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SEND A KNEE-MAIL TO GOD

“Solomon ... kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel and spread forth his hands toward heaven and said...” [2 Chron. 6: 13-14]

Some people can pray! They can be on their knees for hours, with eyes wide-opened, telling their beads. Or, they may close their eyes also for hours, praying with virtually every verse in the Bible as if they want to teach God His word! Yet, when you examine their prayer output (answered prayers), you could be discouraged. Are they asking amiss [Jam. 4:3] or are they praying like the hypocrites and heathens just to impress fellow human beings [Matt. 6:5-7]?

Praying is the main (if not the only) means by which we convey our requests to God [Phil. 4:6]. Jesus prayed often while He was on earth. His disciples were so impressed that they asked Him to teach them how to pray [Lk 11:1]. Yes, God already knows our needs before we open our mouths to pray [Matt. 6:8]. That is why He allows the sun to shine and the rain to fall on both the good and evil [Matt. 5:45]. When we go to the bank to take the money that already belongs to us, we “pray” to the officials (by cheque or ATM card) and they won’t give us more than we ask for! So, why shouldn’t we ask God when we are requesting for what belongs to Him?

*As I meditated on the subject, it occurred to me that we could learn a great deal from the features of the **e-mail** to understand how to pray effectively. After all, God uses “the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty” [1 Cor. 1:27]. Electronic mail, popularly called the e-mail, has revolutionized communication in a world that is becoming a huge modern village. With a click of the **mouse**, you can reach thousands of people in different locations worldwide in an instant. For example, this study material now reaches readers in Africa, America and Europe by e-mail even before we discuss it in class in the Caribbean. With a computer unit, an **Internet** provider and some computer knowledge, you can now send e-mail to anyone else who has an e-mail address anywhere in the world.*

*As versatile, fast and efficient as the e-mail may be, it is primitive compared to the mode of communication between God and us since the creation of man. Every second of the day, billions of worshippers are in contact with Him by prayers that a smart fellow has recently called the **knee-mail**. The knee-mail is easier to use than the e-mail. In fact, it is free for those who understand its efficacy.*

In today’s lesson, I shall use my very little knowledge of the e-mail to share with you the insights that I have gained on how to use the knee-mail to have our prayers answered promptly.

1. What is a knee-mail?

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He taught them the *Lord's Prayer* [Matt. 6:9-13]. It is *both* a prayer and a model of one.

In the box below, I have analyzed the content of that prayer and here are my findings:

- (a) Of the nine prayer points, five (56%) are in *praise* of God while the remaining four (44%) address our *physical and spiritual needs*.
- (b) Of the five to God, three (60%) express *adoration* while the remaining two indicate *our submission to God's dominion and authority*.
- (c) Of the four which address our earthly needs, *only one* (25%) *speaks to our physical needs* while the remaining three (75%) address our *spiritual needs*, namely, forgiveness and protection from Satan and evil forces.

ANALYSIS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER [Matt. 6: 9-13]					
	Adoration	Submission to God's Dominion & Authority	Physical Needs	Forgiveness	Protection from Satan and evil forces
1. Our Father who art in Heaven	X				
2. Hallowed be Thy name	X				
3. Thy Kingdom come		X			
4. Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven		X			
5. Give us this day our daily bread			X		
6. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us				X	
7. And lead us not into temptation					X
8. But deliver us from all evil					X
9. For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory forever and ever. Amen	X				
	3	2	1	1	2

Adoration, praise and thanksgiving tend to go with singing and dancing [Ex. 15:1; Ps. 150:1-6], and worship [Rev. 4:9-11]. During such moments, believers are in an ecstasy and may not be conscious of the praying posture they assume. For example, some may lift up their hands [1 Tim. 2:8], stand [Neh. 9:5], or like David, sit down overwhelmed [1 Sam. 7:18]. But when we are in desperate need of God's help, we don't know when we fall on our knees [Lk 22:41] or on our faces [Matt. 26:39]. That is when we send a knee-mail! So, using the analysis of the Lord's Prayer, we shall use the knee-mail to refer to only prayers for our physical needs and for protection from Satan and evil forces, that is, one-third of what we would normally call prayers.

2. Setting up the knee-mail equipment

To use the e-mail, you need a computer and an Internet provider. Many of us can still not afford to buy or lease. That is why we are not yet operating in *cyberspace*. Fortunately, *spirit-space* is not like that. It is accessible to everyone who wants to use it- for good or for evil. For the believer, the knee-mail equipment consists of the following:

- (a) The "computer" is your *born-again self* because unless "a man be born again {of water and the Holy Spirit}, he cannot see the kingdom of God" [Jn 3:3].
- (b) The "Internet provider" is the *Holy Spirit* because "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost" [1 Cor. 12:3]. Only those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God [Rom. 8:14]. It is He (the Holy Spirit) who bears witness with our born-again spirit that we are the children of God and joint-heirs with Christ [Rom. 8:16-17].

So, once we are born again and *remain in spirit*, Jesus lives within us [2 Cor. 13:5] and we are hooked *online*. We then become the temple of the Holy Spirit [1 Cor. 6:19] and of the living God [2 Cor. 6; 16]. God will put us in His Address Book. He will dwell and walk in us and be our God and we, His people. He becomes a Father to us and we become His sons and daughters [2 Cor. 6:16,18].

Jesus Himself updates the Address Book: "he that overcometh, ... I will not blot his name out of the book of life but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels" [Rev. 3:5].

3. Composing a knee-mail

Jesus has compared the true believer's prayer to those of the "hypocrites" and the "heathens" and it can be summarized as follows:

The Prayer Features of Believers and Non-Believers		
Features	Hypocrites/Heathens	Believers
1. Place	<i>On the outside [emphasis on rituals and traditions]</i> [Matt. 6:5; Is. 29:13]	<i>On the inside [emphasis on essence and spirituality]</i> [Matt. 6:6]
2. Length of prayer	<i>Long and repetitious, using meaningless words</i> [Matt. 6:7]	<i>Precise and to the point</i> [Matt. 6:9-13]
3. Predisposition	<i>In self-righteousness</i> [Lk 18:11-12]	<i>In humility and repentance</i> [Lk 18:13]

Therefore, in composing a knee-mail, we should be *precise and to the point*. No preambles or allegories. A man once brought a prayer request for “anything the Lord wants for me.” The man of God prayed for him thus, “Lord, kill this man right now!” He jumped up, screaming. “That’s not what I want! I want my lung cancer healed!” So, why did he not say so in the first place?

Although “the Lord’s hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy that it cannot hear” **[Is. 59:1]**, there are billions of knee-mail requests dropping into His “mail box” every second. So, don’t waste His time with rambling prayers. When Hezekiah received a letter threatening him with invasion from Sennacherib, king of Assyria, he went straight into the house of God and spread it before Him. He challenged God to defend His name. There and then, God sent Isaiah to tell him “that which thou has prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard” **[2 Kgs 19:14-20]**.

4. Sending the knee-mail

To whom should we address it? In all religions, adherents profess to pray to God. The Moslems pray directly to *Allah* because they don’t believe that God has a Son. In some Christian denominations, worshippers pray to the mother of Jesus, dead saints and angels to intercede for them with God. In some other denominations, they pray **to** Jesus, not through Him. Unless our knee-mail is sent to the proper address, we might not get a *prompt* response.

Jesus Himself has taught us to **pray to His Father in Jesus’ name**. “Whatsoever you shall *ask the Father in My name*, He will give it you” **[Jn 16:23]**. Jesus is the *only way* to God for “no man cometh unto the Father but by Me” **[Jn 14:6]**. Nevertheless, as part of the Triune God **[Elohim]**, Jesus can be *worshipped* **[Matt. 14:33; Matt. 28:17; Jn 9:30-38; Rev. 4:10-11]**, *adored* **[Phil. 2:10-11]**, *praised* **[Rev. 5:12]**, or *thanked* **[Eph. 5:20; 1 Tim. 1:12]**. **However, when it comes to sending a knee-mail**

[i.e., requests for our physical needs and spiritual protection], the correct address must be to the Father through Jesus. This can be stated as follows:

GodtheFather@Jesus.Only

If you send it otherwise, it will be returned to you “undeliverable”!

5. Monitoring your Mail box

The first thing you may notice as you open your mailbox is the number of unsolicited messages, popularly called junk mail. Most of them contain viruses planted by Satan and the evil forces that got your address from the *spirit-space*. Remember that Satan, as a thief, has come to kill, steal and destroy but Jesus, the “antivirus” against the devil has come that we might have life and have it more abundantly [**Jn 10:10**].

These viruses come in the form of fear [**1 Jn 4:18**], doubts [**Jam. 1:8**], etc. Daniel prayed and fasted for 21 days and nothing happened but it did not bother him. Then, on the 24th day, an angel of God came to inform him that “from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard and I come for thy words. *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days*” [**Dan. 10:12-13**]. So, fear not. In other words, **delete** such messages from your mailbox so that you can focus on God’s response to your knee-mail.

If your e-mail delivery system has the facilities to enable you to monitor the status of your sent messages, you may discover that some requests are pending or transfer failed. If delivered, you may discover that some have not yet been opened. If read, then, you have expectations of a response soon, if not already in your mailbox. We may also receive different signals from God. For example, through prophets or dreams or visions [**Num. 12:6**], God can give us an immediate feedback on our knee-mail. David planned to build the temple and the following day prophet Nathan came back to inform him that God had said that it was his son who would build it [**2 Sam. 7:4-17**]. The Apostles prayed to select a replacement for Judas Iscariot. Soon after, it was ministered to them to cast lots to pick one of the two candidates, leading to the selection of Matthias [**Acts 1:23-26**].

In the event that you believe that you have not received a firm and definite reply to your knee-mail, you can forward a copy or send a ‘gentle reminder’, again through Jesus. Remember, if you ask and you don’t receive, *seek*. If you seek and you don’t find, *knock*. Pray with tenacity [**Lk 18:1-8**] and intensity [**Matt. 7:7-11**] and without ceasing [**1 Thes. 5:17**]. *God will certainly open as He has promised* [**Matt. 7:7-8**]. Alternatively, Jesus may already have acted on His copy of your knee-mail because He is knocking on the door of your heart. If you hear and open, He will come in to dine with you and you with Him [**Rev. 3:20**].

Some times, the reply may never come. It means that the request was not necessary in the first place! When the children of Israel cried to God by the Red Sea, He said to Moses, “why criest thou unto Me? ... lift thou up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea and divide it” [Ex. 14:15-16]. So, the love, power and sound mind we may need have already been supplied in full measure [2 Tim. 1:7]. So, get off your knees and use them!

6. Conclusion

God will reward you for prayers of *adoration, worship, praise and thanks*. In such cases, He is likely to give you more than you could ever ask for. After Solomon had offered “a thousand burnt offerings”, God came to him that night in a dream and said, “Ask what I shall give thee” [1 Kgs 3:4-5]. Solomon asked only for wisdom but God added riches!

Our main concerns in today’s lesson are prayers that we have specifically directed to God for our *physical and spiritual needs*. We have called such prayers the knee-mail. If we can fulfil the requirements, such as being in spirit *all the time* and asking in faith through Jesus, we shall surely receive a prompt answer.

As we spend so much time to master the use of the e-mail, may God guide us to also learn a few skills out of it to improve our knee-mail to God.