

MY LIFE WITH CANCER

by ARUN RAM, Australia - June 19, 2009

After being settled with my family in Bangalore, India, we migrated to Australia in July 2007. It was a decision from out of the blue. We couldn't find a reason why we made that big move, until now (*Hebrews 11:8*).

In August 2007, I was diagnosed with Testicular cancer, a month after we moved and I underwent Orchidectomy (removal of testis). My family was shattered with the news of this deadly disease. Why were we moved this to land? Why this suffering the week after we moved? Questions with no clear answers stared at our face. Regardless, I began to run after life to make it secure for the family. We didn't have the strength to reveal the matter to our parents then. Days became weeks, week became months, the fear of cancer, and the fear of a relapse was always on the back the mind. I lost peace. I started hiding my fears from my wife. I was all alone...

After one year, the cancer relapsed to the lymph nodes and I was asked to undergo chemotherapy. That was the time when I met our church Priest, Bobby Philip and a friend Jacob George. Jacob visited me during the first week of my chemotherapy and took my Holy Bible and told me to hold on to it firmly and read daily. I started reading the Bible. It was big relief for me, a new beginning. *The Word of God filled me with peace that passed all human understanding (Philippians 4:7)*. Jacob led me to the scripture, *Jeremiah 29:11* – “*For I know the plans I have for you,*” declares the LORD, “*plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*”

My life during chemo was pure turmoil. But I found my companion in Jesus. He showed me the way, the truth, the life. I was becoming closer and closer to Him each day. I was in emergency isolation in hospital with the severe dose of chemo, but “*thy rod and thy staff comfort me.*” (*Psalms 23:4*). He was my comfort.

Towards the end of chemo by December 2008, I was so weak and was vomiting badly. I prayed to my Lord to give me the strength to attend the Holy Communion on December 25th of 2008. I had never missed the mass since my childhood. On Dec 23rd, I stopped taking the nausea medicine; I was regaining the strength. It was a miracle! On the 25th of December at 5AM, I drove the car all by myself and attended the Holy Communion! “*What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? In Presence of all His people, I will take the cup of Salvation, I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving*” (*Psalms 116*). On December 31st of 2008, I gave my first testimony of His Grace and His blessing.

The chemotherapy was a great success and the 5 cm mass shrunk to 1 cm. The doctor was confident the same to be a dead scar after the chemo. But they wanted it to be removed. The surgery was scheduled on June 3rd. During these 5 months, I was getting closer to Jesus and asked Him why I am being tested in my life. I found my answer in Romans 9:17 - “*Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*” God will never “teach” anyone by giving him or her a sickness. *He loves us so much that He died for us while we were sinners (Romans 5:8)*. *But God can take glory by delivering me from my sickness (John 11:4)* and use me as His effective channel.

During the recent CT scan, the doctors noticed that the mass has aligned to the centre and updated me before the surgery, about the risk of losing my blood when moving the blood vessels to reach the cancerous mass, which was near my spine. This was the new risk on top of the regular risk associated with the surgery. They made extra arrangements for this blood loss and transfusion.

I underwent the lymph node dissection surgery on June 3rd of 2009. After the surgery, the doctor was really happy that they could reach the spine (with their hands) and not lose the blood vessels. These blood vessels turned to their side and made its way to the bottom, just like the divided Red Sea through which Moses and his people of Israel passed after leaving Egypt. Jesus was leading in the front through the surgery. *Matthew 19:26 – “With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”*

After the surgery I was moved to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). After a successful procedure, now it was a testing phase at the ICU. On the first night, I suddenly woke up and saw my image on the TV on the ceiling. It was blurred. The lights were switched off; I could see doctors a little far away in the room in discussion. I was getting uneasy every other minute. While I was looking at the blurred image on the TV, the pain was aggravating. I started commanding: “By His Stripes, I AM healed, in the Name of Jesus”, I was shouting as the pain aggravated. Suddenly the doctors arrived. “Why are you murmuring sir?” and they woke me up. I couldn’t imagine I was asleep. I saw my image on the TV, it was alright. They switched on the light. They were surprised that my epidural (pain medicine) stopped working through the IV (drip through the vein). There seemed to be some air bubble blocking the epidural to reach my body. The block was on the equipment and not on the tube, which was surprising. My temperature shot up to 39.9 and they were running around to get everything in control. In two hours, my temperature became normal and the malfunction was rectified.

The second night at around same time, I started getting the pain. I called the doctor. The Epidural pain management was not getting distributed on all the areas of my abdomen. As a result of this, there was pain and the doctor did not know why it was happening. Finally they found out that the epidural cord which was fixed on my spine, needed to be replaced. They do not have an option but to start over the procedure to insert a new cord. At 2AM they started the procedure. They made me sit on the bed and had me bent forward. The doctor started working on my spine to get the cord right. It took them 2 hours to get it corrected. Due to the 12” incision, sitting in that position was painful. The doctor keeps checking with me regarding my comfort level. I was just smiling. I knew that if the Good Lord had taken care of me during the 6-hour surgery and that these things were minor. The major works were already supervised by Jesus. These were just tricks of Satan, he could only do these silly pain-generating tricks. Why should I be worried? So I wasn’t.

The next day, the doctor informed me that I have pneumonia. The plan was to have me observed for 4 days in ICU and then 10 days in the ward. But miraculously, I moved to the ward on the Day 2 of the surgery. I was transferred to a beautiful room where I could see a church from my bed. It was calm and I was happy to be in this state. Most importantly, I had plenty of time to read my Bible. There was absolutely no tension; I did not have to run around for earthly things, I could be myself with my

Heavenly Father. During this time, I had a lot of God-loving friends visiting me, praying and praising the Lord for His Grace. The doctor never came back on the latest finding on pneumonia. It was cast down in the Name of Jesus. By God's grace, I was recovering fast; I was able to walk from Day 4. Praise the Lord, on Day 7, I was back home! I was not having any pain. The wound healed in 3 days and I could walk from day 4! The biopsy result was out and the doctor confirmed that the residue mass was in fact a dead scar and it was not cancerous. By His Grace, I am cancer free. Jesus saved my family, my wife and my son. My Jesus touched me. I prayed, I believed I felt and then I experienced my healing! (*Mark 11: 24*).

Now I know the truth; the truth why we moved into this land. Through this ordeal, I set my trust in Jesus. All my life, I knew about Jesus, but I did not personally know Him. Now I have experientially known the truth that our Jesus will never leave nor forsake us, no matter how severe the circumstances around us are. Now I have experienced the truth that healing is the divine birthright of a child of God - *My Jesus bore the stripes on His back for our healing (1 Peter 2:24)*. His plan is to give us Hope and Future.

God Bless!!