

## *Embracing Renewal*

### *Why Lent is Like Taking a Bath*

By Elder Dr Alex Tang

Lent, the forty days leading up to Easter Sunday, is observed by many Christians worldwide as a time of reflection, repentance, and preparation. The essence of Lent can be likened to the act of taking a bath, a simple yet profound analogy that encompasses the spiritual cleansing and renewal at the heart of this sacred season. Through this comparison, we explore the transformative journey of Lent, supported by biblical verses that highlight its significance.

### **Cleansing the Soul**

Just as taking a bath cleanses the body of physical impurities, Lent offers us a spiritual bath, inviting us to cleanse our souls of sin and anything that hinders our relationship with God. The act of repentance is central to this process. 1 John 1:9 reminds us of the promise that comes with confession: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Lent is an opportunity to reflect on our lives, acknowledge our shortcomings, and seek God's forgiveness, much like water washes away dirt, leaving us refreshed and renewed.

### **Renewing Commitment**

Taking a bath not only cleanses but also rejuvenates, preparing us for what lies ahead. Similarly, Lent is a time to renew our commitment to God and deepen our faith. Romans 12:2 encourages this renewal of the mind: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." By dedicating time to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we reorient our hearts and minds toward God, refreshing our spirit and aligning our will with His.

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## **Emerging Transformed**

The culmination of taking a bath is the feeling of being clean, refreshed, and ready for a new beginning. Easter, following the period of Lent, celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, symbolising the ultimate transformation and new life. This journey through Lent allows us to emerge spiritually revitalised, echoing the promise of 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" Lent prepares us to embrace the joy of Easter with hearts made new through repentance, prayer, and acts of love.

## **Reflecting and Acting**

Just as water reflects our image, enabling us to see ourselves more clearly, Lent invites us into a time of deep reflection. It's an opportunity to examine our lives in the light of God's Word and to take actionable steps toward spiritual growth. James 1:22-24 challenges us to be doers of the word, not merely listeners, likening the one who hears but does not act to a man observing his natural face in a mirror and immediately forgetting what he looks like. Lent prompts us to not only reflect on our spiritual condition but also to act decisively in aligning our lives with God's purpose.

In conclusion, Lent is akin to taking a bath, a period of cleansing, renewal, and transformation that prepares us to celebrate the resurrection with pure hearts and renewed spirits. By engaging in this sacred time with intentionality and openness to God's work within us, we embrace the opportunity to be cleansed, refreshed, and made new in



Christ. Let us then approach Lent as we would a bath, ready to shed what defiles us and to emerge transformed, ready to walk in the newness of life that Easter promises.

# From A Pastor's Desk

## Why Pray?

*By Rev Dr Chuah Seong Peng*

We all know that prayer is important for our life as children of God. Scripture tells us that God is our Father whose ears are attentive to our cry (Psalms 116:1-2, 34:15). He takes great delight in hearing and answering our prayers. So how often do you pray? Is prayer essential or optional in your life? Do you pray regularly or only when in trouble? In this article, I like to share with you three reasons why we pray, to help you to develop your prayer life.

### **To live the Christian life is to breath prayer**

Prayer is important because to live the Christian life, we cannot do it without prayer. Prayer is like breathing for our life. Without prayer, we die spiritually.

### **Prayer helps us to live and work dependent on God**

The first reason we pray is that it helps us to live and work with God and to be dependent on Him. Jesus is our model. We see how Jesus is totally dependent on the Father in His life and ministry. He does and says only what the Father tells Him through prayer.

### **Jesus's life is saturated with prayers**

A simple survey of the Gospel of Luke shows this:

Immediately after He was baptized, He was praying. Then heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on Him (Luke 3:21). His whole ministry began with a battle involving prayer and fasting in His temptations (Luke 4:1-2). In the midst of busyness and fame, He

withdrew to lonely places and prayed (Luke 5:16). Before He called the 12 apostles, Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray all night (Luke 6:12). Before Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, He prayed (Luke 9:18). At Transfiguration, He took Peter, James, and John to pray. He was transfigured while praying (Luke 9:28). He prayed at Gethsemane right before His arrest and crucifixion (Luke 22:41).

The early church also prayed and worked in dependent on God. After Pentecost, they joined together constantly in prayer (Acts 1:14). When Peter and John were arrested and released, they prayed (Acts 4:24). After they prayed, the place was shaken, and all were filled with the Spirit (Acts 4:31). When Peter was imprisoned by King Herod, the church's response was earnest prayer (Acts 12:5). The church in Antioch fasted and prayed to send Paul and Barnabas to mission (Acts 13:2-3).

### **To seek to know God**

#### **The primary purpose of prayer is to deepen our relationships with God**

Jesus teaches us to call God, Our Father in Heaven in the Lord's Prayer. The primary purpose of God desiring us to pray is to build our relationships with Him, to know Him better. Prayer is about our relationships with God, not about asking for what we need or want. We learn to pray by saying, "God, help me, give me, bless me, protect me." Or when we pray for others, "God, help them, protect them, bless them, keep them." But If that is why we pray, then very soon we will stop praying because of unanswered prayer.

God already knows what we need and want. We see this in Matthew 6:8, Jesus tells us not to pray babbling like pagans, thinking the many words will get God's attention because God already knows what we need. Therefore, the priority of prayer is not asking what we need but a time alone with God to build our relationships with Him.

Jesus shows us why He was constantly going aside to be with the Father. It was because there was an intimacy that happened when He was alone with the Father in prayer. He grew to know God through the intimacy of prayer as He spent time alone with the Father.

### **To learn to surrender to God**

#### **We pray to learn to surrender ourselves and our plans to God**

Prayer in and of itself is powerless. But when it is connected to God, there is incredible power. God alone has all the power—not our praying. The way we connect with that power is through surrender in our prayers. Look at Jesus at Gethsemane in Luke 22:42, He poured out His heart and asked God for what He wanted, but ultimately, He said, *“Yet not my will, but yours be done”*. That is surrender! And that gives Him the power to go to the cross. Such surrender grew out of an intimate relationship of absolute trust in God.

### **Pray and Go Mission with God**

Therefore, as we GO Mission with God, let us come to pray regularly, earnestly, and constantly, to live and work dependent on Him, seek to know Him more, and learn to surrender to Him.

As we recognize our desperate need for God, and seek to know Him more and more, we will grow to know His plan is

always best, and we will learn to surrender to His will in all things. That is where life gets exciting, because that is where God begins to use us and empowers us by His Spirit as we go on mission with Him! We will be amazed by Him and grow our faith and obedience to Him, bringing glory to His name.

# Compromise

*By Dr Ngeow Took Fah*

We in HLCE just completed the study of Exodus. It dawned on me that ancient Israelites were capable of applying the principles of compromise to settle differences among themselves, although they might be unaware of the long term consequence of weakening of their faith.

Just like the biblical word 'Trinity' which is not found in the Holy Bible, so is the word 'compromise'. However, based on the context, the intended meaning of the word is apparent to the reader. It has been said that Christians in the West tend to compromise with the world too often, especially in politics. They want to evangelise but seem reluctant to get involved or speak up for righteousness. Is this true in Malaysia?

And how would you define compromise? I can call it a tool for settling differences between two sides without the use of force. Or more specifically, settlement by arbitration, or by consent reached by mutual concessions. A good compromise results in satisfaction to some extent for both, fairness implied without the notion of a winner or a loser.

The earliest case of compromising recorded in the Bible is the sale of Esau's birth right to his brother Jacob, without considering the differences between immediate but temporary satisfaction and long lasting fulfilment of what matters in life: values, relationship and aspiration.

Life in the Promised Land was not just milk and honey, but also teeming with

challenges from the Pagan culture of idol worship and sexual immorality. God had repeatedly warned His people the danger of inter marriages, the need to avoid close relationship and to resist pressure to compromise. (Numbers 25).

Moses was commanded by God to negotiate with Pharaoh for the release of the Israelites and to lead them to the Promised Land. God sent a series of plagues to Pharaoh to compel him to let go the Israelites, but his heart remained hardened. God resorted to the last plague, the killing of all firstborn male in Egypt except the Hebrews. On this Passover night, God delivered His people from slavery, making the day a National festival, to be celebrated every year.

While waiting for Moses to come down from meeting God, Aaron faced tremendous pressure from the Israelites to make a golden calf for their idol worship. This angered God and He threatened to destroy them. But God is merciful and forgiving after Moses pleaded. (Ex 32). Aaron was more concerned with his popularity than his integrity. He failed to remain steadfast in his convictions.

Before leaving the Old Testament, I should also include the story of Daniel and his three friends for their incredible faith in God. They were taken to Babylon as captives. The three friends were in a blazing furnace, Daniel in a den of lions. All of them came out unharmed. Without compromising, Daniel found a way to live by God's standard in a culture that did not honour God. He chose to negotiate rather than to rebel. Glory be to God.

From the New Testament what most people look forward to is the answer to this FAQ: who killed Jesus? His Father God? The high priest? Pilate? Judas? unbelieved Jews? even Jesus himself (John 10:17-18). The horror of seeing Jesus on the cross was unbearable for His disciples. Three times on his way to the site of crucifixion, Peter had to deny knowing the Lord out of fear of revealing his identity.

Peter should have chosen faith over fear, remained steadfast to his conviction without compromising his values. Most important for him was to seek forgiveness and redemption as soon as possible.

The Roman governor Pilate, being the most powerful man in Jerusalem, declared Jesus innocent of any charge, and refused to bear any responsibility (Matthew 27:24). But he allowed the crowd the choice of freeing the thief beside Jesus, and sent Jesus to be crucified. I believe Pilate's action was based on these factors: political expediency, menacing crowd and his wife's complaint of restlessness. So you can expect a DNAA from him.

The young church at Antioch had to face many problems. They were still hiding from persecution which was getting more severe and intense. Internally they had to put up with arguments of their leaders like Peter and Paul. Two heads are not necessarily better than one.

Paul opposed Peter who behaved like a hypocrite towards the Gentiles in the presence of elders from Jerusalem (Galatians 2:11). Paul was willing to

compromise, becoming all things to all people so that he might save some (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). He advised against forming binding relationship with non believers, for fear of weakening their Christian commitments, integrity and standard. But, on the other hand, he also discouraged isolation from non believers which would mean less opportunities for evangelism (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

Peter was known to bend under pressure from elders coming from Jerusalem. He urged the Jewish Christians to withdraw from the Lord's table because of different eating habits. This was regarded as a negative view of compromising.

James' four point agreement for conversion of Hebrews was accepted by the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15): circumcision not required, abstain food offered to idols, abstain from blood and meat of strangled animal.

A good compromise is one which can help the church grow unhindered by cultural differences, safeguard basic faith conviction, maintain loving relationship and consistent with the will of God. However, from the perspective of Christians, compromise cannot be approved because it involves sacrificing of principles, conceding and concessions. Incomplete obedience to God means compromise with sin. In labour disputes and politics of parliamentary election and unity government, compromise is still common and preferred.

10 things true Christians should never compromise:

# Teo's March Update

1. Defending doctrine of creation
2. Defending the rights of unborn
3. Defending the traditional family
4. Rejecting universalism
5. Defending the dignity of human life
6. The inerrancy of Scripture
7. The importance of Bible prophecy
8. Man's fallen nature
9. Divinity of Christ
10. Importance of sharing your faith

Compromise is generally regarded as a negative unwanted word, and to be avoided if possible. Otherwise, you might be left with the impression of having settled for a second best.

Dear friends,

We just returned to Canada a few days ago on 2nd March after spending three months furlough back in Malaysia. The months went by very quickly and we are glad we managed to do all we had set out to accomplish during our time away, except for a visit to the Doulos Hope because the ship's schedule was changed. Some of our highlights during our time back home included:

- Visiting our families and relatives living in different cities in Malaysia and Singapore.
- Spending time in our home church in Johor Bahru and taking time to meet up with many of our friends and supporters from church. We are grateful to our friends for their love and hospitality extended to us.
- Giving our testimony at three of our supporting churches where we shared our personal faith lessons about our mission journey over the past 23 years.
- Visiting some friends from Singapore whom we know since our days serving in China.
- Spending a week with our daughter Amanda and her husband in Hong Kong.
- Visiting some friends from the OM office in Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong.

We shared three faith lessons that we have learnt in our faith journey - that God is faithful, we need to continue to trust and obey even when it is scary and thirdly we need the church and the

community of friends and believers to come alongside us. We would not have been able to take on this journey alone. And we are deeply grateful for friends and the community of God's people who have been supporting, praying and journeying with us all these years for which we want to say a big Thank You!!

Leaving home in Malaysia also left us with some concerns for our family members. Some of our family members are going through some health challenges at this time and we continue to pray for God's grace and strength for them.

The theme of our home church in Johor Bahru this year is "Go mission with God" and we are excited that the church is being encouraged to also think of missions overseas, going out of the shores of Malaysia. As we return to the field, please pray for Chris as he continues in his role as a missions coach with OM, in helping to process and prepare candidates to go serve the Lord to the unreached peoples of the world. Pray also for our ministry with the middle eastern refugees in Canada that we can continue to learn how to build relationships of trust and be able to share with them the love of God. Please also pray for our application to extend our work permit which expires in early July.

Thank you for your partnership with us in the work of the gospel.

May God continue to grow us in our walk with Him.

Blessings,  
Chris and Joo Ping

# *Spiritual Medicine*

## *A Cure for the Soul*

*By Elder Dr Alex Tang*



### **Our Greatest Need: A Cure for the Soul**

In this modern era, where the pinnacle of human achievement has soared to remarkable heights in fields such as medicine, technology, and science, it is easy to be misled into thinking that our most urgent needs are those that can be seen, touched, and quantified. However, lurking beneath this impressive array of accomplishments is a deeper, more profound need that is frequently overlooked: a cure for the soul. As we navigate the intricacies and challenges of modern life, it becomes unmistakably clear that, despite our significant advancements, a pervasive sense of unease exists—a profound emptiness, an acute sense of disconnection, and a longing for something that transcends the material world. This longing points unmistakably toward our innate need for reconciliation with God, which is as real and urgent as any physical ailment or technological shortfall.

### **The Diagnosis of the Soul**

The symptoms of our soul's distress are varied and multifaceted, manifesting themselves in forms such as a profound



emptiness, unshakeable anxiety, debilitating depression, a pervasive lack of purpose, and an overarching dissatisfaction with the very fabric of life. Even as we live in an era that boasts unparalleled levels of connectivity, a paradoxical sense of isolation and solitude has become the prevailing experience for many. It is as if the soul itself is in a state of profound turmoil, earnestly seeking healing and wholeness in a society that seems to be fragmenting at an ever-accelerating pace.

This distress of the soul cannot be dismissed or underestimated. It is a clarion call for a deep, introspective examination of our lives and priorities. The irony of our situation is stark; in an age where we are ostensibly more connected than ever through digital platforms and social networks, many of us feel a deepening chasm between our lived experiences and the true essence of connectedness and fulfillment. It is as though the tools designed to bring us closer together have instead fostered a greater sense of separation—not just from one another, but from our inner selves and, crucially, from the divine presence that imbues life with true meaning and purpose.

This paradoxical situation reveals a critical truth about the nature of our existence and the complexities of the human condition. Our souls yearn for something that cannot be satisfied by material wealth, social accolades, or technological advancements. There is a thirst within us for a connection that transcends the physical and temporary—a connection to something eternal, something that provides our

lives with a sense of meaning, purpose, and direction that the tangible aspects of our existence cannot offer.

The diagnosis of our collective soul's malaise is precise: we suffer from a profound spiritual disconnection. This disconnection is not merely a personal crisis but a societal one, affecting every level of our community and culture. It speaks to a deeper need for a reevaluation of our values, our goals, and the essence of what it means to live a fulfilling and meaningful life. As we stand at this critical juncture, we must heed this call for a cure for the soul—a cure that begins with a sincere and heartfelt reconciliation with God, the source of all healing, wholeness, and hope.

### **The Problem with Materialism**

One of the main issues hurting our souls is our society's focus on materialism. We're always chasing after money, success, and short-term happiness, ignoring what matters inside us. This chase can lead to a life that looks good on the outside but feels empty inside. We care too much about things and not enough about growing spiritually, thinking deeply about our lives, and building meaningful relationships. This makes us feel disconnected from something greater than ourselves, something divine.

Materialism does not just hurt us personally; it affects our whole culture. It changes what we think is important and takes us away from finding true happiness and purpose in connections with others and with the divine. As we run after the next big purchase, the next promotion, or more money, we miss out

on the joy that comes from real human interactions and being connected to something bigger than ourselves.

### **The Illusion of Technology Solving Everything**

At the same time, technology, while helpful in many ways, has also made our soul's problems worse. It was supposed to bring us closer together but has often made us feel more alone. Social media, for example, can make us feel left out, not good enough, or jealous instead of making us feel connected. These platforms can trick us into thinking we're close to others when missing out on real, face-to-face connections.

The idea that technology will fix our feelings of loneliness and disconnection has turned out to be false. Instead of solving these problems, it can make us feel even more isolated. This shows that being constantly online doesn't replace the need for real human contact and a deeper connection with something beyond our screens.

The focus on material things and technology tells us we must rethink what's truly important. Healing our souls doesn't come from buying more things or spending more time online. It comes from looking inside ourselves, growing spiritually, and having real relationships with others and the divine.

### **Spiritual Practices as Medicine for the Soul**

Spiritual practices offer a powerful remedy against the ailments afflicting our souls. Committing to meditation, engaging in prayer, practising mindfulness, and actively participating

in faith-based communities, we unlock doors to unparalleled inner peace, resilience, and an intimate connection with the divine. These sacred practices beckon us to take a momentary pause from everyday life's relentless pace, engage in deep reflection, and foster a renewed bond with God. They serve as essential pillars, grounding our existence on a foundation far surpassing the material world's fleeting nature. By integrating these spiritual disciplines into our daily routine, we view our lives through a lens that values the eternal over the temporary, encouraging a shift in perspective that aligns our daily actions with our highest spiritual values.

Moreover, spiritual practices offer us the tools to navigate the storms of life with grace and fortitude. Meditation, for instance, allows us to quiet the mind and listen to the subtle whispers of the divine. At the same time, prayer opens a dialogue with God, enabling us to express our deepest fears, desires, and gratitude. Mindfulness teaches us to live in the present moment, cultivating an awareness that every breath is a gift and that the divine is intricately woven into the fabric of our daily experiences. Participation in faith communities strengthens our spiritual journey by providing a supportive network of like-minded individuals who share a common goal of growing closer to the divine.

### **The Power of Community in Faith**

Cultivating meaningful relationships within the framework of faith significantly amplifies the journey towards healing the soul. In a society that often prioritises individual achievements and self-reliance, the

intrinsic value of community can be underestimated. Yet, rediscovering and embracing the profound importance of forming deep, spiritual connections—especially within the context of faith communities—can be transformative. These communities offer a sanctuary of support, acceptance, and understanding, allowing individuals to share their spiritual journeys, learn from one another, and grow together in faith.

Engagement in a faith community brings a sense of belonging that is deeply healing for the soul. It provides a space where individuals can share their struggles and victories, doubt and faith, all while being embraced by a community that understands the journey towards spiritual fulfilment. This shared experience fosters a sense of unity and purpose, reinforcing that we are not alone in our quest for meaning and connection with the divine.

Moreover, faith communities act as beacons of light, guiding us to live out our divine purpose. They serve as a source of personal spiritual nourishment and a catalyst for collective action toward the greater good. Through acts of service, compassion, and love, faith communities embody the teachings of their spiritual traditions, making the divine presence tangible in the world.

## **Conclusion**

The journey toward healing our souls intricately intertwines personal spiritual disciplines with the nurturing embrace of communal faith, pointing us toward the ultimate cure for the soul: reconciliation with God. This path, marked by meditation, prayer, mindfulness, and active engagement

within faith communities, is not merely about seeking inner peace or resilience. It is fundamentally about restoring our relationship with the Divine, realigning our lives with the spiritual purpose that transcends the transient nature of the material world.

The power of community in faith amplifies this journey, providing a supportive network where our quests for meaning and divine connection are shared and nurtured. Through these communal bonds, we find strength, wisdom, and a collective vision that guides us toward living out our divine purpose in the world. Yet, in the personal moments of heartfelt prayer and reflection, within the silence of meditation or the mindfulness of our daily lives, we open the doors to a profound reconciliation with God. This reconciliation is the cornerstone of soulful healing, offering us peace that surpasses all understanding and everlasting joy.

Thus, the cure for our souls lies not in the external pursuits of success and material satisfaction but in the deep, transformative journey of returning to God. This journey requires a personal commitment to spiritual growth and a communal journey shared with others seeking the same divine connection. As we navigate this path, we discover that the true essence of healing and fulfilment resides in a restored relationship with the Divine, anchoring our lives in love, purpose, and unshakeable peace. In the reconciliation with God, it is here that our souls find their ultimate cure, enabling us to live lives of profound meaning and radiant joy.

# Little Children

By Kenneth Cham

During one of the Bible study sessions with my churchmates, we were discussing on a very difficult topic. It revolved around the following questions we brought up, “When little children and infants die, will they be saved and go to heaven?” It is written in the New Testament, when the apostle Paul and Silas were set free from prison after the prison doors flew open, and everyone’s chains came loose – the terrified jailer asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Therefore, will little children and infants be too young to decide to believe in the Lord Jesus and be saved? Everyone in our Bible study group was perplexed. I did offer my humble opinion during the discussion, quoting from 2 Samuel 12:15-23.

“After Nathan had gone home, the Lord struck the child that Uriah’s wife had borne to David, and he became ill. David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them.

On the seventh day the child died. David’s attendants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, “While the child was still living, he wouldn’t listen to us when we spoke to him. How can we now tell him

the child is dead? He may do something desperate.” David noticed that his attendants were whispering among themselves, and he realized the child was dead. “Is the child dead?” he asked. “Yes,” they replied, “he is dead.”

Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the Lord and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate. His attendants asked him, “Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!”

He answered, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, ‘Who knows? The Lord may be gracious to me and let the child live.’ But now that he is dead, why should I go on fasting? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.” - 2 Samuel 12:15-23 (NIV)

David said he will go to his child, but the child will not return to him. The man after God’s own heart was certain when he said, “Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” - Psalm 23:6 (NIV). Dwelling in the house of the Lord forever is being in the presence of the Lord for eternity. It is being in the kingdom of God in heaven. David will go to be with the child in heaven.

Many years after the Bible study discussion, these questions still lingered in my mind. I did my further studies on the topic, and it brought fresh insights as revealed in the Bible. I recalled the

incident when Nicodemus approached Jesus one night on account of the miracles He did from God.

“Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”” - John 3:3 (NIV). Jesus taught that Nicodemus needed to be born again in the Spirit in order to see the kingdom of God. And being born again means being a little child again.

On yet another occasion, the disciples questioned Jesus, “About that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?” Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. Then he said, “I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.”” - Matthew 18:1-4 (NLT)

Little children, characterized by humility, simple faith and belief in Jesus Christ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. There is wholehearted trust in the Lord, not leaning on our own understanding. Likewise, those who have these characteristics of little children will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now, you may ask, “Were we not born sinners? How then can little children who were born sinners enter heaven?” Truly, even though we were born sinners, God has mercy on us, because of His unfailing love. Because of His

great compassion, He blots out the stain of our sins.

“For I was born a sinner— yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. But you desire honesty from the womb, teaching me wisdom even there.” - Psalm 51:5-6 (NLT)

# The Rapture

By Kenneth Cham

Harpazo (Greek) - to be caught up.

For some time, I have been very interested in this word used in the New Testament of the Bible. It is used to describe the occurrence of the Rapture; when we will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”

- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (NIV)

When we are caught up in the air, our bodies will change in the twinkling of an eye; from mortal to be immortal, from perishable to be imperishable. There will be exuberant joy, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for all these things are gone forever.

There will be singing as I rejoice in the Lord. And I will not fear to meet Him there, for my life is hid with Christ. Praise the Lord!

# The Day My Flesh Died

By Kelvin Koh

Once I was spat at in my face while distributing food to the needy during MCO.

We were buying food provisions in NSK Ulu Tiram to distribute to the needy when this lady approached me, speaking good English, asking for help. I offered her food provisions but she said she did not cook. She insisted I gave her money and I even offered her my packet of lunch. She rejected angrily and spat in my face. I did not know if she had Aids or the saliva had COVID virus. She was most probably a drug addict. And this was during the height of the pandemic. I could have reacted by slapping her in her face in retaliation, but I did nothing. Stood there like a fool, and in my mind offering her to spit at me a second time. It was not me at all at that moment, but the Holy Spirit in me that was in control. I was calm, peaceful and loving. There were no conflicts, no offense, no anger, no hatred, no resentment and no retaliation. I was like a corpse. Then I knew my flesh had died. And the fruit of the Holy Spirit had manifested.

It is no longer my flesh that lived but the flesh had been crucified with Christ. And now the reaction that I manifest is the life of Christ who has taken control of my body and my thinking and my actions. This is the resurrected life of Christ that has become my experience, not just a data in my head. Galatians 2:20.

# Why Adam Sinned?

*By Kelvin Koh*

Adam sinned because he thought God was not watching. Somehow in Eden, when the proximity and intimacy of God was most available, Adam can think that God is absent. If God had stood physically in front of Adam, Adam would not have dared to pluck the fruit and bit into it and chewed it and swallowed it. He believed God was not there, and he got used to God not being there. That was a dangerous thing to think. And with this one lie, he caused the whole of humanity to suffer. It started with the first lie. God is not here.

Secondly, Adam thought that what he was going to do was between himself and Eve. He thought, nobody would know. He believed in secret, and that secret will not be discovered. What we call today as privacy. We think that as long as we keep our privacy, nobody, not even God will know. It is this belief in privacy that gives man the audacity to commit what he commit behind closed and locked doors and behind no entry and not welcomed gates and homes. It is so difficult to get into homes and especially when you are not invited and no appointment made. What is there to hide and what privacy to hide, unless it is some hidden and shameful sin. He thought he could be protected by the secrecy act. He did not know, in God's world there is no secret. Everything hidden will be exposed. If he had known that what he was going to do would be recorded and viralled, he probably

would not do it. His sin started with a second lie, I can keep this secret from God and others.

Thirdly, Adam entertained the suggestions of Satan the Tempter. The Bible tell us to flee from Satan and his temptation. Don't open the chat. Don't read the chat. Delete it. We cannot prevent the crow from flying over our head and shitting on our head. But we can surely prevent the crow from building a nest on top of our head and lay eggs on it. Don't be nice to Satan. Don't entertain his sales gimmick. Like Joseph, flee, run quick, quick. Run to one of the Pastor's house if you have to. Run away from temptation. If Adam had not open his chat and read the message from Satan, he would not have been scammed and got cheated of his birthright to the earth. Adam believed a third lie, I can resist the temptation from Satan.

God is easily available in the Garden of Eden, yet what is Adam doing not keeping company with God. He wandered far from God to do his own thing. So far away from God that he can think God is not there when he is making his own decision.

God has given us proximity and intimacy with Him through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. God has made us as if we have never sinned. Yet we do not keep God company, we do not stay close to Him but let God out of our sight. We wandered away, far from God until God is absent from our lives. And then we make our own decisions. And think God is not around; God won't know and God won't find out

and God won't mind. Adam got kicked out of Paradise, kicked out of the Garden of Eden. How sad.

Why is there no sin in Heaven? God will be there. There will be no secret in heaven. And Satan will not be there.

How wrong can we be? We may be careful not to be scammed of our money. But how easily we are scammed by Satan of our Holiness, Righteousness, Sanctification, Obedience and Spiritual Formation. Keep God company and you will not sin.



*In Loving Memory of*



*Elder Dr Alex Tang Tuck Hon  
1955-2024*

NB: Contributions to Sinews newsletter, via email to [spcheong88@gmail.com](mailto:spcheong88@gmail.com) (in Microsoft Word format), in the form of articles, testimonies and original photographs (with captions) are welcome, but we reserve the right to edit them in the interest of HLCE. Views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent that of HLCE or the editor.





HLCE Medical Team, Kpg Sg Gayung



The children with their Lego creation



Teacher Ong doing Lego games with the children, Kpg Sg Gayung.





# **Easter Day**

## **31st March 2024**



### **Baptism**

**Sis Alice Seow  
Miew Lee**

**Sis Jaclyn Yeo Jia  
Ling**

**Bro Jerry Lee Buck  
Chye**

**Bro Leong Fuu  
Sheng William**



### **Reception into membership**

**Sis Joanne Loh**

**Sis Doreen Tey  
Suad Thay**



*Congratulations, Sean & Gracia, on your wedding celebration on Sat, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024, at HLEE, Ponderosa*

