



TIBERIAS, ISRAEL

11 Dec to 20 Dec, 2013

Elder Jason & Christina

This is our testimony.

In the year 2013, I had a fateful experience in the land of Israel. I arrived in Israel on December 12, with a fever that came and went. Before heading to Tiberias from Mount Carmel, I discovered blood in my urine. I was definitely not in good form. The moment we checked into Leonardo Hotel (Tiberias), I sought help from a medical Doctor (In God's gracious arrangement there was a doctor on the team I'm traveling with). He checked and found there was a swell in my scrotum. To bring down the swell, he dispensed to me some antibiotics that he brought along. However, those tablets did not work on me.

December 15, early morning, I had hot and cold symptoms and breathing difficulty. There was severe scrotal pain and swelling that I could hardly move. I asked Christina to call for an ambulance. The time was then five in the morning. Upon arriving at the A & E Department of a local hospital, I was quickly attended by a team of doctors and was advised to have immediate surgery. Part of the scrotal skin cells was already dead and had become dark bluish in colour. The doctors diagnosed it as Necrotizing Fasciitis of Scrotum Fournier's Gangrene. What's that? Gangrene of the what? All I could see was the dose of doctors. And I found out later they were the Heads of Department, of Surgery, of Urology, of ICU. "Would I have gotten such reception if I was admitted a day earlier?", I asked myself. For the day before was their Shabbat. Well, that day I had their attention. At that juncture, Gladys updated the trippers who were having a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee, liaised with Ps Wilfred who rushed to the hospital with my children just before my surgery.

What's Fournier's Gangrene? It is a horrendous infection of the genitalia that causes severe pain in the genital area and progresses

from erythema (redness) to necrosis (death) of tissue. Simply, the Gangrene can occur within hours and the mortality (death) rates are up to 50%. My blood pressure was dangerously low and life-threatening with multi-organ failure – symptoms of severe septic shock. I was at the brim of death. But the medical team did not give up. They tried their very best to save me and they did! The surgery was a success. Thank God! Not long I was transferred to the ICU for further observation.

The night was distressing. I was delirious. I was fearful, hallucinating doctors and nurses were going to harvest my internal organs with every sound of the medical tools that reached my ears. I was too overwrought and all I wanted was to get out of the hospital. The next morning, I told my wife to transfer me to another hospital. It was bad. My wife described to the doctor what I went through and was diagnosed as the onset of ICU syndrome - my mind was unstable after waking from long hours of sedation during the surgery.

During my stay in the hospital, when I was more stable, I could share with the team of doctors and nurses the reasons why I was in Israel and why I love and serve the God of Israel. They seemed indifferent to what I was sharing. They said, “All gods are the same.” I could not reach them.

Those days in the hospital, my wife was with me each day during the visiting hours. Not only a companion for me, she was also a comforter to those in need. You couldn't have asked for more. She had the favour of God to minister to a family who visited their mother who was in a coma. She soon became their friend and even allowed her to pray for their mother.

Here's Christina's account during the lonely and trying period:

"Everyday as I go to the hospital alone, my heart was always filled with thanksgiving and gratitude to GOD for His Mercy in giving Jason a second chance. To top it up, people whom we didn't know also helped us in one way or another, empathised with us - the hotel managers and waiters of the hotel restaurant where I had my stay, breakfast and dinner; Gladys and her friend Gaby; even Elder Winston and Pearl, who drove all the way from Jerusalem just to visit him. GOD is so so very good. In spite of not being able to join the prayer team, God opened doors for me to pray and share His love to His people in the hospital. Particularly one family whose mum was in coma - on the bed just in front of Jason's bed. Just interacting with the family brought such comfort to them. The son even requested me to come to his mum's bedside to pray for her. Even during this time when Jason was in hospital, GOD is always there for me and I truly experienced His Presence in times of needs and received encouragements from the members as they sms/whatsapp their love and concerns."

After 6 days in ICU, I was transferred to a normal ward. I was bedded between a Jew and Muslim patient. Though they did not speak much English, I got to pray for them - thus connecting a Jew and Gentile, prophetically.

Five days later, I was medically evacuated to Singapore on Swissair flight accompanied by a doctor and a paramedic, lying throughout my flight from Tel Aviv to Zurich for 4 hours and transited for two hours before travelling another 13 more hours back to Singapore. Upon arrival in Singapore, I was sent immediately to the SGH by an

ambulance. I was then warded for another 14 days for reconstructive surgery to position back my testicles. After another 5 long days, I was finally discharged and given medical leave for one month with follow up treatment.

What I received from this traumatic experience was more than just the Lord's mercy. He opened doors for us to share, pray and minister to His people. He revealed to us the condition of their cold hearts and they are just too blinded to know who their true Messiah is. Yet even in their disobedience, God still have a special calling for His people and the Lord is faithful to His Word. What He had promised, He will fulfil before His Return to the Land.

God has never stopped assuring me of His Presence throughout that period in the hospital in Israel. I was reminded of the CROSS wherever I went. I was sent in an ambulance bearing the cross emblem. At the hospital I spotted another cross emblem. The emergency call button next to the hospital bed had a cross sign and finally medically evacuated on Swissair which carries the symbol of their national flag on the airplane's tailfin, a white cross on red background.

By God's mercy I received healing, able to recover fully and have a new lease of life. He provided a doctor in the team that I could consult. He united the church and the trippers who travelled to Israel with me to pray to the Lord that Healeth. He was faithful and gathered caring doctors and nurses who did more than just nursing me back to health. *I was even invited by one Israelite doctor to stay at his house should we next visit Israel.* I also thank the Lord for His unending provision. The total cost of the hospitalization and medical evacuation amounted to S\$130,000 and these were fully covered by the travel insurance. Above all, should this incident happen elsewhere like in NZ where we initially planned to visit instead of

Israel, such medical facilities with skilled doctors and attention would be lacking.

Truly our Lord is good and is worthy of all our praises. All glory to His Name. Amen!

This is our testimony.

We made another trip to Israel in 2015 to thank the doctors and the team that treated me. But there was more...

Our Testimony

(By Liza and Andrew Mak)



Introduction

This is a true account in Galilee, Israel, December 2015.

Born Again

Not wrong to say that people generally yearns to be wealthy, to have good fortune, to live dignified and long life, obtained through superstitious beliefs or by the divine acts of a god. We did not have any religion. Just ordinary people and only wished for greater fortune, climbing up the career ladder for a brighter future. However, something happened at end of 2015 that totally changed our religious worldview. I was brought back from an abyss of darkness to light, and my wife had a chance encounter with a

couple from Singapore. It all happened in 2015 on my birthday. On December 24.

Doubt God's grace

The story started in mid-August of 2015, Hong Kong. Few weeks before Liza and I were to go on a tour to Italy, I suddenly came down with a fever and cough and had to be hospitalized for four days for observation. I could not eat and my body weight plummeted and I looked pale. I wanted very much to go on this tour even knowing the potential health problem. And since there will be no refund on the tour fees paid either in part or full for any cancellation on my part, we bit the bullet and set off for our holiday.

While in Italy, we visited a Catholic Church. I saw the portraits of Madonna (*Italian: St. Mary, mother of Jesus*) and the crucified Jesus Christ. I mentioned earlier that I did not care about religious beliefs. But since they are *gods* and I was in a Church, I just prayed and sought blessings. Unbelievably and amazingly, my body seemed to feeling better. I even started to eat solid food and thoroughly enjoyed the eleven-day tour and returned home without any health issue.

I had a supernatural encounter of healing *because I prayed*. Was that the mercies of God or was it just pure luck?

Entangled

That stroke of luck gave us the confidence to plan another trip in December to Israel and Jordan to celebrate my birthday and Christmas. Just to be sure, I went for a preliminary medical health check before making the final payment to the tour agency.

On the morning of December 20, we arrived at Israel's Tel Aviv Airport. The tour started immediately and I was in good form. But it did not last.



Caesarea, Israel. Photo taken by Andrew.



Basilica of Annunciation in Nazareth, Israel. Photo taken by Andrew.

We visited the site of an ancient castle, went down to the basement which only had a glimmer of light. The moment I got back to the bus to continue the journey, I began to feel tired. I was really under the weather. At the next site, I lost my focus while walking up a slope and my brain seemed to be under the control of *something*. When we reached the hotel near the Sea of Galilee, my body began to shake uncontrollably; the symptoms were just different from that in August. I wished it was just a sign of tiredness. I passed dinner and rested in my room. The next day, I still felt bad and my body was still shaking while I was up in the morning getting ready for breakfast. Liza and I decided to stay in the room to rest, that I might feel better to continue with the tour later.

Unfortunately, on December 22, my condition worsened. After discussing with the tour guide, the Tour Company decided to send me to a nearby hospital. That visit sent me straight to the ICU ward with a jab that calmed me down. In the late evening, one tube was inserted into my nose for feeding, one tube went to my lung through my mouth to assist breathing and other catheters were injected into my forearms.

I went into deep sleep. I slipped into coma.

An Invisible "

I was alone in a dark place. I could not see my wife Liza anywhere and I was worried that she was not aware of my situation. I loudly yelled "Liza! Liza!" in hopes of finding her. I did not see any person, but I felt I was being monitored by an Invisible Power. Like an invisible being. I heard a special male voice. I ran in different directions, away from the voice and frantically looking for an exit. The voice warned me not to escape otherwise I would get a harsh punishment. Deafened and frightened I just kept running hoping to

find my wife. The voice got louder and louder, and eventually the Invisible Being captured me and pulled me into a room that has a glimmer of light, put me on a chair and told me firmly to wait there without trying to escape. I felt the It was monitoring me even though I could not see. I was still trembling and shouted for my wife; I felt I was in a prison cell. I felt hopeless and I did not know how long I had been there.

One day, just too tired to struggle, the Invisible Being brought me to another brighter room where I felt more at ease and less fearful. As well, I did not know the reason, but the Invisible Being was gentler too, and he just asked me nicely to wait in this room. In a flash, I had a very short vision of my wife in a blue-coloured coat. She was holding my right hand and sang me songs with tears rolling down her face. It went just as quickly as it came.

Not long I was led to a place outdoor and was instructed to sit down in front of a blue garage door. The Invisible Being asked me to wait there saying that I would be able to go back to Hong Kong with my wife Liza soon. I did not know how long I waited, but I felt the Invisible Being had left me.

I woke up 6 days later and was very curious where I was. The tubes were still inserted into my body through the nose and mouth, and I was unable to talk. I remember waving my hand to get the nurses' attention, but I just could not communicate my intention. I was nervously lying in the hospital bed waiting for my wife to appear. The waiting seemed eternal.

Liza finally came! She rushed toward me, held my right hand, overwhelmed with tears flowing down from her eyes. She had a blue hospital gown on her. That was exactly what I saw her wore in the

vision! After the tube was removed from my mouth 3 days later, I recounted the vision with Liza.

I asked myself what's the Invisible Being? Where was he from? Who was he and why did he save me?

Love and Mercy and a Special Encounter

When I was in the ICU ward on December 22, Liza was quivered with fear and was clueless what should be done. She did not know anyone in Israel and the group we came with had gone far off. Our blessing was the kind local Israel guide who helped her to arrange accommodation, taught her how to travel to and from the hospital, and bought her a SIM card for local calls. Each night all she could do was to force herself to sleep praying hard that she would not receive calls from the hospital.

When Liza returned to the hospital the next day, she was stunned to see me in coma with tubes inserted to my body. She was in distress. The nurse knew that she was really worried about what happened last night, so they explained to her the why, what and how I could recover.

Liza's daily routine began with breakfast at the hotel then a trip to the hospital at twelve noon, out of the hospital by one in the afternoon and then again to the hospital after dinner for the night visit.

On December 24, on my birthday, Liza began her usual routine. That morning she was greeted by the hotel manager who comforted her with kind words but it was just too overbearing and tears just rolled uncontrollably from her eyes. She had no appetite. She was worried sick. She was downtrodden.

On that same morning, seated some tables away was another Chinese couple whom Liza spotted the moment she stepped into the restaurant. A while later, the couple, whom Liza found out was from Singapore came over to chat with her and found out that I was in a hospital, the same hospital that they planned to go that very day! Kind couple they were, they accompanied Liza to the hospital and visited me at the ICU ward.

God's Purpose

Even though I was sedated, I could move my hands and feet like I was trying to escape from something horrible. When they saw me, I was sweating a lot and looked worse than the day before. The doctor tied my hands to the bed frames to restrain me and for fear that I might pull out the tubes. The couple from Singapore came to me and they immediately blessed me with a prayer pleading their God for mercy and to bring me back from the abyss of darkness. It was amazing that my body was immediately calmer. After that, the couple visited the surgeons, ICU doctors and nurses whom they met two years ago. Startlingly, they met Liza again and visited me in the evening. During the six hours of waiting, the couple shared with Liza the purpose of their trip to Israel.

The couple Jason and Christina, are Christians. When they saw me at the hospital it was like revisiting the scene of a trauma that happened to them in 2013.

Their trip to Israel in 2015, specifically to the hospital was to express their gratitude to the doctors, surgeons and nurses in the ICU ward (right where I was warded) who *saved* Jason in 2013.

Nobody could have imagined the uncanny similarity. In 2013, they also visited Italy in mid-October and thereafter a trip to Israel in

mid-December. Unfortunately, just like me, Jason suddenly came down with a severe virus infection, a day after arriving in Israel on December 15, 2013. That infection caused multi-organs failure in his body and he was immediately sent to the same hospital, taken care by the same doctor who took care of me. An immediate surgery was done that left Jason convalesced in the ICU ward for 12 days before flying back to Singapore on December 27, 2013 for a second corrective surgery.

They never thought they would encounter alike setting of 2013 when they returned to Israel in 2015. They were certain though that their current visit was God's divine arrangement. To be in Israel, not just to drop by the hospital to visit the team that treated him but also to meet us and to pray for us.

Incessant Blessing and Love

Jason and Christina released a message to Liza that God will be with us and I would recover without any further serious problem. They accompanied Liza back to the hotel and introduced her to their team members. They prayed for Liza that evening and we were told they continually prayed for us during their stay in Israel. The next day, the Singaporean couple and their team continued with their itinerary.

During that period Liza had been updating her family in Canada daily. Her brother would send her portions of scripture that she could use to pray for me every morning. It was really encouraging to know that he mobilised his prayer team to pray for us. Her non-religious elder sister in Canada often made calls to comfort Liza. Liza felt more at peace and without fears, positively and confidently reacted to all circumstances. She had never seen in her such tenacity before. She communicated and interacted with people in the hospital, and the insurance company without helps.

I was in the ICU ward from December 22, 2015 to January 2, 2016 and was moved to a general ward, then finally back to Hong Kong on January 12, 2016 for another 10-days of hospitalization and surgery. Just like Jason had two years ago.

We Believe

My supernatural encounter with this Invisible Being while in coma and the connectedness with the gentleman from Singapore in Israel who went through the same episode in the same hospital is just inconceivable. A new friendship was forged. Divine? Definitely not natural. And I could not deny the act of God, the mercies and grace of God upon me and Liza.

I still had a question. If the Invisible Being I felt in coma was God, why could not I see him?

I joined a Methodist Church fellowship in Hong Kong and began studying the Bible. I learnt that my God is a Triune Being - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This is what I got, God the Holy Spirit drew me out of the abyss of darkness to light. So in deep gratitude to our gracious God and in public declaration of our faith in Him, Liza and I were baptized on December 25, 2016. We became the disciples of **God**.

True friendship, God's Present



The Singaporean couple, Christina and Jason, have become our good friends and we often communicated through WhatsApp. Time passed and 15 months later we met again in Hong Kong. We are just awed by God's ordained purpose on how He intercepted both our lives and His wonderful plan to save Liza and me. We learnt three things on earth that can last for eternity. They are,

- (1) Worship and Praise and Prayer to God;
- (2) Word of God (read the Bible) and
- (3) Witness for God (to share the gospel of salvation with others).

Proclaiming God's Glory

This is our testimony.

We believe that God's love and gift of eternal life is for you and we earnestly wish our testimony can be passed on (from friends to friends) to proclaim God's abundance grace and for His glory!

***Psalms 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?***

[PSALM 27:1]

***So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help
you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.***

[ISAIAH 41:10]

***There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear,
because fear has to do with punishment.
The one who fears is not made perfect in love.***

[1 JOHN 4:18]

***He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.***

[PSALM 23:2-4]

*Dear God, You are the glorious and omnipotent Lord.
While I was in coma, You were with me;
Your Holy Spirit led me back to brightness from abyss of darkness.
Your graciousness lifted Liza and me up from worries and panic to serenity.
God, Your salvation and mercy is always in our heart
and we trust and follow you forever.
In Jesus name we pray, amen.*



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Confirmed by:
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Completion Date:
March 18, 2017.
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