



## Prayer Miracles

First of all, thank you for your faithful prayers on our behalf while we departed for Nigeria and during these first weeks of our time ministering here! Eleanor and I daily experience the grace of God at work through your prayers. Sometimes we get asked if it's really such a big deal to "pray us in" with our bags and boxes of ministry supplies. The answer is a resounding, "YES!" Below you'll find eight examples of how *"you also [joined] in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks [were] given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many"* (2 Corinthians 1:11) as we departed the US and arrived in Nigeria with all boxes and bags of ministry supplies intact and unharmed.

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## ***Departing the US***

**#1: Loading the boxes.** Mark Brooks has faithfully taken us to the airport for over ten years. Recently, a group of men from our church began coming over the night before our departure to load the boxes of Bibles in Mark's van to prevent me from starting the journey sore and sweaty. Consequently, the night before our departure James Melker and Joe Weaver (both from my Sunday School class) along with my son-in-law Jason Choi came over to load up Mark's van. What a blessing to start our journey to Nigeria fresh the next day!

**#2: Unloading at the airport.** "Zorro" is the head of all Sky Caps at the airport. Several years ago, he took an interest in our ministry and gave us his office number, asking us to contact him when we travel. He waits for our arrival and takes personal care to make sure our precious cargo is carefully loaded and transported to check-in without issue. He also introduced us to other Sky Caps under his supervision and makes sure they receive evangelistic materials and a witness. Zorro is a friend of another Christian who has an important role in the process, Bernice, who checks in bags. Zorro always takes us to Bernice's station, and then also loads the boxes onto the weighing station himself.

**#3: Baggage Check-in.** Checking in bags is a critical point of our journey. The supervisor in charge possesses a great deal of authority. Recently God provided "Denise," a strong African American Christian who became interested in our ministry and began to request to handle our baggage. She checked in all boxes and bags, very carefully labeled each one, and then waived the penalty and cost of the extra three boxes that we did not pre-check. She also shared our ministry with some of her co-workers, and they were all excited to hear of our ministry.

**#4: Baggage Handlers.** Once again the man in charge of baggage thanked me for the thorough job performed by the men at our packing party in weighing, packing, taping, and putting handles on our boxes. He shared how it makes things much easier to load and stack such tightly sealed, compact and square boxes. He also enjoys the verses on the boxes, and for the first time accepted a copy of More Than A Carpenter by Josh McDowell. In all, we distributed two copies of Case for Creation, one Case for Grace, and five More Than A Carpenter books. Zorro told me that the men keep their books in the break room; now they have a nice Christian library for the others to take home and read.

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*Arriving in Nigeria*

**#5: Waiting at baggage claim.** Upon our arrival in Lagos, it was pouring down a hard tropical rain or as we say in Texas, “by the bucket-ful.” These rains are a great blessing to us, for unlike our warm Gulf Coast rains, these storms blow in from the cold Atlantic Ocean, thus providing a moderating affect on the temperatures in the un-air-condition-ed baggage reception area. All 13 boxes of Bibles and Bible study aids for pastors, three boxes of educational and humanitarian aid for their families, and our two suitcases of clothing arrived undamaged. Because of the excellent job our packers did at the packing party, not one single volume was damp or damaged despite the boxes being soaking wet.

**#6: Transporting the boxes.** Our host, Pastor Emeka, traveled to the airport the day before our arrival to attempt to gain permission to enter security in order to help us transport our boxes. The official he spoke to was David Barkki. David saw the name "The Navigators" on Emeka’s badge and thought the name “Mahon” sounded familiar. He said that his older brother, Zach Barkki, was a Navigator campus minister in the North and shared how a school girl named “Lizzy Mahon” (daughter of a Rev. John Mahon who visits Nigeria and teaches the Bible) faithfully sent his brother Zach a portion of her babysitting money every month. He said his brother often shared how this gift touched his heart, and if this was the father of Lizzy Mahon that he would personally take care of us. Consequently, David Barkki met us as we got off the plane and personally walked us through Passport Control, Customs, assisted us in collecting all our boxes and bags, and stayed with us until everything was loaded onto Pastor Emeka’s rented van. He thanked me for raising a godly daughter who had so blessed his brother.

**#7: Customs.** When we packed the boxes for Nigeria, we taped Leviticus 19:11 on the sides of each box in three languages: English (Leviticus 19:11 "You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another"), Yuraba (Lifitiku 19:11 "Mase jale; ma se paro; ma se tanenikenije"), and Hausa (Leviticus 19:11 "Ba za ku yi sata ba: ba kwa za ku yi aikin hainchi ba; ba kwazaku yi ma junanku karya ba"). God once again used the convicting power of His holy, eternal, inerrant written Word to bless us in our ministry. The customs team to which David Barkki brought us were all Muslim. The entire team gathered around our stacked boxes, and then one-by-one began reading the Word of God in their own heart language, talking animatedly among themselves. David told them we were ministers of the conference and that these boxes were full of God's Bibles going to pastors in Nigeria. The leader chose a box to open, and sure enough, it was full of Bibles. (The book plates we place in each Bible reads that it is a gift, not for resale with the words of Jesus in Matthew 10:8 clearly in print "Freely you received, freely give.") Upon reading the plate, he waved both carts, containing 18 boxes and bags, through customs.

**#8: Reaching our destination.** Our good friends Pastor Emeka and deacon Friend of God were there to meet us in two rented vans. Soon we arrived safely at his home. Rather than a hot steamy night, the cool Atlantic rains provided us with a good night's sleep. We woke up early the next morning to repack, sort the items in the boxes, and ready ourselves to head off to our first conference where over 500 pastors waited to hear the Word of God on Lagos Island.

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**Join us in praying this week!**

**Praise for God's faithful provision thus far on this trip**

"I said to the Lord, 'You are my Lord; I have no good besides You.'" (Psalm 16:2)



**For safety in travel as we head to Northern Nigeria**

"You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me." (Psalm 139:5)



**For stamina as we head into the next two weeks of ministry**

"He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power." (Isaiah 40:29)





## **For hearts to continue to be open to God's Word**

"But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance." (Luke 8:15)

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### ***Final Thanks***

As always, I close this message with a deep and abiding thankfulness for your sacrificial and effectual prayers which empower and drive this ministry ever forward in the cause of Christ. If you would like to financially contribute to the ministry of Grace Community International, simply click on the Donate button [here](#), or send a check to the address at the bottom of this update. Also, don't forget to keep up-to-date with the latest ministry happenings by following us on [Facebook](#) (@gciweb). We daily covet your prayers before our mighty Father on our behalf!

By His mercy,

Rev. John S. Mahon

2 Corinthians 4:1