

**Doing Politics according to God's will and way. This is the prayer of my father-in-law, Rev.
Johnny Htoo based on 2 Chronicles. 7:14.**

Saw Johnny Htoo was only 7 years old when his father Rev. Saw Aung Htoo, a Karen Missionary to the Lahu people in Shan State of Burma was called to rest in peace with the Lord. His widowed mother was left with 6 children (1) Naw Gracy, (2) **Saw Johnny Htoo** and (3) **Naw Jimmy Htoo** (twin brother & sister) (4) Saw Benny Htoo, (5) Naw Elsie Htoo, and (6) Saw Goldwin Htoo (served in the British Army and died in India when the British troops withdrew to India during the Japanese invasion and occupation of Burma). She worked very hard and struggled to send all the 6 children to school by sewing. Johnny Htoo, being the eldest son in the family, worked part-time as egg collector (collected eggs from different people and sent them to the shop) to help his mother. But after he finished 9th grade, he decided to leave school and help his mother in supporting the family. His mother was against his decision. He finally made 3 choices, wrote each on a piece of paper, rolled and put in a cup and pray and drew the lot. (1) Go to school. (2) Find a job. (3) Join the British Army. After praying he drew the lot and got no. (3) **Join the British Army**. He told us that he did it three times and got no.(3) join the British Army. It was the year 1932. So he went to the British Army Recruiting Office and the officers liked him so much so that they immediately accepted and allowed him to join the British Army. His personal no. in the British Army is 3695 and registration no. is 4047. He later became Captain Johnny Htoo and when the Japanese troops invaded Burma in 1942, they withdrew to India. His youngest brother, Saw Goldwin Htoo also joined the British Army and died in India. Capt. Johnny Htoo and his other two friends were sent back to Burma by aeroplane to be parachuted into Burma in the Delta (Irrawaddy) region, because they knew the place well. They were first flew to check the place where they will be parachuting into Burma. They went to a place, and check and said, this is close to the enemy position. They continued and came to a place which they knew it is safe. They marked it in the map and flew back to India. But when time came for them to be parachuting into Burma, the pilot who flew them to survey the place was so sick, so another pilot was ordered to fly them instead. When they arrived at the first place which they marked as close to the enemy position, the pilot asked them to get ready. They were arguing in the plane but finally knew that the pilot was only given the order to take them to this place, they jumped down. They were soon arrested by the Japanese soldiers and were tortured. But the soldiers knew that they (the 3 of them) were very important persons, so they planned to

take them to the Japanese Higher Officers. They were asked to put their hands to the back and they tied them very loosely. There were 3 soldiers walking in front of them and 3 behind. It was about 4 hour journey from their place. When they walked about half journey, the 3 soldiers behind them started talking to them, asking them very strange question. “Are you Christians?” They replied, of course, we are Christians. The 3 soldiers told them that they were Christians too and they were not Japanese soldiers, but Koreans forced to join and fight for the Japanese army. When they arrived at the junction and the 3 Japanese soldiers walking in front went to the left side, the 3 Korean soldiers asked them to run to the right and escape. They did as advised and escaped from the Japanese hands. They said, few minutes later they heard the shooting, but didn’t know what had happened to the 3 Japanese soldiers and the 3 Korean soldiers. They finally arrived at the Eastern side of Burma, in the Karen area, and rejoined with the British troops stationed at Thaw Thi Ko (the Holy Mountain according to the Karen people living there) near Pwa Wor. Many British Army officers loved their Karen fellow officers and soldiers so much so that they promised them that they will help them get their Karen State when the British Government gave independence to Burma. Burma won independence from the British Government on January 4, 1948. A month after Burma got independence (February 11, 1948), the KNU organized a spectacular mass rally to demonstrate their national political aspiration and position in the following four slogans:

1. We don’t want communal clash
2. We don’t want civil war
3. Give us Karen State at once,
4. Show us Karen one Kyat, Burman one Kyat.

A Karen multitude of 500,000 strong held mass meetings in all towns where Karen population was prominent. Karen from the hills and the country-side took earnest participation. The occasion of Karen mass rally, one singular event ever to be performed by the Karen in their history. The then Government of U Nu refused to take heed to the Karen’s demand. Instead ordered the Burma Army to attack the Karen National Union Headquarters in Alone, in Rangoon and thus the Civil War between the Karen and the Burmese (Pwa K’Nyaw and P’Yaw) started on January 31, 1949. Captain Johnny Htoo joined the Karen Revolutionary Movement for Peace, Justice and Freedom (first by peaceful demonstration, then when failed followed by armed struggle. He became the Brigadier of the 6th Brigade of the Karen National

Liberation Army (KNLA). During his service as the Brigadier of the 6th Brigade, he even helped Thailand in suppressing the Communist uprising and have many friends among the Thai Army Officers. Then in 1954, he was called to the General Headquarters to be promoted as the Adjutant General. Before going to the GHQs, he requested for few days leave and it was granted. He took rest with few of his soldiers with no security guard on the top of one mountain. Someone gone to report it to the Burma Army and they came rounded them and captured them early one morning. It was the time when the tension between the Karen and the Burman was very tense that if the Burmese captured the Karen, they would torture and kill them and so also if the Karen captured the Burmese they would do the same thing. But very strange in the case of Brigadier Johnny Htoo and his soldiers with him. They (the Burma Army) did not torture them, instead took them to the Burma Army Office in Moulmein. He met the Commanding Officer, Col. Thaug Kyi (his friend at the Officer Training School in May Myo) and learned that the reason they were not tortured because the soldiers obeyed the order of the Commanding Officer. Col. Thaug Kyi treated them well and asked Johnny Htoo to join hands with the Burma Army and work together, promising to look after his family and for the schooling of their children. He refused and insisting that he didn't want to get involved in politics any more, instead decided to join the Burma Divinity School and serve the Lord the rest of his life. Finally, Johnny Htoo and his soldiers all were granted amnesty. They could go anywhere in Burma, but cannot come back to the eastern side (Kawthoolei). He joined the Burma Divinity School and graduated and served the Lord as the first Pastor of the Taung Gyi Karen Baptist Church(1967-1989) until he joined Rev. Dr. Saw Simon (his son-in-law) and family when they left Burma Divinity School in Insein, Rangoon (later became Burma Institute of Theology and now Myanmar Institute of Theology) in March 1989. He was ordained by the Church and when he left the Church, he already retired, and Col. Thaug Kyi, the Officer who he made vow with already died. His sole purpose of joining his son-in-law and family was to pray for the Karen leaders, soldiers and the people and bless them. When we arrived at the Karen National Union General Headquarters, Mar Ner Plaw, Gen. Bo Mya, the late Gen. and President of the KNU and KNLA asked him and his family to live there and help in ways and means they can. Gen. Bo May wanted him to help him as Advisor. He requested Gen. Bo Mya to allow him and family to go to the 6th Brigade (where once he was the Brigadier) and Gen. Bo Mya kindly allowed him and his family to go to the 6th Brigade lived and served the Lord at Wallei for few months (June to December,1989). It was at Wallei where the

Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Bible School was there and his son-in-law, Rev. Dr. Saw Simon became the Principal of the KKBBS (now the KKBBS in Mae La camp). It was Rev. Johnny Htoo's constant prayers, whenever he prayed, he prayed "Dear Loving Father, I pray that you bless my people and nation. Protect them from all evil. May they repent from their sins and turn back to you. Help the political leaders who do politics, may they do politics according your will, your plan and purpose for our people and your people." He was a faithful servant of the Lord, faithful to the end of his life and praise the Lord for calling him to rest in peace with Him forever on April 25, 1996, just few months after the fall of Mar Ner Plaw, the General Hearquarters of the KNU and KNLA.

You may not know Brigadier Johnny Htoo who finally became Rev. Johnny Htoo but you will remember the God Army Movement led by the 2 twin brothers, called Johnny Htoo and Luther Htoo in the year 2000. In fact, the 2 twin claimed to be Johnny Htoo and Luther Htoo when they were possessed by the spirit. They were using the names of Johnny Htoo and Luther Htoo, the two officers in that areas. At that time the 6th Brigade extended to the present 4th Brigade of the KNLA. Johnny Htoo and Luther Htoo were good friends and good leaders and loved and respected by people in that area.

With the present political situation in Burma/Myanmar, quite a few people sent me message, requesting for my opinion about the changes that are taking place in Burma/Myanmar. As we all know, there are some political leaders who do politics with power and authority (military regime), some do politics economically (focusing on business and economy and development), some philosophically and ideologically (Socialism, Communism, Democracy, etc.), some do politics in the name of religion. We believe in God and we know that everything is in His control. He is the Creator and the Author of all. It is time to go back to God. The End Time is coming soon. Jesus is coming back soon. Let us join our hands together and let us live together as brothers and sisters in peace and unity and let us all with our hands make the world a beautiful, peaceful and meaningful place for living. It is time for healing and peace. Not for warring and killing. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! ... for there the Lord commanded the blessing – life forevermore." Ps. 133. May God bless you all.

Sincerely yours in Christ's ministry among the displaced Karen people in the camps in Thailand and the IDP areas, Rev. Dr. Saw Simon.