

Hear My Prayer Adonai Yeshua HaMashiach (Lord Jesus the Messiah)!

Background

In retrospect, back in 1948 (nearly seventy years ago I was born (15th May 1948), with an ailment that was diagnosed correctly only 50% of the time. This was dependent upon the attending doctor. If diagnosed you had immediate surgery, if not, you died. I had surgery at six weeks. God had a purpose for my life.

In June 1970 I came to Canada. “ ... if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast”. (Ps 139:9-10) Little did I know how secure he would hold onto me.

Fast forward to July 1971. I decide to jump out of an aeroplane, the adrenaline rush was so powerful I figured my heart was about to burst out of my chest. The closest thing I figured then to being a heart attack.

Forward again to Aug 1974, Scuba diving in the Atlantic ocean 100 feet down, I run out of that life giving commodity ... air. Now faced with a vertical ascent, effectively up a ladder with rubber rungs I was fortunate that my diving buddy looked back to see me sky-rocketing upwards. He caught up with me, and we buddy breathed to the surface. Obviously God didn't want me to drown or get the bends.

Forward again, July 1976; I met Mary (who was a **Cardiac Operating Room Nurse**) under very unusual circumstances and we are married 3½ months later. Forty years onward (2016) this God ordained blessing would become key to my continued existence. She knows the right questions to ask.

The 9th December 2015 I awoke during the night with no sensation of feeling in my left thumb and forefinger. At dawn the feelings had returned, but I lost the sense in the 3rd and 4th fingers of the left hand. Upon showering I discovered pain in the left triceps muscle, compounded with a pain from behind the left ear to below the shoulder blade also on the left side.

This was a bit disconcerting as being all on the left side, gave reason to heart issues. I went to visit the cardiologist, but he is retiring and only showed up once a week. Not being in that night, I dropped into the walk in clinic and was diagnosed with having an issue with the facial ulnar nerve, for which there is only physiotherapy. The doctor had a “but”, by which he would contact my cardiologist and have him prove it was not my heart.

The following week I had a visit and a stress test, which I managed to fail. The result being that I had another, but, a nuclear stress test at the hospital. This revealed that I had obstructions of 70% and 90% in the arteries of the heart. Progressing, I needed an angiogram which uncovered yet another blockage of 70%. This cardiologist contacted the cardiologist that ordered the angiogram and a decision was made that I would be a prime candidate for bypass surgery.

I was contacted by St Michael's hospital to come for an assessment within the week. Unfortunately I was acutely aware of people who had experienced similar assessments and ended up in the operating room instead of going home. Also I was certainly aware that a person could die during this

surgery. Saying goodbye to Mary and Jacob that morning was very difficult, not knowing if I would be home or even alive at the end of the day. The train ride to Toronto was an emotional disaster.

The meeting with Dr Bobby Yanagawa went very well. He went over the diagram of the blockage sites and concluded that I would be a walk in the park. I didn't smoke; didn't drink; not diabetic; not over weight; not old; relatively fit; socially active; not having had a heart attack or stroke. The odds of full success would be 99%. So what was the 1%? I could have a heart attack during the procedure, have a stroke or die. I looked at this a little different in that I had 99% and God. Even better he replied! Signing on for the operation, although not taken lightly was acknowledged as being necessary. There was a comfort level that I was vaguely aware of, but managed to find relief that I was actually going home and not the operating room.

There was an eight week backlog for operating room availability, so I continued working until the weekend before the surgery due date (4th May 2016) which was to be postponed two impossibly long weeks.

My Prayer

In these days of Purim, (24th March 2016) I ask myself; "Have I been saved for a time such as this"? (*Est 4:14*)

In reflection (back to December 2015); I offer prayers of thankfulness that God, who works in really mysterious ways, provided "a thorn in my side" ... actually a pain in the neck that radiated down my left arm and caused a varying loss of feeling in my fingers. (Actually felt like my fingers did not exist).

I offer prayers of thanksgiving for the doctor, who's questioning attitude was correct in that the neck pain was the Facial Ulnar nerve which was rectified by waving my arms about (called physiotherapy), and, for the "but" he interjected to have my cardiologist prove to him that it was not my heart as being the cause of the discomfort. "Create in me a pure heart and renew a steadfast spirit within me". (*Ps 51:10*) What a surprise finding that turned out to be.

"I come before you (God) in weakness and fear and with much trembling"; (*1Cor2:3*) For, I could hardly express how helpless and vulnerable I felt. My throat seizes up and I can't see as my eyes leak. It is only in Jesus, who is with me as I journey through this "valley of the shadow" (*Ps 23*) that I can fear no evil. (What evil, the evil of doubt, uncertainty, fear, distrust, illness) yet Jesus has conquered all these feelings.

God's timing is awesome, and in practical medical terms things happened at light speed with stress tests, nuclear stress tests, angiogram, surgeons' consultation, pre-op checks and a date for quadruple bypass surgery.

I pray that the date holds, for although I know that God is behind the scenes conducting this orchestration, there is this 1% reality that I could die. Jesus said: "Do not let your heart be troubled, trust in God trust also in me". (*John 14:1*) So, I do so!

Love is not a subject I discuss openly or frequently, but I acknowledge it now for the overwhelming presence I experienced during my discussions with the surgeon. Satan was having a field day in my mind, as I was truly a mess going to the hospital on the train, having recently heard of others who

upon the same kind of visit didn't get to return home, and ended up in surgery. So in leaving Mary at home that morning I didn't know if I would be coming home, having surgery or be dead. This is when, confronted by your worst fears we stare Satan down, because we know God is in control.

I praise God for the skill, and ability that the surgical team have, and the confidence and calm assurance that my condition presently makes me a prime candidate for such a procedure. As the surgeon says; "I am just a walk in the park", as he reviews the sketches from the angiogram and the background that got me seeing him. By the end of the consultation we were laughing and joking.

I signed on the dotted line for the surgery with the objective of being fit and able for Margaret's wedding in August. There was an eight week delay as the OR schedule was fully booked due to emergency pushes of others not as critical, scheduled for the 4th May 2016. God says: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you". (*Eze 36:26*)

I pray in my frailty and humanness, that, I can depend upon God. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid. (*John 14:27*) These next eight weeks were to be surely a time of testing and believing. I found solace in songs like "My lighthouse", and "In the Eye of the Storm", as a beacon towards our awesome God and His amazing power and strength.

I am so thankful for the multiple prayer teams, across the country, and the oceans, that have my back, I thank Jesus for the people that He has already seen through this same procedure and now have a new lease on life, and I am really grateful for the thoughtful consideration they have in conveying words and messages of support, love and success. I see it all as outward evidence of God's love. "How great is the love the father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God" (*1 John 3:1*)

Finally I pray that my expectations are fulfilled; "He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (*Isa 40:31*)

Pending Surgery

Prayer Warriors:

I admit my apparent fear, since I haven't been exposed to surgery since I was eight. Sixty years later the surgery I face will be life changing. Technically I will die, as one does when the heart stops, so May 4th 2016 will stand out as being the day I am blessed with a refurbished heart on a restart. I ask God to; "Create in me a pure heart, O God and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (*Ps 51:10*)

I suppose I have always been in control, most of the time of my circumstances, and able to acknowledge the outcome, good or bad, as it was always based on my decisions. This is different as I am not in control of anything. It brings the resolution to being that I have to give up control. Like Jesus who pleaded with Abba the father, I prayed that God would grant me the miracle I sought, and to take this cup from me, but not my will, but thy will be done (*Luke 22:41*). Sometimes God uses others to achieve the desired outcome.

I came before God with weakness and fear and much trembling (1Cor 2:3). I am faced with walking through the valley of death, yet I fear no evil. (Ps 23:4) I ask myself as I look to the mountains, where does my help come from, and God says to me that; "My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth". (Ps 121:1). He is ever faithful.

Since the relinquishment of self-control, there has been a flood of encouragement from friends and colleagues who have either experienced or have relationships with others who have undergone the same procedure, phone calls, emails and from his word. God says; "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Jos 1:9) This really is a source of peace. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition present your requests to God and the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. (Phil 2:3-4)

"Trust in God, trust also in me", says Jesus (John 14:1) and Peace I leave you, my peace I give you (John 14:27). God says: to me; "You are my servant. I have chosen you and have not rejected you. 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 41:9-10)

I pray that the date (May 4th) still holds firm and does not get delayed due to emergencies, that the Lord will guide the hands of the surgeon (Dr Bobby Yanagawa) and the surgical team, for rapid healing and strong recovery, for this heart belongs to Jesus.

The Prayer is Answered.

Wednesday 18th May 2016. This day will be a new day, a day of death and resurrection; delayed from the 4th to the 19th due to some emergency, (all that means is that there is some soul who has been carried in rather than walking in to the hospital); then, advanced a day to the 18th as there was a "big" job scheduled, (I just can't imagine what a "big job" would be).

It is difficult to express the calmness that I experienced going down to Toronto with Margaret, by chance (or God's providence), happened to be in that area of Toronto that day, at that time, along with Mary and Jacob at 05:00 hours, getting dressed in operation scrubs, and waiting for the appointed time to arrive. What a fine oiled machine, St Michael's hospital is. Right on queue I was wheeled of to the OR. It is 7:40 am. It is bright and seemingly spacious, yet packed full of equipment all for me. The surgeon is poring over a monitor, nobody bothering him. An attending surgeon asks if I can hop over to the table (from the gurney). No problems and no anxiety ... strange.

Another attending surgeon proceeds to provide a dialogue of what the intention of the procedure that was to be performed. She mentions that I am a white male of 64 years, having a quadruple bypass (although it was all in the medical terminology). At this point I said: No he isn't". Well, her eyes nearly fell out of her head. It was classic moment of, 'have we got the wrong person here'. Observing this, I started to chuckle and told her I was 68. Fortunately her eyes retreated back into her skull and she continued. I don't remember any more as I was out like a light. Somewhere in the next 4 hours and 10 minutes I died clinically (my heart was stopped as I went on a heart lung machine. Fact: When your heart stops ... your as good as dead, (actually when your brain stops your dead). Sometime later I would be resurrected.

God says: "Then I shall sprinkle pure waters upon you and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. I will also give you a new heart and I will place within you a new spirit." (Ezekiel 36:25-26) "... for I am the Lord who heals you". (Ex 15:26)

“Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.” (*Deuteronomy 31:6*)

I don't remember much about being in the intensive care unit, but I was there for a while. On coming to, I was helped to sit up as they were readying me for transfer to the cardiac ward. What I do recall was shaking like the muppet Kermit the frog when he is agitated. A nurse asked me if I had been shaking like that when I came in. There wasn't a muscle in my entire body that was under control, everything was shaking. Back under (this loss of consciousness is quite the thing) I went for who knows how long, but when I came to this time I was a lot more lucid.

It was at this juncture that I fully rationalized that I had made it. I had actually come through, “the valley of the shadow of death and would fear no evil for you are with me”. (*Ps 23:7*) I now had my feet planted on the mountain. “How beautiful on the mountain are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion “Your God reigns!” (*Isa 52:7*)

I remember Mary being there and I could only tell her to pray. She considered this momentarily and then maybe as an after-thought, that maybe there was something in specific she should pray about she asked me. Clearly I remember saying very emotionally; “Thank Him!” That was it; next time I came to I was in the cardiac ward room. Apparently in the ICU, I also just stopped breathing for a while. I suppose that caused a little bit of excitement.

Becoming more aware of my surroundings, I was delighted to see Mary sitting there and a little later Jacob appeared. I know I was not very spry at that point, but it was then that I was so acutely aware that I was really loved. It was in the eyes more than what was said. It wasn't long before I was being filled full of pills and jabs and falling asleep, so they went home. Only to return the following day and Mary showed up every day like clockwork. What a trooper ... my hero.

Every morning, first thing, a little lady would come in and tell me to get up so that I could get weighed. Apparently, this was to ensure that the couple of gallons of fluid I had taken on during surgery was actually being relieved. I didn't know they were also monitoring my urine for blood contamination, via a catheterization.

Then there were the orderlies who very diligent to ensure that I “hugged my baby”. The baby in this case was a folded blanket that I held across my chest tightly, and was instructed to have ten deep breaths followed by two good coughs. This was to be done four times a day, which I dreaded. The nurse made sure that my reflection of the degree of pain didn't get above 2 on a scale 0 to 10 where 0 was no pain and 10 the worst pain I had ever experienced. It was like I could feel my chest opening up where they split the breast bone, and coughing, well that was just awful. This guy also told me how to cantilever my body to bring myself upright without having to apply pressure across my chest as happens when using your arms. I also had to lie on my back, not my side, and not to cross my ankles, but to flex my foot back and forth to improve circulation in my legs.

I didn't have a clock for the first four days, so I had no chronological awareness until Mary arrived. So my time was spent remembering God's promises to me, That he would never leave me or forsake me, He would heal me, He would strengthen me, He would love me beyond all measure. Mary brought me a reminder, a stone engraved: *Ps 40:4* “Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord”. I found I had the ability to recall hymns, like “How great thou art”, and “Amazing Grace”, “Amazing Love”, “Trading my Sorrows”, “My God” and “Jesus Messiah”. The experience brought me closer to God than I had ever been and, I was being drowned in the Love of God himself.

A lot stemmed from the care I was receiving from everyone, from the “weigh in” lady to the surgeon, who by the way visited me three times in five days to basically stand at the end to the bed, look at me, ask me how I felt and pronounce that “I did really good”. Of course I have no inclination as to

what he was inferring, but later this would also become clear, remember for some ten weeks prior to the surgery I had prayed that Jesus would be with me, prayers by our church prayer team, through which there was much fear and tears released, Christian fellowship groups and many individuals, some who even visited me in my incapacitated state.

After two days the catheter was removed and I was now responsible for ensuring I didn't leak all over. This also required use of a bed bottle. There was also the removal of the chest cavity drainage pipes. That was an experience that I was unprepared for. Dr Samantha (something) performed this. Quite gingerly stating; "take a deep breath and hold it". At that moment, whoosh, these two drainage lines emerged from my chest about six, maybe seven inches in length. These left two bullet holes in my chest which took their own time to heal.

For every day, my physiotherapist had mapped out what progress was expected. These basically were short walks up and down the ward corridor, more walks every day, and eventually around the block of the ward. This would ultimately culminate in the climbing of the stairs, and that would allow me to go home, with her knowing I could ascend these without difficulty, since I had stairs at home.

Second day after surgery was beautiful day. I was already feeling "better". Walking a couple of times in the morning, and the news I would be taken for a shower in the afternoon. The shower. It was just great, even though all the injection sites are waterproofed and taped up. I just didn't want to leave. Modesty gets chucked out the window, when one gets the going over that I had had.

The third day was a bit of a setback, since I was encouraged to rise to go to the toilet, but with the effort first thing in the morning I decided as I was leaning against the bed to just use the locally handy bottle. As I was enjoying the relief of the moment, I suddenly had the urge for a major movement, but I couldn't stop the stream flow, and by remaining where I was leaning against the bed, was really going to make a mess of things. I managed to hobble to the toilet in time, although I didn't have time to get organised, still streaming away, when the charge nurse was outside the door, yelling at me to, "stop whatever I was doing and get back into bed, right now and I mean right now"! There was certain urgency in her voice that I hadn't heard before.

Apparently, alerted by the monitor dangling around my neck, I had gone into Atrial Fibrillation. By this time I had stopped streaming and just handed her the bottle, the rest would have to wait as I rolled back on to the bed. No sooner was I there, when they had a blood pressure cuff on, monitoring about 200 plus with no pulse! I knew this was not good. In a few moments a cardiac doctor from the same team was present and told me that I had not to move for the next four hours. More jabs and pills. I figure I had so many pills I could hear them rattling around inside me.

Mary knew something was wrong when she walked in, as I looked as if I had been demoralized. Still breakfast had arrived, looked at me, went cold and was later removed, when lunch came, also, to sit looking at me and then get removed. Still, by the afternoon I was up and away, struggling to get my assigned walks in. This was not a time to be delinquent on that front.

Now I had real reason, on top of else to give praise and acclamation to our God, and to thank our Lord Jesus for being with me once again. In fact he never ever left me alone. It was much later (maybe months) that the realization of the success of the surgery was not that my heart was repaired, but that the 12 inches between my head and my heart had been repaired. I reflect back on it all now and realize that maybe my connection to the Lord was a bit superficial, but the experience of his unfettered abundance and disposition of his love over me was tangible. It was as if I was breathing it in. I could compare it to scuba diving where at depth the compressed air becomes liquefied and it has the sensation of drinking air.

Every day I could give thanks, pray, sing praises and be strengthened in the Lord as I knew he was providing the healing to the engine that had just been refurbished. The surgeon had been notified

about the “A Fib”, but in true form he was there at the foot of the bed, saying; “You did real good.” For good measure he added, “looks like you will be with us another day, but we will try and have you home by Monday”. This was to be Victoria Day 2016.

That morning I didn’t wait, with full expectations of going home, I dressed for the occasion, and waited for the physiotherapist so we could climb the mountain of a staircase, and she could punch my ticket out of there. My desire was to run up them, but I held off not wanting to jeopardize my escape plan.

It was great to see Margaret helping Mary get me and my stuff and wheeled away in a wheel chair. Strange, that although capable of walking, a person has to ride out of the hospital, and there was Lee driving the vehicle around the block as parking is always difficult in that area, and there was a major construction addition/renovation going on at St Mikes at the same time. It was so good to feel the sun, breathe the air as my family wheeled me out of St Mikes on Victoria Day, 2016.

The following morning I was faced with the challenge of walking for five minutes six times that day. Five minutes didn’t get me much more than a hundred yards. Getting home was actually exhausting and an hour later the next walk would kick in. Every day henceforth the walks got longer, but the number got shorter, averaging about 30 minutes a day. By the 28th day I was walking for 40 minutes and covering close to two miles.

About ten days after leaving the hospital my left leg, where they harvested the vein, I managed to get an infection. This was a strange occurrence as the incision had healed and although the leg was heavily discoloured from the harvesting, it managed to camouflage the redness of the infection, but the leg was as hard as a lump of wood. Also this happened on the Saturday night, and who want to spend their Saturday night in a hospital waiting room. That also went for the Sunday, and what was the point of going on the Monday when I had a Doctor’s appointment on the Tuesday. Of course that gave the infection a good hold and caused me a lot of grief for about three weeks while the antibiotics did their job. Things had gotten bad enough that I had restarted the pain medication just so that I could walk. I had not been on any pain medication from the time I left the hospital.

Every day was a new day, with the walks allowing me quiet time with the Lord, all the time knowing that He was strengthening me. Prayer time and prayer meetings had been a very emotional time as I couldn’t grasp or comprehend just how much love God had for me, for the fear and uncertainty of surgery. The realization of this outpouring of love grabbed me by the throat such that I sometimes I couldn’t continue. Tears would stream down my face, yet, enough of being macho, I surrendered to God and received his grace with humble submission.

At five weeks, I had a visit to the surgeon. He was doing his follow up and a success here would allow me to drive, instead of being a passenger in the rear seats. This was necessary as a precaution against any impact where the air bags explosive force would have caved in my chest with the potential of damaging my heart, if not killing me. When asked about driving, he came up to me and full thrust with his forearm smacked me in the chest, and pronounced I would do fine. I didn’t even have to gasp. And this still a good six weeks away from being fully knit back together.

Freedom; I could come and go as I felt like it, but it also provided me with the ability to get started on the road to recovery with the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program courtesy of the provincial government. This is a great program and has done wonders in providing the tools I need to continue to progress, get stronger and return to a fitness level I haven’t known for a lot of years. Jogging and walking for a furlong alternatively covering a mile in about 13 minutes.

I am told that I am walking faster than the army. (Mind you I do not have to carry a pack.) The emotional stirring of my heart still causes me to choke. The love I have for my wife and my family, and life itself has only intensified. I now consider myself to have had a crusty shell (like a turtle), that

God's love wasn't penetrating enough to fill my heart. So I feel He just broke it open, and exposed the heart completely, filled it with love, and put it back, at the same time fitting me with a zipper that he could open my chest anytime and fill my heart up, if perchance I should use up all the love he packed in there.

In November 2016, I was fit and able (doctor and cardiologist approved) to be sent to France where I was unable to continue my walking regimen, so I exercised in my room. Due to space limitation I started doing push ups, and could only manage 4 at the outset. In two weeks I was up to 12 and now I can manage 25.

God has done His part, cardiologists have done their part, the surgeon has done his part, and the doctor has done his part, now it is up to me to do my part. Apparently the retrofit is good for twenty years.

I manage three miles in 53 minutes, and have elected to be part of the Cardiac Rehabilitation of others. God says; "Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act". (*Prov 3:27*). I believe this is the answer to the question asked at the beginning: "Have I been saved for a time such as this"? (*Est 4:14*) to be an example and an encouragement to others.

Jesus walks with me every day, and only by his strength have I been made whole. "... those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary they will walk and not faint." (*Isa 40:31*) So I; "Trust in the Lord with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding, in all my ways I acknowledge him and he will make my paths straight. (*Prov 3:5-6*)

My leg is still numb near the ankle, yet there is sensation where there was none, the bullet holes are fading, the zipper, ever present, is a reminder every day that God had a huge part in the fact that I am looking at myself in the mirror. "O Lord my God, I cried to you for help and you healed me. You brought me up from the grave and spared me ..." (*Ps 30:2-3*)

I lift up my hands in the sanctuary and praise the Lord (*Ps134:2*) for I am free, freed from the shackles of fear, death has lost its sting. I am new ... I am different. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has gone the new has come" (*2 Cor 5:17*)

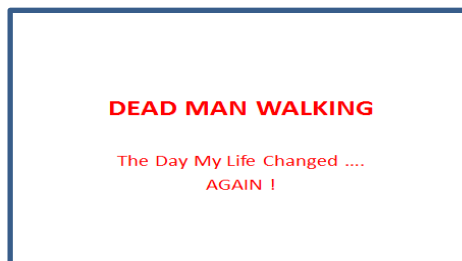
God's Promise

"... for I am the Lord who heals you".(*Ex 15:26*)

Promise Kept!

In His hands.

Bob Drummond





18th May 2016

This is it.
Surgery Awaits



ICU

And not a hair
out of place



Best sleep I had
for a long time



Not sure what this
was doing, but it is
looking at Blood.
I believe it is
draining from the
inner chest cavity.
I have two bullet
holes to prove it.



You want me to do
WHAT !

This lump is a monitor, so
they would know if
anything went a wry, as it
did the following day.



Glad they had this to
stick all the needles
into instead of me



My Hero

Personal Support team

