



December 2021 Update

Year-End Highlights

In **April**, Polson Movement joined Pablo Naz to celebrate the Naz's 40 years of ministry in the Mission Valley! We also dedicated the new children's playground. On **July 4th**, Pablo Naz & Polson Movement came together for baptisms and a BBQ. Food, friendship and frivolity was free for all! **October** found Polson Movement hosting a block party, with hot dogs and a few sumo wrestler combats. Then, Polson Movement and Pablo Naz reunited for the Naz's traditional Trunk-or-Treat. Addie charmed most passersby as a curious reindeer (see pic!)



"For everything there is a season ... [A] time to tear down and a time to build up; ... A time to scatter stones and a time to gather [them together], ..."

—Ecclesiastes 3:1a, 3b & 5a (emphasis mine) TLV

As I review this year, I'm also pondering seasons of faith. As a celebrated judge of Israel, Gideon's life seems to illustrate this. When the Messenger of ADONAI first meets Gideon, he calls him brave. Gideon describes *himself* as "the least important member of my family" from "the poorest [family] in Manasseh" (Judges 6:15). God begins building Gideon's faith (ie, his relationship with Him). Repeatedly, Gideon asks God for signs: a sacrifice accepted, a wet or dry fleece, a dream's interpretation. Signs that God finds Gideon "acceptable". God constantly *gives Gideon these signs!*

Seasons of Faith

ADONAI asks Gideon to tear down an altar to a false god, Baal, and replace it with one to ADONAI. Gideon is afraid of Baal-worshippers in his community, so he does what God asks ... at night. Then, Gideon mobilizes an army against Israel's Midianite oppressors—warriors from his own family (Abiezar), his tribe (Manassah), and the neighboring tribes of Asher, Zebulun & Naphtali. When 32,000 warriors respond, God culls them. Why? "Israel might brag and say, 'We saved ourselves'" (Judges 7:2).

"They held the torches in their left hands and the rams' horns in their right hands so that they could blow them. They shouted, 'A sword for Yahweh and for Gideon!'"

—Judges 7:20 (emphasis mine) NOG

So, Gideon obeys God and *sends away* Israelite warriors. "Whoever is scared should go back home" (Judges 7:3). From 32,000 to 300! Amazingly, Gideon obeys *while afraid* (Judges 6:27, 7:10-11). ADONAI recognizes that Gideon is fearful ... and uses him anyway. Still, my favorite part of Gideon's story is when he divides the warriors into three companies and instructs each man to blow their rams' horn and break their jars simultaneously—revealing fire inside—then yell "For ADONAI and for Gideon!"





Holding Position

Did you notice that these men ... *didn't have a sword in hand*? Instead, each warrior had his hands full—one hand with a rams' horn, the other with a torch (ie, an oil lamp). Each man *said* he had a sword. But, he wasn't holding it! Instead, each one held his position—trusting that God was fighting for him. In the ensuing clamor, ΑΔΟΝΑΙ turned Israel's oppressors against each other!

"While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled."

—Judges 7:21b (emphasis mine) NIV

Tearing down lies while building character & faith in His people. ΑΔΟΝΑΙ continues to do this today! God is Faithful and True—even when we're not. God moves men and women through fear to faith ... step by step. Day by day. Season by season. Do you feel unimportant, weak or poor? So did Gideon. Do you struggle with fear or self-doubt? Me, too. But, hold your position! And trust that God is fighting for you! Our flaws & problems are what God uses to draw us to Him. And to draw others, too!

Building Connections

I'm asking God for insight in ministry among First Nations people, and trusting that the Flathead Reservation will relax more COVID-19 restrictions. In the meantime, I'm building connections with others in local ministry. Jan & Corb Morgan spear-headed a Native Prayer Gathering in **February**. In **May**, I met a colleague at Blodgett's Creamery downtown to brew outreach ideas! And, expecting a snowy **December**, it's time to resume my project for next year's beading class!



"The work is great and widely spread out, and we are separated on the wall, far from one another. In the place where you hear the sound of the trumpet (ie, shofar), rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

—Nehemiah 4:19b-20 (emphasis mine) RSV

Living out the Love of God is a great work—one that finds followers of God spread out all over our towns, nation and earth. Those who share Messiah Jesus—especially among First Nations peoples—can be separated, far from one another. So, **thank you** for listening for the rallying blasts that alert each of us to the Enemy's attacks. And to God's fighting for us!

If you'd like to give toward this work of tearing down lies & building up each other in sharing God's Good News on the Flathead Reservation, a year-end gift would be perfect!



Praises and Prayer Requests

NAIM (VIRTUAL) CONFERENCES Thanks for praying! This year, I attended the spring Women's Retreat. And the autumn Staff Conference—with Zoom sessions recorded to watch later.

LOCAL EVENTS Thanks for praying! 40 years of ministry & counting for Pablo Naz in the Mission Valley!

REQUEST Please pray for events at Polson Movement and Pablo Naz that include the entire community—Native and non-Native.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS REQUEST Please ask God to encourage & empower Native leaders—including: Jan & Corb Morgan (Many Tribes) & Dr Suuqiina (Indigenous Messengers).

Tara

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