

# The Vine

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## EDITOR'S WORD

After a crazy week of last-minute rush to complete the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book with the sudden deluge of articles and photos, and actually, I am still waiting for some really late materials to come in, I fear that at the end of the day when the book is finally in print, some of you may find it so unattractive that it ends up in your "web-site". That's where you leave all those things that are forgotten and the spiders come and spin their webs around it.

John worked very hard to edit and ensure all the dates are reconciled within all the articles. So hopefully, this will be a good historical record of JCC's first 40 years.

I apologize if your photo or your name does not appear anywhere in this book. I do not have everyone's photo in my possession. Do not worry, as long as your name is in the Lamb's Book of Life – that is sufficient.

Thank God that JCC is like the first son in Matthew 21:28, who at first said, "No" but later on goes to do his father's task. But in 2047 when we celebrate our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, don't try this last-

minute rush again because by then I will be 94 years old, too old to take this type of stress. I am giving you a 40-year head-start to think of something to write.

Many people tell me that they can't write. I wonder what they really mean. Are they saying they have no ideas, are poor in English, or are not able to compose a sentence in an eloquent manner? Most have written essays and passed their General Paper, right? Am I harder to please than the examiner?

Did you contribute to the 6.6 million dollars that Spiderman 3 raked in? Did you know that if you had watched Spiderman 1, 2 and 3 and Fantastic Four 1 and 2, you would have spent about \$45 already? That is \$5 more than what the Dinner will cost. "Nuff Said."

Let's look forward to a fulfilling 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

*Martin Cheah*



# Cambodia - Apr 2007

Dear Supporters,

Thanks for supporting me both prayerfully and financially. It was really a life-changing experience for me as I have never seen God working so mightily before – the tearing down of the altars of idols in just minutes when we were proclaiming the name of Jesus, seeing people who had not known God coming to Him.



During the period from 20<sup>th</sup> April to 27<sup>th</sup> April 2007, I trusted God and left everything behind to share his love abroad. Cambodia is a land filled with suffering and pain, to which I brought the love of God.

Before this trip, I had experienced how God worked in my life to make everything possible for me. At first, I needed to go for training during this period of time; thus, I thought I would not be able to go. Previously, when my pastor asked me whether I was able to go, I told him I was not able to make it. But deep in my heart, I had a deep desire to go to Cambodia for a break from my normal routine. So I started to pray and indeed God made it possible for me. My training was postponed and my leave was approved immediately upon request.



A photo of the team

During this period of time, it was definitely a humbling experience for me as I sought Him and His will for me. The love for people is always in my heart and it is a desire that God has given to me.

During the second day of the mission trip we went to the Genocide Museum and the Killing fields. During the trip, I felt for the people who have been ill-treated. Many suffered during the period which led to the economical and physical deterioration of the country. This prepared me mentally on how to share with the Cambodians and what to say and what not to say.

The trip to the Solid Rock Baptist Church was a very special experience for me as I enjoyed the love that the people showered upon us. Indeed, the people there do not have much but they give all they have for God's Kingdom and for mission. I was encouraged by them and also humbled by God once again. I taught the youths there the basics of English, played games with them and also chatted with them. The youths showed interest to know us more and also showed the greatest care for us by inviting us for a meal. When it was time to bid farewell, leaving the place was a hard thing. But one thing that I took back from the church is the phrase 'Blessed to be a Blessing'.

'Blessed to be a Blessing' – This phrase seems simple yet difficult for me. I spent days of praying and seeking him as this trip was also a trip which I wanted to spend a time of retreat with him. I finally understood the phrase and the reason that God brought me to Cambodia.

Indeed I am so blessed in Singapore so that I can in turn bless those in Cambodia. During the day of ministry at a village, I saw how different Singapore is from Cambodia. Indeed, we are blessed to have everything so nice and live in our comfort zone. God has brought me out from my comfort zone to see the situation of Cambodians and the condition of the places in which they live. God showed me that he is mighty. During the time when we taught the youths some simple songs to praise God, the altar beside us started to fall. Firstly, the container where they placed the joss sticks dropped from a height and I was shocked. A while later, the altar broke into many pieces and it was a sign that God was working in their life.

During the day, I was tasked to share the gospel with the youths. While preparing the coloured papers for the youths to teach them how to fold a heart and paper crane, I was once again reminded of God's love for us and the reason I was there. I taught them origami and through it I shared the Gospel bringing the message across to them. I was touched by God's love for us when he chose the cross, bearing our sins and



that we may be free to live a life with him. During the night sharing with my team, I also expressed my interest to help out in the medical ministry to see more things.

During my stay in Cambodia, God reminded me to put on the armour of God to fight the spiritual war for him. On the Third day of ministry, I played the supporting role for my team. I started making flowers using raffia string for everyone in the village. I saw the discipline in the youths that they did not snatch the things from each other but they all waited patiently for their turns to receive them. This is like God telling me to wait on him. In the afternoon, I heard from Peh Ern that the youths were not coming back in the afternoon as some were going to school and some were going to work. I immediately went to ask Doctor Jackson whether I could help him in any way. He taught me how to use the instruments and I started pricking the fingers of the villagers above 40 years old to test the sugar level in their blood. It was a very special experience which I will not forget. The “thank you” that the villagers said was so sincere which I have never experienced in Singapore.

On the last day of ministry, which is also my most memorable of the whole trip, I shared the gospel to the villagers. But this time, it was in a Buddhist village. I was shocked when Peh Ern asked me to share the gospel in another way (tearing a piece of paper). I did not prepare myself to share the gospel in that manner so at that moment, I told myself that there is nothing impossible for God and I must trust him. I told God that I am indeed nothing in his eyes but I asked him to help me and used me to glorify his name.

As it was in a Buddhist village, I did not have high expectations of myself and kept asking God to open their eyes. During the sharing of the Gospel, I tried to ask the youths a few questions but they did not seem to understand. But as I shared about hell and heaven, I could see God working in their lives. As I was sharing, my heart was praying



that they would see the love of God and receive him that day. When I asked them

if they would like to receive God, many responded. I was shocked by God once again and there was a huge pause. Then I asked Mervyn and others around to help to pass the gospel beads to them.

I led the youths in a prayer to receive God and also shared with them what the different colors represent. I could see from the eyes of the youths that indeed God was in their life and he will never leave them.

God was always good in both good and bad times during the trip. During the trip I was sick and lost my voice but I knew that God had his plans for me. I lost my voice when I was not involved in ministry but during ministry time, my voice was restored. After a few days I realized that God was asking me to listen to the needs of the people and to pray for them. Thank God that he spoke to me and made me a better person as I learned to follow him. All Glory to God!

Once again thank you for praying and hope that you will be part of the mission too!

God bless!

Serving with you  
Roger



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## AGM - 29 April 2007

All God's Men were debating About God's Money as usual. Throughout the year we do not preach money so we save it all for the AGM, where we talk about nothing else but money. There are 3 theologies about money. Poverty, Stewardship and Prosperity Theology. I believe that JCC holds to the Stewardship Theology, ie that we are only stewards of God's money.



Maybe that is why we were so concerned about the stewardship of the money, how we spend it or keep it. It's tough being the Treasurer, Always Guarding the Money, not able to enjoy it. You have been a good steward, keep it up.



***"You must not stand idly by when your neighbour's life is at stake. I am the Lord." Lev. 19:16b NET.***

Dear Praying Friends,

How easy it is to remain in our comfort zone, and think we are not breaking the scripture quoted above, especially when we read other translations; for example, the NIV says "Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life." Of course as good Christians, we will not do anything that will endanger the life of another person. But how easy it is to remain passive, and 'stand idly by' because we feel we are unable to save the lives of our neighbours.

The Lord did not expect us to be their saviour. However, He does not want us to be idle, doing nothing and saying nothing when we know that they are perishing without the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus.

May I use the same scripture to urge you to do something for the following blind friends whose lives are really at stake. They have received salvation, but their lives are endangered by different life-threatening diseases. Let's not say we are not faith healers or doctors, and therefore cannot do anything. We can pray for them, and ask the Lord what else we can do for them.

**Cyriana Chong** is fighting to live and has been in and out of coma for many days. She is suffering from internal bleeding and other complications after she started dialysis treatment.

**Choon Lee** has been kept alive by the Lord for the past nine years, and is thankful that he needs not live in the hospital as though it is his second home. However, he was recently admitted into hospital for a few weeks because of a cough and fever that would not leave him, resulting in his loss of 6kg in weight. He has just been discharged from hospital, but is still feeling very weak physically.

**Lui Boon Poh's** life is at stake due to many health problems and the process of aging. He is asking the Lord to let him experience His love, peace, comfort and to be spared from physical pain.

**Charmaine**, a 13-year-old student who received salvation on 7th April 07, has been in hospital for the past several days. The doctor told her mother that both the kidneys are not functioning properly, and that she is losing most of the calcium.

**Yam Fong Ngan** who is suffering from diabetes and some other health problems had two of her toes amputated in March 07. The wound is still not healing properly, and she has no one to take care of her when she was discharged from

hospital. She has been readmitted into hospital and is applying to go into a community hospital or nursing home.

Lastly, please also pray for our youth camp on 4th-7th June 07. 17 youths have signed up for the camp. Pray for salvation and inner healing for the young people, and for sighted men to come and help us at the camp.

We thank you for your partnership in the ministry, and we also thank the Lord for the privilege to be in partnership with Him.

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# Pulse 4th Anniversary

Fun and games at  
Lakeside  
Gardens on 6  
May 2007



## HOW I READ & INTERPRET/UNDERSTAND

A publication called “THE PROPHETIC VOICE (A PROPHETIC JOURNAL BY DR AMOS) Vol 03/2007” came into my mailbox. Its title suggests that it has explicitly for its purpose something to do with the propagation of prophetic messages. Therefore, a prophetic quotation taken from Scripture was to be expected from the publisher. Here is a part from the said emailed publication:

“Behold the days are coming (have already come)” says the Lord God, “That I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, But OF HEARING THE WORDS (PROPHETIC WORD) OF THE LORD ...” Amos 8:11-14. The time has come where there is a cry in the hearts of the people to hear from God clearly, to receive supernatural healing, to have a God-encounter that will produce a tangible presence of God in their lives.

It is common for Christian writers to quote from Scripture. It is also normal for Christian readers to refer to the quoted Scripture for greater clarification, by wisdom received from Acts 17:11 and Deut. 18:14-22. In this vein, and partly because I felt that the above reference to the Book of Amos was interesting for a deeper study, I decided to take a look at the passage in the Bible itself. Here is what I find in the King James Version of the Holy Bible (Amos 8:11-14):

11Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:  
12And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.  
13In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.  
14They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.



The passage of Amos 8:11-14 is much longer in the Bible than quoted in the emailed publication. (Maybe it was a typo that some of the verses were inadvertently left out when quoted.) Also, the quotation attributed to the OT Prophet Amos contained words in brackets, which were not in the KJV Bible; therefore I take them to be the writer's (Dr Amos') own addition based on his thoughtful interpretation of the prophecy of the biblical Amos. Following closely (immediately after) the verse from Scripture, the writer continued with his statement that:

“The time has come where there is a cry in the hearts of the people to hear from God clearly, to receive supernatural healing, to have a God-encounter that will produce a tangible presence of God in their lives.”

Many Christians might also have opportunities to read interesting and revealing contents of THE PROPHETIC VOICE from time to time, as I gather from casual conversations and hear resulting sharing about prophecies, the ways to interpret them and miscellaneous connected issues. I myself do find some contents of the publication informative, but not always so. In this instance, my personal prayerful reflection, with reference to qualified bible commentators, does not help me to connect the writer's expression of his thoughts and the quoted Scripture to suggest the OT Prophet Amos as referring to supernatural healing in the OT prophecy. I fail to detect any suggestion of supernatural healing in the OT words notwithstanding the unfortunate juxtaposition of the words of the writer and the words of the OT Prophet in the publication. In fact, the Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary's explanation of Amos 8:11-14 shares the message about the rich and powerful of the land who were most guilty of oppression and foremost in idolatry, and of how misery would fall upon them with terror and desolation. (You can read this commentary on the Internet via BibleGateway.com) It is as clear as day that there is no link between Amos' prophecy in the OT and HEARING THE PROPHETIC WORD OF THE LORD today.

In the last issue of THE VINE, I wrote about considerations of care when translating a message and interpreting what we read. I may add here that when I read whatever material that comes into my mailbox ever so often (in this high-tech age when email traffic is irrepressible), I sieve for value

in the voice of Scripture (pure as recorded) as well as in the blessed insight of man (further appended) in rendering elucidation with the human interpretation of the Word; yet, I make sure that I have a clear discernment of which is which – which is infallible and which is open to continuing sharpening as more heads are joined in sharing their varied insights. Frequently, by searching deep, muddles are rid of. The passage from “THE PROPHETIC VOICE” as I have highlighted also gives me a good case in point on my numerous encounters with neither agreeing totally nor disagreeing completely. While supernatural healing, in my humble opinion, is not the theme of the quoted Scripture (Amos 8:11-14), there is nothing out of order for people to receive it, God willing. This is also my understanding – We can seek, but we cannot demand. (Put another way, “man proposes, God disposes.”)

Certainly, it is good for Christians “to have a God-encounter that will produce a tangible presence of God in their lives” (borrowing the words of Dr Amos). My understanding of having a God-encounter is to have the experience of God’s presence (not solely restricted to supernatural happening) – tangible in the sense of being noteworthy, to see God in the sense of Matt. 5:8 (“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” KJV). Reading Dr Amos, I would not want to misinterpret “a tangible presence” by associating it with the “seeing” as in the following passages of Scripture:

*Exodus 33:20 “And he said, Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live.”*

*1 Tim. 6:16 “Whom no man hath seen nor can see”*

So I conclude this sharing of a piece of my mind in this issue of THE VINE on how I would personally read and interpret/understand, using as example a small part of the publication that happens to come into my mailbox in a timely manner to relieve my writer’s block. Count it as just 2-cent worth, subject to readers’ correction (most welcome; but gently, please) as I am not infallible, after all.

*John Lee*

# A MOTHER'S DAY POEM

*shared by Margaret Lee*

When I look at You, Mother  
I see my life through your eyes.  
I see the strength you always offer me,  
the comfort you continuously show me,  
the support you provide to me, and the magnitude of the love  
that you unselfishly share...

I see the many sacrifices you have made and continue to  
make for me, the inspiration you are to me  
when I need direction, the devotion you show to me  
as a parent, and the encouragement you give me  
when I need a friend.

When I look at you, Mother,  
and see my life through your eyes,  
I feel very loved, fortunate and blessed  
Thank you for being all that you are to me  
- the best and more than a mother can be.

I want to apologise for any problems that  
I may have caused you in the past..  
I am not the easiest person to live with  
since I am so independent and strong  
but you can be sure that though it  
possibly didn't seem like it  
your values and ideals did pass on to me  
and I carry them forward in all that I do...  
You always were someone stable, strong, giving  
and warm and ideal person to look up to  
This has given me the strength to lead  
my own life according to my own standards  
your leadership and love have enabled me  
to grow into a very happy person  
and I think that is what every mother wishes  
for her child....thank you.



# Christianity Explored Retreat

1 May 2007 – The Christianity Explored study group took a one day retreat with a walk into the forest near MacRitchie Reservoir to cross the HSBC Tree Top Walk. After about 3 hours of walking, the group came back to Jurong for a Thai buffet lunch.

After a very heavy meal, the group sat or slept through about 2 hours of Rico Tice videos. There were breaks where JCC members shared their testimonies. It was a long day when the group went home at about 6.00 pm.

We thank God for the good weather. It was raining in the morning but when we started our walk at about 9.00 am, the rains had stopped and we had cool weather for walking.

