for the reading of God’s Word”, everyone, including my children who were sitting on either side of me, did as he said. Everyone, BUT for SHOW-SHOW Ma Monjimbo, who only obeyed half the order! I stood, (more like leapt), to my feet quite alright, BUT made no attempt to open my Bible! Why? Because this "product" of the Late Ma Elizabeth MBIWAN's legendary Sunday School "Academy" is still able, almost 5 decades after, to recite the first 20 verses of the chapter BY HEART – in KING JAMES VERSION verbiage, which, by the way, is what I was thoroughly convinced, at the time, was THE OFFICIAL LINGUA FRANCA IN HEAVEN!!

(Ah say eh? Don’t y’all also wanda what kontri talk God and the angels use up there in Heaven? Or na onley me one? When He summons and dispatches the angels on their countless ministering missions to Planet Earth, in what language exactly, does He do that eh? Maybe my head just isn’t “correct inside”, but I spend me my precious time wondering if, when I do meet Him in deh sweet by and by, He will really say: “WELCOME HOME” – like that, in ENGLISH, or if He might say “BIENVENUE” instead, or even “O TUO?” (in Kenyang), “O MA JA, Iya?” (in Mokpe), or, better still – if He goes by the PREFERRED language of each individual standing before Him: “NA YA EYE DIS, MA PIKIN? CAM GOOD OH!!”) Anyway ...

As I was saying before I rudely interrupted my own self ...

I went valiantly from: “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all should be taxed”, all the way to: “And the Shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.” Sango Pasto went on to preach a BEAUTIFUL, MEANINGFUL, theologically and spiritually sound message, which I listened to with all the raptness in the world. However, what I left that Church Service with, which hovered in my mind and has now lodged itself firmly in my heart this Christmas Season (especially after having re-read the entire Christmas Story as recorded in the Book of Matthew and the rest of Luke) is not Mola Pasto Clint Pressley’s 6 (GREAT) points but just THE EXEMPLARY, NO-QUESTIONS-ASKED, NO COMPLAINING,

OBEDIENCE & COMPLIANCE displayed by the characters involved in the Story of the Nativity!!! Lord knows that if I had had anything to do with it, TRONG-HEAD, OVAH-SABI & FEAR-FEAR would have crept in, and y'all would probably still be waiting for The Messiah to show up sotey today, though not in the same way orthodox Jews still await His coming, but because "poor" Jesus would just not have been born at all – at the very worst, or, at best, the BEAUTIFUL & "MAGICAL" part of the story would be totally missing! Here's what I mean, in 5 "IF I WERE" points:

1. IF I WERE MARY: Puh-lease! If I had been Mary, that whole "convahsation" with Angel Gabriel would not have gone down the way it did oh! First of all, He would have had to appear at least 20 different times, because I would have flat out fainted the first 10 times, and been unable to even hear him say that "FEAR NOT". Hah! The remaining 10 times would have been taken up with questions as to the "details" regarding exactly how this "belleh" was going to come about, a lot of grumbling as to "why na me God choose'am for carry dis kind disgrace", and many attempts to "negotiate" my way out of the whole deal! Ooooh! I would have made Trong-head Prophet JONAH look like a Saint! And in the end, even if poor, sweating-and-exhausted Angel Gabriel had managed to convince me, The Gospel of LUKE would most definitely be missing 10 good verses! The narrative in Luke 1 would have gone from Verse 45, straight to Verse 56, which means there would have been NO MAGNIFICAT! "MY SOUL DOTH MAGNIFY THE LORD" keh? My teenage mind would sooo have seen the whole mattah as a propah "GO SLOW", NOT anything to magnify God for. Au contraire!
2. IF I WERE JOSEPH: Look! Dream or no dream, and with all due respect, I would certainly NOT have 'greed to marry this Mary "gal" to start with, and even if I had tied heart and stuck with the program all the way to Bethlehem, that whole "Wona carry pikin run go Egypt kaszi-kaszi! Herod dey cam" thing would have been the last straw! C'est quoi même ça? Especially if I had been able to foresee that this same "BABY-BOY" who had already caused me so much WAHALA, would, at age 12, when His mother and I finally find Him after He's been missing for 3 WHOLE PANIC-FILLED DAYS and tell him we'd been worried, "retort" with: "DID YOU NOT KNOW THAT I WOULD BE ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS?" Excuuuuuse Me??!! YOUR Father's Business? So, this me who's standing in front of you, nkoh? You bet I would have said: "CAM PASS and be about "YO" father's business, for real, my friend! And that "business", for Ya Information, is CARPENTRY!"! (Probably would have driven home the point better, with a KONK or 2 on His backhead! NONSENSE!!
3. 3. IF I WERE THE SHEPHERDS: I don't think I would have minded the whole "Glory to God in the Highest" thing! In fact, I think I would have thoroughly enjoyed the whole "njo-oh" (as in, NO GATE FEE) concert me! As for that plenti light that "shone around" at a time when THOMAS EDISON and his light bulb were centuries away from appearing on the scene, I think I would have marveled at that too! BUT: LEAVE THE MUMU SHEEP, (my source of income/livelihood), UNATTENDED, AND JUST "GO TO BETHLEHEM" (wit foot, not even say de angel dem pay me

transport), to see, not some 7 foot, clad-in-royal robes, and chilling-in-a-Palace KING, but some chochoro baby wey dem wrap'am wit "pieces", perching in a stable?? How would I ever explain THAT to my "patrong", de Sheep Owner?? Abi na "Baa, baa, Black Sheep", ah go recite? YE MAHLE!! And that is not all! They didn't just see and "stop quiet"! They became the VERY FIRST "EVANGELISTS", SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS on the Mountains, Over the hills and Everywhere!! AND TO TOP IT ALL, they did all this when they were NOT told by the angels to do "NWENG"!!! The Angels sang and went them back to heaven oh! No man no tell de Shepherds say "GO!" but they "Tokio-ed" to spread the news after a brief but concerted: "Let us NOW go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass...". Now, compare that with "US"! WE who have been given the EXPRESS COMMAND known as THE GREAT COMMISSION, clearly spelled out in Matthew 28: 19 & 20 to:

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

We dey 'gree go? We neva first see door mot for Church, before na for waka tell people for tong?

4. IF I WERE THE WISE MEN: Hmm! Matthew tells their whole story in just the first 12 verses of the 2nd Chapter of his Gospel, which somehow makes the actual events of the story seem SHORT. Even in our Christmas Plays; don't the Wise Men just "ride" from the Church door to the stage up front? However, in reality, when you think it through, just de waka alone is anything but short! (Especially as na by CAMEL, not jumbo jet, wey dem be waka!!!) Given that they came from "THE EAST" – as in, Persia or Modern Day Iran, they must have traveled some 800 to 900 miles based on what I have just checked now-now on Google! The same Google tells me it is 397 miles DRIVING between this Charlotte and Washington D.C. and it usually takes me 6 and a half hours to cover. That would be less than half the distance covered by the Wise Men, which means I would have to drive to D.C., turn right around and drive right back here immediately, AND THEN REPEAT THE WHOOOOOLE PROCESS (as in 26 hours) to even begin to have the faintest of ideas what those Men and their entourage went through, (to and fro) with NO AIR CONDITIONING or REST STOPS & McDONALDS on their route, but tons of HEAT, SAND-SAND and CUNNY/WICKED KING HEROD to deal with instead, all of it, on camel-back!!! Then, what about the TIME that must have elapsed as they first "STUDIED" this Star in the East and then prepared exhaustively, PRIOR to setting off on their journey??!! I don't think they just saw the Star one Sunday afternoon, TWEETED the news, TEXTED each other, picked up a GPS from BEST BUY, used their iPhones to RESERVE 2 dozen Camels at CHEAP-CAMELS.COM and just left sharp-sharp Monday morning before sun wan even comm'ot!! And then those EXPENSIVE gifts!!! Hmm! I wonder if they were married oh! I'm just wondering because it would NOT sit well with this Marram if Oga Monjimbo were to announce to me, one bright day, that "HE HAS SEEN A STAR IN DEH EAST" and then start, along with a bunch of his similarly misguided "Paddy Men" to gather Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh for this "Camel Expedition" across the desert!! The trip itself must have taken several MONTHS, (at the very least), with no Telegraph or Telegrams for communication, to talk much less of cell phones or SKYPE. So when dem ask me say: "Woosai

dis pikin their Papa don go?" Make ah answer say wetin? Even ah be WINNIE MADIKIZELA MANDELA seff!!! She at least KNEW Dear ROLIHLEHLA's "QUARRY-AT-ROBBEN ISLAND NGATTA UNDAH HOT SUN" whereabouts oh! Hah!

5. IF I WERE JESUS: Why oh why, would I, as the song says, "LEAVE THE SPLENDOR OF HEAVEN" knowing full well, ahead of time, that my ultimate destination would be that Dreadful Hill of GOLGOTHA (via the agony of GETHSEMANE), where I would lay down my life?? And for WHO? A bunch of "Nyamfookahs" who do NOT deserve even one wretched "mbong-mbong" to start with, or even the sacrifice of a common "mboli" - as in, "goat"? NIET! Wouldn't have done it! 33 years of NO HOUSE, HUNGER, THIRST, EXTREME EXHAUSTION, HEALING PEOPLE left right and center with not so much as a THANK YOU from some of them (as in, the other 9 lepers), PERSECUTION at the hands of the Scribes and Pharisees, all of it culminating in being BETRAYED, ABANDONED, REJECTED, SCOURGED, SLAPPED, SPAT UPON, & CRUCIFIED by the same people I came to save but have ABSOLUTELY NO OBLIGATION TO? PEOPLE I CREATED? I would even have asked myself as I hung on that cross: "What if I die and my Father just doesn't raise me up on the 3rd day like He said?"

Hmm! No wonder there is a Hymn called "TRUST & OBEY", for that's what it really boils down to! Those 2 words explain the otherwise unfathomable, "nonsensical" acts by the "characters" I mention above! They all trusted in GOD'S WISDOM, SOVEREIGNTY, OMNISCIENCE & GOODNESS, and as such did not let Doubt, Worry, Trong-Head, Over-Sabi, or the Fear of appearing Foolish, Stupid and darn CRAZY in the eyes of the world, stop them from playing the DIVINE role that HE assigned to each of them.

MAY THEY INSPIRE US TO DO THE SAME!

MERRY CHRISTMAS