

THE BALM OF GILEAD

A FULL RECOVERY

'Who Took Me Out of the Cave?'

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'Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the LORD and wiped His feet with her hair.) So the sisters sent word to Jesus, LORD, the one you love is sick. When He heard this, Jesus said, This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it.' -John 11:1-4

Are there still miracles? What is a miracle? A miracle is defined as *an extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs*. Some would argue that they do not exist. Even some Believers in Christ believe such a 'Gift of the Spirit' does not operate now beyond the *Apostolic Age* while others do. Others do believe in 'miracles' but perhaps not as they occurred to the degree as they did during Jesus' ministry that was signaled by miracles. In fact, miracles were to be one of the Messiah's credentials of His authenticity according to Isaiah. Who but GOD alone could give back the blind sight, have the deaf hear, heal lepers, give life to limbs, raise the dead, etc. This was the question of John the Baptist to Jesus.

I like to share a *Praise Report* of what happened to me this summer. A miracle perhaps? I had a medical emergency. It was horrible, painful. I did not have time to inform anyone of my online family for prayers and petitions as it happened so fast and I remember hardly anything. I did not have access to my cell phone nor laptop to inform anyone. However, there were some that sensed a need to contact me and prayed for me. I later found out that through my family, which I am so grateful to still have, that they rallied together, were unified and had several churches doing prayer chains on my behalf. Spiritually, in looking back, I did have somewhat of a premonition that something was going to happen that involved a 'cave' or tomb and a 'sickness'.

Leading up to my medical emergency towards the end of June 2018, the LORD put it in my mind to ponder the *Garden Tomb* in some studies I did of it. Then I had for no expected reason a flashback to around 1993 when an African Brother came to our Assembly in the States and gave a report. His theme was, 'The one you love is sick' from John 11. In my case, I was told that my family was notified to come to northern California as soon as possible and expect the worst, my death. When they saw me in the hospital bed with all the tubes and machines connected to me, my mother told me that my father, *mi Apa* whom I cried out to, out-cried my mother in besieging YHVH for my 'Full Recovery'. As you can imagine, especially a father and/or mother, how they can be in anguish over the pain and suffering of a son or daughter. In fact, that was the supplication and petition my family prayed all the way during the road trip to see me.

The Unity of the Body

I am very thankful that my family was bold to ask for a 'Full Recovery' of which I will share for the sake of others. Perhaps some reading this testimony of my 'miracle' may be comforted in my witness of what Jesus did to me, for me; if not now, in the future. Some may find themselves in such conditions, medically now or will and in dire need of a united Body of Jesus praying for them. Many Christian Brothers and Sisters are battling all sorts of physical ailments and/or diseases. Now I do not know nor understand, even after decades of walking with Jesus why Jesus does not heal some and He does others. I cannot answer for other's condition and such that may be in dire need of healing due to physical illnesses and are suffering and in pain. I do not know why many fervently pray for physical deliverance and it does not come.

All I can say is that Jesus admonishes His Disciples to approach His *Throne of Grace* with prayer and petition, in faith. Jesus does hear all our prayers and He does answer them. I will spell out the details of how I experienced what I believe was/is a 'miracle' of a total restoration and recovery of my body. This medical emergency was probably the most emotional and intense trial of my life since coming to Jesus on April 9, 1980. It involved my physical body and I do not remember anything of it other than flashes of consciousness here and there. I had always been a sickly child. Growing up in a 3rd world nation, access to medicine was scare and substandard for the poor as it is today. I was told, for example that when I was around 3-4 years old, in taking a bus to the nearest city to see a doctor, my mother and aunt in one occasion had to get off the bus because they thought I had died. Sadly, such types of incidents occur daily even now.

Those that are blessed to be 'healthy' and have taken care of themselves can take the physical body for granted. I learned a whole new level of appreciation of just how complex and amazing the human body is in how it works and how it has to work, in unity. How can one not look at the functions of the human organs and not say there is at least a *Great Designer*. Moreover, we as Followers of Jesus know that He is the *Great Physician*. Jesus came to heal not only our *Broken Hearts* but our 'Broken Bodies' as well. For me, the physical pain was excruciating, but so was the mental pain as I lost track of time, consciousness and I did not know what was going on nor happening to me. I don't fully understand my 'miracle' and the details surrounding my medical emergency. Nonetheless, I share it publicly to encourage and comfort others as the Word states that issues and trials through illnesses are allowed to come our way.

In such times, the *Great Comforter*, GOD, the Holy Spirit comes along side us to comfort us so that with the comfort we receive, we can then comfort others that might find themselves in the same trials, illnesses, sufferings and/or pain or will be. All I can testify is what Jesus did for me and that I can personally say is that the LORD YHVH is a GOD of restoration and like Lazarus has taken me out of the 'Cave'. I basically was hours away from being clinically died. I had a convergence of all types of conditions that made it for a perfect 'storm' in my body. I was in the hospital *Intensive Care Unit* for about 10 days. The Doctors and Nurses say I am a 'miracle' for being alive. I am 'lucky' I am alive as the cliché goes. However, in speaking to a mother of one of my best friends thereafter, she rightly corrected me about Followers of Jesus being 'lucky'.

A Full Recovery

For a believing Christian, 'luck' has nothing to do with a 'miracle' or work of YHVH. It is our faith in Jesus that is working in us and at times, He uses our bodies. We know that Jesus bore our afflictions, our 'stripes' in His physical body so that we could be healed: Spirit, Soul and Body, etc. My testimony begins when during the course of some days off in June of 2018, because of the warm/hot weather, I attempted to turn on the shower with cold water to cool off. All I can remember is that I was attempting to go in and the next thing I know I am in the hospital. I was tied to a rack in bed because I pulled all my tubes out of my body, twice I was told. I had no clue what was going on other than I thought I was being tortured; it felt that way. I live in a 1-bedroom apartment upstairs and the neighbor downstairs called the apartment Manager because he heard my shower water running for just over 24 hours or about a day and a half.

The Manager following protocol, came in for a health check and possible plumbing issues and found me passed-out in the tub with the cold water still running over me. The Doctors told my family that the cold running water actually saved my life as I went into the beginning of *Hypothermia*, but all my organs were starting to freeze and shut down. I do not remember anything...and probably good for it. I was rushed in an ambulance to the local hospital and placed in the *Intensive Care Unit* ICU. I was told that if any more time would have passed, I would have not come out alive but would have died. It was an issue of hours for me. As noted, if I would have survived the ICU, it would have been a 'miracle' according to the Doctors due to the following compounded complications that the Doctors said a man with such conditions would not have made it. Here is the list of complications and why the Doctors and Nurses expected the worst, my eventual death.

- body temperature at -1.1 degrees Celsius or 30 Fahrenheit for about 1.5 days
- beginning states of hypothermia, organs 'freezing-up'
- body in shock
- signs of kidney failure
- internal bleeding in stomach, ruptured ulcers, pumped out about 1 liter or 1/3 gallon of blood
- brain swollen, possible brain damage
- swollen pancreas
- possible heart damage
- blood sugar level at nearly ~1500 (80-120 is normal, varies)

The Doctors prepared my family whom they called and came up during the 7-hour road trip to brace themselves for the worst. My family was told that people my age, in my 50s (52) usually would not have the resistance or strength to endure or survive such medical conditions and especially due to the 'off the charts' blood sugar level. I believe I now hold the record for northern California. The Doctors and Nurses told my family they had never seen such a case/number and did not believe I would survive the ICU or at best, if lived would probably be in a permanent vegetated state. If you were to ask me, spiritually speaking what occurred, it was horrible. I think I was spiritually attacked as it seemed I was wrestling with someone/thing, yet my blood was in my mouth, on my hands and walls, like a struggle had occurred. My sister whom helped me immensely thereafter stated that my apartment looked like a 'crime scene'. I have no recollection.

The Cave

I know I have issues and stress at work as we all do but I guess my body reached a threshold of sorts to the point of a 'fight or flight' event and thus the release of so much blood sugar. There are rare cases of being in a temporary diabetic coma due to *Ketoacidosis* and that is what is suspected I had medically. The Doctors and Nurses stated that normally those with such an 'off the chart' blood sugar level would have permanent damage of some sort, but they did not know what type and to what degree until I came out of it and did tests. Well, Jesus, our *Great Physician* had other plans, a 'Full Recovery' and that is what occurred and is still. I woke from the temporary diabetic coma that might have been triggered by the stomach ulcers unbeknown to me. However, there is a spiritual element Doctors do not consider or take into account. My mother told the Doctors and Nurses that I was surrounded and attended by an 'Army of Angels', and in more ways than one for those Followers of Jesus.

I was told that I was in-and-out of consciousness and in one episode when I came to, I told my mother, 'Who took me out of the Cave?' She responded, 'Jesus did.' Some of my family members asked if I saw the 'Light' or the 'Tunnel' but I could not remember anything. Perhaps some things were shown to me, but the LORD made it that I did not recall such things. The Doctors and Nurses were shocked and amazed I lived and on my way to a 'Full Recovery'. I was discharged from the hospital after 10 days. I was literally brought back from the dead, the place of the 'Cave'. It was a miracle. I have the charts to prove it. Blood sugar levels, normalized. They did an MRI, normal. Brain scan, normal. Heart scan, normal. Blood pressure, normal. Eye sight, same as before. Kidneys, restored. Pancreas, normal and producing insulin.

I was kidding with my family afterwards in that 'why I did not come out of this ordeal with some kind of super power'? I'll gladly wait for the *Glorified Body*, thank you. Nonetheless, my stay at the hospital was a great way to testify of how the LORD, Jesus restores and brings one out from the *Pit*...literally. The Doctors and Nurses commented on the unity of our family and the love shown to me during this trying time. I really have a greater appreciation for what Doctors in the *Emergency Room ER* and Nurses do. And if you see an ambulance in route, please make way. The person being transported could be you. Why did the LORD not take me? Well, realize that 1 of my life promises was and is that I would be alive at the time of the Rapture and not dead and that all my family, my household would go up together.

I believe the LORD honored this request since I became aware of the notion of a Rapture about 2 years after being saved in 1980. As I was reading the passage about 'being gathered-up and meeting Jesus in the air' in my dorm room in college, I had to re-read it several times. I needed to make sure I understood what it said as it seemed more spectacular than a Sci-Fi movie. What have I discerned from this so far? It was a wakeup call for my family. It was a wakeup call for me to have one's 'house in order', deal with 'secret sin' and allow the LORD to even use one's body as Lazarus for the glorification of the Son of GOD, Jesus. Many have told me that the LORD wanted me to be refined as silver and gold. In pondering the nearness of the *Gathering of the Bride*, I asked is it that close then?

What was the 'Cave' for me? Realize that out of all that occurred, I remember nothing but segments of certain parts. One situation that I do remember vividly was when I was put in the 'Cave'. This occurred in my sub-conscious and I was told I would come in and out of for the 1st 4 days. This was only revealed to me as we tried to make sense of what had just happened. And I wanted to know what was the 'Cave'? It came to me as once I was released from the hospital that in our conversations with family, I could not explain why I first said, 'Who took me out of the Cave?' It was only after sleeping on this that I asked GOD about it. It was then the next morning that I was made to understand, at least this part of the canvas it seemed. The 'Cave' consisted of a small hospital room, unapparent with a bed, computer by side, a tv flat screen on wall, a table by the side and barely enough room to walk in and out. I remember that it was attached to the main hospital but on the periphery it seemed.

I was lured by a hospital tour of sorts and asked to come in. It seemed it was a 'trap' to get me in there as several nurses and a male one that I named or would describe as a 'hippie'. He was the one that placed me in the bed when asked to get a blood pressure and heart reading. It was once I was laid down on the bed he strapped-down and tied my hands as to not 'escape'. I remember seeing my mother and sister come in the room after me and wanting to take a picture but I shouted at them to get out as I did not want any harm to come to them and also be 'trapped' in the 'Cave'. They eventually did leave and the door was shut. I could hear the conversation of about 3-4 nurses carrying on. One nurse would input some information on the computer by my bed. Another nurse would be helping her. Another nurse would just be there sitting looking straight at me all the time. I could sense that this was not right as I physically tried to free myself from the bands.

The 'Cave' it seemed was set up like a game or riddle in that one could 'escape' if one know the combination of a 'Cave'. It was like figuring out a riddle. I tried about 4 times in cracking the 'code' but every time the 'time' expired, the nurses would come back in. At one time, I almost made it to the door but as it opened, a guard was there in a police type of uniform. And the 'hippie' would show up and once again put me back in bed and strap me again. In one of those episode or trials, as it seems this 'Cave' was a trial, as the 'hippie' was placing me on the bed, I mentioned to him, 'you know you look like Jesus?' He sort of smiled a bit but said nothing. I continued in my struggle to 'escape' after he left. After about the 4th attempt I realized in my psyche that I could not 'crack' the code of the 'Cave' or room to be set free.

I was also so physically weak and exhausted that I could not even left myself up from the bed. Even if I would or could have escaped, I was only in a hospital gown, barefoot and plugged-in to some machines. Where would I go and to whom? It was then that I realized and made a conscious decision to be resolved to yield or 'surrender' my will to fight this circumstance. Was I fighting 'Jesus'? Was I wrestling with GOD all this time. Was this 'Cave' a trial of my faith and resolve? I came to the conclusion that if Jesus or 'GOD;' wanted me here and now, then so be it. The story of how Jacob wrestled with YHVH came to mind later as I got out of the hospital and then pondered what had happened and what was Jesus trying to show me or do to me?

The Preparation

One friend commented that perhaps the cold running water that 'preserved' me to give me enough time to be found could also be seen in a spiritual light. The water actually was spiritually cleansing me. The question I still ask is then, was/is this for a preparation of sorts? Of what? It was when this resignation to the will of Jesus occurred in my innermost being that then an indescribable 'peace' came over my body from my feet all the way to my head. After this, it was like as one 'sighs' in relief after a stressful moment and I was able to sleep thereafter. A comforting and peaceful sleep came over me for the first time in the hospital as I could not sleep since arriving. The next thing I knew is that when I awoke, no one was there of the nurses or the 'Jesus' hippie.

The door was open and no guard was there posted. My hands did not have any bands and I leaned forward from bed to start to walk out of the room or 'Cave'. Mind you, this was occurring in my sub-conscious. The next thing I then remember is waking-up in full consciousness although I don't remember even those times. However, it was when I was told that the first thing I said was to my mother that was next to me all along, 'who took me out of the Cave?' It was from that time that my body recovered dramatically. It was only after the 4th day –like in Lazarus' case that I started to function in full consciousness and be alert as to what was happening around me as I couldn't distinguish that before. It was from this point on that my physical body started to rapidly recover to the shock of the Doctors and Nurses.

Allow me to crossover and make some spiritual parallel comparisons based on my medical emergency. Was/is Jesus preparing me for the Rapture, our family, as He is His *Bride*? The LORD Jesus, the coming *Groom* will not have any compromise in His *Bride*. In many parables of the *Gospels*, I have come to appreciate just how many times Jesus likened His work, ministry and person to a *Groom* expectant of his *Bride*. Spiritually speaking, some may ask, who will go up in the Rapture, 'all Christians'? Well, the 'correct' answer is 'those that are Followers of Jesus', period. What Jesus did in giving His body and what He has for those that come to Him is all because of Grace alone through Faith alone, etc. However, in Revelation 19 Jesus reveals that His Bride 'makes herself ready'. What is going on here?

The key is that the *Bride* is given the 'vestiture' to be made ready with. It is an application as the *Bride of Christ* is making herself ready even now and for the past nearly 2000 years. *In Revelation 19:7-8 Jesus teaches us, 'Let us rejoice and celebrate and give Him the glory. For the Marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. She was given clothing of fine linen, linen bright and pure. For the fine linen she wears is the righteous acts of the Saints.'* The point is that in this present *Church Age*, there is a 'present tense salvation' occurring. One has written on this subject in the past but in context to my experience, Believers in Christ have an amazing opportunity to be co-workers, with the GOD the Holy Spirit to 'make the *Bride of Jesus* ready'. It is a glimpse of the partnership a Follower of Jesus has during this *Church Age* where the Holy Spirit is sealed eternally in a Disciple of Jesus and 'Good Works' are prepared to be fulfilled.

Thankfulness and Gratitude

All I can do is testify and share about the little strength I had physically and perhaps mentally; of how my body and faith were tested. Did I pass? All I can say is that in those episodes of consciousness and struggle to ascertain what was going on, I called out to Jesus. And in my physical strength attempting to escape the 'torture' of the rack I eventually resigned in my being that if my body was to be used for Jesus' Glory, so be it. I was reminded of the *Philadelphian Church* that had 'little strength' but had heart. In fact, their heart made all the difference.

Such a gathering of Believers loved their fellow *Brethren* and no doubt prayed for one another and in times when some were physically sick or even bedridden. They are an example of a unified body, bold in prayer for the sake of others. Personally, prayer is not my strongest gift, which has been one of my lifelong prayers to become prayerful. One knows that the battle is lost or won in prayer, but Jesus is not done with me yet or else He would have taken me. We know that we 'wrestle not with flesh and blood', etc. Did I wrestle with something?

Regardless, it was Jesus that wrestled on our behalf to secure a full salvation; Body, Soul and Spirit. Because of His great work, we await the last portion, our *Glorified Body*, a physical one yet able to abide in Heaven and see the *Face of YHVH* and not die. This is promised to those Followers of Jesus at the *Catching Way*. In the meanwhile, Jesus is healing. As Isaiah said of the coming Messiah, the *Great Physician*, 'A bruised reed He will not break and a smoldering wick He will not extinguish.' He maybe healing bodies but there is something far more precious that Jesus wishes to heal, that is your heart, your Soul, your Spirit.

Jesus gave His body on the *Cross of Calvary* and be put in the 'Cave' of Death to redeem Humanity by the blood that was in that body, a perfect uncontaminated one. In fact, it was and will be the only one of its kind. More important than a physical healing you might need or are asking for, is your need for the healing of your Spirit and Soul. Jesus secured this complete 3-fold redemption at the *Cross of Calvary* because of His great love for GOD the Father and the promise and expectation of a *Bride* that is perhaps soon to be gathered-up. I take this opportunity to extend an invitation to come to Jesus, this *Great Physician* and be part of this *Great Gathering* and *Catching Away*.

Admit that one is a sinner as no one is 'good' enough nor ever will be, except Jesus.
Believe in the Name of Jesus, that He alone is the answer of where one will spend Eternity.
Call upon the Name of Jesus and you will be saved as you put your faith and trust in Him.

I like to personally thank Jesus for a 'Full Recovery' that is unfolding. Thank You Jesus, my Savior and my LORD. Thank You for taking me out of the 'Cave' and using my body, if needed to glorify the Son of GOD, Jesus. Jesus used many people during my medical emergency. I like to thank the neighbor downstairs, that noticed the running water and called for help. I want to thank the apartment Manager for the protocol she followed. It made all the difference in my life in terms of only hours I had to live. Thank you for the ambulance paramedics that administered *First Aid*.

Thank the LORD for the Doctors and Nurses, especially one named Laura. Thank you Jesus for unifying my family in greater and unexpected ways. I like to thank my extended family of cousins and all those in Churches and Bible Studies we did not even know of that were praying for my Full Recovery and still are. Thank you Jesus for a quick work. I like to thank Paul Dawson of *YouTube Channel: RevelationChapter12dotCom* for having a premonition of needing to contact me and pray for me. Perhaps other online family also did unawares, Thank You. Thank You Jesus that you are the *Great Physician*. You are the *Balm of Gilead*, the restorer of not only our Spirit, Soul, but our Bodies.

As mentioned above, I do not know what the heck happened other than what has been told to me. For me, it was like the blind man that was given sight by Jesus on the Sabbath. He could only testify, 'I was once blind, but now I see'. All I can say is that I am a 'miracle', hours from Death but now alive with no permanent damage and fully recovering. All I can settle in knowing and have peace about is that I do understand that Jesus uses sickness and death and near-death experiences to display His Glory and reveal His power over life and death. If I was to be a 'Lazarus' to display the Glory of the Father so that GOD's Son, Jesus may be glorified, be it so as Jesus took Lazarus from the Cave.

Realize that in Jewish tradition, a dead corps is 'watched' for at least 3 days. Lazarus was in the 'Cave' 4 days. For me, it was only likewise on the 4th day that all my organs and mind stabilized and started to recovery, fast. A vigil is to ensure that the person does not come back from the dead. In the Greek, the word 'dead' used means a complete death, as in a separation of the body from the Spirit, etc. Thus, Lazarus went to *Abraham's Bosom* or 'Paradise'. He was not in a coma or in suspended animation. There is debate but it is understood, and many believe that Lazarus was resuscitated by Jesus.

Lazarus was not resurrected as that would have demanded the new *Gloried Body* that only Jesus has now and took on at the *3rd Day* when His Resurrection occurred as foretold, etc. Jesus used a willing Lazarus that perhaps had no idea what was going on or happening to his body but nonetheless was an example of a Disciple of Jesus that relinquished all, even his body. As Jesus stated, it was not unto death but for the purpose of fulfilling the plan of Jesus through him to glorify the power of Jesus over Lucifer, Sin, Death and Hell. To reiterate, I experienced a measure of physical pain, agony in a new way unknown before that otherwise would have left me dead.

Then a spiritual one in another way, uncharted in my personal relationship with Jesus. It is through sufferings that we do know and learn a greater level of fellowship with Jesus. I have a greater appreciation of how Jesus willingly chose to submit Himself, even through His physical body. Jesus truly experienced the physical torture and pain in His body. Why was this allowed of the Son of GOD? Jesus willingly took on the sins of Humanity upon Himself at the *Cross of Calvary* that was like a 'rack'. Jesus' body was then put in the 'Cave' for us so that He could take us out.

Moreover, Jesus gave His all, His death that released His blood from that body that can only atone for a sick, ill, dead and dying race of Adam and Eve. I covet your prayers that I continue in this 'Full Recovery' as I write this witness and that there will be no relapse of my medical emergency. I am taking it one day at a time. Even though I am a very private person, I was encouraged to share this witness with the world. I, Luis Vega testify that I was hours way from being physically dead and if the prospects of living were given that I would have been medically expected to come out at most in a permanent vegetative state.

I testify that it was Jesus' power over the 'Cave' that restored and is restoring my body, my mind, my faculties, my organs through the prayers of other Believers and Followers of Jesus for which I am eternally grateful. Many would/will say that the body heals itself and although this is true, it is only to an extent. Jeremiah 8:22 states, 'Is there no *Balm in Gilead*? Is no Physician there? Why then has the health of the *Daughter of my People* not been restored?' Did I experience a miracle? *Was there an extraordinary event? Was there a manifesting divine intervention? Is there a restoration?*

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Psalm 27

<http://www.postscripts.org/ps-news-316.html>