

I Saw the Hand of God- My Carjacking Eperience

Written by admin

Wednesday, 29 June 2011 12:42 - Last Updated Wednesday, 07 March 2012 13:43

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Monday, 23rd September 2002 is forever etched in my mind. I had left work at five o'clock and arrived home at around a quarter to six o'clock. I stopped at the gate of our house and hooted but I was a bit impatient and did not wait more than a few seconds for my worker to open the gate. Since it was rarely locked, I decided to open it for myself and came out of the car. No sooner had I stepped out that that I was gripped by someone from behind me and I felt something cold on my neck. "Mama get back into the car and do not make any noise or we will harm you"

My first thought was to resist. I could register that the gangsters were actually very young men, probably the age mates to my children. However the brute force of the one holding me reminded me of the real danger. It clicked to me that these were the young men I had passed a few metres away from my gate going in the opposite direction. I had not registered their faces as I was in a hurry to go home. They must have turned back on seeing me stop at my gate.

I was led into the back seat of the car and one of the men got into the driver's seat. Just then my husband opened the side gate and I could see our worker some few metres behind him.

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“Get into the car and give us all the money you have” my husband was ordered. The worker on seeing this fled fast and I think the hijackers thought they would lose valuable time chasing him. While one of the gangsters pushed my husband into the back seat the driver started the car and quickly drove off.

I was asked how much money I had and told them that I had about 8,000 shillings in the bag. In the meantime the thug that was beside me was frisking my body. He found in my cardigan pocket the change of about six hundred shillings that had remained from my shopping. He indicated to me that I was to keep mum about it. Meanwhile the thug in the passenger seat had emptied all the contents of my bag onto his lap. He said he could not find the money and asked me where it was. I directed him to a side pocket and he took it out and counted it. Meanwhile, my husband was also frisked but he had only two hundred shillings in his trouser pocket. He had stayed at home all day doing some renovations. The money I had was to buy some supplies that he needed.

We were driven fast towards the main road and midway they were talking to one another and saying “Tundodoe?” “Apana hatutandondoa hapa, tutaenda kundondoa hapo mbele’ At the time I did not know what kundondoa means and was very scared. I later learnt that it meant for a vehicle to stop so that a passenger can alight. They finally stopped the car and asked us to get out. We were told that we would find our car at a nearby shopping centre.

A few minutes later we hitched a lift to the main road and asked to be taken to the said shopping centre but we did not find the car. Someone we knew saw us while we were there and helped us look at several other places. He also took us to the police station to make a report. He offered to take us home but on the way we noticed that his car was almost empty on fuel. We asked him to go back so that he could fuel and we were just about half a kilometre away from home.

As soon as we alighted we were surrounded by a group of about twenty young men. By this time it had got to be quite dark. They targeted my husband and demanded money. I implored them to please leave us alone since we had just been robbed. They went away after making sure we really had no money on us. I thank God that they did not harm us.

As they left, my knees suddenly gave way and I could not walk. We were lucky to get a matatu

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home for the distance. The thieves had left Kshs. 40/- change in my cardigan which we used for payment.

When we arrived home, we found our house full of our neighbours and friends. Our worker had informed everybody he could about the incident. When I went into the house I could not talk to them because I was in a bad emotional state. I imagined that this gathering could have been in preparation of our funeral. The reality of what could have happened dawned on me. I went to the kitchen and broke down and cried and some ladies came over to offer comfort.

That night we barely slept. Some of the people stayed with us until two a.m and we said thanksgiving prayers to God for his protection.

The following day one of the friends took us to the police station and we followed a different road than the one used the previous night. We found our car in the neighbourhood of the shopping centre we had been told the hijackers would leave it. I thank God that we found my identity cards and other documents in the car and especially all my daughter's certificates which I had gone to photocopy. The only thing missing was the two loaves of bread I had bought.

This incident made me appreciate my neighbours and friends more and especially those we fellowship with. They were there for us, with some of them also going to report and check for us at the police station. I thanked God also for the worker with whom we had a good relationship and who had stayed with us for several years.

I also appreciated that experience is the best teacher. There had been many of my friends who had been hijacked and I realized that I had not fully appreciated the trauma of their experiences until I was also hijacked. Even today my heart always flutters when I near my gate especially when I am driving. And I also feel jittery when I meet a crowd of young men.

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Praying for journey mercies also took on a new meaning for me. Sometimes we leave those we love while embarking on a journey, never to see each other again. I have also learnt to appreciate that death does not just occur on the roads out there but can happen closer to home. Death is always with us and can occur any moment

I realized that when you are faced with a calamity you have no time to talk to God and ask for forgiveness. You think more of praying to be delivered from death. We therefore need to always keep our hearts turned to God.

I also thank God for a good presence of mind during the ordeal. I saw his faithfulness because in every situation He gave me courage and strength to act and talk normally to the robbers. I told them that since they were only doing it because they needed food and they had got it, they should let us go and God would take care of their tomorrows.

All along there was a song in my mind. *“Jesu we unyendete, ningurira hari we, Riria mbara ii nene, nowe wa kuhonokia...”*

(Jesus lover of my soul, Let me to thy bosom fly, While the nearer waters roll, While the tempest still is high, Hide me, Oh my Saviour, hide)

The experience gave me a new burden of praying for the youth and any prevailing situation that can lead them to the kind of life where you rob people for a living. I forgave those youth who

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terrorized us a long time ago. As far as I know, they were never apprehended and I never got to know who they were. But whenever I think of the experience, I pray that they leave their lives where they prey on others, that they draw closer to God, seek His forgiveness and glorify the Lord with their lives.

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