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When he was 35 years old, Mr. Arumugam developed an unusual rash on his hands and feet. He also noticed a slight numbness in his hands. So he went to a local healer, who gave him some herbs and poultices.

But the rash spread and developed into rough patches of skin, while his hands and feet went numb. He could have smashed his hand with a hammer and felt nothing.

Luckily, a health worker trained by American Leprosy Missions saw Mr. Arumugam’s condition and took him to the hospital. That’s when Mr. Arumugam got the bad news. “I’m sorry to tell you this,” the doctor said, his face a somber mask, “but you have leprosy.”

Mr. Arumugam received multi-drug therapy for two years. He was cured. But leprosy left him with severe disabilities. His right hand and right foot are twisted into useless claws, and he has permanent nerve damage.

“I am a social outcast,” he said. “My neighbors don’t respect me anymore. And my family is neglected by society because of my disease.” Despite his cure, the stigma of leprosy keeps stalking him.

Your Gift Will Double in Impact!

When you give now, your gift will double thanks to the challenge grant. So you can do twice as much good to care for and cure people with leprosy. Make a difference in someone’s life, won’t you? Please give now.

$1 = $2 Your Gift Will Do 2x More Good This Christmas!

YES! I want to give a special gift this Christmas to bring Jesus’ compassion to suffering people.

Enclosed is my gift of:

- $25 to do $50 of good.
- $50 to do $100 of good.
- $100 to do $200 of good.
- $_______ to do as much good as possible.

Your Gift Will Do 2x More Good This Christmas!

Thank you! Please make your tax-deductible check payable to American Leprosy Missions and mail it with this reply form in the enclosed envelope to American Leprosy Missions Gift Processing Center, P.O. Box 6078, Albert Lea, MN 56007-6078. Or donate securely online at www.leprosy.org. If you have questions, call us at 800.543.3135.
It’s a Blessing in the True Spirit of Christmas

Yong’s Life Is Bright Again, Thanks to You

C

hen Shen Yong lives in a remote mountain village. It’s a hard life, but it’s beautiful, too. In the mornings, a white mist hangs in the pines that blanket the mountainside as a thin coil of smoke slowly rises from the chimney of the open-fire stove.

Yong was just 28 when he got leprosy. With a wife and child, he was devastated. As the disease progressed, it crippled his foot and opened weeping wounds that refused to heal. But maybe even worse, leprosy’s stigma cut him like a knife.

“I lost relatives and friends due to my disease,” he said, his voice trailing off in shame. “People in the village discriminated against me and my family, so my wife left me and our infant. I was abandoned with my baby.”

Even though it was difficult to walk, Yong did everything he could to take care of his baby daughter and earn a meager income by farming and raising a few animals. He struggled while delighting in seeing his daughter grow up. But in reality, he was barely surviving.

“Due to my illness,” he said, “I can’t even hold a shovel. ‘Due to my illness,’” he said, “I have become very poor.”

Seeing that leprosy is a disease like any other, Yong’s neighbors gradually lost their fear and suspicion. They started stopping by to visit occasionally. And they even began helping him with some household chores that he’s otherwise unable to do.

Back with his neighbors and being a proud papa to his daughter, Yong realizes that he has been blessed beyond measure. He gives voice to a sentiment we all feel at this holy time of year: “My life has been turned to brightness.”

(continued from front page)

A Miracle Has Happened

“When I attend any social function like marriages, people stare at me because of my deformities and avoid coming near me. I am looked down upon.”

Ever worse, Mr. Arumugam is unable to work. Before his disabilities, he was thriving as a farmer in his village. But now, with his clawed hands, he can’t even hold a shovel. “Due to my illness,” he said, “I have become very poor.”

And yet, Mr. Arumugam sees a brighter future, and that’s because of American Leprosy Missions and supporters like you. “I have received medicines that cured my disease,” he said. “I have been invited to the leprosy camp for treatment and care. And I have been given a buffalo, which is very useful in supporting my family.”

But even more important, said Mr. Arumugam, “I believe Lord Jesus will help me and my family overcome the problems of this disease.”

Mr. Arumugam continues to pray for American Leprosy Missions and for you. He asks for our prayers as well. His dream is to build a house of his own, and he’s certain it will come true. “Lord Jesus,” he said, lifting his eyes to heaven and clasping his hands together in devotion, “has given me new life!”

A $1 million Christmas gift is certainly life-changing news. That’s how the doctors, nurses and health workers in countries throughout Africa are feeling now. They’re receiving $1 million in medical supplies to treat their patients suffering from leprosy and other diseases, thanks to the generosity of friends like you.

These medical supplies were donated to us by MAP International, a Christian charity. And now, with your help to cover shipping costs, huge shipments of bandages, antibiotics, antiseptics and other supplies are arriving at hospitals and clinics in these poverty-stricken countries.

The supplies are sent in a cargo-ship container holding 20 pallets, some packed with larger items like 50 respiratory care systems, others with thousands of smaller items — from tracheotomy kits to exam gloves to antibacterial soap.

The health facilities in these countries run on a shoestring budget, often with no funding from their governments, so healthcare workers always lack medical supplies. Without these supplies, patients suffer, and may die needlessly. But with them, sick people recover and go on to live productive lives. In fact, these medical supplies are an infusion of healing and renewal for entire villages. Better healthcare helps lead to improved education, greater opportunity, and enhanced community development. It’s inspiring to see. Where there was sickness and poverty, now there’s hope for the future — a future you’re making possible.

(continued from front page)

UPDATE

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