



January 2019
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ALABASTER MINISTRIES

UPDATE

Dearest Friends,

And the break through continues. Just a couple of days after arriving home from Trinidad I was on a plane again for Florida to what was supposed to have been a Pastor's conference and which turned out to be an old form of camp meeting - 2019 style as we all stayed in hotels. Yay for that as my home is a tent in Africa!!! When people ask me to come on a camping vacation my reply is that my idea of vacation is not a tent but a decent hotel.

The praise and worship were glorious, such as I have not experienced in the West for a number of years and the Holy Spirit was present. The preaching was anointed, and lives were truly changed. Added to that many contacts were made. One of the aims of the Lord is for us to work together in unity. When that happens, the Kingdom grows exponentially. We cannot achieve anything when we are an island - we do not blossom as isolated individuals but when we are surrounded by others, we sharpen each other. *"Iron sharpens iron and one man sharpens another"* Prov 27:17. *"Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!"* Ecc 4:9.

So many in the ministry have fallen because they believe they are

spiritually superior and will not ask for help or counsel. We often think that we can "go it alone" but we were not created to work that way. I see many who lack discernment and the Lord has faithfully placed someone alongside them who has amazing discernment and we do not listen to them. That is why there are "fathers or mothers in the faith" who have incredible wisdom. In the Old Testament there were those who held the office of the prophet who were there to speak into the lives of the Kings and leaders and the nation. These prophets kept kings like Uzziah and David on track. When Uzziah no longer had his prophets around he began to believe that all that had been achieved was due to him and not by the grace of God. Pride led him to believe that he could light the fire before the altar of incense which only the priest could do. So, he offered "strange fire" and was struck down with leprosy. There are many in the Kingdom with "leprosy" because they do not have someone alongside them, or they do not listen to wise counsel.

Jesus sent the laborers into the harvest fields two by two so that they could begin to pray and adjust the spiritual realm of the city and area. When the Lord of the harvest came it was ripe for the propagation of the Gospel. That is why Charles Finney always sent his intercessors ahead of him - brothers Nash and Cleary and when they ceased their

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8514 N. Donna Ct. Kansas City, MO 64153

"He shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meant for the master's use and prepared for every good work."

From the desk of Roz Heyns

Ministry, Finney shut down his revival meetings.

Let us pursue like minded relationships as never before so that we can expand the Kingdom for the glory of God.

What does it mean when we talk of iron sharpening iron. First of all, it makes us as a two-edged sword. Many swords have only one side that is sharpened such as the Arab scimitar or the Japanese Katana. They will only cut one way, but a two-edged sword, such as the saber, will cut from all directions. The Lord wants us to be like a two-edged sword. We get to be like that by staying in the Word and in prayer and hanging with people who urge us on, correct us in love when we are wrong, and listen to us as we should listen to them. Sometimes people call me to find out how things are going and promptly spend the next 30 minutes telling me what is going on with them and then hang up. We do the same thing when we talk to God. We keep on babbling instead of listening and all He wants to do is talk to us. Imagine what it was like for Adam in the Garden. What amazing conversations they must have had together! I often feel uplifted when I have been around others and we discuss the Word and revelation and testimony – that is iron sharpening iron. When we are tired, depressed (please don't say "get over it") many of the great prophets of the Old Testament got depressed, we need to keep in touch with those who are positive. Elijah when he was in the cave was depressed and feeling sorry for himself. Jeremiah was depressed and overcome. Moses told God he was fed up with the Israelites in the desert. That is the best time to get together with someone like-minded and straighten up. When you run two pieces of iron together it forms sparks. Some of us need a few sparks to once again light up those smoldering coals that are about to go out. Don't associate with negative people because they will drag you into the gutter with them. I once had an acquaintance who would call me early in the morning – different time zone – and was so negative about everything. The rest of my day was totally ruined. That is smacking you upside the head with a dull iron so that all you feel is down for the count. If you cannot be positive and uplifting then please don't call someone at 5.00 am.

So, we need to be with people who are actively doing something in the Kingdom and who are not spending all their time drinking milk but are feeding on protein. I once asked a nutritionist why so many in the west suffered from allergies and they told me it was because we do not wean our children off milk. It is the same with spiritual things – we have to finally wean ourselves off the milk and get into the meat or we will be unhealthy adults.

Iron sharpening iron is not always "fun." There is friction and heat and fire, but all of those things will mold us into the person that the Lord wants us to be. He is the refiner and He knows exactly how much pressure we are able to take. We are the babies and want out of the fire before He is finished with us. That is why it took the Israelites 40 years of wandering when it should have taken two weeks.

Let us allow the Lord to correct and chasten us by using others who are discerning and caring and can speak correction in love AND who do not blab issues all over the countryside. Ever wonder why people do not confide in you...? Let us sharpen one another so that we can grow into maturity in the Kingdom instead of ever remaining babies.



ABOUT US

We, Alabaster Ministries

are based in the United States with a tax-deductible status under 501(c)(3).

We also have representation in the United Kingdom and are covered by Stewardship Services

Our representatives there are Michael and Penny Shellswell.

Phone: +44-7780-383452 (Michael)
+44-7551974316 (Penny)

In Malawi we have Oresti and Julie Yiannakis who are a wonderful support and without whom it would be extremely difficult for us to operate.

Our staff comprise of local Malawians, and volunteer staff in the USA and UK.

It is our belief that we should train the locals to one day be able to totally run every aspect of the ministry in their nation and to train the next generation to one day take over while we support and give advice where needed.

God has blessed us with an amazing team of people who are always ready and willing no matter what comes against us. God is in charge and is faithful when we are about His business.

This is an exciting ministry to be a part of and we so appreciate your support.

CONTACT US

You can support this exciting and vibrant ministry by sending checks to:

Alabaster Ministries
8514 N Donna Ct
Kansas City, MO 64153

OR

Via the web site direct to PayPal.

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REPORT FROM FRANCIS

This house finally fell down during the rains and she is sheltering in the church of one of our pastors. Apologies for the bad image but it was sent from the pastor who does not have a good camera or phone. Her name is Vizhina Benasi and she is 79.

Dearly beloved,

Every investment that we have ever made produces some result and regardless of what that maybe, we cannot help but assume some level of responsibility over that result. I was in Chididi on Sunday January 27th where Peter's family and friends gathered together to celebrate his success at the Bible School. We had our Old people there to congratulate him on his achievement since most of them have known him since he was a boy.

It was a proud moment for the elderly who have spoken into Peter's life over the years and have kept him believing in dreams. It was a happy moment for the community because another of its son's became a torch bearer for the youth who seldom ever have the opportunity or the zeal to pursue their education. Peter's graduation was big news in the surrounding villages. Some people had never seen what a college diploma looks like and I was astonished by how many kids came by to ask Peter how he managed to defy all the challenges they go through and be successful. I thought, "what a wonderful opportunity to teach these young guys something that perhaps someone has been trying to get across to them but maybe it did not make so much sense at the time." We are struggling to get the literacy levels up in the rural areas in the country. When education fails, people escape to South Africa for jobs. But if we have an opportunity where someone can be a role model for the youth, how far can it grow? We need to have good schools and when the government is not being responsible then it is up to us, the church, to assist. Already we are preparing to put up four more classrooms at the local primary school and to salary some retired teachers to come out of retirement and assist at the school. Our prayer is to scholarship children so they are able to attend, especially the girls who otherwise will never receive an education. Our aim is to have the Bible and English taught so that they grow up into spiritual young men and women and because of their English they will far more easily be able to get jobs.

We have had a good rains which gives us the prospect of a good
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REPORT FROM PETER

I greet you in the precious name of our Lord and perfect friend, Jesus and hope that you are all well. I am glad to report that our efforts in encouraging children's ministry and the youth to participate in ministry as well as local development initiatives continue to bear fruit. Just last week a group of young men and Sunday school students participated in helping patch up mud huts throughout Thondo village which were either falling apart or severely damaged by heavy rains in the village. We have been experiencing severe rain conditions in the Lower Shire, and there has been a lot of damage to property. There has not been any reported cases in my area of operation although the Shire River continues to swell with water, but some of our people in the mountains have been affected by the rains and have lost their homes.

Our prayers go out to all the affected families and we hope the situation does not escalate. We are coming close to the first distribution campaign of the year, this is a wonderful opportunity to meet all our friends in one place and spend some time together as we continue sharing the Word, our lives and experiences together. I am looking forward to seeing all the familiar faces and sharing jokes as we always do. We have a few challenges with the roads due to the rains, I pray that doesn't become a problem as we do distribution.

We are receiving a lot of rain, but we have a gentle rain in the Tengani and Chididi areas which is very reassuring with regards to crop security. Our villages on the Malawi/Mozambique border have a good crop and it is our prayer that they don't experience strong winds like last year as that has the potential to reduce the quantity of yields. We pray to the almighty God for his supernatural intervention and implore you, our wonderful family, to keep us in your thoughts and prayers during this period. Thank you. (Ed note) Part of Peter's church. Please help us finish his building so they can fellowship out of the rain and sun.





I am leaving this up from the December newsletter.

We have two great needs at present. One is to complete the church at Tengani and the other is to put in a borehole up the mountain where we have the Bible School. The borehole will cost \$4,000 with a hand pump which we can replace with a solar driven immersible pump at a later date. The cement, timber and corrugated iron sheets for the roof to complete the church will cost us \$5,000.

This is the "well" that the water comes from to bathe, drink and cook for the Bible School. By midweek it is almost dry, and it is the well that the village uses. They then must walk over two miles to another well to collect water. We are so blest to be able to turn on a faucet and have excessive amounts of water run freely. The water used in our dishwashers alone would be enough for a whole family for the day.

The church when built will attract a congregation because it is the biggest building in the area. At least everyone will get to hear the message of salvation instead of having their ears tickled by the promises of God.

God is faithful and stretches every seed that is sown and this is good soil.

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harvest but heavy rains in higher altitude areas in the north of the country has resulted in flooding down in the Lower Shire Plains. There have been over 500 families in Chikwawa who have fallen victim to the floods, but no cases are reported in Nsanje district which is our area of operation. We are sad to report that three of our beneficiaries in Pastor Shadreck's area have had their houses damaged or destroyed by heavy rains in the mountains and are currently seeking shelter in his church. Thank you, Trinidad, for your gift towards housing. These will be the first three of the new year which we will begin as soon as the rains have stopped.

We are always grateful to you our beloved family for your support and generosity. We will have our first distribution campaign of the year this February and we thank you for making this distribution possible. We are looking forward to creating new memories together in this year, 2019. May you have a blessed month and an eventful year.

Alabaster Ministries

REPORT FROM SHADRECK

I greet you in the precious name of our Lord Jesus and wish you the very best in this year 2019. I pray that the Lord has been good to you just as He remains ever faithful to us, watching and taking care of us every day of our lives.

We have had heavy rains in the mountains, some of the roads have become impassable and pretty much most of the mud huts are falling down. Two people from my house group have been affected by this tragedy. Vizhina Benasi and Malifa Macheke's houses collapsed and fortunately they were not in their homes when the incident occurred. We managed to get a few men to try and build back up the walls which fell down on Vizhina's house but Malifa's house was completely destroyed. We have given them shelter in my church at the moment while waiting alternative solutions.

We have had a very good start to the year in our usual Bible Study gatherings in all the villages. I had representatives from six villages at Pastor Kankoche's church on the 15th of January just to set an agenda for the year. Our theme for this year is that, "We are the salt and light of the world" therefore, wherever we are and whatever we do must make a difference in someone else's life. We are to be a blessing, a caretaker, a peacemaker, a good friend, and a bringer of hope to our communities. We count it all joy that despite all the challenges we faced and all the rough times we have been through, we are here this year because of His goodness and mercy and thus it is our duty to live for Him and to spread His unending love. I am looking forward to having another year of fun and joy with you all. God bless you always. Amen.