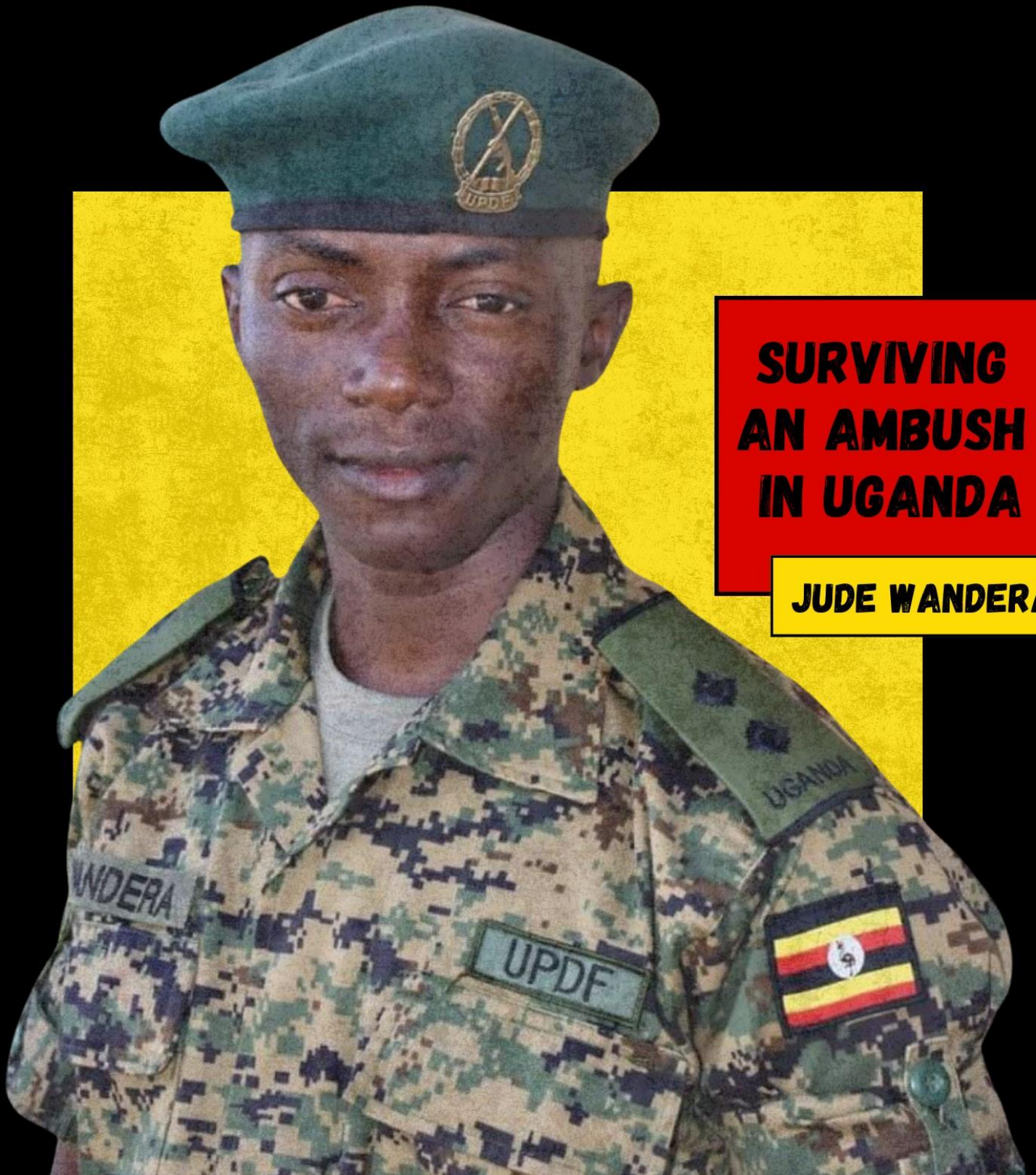


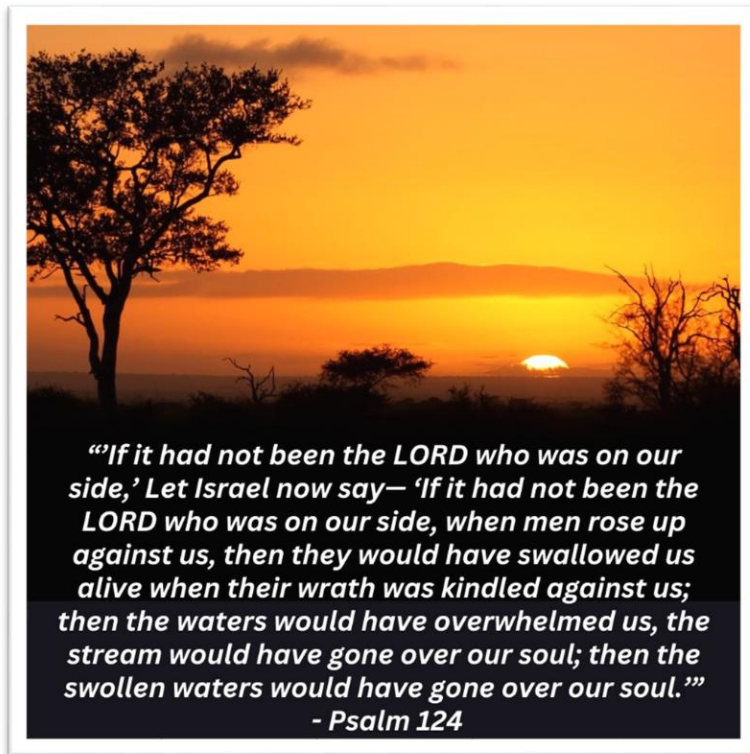
SPARED FOR GOD'S GLORY



**SURVIVING
AN AMBUSH
IN UGANDA**

JUDE WANDERA

DEDICATION

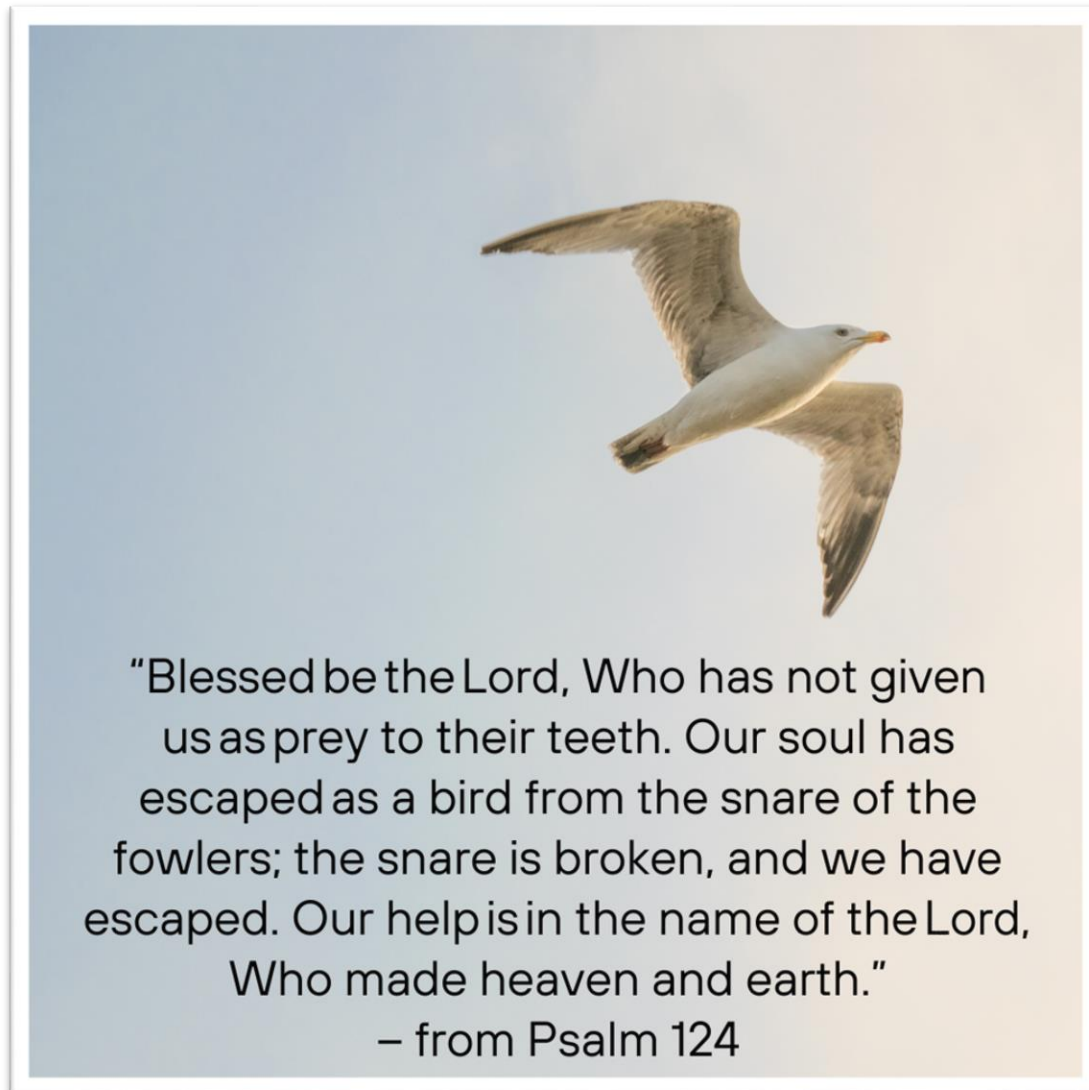


This book is dedicated to uniformed men and women, all those experiencing trauma, and the body of Christ at large. It is especially dedicated to our two fallen comrades, who were killed in action by cattle rustlers during the same ambush that left me with a bullet in the face. Private Odong Patrick and Private Ogobi Jacob, your sacrifices will never be forgotten. May God never forget your families.

Psalms 68:5 tells us that God is “a Father of the fatherless and a Judge and a protector of the widows is God in his holy Habitation.” May your families always know God is with them.

This book is also dedicated to these gallant Ugandan warriors: Pte. Otim Richard, Pte. Oyet Richard, Pte. Ochieng James, Pte. Komaketch Daniel, Pte. Okello Tonny, Pte. Okello Davis, Pte. Ogwok Charles and Pte. Sedrick, and Pte. Orach Norbert Carlos. You exhibited extraordinary courage, obedience, unity, love, honesty, and accountability as military men when I became a casualty. You labored to carry me on your backs rotationally when I couldn’t move any further, ensuring that I was evacuated successfully and taken to the hospital. I live today partly because you stood with me in those horrific hours. May God always defend you and your families in Jesus’ mighty name. (Psalms 20: 1-9)

To Lt. Col Amandi, Maj. Bruhan Aisuga, Lt. Benjamin Elasu , Lt. Mwesigwa Silver, L/Cpl Ayinza Jason and Pte. Angena Bonny - your efforts, quick intervention, and coordination for my evacuation from Dr. Ambrosoli Hospital to our General Military Referral Hospital - Bombo was not in vain and will never be forgotten. Only God can reward you.



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CHAPTER 1

A Bullet to the Face

The ambush in Northern Uganda took the lives of two of my soldiers and left me with a bullet in my face, bleeding out while still trying to command my unit to safety. That's not the starting line that leads you to believe there is a happy ending to this story. But by the grace of God, I was blessed to survive that ambush and tell the story of God's faithfulness!

An ambush, a term that carries ominous weight, is the sordid story of an adversary patiently awaiting the best moment to strike. In an ambush, the element of surprise often tilts the scale in favor of the aggressor.

Biblically, God himself – orchestrating divine strategies - used ambushes against the enemies of his children, the Israelites, as in 2 Chronicles 20:22 where the Lord set ambushes against the enemies, turning their aggression into self-destruction: *"And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir who had come against Judah, and they were [self-]slaughtered."*

Joshua 8:2 further narrates God's order to lay an ambush against the city of Ai: *"And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king, except that its spoil and its cattle [this time] you shall take as booty for yourselves. Lay an ambush against the city behind it."*

These biblical accounts portray ambushes not just as military tactics but as divine interventions, where God's unseen hand guides the destiny of nations – and even individuals within those nations.

Through my experience as a military officer in Uganda's People Defense Force, and surviving an attack by merciless cattle rustlers, I learned that God's unseen hand was guiding my life, allowing me to survive an enemy ambush and return to my wife and children.

civilian and were stealing over 70 heads of cattle. I immediately got offline and engaged with my commander to determine the next course of action.

I was tasked to track the rustlers with the main squad. With the commanding officer, we moved off to the suspected crossing points. As we neared Lai trading center, the distant sounds of gunfire reverberated through the night. Another squad was already engaged with the rustlers, but they had slipped away with the stolen cattle.

Our squad merged with the other, and – tracking them by moonlight and taking necessary precautions for our the safety of our unit – the swift pursuit took us to Wiilyec village.



After tracking for over two hours, under the guidance of my superiors and in coordination with other squads, the enemy struck with brutal precision in a diagonal ambush. I sent a “contact – wait out” report immediately. In the ensuing chaos, two soldiers were killed immediately and I was shot through the left cheek. The bullet drilled through my jaw and teeth in microseconds. In those first seconds unconsciousness engulfed me, but suddenly light was all around me and the darkness disappeared. I regained consciousness and, seeing the battle still raging, knew I still had the responsibility of command. I

got up to command my squad to neutralize the enemy with maximum fire power.

"In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men." John 1:4

"And the Light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never overpowered it [put it out or absorbed it or appropriated it and is unreceptive to it]." John 1:5

After analyzing the situation and seeing that we had neutralized the enemy, I realized I had to pay attention to the excessive bleeding from my wound. I informed my commanding officer on the radio and requested evacuation.

I called one of my men, Oyet, over to me and told him to use my phone's flashlight to look at the wound. "Oyet, do you think I am going to survive?"

He was frightened, but he replied, "Sir, you're going to survive."

I felt like I should notify my people that I was dying but knew that was the devil whispering hopelessness in my ear. I knew the Dr. Ambrosoli Referral Hospital in Kalongo Town was over 20 kilometers away, and the land cruiser we normally use for evacuation couldn't access us due to the harsh terrain and weather factors. It had started out toward us but, disastrously, had gotten stuck in mud over 15 kilometers away from our location.

"With this bleeding, you won't live through this," came the unbidden thought.

I got my phone out started scrolling through phone numbers – my wife's, my pastor's, and a few close friends at home. "What should I tell them? How can tell them I'm dying?" I asked myself, but then precipitously the Spirit of God endowed me with strength, and I instructed my escort to switch off my phone and take it away from me. I tore off my shirts and we bandaged the wound with the fabric.

We were expecting the rustlers to reorganize and cause more mayhem. Desperation lingered in the air as we faced the harsh reality of being stranded. With the land cruiser immobilized in the mud, evacuation wasn't possible. The hostile surroundings forced us to change our strategies, knowing that the enemy could regroup at any moment.

In a moment of divine inspiration, I contacted the nearby detach by radio and instructed them to fire one bullet in the air for us to get our bearing. They did so, and so became our compass. Even as we marched quickly toward them, I had to continue leading my troops and we had to fight until the enemy ran off in disarray. I remember thinking, "It's undeniable - I have been shot and am

bleeding heavily. But since I can still speak and breathe, I have the opportunity to continue giving guidance to my subordinates. I'll put aside the issue of the wound until later."

For military people, we often have to push forward even while injured, knowing that the battle is not yet over. Carrying on the operation while bleeding became a tangible reminder that life's adversities do not pause for our wounds.

The journey was a race against time and circumstances. During that journey of approximately six kilometers, I frequently felt dizzy and my squad had to rotate carrying me on their backs. After we joined them, Private Achilam Bageldo, who had brought his motorcycle to the operation, used it to get us to the hospital over 20 kilometers. How blessed that he had enough fuel to get us there!

While on the way to the hospital, the terrain became a very big obstacle to our movement as it had rained heavily. We couldn't go faster than 30 kilometers (18.64 mi) per hour, all while expecting another ambush on the way.

Chapter 3

My Life Up to the Shooting

Before we go further, let's go back in time a bit. I am the son of Mr. Wandera Paul and Mrs. Wandera Regina, both from Butalejja District in Eastern Uganda. My parents migrated to Kaliro District where I was raised up and started my education journey from Kaliro Church Primary School, Kaliro High School, Uganda Institute of Business and Media Studies in Kampala (UIBMS), Cavendish University Uganda in Kampala, and World Video Bible School Based in Texas.

As a younger man, I stopped at the Miracle Centre Cathedral daily after school. I enjoyed the praise and worship sessions, and on 1 April 2007 I made a strong decision to accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior at the center, which was pastored by Robert Kayanja. I then took discipleship classes, where the Holy Spirit ignited me to preach the gospel. In 2008, I joined my home church, Kaliro Miracle Centre pastored by Nafula Harriet Ibanda, where I was spiritually fortified through daily inductive Bible studies. I also fellowshipped with Christians after my studies at Uganda Institute of Business and Media studies (where I earned a diploma in journalism).

While serving God faithfully at Kaliro Miracle Centre, God visited me in multiple dreams and visions instructing me to go and serve him in military service. This was one of the most difficult and painful decisions I have ever made in my life. I shared this calling with my pastor and little did I know that God had ALREADY told her about my upcoming military destiny. She told me, "I thank God that He has finally spoken to you. I was hesitant to tell you, but God told me about you joining the military, and I believe victory awaits." My church family took time to pray for me as I started this new career, and as they prayed I saw three stars on each of my shoulders. I didn't know what that vision meant, but I joined military basic training at Kaweweta Recruit Training School, after which I had the rank of private.



After four years of service, I was nominated to go for a cadet course at the Uganda Military Academy for a year. After attending those courses, I was commissioned as a second lieutenant and was later promoted to full lieutenant. The vision of three stars on each of my shoulders is now on its way coming true. I also took short military courses, including Peace Support Training.

I officially married Namuganza Irene on 12 November 2016 and God has blessed us with three sons: Mwesigwa Benaiah (six years), Muwanguzi Benjamin (four Years) and Mulwanyi Jedidiah (two years). After I was shot by cattle rustlers, my thoughts immediately went to my family and the worry they would endure because of this injury.

CHAPTER 4

Bleeding Out

"We are hedged in (pressed) on every side [troubled and oppressed in every way], but not cramped or crushed; we suffer embarrassments and are perplexed and unable to find a way out, but not driven to despair. We are pursued (persecuted and hard driven), but not deserted [to stand alone]; we are struck down to the ground, but never struck out and destroyed." - 2 Corinthians 4:8-9



I am alive today partly because God used my wonderful squad took care of me after I was shot. Every day they lay their lives on the line to ensure the people of our nation and around the world can enjoy sleep, stability, peace, and tranquility. I am thankful for their work and commitment to our nation! Although we had used my shirt to bandage the gunshot wound in my face, I continued to bleed for over three hours. It took

us about an hour and a half to get the 20 kilometers to the mission hospital.

By the time we arrived at the hospital around 4:30 AM, 95% of my clothes were blood-stained and I was weak and dizzy.

"Doctor, I need blood. My life is going out of me!" I told them as I was rushed into the room. The doctors quickly cleaned my wound, put me on a drip, and performed several tests. Those tests showed that I didn't need extra blood. This was the beginning point of my realization that I was going to heal and live. As I lay on the bed, I asked myself, "How is it possible I still have enough blood after bleeding for over three hours? Whose blood am I bleeding?" Then I remembered that Jesus had gushed out His blood for us on the cross, and I was filled with joy.

"If you live in Me [abide vitally united to Me] and My words remain in you and continue to live in your hearts, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you." - John 15:7

Jesus came to this earth with the divine motive of loving people and dying to save the entire human race from their sins. He was persecuted, arrested, and flogged. He spurted out blood for mankind to attain victory and life in abundance as we sojourn planet earth. Jesus already spilt blood for us. It has more than enough power to heal, save, protect, and speak for us. No other blood could provide for our redemption except His!

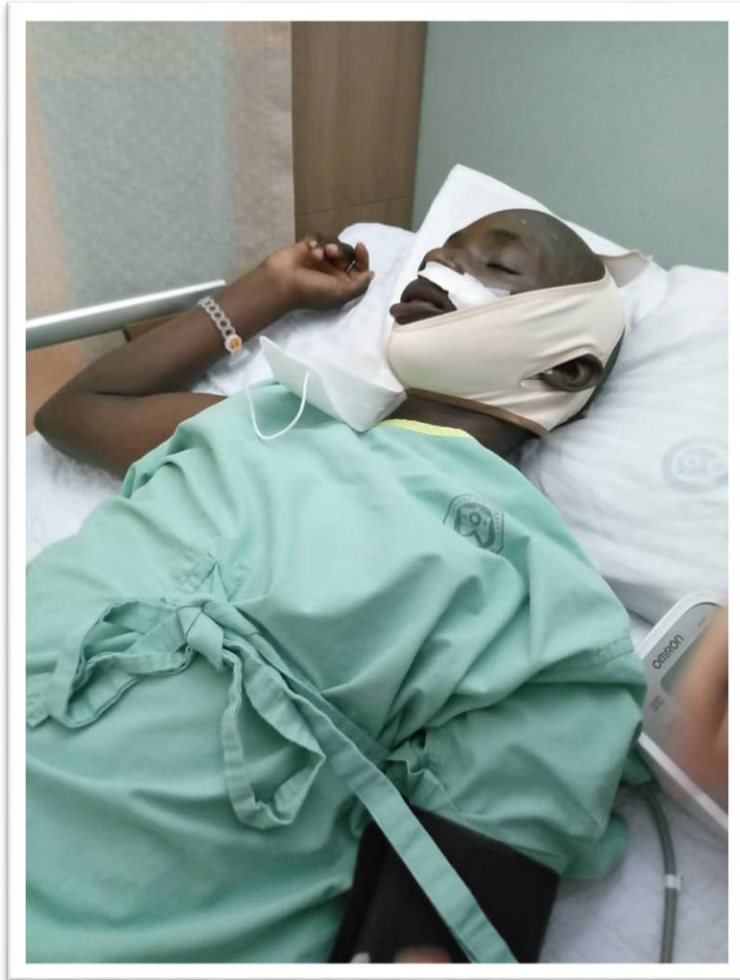
"The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)." - John 10:10

"And to Jesus, the Mediator (Go-between, Agent) of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood which speaks [of mercy], a better and nobler and more gracious message than the blood of Abel [which cried out for vengeance]." - Hebrews 12:24

"Because the blood of bulls and goats is powerless to take sins away." - Hebrews 10:4

CHAPTER 5

General Military Referral Hospital - Bombo



After receiving first aid at the Dr. Ambrosoli Referral Hospital, I was transferred to Bombo General Military Referral Hospital, which was 422 kilometers away. Doctor Ocen William and his team conducted successful surgery on my head on 9 September.

For many days after the surgery, I continued to receive excellent treatment in the officers' ward and stabilized. Dr. Edube also conducted a dental surgery to ensure my healing. That surgery locked my mouth shut for

six weeks, which meant I could only take in liquid nutrition.

After six weeks, Doctor Edube removed the braces. I was full of anxiety, but also hungering for solid food - especially roasted meat or chicken! Unfortunately, I was told that I still wasn't healed enough for solid foods so continued on my liquid diet.

After I was released and began my journey home, we made a stopover at Najjemba to buy food. After six weeks of only liquid, I still had a deep craving for roasted chicken, so I bought some. But to my chagrin, I couldn't eat it at all. My mouth was still locked shut. I shed tears of frustration and wondered when – or if – I'd be able to eat solid food.

I had lost multiple teeth due to the bullet going through my jaw, but that didn't mean my remaining teeth were in good shape. 90% of them were painful and loose, which made me worry that I'd never be able to chew with them again. Once home, my wife Irene tried all she could to ensure I could eat. She cooked up smashed Irish potatoes but I could still only take in fluids.

While finishing my recovery at home, I had checkups at Musana Health Centre in Kaliro by Doctor Ivan and his team of nurses, who dressed the wound. I also saw Doctor Mukisa and Apostle Paul, a clinical officer, at Doctor Katamba's health facility in Kaliro Town for advice on how to handle the wound.

I continued routine mouth exercises which the doctors had taught me, and I was grateful to God that, as time went on, I started being able to open my mouth slowly. Eventually I tried to chew soft foods like eggs and Irish potatoes, but I could only do so using the teeth on the right side as most of the teeth on the left were gone or damaged.

One of the great lessons learnt through the first phase of dental surgery healing process after over 40 days without solid food was that of Matthew 4:4: *"But He replied, 'It has been written, man shall not live and be upheld and sustained by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"*

CHAPTER 6

Help from the International Family of God

Because I was a member of the MCF of Uganda, in 2019 I participated in the online version of ACCTS' leadership training program called Interaction-Rocky Mountain High. Since that training, I've stayed in contact with ACCTS, and as noted earlier was taking a Trauma Healing course with ACCTS at the time of the shooting. I'd also been involved in their military ethics program and had become an ethics intern with this organization.

ACCTS' purpose is to assist in the development of Christian leaders in the armed forces of the world and in the establishment and growth of military Christian fellowships. They are a partner organization to AMCF, of which the MCF of Uganda is a member.

Within hours of being shot by the cattle rustlers, ACCTS had sent out a prayer request for me to international military and civilian Christians around the world. They also shared that prayer request with its sister program organizations like Military Ministries International (MMI) in the UK and Mission Support Organization (MSO) in South Korea.

Injured Soldier Needs Prayer

We appreciate your prayers -- as do international military Christians!

This week, a young military Christian in Uganda, while participating in an ACCTS online Trauma Healing training program, was called out of the program to fulfill a duty assignment to apprehend cattle raiders. While on that assignment, two men in his unit were killed and Jude was shot in the face - between his nose and left eye. Despite his injury, he was able to email our staff member Emanuela (one of the program leaders) to tell her what happened and ask for prayers. He was evacuated to Kampala for surgery. Today, Jude's wife reports that he is out of surgery and recovering well, but will need at least one more further surgery (dental). Please pray for Jude's complete healing, and be in prayer for the families of the two military personnel who were killed. In addition to participating in the Trauma Healing program, Jude has been a previous participant in ACCTS' I-RMH leadership program and is our current military ethics intern. He has a heart devoted to God and military ministry and is being used strongly by God to further His kingdom.

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Not only did brothers and sisters around the world pray for me, but MSO sent some financial support through Professor Yoon and our AMCF Vice President for East Africa, Maj Gen (Rtd) David Wakaalo. They also shared the possibility of getting me to South Korea for advanced treatment on my injuries, and they invited me to come to Seoul for that purpose.

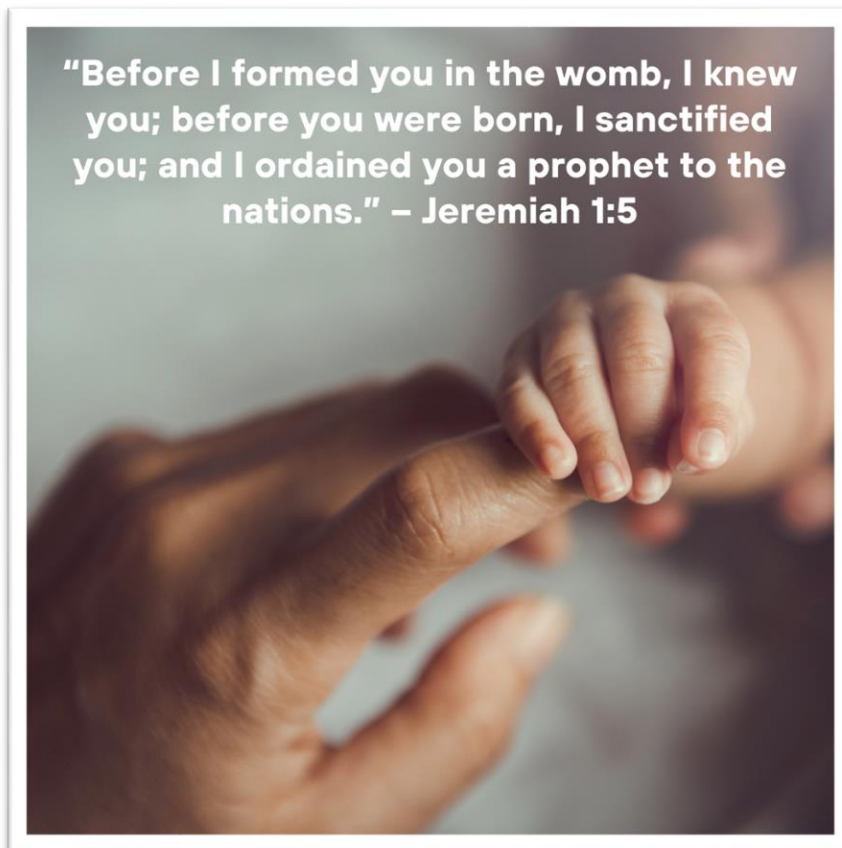


While I was recovering at home, my beloved sons -- Benaiah, Benjamin and Jedidiah -- endured a miserable and scary situation that had engulfed their daddy. My wife and I tried to ensure that they didn't see pictures of my injury immediately after the attack, but even so it affected them. A few months after I was shot, my

first-born, Benaiah, saw me donning my military uniform and told my wife, "Mummy, Daddy has put on his uniform. He is going to be shot at again. He should not wear that uniform again!" Hearing that, I could imagine the trauma that had entered his five-year-old mind because of the attack. When military personnel are injured, the repercussions reverberate not only through their unit, but through their family and all who love them.

I believe Jeremiah 1:5 has been manifested in my life, for God knew what was going to happen to me and paved the way for me to join ACCTS as an intern and to take the Trauma Healing course so I could get prepared to manage the trauma I was about to face, as well as helping others to maneuver through such experiences. The skills acquired through it were a great help throughout my healing. Even as I was discharged to recover at home, where people from the same tribe of the rustlers who'd injured me lived, I remembered their

prayers and the lessons learned. Every time I passed by some of those tribal people, the devil tried to whisper to me to pick my weapon and kill them for revenge. I had a lot of grief in my heart and still felt horror from the attack, but the Holy Spirit reminded me always to pray, forgive, forget, and move on with life.



CHAPTER 7

Prayer Warriors and Friends



At each step of the way, medical doctors did amazing work to keep me alive. However, without the prayers of God's people, I'm not sure I would have come through this event alive. I believe God used their prayers as well as the doctors to work His healing in my body.

My wife, Mrs. Irene Wandera, prayed faithfully. She is a virtuous wife who has always held up my hands. Her support reminds me of Exodus 17:11-12: *"When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and when he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy and grew weary. So [the other men] took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Then Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side and one on the other side; so his hands*

were steady until the going down of the sun."

My home pastor, Nafula Harriet Ibanda, and her husband, Pastor Christopher Ibanda, were immediate prayer warriors. She visited me in the military hospital and prayed with me, leading me through the entire chapter of Psalm 18. She has been an exemplar in teaching us to pray, to have faith in God, to have courage, and to study the Word of God daily. Members from my home church, Kaliro Miracle Centre, prayed unceasingly for me and gave overwhelming support to my family. We were humbled by their love.

The MODVA (Ministry of Defense and Veterans Affairs) Workplace Fellowship also gave impeccable support to me, under the leadership and guidance of our patron, Madam Edith Buturo, the Undersecretary of Finance MODVA/UPDF.

Pr. Capt. Ivan Kajuba, who is also a member of the military Christian fellowship of Uganda, was led by the Holy Spirit into fasting and prayer for my healing. God gave him a dream that I would be taken abroad for specialized treatment and come back without the big facial scar - and indeed it came to pass nine months after that dream.

Around January 2022, while I was still very sick from the attack, we joined Pastor Nafula Harriet Ibanda for a five-day evangelism campaign in Sifuyo Busia District. I shared my testimony briefly, and afterward we prayed for people. The Holy Spirit manifested God's power during those five days and many received healing during altar calls, and many confessed Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This reminded me that, when I asked God why He allowed such a tragedy to happen to me, the Holy Spirit whispered to me, "Go and preach the good news to the ends of the world, sharing your testimony."

CHAPTER 8

A Bridge Between AMCF, Severance Hospital, and a Patient

God used people around the world to enable my healing. I'm so thankful for Professor Moonsoo Yoon from the Central Military Chapel in South Korea. He is a retired Lt. Col., a member of the Mission Support Organization in South Korea, and a member of the AMCF. He is also the Visiting Professor and the Chief of Global Health Security Division for the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM), College of Medicine, Yonsei University in South Korea.

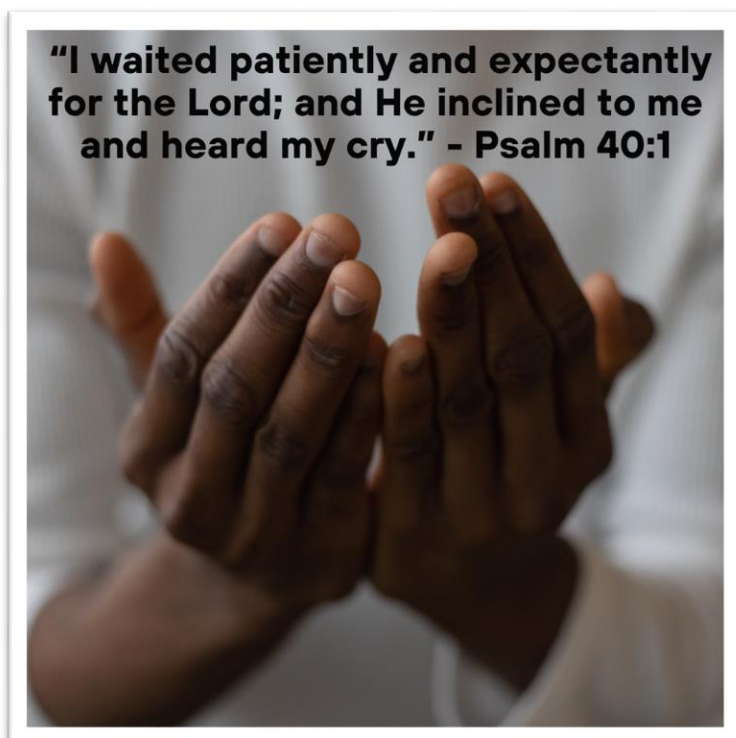
He was a bridge that, through God's grace, connected me to Yonsei University College of Medicine – Severance Hospital for further treatment for my wounds. Professor Yoon already knew Dr. Emmanuel, Dr. Douglas, and others from the Uganda Ministry of Health because they had trained at Yonsei University. He also had good Christian relationships with others from the Ugandan Ministry of Health.

Shortly after I was shot, Professor Yoon had sent out a prayer request for me in a Whatsapp prayer group, and that group prayed continuously. Peter Ahabwe Babigumira was the engine of this WhatsApp prayer room. Professor Yoon had also included Anthony Wandera, Jude's younger brother, in this prayer group. Coincidentally, Anthony is earning his Master's Degree in Korea through a full scholarship.

Professor Yoon contacted the director of the Medical Mission Center in Yonsei University College of Medicine, Professor (Chaplain) Chin Pak. Professor Pak, and Professor Paul Wonkyu Choi of the Medical Mission Center. They called a meeting with the Severance Social Work team members, and from that group Mr. Sang Min An from completed all the administrative work (air travel, hospitalization and appointments with all of doctors, communication with Moonsoo) for me to travel to South Korea for more advanced surgery on my wound.

CHAPTER 9

Severance Hospital – First Treatment Trip



Starting in October 2022, Mission Support Organization in South Korea worked in tandem with doctors from the prestigious Severance Hospital Yonsei University, developing modalities of how I could fly to Seoul for specialized treatment. This mission hospital was established in 1885 by an American missionary and is located in Sinchuhon-dong, just three kilometers from

Seoul. It is a prestigious, internationally renowned hospital.

In June 2023, they arranged for my wife Irene and I to fly into Incheon International Airport in South Korea. The pleasant reception, hospitality, love, and care exhibited through Professor Yoon outmatched our expectations. Indeed, South Koreans are a superlative people when it comes to exhibiting the real love of Christ to others. 1 John 4:20 says, *"If anyone says, I love God, and hates (detests; abominates) his brother [in Christ] he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen."* Through the South Koreans, I saw the love of God exhibited fully in my life and in my family's life.

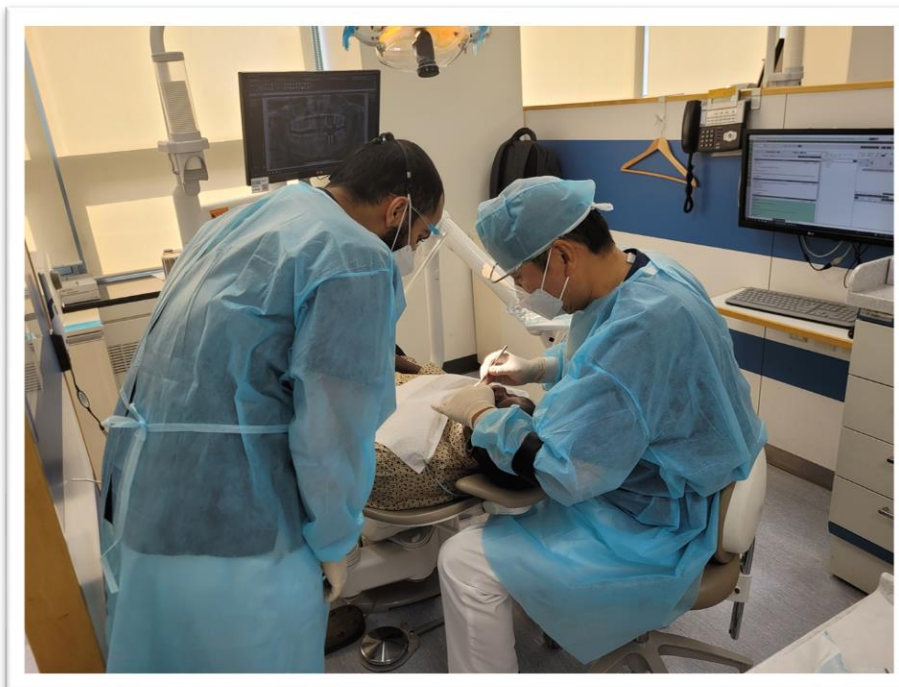
Because of this trip to Korea, I was privileged to join the closing ceremony of the MSO's 2023 Military Evangelism Observation program in June. This annual event is a training program for international military Christians from multiple countries. At that meeting I met with quick-witted uniformed Christian men and women who served God. Some were retired from military service but were

not tired of serving God! At this meeting I also met our beloved ACCTS' Executive Director, Col. (USMC, Ret.) Philip Exner.

At the MEO program, the MSO Chairman, Maj. General (Rtd) Park Nam-Pil gave a farewell address thanking all participants and encouraging them to embrace evangelism in their militaries. General Lee, Pil-Sup of South Korea, who is a former AMCF president, also narrated briefly how far God had brought the Republic of South Korea - from dust to one of the ten superpowers on the globe.

After that program, I was first tested for COVID-19, then admitted into Severance Hospital for further treatment. My wife and I were filled with amazement at to the level of expertise and professionalism of all the medical personnel, from the doctors to the nurses, including Park Soojin and Minji Huang.

On the evening of 26th June, surgery commenced on my teeth. The surgery included dental implants placements by Professor Hoon Jae Lee, and plastic and oral facial surgeries by Senior Surgeon Prof. Lew Dae Hyun and team.



As I was taken into the surgical theater, I was welcomed by words of life from the Holy Bible that were written over the entrance. Those words were from Isaiah 41:10, which states, “Fear not [there is

nothing to fear], for I am with you; do not look around you in terror and be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen and harden you to difficulties, yes, I will help you; yes, I will hold you up and retain you with My [victorious] right hand of rightness and justice.”

These words amplified my faith in God and my courage, allowing myself to see that I would be “more than a conqueror,” as Romans 8:31 states. They conducted all surgeries successfully, one after the other, in over three hours.

Before the surgery, one of the surgeons had asked me, “Who is going to pay your bills? These implants are very expensive, and even in Korea only a few people could afford this. One implant goes for at least \$2,000 USD and you’re in need of four!”

Gazing at him, I replied that all of this was courtesy of Mission Support Organization in South Korea in conjunction with Severance Hospital. I later learnt that it was all paid for by Severance Hospital under its Global Charity Global Program, which has existed since 2011. Including airfare and surgery costs, the expenses in South Korea were over \$25,000 USD. That amount doesn’t include the expense that my own Ministry of Defense of Uganda had paid into my health, starting with the day I was injured. Truly, if it was not for God’s love as shown through His people, how could I have paid for all these expenses to restore my health?!

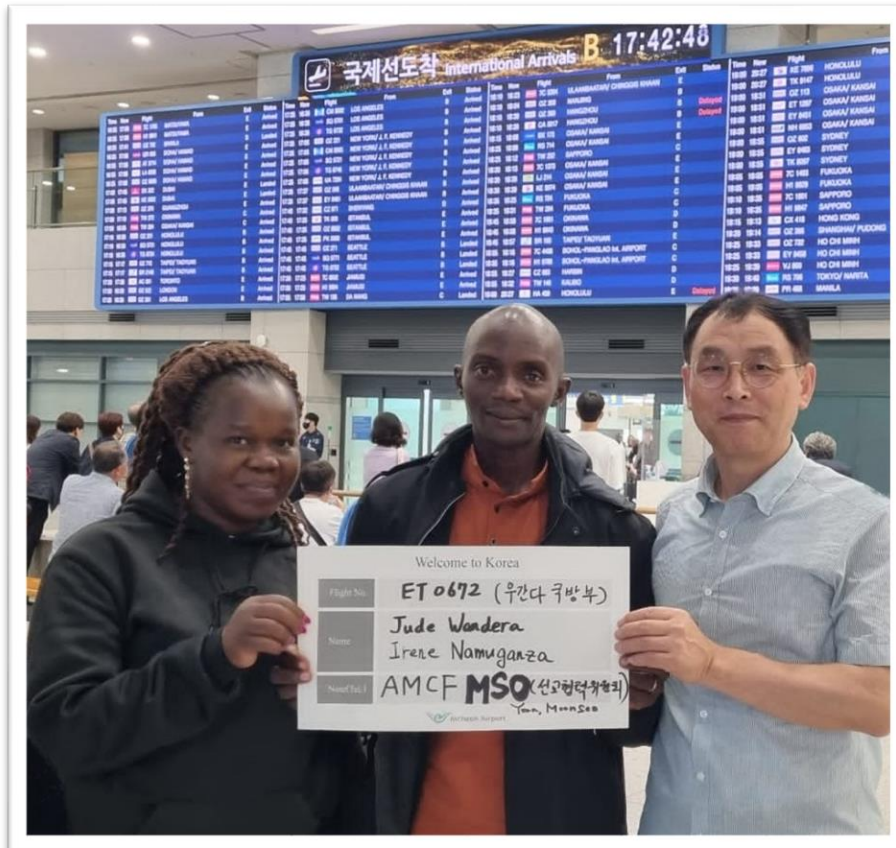
By July 3rd, when I looked in the mirror, my face looked so much better – almost like new. I kept wondering, where did all the contractures go? What happened to the big scar that had run from my nose through the cheek? Where did Prof. Lew Hyun get the skin to cover all of the former scar? I’m still amazed at their work and the level of expertise and professionalism exercised on patients at Severance Hospital.

I was discharged with enough medication to treat me outside the hospital and booked in for the final phase of treatment in October 2023.

“He drew me up out of a horrible pit [a pit of tumult and of destruction], out of the miry clay (froth and slime), and set my feet upon a rock, steadying my steps and establishing my goings. And he has put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many shall see and fear (revere and worship) and put their trust and confident reliance in the Lord.” Psalm 40:2-3

CHAPTER 10

Severance Hospital - Second Trip



By early September 2023, the UPDF leadership cleared me to fly back to Seoul for a review of my previous surgery and placement of four dental implant. I arrived in South Korea on 6 September, where I was met by Professor

Yoon.

The following morning, I fellowshipped with Immanuel Korean Methodist Church, which is located opposite the Olympic Park in the Songpa District. There we were met by the President of MSO, MGen (Rtd) Nam-Pil Park, who took us for lunch and then they took me through the entire program during my stay.

During this trip, Professor Yoon showed me how to use the transport card for the subway (underground train) – that was my first time doing so. I used that means of transportation during the rest of my time in South Korea to move to and from Severance Hospital.

On 10th October, Lt. Col. Lee and I went to Severance Hospital for a plastic surgery review, and a checkup to see how my eye was still being affected by the gunshot. The eye doctor declared that my eyes were okay, though they would need medication to cleanse the eyelids and provide moisture.

Professor Yoon also took me for fellowship with his home church, the Central Military Chapel. The pastor told the church about my situation and my testimony of God's healing after the attack, and shared photos on a projector of my injury to the congregation. Later, people gathered around me to look at my left cheek and were amazed at how much it had improved from the original injury. The scar is barely visible, in comparison to the original, horrific facial injury!



After the church service, I was surprised to be honored with a military coin from the Chairman Joint Chief of Staff of the Republic of Korea, Gen. Kim Seong Kyum. I also was honored to meet the former Defense Minister of the Republic of Korea, Gen. Lee Jun, who also happens to

have been the first Military Christian Fellowship President in South Korea. What a memorable experience!

On 19 October three of the four implant crown fabrications were successfully placed, but one could not be implanted due to a lack of a bone to hold the

implant. Later, when the final review of my treatments was made, I learned that everything was responding very well to the treatment. To be alive after such a terrible injury, so close to the brain, was still amazing. In the evening, Severance Hospital conducted a farewell ceremony for me, presided over by the General Director, Doctor Ha Jong-Won, who thanked God for sparing my life that I should serve him. "You're very lucky to be still alive after such a terrible injury on a very sensitive part of near the brain. Indeed, God loves you," Dr. Ha Jong-won said.

He also thanked the professors, doctors, and everybody who had ensured I received treatment at their medical facility. Present at the ceremony were the President of MSO, MGen (Rtd) Park Nam-Pil; Professor Moonsoo Yoon; Pastor Chin Yong Pak; and professors, doctors, and Mr. Sangmin An from the social work team.

The following day I picked up copies of my treatment records then proceeded to the airport for my journey back to Uganda. Arriving at Entebbe International Airport, I was received by my virtuous wife Irene, our son Benaiah, and Pastor Kiige Emmanuel of Kyani Miracle Centre in Kaliro District Eastern Uganda. I was so thankful and reflecting on how God had made a way for my healing when it seemed there was no way.

CHAPTER 11

God's Omnipotence

“But He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you [My lovingkindness and My mercy are more than enough—always available—regardless of the situation]; for [My] power is being perfected [and is completed and shows itself most effectively] in [your] weakness.’ Therefore, I will all the more gladly boast in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ [may completely enfold me and] may dwell in me. So I am well pleased with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, and with difficulties, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak [in human strength], then I am strong [truly able, truly powerful, truly drawing from God’s strength].” 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

How blessed we are to serve an omnipotent God who also loves us!

Omnipotent literally means that our God, the creator of heavens and earth, is capable of performing so many tasks in His power and he is never diminished by His work, like humans are.

When I talk of God, it’s important that you know I mean the only One who is eternal (has no beginning or end), Immense (bigger than all He created), Omnipotent (all-powerful and not diminished by working), Omniscience (all-knowing, with the understanding of our past, present, and future) and Omnipresent (He is everywhere).

In Uganda, it isn’t uncommon for people to visit witch doctors in shrines, and many will be told that demons carry on evil missions, but those demons sometimes must rest before carrying on another task. Human beings, after a busy schedule, will automatically feel weak and fatigued, needing time to rest before resuming duties. Most weapons experience stoppages and must “rest” while being cleaned in order for them to operate perfectly. Industrial machines experience wear and tear, needing proper lubrication and routine maintenance for them to give you better results. All those things need rest to work, yet our all-powerful, all-knowing God never needs to rest!

Child of God, our creator is 24/7 in the business of working and he doesn't experience stoppages, wear and tear, or time to rest. Psalms 121:4 states, *"Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."*

He is ready to respond positively to your call at any time of the day or night. Jeremiah 33:3 states, *"Call to Me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, fenced in and hidden, which you do not know (do not distinguish and recognize, have knowledge of and understand)."*

Imagine getting a bullet wound at midnight and the nearest medical facility is 30 kilometers away. But I prayed out to God, as did others, and God intervened. In those first microseconds after being shot, I saw a spiritual battle as darkness tried to engulf my life. As dizziness threatened to overcome me, I saw a light shine forth and overpower the darkness. That is how omnipotent our God is!

Through this experience, I have realized that, with unceasing combined prayers, nothing is impossible with God. When we serve God honestly, He can never leave us. When we call Him to intervene in our situations, He will. There's power in prayer and if there's a human to pray, there's a God to answer.



I am indebted to God for sparing my life. He has given me a second chance to live, and I will spend it serving Him wherever I am, because there's nothing I can give back to him in return other than preaching Christ.

As human beings living on Planet Earth, we often spend hours laboring to earn a living, and after a hectic day we are ready for a sound night's sleep. These days, especially since the ambush that nearly ended my life, I wake up and glorify God for giving me another chance to breathe as I face each new tomorrow.

For the Child of God, navigating life's ambushes extends beyond military situations. The devil lays multitudes of ambushes against our destinies, marriages, children, jobs, businesses, and ministries. Irrespective of our position or importance in life, it's only the One who died and rose again who can save us in life-and-death situations, often in ways we can't. In the face of unseen threats, the promise of God is that He orchestrates the final outcome to any snare laid by Satan.

Child of God, you will almost certainly never be shot in the face by cattle rustlers! But you may face immensely difficult situations that cause you to, metaphorically, bleed out. It could be a situation you face in your marriage or with your children, with extended family and friends, or in your workplace. However, God will give you unexplainable escape routes as you continue abiding in God. He will carry you through to the other side of your situation in Jesus mighty name!

Child of God, you don't have any excuse to implement what God instructs you, for he will grant you any measure of grace needed for you to accomplish his instructions.

CHAPTER 12

Military Ministry-Related Organizations

AMCF

www.amcf-int.org

The Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF) is an association of national military Christian fellowships (MCFs) and individual military Christians voluntarily working together to honor Christ in their respective armed forces, nations, regions, and worldwide. MCFs are independent, self-governing, and financially self-supporting; they develop along national lines to meet the needs of their own national armed forces. The AMCF is nonpolitical and does not support the political aspirations or positions of any person, party, or nation. The AMCF is non-denominational in character, and it is open to interact with all traditions of the Christian confession of faith. It has no official affiliation with any denomination or church. The AMCF is an association with no central organization, office, budget, or staff.

AMCF Prayer: The AMCF Prayer is: “Heavenly Father, We thank you that the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. Bless the service men and women of all nations, and grant that we who know the joy of being ‘All one in Christ Jesus’ may be filled with your love and pass it on to others through the power of the Holy Spirit until His coming again. Amen.”

AMCF Mission: The mission of the AMCF is to bring the good news (Gospel) of Jesus Christ to military men and women of every nation of the world.

AMCF Goal: The goal of AMCF is that every nation in the world has an MCF that becomes mature and effective. A mature and effective MCF may include the following characteristics, and be:

- a. Indigenous: Native to the host country and not from another country
- b. Self-governing

- c. Growing into spiritual maturity in the sense of Phil. 3:12: “... *I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.*”
- d. Self-supporting - that is not dependent upon others for ministry support
- e. In communion with other regional and world-wide MCFs
- f. Mature military Christian leaders and members who love the Lord and the military and want to make the Gospel known

ACCTS

www.accts.org

ACCTS (Association for Christian Conferences, Teaching and Service) has existed since 1972. Its mission is to assist in the development of Christian leaders in the Armed forces of the world and in the establishment and growth of military Christian fellowships worldwide.

Using its core values of being biblically-based, Spirit-led, prayer-centered, and people– focused, ACCTS has done incredible work to bring about transformation in military Christian fellowships by grooming outstanding young Christian leaders who are God-fearing, disciplined, honest, transparent, and reliable Christian leaders.

Their staff, along with their website, share topics that help shape military Christians’ understanding of how to live out their lives and military careers as Christians. Their website, www.accts.org, has many resources available, including: May a Christian Serve in the Uniformed Services; How to Decide Right from Wrong; Preparations for Ethical Dilemmas; How to Redeem Ethical Failures; Making an Effective Appeal to a Superior; and The Historic Just War Theory.

Had it not been for ACCTS’ exhibition of Christ’s love and carrying one another’s burden, by sending a prayer request, it’s possible that MSO and other sister organizations wouldn’t have known about my incident to help advance my healing with this treatment in South Korea.

ACCTS showed more concern through their staff member Emanuela Haien, who checked on me always with encouraging messages via emails. I will forever remain grateful for their faithful services to God. ACCTS believes in giving prayer support. Their staff exhibit humility without fear and share how we can live out our Christian faith in the workplace. They've shared tools for evangelism, including how to lead inductive Bible studies. Above all I have come to realize that out of carcasses, we shall always receive something sweet (Judges 14:8-9). God can turn ugly situations into a beautiful story like mine.

It is not possible to join ACCTS and remain the same spiritually, mentally, and intellectually. After undergoing through the above ACCTS topics and core values, and by listening and sharing with well-tested ethics facilitators for over two years, Capt. Ivan Kajuba and I as ACCTS ethics interns embarked on sharing this knowledge with others in our AMCF Uganda fellowships. We have so far engaged Kaweweta, Air Force, Singo, and Prisons Service fellowships.

In each of these four fellowships so far, the results are very positive and ACCTS topics are just what is needed to many issues faced by those engaged in uniformed service. For example, many are serving but have guilt and self-condemnation. After us taking them through topics like "Can a Christian Serve in the Uniformed Services", they learn that they have a calling from God to serve in the armed forces and are left with joy and improved morale.

Interaction Rock Mountain High Training Program is one of ACCTS' approaches to develop young Christian leaders. IRMH strives to create leaders who listen to Gods' voice and who will deeply meditate upon His Word for expansive revelations. I was nominated to attend in 2016 but didn't get a visa in time. The second time I was nominated to attend, I couldn't do so as I was already in African Union Peace Mission training for Somali. Instead, I nominated Captain Ivan to go as my replacement. He later flew to Colorado for the IRMH Program. Upon his return, Ivan shared with me lessons learnt - among them was how to lead an inductive Bible study.

I was much impressed after Capt. Ivan shared with me such positive results from the IRMH program. I was then nominated a third time to participate, but Covid-19 caused a stall in every program globally. Little did I know that this would give me the opportunity to participate in part of the IRMH program

online with ACCTS staff member Russ Hammerud an older man who has so much of the Bible committed to memory. He challenged me greatly and was a great exemplar to me. This training caused a very big positive shift in my spiritual growth; I am blessed by the teachings and his dedication to transfer knowledge, wisdom, and understanding to the young generation. May God satisfy Mr. Russ with long life.

MMI

www.mmi.org.uk

Mission: MMI helps military Christians follow Jesus Christ in armed forces around the world.

MMI works amongst Christians in the armed forces of countries in Europe, Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East. MMI is based in the UK and the field staff members have all seen service in the armed forces of various countries. It is one of the three principal supporting organizations for the Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF). MMI staff members assist in running conferences and seminars and staff members travel to meet with national MCFs as well as individual Christians in the MMI operating regions. They conduct their work in accordance with their values:

- a. Christ-centered (Ephesians 3:20 -21);
- b. Prayer-led (Philippians 4:6);
- c. Servant-hearted (Philippians 2:5-8);
- d. Relational (John 14:12-13);
- e. Trans-denominational (Galatians 3:28);
- f. Pioneering, adventurous (Acts 1:8);
- g. Committed to excellence (Philippians 2:14-15).

Vision Statement: What might God do if every military Christian had someone to stand with?

Mission Support Organization (MSO)
www.mso.or.kr

The Mission Support Organization (MSO) is an organization dedicated to supporting the AMCF. Its office is located at the Central Military Chapel, Seoul, Republic of Korea. The MSO is an organization composed of volunteer Christian men and women from active, reserve and retired military service and military civilian employees active in or retired from the Korean Armed Forces. The spouses of the members are encouraged to participate in MSO activities. The MSO also has a unique relationship with Korean Civilian Church Communities in country and overseas for military ministry. It is an interdenominational, non-governmental, non-political and independent organization.

MISSION: The mission of the MSO is to contribute to bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the military men and women of every nation of the world. It does this by supporting the activities of the Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF) and by cooperating with missionary organizations concerned.

GOAL: The goal of the MSO is to contribute to the accomplishment of the Great Commission of the Lord (Matthew 28:19). It does this by supporting and cooperating with the AMCF in pursuing the establishment of an MCF in the armed forces of every nation, and the development of MCFs already established.

Chapter 13

Giving Thanks

There are so many people who God used in my healing journey that I want to thank them all. And if I forgot to mention anyone, please forgive me and know how grateful I am for your part in my journey!

Uganda Peoples' Defense Forces (UPDF) Strategic Leadership: The UPDF leadership did whatever was possible to ensure I am evacuated for treatment at our General Military Referral Hospital in Bombo Luweero District.

Medical doctors and other personnel: As first responders, the doctors and personnel at Dr. Ambrosoli Referral Hospital gave me all the first aid I needed. To Dr. Ocen and his team, bravo for the amazing work you did to ensure I received the best urgent treatment for my restoration to health. Dr. Mpiima (the dental surgeon) and his team went beyond my expectations with their work. Dr. Ivan and team at Musana Health Centre did an impeccable job. Dr. Mukisa and Apostle Gulere Paul (a clinical officer) at Dr. Katamba's facility provided invaluable input.

Craig Conrad, Colorado, USA: This man of God requested daily prayer for my recovery. His support, love, care, and generosity was totally outstanding and can never be forgotten. Only God can reward Him enough.

I'm also so thankful for Pr. Kiige Emmanuel of Kyani Miracle Centre and Apostle Bwoye Sylvester for their overwhelming love and care.

To everyone in South Korea who helped with medical treatment, and to everyone around the world who prayed for my health and sent me financial support – my profound thanks to you!

