

Blood Soaked Soil

When the first member of my staff was killed, it caused me to spend a great amount of time thinking about the danger for those who served with us and what it had cost the family of this individual. It is a sobering experience for anyone who has ever lived in a war zone. I was trying to assess if what had been accomplished was worth the price. Then, the still small voice of the Lord spoke to me and said, "This will be the first of many. Do not grow weary in well doing." That was 16 years ago. I could never have imagined that Far Reaching Ministries would lose 23 staff members in 16 years. These men have laid a foundation of sacrifice to bring Christ to the Dark Continent. Jesus said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto myself." God is raising His banner of salvation through these chaplains. They have not died in vain. We pray that their sacrifice will usher in the greatest revival Africa will ever see. This war in South Sudan has no end of any kind on the horizon, so we must and will remain strong and resolute.

I tell the men, as they prepare for battle, "Be without fear when you face the enemy. But stand in fear in the presence of a Holy God. Understand that you were chosen by Him to be strong and to overcome in the midst of a dark and wicked generation. To accomplish this, you will have to fight with great determination to defeat the forces of Satan because the only way that the enemy knows how to fight is with great determination." That is why we are willing to cross deserts, climb mountains and navigate great bodies of water on foot, by boat, or riding by camel for our Lord Jesus Christ. We do not have the luxury of being weak, lest we give ground to our adversary.

Thus, I must once again share with you the death of one of our brothers, Chaplain C00280, Jacob Malek Ayueb. Jacob was shot serving our Lord and died on April 15, 2015. Jacobs's testimony will demonstrate his love for the Lord.

When I was 11 years old, I became extremely sick and I realized that maybe I needed God. One of my younger brothers was also sick at the same time. When they took us to the hospital, my younger brother died, but I was healed. I knew it was God who had healed me, so I immediately went to church. I was very committed because I realized God must have a purpose for my life since He had healed me. When I was 17, I began teaching the children in Sunday school.

In 2008, I joined the army. When I joined the army, I wasn't being paid a salary, but I wanted to serve my country and God at the same time. My friends told me to leave, since I wasn't making any money, but I continued serving for two years.

In 2010, I began receiving a salary. Even though I wasn't paid for the previous two years, I didn't lose my faith in God or forget what God had done for me. I knew that the same God who had healed me, would help me wherever I would go. My pastor back home would continue to encourage me to be wherever God was calling me, even if that was in the army.

In August of 2010, I heard about the chaplaincy program, and knew I wanted to join. I thought that anything that had to do with God, no matter how long the program would take, I wanted to be a part of it. I wanted to be able to go back to my battalion and share about the Lord with a real knowledge of His Word and what God has done in my life.

My favorite Scripture is Galatians 5:24-26, "And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

At the last chaplain refitting and refresher that Jacob attended, he wrote this note to those that were supporting him.

The last year has brought many challenges and blessings to the ministry God has called me to. Being a chaplain means that I get to tell the soldiers about salvation in Jesus Christ. I am encouraged and strengthened in the Lord, through prayer and reaching the men.

I have witnessed God's hand move during the midst of great trials. One such miracle is when a family member was ill. I prayed that God would heal him and He did! Also, God gave me a commander who allowed me to preach the Word of God freely to the men and I was able to lead many men to Christ.

The Western world knows very little about the war in South Sudan. I would like to share with you that we want the world to pray that God would sustain our freedom. We, the chaplains, greatly appreciate your prayers and support that come from you. Please pray for our nation, my family, and for me, that I will continue to preach the Gospel.

I want to encourage you to remain strong in your ministry and press deeply into the Lord in the midst of trials and tribulations. II Corinthians 4:8-9, tells us, "We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not forsaken, struck down, but not destroyed." The Lord does hear our prayers and for that we praise God. Please allow

God to speak to you through John 20:21. Then said Jesus unto them again, "Peace be unto you: as my Father has sent me so I send you."

Jacob

I have recently taken a few weeks away from the ministry to seek the Lord. I wanted clarification that Far Reaching Ministries is headed in the right direction, as well as a time of solitude away from the war. I wanted to hear an encouraging word, but the issue of being in a constant war zone never really gave me any rest. During this time, I did hear from the Lord and it was very clear what He spoke to my heart. The Lord told me that it would be a fight to the end, with very little rest. There would be times of defeat, as well as victory, but He expects me to be faithful. In a nut shell, He told me to "Buck up." Our ministry has had a history of blood soaked soil and to be a part of it, one must accept the cost.

Jacob was only 23 years old when he lost his life and had only been in the field three years serving as a chaplain. He never married. Never had a girlfriend. Never experienced living for himself. I feel sorrow that he was taken so young without experiencing what most of us wish for. The three years he did serve, he lived for Christ with his whole heart, and I am reminded of another man, Jesus, who was also only given three years to serve on this earth.

Until the oppressed are free,

Wes Bentley