

PSALM 85

REVIVE US O LORD



40-DAY

FAST & PRAYER

2016

7 AUGUST - 15 SEPTEMBER

NECF
MALAYSIA



ADULT EDITION

REVIVE US
O LORD



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Psalm 85

¹ Lord, You have been favorable to Your land;
You have brought back the captivity of Jacob.

² You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people;
You have covered all their sin. Selah

³ You have taken away all Your wrath;
You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger.

⁴ Restore us, O God of our salvation,
And cause Your anger toward us to cease.

⁵ Will You be angry with us forever?
Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?

⁶ Will You not revive us again,
That Your people may rejoice in You?

⁷ Show us Your mercy, Lord,
And grant us Your salvation.

⁸ I will hear what God the Lord will speak,
For He will speak peace

To His people and to His saints;
But let them not turn back to folly.

⁹ Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,
That glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰ Mercy and truth have met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed.

¹¹ Truth shall spring out of the earth,
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.

¹² Yes, the Lord will give what is good;
And our land will yield its increase.

¹³ Righteousness will go before Him,
And shall make His footsteps our pathway.

(NKJV)

REVIVE US O LORD

The obvious similarity of this post-exilic¹ psalm with the Malaysian Church is the context of national catastrophe, hence the outpouring of God's wrath.

Too often we pray amiss because we fail to comprehend His holy wrath. We lament the ails of our nation whilst obstinately refusing to accept the possibility that the state of our nation mirrors the state of the Church. When our prayer has not "cause your anger toward us to cease" (NKJV), then we are guilty of pouring empty words on our prayer altars. Hollow, mindless verbiage does not constitute "incense".

The psalmist's cry is far from our modern day persistent whimpering for a cozy and comfortable life. Their national lament was not for a "here and now revival" - it was for national restoration. The focus was on "land" (v1,9,12) and "restore" and "return" (v1,4).

Our *standard* prayer for revival will not do.

We want to see change whilst we dig in our heels and have no desire to "return". And until we have a vision beyond our home, our local church, our lifestyle, to the "land" and her salvation, it's doubtful we will receive answers to our "revive us".

Yes, "will you not revive us a-g-a-i-n" v6 (NKJV)

And the mercy of God can never be divorced from truth. In v10 the Psalmist cry "mercy and truth have met" and "truth shall spring forth upon the earth" v11. "Mercy" is no magic word and God is not obliged to move even if we cry loudly. God is not *nervous* just because we have a skewed theology of His love and mercy. God is looking for truth and righteousness in our responses as we intercede for change in our land.

¹Expositor's Bible Commentary

The Malaysian Church must ask herself some pertinent questions:

(1) Are we a party to the corruption in the nation? Are Christian businessmen just as corrupt? Is the Church happy to collect tithes of unclean monies and timid in admonishing members?

(2) Are we seeking for a revival and restoration without righteousness? With pornography rampant and homosexuality creeping into our Asian culture, where is the angry voice of the Church? Are we guilty of wanting restoration without wanting what God wants?

(3) "Salvation is near those who fear Him" v9. Yet today we witness tardy attendance, disrespectful worship, non-disciple leadership. How many churches are there that fear God?

We want to pray, "revive us". But perhaps the more appropriate focus should be "show us your mercy, Lord, and grant us your salvation" v7 (NKJV)



Many of us perceive fasting as a powerful complement to the act of prayer – a way to “twist” God’s arm into answering our prayers. We then become disillusioned when our cries and petitions seem to go unanswered. We fault God for not keeping His promises and start to doubt the effectiveness of fasting and prayer.

In this regard we are like the ancient Israelites who constantly questioned God and grumbled against Him, *“Why have we fasted, and You have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves and You have not noticed?”* (Isaiah 58:3)

The 58th chapter of the book of Isaiah talks about the kind of fast God desires. Before they were captured by Babylon, the Israelites would observe the annual Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement - by participating in a nationwide fast on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar. On this day, every one living in the land – Israelite and alien alike – were obligated to put aside their work and deny themselves. It was a day for them to be cleansed of their sins. But the manner in which they conducted their fast provoked the anger of God, who sent the prophet Isaiah to rebuke His people:

*“Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please
and exploit all your workers.
Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife,
and in striking each other with wicked fists.
You cannot fast as you do today
and expect your voice to be heard on high.
Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,
only a day for people to humble themselves?
Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?
Is that what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord? “*
(Isaiah 58:3-5)

The way they had carried out the day of fasting – the day allotted for them to cleanse themselves of their sins – was detestable in the eyes of the Holy God.

It is a sin that the Church has repeated throughout the centuries. We fast and pray, but still exploit the poor, and harbour resentment towards our brothers and sisters in Christ. Often our motives for fasting and praying are to compel God to do something for us, instead of submitting to His will for us. We have to recognise that prayer and fasting should lead us to identify with our own wickedness, and lead us to repentance. When we fast, our goal should be for the sanctification of our own selves, which are naturally followed by an outward expression of the goodness and kindness of Christ toward others.

Isaiah 58:6-7 instructs us to *“loose the chains of injustice...set the oppressed free and break every yoke”*, to *“share our food with the hungry, provide the wanderer with shelter and not turn away from our own flesh and blood”*. In short, fasting is not about skipping a meal or even the number of days we spend denying ourselves of certain things.

It is more important that our fast leads us to get ourselves right with God and with others – that we may conduct our lives and even our prayer, aligned with His will. So that we may effectively carry out His purposes here on earth.

Charity Collection: You may choose to fast a meal or more in this time of nationwide fast and prayer. Any amount saved from your fast can be channelled to our Charity Collection. You may transfer it to *NECF's Public Bank account (no. 3078972807)* as individuals or as a church. The money collected will be used for the following purposes:

1. To strengthen the East Coast Churches and Work,
2. For the Rural Educational Empowerment Programme (R.E.E.P.),
3. For the Holiday Empowerment Leadership Programme (H.E.L.P), and
4. For the Becoming A Disciple-Maker Training

Please send us your bank slips via fax (no. 03-7729 1139) or email (prayer@necf.org.my). Do indicate the amount to be set aside for *“40-day Fasting and Prayer Charity Purpose”*.

AS WE BEGIN these 40 days of fasting and praying for the nation, let us define the concept of prayer as “holding a conversation or communing with God our loving Father” – and not just asking Him for things. We shall start on this premise: that God is good, He surrounds us with immeasurable love. His faithfulness endures forever, and we can depend on Him. Knowing this, we can apply 1 Thess 5:16-18 to our lives: *“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”*

God wants us to know and understand Him, so that we can live victoriously and purposefully in Jesus Christ (*Read Jeremiah 9:23-24*). If we can approach Him with this attitude, prayer will no longer be a chore or just a duty, but we would look forward each day to connecting with God and enjoying His presence – because that is where we will experience amazing revelations, miracles and breakthroughs. We will be able to remain immovable in our faith, if we base it and depend entirely on God’s faithfulness and loving-kindness. **Do you need a change in your attitude towards prayer?**

7 pillars of influence in the nation: Business

- **Pray for businessmen with integrity to rise up**, for the Church to be a good nurturer and support for those in the marketplace. For Christian business men and women to be Kingdom-minded and live out a lifestyle of intercession.
- **Pray for financial breakthrough in Malaysia.** Pray for God to intervene, by His mighty hand weed out corrupt practices that are bringing down our nation. Pray for good practices to be fortified. Pray for an inflow of investments and economic growth.

THE WHOLE BIBLE has to be read from cover to cover, in order for us to get a “complete” picture of what God is saying to us, His children. This will open our eyes and give us understanding, which we need in order to be good stewards of what He has given to us. Most times when we pray, we make petitions telling God our problems and imploring Him to answer us ASAP. We tend to forget that prayer is a dialogue – a two-way conversation between us and God – and not a monologue.

How can we hear from God? It begins with a desire – to know God and to be known by Him. *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me”*, Jesus said in John 10. He also told the Pharisees, *“You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about Me”*. John 5:39

Most of us find it tough to read large portions of the Bible in one sitting, but we can set aside these 40 days to: develop a discipline of reading 10 chapters a day to ensure that our spirit-man is adequately fed, and to finish reading the New Testament and the Psalms (this can be done by reading seven chapters of the NT and between three to five Psalms, every day).

When we saturate ourselves with God’s Word and allow His Word to renew our minds, we can rest assured the outcome will amaze us. We can start by asking ourselves: **is my spirit-man adequately fed or is it deprived of God’s Word?**

PRAY

7 pillars of influence in the nation: Media

- **Pray for courage** to speak the truth with conviction and journalistic integrity, no matter what the cost.
- **Pray for wisdom** for newsroom editors and producers - to be able to discern the truth from lies, and to carry out their responsibility as watchdogs and opinion shapers with integrity.
- **Pray that God will protect** independent media houses that seek to report the truth. That God will provide the funding and talent they need.
- **Pray for Christian journalists** – especially those who have lost sight of the gospel. Pray that they will have fresh encounters with God, and work to build His kingdom rather than a name for themselves.

WORSHIP helps us relate to God's holiness. In worship, King David proclaimed, *"Everyday I will praise You and extol Your Name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; His greatness no one can fathom (Psalm 145:2-3)."*

Previously, we discussed how the reading of God's Word brings us to know God – thus renewing our minds and deepening our relationship with Him. As our awareness to His presence heightens, we can respond in spontaneous worship, like David so often did, adoring, revering and honouring our God, the King above all kings.

As we take the time of immerse ourselves in His presence, may we find ourselves completely given over to His love – that it should compel us in everything we do. *"My beloved is mine, and I am His (Song of Solomon 2:16)."*

PRAY

7 pillars of influence in the nation: Arts & Entertainment

- **Pray for Shadrachs, Meshachs and Abed-Negos:** Pray that Christians positioned in the industry to be strong and courageous in being counter-culture, choosing to stand on God's truth and reflect it to their surroundings. (Read Daniel 3)
- **Pray for hearts of stone to become flesh again:** For those in the industry who have taken their eyes off the truth and stopped believing God's promises for them, to soften their hearts - that they will be convicted to turn back to Him again.
- **Pray for bold hearts to dream big:** Pray for Christians to have the courage to pursue God's destiny for their lives, no matter what the cost and no matter how outlandish their dreams may be. Pray for an outflow of creativity, that will be rightly used to bring God glory.
- **Pray for wisdom and discernment:** For consumers and practitioners alike, of the arts and entertainment. Pray for discernment to filter out the lies from the truth.

FASTING is a powerful tool to complement our prayer. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church and Timothy whom he mentored, about subjecting his body to discipline and focus, just as an athlete or a soldier would.

Similarly, fasting is a discipline that requires focus and dedication, to abstain from certain things such as meals or everyday distractions – to help sharpen our senses towards God’s voice, presence and direction.

As we draw closer to Him, we might be surprised by how much God wants to reveal to us – both about Himself and His plans – and how much He longs to fellowship with us. **What do you need to fast from in this season of prayer?**

PRAY

7 pillars of influence in the nation: Education

- Pray for policy makers and educators: Pray for wisdom and conviction to bridge the literacy gap between students in rural areas and those in the cities. Under the current system, those in rural areas tend to lag behind due to lack of exposure and opportunities. Pray for a system that teaches students to think creatively and constructively. Pray for educators with passion and talent.
- Pray for Christian Fellowships (CF) in schools across the country: That God will bless and protect CFs, bring in teachers and student leaders who will bless and nurture their flock, and help young Christians build strong foundations.

IT IS GOOD TO PRAY IN LIKE-MINDED COMPANY of fellow believers. Hebrews 10 exhorts us to stir up one another in love and good deeds, and to meet regularly. While these 40 days of prayer and fasting will no doubt prove to be challenging, having a partner or a group to partake in it together might make the experience more enjoyable.

These 40 days should be a time of discovery and encouraging one another with our testimonies and revelations – to spur one another on, as iron sharpens iron.

*But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)*

Keep a journal and record what the Holy Spirit says throughout this season of prayer. Get involved in praying together with your church, and encourage believers whom you know have a heart for Malaysia to participate. Keep pressing on, while holding on to the belief that times of change are coming for the nation – and it is all part of God's perfect plan for this country which is close to His heart!

7 pillars of influence in the nation: Family

- **Pray for marriages:** For the restoration of biblical identity, as well as the role of husband and wife. Pray for marriages to be protected against adultery, divorce, and abusive relationships.
- **Pray for parents:** For the restoration of biblical parenting. That parents will be convicted to raise God-fearing children, and do this by setting up family prayer altars.
- **Pray for the unmarried/singles:** For the restoration of biblical identity in individuals as a man or woman. For singleness to be carried out in purity and purpose.

*Restore us again, God our Saviour, and put away your displeasure toward us.
Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you prolong your anger through all generations? (Ps 85:4-5)*

MOST RELIGIONS of the world operate out of fear of retribution – if I don't do this will I be punished? Will my bad deeds come back to haunt me?

A follower of Christ however, functions out of God's love: *"For Christ's love compels us"* (2 Cor 5:14). But ever so often, we take His love for granted. Look around you – we live in a world that has forgotten God, a fallen world that does not revere its Creator.

While we may have strayed, God's character remains unchanging. When we are persistent and unrepentant in our sins, we willingly step outside His protective boundary – where we have to face the inevitable consequences of our sins: where we have to face the wrath of God. It is only through Christ that we receive undeserved mercy and our guilt is pardoned. As we continue to cry out for God's healing to come upon our nation, let us be mindful of the condition of our hearts and seek to make ourselves right before Him.

7 pillars of influence in the nation: Religion

- **Pray that God will protect all Malaysians**, regardless of religion, from extremism and radicalism. That they will be shielded from radical indoctrination and will have the discernment to oppose forms of religious practices that seek to harm others.
- **Pray that moderation** will not be merely used as rhetoric, but practised in governance and ingrained into the fabric of our society. Pray that all Malaysians will see the importance of religious tolerance and racial harmony for the benefit of the nation.

WHAT could make God so angry that He would abandon a nation? Throughout the Old Testament, and throughout history, we see three behavioural trends that provoke God's anger to the extent that He would turn away and leave a nation to its own devices: disobedience, outright rebellion and stubbornness.

God gave His people the Ten Commandments to protect them, and so that they would be blessed and prosper at whatever they do. Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to love Him with all our hearts, soul and mind. When our affections and desires are not consumed by Him, they are trained on another. We disobey God when we erect idols for ourselves.

The Psalmist understood that as much as God was merciful, He would not tolerate sin: *"If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened."* (Ps 66:18). What sins have we left unacknowledged and left to infect our communities, even across generations? It is never too late to repent of them. Let us come clean before our merciful God and break the bondages of sin.

PRAY

7 pillars of influence in the nation: Government

- **Speak life** and not condemnation into the present government.
- **Pray for wisdom for legislators and civil servants** (regardless of which party they are affiliated with), to make decisions for good governance using judgement unclouded by unrighteousness or fear.
- **Pray against the spirit of covetousness** across all levels of government.
- **Pray for renewed mindsets/a revived generation of civil servants**, one not ruled by apathy or greed, but one compelled by a fear of God and love of righteousness.
- **Pray for blessings, favour and strength** for godly men and women who have chosen to serve their country in civil service.



Read Ezekiel 34:2-4

What are some of the troubling issues in the Church today?

Irresponsible Shepherds

God loves His people very much and is greatly grieved when those whom He put in charge of His flock do not carry out their responsibilities as they should. Shepherds who provoke the wrath of God and bring judgment upon themselves are: those who misuse church funds, those who commit adultery and who abuse their spouse and children, those who neglect the needs of their congregation by ignoring the hurts in their lives, those who fail to discipline and correct where necessary, and those who fail to feed their flock with godly truth but instead only preach what they people want to hear. It is these that are more interested in building their own kingdom than reaching the lost.

Irresponsible sheep

Members of the flock also have a God-appointed responsibility, and are warned: Not to cause division and quarrelling within the Church, and not to stumble new Christians with our behavior and not to try the patience of God by insisting on living in disobedience.

In Revelations, the apostle John wrote about several shortcomings that plague churches, even till today. What do you and I need to repent of, on behalf of ourselves and our church?

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Penang

- **Pray for the Church of Penang:** For an ignition with fresh fire to be an intercessory House of Prayer for all nations.
- **Pray against unbridled land reclamation:** Which increased with the rise of development projects by local and foreign investors. As a result, many villagers in the affected areas have been forced out of their homes where they have been living for generations. Pray for their voices to be heard, and that the state authorities will handle their concerns with wisdom, integrity and compassion.
- **Pray against prostitution:** Pray for righteousness to rain down, and for authorities to clampdown on prostitution rings. Pray for those trapped in the sex trade to find freedom.



AUG 15

Missing the day of His Visitation *(adapted from a message by Brother Israel, a Ugandan intercessor)*

16

Read Luke 19:41-44.

IN THIS PASSAGE WE READ THAT JESUS WEPT. Take note, because God cries for the things that man does not cry for. He cried over Jerusalem. Why? Because the people missed their season, they missed His visitation. That made Jesus weep. Missing it means terrible days will follow. Jesus saw what was coming ahead for Jerusalem, its destruction in AD 70, its Holocaust, its re-emergence as a nation, the hatred of nations against Israel today. Jesus sees what is coming ahead for nations.

Jesus became a man, and they could touch him and see him. Yet they did not know the time of His visitation. They failed to see what He was doing. Even today is it possible for churches to miss Him even though they are busy doing ministry? Will we miss our time of God's visitation? Heaven is moving now. If we miss it, terrible days will come. Respond quickly to avoid the terrible days ahead. God works in seasons. If you miss it, bad times follow. See that this does not happen to Malaysia, that you will not miss God's visitation upon our nation. **What needs to be set right in your life to be ready for God's visitation?**

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Johor

- **Pray for the sultan of Johor and his family:** The sultan has a dream to transform the state into a centre for commercial opportunities. Pray that the state's prosperity will be built on justice and integrity.
- **Pray for families:** A significant number of Johoreans travel across the causeway to Singapore for work, leaving the raising of their children to relatives or other caretakers. Pray for wisdom and counsel for the community to support parents to make healthy decisions for their families.
- **Pray for peace and security:** Crime rate in Johor remains high, with gambling addiction and drug abuse. Pray for the Holy Spirit to intervene and break the destructive cycles within the communities.

Read Ezekiel 22:30 and Psalm 85:2-3

God is calling us to stand in the gap. The question is why are so few willing to do it? When God can't find a single person to stand in the gap, **indignation is poured out**. Why?

Because beyond our personal agenda, God is concerned for the land, i.e. the nation. In order to stand in the gap, you need to connect one part to another part, like the bridge connection of the Petronas Twin Towers. There needs to be the connection between heaven and earth, between God and man, to bridge the gap. What is this connection?

Repentance is the connection. It repairs the broken relationship. Repentance takes away the legal ground of the enemy. Lev 26:40-42 states *"If they confess their own sins and their father's ... Then I will remember the covenant ... and the land."* We are reconnecting the land to God when we confess and repent of the sins of the past and the current generations, especially that of the leaders.

You stand in the gap when you have built the bridge. God is looking for someone to stand in the gap like Nehemiah did. This involves informing others about the situation so they too can pray. We need to remind and alert the people of what is happening. Let us allow God to take us one step at a time. What is important is that we answer Him when He calls, lest He pass us by.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Melaka

- **Pray for the Church of Melaka:** There is a lack of unity and a sense of complacency among churches in the state, and an urgent need for revival. Pray for an awakening of hearts and a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- **Pray for the young people of Melaka:** Pray for ambition for the youth of Melaka, goals that go beyond material achievements.
- **Pray for sustainable plans and policies by state legislators:** Praise God for the opportunities coming into Malaysia and pray for the local government as they seek to improve the state.

AW TOZER WROTE in his book, *The Knowledge of the Holy*: *"If we could remember that the divine mercy is not a temporary mood but an attribute of God's eternal being, we would no longer fear that it will someday cease to be. It will never be more since it is in itself infinite, and it will never be less because the infinite cannot suffer diminution. Forever His mercy stands, a boundless, overwhelming immensity of divine pity and compassion."*

Because of His great love for us, God took pity on us and came down, taking the form of man, to rescue us. We are saved from inevitable condemnation, because of His mercy. Today let us take some time to meditate on what Scripture has to say about God's mercy, and give praise, and thanks to our merciful God.

Read and meditate on these Scriptures: 1 Chronicles 16:34, Psalm 89:1, Numbers 14:18-19, Lamentations 3:22, Titus 3:4-5, Psalm 52:8b.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Perak

- **Pray against gangsterism:** Gangsterism is a prevalent problem in the state. Pray for God to protect the youth of the state, as gangs have been known to recruit members from school students, who end up getting involved in extortion, drug abuse, and even murder. Pray for adequate aid for the poor, as many among the marginalised have turned to gang involvement as a means to survive.
- **Pray against deforestation:** Pray for better enforcement of laws to protect the environment. Indiscriminate land-clearing for palm oil plantations and due to logging has left grave repercussions on the environment.

READ PSALM 85: This psalm is a communal prayer by the people of God at a time of distress. It is a prayer for God to renew His mercies. Note that the psalm begins with a focus on God and a recollection of His merciful acts in the past.

Our present troubles can easily cause us to shift our focus away from God. We then tend to turn our attention to other things we think will help us. *O Lord, we pray but our problems clutter our minds. Help us to set our focus on You again (Psalm 27:4).*

Recalling past events when God's mercy had delivered us helps us intercede for His intervention in our crises. As we focus on God's goodness, kindness and love, we can rejoice even in the midst of trouble, because we know that our Almighty God rescues and delivers His people.

We come before Him in confidence, because we know who we are in Christ – we are God's children, His beloved, the redeemed of the Lord.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Kedah

- **Pray for the youth of Kedah:** Substance abuse, sexual promiscuity and gang involvement are persistent problems among the youth of Kedah. More worryingly, the influence is spreading among primary school students. Pray that God will protect the young people of Kedah, and that effective measures will be put in place to bring healing and restoration.
- **Pray for families:** Many families, such as those living in the districts of Kota Setar, Baling, Sik, Kuala Muda and Kubang Pasu, are still living in poverty. Pray for job opportunities to be opened up to help these families, and for proper and equal distribution of aid by the state.
- **Pray for security at the Malaysia-Thai border:** Concerns have been raised over lax security at the porous border region, where smuggling of goods, firearms and immigrants is rampant. Pray that those with integrity to be put in place to guard the border and protect the security of the state and country.

LUKE 18 records a parable Jesus told, of two men who sought to be justified before God. The Pharisee was puffed up by the pride of his own righteousness, and in his prayer paraded his religious achievements. In stark contrast, the tax collector was contrite and aware of his sins, stood at a distance, as he pleaded for God to forgive him: *"God, have mercy on me, a sinner."* Jesus said that this man went home justified before God.

The mercy of God is the prevailing theme throughout the Bible. In many instances, people were healed, saved and delivered because of His mercy: a blind man called out, *"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"* and received sight; a demon possessed man was set free; the apostle Paul was saved after an encounter with the Lord while travelling to Damascus and testified, *"I was shown mercy..."*, and a criminal dying on a cross asked Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom. Jesus assured him that he would be with Him in paradise.

In his *Heartlight Morning Devotional*, British preacher Charles Spurgeon described the multi-faceted wonders of God's mercy as a tender mercy, a great mercy, an undeserved mercy, a rich mercy, and an unfailing mercy. Let us praise God for His unfailing love and mercy that rescues us.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Selangor

- **Pray that the Menteri Besar** will administer over the state with wisdom and integrity, that he will have the courage to be intolerant of corrupt practices.
- **Pray against a worsening crime rate:** Pray for God to intervene - that He will provide for those in need and jobs for the unemployed. Pray that He will protect families from the influence of vices such as gangsterism, drug abuse and gambling.
- **Pray for the churches** in the more affluent parts of the state to look outward, and share their wealth with their brothers and sisters who are in need.

“Restore us again, O God our Saviour and put away Your displeasure toward us.” Psalm 85:4

OUR LAND IS IN URGENT NEED OF HEALING. But before we can expect revival, we, His Church, need to ensure that we are in the right posture as we come before Him.

O Lord, let us be broken and contrite in Christ

“If My people who are called by My Name would humble themselves... and turn from their wicked ways.” (2 Chronicles 7:14). As we seek after God to heal our land, let us first acknowledge our own faults and come clean before Him. We pray effectively when we are aware of who we are before our Holy God.

O Lord, give us peace and confidence in Christ

The problems we face in our lives and as a nation can be overwhelming and rob us of our peace. Let us not keep our eyes on the storm - Jesus is in the boat with us, and He is Lord over the wind and the waves!

O Lord, give us clarity

Trouble has a way of muddling our thoughts and prayers. Are we able to think clearly, and more importantly – hear His instructions accurately? Or are we easily distracted by loud voices and strong opinions? If we are to be effective in our prayers for revival, we have to be strategic in our prayers – strategy that is given by the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Kelantan

- **Pray for the Church of Kelantan** to be a shining light and a powerful representation of the love and kindness of Christ in Kelantan.
- **Pray for the state government:** To be good stewards of state funds, to be upright and fair in handing out welfare to poor, as well as in terms of relief for victims of disasters such as floods.
- **Pray for protection:** The past couple of years saw the worst floods in the East Coast. Pray that God will have mercy and hold back the floodwaters. Pray for protection from militant violence on the other side of the Malaysian-Thai border.

TO DISREGARD IN DISBELIEF the mercy of God would be to "starve to death just outside the banquet hall into which we have been warmly invited." A.W. Tozer reminds us to capture the pure joy of personally experiencing God's mercy, believing that it is "boundless, free and through Jesus Christ our Lord, available to us now in our present situation." (A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*).

But the joys of God's banquet are meant to be shared. When the Pharisees reprimanded Jesus for eating with tax collectors and sinners, Jesus responded, "...go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice'. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matt 9:13). It is possible to carry out religious obligations and "sacrifices", and still be far from God and unkind to people.

Freely you have received, freely give, Jesus reminds us. God has graciously cancelled our huge debt of sin, and we should extend that grace and mercy to others. **Are there any debts you need to cancel? What steps of obedience do you need to take to extend God's mercy with someone?**

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Terengganu

- **Pray for a heart of compassion:** That will compel the Church of Terengganu to reach out and share the gospel through kindness and love. Pray for the fires in churches to be reignited.
- **Pray against extremism and for moderation:** Pray against radicalism that has been increasingly taking form in the state.
- **Pray for cooperation among government bodies and NGOs:** Especially in terms of responding to disasters such as floods. Pray against racism and political agendas in this area. Pray for better preparedness to respond to emergencies.

NEHEMIAH was a man overwhelmed. He had heard reports that the walls of Jerusalem still lay in ruins, and he could not just sit back and do nothing. He knew he had to help, but he didn't know where to start, so he turned to the Lord: *"For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven."* (Nehemiah 1:4)

God granted him favour in the eyes of the Persian king whom he served as cupbearer, and the king sent him to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, while providing him the resources to do so.

So many systems in our nation have failed, lying in ruins and are in dire need of a reboot and rebuild. Often when we look at these failed aspects, we feel despair and we don't know what we can do or even where to start.

But just as He equipped and enabled Nehemiah for the great task of rebuilding the wall, He also has the strategy for us to rebuild Malaysia. The same applies to areas of our lives, which we feel lie in ruins – there is no work too big or overwhelming for our God. Let us look to Him for His perfect plans and strategies, that He may grant us favour for the work that needs to be done.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Perlis

- **Pray against human trafficking:** Wang Kelian at the Malaysia-Thai border has been identified as base for traffickers to smuggle in immigrants. Mass graves containing the remains of migrants who died while being held captive by these smugglers, were found at abandoned camps near the border. Pray for heightened measures to end this evil and inhumane trade.
- **Pray for families:** Pray for God to bless and strengthen family units - that He will protect parents from divorce and their children from the influence of vices, such as drug abuse.
- **Pray for economic development:** Farming is a key source of income for Perlis' rural population. Pray for blessing over crops, and for farmers' access to innovative technology which can help improve both yield and sustainability.

THERE COMES A TIME when we have to just get up, take that step of faith – and begin. That's what Nehemiah did – he knew what he had to do. Although there was no way to foresee what challenges the task ahead would bring, he had the assurance that God was with him, and that was enough. He knew, that was the "call".

"You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace." 18 I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me.

They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work. (Nehemiah 2:17-18)

As we look around us in this nation – rising inflation, increasing crime, a flailing economy, blatant injustice and political unrest. Our country is in peril, and only God has the solution.

As His Church – His people, His builders, His army – we need to seek Him for His fail proof strategies for the nation. Then we need to get to work.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Negri Sembilan

- **Pray that God will bless the Yang di-Pertuan Besar and his family:** That they will be unwavering as pillars and drivers of moderation, racial harmony and champion good governance.
- **Pray that efforts to develop the state** will be free of corruption, and carried out with due diligence and responsibly. Pray that God will bless these efforts and prosper them.

HAVE YOU EVER RELIED ON A GPS DEVICE to help you find a place, only to have it lose its signal midway or point in the wrong direction? It could mean one of two things – your device needs an update or an upgrade.

As cupbearer, Nehemiah's life was headed in the direction of the king's courts. His was a pretty important role – the king relied on him to ensure that he was not poisoned by drink.

Then life took unexpected turn – God tasked him to lead the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, and he obeyed. The thing about living our lives according to God's plans – which He had put in place even before we were born – is that they may be unpredictable. Even so, they are perfect and fail-proof, and what we were destined for when He created us.

However, if we choose not to obey or seek Him for them, it is like relying on a broken or outdated GPS – we end up lost and missing out on what we were meant to do. **Are you tapping on to God's guidance for your life?**

PRAY**PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Pahang**

- **Pray for equal and fair opportunities for the Orang Asli** in Pahang. The state's interiors are home to many tribes that have been pushed to the margins due to development and even discrimination. Pray for righteous people to be placed in charge over the welfare of the Orang Asli in Pahang.
- **Pray against exploitation of resources** in mineral-rich Pahang. Pray for the authorities to clamp down on irresponsible mining, which are not only causing grievous harm to the environment but also to the residents living in the surrounding areas.

*May the favour of the Lord our God rest on us;
establish the work of our hands for us—
yes, establish the work of our hands.*

Psalm 90:17

AS THE BUILDERS WENT TO WORK, everything that they did they dedicated to God. They knew that the work they were doing was commissioned by God. Thus, He would grant them favour and equip them for the challenges ahead.

God has commissioned all His children to be builders – to build people through discipleship and to build His Kingdom here on earth, and part of this is by being nation-builders. The Bible says that through Jesus Christ, we have been consecrated to carry His presence in and through our work.

Because of our fallen nature, dedicating our work and our lives to God has to be a deliberate, daily effort. The Psalmist prayed, *“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord,”* (Ps 19:14).

Have you fallen complacent in dedicating your life and your work to God? When you walk in His ways, He will lead you to do things bigger than you ever thought possible!

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Sabah

- **Pray for God to protect Sabah’s borders**, which have become increasingly porous and have seen an alarming increase in the number of kidnappings and militant attacks.
- **Pray to break the stranglehold of corruption** which has fuelled various vice trades, and kept the state from prospering. Pray for a state government that is righteous and works to protect and prosper the state.
- **Pray for God to protect and revive the Church of Sabah**, that it may be a lighthouse and a blessing, shining the light of Christ in the darkest parts of the state and bringing hope to every tribe and tongue.

"Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes... Our God will fight for us!" (Nehemiah 4:14, 20)

THE BUILDERS WERE TIRED AND DISCOURAGED. The work was tedious and they had been at it for weeks. Leaders from the neighbouring regions had ridiculed them, and even threatened to attack.

Ever felt that way, even in the midst of doing what you knew God had called you to do? The prophet Elijah sure did. Afraid for his own life, tired of running and downcast, he wanted to give up.

The Lord came to him, fed him and let him rest, and when he had strength enough, Elijah carried on.

When we are tired and weary, Jesus says, *"Come to me"*. In His presence, we will discover, as the Psalmist did, *"My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever"* (Psalm 73:26).

What are the oppositions you face in your life? Bring them to God who is your Deliverer.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Sarawak

- Pray for against the illegal logging activities in the state and the protection of the native land rights.
- Pray for all elected representatives to deliver their election promises.
- Pray for access to basic amenities and education in rural areas.
- Pray for the unity of the Church.

Read Genesis 12:1-8.

“Prayer Altars are Spiritual Gateways between the physical and spiritual realm”. When God created men, He gave us dominion over the earth. Such was our authority, that whoever we worship and invite into the land will be given right of entry. Thus a prayer altar creates an entry point for spiritual forces to enter a land.

When God called Abraham to Canaan, the land had been previously offered to the other gods through altars that were erected for them. Therefore, wherever he went, Abraham set up prayer altars to the Lord, offered sacrifice, ministered to the Lord and covenanted the place to the Lord. In this way he changed the spiritual atmosphere of the land and possessed it.

In the same way, God wants us to possess the spiritual atmosphere in the places we live, work and worship. We can only do this when we build prayer altars to the Lord. Jesus taught us to say, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.” Where His kingdom is built, darkness must flee. **Have you started building prayer altars to usher in His Kingdom?**

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur

- **Pray for efforts to reach out to the urban poor:** Pray for government and NGO-driven initiatives to improve living conditions for the urban poor, and provide them with a sustainable source of livelihood. Pray against every form of corruption and self-interest in these initiatives.
- **Pray against crime:** Kuala Lumpur has become increasingly dangerous over recent years, due to poverty, drug abuse, gang-related activities, etc. Cry out to God to protect the city, that He will move the police force to combat crime more effectively.

Read Genesis 19

“Just as a holy altar claims the land for God the unholy altars are trying to draw the presence of evil and claim the land for darkness.” (Prayer Altars by John Mulinde and Mark Daniel). What happens when godly people do not bother to build altars to call on the name of the Lord?

Throughout the book of Genesis, we do not find Lot building prayer altars, as his uncle Abraham had, and the outcome of his neglect was disastrous: he gave in to the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah, lost his wife and property, and ultimately, his legacy – his daughters ended up committing incest and gave birth to a godless generation, the Ammonites and Moabites.

Where there are unholy altars to demonic spirits, those spirits are given the spiritual authority over that place, and will be allowed to influence wickedness among its inhabitants. The only way to resist them is to spend time and effort to build holy altars unto the Lord, where He is worshipped and welcomed to contend against these evil powers.

Take a look around your neighborhood, how many active unholy altars are there? What spirits have been invited into our land? What is its effect on our lives? Remember the altar that is most active – holy or unholy – will control the territory.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan

- **Pray stricter and tighter enforcement of the law:** Being an international port and duty free-hub exposes Labuan to many vice trades catered to internationals, such as prostitution and smuggling of goods. Pray also for God to close up pores in the borders and protect the state.
- **Pray for Church of Labuan:** that God will strengthen it to be a light in the darkness, and a safe refuge for those in need. That the Church will be moved to build prayer altars to take back the state for His kingdom, and that it may see a revival.

Read Exodus 33:7-19

"The essence of a Prayer Altar is to come into the Presence of God."

While most of our prayer meetings focus on our petitions and answers to our prayers, prayer altars focus on God Himself. At our prayer altars we seek to minister to God so that His presence will dwell with us. We desire for God to live with us, not just visit. What sets a Christian apart from the rest of the world is God's presence.

The presence of God is tangible, and can be felt even by those who don't know Him. In His presence, the sick are healed, the demon possessed are delivered, and we see salvation. Our churches and homes will see a transformation when God is honoured in them.

In John 15:5 Jesus said: *"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."* Abiding in Him is having His presence in us. Without His presence we cannot bear lasting fruit.

"Abiding in the divine enablement and communion with the One who made him is the secret to man's authority." (Prayer Altars by John Mulinde)

As our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, the place of the altar is our hearts.

PRAY

PRAY for the states of Malaysia: Wilayah Persekutuan Putrajaya

- **Pray for each government department located in Putrajaya** – that God will bless them and rain down wisdom, righteousness and integrity. That He will give them strategies for good governance and stewardship over the nation.
- **Pray for more godly men and women to be placed in positions of authority and governance.** Pray that He will bless and strengthen those who are already there.

Read Romans 12:1-3.

What do we do at our prayer altars? Paul writes about offering our bodies as a living sacrifice and offering true worship.

An altar implies that there will be a sacrifice. The act of sacrificing something upon an altar is to honour whatever the altar was built to worship. The reason why evil prevails and prospers today, is because many people have offered up great sacrifices – including their own lives – on unholy altars.

In the same way, on our prayer altars, we offer sacrifices – our time, our distractions, our affections, and our lives. Fasting is a form of sacrifice – Jesus fasted for 40 days to overcome Satan’s temptations.

As we fast, we need to set aside time to worship and exalt His name. We should spend more time reading His Word, so that we can enlarge our capacity for Him.

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Malays

- **Pray that God will bless, protect and prosper the Malays** who are the majority people group in Malaysia. Pray especially for those who live in rural areas – that parents will see the importance of education for their children, and will not shirk away from opportunities offered to them.
- **Pray for racial harmony** among all people groups in Malaysia, regardless of ethnicity, religion or creed.

Read Acts 2:42-47

Unlike modern-day Christians, the early Church did not place much focus on programmes and ministries. Their core function always revolved around worship, communion, the Word of God and prayer. The early Church, therefore, was a daily altar unto God.

Matthew recorded Jesus saying, *"It is written: 'My house shall be called a house of prayer.'" Jesus was not perpetuating that we use prayer as a way to get God to endorse our programmes. What He meant was that when His House – His Church – makes prayer its priority (and not part of a programme), then what will flow out of her initiatives will be effective even to all nations.*

The church prayer altar is still the most important altar where the congregation can come to have their own altars ignited by the fire of God's presence. As the church invests time on building this corporate altar, many of its members will grow to love God more and they in turn, will be inspired to build their own altars in their personal spaces, for their families and even in their work places.

It is these active prayer altars in our churches, homes and communities that will cause the spiritual climate in our cities to change.

Selamat Hari Merdeka! As we commemorate our nation's independence, let us continue to press on and pray for Malaysia to be truly set free, by the redeeming work of Jesus Christ!

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Chinese

- **Pray that God will bless, protect and prosper the Chinese community.** Pray that cultural mindsets will no longer be a hindrance for members of the community to receive the gospel and salvation.
- **Pray for racial harmony** among all people groups in Malaysia, regardless of ethnicity, religion or creed.

Read John 10

HAVE YOU EVER FELT OVERWHELMED, CONFUSED AND CONFLICTED at a time when you had to make a decision, but you didn't know which the right one was – because there were too many voices?

Too many opinions (including your own), too many options – and you didn't know which was the right one.

“He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice...My sheep know My voice.” Jesus said (John 10:3-5)

A discerning ear, and an obedient heart. Those are the two things needed for us to stay close to our Master, and we need to spend time cultivating them.

Are we able to recognise the voice of our Good Shepherd who will call us away from danger, and towards the best pastures and streams?

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Indians and Sikhs

- **Pray that God will bless, protect and prosper the Indian and Sikh community.** Pray that cultural mindsets will no longer be a hindrance for members of the communities to receive the gospel and salvation.
- **Pray for equal opportunity** for all Malaysians, especially in terms of education, and social and economic. Pray for righteous people from within the Indian and Sikh community to rise up to positions of leadership in the nation.
- **Pray for racial harmony** among all people groups in Malaysia, regardless of ethnicity, religion or creed.

Read Acts 16

PAUL AND HIS COMPANIONS were going from town to town to evangelise. As they moved along, churches were being strengthened and grew in great numbers. Upon reaching the Roman province of Asia, wherein lay all seven churches of the book of Revelations, the Holy Spirit stopped them from preaching, and barred them from entering certain areas. They moved on westward instead.

Throughout their journeys, Paul and his companions were always highly aware of the Holy Spirit's guidance. The Holy Spirit guided them to precise locations and at times to do specific acts. Only God knew which places and people were receptive to the gospel.

God speaks to His people in many different ways, and it is important that we learn to recognise His voice and remain alert to it, because He is always guiding us. **What role does God's voice play in your decision making?**

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Peranakan/Baba Nyonya

- **Pray that God will bless, protect and prosper the Peranakan community.** Pray that cultural mindsets will no longer be a hindrance for members of the communities to receive the gospel and salvation.
- **Superstitious beliefs and rituals** play a big role in the Baba Nyonya culture. Pray that God will loosen the hold of such beliefs over the community, and make their hearts fertile ground for the gospel.
- **Pray for racial harmony** among all people groups in Malaysia, regardless of ethnicity, religion or creed.

Read Matthew 2:12-23

JOSEPH WAS PERPLEXED. He had been warned that his new-born child, Jesus, was in danger. King Herod would later figure out that he had been outsmarted by the Magi, and unleashed his fury by killing all the boys in Bethlehem. So Joseph packed up his family and escaped to Egypt.

Years later, the Lord spoke to him again – King Herod was now dead, and it was now safe to return to Israel. But in yet another dream, God warned Joseph not to go to Judea, and they went to Nazareth instead.

The Joseph of the Old Testament had also been accustomed to hearing from God through dreams – in which he received clear instructions on what to do.

Whichever manner God chooses to communicate his message to us, even if it is through a dream, the voice of God is accompanied with a divine enablement on our part to discern and understand its message. God never speaks to confuse us but rather to bring clarity to us. The story of Joseph is an example of how God wants to speak into our perplexing circumstances and give us clear admonition, counselling, guidance and direction. And He can choose any manner to communicate if only we are sensitive and discerning to His voice. **What situations in your life need clarity at this moment? Bring it to God.**

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Chitty

- **Pray that God will bless, protect and prosper the Chitty community.** Though small in numbers, the Chitty were once prominent members of society. Pray that cultural mindsets and the hold of Hinduism upon this community will be loosen, that the gospel of salvation may be firmly planted among them.
- **Pray for racial harmony** among all people groups in Malaysia, regardless of ethnicity, religion or creed.

Read 1 Kings 19:9-18

ELIJAH THE PROPHET was going through his worst time. He was on the run, away from the wicked Jezebel, who had sworn to kill him. After 40 days of running through the wilderness alone, he arrived at Mt. Horeb – the mountain of God – and hid himself in a cave, where he spent the night.

The Lord then told Elijah to come out of the cave and stand on the mountain, for He was about to pass by.

The events that followed were quite dramatic: first, a great and powerful wind, then an earthquake, and after that a fire – but the Lord was in neither of these. Instead, He spoke to the tired and worn-out Elijah, in a still and quiet voice. It represented the kindness of God, and His providence and grace. At Mt. Carmel, God had spoken through fire. But this time, He knew that Elijah's wounded soul needed to hear His gentle assurance.

In the midst of terror and tempest, God in His infinite love for us, will reach out to us tenderly. **When was the last time you heard that still gentle whisper of God? What did He say?**

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: the Orang Asli of West Malaysia

The Orang Asli are the original inhabitants of Peninsula Malaysia. They were here more than a thousand years ago. The greatest threat today to them is their dispossession from their traditional homelands. There is also a high incidence of poverty among them.

- **Pray for the Orang Asli to be given direct involvement** and control over programmes developed and run by the Department of Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA).
- **Pray for more Orang Asli villages** to be gazetted as Orang Asli Areas or Reserves, and that those that are already gazetted will not be reclaimed for development works.
- **Pray and bless the Orang Asli** churches and ministries to reach out to these communities. Pray for families to emphasize education for their children, and for members of the community to have wisdom and courage to safeguard their lands and rights.

Nebuchadnezzar was indeed a powerful king. He enjoyed imperial power, having subdued all the neighbouring nations – so much so that it got to his head, and drove him to make a god for himself, even after confessing that there was none like the God of the Jews (Dan. 2:46-47).

God had warned him in a dream, that if he failed to acknowledge the Lord, he would lose his mind. God gave the king a stern warning, and time to repent, but Nebuchadnezzar chose to harden his heart and God's judgement came to pass.

Because He loves us, God's intentions are never to condemn or curse – but always to restore and bless. Even in carrying out judgement, He allows for repentance and restoration. **Has God been speaking to you over something that might bring disaster over your life? Let us be quick to repent.**

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Portugese descents/Kristang

- **Pray that God will bless, protect and prosper the Kristang community.** Many are professed Christians or Catholics, pray for a revival of faith among this community – for fresh encounters with the Lord, that each member will have renewed passion for the gospel, and zeal to live their lives for Jesus.

IN OUR 52 YEARS as a nation, Malaysia has seen revival take place twice – both times in Sarawak: the 1973 Bario Revival and the 1984 Ba’Kelalan Revival. Both lasted less than three years, but had transformed two successive generations of Christians.

The Bario Revival was sparked by the open confession of sins by a group of secondary school students. Spontaneous acts of repentance spread across schools, nearby villages and between generations. The flames of evangelism were kindled and the gospel advanced to other villages.

The Lun Bawang of Ba’Kelalan were steep in animism and plagued with disease and drunkenness, and were left by British colonisers to die out as a tribe – until the gospel reached them in 1930. The church grew, but by the seventies, nominalism had set in.

Then in 1984, revival came followed by signs and wonders: water turned into oil, rice into flour, there were fireballs in the sky and angelic visitations. Key to this was a humble man of God named Agung Bangau. Similar to the Welsh Revival of 1904 and the Azusa Street Revival of 1906, the visitation of the Holy Spirit to Ba’Kelalan brought widespread repentance and restoration.

Our nation is in great need of a revival. As we continues this season of fasting and praying for Malaysia, may we do it in humbleness and brokenness, that He may hear our cries and heal our land.

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Dayak

- **Pray that God will bless, protect and prosper the Dayak ethnic groups.** Pray that God will place righteous Dayak men and women in positions of governance and authority, who will work to protect their people, as well as their homeland and its resources.
- **Pray that God will loose the chains of animistic beliefs** among the Dayaks; that they may know the freedom Christ has bought for them through the cross.

THE CITY was packed to the brim with Jews who had travelled from all over the world. Extra security had to be brought in to control the crowd. Celebration filled the atmosphere in Jerusalem where thousands upon thousands had thronged to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost.

In a small cramped room in the city, the Holy Spirit fell upon 120 who had been praying faithfully. What looked like tongues of fire rested on them and they began to speak in other languages, startling the crowds. Quoting the prophet Joel, Peter reminded the people:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days says God, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men dream dreams” (Joel 2:28).

Three thousand were saved that day. Other revivals were recorded in the New Testament – in Samaria where Philip had preached the gospel and many were saved. Among them, Simon who was a magician, as well as a high-ranking Ethiopian eunuch who was on his way to Gaza (Acts 8:5). While in Ephesus, many who had been dabbling in witchcraft publicly repented.

However, it must be noted that each revival in the New Testament was also accompanied by persecution. If we seek revival, the Church of Malaysia must also seek to be strong, for revival will not only strengthen us but will also put our faith to the test. Are you ready for such a revival?

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Iban

- **Pray that the young Iban would not be unequally yoked** and that they would be strong in their faith to build families that would serve the Lord.
- **Pray that the Iban would receive agricultural training** to adopt new and innovative methods to sow seeds and harvest bountiful crops to reach self-sufficiency and lift their economic status.
- **Pray for prominent and prolific Ibans** who have achieved success, that they will champion the rights of their community.

MOSES was going about his usual business tending sheep for his father-in-law Jethro when a strange sight caught his attention. A bush was on fire, but it was not burning. He stopped to study this strange occurrence – and ended up coming face-to-face with the glory of God.

In the Old Testament, God revealed His glory to the Israelites in the form of fire by day, and a pillar of cloud by night. His manifest glory brought the mighty Egyptians to their knees and parted the Red Sea. It fed and quenched the thirst of close to three million people wandering in the desert.

So heavy was the “weight” of the presence of God that fell on the temple built by King Solomon, that the priests could not enter. When the prophet Isaiah saw a vision of the glory of the Holy God, his own righteousness looked like filth in contrast.

This same glory lives in us today. How is that possible? Because of the cross. Jesus took our sin, so that we can be temples of the Holy Spirit living in us. His glorious presence transforms us, and transforms everything around us – He has equipped us to bring revival. **How have we kept our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit?**

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Bidayuh

- **Praise God for a recent landmark case** where a Bidayuh man was allowed to legally convert to Christianity. Pray that this will be a turning point for more to return to their faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Pray for Bidayuhs in the state government** – to have a fear of God and exercise their influence and authority with wisdom. Bidayuh community leaders are looking to impose a minimum age of 16 for marriage to curb child pregnancies.
- **Pray that God will bless and protect Bidayuh families,** and that parents will realise the importance of progress and education.

ONE OF THE MARKS of revival is spontaneous worship in all forms: praying, productive work, honest trading, generous giving, and above all else vibrant singing that floods the revived community. While renewed worship is one response of the revived community to the manifest presence of God, it is also the means by which strongholds of the enemy are torn down.

Let's consider King Jehoshaphat. When the Moabite and Ammonite armies attacked Israel, threatening to annihilate them, the king panicked and cried out to the Lord, and God gave a word: *"Do not be dismayed or afraid because of this great multitude because the battle is not yours but God's"* (2 Chr. 20:15). King Jehoshaphat then instructed his men to sing praises to God, and - *"the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon and Moab.. and they were defeated."* (2 Chr. 20:22)

Thanksgiving and praise is both a form of our expression of adoration to God as well as a weapon for revival. Paul and Silas sang hymns to God while they were locked in a dungeon, their backs raw from whipping – when suddenly an earthquake forced open their prison doors.

In the same way, our prayers today must be intertwined with faith-filled worship as we bring the challenges of our nation before our Almighty God. Have you been cultivating a lifestyle of worship?

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Orang Ulu

- **Pray that the Sarawak state government would not renege** on the current law and that the Orang Ulu can continue to occupy and cultivate their land. Under the present land laws, the Orang Ulu's customary rights to land are enshrined as a basic right. However, logging activities by timber companies have damaged their lands with impunity. Forest concessions have been given in lands which traditionally fall within their sempadan (village boundary) without their knowledge.
- **Pray that God will bless and protect Orang Ulu families** and that parents will realise the importance of progress and education, as an important key against exploitation.
- **Pray for fair and equal education and work opportunities** for the Orang Ulu.

I FIRST VISITED BARIO in 1993. As I got off the Twin Otter plane on to the airstrip, smiling Kelabits garlanded us with traditional beads. I had travelled with the late state assemblyman Balan Selin. It was this godly man who had recognized that the unusual repentance that had broken out among secondary students in 1973 was a work of God and had advised the elders not to resist it. Only then did the revival spread.

The week I was there, the divine atmosphere was tangible. Each morning a gong sounded at 5am for dawn prayers, as it had since 1973. Later, I was shown the school and the classroom where the fire of God first fell. A remarkable effect of the revival was that it had turned mediocre students into excellent ones. As a result of this, many of them hold top influential positions in the country today. I spoke at some meetings. My sense of inadequacy was immense but I was aware of an unusual liberty in ministering the word.

Fast forward to my return visit in 2011. The airstrip was now a concrete runway. The welcome was just as warm but the spiritual climate had changed. The students of 1973 were now the elders of Bario but in that time, two generations had arisen that never experienced revival. Many of these young people were now spiritually dry. Some had left to work in the cities and many have backslided. Revival is vital but it is not the answer to everything. It is imperative that the church discipled each generation to walk in personal revival as well, and to pray. The Psalmist cried: *"Restore us, O God of our salvation"* (Ps 85:4). May that be our cry today! **What areas of your life do you need God to restore?**

PRAY

**PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia:
Kadazandusun**

- **Pray for equality in raising education levels and employment** to lift the standard of living for the Kadazandusun.
- **Pray that the Kadazandusun would have a personal encounter with Jesus and follow him wholeheartedly.** That all spiritual bondages and wrong practices be broken.

*I will listen to what God the LORD says;
He promises peace to his people, his faithful servants—
but let them not turn to folly. (Psalm 85:8)*

Read also: Numbers 6:25-26, John 14:27, Romans 5:4, Psalms 34:14

REVIVAL IS A TIME when God responds to our repentance and brokenness with mercy and grace. He extends His forgiveness and embraces us with His love. He breaks His silence and speaks tenderly with us. No longer setting His face against us because of our disobedience, He now declares His affection, comfort, encouragement and blessings. The old is forgotten and a fresh start is made. He embraces us as at first and causes us to be drunk with His love.

Nothing can be compared to being at peace with God. When we find peace with God, we will find peace with ourselves. It is priceless. It is liberating.

In such moments, let us not slide back and return to our foolish ways to provoke Him to anger again. Instead let us be filled with holy reverence and deep gratitude. Let us cherish His affection and tender voice. Let us believe His promise and obey His commandments.

Are you still striving and “kicking against the goads” or has that peace entered your heart? Let that peace be a hallmark of your faith.

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Bajau Laut

The Bajau Laut are known as the “sea gypsies” as they spend most of their lives on boats and depend on the ocean for their livelihood. While some Bajau villages are located within Malaysian borders, many are stateless, and have no legal identification or formal education.

- **Pray for the Bajau Laut to experience** the love of Jesus, to know that they are his children, their identities are found in Him, and that they have an eternal citizenship in heaven.
- **Pray for the Malaysian government to take more effective initiatives** to recognise this community, protect them, and allow their children to attend local schools.

*Surely His salvation is near those who fear Him,
that His glory may dwell in our land. (Psalm 85:9)*

Read also Ezekiel 10-11, 1 Samuel 4:19-22, Isaiah 4:5, Zechariah 2:5, Psalm 51:11

PRIOR TO THE FALL OF JERUSALEM, the Lord showed the prophet Ezekiel a vision of His glory departing from the land. It was the glory of God had that kept Jerusalem safe from her enemies. When the glory of God departed, Jerusalem was destroyed.

The glory of God is His manifested presence. Where the presence of God is, there is peace and liberty. It is a tangible presence, which brings restoration.

God's glory is what enables an individual or a nation to live up to their destiny. Without His glory, no nation will never be able to fulfil its calling. Where His glory abides, His favour and blessings are multiplied and manifested; but where it is absent, death and darkness will reign instead.

Therefore, we must be careful not to drive the glory of God away from our lives. Let us continue to yearn for Him and seek Him, that, He may abide in us and among us. How can you keep that hunger for God's glory alive?

PRAY

PRAY for the people groups of Malaysia: Murut

- **Pray that God will bless and protect the Murut people**, that He will send revival among them and prosper them.
- **Pray for those who leave their villages to seek better opportunity in the larger cities**; that they will safeguard their salvation and allow God to use them to bless others and share the gospel.

Faithfulness springs forth from the earth (Psalm 85:11a)

WHEN REVIVAL BREAKS OUT, truth will be restored in the land. His light will open every eye and reveal every lie. Liars will repent of their dishonest ways and lying will be rejected by society. Satan will lose ground to deceive and darkness will be wiped out of the land. Honesty will be praised while deception will be condemned.

When revival breaks out, the Bible will be widely read and its message proclaimed to all, recognised as the truth while others will be seen as falsehood. The Word of God will find fertile ground and will grow, bearing fruits of righteousness.

When revival breaks out, the servants of God will be sought and greatly honoured. As written, how beautiful the feet of those who bear the Good News of God's Word. They are messengers of the truth and will be given much honour. Many will flock to learn at their feet and grow in the truth.

When revival breaks out, our Lord Jesus Christ will be exalted and worshipped. He will be acknowledged as the Way, the Truth and the Life - as the One who embodies the Truth, and many will find lasting freedom and understanding in Him. **But from here to then, we have to ask ourselves, are we lovers of truth or has our own tongue been contaminated with lies and deception?**

PRAY

PRAY for Malaysia: The Economy

- **Pray for Bank Negara, banks and financial institutions:** for wisdom to steward over the God-given wealth of this nation, pray against misappropriation and plundering.
- **Pray for families who are worried** about the future economic security of the nation, for the sake of their children: that they will dwell and cultivate faithfulness in the land (Ps 37:3).
- **Pray for God's strength and protection** as the nation weathers through economic cycles.
- **Pray for the Church to be equipped with the compassion and conviction** to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, proclaim good news to the poor.

...and righteousness looks down from heaven. (Psalm 85:11b)

Read also: Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:13, Acts 3:19, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Psalm 23:3

TO BE RIGHTEOUS means to possess the moral standard of God. In revival, the moral standard of God is restored back to society. The corrupt and dead-consciousness of society is suddenly resurrected and men will begin to fret over their unrighteous deeds and practices before a Holy God. The only means of deliverance from this state is for them to return to the One they have offended, plead for His mercy and return to His ways. As they come in repentance and contrition, the Holy Spirit realigns their hearts back to God. The moral standard of God is acknowledged and embraced once again.

As men begin to return to Him in repentance, a change takes place in heaven too. God looks down upon men in mercy and extends His forgiveness. The work of the Cross is applied to the sinner, and mankind is declared righteous once again.

Having received a new heart and new start, men will begin to desire for righteousness and abandon sin. The righteous will be exalted again and the wicked shall be put to shame. The land will no longer suffer violence and corruption. Instead it will be filled with the peace and light of God. **Has your own heart and mind been renewed in preparation for this?**

PRAY

PRAY for Malaysia: The Judiciary and Legal System

- **Pray for complete independence of the judiciary**, for everyday decisions of the Courts to be fair, just and righteous.
- **Pray that the judiciary will be beyond corruption.** They cannot be “bought”, they will stand up to refuse any bribes or favours.
- **Pray for godly and righteous judges, court officers and lawyers.** For young Christian lawyers to be Kingdom-minded and to place righteousness and justice above and beyond anything else.

*The LORD will indeed give what is good,
and our land will yield its harvest. (Psalm 85:12)*

Read: Joel 2:18-32, Isaiah 54:1-3, Deuteronomy 30:1-10

WITH REVIVAL, COMES A CHANGE IN SEASON. Just as spring breathes new life to the earth, revival breaks the winter of darkness and brings the warm presence of God upon the earth. The presence of God, like sunshine, will cause the earth to be alive and fruitful. Plants will produce fruits and animals will reproduce after their own kind. The earth will yield her increase.

Prayers will begin to be answered. Tears of sorrow will turn to those of joy, and weeping to laughter. Dreams will come to pass and the impossible becomes possible. Sowing will turn to reaping and poverty will be replaced with abundance.

Hearts will turn to the Lord and the penitent will fill the altars of churches. The church will overflow with saints and the streets void of crime. Every work will begin to prosper and every need will be met. Every potential realized and every destiny unveiled. Ask God to keep that hope for Malaysia alive.

Are you ready to pursue this? Are you willing to pay price for it? Then let us run together and prepare the way for the Lord.

PRAY

PRAY for Malaysia: The Church of Malaysia

- Righteousness exalts a nation. Injustice destroys it from within. Let's pray that in our nation, justice will roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-ending stream (Amos 5:24).
- Command breakthrough in the spiritual realm that God in His sovereignty will pierce all darkness for His Kingdom invasion. That His church will be released from all hindrances to fulfil His eternal purposes in advancing His Kingdom.
- Restoration of vision and passion. The eyes of the church to be opened and enlightened in recapturing the comprehensive vision of His Kingdom.
- Pray for restoration of kingdom lifestyle, godly attitudes, biblical value systems and Christ-centred mind-sets. Pray that believers will be disciplined and firmly grounded in the Word of God.

Thanks to all our guest writers for their precious time and effort to pray and write for this prayer booklet. May God bless each and everyone of you.

The Wrath of God : Pr Ang Siew Khim

The Mercy of God : Ms Goh Poh Gaik

Arise and Build : Rev Looi Kok Kim

Prayer Altars : Pr Dr Lew Lee Choo

The Voice of God : Rev Gabriel Jabanathan

Revival : Pr Dr Philip Lyn

40-DAY

FAST & PRAYER



7 AUGUST - 15 SEPTEMBER

NECF
MALAYSIA

National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF) Malaysia
32, Jalan SS2/103, 47300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan.
Tel: +603-7727 8227 | Fax: +603-7729 1139
Email: enquiries@necf.org.my | Website: www.necf.org.my