



4 DAYS

FAST & PRAYER

7.8 - 15.9.2022

NCC
MALAYSIA

A
Heart
to
KNOW
You

JEREMIAH 24:7

FOREWORD

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**A Heart
to Know Him / 4**

FOREWORD

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**A Heart
to Know God / 8**

FOREWORD

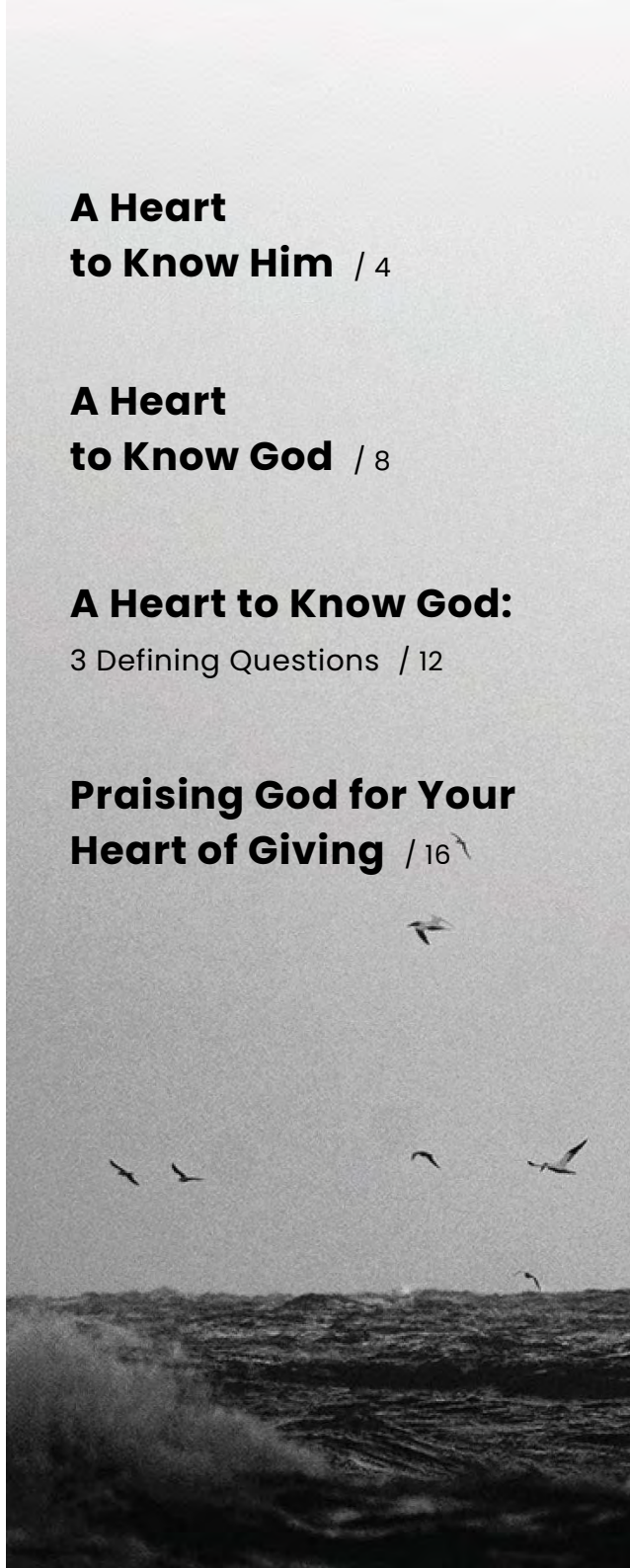
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A HEART TO KNOW HIM

By Rev Dr Eu Hong Seng, Chairman of NECF

Jeremiah 24:7 (NKJV) *Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.*

This verse begins with God's **Promise** – for us as much as for the people of Judah – to give us a new heart so that we can know Him as we return to Him with a *whole heart* (v7b).

The people of Judah worshipped idols. They had altars and wooden images *“by the green trees on the high hills”* (Jeremiah 17:2). Harlotry was on their foreheads (Jeremiah 3:3).

It was apparent that they were openly committing spiritual adultery. So rampant and blatant was their harlotry, and so damaged were their hearts that it was not worth salvaging. It is so true what the prophet Hosea says, *“Harlotry, wine, and new wine enslave the heart.”*

So, God decided they needed a new heart.

He made a **Proclamation**: *“I am the Lord ... I will be their God”*. Our world today is full of distractions, all screaming for our attention and affection, each demanding to have a piece of our heart. That is why King David prayed, *“Unite my heart to fear Your name.”* (Psalm 86:11) Unless we choose to seek God first – to make God and His kingdom our priority – our automatic, default position will be the world's kingdom, with its values and priorities.

God assured them of a marvellous **Phenomenon** : *“They shall be My people.”* Judah played the harlot and persistently pursued

many lovers. Despite their spiritual adultery the Lord did not reject or abandon them. He wanted them back as His wife. This was unheard of at that time since the Old Testament forbade the remarrying of an adulterous spouse. But God said, "I will take you back. You are going to be My people."

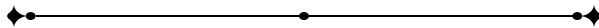
That was the dawn of a new day for them. Today, it can be so for us too.

God's **Plea** and desire was for them to *"return to Me with their whole heart"*. The words "return" and "returned" occur 48 times in the NKJV version of the Bible (in the book of Jeremiah).

Just as He did with His people then, God is patiently pleading with us today. Just as it was for Judah then, it is time for us now to forsake our idols and our adultery, and return to the Lord with our whole heart.

His **Purpose** was for them *"to know Him"* (v7a). Our Lord's purpose has not changed. He wants us to know Him. How we need to know Him as the last days are upon us! And only those who know their God can do great exploits.

Unless we know Him, we will find the door of the kingdom shut to us and He will say to us, *"Depart from Me, I never knew you."*





A HEART TO KNOW GOD

By Pr Sam Ang, Secretary General of NECF

The year 2022 began on a more positive note in comparison with what we went through in 2021. The nation has moved from pandemic to endemic and the SOPs that we are now complying with for church activities relate to recovery.

When God spoke these words to his people in Jeremiah 24:7, *"I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart."* (ESV), it was before they went into exile in Babylon. God was concerned about three areas in their lives and His desire was for them to experience spiritual restoration in these three areas while they were in exile: a new heart, a new identity and a new loyalty.

The exiles did not understand that they were sent out for their own good. God himself set His eyes on them for their good and He promised to build them and not pull *them* down, and to plant them and not pluck *them* up. And when it was time for their return, they would be brought back safely.

When this text was chosen for this year's devotional, there was a concern that the Church would be engrossed in the direction of recovery and fail to remember and appreciate what God had done for us during the pandemic and lockdowns.

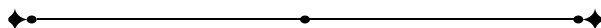
Just as the exiles who returned to Jerusalem after the captivity were by no means perfect, we hope that our prayers and experiences in the last two years has enabled us to trust the true and living God and continue to be steadfast until Jesus returns in glory. There is still much more to serve in the Kingdom of God in

the midst of the increasing birth pangs of recovery.

Similar to how the exiles experienced and learned about the providences of God in Babylon, we too have done so during the two years of lockdowns. God promised them that He would give them, not so much a head to know Him, but a heart to know Him, for the right knowledge of God consists not in notions and speculations but in the convictions of the practical judgment directing and governing the will and affections.

Psalms 111:10 (NIV) says, *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding,”* Here we learn that when God gives us a sincere desire and inclination to know Him, we must make the effort to draw close to His heartbeat or else perish forever in our ignorance.

My prayer is that, together with the devotional resources available for your meditation, you will truly experience the Father’s heart and enjoy His healing touch for you and your family.





A HEART TO KNOW GOD

: 3 Defining Questions

By Rev. Looi Kok Kim, Chairman of NECF Prayer Commission

God is on the move. There is a growing awareness of the great need for prayer and fasting today. It is a call issued for an urgent return to intimacy with God and a lifestyle totally surrendered to Him. But there is a problem, and the heart of the problem is people. The call is not simply about superficially experiencing the disciplines of fasting, praying and knowing about God. It is about sustainability and ultimately developing a lifestyle of pursuing God.

Many assume that the volume of information imparted through prayer movements, prayer sessions, conferences, seminars, or trainings will inevitably lead to true prayer altars. That thinking is shallow, dangerous and simplistic. Merely giving mental assent or agreeing to information transmitted doesn't cut it. Parroting

mere information doesn't cut it. We are to learn the truth, followed by hearts that walk the talk. Knowing the truth doesn't change lives. It is truth applied that changes lives. The source of truth is in the Word of God.

In this 40-day journey, we have to rethink our personal prayer altar. There are three defining questions involved. The aim is not to be comprehensive, but rather to provide perspective. More importantly, the aim is to provoke you to think about what you will do to discover and know the heart of God deeply.

Question 1: Why is knowing the heart of God so important?

In Jeremiah 9:23-24, the Lord said: *"Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord."*

We tend to be religion consumers, overly dependent on Sunday sermons, Bible studies, prayer meetings and home cells, while lacking a depth in knowing God. Depth anchors spiritual maturity. To know and understand Him, we must plough the Word of God and connect with His overarching plan.

Question 2: What is knowing the heart of God all about?

By now you will have noticed that the daily Scripture reading covers 10 chapters. The purpose is to develop a lifestyle of reading

scripture in big portions. We pray that the Holy Spirit would enlighten your eyes to understand who God is – including His salvation, loving-kindness, redemption, promises and judgment – before Christ returns.

Question 3: How can this best be accomplished?

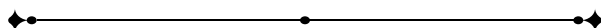
As you take this 40-day fasting and prayer journey, the starting point is to realign our hearts with God. Our love-style should reflect the cross where Jesus died – a totally surrendered lifestyle.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20 NKJV)

In other words, you begin daily with acknowledging that you are in complete union with Christ by living out a distinct life of saturating yourself in the Word of God; constantly reminding yourself that you are living a directed life, a life lived by faith, and a devoted life, a life that loves justice, righteousness, and loving kindness.

Finally, no one should be surprised at the difficulties of faith as we go forward. It is only through the hard enduring work of reading the Bible and constantly reflecting on the reading that we will truly know and understand Him.

May you be richly blessed.





PRAISING GOD FOR YOUR HEART OF GIVING

By Pr Sam Ang, Secretary General of NECF

Dear Fellow Prayer Partners,

Last year was the first time that NECF designated the fund collected to be used for our General Fund instead of other special ministries. Your gift meant a lot to us and was not only a financial aid but a morale booster as well.

NECF experienced such a tremendous grace from God as we witnessed how churches and individual believers gave sacrificially in the past, especially in the last two years when most economic sectors in our nation were undergoing stagnation and depression.

We truly want to praise God for what He has been doing in our midst, and would like to express our appreciation for your partnership with us throughout these years and for your belief in NECF's vision for the nation, i.e., transforming our nation through local churches, shown tangibly by your financial support.

We foresee that the situation in 2022 will still be vulnerable and unpredictable. Hence, our 40-Day Fast and Prayer 2022 devotional and prayer materials with the theme of **“A Heart to Know You”** will continue to be presented to you mainly via e-copies on our website and app.

Churches and individuals who prefer printed copies can email us their orders, but they will be provided on a first-come first-served basis as we will only be printing a limited number of copies.

The funds collected this year will still be used to offset the operation costs incurred in producing the yearly material as well as for general operations.

If you are prompted to give to our General Fund, you may do so by:

- Banking in directly/transferring online to NECF's general fund account:

Bank : Public Bank

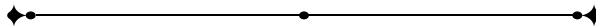
Account Name : National Evangelical Christian Fellowship AC3

Account No. : 3218284529

- Scanning the Touch' n Go barcode given in this booklet, NECF website, Facebook pages, App, etc.

Please send your bank-in slip to **prayer@necf.org.my** if you do an online transfer or bank in your cash/cheque. Receipts will only be given if requested.

We thank you once again for your generosity, kindness and partnership in Christ. May the Lord bless you greatly in the years to come!



DAY
1 – 5

**God
the Rebuilder**



Bible Reading:
Ezra 1-10

DAY 1

7 August 2022 (Sun)

Rebuilder of Our Hearts



Ezra prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord and to obey it (Ezra 7:10). As we start our 40-Day Fast and Prayer for the nation, let us prepare our hearts to seek the Lord diligently so that we may know Him passionately.

God stirred the hearts of pagan kings and spiritual leaders to rebuild the temple. He can move our hearts too. The prayer altar is about our heart.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:21)

No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other... (Matthew 6:24)

God hates idolatry. Let us look into our hearts.

What are the treasures stored up in our hearts that distract us from wanting to know Him? Prayer, worship, reading the Bible, and waiting on God do not come automatically. It requires discipline before it becomes a love. But what is stopping us from doing all these that connect us to the Living God who so desires to commune with us?

Do we have one master only? Do we give more time to Youtube, sports, business, career, children, and so on? List them out and repent.

In 1 Samuel 15:15, 21 and 30, Saul told Samuel that he sacrificed to the LORD “his” God and worshipped the LORD “his” God. It was about Samuel’s God, not Saul’s God. Saul did not really know his God.

Like what we found in Ezra 10:3, we need to reflect on and renew our covenant with God. When our hearts meet His heart, it will motivate us to flee from sin and cut off idolatry.

Today’s Prayers:



Lord Jesus, we cry out to You like the psalmist. We ask that You search us, know our hearts and everything about us, and try us and know our thoughts. For Your eyes range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to You. Amen!



Police reported that youth between 15–18 years old made up 51% of a total of 1,708 suicide cases from Jan 2019 to May 2021, and suicide has become the leading factor in pre-mature deaths. Pray against dark forces that try to weaken their will to live and for the light of God to shine on them so that godly values will be implanted in their hearts and minds.



Due to the pandemic and unemployment, many Malaysians have accumulated huge debts over and above their capacity to repay. Pray that our government would implement feasible strategies to help mitigate their financial burdens.



Bible Reading:
Nehemiah 1-10

DAY 2

8 August 2022 (Mon)

Rebuilding with His Word



The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt in 52 days but not without opposition. In Nehemiah 4:2, we saw how Sanballat ridiculed the Jews and challenged them. Nehemiah and the people were united when faced with opposition. With one hand they worked and with another they held their swords.

When we anchor the prayer altars, we declare His name holy. At the beginning, I could only declare He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, as well as a few other names. From there, I realised I know so little of my God! I am grateful for NECF's Bible reading plan because it was from there that my appetite for the Word grew. The more I read, the more I grew in my hunger to know my God.

The Word is active, living, powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword (see Hebrews 4:12). The Word is the Sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6). It is defensive against the enemy's attack and offensive when we advance into the enemy's territory.

Jesus defended Himself with the Word at the temptation in Matthew 4. The devil also knows the Word. Therefore, we must know the Word in our hearts, not just head knowledge, so that we

can declare it in every circumstance. John 1:1 tells us that the Word is God. The more we have the Word, the more we have Jesus and the more we know Him. The Word aligns us to think God's way. The Word makes us complete and thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

It is indeed a manual of life. Shall we commit 10 chapters of Bible reading a day as we venture into this 40-Day Fast and Prayer journey?

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, let our hearts yearn for Your living Word, for in it there is Life and Light. As we meditate on Your Word, may Your Spirit remove whatever impurities and ungodly desires that are in us. Build us up solidly upon the foundation of Your Truth, so that we would be careful to do according to all that is written in it, and so that our ways would be made prosperous, and our paths straight. Amen!



Unemployment for youths is higher than in other age groups, and is mainly caused by education quality deficiencies, skill mismatches and low-quality jobs. Pray that the existing education system would be efficient in training youths holistically so that they will be well prepared in skills and character as they launch into their career life.



Pray that our cabinet ministers would possess great wisdom and calibre to forge ahead towards growth and expansion in all sectors with concrete plans and available resources as the nation undergoes a recovery stage.



Bible Reading:
Nehemiah 11-13;
Esther 1-7

DAY 3

9 August 2022 (Tue)

Rebuilding in God's Destiny for Us



One of the things we learned from the book of Esther is about destiny. An orphan girl, born beautiful, was destined to be the queen of Persia. Her Jewish roots taught her the power, importance and effectiveness of fasting and prayer. As she called for an absolute fast among her community, her destiny began to shape up, bringing her to a position of power and authority with which she was able to work with her uncle Mordecai to overturn the enemy's plan and deliver the Jews from annihilation.

We do not merely exist. God has written everything about you in His book in heaven, even before the day He created you as a substance in your mother's womb (Psalm 139). What was written about this orphan girl and her uncle came to pass. All of us have a destiny and so does this nation. But how do we know what is written in His book? We need to seek Him and one of the ways to do that is fast and pray.

Jesus fasted and prayed. When we fast, we deny the pleasures of food, entertainment and shut off the noises out there. We choose to die to the desires that enslave us and to develop patience and self-control which in turn develop our character. Fasting enables us to hear Him. Fasting should be the lifestyle of a believer. God

enables us when we allow Him. As we continue to fast and pray for our Land, let's ask God to unfold strategies that can overturn the powers of darkness in this nation.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, it is not our ways, but Your Way. It is not our thoughts, but Your thoughts. For as we seek for the destiny of this nation, we are seeking indeed Your will and Your heartbeat for her. Teach us now how to pray for our beloved nation, and fill us with love, forgiveness, compassion, mercy and grace that flow from Your heavenly throne. Amen!



A survey done by the Ministry of Health revealed that Malaysian teens aged 13-17 are critically and silently suffering from mental problems due to family issues. Pray that parents would pay close attention to their children and that there would be open communication between them.



The pandemic has caused many to experience an "improper closure" as people could not even pay their last visit and respects at the loss of family members or loved ones. Pray for supernatural healing and the comfort of God upon these broken-hearted individuals.



Bible Reading:
Esther 8-10;
Job 1-7

DAY 4

10 August 2022 (Wed)

Rebuilding Our Altars



God said there was none like Job on earth! Wow, God was so proud of his son.

It was recorded in heaven that Job was a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil. (Job 1;8; 2:3)

Psalms 15 points out the mark of an upright and righteous man.

How can we achieve this? When we abide in Him and He in us (John 15). To abide is to remain in His presence. It is like a wool garment when the wool is intricately woven making a beautiful pullover. A hole or a tear can ruin the whole piece. Intimacy cannot be compromised.

The best example of abiding in Him is building Him an altar of love where we willingly pour out our hearts in worship, reading chunks of the Word, praying and reflecting upon what God is saying. In His presence, our sins are exposed, leading us to repentance and to enjoy times of refreshing (Acts 3:19). It is about connecting to Him on a daily basis. There is nothing like having fresh manna direct our paths for the day. It is really about offering our time to our Master, Lover of our souls.

But you may say that Job was tested beyond measure. Job 1 and 2 show us different levels of spiritual warfare. Abiding in Him helps us overcome when we are tested. May God be proud of us.

*Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the Lord tests the heart.
(Proverbs 17:3 NLT)*

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, how blessed it is to enter into Your presence, for in Your presence, there is liberty, fullest of joy, rest, time of refreshing and glory. Give us the desire that loves to behold Your face so that we will find comfort and strength as we abide in You. Amen!



Advances in technology have caused a lack of interpersonal communication channels and skills in youth and children. Pray that parents, educators, and churches, and so on, would work to help youths and children overcome this relationship hurdle.



Pray against the spirit that works behind racism and extremism, and that Malaysians would be sober and alert, and not be easily manipulated by all the evil that divides and disrupts our peace.



Bible Reading:
Job 8-17

DAY 5

11 August 2022 (Thu)

When the Rebuilder is Silent!



Many people lost their loved ones, jobs, businesses and wealth during the pandemic and many were devastated by the flood last December. Indeed 2021 was a challenging year with so much suffering and pain. Yet the worst thing that can happen to a believer is not really about losing our earthly possessions but rather when God is silent. It was not recorded how long Job had to scrape himself with a potsherd and keep up with his friends but there was silence from heaven for some time.

Like Job, many have questioned God. It is at this juncture that either God is still God or otherwise. Job desired to reason with God. No matter how much he had suffered physically or mentally, he could still declare that he would be vindicated (Job 13), though it was a difficult journey where pain and suffering did not go away immediately.

In every spiritual battle, our character is being tested. While the enemy wants us to give up, God wants us to rediscover more of Him in the most difficult situations. The more we surrender to Him, the more we grow in faith. Surrender is about giving up our rights to Him who knows the end from the beginning. The enemy uses doubt, but we have the shield of faith. By faith, we surrender

everything knowing He will vindicate, restore and rebuild our lives and the nation again. Faith and patience inherit the promises of God. (Hebrews 6:12)

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, as we ponder upon Job's life, we find hope during our pains and troubles. You do tear down some parts of our lives or even our nation, but You do rebuild them in Your time. Help us to truly come to comprehend Your Word even as we recite, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." Amen!



Online romance has become a convenient way for many youths today to start a relationship with a member of the opposite sex. Pray that they would be kept away from the evil ones and that intentional harm and deceptions would not be a stumbling block in their pursuit of true love and relationships.



Pray that young, energetic leaders who are filled with vision and dreams would come forth and drive this nation in the pursuit of peace, righteousness, fairness, and justice.

DAY
6 – 10

**God
the Redeemer**



DAY 6

12 August 2022 (Fri)

My Redeemer Lives



Have you ever asked yourself if there's ever any reason to do good? When you tried to help someone, you were rewarded with slander and accusations instead of gifts. You live an honorable life but evil people take advantage of you and harm your family. Is there justice in this world? Deep down in our hearts, we assume (or at least hope) good people will always win and bad people punished. However, the reality is often the opposite.

The book of Job shows us such injustice. Though a good man, Job went through enormous suffering. His friends came to urge him to repent, assuming he must have sinned terribly. Job tried to defend his innocence again and again. The dialogue is painful to follow but it resembles the conversation in our hearts. In Job 19:25, Job said, *"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth."* Despite all the injustice and accusations, Job was confident that his Redeemer would vindicate him. In ancient tradition, the Redeemer is a person who will recover the losses and vindicate a victim's dignity. Although Job suffered then, a living redeemer stood for him.

In the New Testament, we learn that there is a divine Redeemer. His name is Jesus. He lives and will stand for us in the last days.

Do not give up the hope of living. Our Redeemer lives! Keep doing the good works even during a catastrophic season. Jesus stands with us.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, it is because You live that we have hope for the future. Help us to break free from whatever disappointments or discouragements we are experiencing. May we find new strength and hope in You. Amen.



Metaverse has created a 3D universal virtual world of connections for youths to explore their dreams and desires. Pray that it would not be misused by those with evil intentions, and that youths would know how to differentiate the real from the virtual.



Pray that the Prime Minister of Malaysia would be faithful in playing his role to provide godly and sound advice to our Agong, and that he would be wise and prudent in his leadership over the nation.



My Redeemer Knows



Social media is a powerful communication platform. It broadcasts personal thoughts to the global netizens. For many people, it has become a habit to express their anger and frustrations on social media. There is an inner desire and need for others to know our struggles. It is strange that, though people post their pains and problems, they still feel no one is listening to them. When life goes wrong, we even wonder whether God knows what is going on. If God knew, why did this happen to me?

In the story of Job, the narrator assures us that God knows everything. God looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under heaven (Job 28:24). Job knew that God had been watching over his life (Job 31) but he struggled with the fact that he still suffered so much. Job aired his frustration, somewhat like how we post our disappointments on social media.

Then came a young man named Elihu. He reminds us that God knows our condition, and His plan and purposes are greater than our human understanding (Job 33:12-14). Our Redeemer knows our circumstances, and He works in mysterious ways to redeem our soul from going down to the Pit (Job 33: 23-30). God is not wicked in using His knowledge against us. He is good, gracious,

and great. He knows our struggles. He is capable of saving us. But the way of redemption is according to His wisdom and plan.

Let us be silent before God and meditate on the wisdom of our Redeemer.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, we will learn to be still before You and trust that Your wisdom goes beyond our understanding. We allow You to do whatever You need to in our lives so that, as we are shaped under Your hand, we would come forth stronger and wiser. Amen.



An average of 14 unmarried teenaged/underage girls out of 1,000 in Malaysia get pregnant yearly, especially those from low-income families. Pray that youths would be directed to channel their energy towards constructive and healthy activities and pursuits, and that they would not easily yield to temptations.



The withdrawal schemes from EPF during the pandemic resulted in thin savings for nearly 50% of contributors and, therefore, a threat of financial shortages in their retirement. Pray that both the government and affected individuals would have wisdom to deal with the problem and that the grace of God would sustain them through their difficulties.

**Bible Reading:**Job 38-42;
Psalms 1-5**DAY 8**

14 August 2022 (Sun)

My Redeemer Saves



Christians have the responsibility to live their lives as good stewards. We should live up to the potential of what God has installed for us. Even if we were placed in an unfortunate situation, the love and hope of God should spur us to keep producing good works. Having said that, Christianity is not merely about making the most out of our lives. We are not just trying to have a positive mindset as self-help books and speakers advocate. We need to recognize the reality of sin and the dark forces of evil. Humans can't save themselves - we need the Divine Redeemer to save us.

In the story of Job, God finally broke His silence from chapter 38 onwards. God reminded the people that He is the Almighty Creator, powerful and superior to all creations. God later delivered Job from his agony, restored his fortune twofold, and blessed his family. Job lived to the full of his days (Job 42:17). The Lord redeems by renewing the broken world, bringing healing, and restoring order.

Our Redeemer also saves us by judging the wicked. The psalmist affirms that the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish (Psalm 1:6). When nations conspire against God and His people, the Lord will break them with a rod of

iron and dash them into pieces like a potter's vessel (Psalm 2:9). As we face injustice and oppression, let us continue to pursue the path of righteousness (Psalm 5:7-8). For deliverance belongs to the Lord; His blessings will be upon His people (Psalm 3:8).

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, we want to fix our eyes on You because there is nothing but a pool of sinking sand all around us. Help us to hold tightly to You and let loose of those things that are temporal. For, in Your time, our Heavenly Father shall restore all things in You. Amen.



Statistics show that a baby is dumped every three days and that it has been happening over the last decade, with half found dead. Pray that youth would have a heart that fears God and understands the principle of the sanctity of life.



Pray that the country's overall drainage system would be improved and strengthened, and operation failures rectified so that places suffering from flood issues would be spared from more disasters.



DAY 9

15 August 2022 (Mon)

My Redeemer Hears



Before an impending crisis or major event (such as an election), there will often be a surge of prayer. We pray zealously, persistently and hopefully in times of difficulties. After the issue is over, believers may either lose hope in prayer when it turns out unfavorably or lose the urgency of prayer even when it turns out favorably. We see prayer as a means to achieve our desired outcome. We forget that the Lord also changes the one who prays.

Our Redeemer is not a machine that takes our orders through prayer. He is a living God who hears us like a father listening to his children. He listens to our words, our inner desires, our frustrations, and our hopes. The psalmists were brutally honest when lifting their prayers to God. They brought their tears (Psalm 6:6), their anger (Psalms 7:9; 9:19) their suffering (Psalm 9:13), and their helplessness (Psalms 10:1; 13:1-2) to the Lord. They did not need any pretense before the Lord who knows all things.

As the psalmists brought themselves to the Lord in prayer, they found their hearts changed. There is healing in our conversations with God. The psalmists found that the Lord hears their prayers (Psalms 6:9; 10:17), and they were drawn to the righteousness, the

glory, and the steadfast love of God (Psalms 7:17; 9:16; 11:7; 13:5). Even while they were still facing the challenges of the enemy, they regained their strength from the Lord and kept following the path of righteousness.

Let us pray with open hearts. Our Redeemer hears our prayers, and He meets us at the point of the conversation.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, we repent of our stubbornness at those times when we try to twist Your arms with our forceful prayer. We ask that our prayer would be aligned with Your will so that we can be vessels that You work through. Amen.



Research done by NADA (National Anti-Drug Agency) in 2019 revealed the shocking statistic that 30% of young school kids (mostly in secondary schools) were diagnosed with drug abuse. Pray against peer influences and systems of profiteering that prey on young ones.



98% of the domestic water supply comes from rivers with water quality that has been deteriorating over the years. Pray that the issues of water access and pollution caused by urbanization and population growth would be handled seriously and effectively by the relevant authorities.



DAY 10

16 August 2022 (Tue)

My Redeemer Wins



“It’s not fair” is a common phrase we hear from time to time. In this world where success is mainly measured by wealth and power, those who pursue them usually don’t play fair. The wickedness of humanity is pushed further by the dark forces of the evil one. Deep in the human heart, there is a cry for fairness. We hope to have a superhero who would kick the bad guys out, and restore order in society, and we hope the good guys would live happily ever after.

Such hope is not a random thought by those who suffer. It is an essential part of humanity. God created the universe with a precise order, and humans are given the responsibility to maintain the creation according to God’s perfect will. It is natural for humans to seek for fairness, order, goodness, and other attributes of the Creator. The Christian story is the story of God restoring the whole world to the “happily ever after” state.

However, the plot of the Christian story is not as short as the Avengers, Narnia, or even the Lord of the Rings. Although the main hero has been cast (Jesus crucified, resurrected, and ascended), the rest of the minor plots are still ongoing. We live in these plots where we continue to struggle with the unfairness, wickedness,

and ugliness of humanity. But as in any good story, those who team up with the hero will win.

The psalmists remind us that the Lord is our rock, fortress, and deliverer (Psalm 18:2). The world may become chaotic and be in disarray. But our Redeemer will have the victory and make things right in His time. The backdrop of our struggles is the victory of Jesus, proven by the empty tomb.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, as we honor You as our Team Leader, our Head, and our Commander of Army, we can be assured of the final victory. Make us Your faithful followers and team players until the very end of our lives. Amen.



High truancy among Malaysian youth (approximately 29.4% according to a survey conducted in 2017) has caused some social issues. Pray that parents and educators would come up with concrete plans to help minimize the truancy rate.



Freedom of expression from the public is constantly under attack by different regimes. Pray for openness in the existing government to allow people to air and express their views. Pray that authorities would not abuse their power and curb this freedom.

DAY
11 – 15

**God
the Rescuer**



Bible Reading:
Psalms 26–35

DAY 11

17 August 2022 (Wed)

He Saved Me Out of All My Troubles



Psalm 34:4 and 6 reads, *“I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.” “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.”*

David was in the cave of Adullam when he penned Psalm 34, a joyful and wise psalm which was sung in the presence of some 400 desperate, distressed and dejected men. This psalm invites us to exalt, worship and praise God at all times, whether good or bad. Seek Him and He will draw near to you and deliver you from all fears.

When we look to the LORD, we will manifest His glory and be steadfast, and when we call, God will save us from our troubles. There is protection and deliverance for those who fear Him. We can experience for ourselves that the LORD is indeed good, and blessed are those who make Him their refuge. When we fear the LORD, we lack nothing and have everything that we need.

The fear of the LORD will cause us to keep our tongues from evil and our lips from telling lies. We will love life and see many good days. We will turn from evil and do good, seek peace instead of strife.

May we turn to our LORD to rescue us from all our troubles for the fear of the LORD will cast out every other fear!

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, You are our refuge, and You calm us in the midst of the raging storms. Let us cast our worries and our fears unto You, for You care and only You alone can save! Amen.



Pray that the Malaysian government, especially the Ministry of Youth and Sports, would conduct more public campaigns for youth to raise awareness and create positive mindsets and perceptions in them.



85.5% of calls made to government-operated helplines between March 2020 to May 2021 were from people with mental health issues. Pray that these people would receive proper emotional and spiritual assistance, and that they would turn to the One who can heal their wounded souls.



Bible Reading:
Psalms 36–45

DAY 12

18 August 2022 (Thu)

You Are My Help and My Deliverer



In Psalm 40, David revealed a confident faith based on his assurance that salvation and deliverance come only from God. Despite the incredible stresses he was facing, David relinquished his frustrations to the Lord and rested in His strength.

During the time of David, if a servant loved his master, he would make a lifelong covenant to remain in his service (Exodus 21:6). To signify this promise, the master would pierce the ears of the servant with a sharp awl. David used this practice as a metaphor of his love and devotion to God. He loved the Lord and had entered into a lifelong covenant of obedience to Him (Psalm 40:6).

He understood that the secret to a joyful life does not lie in empty sacrifice, but a lifestyle completely yielded to God's will: "I delight to do your will" (verse 8). Although David was literally running for his life, he made it a practice to talk with God about his frustrations and found delight in obedience.

A joy-filled life does not depend on outward circumstances, economic security or robust health. Joy ensues when we understand who God is and live our lives as He wants us to, with the attitude expressed by Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, *"Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."* (Luke 22:42) When

we obey God, we enjoy the same fellowship with Him that Jesus and David knew.

May we ask God for the strength to give up control and to follow the lead of Jesus who models for us a life of blessed submission to the perfect will of the Father for, truly, He is our help and our deliverer.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, we acknowledge Your sovereignty and Lordship over our lives. We pledge our allegiance to You and, like the eyes of the servants look to their masters, we look to You alone and always! Amen.



Pray for parents of adolescent youths who are undergoing psychological and physical changes, that they would be able to handle their children well and guide them through the process to adulthood.



Pray for refugees and migrant workers stranded here that doors would open to them either to return to their homeland or settle in countries where they can lead normal lives.



Bible Reading:
Psalms 46–55

DAY 13

19 August 2022 (Fri)

Have Mercy on Me, O God



David lived a life of devotion to God but, by no means, did he live a perfect life. The greatest tragedy of his life was that he had an affair with a married woman and arranged to have her husband killed when she discovered that she was pregnant with David's child.

Psalms 51 allows us to listen in as David tells God, with all the emotion of a broken heart, about his sin and it starts off with a plea, *"Have mercy on me, O God"*. We also overhear David's solemn promise to turn back to his Creator and Father, the God of second chances.

Sin has consequences – very serious ones. After David turned away from God, he eventually experienced the full weight of what he'd done and felt crushed inside (verse 8). David knew that his relationship with the Father had been affected.

Our relationship with God, however, doesn't have to remain fractured. David found the path leading back to God, and the same path is there for us. When we admit to God that we have sinned against Him and betrayed His trust, and when we direct our steps back towards home, He forgives us and no longer holds our sins against us.

He is the God of second chances. Remember David's example and reflect also on your righteous standing in God's sight based on the sacrifice of Jesus.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, You are a God of second chances, and we have the hope of living again rightly with You and with others because of Your grace. Help us not to harden our hearts but to humbly confess that we need You. Amen.



Pray that a holistic and scientifically accurate sex education would be imparted to children and youth that corresponds to their age and development either through parenting sessions or school syllabus, so that their overall and general understanding towards this subject would be enhanced and would serve as a protection for them.



The existence of "parasite companies" and government-linked companies in many economic sectors have posed a serious threat for the competitive market environment and caused the slowdown of economic growth. Pray for a more open and competitive market where the value of excellent skills and performances are upheld.



Bible Reading:
Psalms 56-65

DAY 14

20 August 2022 (Sat)

In You, My Soul Takes Refuge



Psalms 57 declares that God is pre-eminent in everything: *“Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth.”* (verse 11) Because God is supreme in everything, He is the only One we can turn to in all situations. When David was being pursued by men who wanted to kill him, he talked to God about his situation and pleaded with Him for help: *“Be merciful to me... for in you my soul takes refuge”* (verse 1).

We might not encounter people who are trying to kill us but we are surrounded by problems, responsibilities and enticements that could easily overwhelm us. People do on occasion say cruel things about us and to us. But God takes care of us. *“For your steadfast love is great to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.”* (verse 10)

All of creation points us to the glory of Jesus. God the Son is first in the Church; He is the “head of the body,” the Church; and “the beginning and the firstborn” (Colossians 1:18). Because of this we as the Church draw our strength and power from Him (Ephesians 4:15-16). Jesus is the “chief cornerstone” of the Church, having built it on the foundation of the prophets and the apostles (Ephesians 2:20).

Although He is the Lord of lords and King of kings (Revelation 19:16), Jesus never forces Himself into anyone's life. He wants a relationship with us based on love and commitment rather than coercion. He waits to be invited (Revelation 3:20) and it is up to each one of us to choose to walk with Him (Romans 12:1-2). May our souls take refuge in Him and may we allow Jesus to be exalted to the number one position in our lives.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, may our heart find comfort and strength when we are in trouble for You can give us rest. May Your peace that surpasses all understanding be found in us. Amen.



Pray for youth leaders in the church that they would be good and faithful followers of Christ and that, by their genuine devotion and obedience to Christ, they would draw the same kind who would pledge their allegiance to the Lord.



Malaysia has suffered continual budget deficits for the past 24 years. Pray that the existing government would be better equipped with knowledge, experience, skills and foresight to manage the fiscal budget of the nation.



Bible Reading:
Psalms 66–75

DAY 15

21 August 2022 (Sun)

Rescue Me and Deliver Me



One of the psalms quoted most frequently in the New Testament is Psalm 69, generally in connection with the ministry and suffering of Jesus. At the time of writing, David was drowning in a sea of trouble and cried out to God. He implored God to save him (verse 1), answer him (verse 13), rescue him (verse 14), come near to him (verse 18) and protect him (verse 29). Even though he could envision no way out of his distress, David was confident that God would take care of him, and he found the inspiration to end his psalm with a burst of praise.

Some of David's descriptions of his own difficulties are paralleled in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' sufferings. God never abandoned either David or His Son Jesus, and He will never desert us. The writer to the Hebrews referred back to Deuteronomy 31:6,8 when he quoted God as saying, *"I will never leave you nor forsake you."* (Hebrews 13:5)

Whatever our circumstances, He will give us the strength to carry on because He is the Almighty God who will never stop loving us: *"The LORD appeared to him from far away. 'I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.'*" (Jeremiah 31:3).

Because Jesus suffered insult, betrayal and unspeakable anguish of body and spirit, He knows how we feel when we grow weary and bruised from life's blows (Hebrews 4:14-16). He truly understands and is on our side to encourage us to *"run with endurance the race that is set before us"* as we keep our eyes fixed on Him, the One who has gone before to show the way (Hebrews 12: 1-3).

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, a song of praise is what we need in challenging times, for Your name is exalted and adored in our praise, Your joy bursts forth in us and Your power goes forth before us as we praise You. Amen.



Pray for a strong bond of mentorship and friendship among the youth and their leaders, and that youth ministries would go beyond mere activities and be relationship-based, building strong relationships with Christ and with one another.



Pray that Malaysia would attain the capability to compete with neighbouring countries like Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos with their lower prices and high-quality goods and become competitive in the international trade market.

DAY
16 – 20

**God
the Refiner**



DAY 16

22 August 2022 (Mon)

Refined in His Word

(Ref Psalm 76)



As we journey during this 40-Day Fast and Prayer to have a heart to know Him, I trust that by now (Day 16), you have begun to appreciate what God has done for you as well as His plan and purpose for you.

The emphasis of Psalm 76 is on God who accomplished victory on behalf of His people over Sennacherib, king of Assyria, as he sought to conquer Judah during Hezekiah's reign. In Psalm 76:1, the psalmist declares that God is known, and that His name is great in Judah. In response to Hezekiah's prayer, the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians, leading the psalmist to write in Psalm 76:3, *"There He broke flashing arrows, the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war."* Yes, many of the Israelites knew God because of what He did in the face of the threat from Assyria.

In the next five days, we want to know God deeper, not only about what He has done for us but also what He wants to do to us. We want to know Him as our Refiner. The place to begin is through His Word, the written Bible. Declare to the Lord that you want to study His Word and allow His Word to refine you. After all, only God's pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times (Psalm 12:6) has the power to refine us of the iniquity and sin in our hearts and the impurity of rebellion and unbelief.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, Your Word refines me each time I read it and as I respond to You accordingly. Make me as pure gold and silver so that I would be purged of all impurities and unrighteousness. Amen!



Pray that Christian youths would grow in Christlikeness and that their love and devotion to the Lord would increase daily even as they grow into their adulthood and are occupied with all kinds of demands in their lives.



Pray that, in the coming years, our government would have better control over the main economic issues that affect the livelihood of Malaysians, like rising prices, the fall of the ringgit and the outflow of capital.



The Refiner's Fire

(Ref Psalm 94:8-11)



As we read in Psalm 94:8-11 today, the Lord knows that the thoughts of man are futile. Though He sees man as senseless fools, He also wants to correct us and teach us knowledge.

We were created in the image of God but, time and again, we fall short of God's glory. In a sense, we are like an impure metal ore, impure by nature, by what is on our minds and by what we do.

Our God is a refiner's fire. He must be like a refiner's fire because we need to be refined.

The psalmist writes in Psalm 66:10, *"For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried."*

In metallurgy, refining consists of purifying an impure metal. To extract pure silver, silver ore is heated and as air is blown over the melted silver ore, only the impure base metals oxidize, allowing it to be separated from the silver.

Picture yourself as impure silver undergoing the process of being refined by God's fire. As He puts us through the fire and blows over us, the impurities rise to the top and are skillfully removed by Him as a master craftsman.

By God's grace and mercy, what remains when the silver cools down is like a mirror that reflects back a perfect image, just as God had originally designed us, in His image. Though we are still the original person that we were, the difference is that after we are refined, we are a redeemed people in His sight.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, You have been good to allow me to go through the purification process. Every step You take to refine me, You have me, the ultimate product, in mind. I entrust myself into Your mighty hands. Amen!



Pray for a smooth transition in their faith journey as youths enter their adulthood, that their churches and leaders would be sensitive to their needs and struggles, so that churches would be able to contain them and not lose them to the world.



Pray that educators would harness innovative ways of teaching and impartation so that students would not get bored or passive in learning and would interact and participate more instead. Pray also that parents would ensure that their children are studying well and that students would work hard at their studies.



Repent & Be Cleansed

(Ref Psalm 100:3; Zechariah 13:8-9)



As we read in Psalm 100:3 today, *“Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.”*

God created us and wants us to be part of His flock here now on earth and forever in heaven. God will not forsake us even if we are impure. He wants to refine us so that we are cleansed of our impurities, and so that our impurities do not create a barrier between us and Him.

God’s fire is a refining fire, designed to remove the impurities from our lives. It is not an all-consuming fire – otherwise no one will make it to heaven. Likewise, if there was no refining fire, everyone will not make it to heaven either, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

But do not assume that everyone will have the opportunity to be refined by God. In the last days, the prophet Zechariah has prophesied (see Zechariah 13:8-9) that only one-third shall be refined by God’s fire as silver is refined and only the same one-third will call on the name of the Lord. Two-thirds shall be cut off and rejected by God and shall perish. Church, do not remain

defiled and impure, but repent, be cleansed and turn from our sinful ways, and allow Him to refine us today.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, it is indeed a privilege and blessing for me to fall into Your hands. I would rather entrust myself into Your hands than in the hands of men, for Your mercy is great. Mold me and make me in Your way. Amen.



Juvenile crime is one of the greatest issues found among Malaysian youth. Pray that those who have committed crimes would receive proper counselling and that their root problems would be verified and rectified to prevent them from committing future or habitual crimes.



Pray that Malaysian educators would receive more training, exposure and talent exchange opportunities so that proficient leaders would be built up to lead the growth and expansion of our education sector.



DAY 19

25 August 2022 (Thu)

Trust the Goodness of God

(Ref Psalm 107:23–24)



The psalmist in Psalm 107:23–24 writes of seeing the works of the Lord. As Christians, we want to see more than just His works, we want to see Him ourselves. *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (Matthew 5:8).*

To be pure in heart, we need to endure the refiner’s fire. Are you able to withstand the heat of His furnace?

Church, I ask that you trust in the purifying merciful God! As God seeks to refine you into pure gold and silver, resist the impulse to jump out of the refining fire of mercy today as hot and uncomfortable as it may be. Trust the goodness of God. Believe that His ways are the ways to infinite joy, preparing us for the time of His Second Coming. Accept His expertise as a Refiner.

Malachi 3:2–3 *“But who can endure the day of His coming, and who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD.”*

Before Christ's Second Coming, God's severe judgment will fall on the whole world. Christ's return to set up His kingdom will be preceded by the Lord's wrath on a Christ-rejecting sinful world. Let God do a refining work in us today, purifying us today so we can endure the day of His coming and can stand when He appears.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, help me recognize every single work that You are doing in my life and see You in a broken and fragile world that is plagued with calamities, conflicts and disease. Teach me how to pray so that my prayers align with Your will. Amen.



Pray for children without identity, including those who are refused under the birth registration system such as children of immigrants and asylum seekers, that they would receive help and that their rights of identity and education would be recognized.



Pray for more dedicated educators who seek not just to impart their knowledge but also to serve as a source of encouragement and inspiration while helping their students grow holistically.



DAY 20

26 August 2022 (Fri)

Gold Refined

(Ref Psalms 119: 66, 119:75, Revelation 3:18)



In Revelation 3:14, Jesus admonished the Laodicean church for their lukewarmness. Lukewarmness from a Christian perspective, as Jesus tells us in Revelation 3:17, is when we are oblivious to our true spiritual state, and satisfied with the way we are. We declare that we are “rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ and do not know that we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked instead.

Now, in verse 18, Jesus offers His counsel to the lukewarm church – to buy from Him, gold refined in the fire. Yes, only our Lord, who is the refiner’s fire can offer us gold that has been refined in fire. Buying this gold refined in fire will open our eyes to know Him more intimately and fall in love with Him.

How do we buy this gold refined in fire? Simply through inviting Him into your heart. Jesus said in verse 20, *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”*

Jesus is not speaking to the non-believer, but to the lukewarm Christian who think they are spiritually satisfied and have no need of Him. Open the door of your heart and let Him in today.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, open our eyes to see our spiritual condition so that we would not build our security upon a false foundation but solidly on Your Word and commandment. Refire us in Your flame to enable us to come out on fire for You. Amen.



Pray for the spending patterns of the youth as many have been caught up with consumerism out of a materialistic attitude. Pray that a proper value system would be instilled in them and that they would find contentment, especially in Christ.



Pray against the marriage of money and politics or religion and politics so that Malaysia would grow and prosper under a truly democratic atmosphere. Pray also for the politicians with integrity that God would continue to strengthen them and give them wisdom.

DAY
21 – 25

**God
the Reformer**



Bible Reading:
Psalms 126–135

DAY 21

27 August 2022 (Sat)

Formed. Deformed. Reformed.



*"I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope."
(Psalm 130:5)*

Today we look into the theme of knowing God as our Reformer. From the very beginning it was God who **formed** us (Gen. 2:7). So why the need to be reformed? The answer is because of sin. Sin left us in a **deformed** state – corrupted in every way. But God in His grace and mercy, **reformed** us into a new creation through faith in Christ Jesus. The old has gone and the new has come! This is the new beginning that we have in Christ Jesus – born again and reformed into His image through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In today's bible reading, we continue on with ten more psalms. Out of the ten, nine are taken from a group of Psalms called the Songs of Ascents (Psalms 126–134). Why are they called that? Well, historical tradition says the Jews sang these psalms as they made their uphill pilgrimage towards the city of Jerusalem during their annual festivals. The psalms shaped their thoughts and hearts even as they went – no doubt giving them encouragement and anticipation as they made the long and demanding journey.

Likewise, we too are pilgrims pressing towards the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14). So just like times of old, may the psalms and Scriptures reform us along the way - reminding us again and again of the great things God has done (Psalm 126), the blessings of God upon those who follow His ways (Psalms.127-128) and the unity we have as God's people (Psalm 133). May they be fresh manna and sustenance for our souls until we see Him face to face.

"It was God's Word that made us; is it any wonder that his Word should sustain us?" ~ Charles Spurgeon

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, I acknowledge that I am far from the perfection that is only to be found in You. As I meditate on Your Word daily, I ask that You do a reformation daily inside of me, so that I will grow more and more like You. Amen.



Pray for active, vibrant and fruitful evangelism in campuses and among working youths. Pray that the hearts of the younger generations would turn to seek the face of God.



Pray that Malaysian churches would continue to be built solidly upon the foundation and revelation of the Word, having Christ as our Cornerstone and believers as living stones in which the Holy Spirit dwells and works, and the gates of hell and power of darkness shall not prevail against us.



Bible Reading:
Psalms 136–145

DAY 22

28 August 2022 (Sun)

Reformed under Pressure



*And in your steadfast love you will cut off my enemies, and you will destroy all the adversaries of my soul, for I am your servant.
(Psalm 143:12)*

The psalms carry with them a sense of peacefulness and serenity. More so when read in the comfort of our homes, sitting in our favorite chair, over a nice cup of coffee. Because of this we can often forget that many of the psalms were birthed out of strenuous and chaotic situations at ancient times of blood and war where your enemy was bent not just on hurting you, but even on taking your very life.

Today's Scripture reading reminds us that many of the psalms were forged in the fires of persecution and pain, affliction and abandonment, desperation and destruction. But more than that we get a glimpse into the heart of the psalmist, King David. His pleas to God show us what needs to be done in such times. King David humbled himself before God, asking God to deliver him, to preserve his soul, and to destroy the wicked. He involved God in his life, trusted God with his life, and depended on God for his life. In doing so he experienced the steadfast love of God unlike any other.

Whether we know it or not, our trials and tribulations are reforming us. The mature believer is one who is able to see times of suffering as training unto godliness. They have already taken the words of our Lord Jesus to heart, *"in the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33) May those words continue to reform us to be more Christlike even in our sufferings.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, this season has been extremely tough for every one of us, but I am thankful because I can always find comfort and strength in You. Reform the way I respond to circumstances that are beyond my control and help me look up to You who are in control of every situation. Amen.



Nearly 21% of children under five suffers from stunting, about 12% from wasting, and roughly 13% (between 5-19 of age) from obesity (UNICEF, 2019). It is forecasted that 1.65 million Malaysia school children will be overweight or obese by 2025. Pray that the government and parents would help rectify the dietary and nutrient imbalance to mitigate such child health issues.



Pray that overseers in the church – pastors, spiritual elders or leaders whom God has placed to keep watch over their flocks – would pay careful attention to themselves as well as those under their care, to avoid slumbering and slothfulness and to be alert and vigilant in this age.



Bible Reading:
Psalms 146–150;
Proverbs 1–5

DAY 23

29 August 2022 (Mon)

Reformed through Worship



Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
(Psalm 150:6)

Today's bible reading brings us to the end of the book of Psalms. The last five psalms (146–150) each end exuberantly with the word "Hallelujah", which means, "Praise ye the Lord." What can we get from this? Could it be that, after all is said and done, Scripture tells us that the only right and good response for the believer is to worship? To raise a Hallelujah. To remember once again that man's chief end is "to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

The power of worship can never be underestimated. Scripture shows us that we become what we worship. We begin to reflect that which we give most worth to. The psalmist puts it plainly, *"Those who make them [idols] become like them, so do all who trust in them."* (Psalm 115:8) When we revere the things of the world, we become like the world – taking on its sinful patterns. When we make idols out of money, sex and power, we will fall into destructive habits of greed, lust and abuse.

There are a million "little gods" fighting for our attention – online and offline. Like clay, we are constantly being shaped by what we

behold and whom we expose ourselves to. The only question is, "Who is our potter?" There is only one true Potter who loves us and has our very best interest in mind – God our Father. Worship is akin to placing our lives into His hands. As we worship, He reforms and molds us to be holy vessels – fully alive in Christ and useful for every good work.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, my heart is drawn closer to You each time I open my mouth to worship You and declare who You are in my life. Remove every idol in my heart and make Your image strong in me through the reforming power of Your Word and Spirit. Amen.



A survey in 2021 found that 36% of Malaysian parents have children who encountered online scams during the pandemic lockdown season. Pray that parents and schools would play their roles in providing safety guidelines for their children so that they would not be preyed on by scammers.



Pray that the Church would stir up one another to love and good works and continue to meet together as a spiritual habit to encourage and strengthen one another in this difficult endemic season. Pray that Sunday School teachers will be able to connect effectively with the children, especially those from non-Christian families.



Bible Reading:
Proverbs 6-15

DAY 24

30 August 2022 (Tue)

Reformed in the Fear and Knowledge of God



The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.” (Proverbs 9:10)

With the advancement of information technology, we have been given almost unlimited knowledge in the palm of our hand. “Uncle Google” seems to have all the answers we need, dispensing knowledge at our whims and fancies. The prevailing culture would have us think the more we know the better off we would be. Yet the research shows otherwise. Mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety disorders continue to be on the rise globally. It’s like the ocean of information is drowning humanity instead of watering it for growth.

Suffice to say, more knowledge does not equate to a life well lived. Instead, many would agree that what is needed is not more knowledge but rather more wisdom. Wisdom can be thought of as the ability to apply the knowledge we have in good, just and practical ways. And the book of Proverbs is overflowing with it.

But more than just giving us wise sayings, the book of Proverbs roots wisdom in something deeper and greater i.e., the fear of the Lord paralleled by knowledge of the Holy One (Proverbs 9:10).

Meaning, true wisdom is only found in a heart that fears God and a mind that seeks to know Him. So, fill your heart with the joys and gifts of life, but never lose the reverence for the Giver of all things. Fill your mind with much learning but neglect not that which is most important – the knowledge of God through Scripture. This will be a lifeboat to us – a fountain of life that saves many from even the snares of death (Proverbs 14:27).

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, the more I fear You, the wiser I become. Shift my eyes and mind away from worthless things and let not my heart pursue worldly knowledge endlessly but, instead, make my heart a place where the treasure of Your Word would be stored. Amen.



Pray that the Malaysian government and non-profit organizations will have sufficient resources and expertise in alleviating and eradicating poverty among children as they offer aid in education, protection services, food and nutrition, healthcare, and so on.



Pray that, as a church, we would have the Word of Christ dwell richly in us, that we would teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and worship in One Spirit, giving thanks to God in our hearts.



Bible Reading:
Proverbs 16–25

DAY 25

31 August 2022 (Wed)

Reformed through Humility



Before destruction a man's heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor. (Proverbs 18:12)

*Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.
(James 4:10)*

Two men read the Bible – one remains the same; the other is transformed. Two men sit under the preaching of the same preacher – one is unfazed and bored; the other receives it with joy and obedience. One is reformed; the other is not. Many people read the book of Proverbs, yet not all turn out wise. The question is: What separates one from the other?

The book of Proverbs gives us a clue. It shows us that the key to being reformed is actually found in the posture of the heart. It carries the theme of humility and teachability throughout, while at the same time condemning pride and arrogance. A proud heart will learn nothing and can learn nothing – it leads to destruction (Proverbs 16:18). In contrast, a humble heart is one that submits to God by receiving and obeying His Word as the final authority in one's life.

Have we come to that place yet? Or are we still double-minded, unstable in all our ways? The wisdom and power of God was revealed ultimately through the cross of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:18-25). We do well to remember the greatest victory was won when Christ, submitting to the Father's will, humbled himself unto death. May we, the Church of Malaysia, be reformed in humility and, in doing so, find our true victory in the power of the cross.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, You lift the humble and bring low the proud. Cultivate in me a spirit of humility so that I can receive life and honor. Help me overcome my pride lest it brings me destruction. Amen.



Pray that children in Christian families would be trained under the precept of the Word of God, and that they would grow in the love and fear of God.



Pray for family evangelism where believers would be fervent and bold in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ to their immediate or extended families so that, as a household, Christ would be worshipped as Head and Lord.

DAY
26 – 30

**God
the Rekindler**



Bible Reading:
Proverbs 26–31;
Ecclesiastes 1–4

DAY 26

1 September 2022 (Thu)

Rekindling Our Faith



Old Solomon lamented over the vanity of life and the meaninglessness of chasing after the wind under the sun.

Many coveted his wisdom and yet he came to realize all of a sudden that both the wise and the foolish have the same ending, i.e., death!

Many admired his great achievements and yet he grieved over the fact that whatever he had laboured and gained over his lifetime would be passed to someone for free. Worst still, he couldn't even ascertain whether that successor would be wise or foolish. Israel suffered a split into two kingdoms after Solomon's reign. His son Rehoboam was gullible and foolish while Jeroboam, who took his kingdom away, worshipped the golden calf and triggered the tragic destruction of the Northern Kingdom!

Solomon had lacked nothing in life then. However, he discovered that his heart had become the emptiest place. He had deviated from God's way, and his past glory became futile and something to moan about!

How many have played excellent roles and performed outstandingly in their lives only to experience Solomon's regret as they aged and become weak physically? Or when they had lost their power and found no successors or wrongly entrusted their possessions to someone?

Do we hold tightly to our ministry, wealth, performance and position when we serve God? Or do we hold tightly only to Jesus? A life that chases after the wind and shadow leaves one nothing but physical and mental exhaustion. Hold tightly onto Jesus, and He will make our spirit flourish like a palm tree and grow like a cedar of Lebanon which bear fruits in old age and stay fresh and green.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, everything I have comes from You, and all that I have accumulated in this life will ultimately be tested by Your fire. Teach me how to be a good steward and put everything to good use for Your Kingdom and glory. Amen.



Pray that Christian parents would realize the importance of discipleship at home, and that they would obey the Word of God to make every opportunity to reveal Christ and His truth in all the aspects of their family life.



Pray that we would possess the spirit of the apostle Paul in that our lives is worth nothing to us, our aim being to finish the race and complete the task of testifying to the Good News of God's grace which is entrusted by our Lord Jesus Christ.



Bible Reading:
Ecclesiastes 5-12;
Song of Songs 1-2

DAY 27

2 September 2022 (Fri)

Rekindling a Heart of Gratitude



Do the lovers in Song of Songs remind you of your first love or newly wedded days?

Every date is filled with a mixture of anxiety and expectations when couples fall in love. Every minute apart causes them to miss each other dearly and every reunion is a memory to be treasured.

As newly-weds, there would always be something that moved and touched their hearts, be it in the morning or evening.

We can't really tell when, but the freshness of love and gratitude would eventually disappear.

Meals on the table no longer caused anyone to ooh and aah, and you no longer thanked each other when bills were paid.

Instead, twisted toothpaste tubes, messy clothes, smelly socks, or an oily face would stir grumbles and complaints, cold shoulders or frowns.

Don't we encounter similarly sad situations in our relationship with the Lord?

Things that used to move our hearts when we first believed in Jesus don't mean anything to us now, and we no longer feel thankful to Him for His many blessings, big or small. People around us have shortcomings that give us the right to make clean breaks with them. We might also be frustrated thinking that "God didn't answer some of my prayers."

A heart of gratitude is a lubricant for relationships. Without it, discoveries in our lives would not move us or cause our hearts to throb. The Bible teaches us to give thanks in all things, for every time we feel thankful, we are drawing closer to God and others.

May God rekindle in us a heart of gratitude. Our love is able to surpass temporal passions because of our gratefulness to Him.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, rekindle my heart to be full of thankfulness to You so that I appreciate people and things that come along my life journey. For I know that You are the Giver of all, and that Your gifts will enrich me as I learn to accept them with a heart of gratitude. Amen.



Pray for the strong building of family altars in Christian homes, that Christ would truly be the Centre and the Head of their families as they welcome Him daily in their homes.



Pray that we would not be ashamed of the Gospel but would share Christ with people in our circles of influence as it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes.



Bible Reading:
Song of Songs 3-8;
Isaiah 1-4

DAY 28

3 September 2022 (Sat)

Rekindling a Heart of Praise



Listen to the praises that were sung by the lovers in the Song of Songs.

Love is blind. From the top of the head right to the tip of the toes, everything was extremely beautiful in the eyes of the beholder.

With every praise, the woman became more charming and the man became more handsome. The power of their love was as strong as death and nothing could drown it out. Their passion was as hot as the flame of Jehovah.

Praise is the best catalyst for our love and relationships. Joy bursts forth in the hearts of those who give praise as well as those who receive them.

Praise is a new Kingdom language that God calls us to learn. The world is quick to see our shortcomings but the people of His Kingdom should firstly see the strengths of others. The world boasts of its firm fists by overpowering others but, for the people of His Kingdom, our mighty arms will be revealed when we lift others up.

The language spoken by God in the creation was a language of praise. God looked at those things He had created and He pronounced them as “good and very good.” God’s nature is full of truth, goodness and beauty, and so does the language He speaks.

We learn the Kingdom language from God when we draw near to Him. God will rekindle our love for Him so that we have His nature of praise. Our days would then be filled with joy when we give praise.

Today’s Prayers:



Lord Jesus, my vocabulary is so limited every time I come before You to give praise. Fill me with Your Spirit so that praise would become a fluent language for me. Help me to find things in others for which I could give praise too. Amen.



Pray for the children Sunday school programs, that they would be strongly rooted in the Word of God, and that children would learn the character and the heartbeat of Jesus as they grow in the truth and impartation of His Great Commandment and Great Commission.



Pray that churches all over Malaysia would be well prepared to give an answer with gentleness and respect to everyone the reason for the hope we have so that Christ would not just be made known, but also glorified.



Rekindling our Vision



If you have ever driven in a big storm, you would have forced yourself to slow down because your vision of the roads would have been blurry. If you are short-sighted, you would need to replace your glasses regularly to keep a clear vision.

Outward hindrances or things that distract us can affect our vision, and our inner hidden illnesses can also cause us to have bad eyesight.

Isaiah was already exercising his role as a prophet before the death of King Uzziah. That year, he saw the Lord sitting highly on His heavenly throne and this vision freshened his journey as a prophet. He heard the call of God and saw the Holy One as well as his and the nation's unclean lips.

How many strong rebukes came out from his mouth in relation to the sins of the Israelites! Then he came to realize that he was a man with unclean lips himself, exactly like the people under his condemnation! This discovery changed Isaiah from an outsider to an insider. The ultimate rise or fall of the nation was not merely due to the sins of others but everyone who had sinned against God, including him, the prophet.

Do we serve God as an outsider like Isaiah? Our hearts are full of deceit and we are quick to pinpoint and pass our judgments on others as we look around our nation and its affairs. It is only until we have seen God that we can empathize like an insider and be able to serve with contrite hearts that are full of mercy and love.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, I want to see You high and lifted up so that I would come to realize how lowly I have been. Help me to have good vision so that I would see all things through Your lens. Help me to pray for the nation with a contrite heart and broken spirit. Amen.



Pray that Christian parents would come to realize that the greatest inheritance that they could give to their children is their faith in Christ and that a life that lives fully for Christ would influence their children's values and beliefs for a lifetime.



Pray that, as the Church in Malaysia, we would bear much fruit showing ourselves to be disciples of Christ to the glory of God, the Father.



Rekindling Our Hope



In today's Bible reading, Isaiah used extensive passages to describe the devastation that Israel's neighbouring countries would soon undergo when they were trampled under chariots. Whether it was Moab's King's Highway, Damascus' waters, Cush's idols, or Egypt's horses, eventually even God's people, the Israelites, were not spared.

How terrified God's people were as they witnessed the miserable collapse of the powers they initially sought to ally with.

God reminded them through the prophet that none would be able to stand before His judgment except those who looked up to Him. Israel would be His inheritance, even Egypt would be His people, and Assyria His handiwork. People would not look to the altars, the Asherah poles and the incense altars they made with their hands. They would look to their Maker and turn their eyes to the Holy One of Israel.

Hasn't Covid-19 also caused whatever we have depended on to stumble and fall? The inflation and economic downturn, the exhausted and overborne medical system, lost wealth and health, virus variants, market volatility and, worst still, the unknown

challenges and sense of despair regarding our country's politics and authorities. Who shall we trust? And who shall we turn to?

The call of the prophet should resound in this generation. We must forsake worthless idols and look only to the source of our hope, the God who works in all things for the good of those who love Him and who have been called for His purpose.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, when the world is in a mess and nobody is able to tell me what to do, I can always turn to You and seek Your wisdom. For You have told me not to be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present my requests to You. Amen.



The statistics of the Malaysian Paediatric Association show that a billion children experience violence yearly on a global scale and that there was a higher increase during the pandemic season. Pray that Malaysian children who suffer under domestic violence would receive proper help and rescue.



Pray that ministers of God would preach the Word of God and be prepared in and out of season, correcting, rebuking or encouraging their flocks with great patience and careful instruction.

DAY
31 – 35

**God
the Revenger**



Bible Reading:
Isaiah 25-34

DAY 31

6 September 2022 (Tue)

Waiting Upon God the Revenger



The words of the prophets brought great comfort to the people of God who cried out to Him when the Kingdom of Judah was invaded by their enemies, and when their internal regime was found to be corrupted. Prophets kept evoking the people of God to return to His knowledge. For God is righteous in His ruling, and He reigns with justice. Therefore, not only would God's people behold Him, they would also hear His voice speaking to the nations. Then, God's people will come to know that He is sovereign and in control, and that He is worthy to be praised! They would surely burst out in song and declare the unshakeable fortress they have in God!

God shall give grace to us. When we are trapped in our environment, and become weak and unable to move on, we must know that God is going to shower us with grace. God will surely rise up and show us mercy whenever we turn to Him and trust Him firmly in our troubles. May God reveal to us more and more His will for our nation as we pray for it, so that we can hold fast a prayerful heart. May the power of the Lord Jesus be our shelter. May we enjoy peace and stability in Him. Blessed are those who wait upon Him!

Today's Prayers:



Strengthen our hearts, dear Lord! May You open our eyes, so that by faith we perceive ourselves dwelling in your presence in the vast land You shall give to us. Hide us in your stillness and may we trust firmly in You for You will keep us very peaceful! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!



Gangsterism or bullying has become a prevalent phenomenon in the Malaysian schools nowadays and has damaged both the bullies as well as the bullied. Pray that parents and schools would make a good effort to identify the reasons that draw youths to gangsterism and bullying and deal with them effectively.



Pray that the Malaysian law enforcement would carry out their duties in a fair and just manner, without abuse of power towards the innocent or impunity for the perpetrators.



Bible Reading:
Isaiah 35-44

DAY 32

7 September 2022 (Wed)

Overcome By the Power of God the Revenger



God exhorted His people not to remember the former things or dwell on the past when they experienced troubles and fears, for He is the God who does new things. Therefore, both the Israelites who went out of Egypt and Hezekiah who faced the attack of the Assyrians experienced God's wonderful salvation.

God treasures and honors us and, with His power and might, He rescues us and blots out all our trespasses for the glory of His name so that His children would turn to Him from all corners. Whatever experiences we have gone through, be it at the mountain peak or at the valley deep, be it difficulties or sufferings, God would surely cover us with His mighty arms and lead us through all these challenges!

Dear brothers and sisters, God loves us so much that He calls us by name. We belong to Him! Hence, do not be fearful for God is with us. May God help us know Him personally and understand His love for us and realise that He is the God who takes vengeance on our enemies. There is no need for us to live in grievances, distortions, or suppressions. In Jesus, all the enemy's works of killing and destruction shall cease, and we shall receive lives of abundance!

Today's Prayers:



Dear Lord, I want to declare that, in You, I can be strong and courageous, and I will overcome as I rely on You! I would surely walk in Your light as You illuminate me and, in Your light, I shall see light! In Jesus' victorious name, I pray. Amen!



Child marriage remains a major concern in the welfare and health of children as it deprives them of a normal childhood and proper education, and even exposes them to birth risks and death. Pray that those who agree to child marriage would come to that awareness and that God's mercy would cover badly affected children.



Pray that religious freedom and rights would be upheld staunchly by all stakeholders in this nation and that there would be no violation of these rights and freedom from the relevant authorities.



Bible Reading:
Isaiah 45-54

DAY 33

8 September 2022 (Thu)

God the Revenger, He Shall Rebuild Us



Many times, be it in their prosperous or peaceful seasons, or seasons when they were under enemy invasion, the Israelites stirred God's wrath. They forsook the God who loved them and, instead, relied on the powers of other nations and sought help from their idols. Man's weaknesses cause them to rebel against God and stray away from Him. The temptations of the evil ones made them lose their faith in Him. Amid their pain and suffering, those who were remorseful condemned themselves and dared not call out to God while the obstinate ones refused to acknowledge God. They forgot that God was waiting for them to return.

In His patience, God allows suffering and pain to refine and discipline us for our own good. Many times, we think that God had forsaken us. Yet He has reminded us again and again to not forget! Though He would only leave us for a while, He would receive us back with His abundant grace and show us His mercy with an everlasting love.

May God rebuild whatever we have lost during this pandemic season, be it what we used to possess, or the faith or hope we had for the future. Let's humble ourselves and turn our hearts to Him. Let us doubt not how long, how wide, how high, and how

deep the love of God is. He would surely give us great peace. In all kinds of chaotic situations, let us cry out to God for our nation to be firmly established in His righteousness, and we shall be free from oppression, fears and terrors!

Today's Prayers:



Dear Lord, forgive us when we sin against You in our weaknesses and arouse Your anger! We have decided to return to You now, and we declare that You will restore whatever our enemy, the evil one, has taken away from us! You shall fix Your eyes on us and keep watch over us and lead us on the path of peace! In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Pray against child prostitution or child sexual exploitation, especially among immigrant children who live in poverty and are forced to lead such a lifestyle for survival. Pray that God would provide a way for them.



Pray that families in the Church would continue to grow holistically and that fathers, who are the heads of their families, would devote time and energy to lead their families in worshipping and serving God wholeheartedly.



Bible Reading:
Isaiah 55-64

DAY 34

9 September 2022 (Fri)

God the Revenger, Accomplishes Great Things for Us



God is our Rescuer, and how wonderful are His deeds! His thoughts are higher than our thoughts and His ways higher than our ways. Therefore, blessed are those who hold fast to His promises. For He spoke, and it came to be. He commanded, and it stood firm. His faithfulness lasts forever.

God will accomplish great things for us and replace the common ones with the special ones. He will build us up with His peace and righteousness. All the violence, desolation and destruction on earth shall pass away. Moreover, the least among us shall become a thousand, the smallest the mighty nation. God promises that we shall receive a double portion instead of shame, and we shall rejoice, instead of face disgrace, by receiving an everlasting joy. For our God shall reward us in His faithfulness, and He shall make an everlasting covenant with us.

Hence, let's pray to Him and seek Him. May God look down from heaven and from His holy and glorious dwelling place, and show us His power, love and mercy as we pray! For God is our Father. We are the clay, and He is the potter, and we are the works of His hand!

Today's Prayers:



Lord, You are the God who watches over us and showers us with Your favour! Blessed are those who seek Your will and who act according to Your precepts! Therefore, we are willing to entrust our lives unto Your hand, so that the works of our hands shall be pleasing to You! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!



The Health Ministry Malaysia statistics show that at least 1,000 Malaysian children are abused yearly, most commonly either by parents, custodians, or baby-sitters. Pray for good and creative measures by the government, families and public to help curb the abuse.



Pray that Malaysian churches or organizations that undergo transitions of leadership would experience a smooth process, and that future generations who take over the leadership of those churches or organizations would be empowered and anointed to achieve greater heights.



Bible Reading:
Isaiah 65-66;
Jeremiah 1-8

DAY 35

10 September 2022 (Sat)

God the Revenger, He Demands Our Fear and Wholehearted Worship



"The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved." This was the condition of the Israelites: the crises posed by their enemies remained unsettled and they had not been saved. Not only did they miss their harvest then, they had also lost their hope for the harvest of the coming year.

The impending destruction awaited the Kingdom of Judah as the people became more hard-hearted in their bloody and chaotic situation. They gave up their trust in God and, instead, abandoned themselves to unreliable idols and Pharaoh, the King of Egypt. The piercing words of the prophets calling forth God's people to forsake their wickedness in their hearts were in vain for they did not know God. They foolishly thought that they were the people chosen by God, that the existence of the temple was a sign of God's presence with them, and that disasters, swords, and famines would never fall upon them. Never did they realize that God was indeed looking for hearts within them that were steadfast and feared Him!

The same goes for our generation, where challenges and temptations also test us. We would know whether we have truly

known this God through these tests. Let's love God sincerely and forsake false gods that are delusive, as well as idols in our hearts, so that our prayers would be heard by God. An attitude that seeks to live out lives of righteousness and integrity makes us not only a mainstay in this warped and crooked generation but also lives that are full of powerful testimonies.

Today's Prayers:



Now is the time to seek You, Lord. May we come before You with clean hands and pure hearts. Illuminate us once again so that we would know how to pray in accordance with Your will, and would see You face to face! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!



With the estimation that 1 out of 68 children are born with autism, 9,000 children would be found to have this condition in Malaysia every year. Unfortunately, current NGOs are said to have the capacity for handling less than 1,500 autistic children (NASOM). Pray for more centres to cater for this need, and also that parents and caretakers with autistic children would possess greater stamina, wisdom and skills, as well as a spirit of perseverance and love to groom them.



Pray that Malaysian churches would be renewed in their spirit with fresh encounters with the Lord and receive a new anointing to venture into new assignments from Him.

DAY
36 – 40

**God
the Restorer**



The Presence of an Absence



The rejection of God is present when He is constantly relegated to the marginal corners of our lives. Our waking moments are often engaged with urgent tasks and busyness. Before we know it, we are beset with subtle but fatal compromises. Jeremiah, the restorer, faced such a calamity in the behavior of the Israelites.

The reasons why judgment must strike God's people are carefully explained in today's reading of Jeremiah. Foolish in its claim to "wisdom," pride and self-righteousness, Judah rejected God's Word and turned away when the Lord spoke to them. The prospect was so vividly clear to Jeremiah that he again cried out in anguish. Yet at the same time Jeremiah was repelled by the corruptions all around him and wished he could leave this tainted land filled with spiritual and moral adulterers (9:16). He echoed Isaiah's scornful condemnation of idolatry (Isaiah 44:6–28). The sickness of the land was incurable. Now it must endure God's burning judgement.

Jeremiah was teaching that obedience to the laws was vital to the covenantal relationship of each generation with the Lord. But his listeners whispered among themselves and turned away. God deals with his people like a potter works on a lump of clay. He will

squeeze the clay into a lump again and again. God's desire for all mankind is not to sin. The disobedient will be crushed, and He can again shape them toward His holiness and His nature.

Consider your ways:

We need to make a difference and restore our time with God. How can we break away from an ignorant spirit? (Jeremiah 4:1-3).

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, we ask for Your forgiveness for squeezing You out of our busy schedules, all the while thinking willfully that You can be summoned as and when we have a need. We seek Your presence and refuse to move on with Your absence. Amen.



Pray for a stronger bond between children and their working parents. Pray that they would be able to spend quality time together daily and hear each other out, though most of the children's time is spent outside their homes in schools, tuition centres or day care centres.



Pray that Malaysian churches, with either big or small congregations, would be effectual community churches that help meet the needs of their communities and bring forth transformation in their localities.



The heart of a Restorer



The Church is often influenced by the world and has thus become conformed to it. Worldliness has crept into the Church. No wonder there is neither advancement nor depth in discipleship today. Instead, the superficial abounds. People are not ready for tough times.

The crushing weight of Babylon was felt in Palestine in Jeremiah chapters 21–28. As the army approached, the terror that Jeremiah had so long foretold began to grip the hearts of the inhabitants of Judah. He carried a demoralizing message to all the citizens of Jerusalem. Those who flee the city and surrender to the Babylonians will live. Those who stay behind her walls will die (21:8–11).

He stood in the king's palace to deliver a message of condemnation: Do justice. Keep the covenant, or the palace will become a ruin (22:1–10). But the king did not listen. Why?

God is not interested in just touching up our lives. He wants to transform them. Living by the externals causes us to misguidedly perceive that we are already pretty good. The ruler and the people in Jeremiah's time could not foresee the judgment to

come because they sought only abundant blessings from God but shunned a total surrender to Him. The heart of a restorer cultivates a godly appetite for an inner journey through which they get to know Him (24:7).

Consider your ways:

Conviction lies in the ability to see. It is killed in people (especially leaders) with arrogant and prideful attitudes which say, "I've been there and done that. Have you?" It is a performance trap, a false sense of perception. They refuse to listen to others because they think they are more experienced and have achieved more. Radical change comes with a heart to know God. Read the word of God in chunks daily.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, strip from us our reliance on our past experiences. Keep us away from a desire to seek performance in order to gain approval from the world. Set our hearts to want to please You alone, our Master. Amen.



Malaysia was downgraded to Tier 3, the lowest rank in the 2021 US Trafficking in Persons Report. With the passing of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants (Amendment) Bill 2021, pray for effective prevention, enforcement bodies and prosecution, public awareness and cooperation. Pray also for the repentance of those who are involved in the black-market businesses.



Pray that churches would rise above the political, economic, health and social crises, and be the prophetic voice as well as channels of blessings in their spheres of influence.



The Mission of a Restorer

(A World-oriented or a Word-oriented Life)



Genuine love results in good works. Unconditional love brings about good works such as helping the poor, missions, peacemaking, meekness, and enduring persecution or rejection. Doing all these good works is bearing the cross of Jesus.

God told Jeremiah of a future restored Judah, whereas there was now death and desolation (33:1–13) in Jerusalem. The full restoration of which the prophet spoke about would not come until after 70 years later. It awaits the appearance of the Messiah, who is identified as the “righteous Branch from David’s line” (33:15).

The covenant of promise is unbreakable and immutable, for God will never retract His unconditional oath (33:19–22). The point which the Lord makes through Jeremiah is important in our understanding of God’s big picture. The Babylonian disaster or any disaster which may befall God’s people in history does not change God’s unshakable purpose. Hence, the mission of a restorer must be to know God who keeps His covenant with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (33:23–26).

Consider your ways.

Here is a question. What kind of Christian are you? A lifestyle of mediocrity is occupied with work, play, games, church, and friends. A lifestyle of excellence is rooted in knowing God, i.e., a daily reading of God's word, mission focused, and radical discipleship, and so on.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, You are a history maker and nothing happens without Your foreknowledge. Keep us focused on the trajectory that You have set forth for us so that we would live a fruitful life being a disciple in Christ. Amen.



The 2020 statistics show an increase in the percentages of both the Malays (15.33%) and Indians (2.75%) in sending their children to Chinese primary schools. Pray for greater bonds in fellowship and friendship, mutual acceptance and understanding of culture and lifestyle among future generations as kids befriend one another from a young age.



Pray that churches and individual believers would continue to be renewed by the Word and Spirit of God so that we can see things from God's perspectives and partner with Christ to be an agent of change in these turbulent times.



The Price of a Restorer



Without knowing God, we are tragically left with growth without depth. Revival is not just a euphoric experience. It is not about such things as signs and miraculous encounters, being “fired up” with zeal to serve God, and church programmes. These create fault lines with leadership burnout, families in trouble, and divisions or heresies within the church. Revival can only be sustained by intentional discipleship.

The Babylonians’ invasion around Jerusalem tightened and terror heightened the tension within its walls. The officials’ determination to resist Babylon got the upper hand. King Zedekiah, who wavered fearfully between resistance and surrender, was too frightened to exercise his supposed authority. In this deteriorating situation, Jeremiah’s life was in great danger. He was imprisoned (37:1–21) and the resistant leaders demanded that Jeremiah be killed, for his message discouraged the soldiers and the people of Jerusalem from resisting the Babylonians. The cowardly King Zedekiah feared opposing them and Jeremiah was turned over. He was lowered into a cistern and left there to die. Jerusalem’s wall was breached and resistance crumbled.

Jeremiah was rescued by the Babylonians and Ebed-Melech who defended him (38:7-13). He was promised safety when the city fell.

Consider your ways...

The real test of a genuine restorer is when one goes through difficult situations of religious threats, a corrupted systemic influence, and the grip of materialism. We call this the age of conformity. A radical disciple who knows the heart of God will resist the above. He ploughs in depth to know God in season and out of season.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, we cannot be strong and firm if our foundation is not upon Christ, the Rock. Anything can shake us and distract us from Your Kingdom purposes if You are not the Rock we trust. Fill us with Your Spirit and Your Word, Amen.



Pray that school children would be protected during this pandemic, and also that they would not suffer from any side effects if they do get infected.



Pray that there will be a spiritual awakening among churches across Malaysia as well as a great harvest of souls when churches are awakened to reach out to their neighbours.



Bible Reading:
Jeremiah 49–52;
Lamentations 1–5

DAY 40

15 September 2022 (Thu)

The Present Hope of An Absent Security



What defines us in the age of consumerism are our rights, our choices, and our conveniences. A radical discipleship is deemed to be unrealistic for us. Some come up with excuses to leave church or rely on internet church services for their convenience. These are real challenges for discipleship. The Church has lost its power from God and with man because it has substituted commitment for compromise!

The fall of Jerusalem and the loss of the Promised Land shocked the Israelites. Jeremiah's theology of sovereignty, justice, judgment, and morality, as reflected in these laments, were fully defended. Reading through the five chapters of Lamentations, we can sense the impact of the national disaster that shattered the false hopes of the people and demanded that they face the reality of their sins. The sorrowful poems also reflect the spiritual sensitivity that drove them to turn to God in exile. We find ourselves soaked in an anguished mode expressed in the five chapters of Lamentations. How good it is to realize that God intends to bring us good and the presence of hope, even when we go through pains. And in the absence of security, suffering is God's pathway to healing. The final poem in chapter five expresses the exile's

cry to the Lord for mercy (1-10). A cry of true repentance arose from the people in exile, *"Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may return"* (Lamentations 5:19-22) The real radical change of heart is a total surrender to God, and it is far more than a mere commitment to serve in church.

Consider your ways...

Define the reality of a total surrender to God. We cannot come close to God simply by serving Him. It must be a lifestyle of total surrender and of being disciplined to know Him daily.

Today's Prayers:



Lord Jesus, many times we equate our spirituality with the busyness of being involved in serving in the church or just by serving You. We forget to choose the better portion that Mary chose, when she sat at your feet. Help us to draw near to You and discipline ourselves to know You more as we listen to You in our prayers and reading of Your Word. Amen.



Pray for children in broken families, that their welfare would be regarded highly by all the stakeholders, and that they would receive warmth, comfort, strength and healing in their wounds.



Pray that churches and Christians in Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Terengganu, where Christians make up less than 1% of the population, would remain strong and encouraged, and serve as a light in the darkness.

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