



Alabaster Ministries

He shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the master's use and prepared unto every good work." 2 Tim 2:21

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Roz Heyns

FEBRUARY NEWS 2015

Dearest Partners and Friends,

2 Cor 4 : 7-9

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

We are troubled on every side yet not distressed: we are perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken: cast down but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

This treasure, without doubt, is the most wonderful, most precious treasure that anyone can experience in their natural lifetime. The infilling of the Holy Spirit who has left His home in the glory of heaven and who has lived in us and through us (hopefully) since the ascension of Jesus.

I am nothing more an earthen vessel. I am made from the dust of the earth. Earthen vessels speak of humanity. BUT, when we develop a relationship with Christ and allow the Holy Spirit to become the "Dictator" in our lives we have a treasure within us that will operate through us if we allow Him, instead of doing it ourselves.

We begin as dirt and God adds the water of the Spirit and He forms us. It is our responsibility to allow Him to place us on the potter's wheel and to form us into the vessel that He wants us to be. We are all different in shape and size and we should never look to someone else and want to be like them. That tells Him that you are insecure in what HE has created or that you are too lazy to carry that for which He created you. He has given each of us wonderful gifts and talents and if you do not know what they are for you personally then you had better ask Him to show you. Mankind has become so involved in the things of this world - a new car every second or third year, androids for our children and the very latest in computers. It is no longer enough to have two computers in a home - each family member has to have their own. We have become so caught up being busy about our own business we are either too tired or really have no interest in fulfilling God's purpose for our "peculiar" lives.

Yes, God is omnipresent and yes, He is omniscient but does He move supernaturally - not very often? Of course He can move supernaturally as He did at creation but He uses us and we need to make ourselves available to be used. God uses our humanity, our ordinary lives of clay, to show His immeasurable power and authority as long as we are totally surrendered to Him.

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed." I am not talking about those who are troubled or persecuted because they are naturally goofy, different or unusual but I am talking about those who are persecuted because they stand for Jesus - a "peculiar" people and we do not have to be "goofy" when doing that. When we are persecuted for our faith we will not be distressed in the midst of it because our faith is not in self but in Him. When we rest on the Word, and the Word is Jesus Christ and not the Holy Scriptures, He stands alongside us.

Other interpretations state, *"We are hard pressed on every side but not crushed."* When grapes or olives are pressed the best of them is produced. When we are placed under the press we need to ensure that the very best of us is produced for the extension of the Kingdom. In adversity or under extreme pressure the best will be generated only when we are filled with Him and it will be Him that is produced. When flowers are pressed the oils that flow are used for the finest of perfumes and they are really concentrated. He is the Rose of Sharon and when He was pressed at Calvary the superlative emerged.

"We are perplexed but not in despair." Perplexed means that we are in complete doubt about ourselves and our abilities. We all have gifts/abilities but they need to come under the direction of the Holy Spirit. You can have the most talented team of musicians trying to lead praise and worship on a Sunday morning and it may sound wonderful but the Holy Spirit is missing unless they have made Him the center of it all.

The devil loves to have us perplexed because we begin to doubt that we can be effective for the Kingdom.

"We are not in despair." I have become a new creation in Him and all old things are passed away. I have this new identity and do not have to run to and fro from one conference to another to find out who I am. I just need to rest in Him, to put my trust in Him because He and I together are overwhelming. He is overwhelming and I am along for the ride.

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"Persecuted but not forsaken" "Persecuted" does not just mean mistreated or tortured but also means being pursued. We are followed by so many things that try to derail us. Many of us are derailed by our past and it is time to lay our past at the foot of the Cross and move on. Never turn around to look at it or turn to pick it up again. We allow people from our past to impact our present. This is why we should never become unequally yoked – not in marriage, not in relationships and not in business. We always believe that we can change people and we end up being changed by them.

"We are not forsaken." We are never beyond help and can always make it back and be overcomers. We are never abandoned by God. Failing is a part of life and the key is to dust yourself off and climb back up and to do it with joy. *"I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

"We are cast down" or thrown down = falling and failing. Our failures often bring condemnation and the devil loves to condemn. There is a huge difference between condemnation and conviction which is what the Holy Spirit brings. Falling destroys our self-confidence. If you fall physically (I am very familiar with that) you definitely lose your self-confidence and want to hang on to everything that is close every minute expecting your feet to slip out from underneath you. We need to get back up and carry on. Often we don't do that because we are concerned about what people say or think. That should never be of concern for us – it is only God's opinion that counts and He wants us back in the saddle.

"We are not destroyed." From the Greek word meaning not dead and not lost. Death has no hold on us because He conquered death and the grave. God's promise to us through Jesus Christ is that we will never be dead or lost, we will never be destroyed. It is time for the Church to rise up and shine as she never has before. We are on the brink of the Third World war and the church needs to stand and be counted. Rise up oh Church of God. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church. We are equipped so let us use what we have been given to fight the good fight of faith. If Daniel could overcome against the Prince of Persia then we should be able to bring down ISIS. In my opinion it is the same spirit.

MALAWI

Ever since December 2014, Malawi has been face with heavy rains. As a result of these rains and the two cyclones in January, many areas have experienced floods that have caused great hardship to the villagers. Out of 28 districts in the South, 15 have been badly affected. Thousands have been left homeless. Crops have been washed away, livestock missing and worst of all there are numerous people missing. Until things are running properly again we will not know exactly how many have perished. In some places entire villages have gone along with everyone in them.

Those who have lost their homes have been placed in existing schools, churches and any other large buildings making it easier for the government and any other aid organizations to feed them. Tent villages have been set up and even though this gives them shelter temperatures are over 100F at this time of year and the tents are made of a plastic material.

With so many people now concentrated in one area sanitation has become a problem which could lead to dysentery or outbreaks of cholera. There are no "flush toilets" in rural Malawi, only "long drops" as we call them or pit latrines which have filled with water and overflowed, polluting all of the ground water in the area.

Alabaster Ministries have been down to the area and have distributed food items, clothing and soap but the need is great. The rains are continuing.

As Director of Alabaster, Malawi, I am prayerfully requesting that people in the West rise to meet this need. We will be handling a massive distribution in April to about a 1,000 people. This will include food, blankets, mosquito nets and items such as pails, eating bowls and eating utensils. Along with that we will be preaching and teaching the Gospel of Jesus – a Gospel of love, hope, joy and peace – all of which are desperately needed under these circumstances.

Linda Mavutula Director, Malawi



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We're on the Web.
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You can donate on line.
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MALAWI CONTINUED



This is one of the tent villages that have been put up just behind the church in Nsanje where we hold our annual conference for the elderly. Unless someone has insisted that pit latrines have been dug then those who are living in this village will just use the area in the background to relieve themselves. This is what causes the real dangers after natural disasters – the dysentery and cholera that follow as a result of living in unsanitary conditions.

One of the most important things at present is to get some wells dug so that there is clean, uncontaminated water available. One of these wells would be dug at the church property so that they can keep it properly maintained. Not only would it be available to those who are displaced at present but once they return to their villages well water would be available for everyone when they attend conferences. We often experience a problem with water when we have our conferences there and have to go elsewhere and hand pump the water into 44 gallon drums. We need three wells and each of these cost \$4,000.

As we shared in an earlier newsletter, Malawi had been experiencing serious drought prior to our last distribution. While we were still there the rains began and it promised to be a wonderful season for crops. Who knows why these cyclones came up the Mozambique coast and it must have left people wondering why God.....? I am asking myself that question but in the midst of it all we have not lost one “cotton candy” to the floods and we lost none of the cottages we have built for them. Our “cotton candies” are amazing, indomitable, tough, invincible, stubborn, determined – if only the Church was like them we would be a driving force to be reckoned with in the world today.

Here is one of the “cotton candies” being prayed for by James and our new pastor who is now the pastor for Alabaster Ministries. His name is Pastor Alfuzima (on the right) and he lives in Tengani not far from our property there. He will attend Bible School one week out of every month and the rest of the time he will travel throughout the villages getting to know the elderly and praying for them. He will also hold prayer meetings and Bible Studies with them. He speaks very good English and is a family man age 66. We employed him because of our young girls. They also need spiritual input and they do not need a younger man but someone who can listen and be a father figure. Many of these girls have never had a father or they have had fathers or guardians who have abused them.



This is an example of some of the flood damage that occurred. That was a church and the brick split through the middle. Our land was not touched by the flood waters. The only flooding we ever hope to see through the property is the flooding of the Holy Spirit. We are praying that that land will become a well of living water to the whole area no matter the age group and that it will always be a place of refuge in times of trouble. Not just a spiritual refuge but also a place where people can come and find peace and joy that their faith may be renewed in the Lord.

Please help us to realize this vision.

I return to Africa in April. Each gift will cost \$25. Please help.

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SAMARITAN'S PURSE

If anyone has a connection with Samaritan's Purse please contact me as soon as possible. They are sending money to Malawi to assist with the situation there and are giving it to churches. That is what they told me they are doing when I have spoken with them on the phone. I have been in touch with contacts I have in Southern Malawi, especially pastors and they say they are not receiving any aid and people are returning empty handed after waiting in the lines for food for sometimes up to eight hours.

I have tried to get hold of Samaritans Purse via phone and email and even drove three hundred miles out of my way to stop and see them. They took down my details and promised to get back with me. It has been over three weeks and I have heard nothing. They told me that they did not have people on the ground there and I have offered to assist in any way that I can so that the aid gets into the right hands.

If anyone is able to put me directly in touch with someone at that organization I would be extremely grateful. There are always people in these situations that take advantage especially when there is no proper oversight.



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