



Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." Luke 13:4-5

1861 was a year of calamities in England. There was a series tragic incidents, one of which was a railway accident that caused many deaths. It was on the following Sunday that Charles Spurgeon, the famous preacher from Great Britain, gave a sermon from Luke 13:1-5. How then are people to think about such a surge of misfortunes?

The wrong conclusions to draw

As per his sermon title 'Accidents, not Punishments', Spurgeon protests against the common conclusion that those who suffer tragedy suffer because of their sins. This very conclusion is refuted by Jesus in Luke 13 – ‘Do you think they were worse offenders ... No, I tell you’

Such a conclusion is not just erroneous but spiritually harmful:

1. It views God's providence (God's guiding plan for creation) as something shallow rather than a "great deep"

"Suppose for a moment there were some great performance going on, and you should step in ... and see one actor upon the stage for a moment, and you should say, "Yes, I understand it," what a simpleton you would be! .. Think not that you know the ways of God; [do not] bring God down to the level of men.

2. It encourages Pharisee-ism

“If it were true that the worst of sinners met with accidents, it would follow that those who do not meet with accidents must be very good people ... [However], while we can thank God that we are preserved ... we must ascribe it to His grace, and to His grace alone.

3. It "robs Christianity of one of its noblest arguments for the immortality of the soul"

“In this world, the righteous man is poor as well as the wicked, and that he dies suddenly as well as the most graceless. Since [God] does not do render full justice in this world, there must be a next world in which these things must be righted.”

Welcome!

God's blessings be upon you as you join us for a time of worship and fellowship here at Covenant. If you're a visitor, please refer to the back page for some helpful information that will enrich your time with us. We trust that you will be refreshed as you encounter Christ anew.

To be a God-fearing, Christ-centred, Spirit-led community, touching and transforming lives through holistic worship, healthy body life and passionate outreach.

The right conclusions to draw

Jesus does not give an answer for why specific misfortunes happen, but draws the attention back to the hearts of his hearers - "*but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish*".

Spurgeon suggests two conclusions we can draw from calamities that have scriptural warrant:

1. Asking ourselves if we are ready to die

"If now beneath me the wide jaws of death should gape, am I prepared with confidence to walk through the midst of them, fearing no evil, because God is with me?"

2. Warning us that we will die – for death comes "potently and irresistibly"

While death may not come to some as suddenly and without warning as others, "when the hour has struck there shall be no postponing of it."

In 2020, we live in a time where man's attention is fixated by a looming threat of misfortune or even death. To paraphrase Spurgeon, it is no shame (it is inevitable) that we should die, but it is a shame if we die unprepared, and not ready to meet the Lord. May God grant us the grace to number our days well.

~ *Pr Lionel Neo* ~

Joel 1:1-2:17

21-DAY FAST (20 March to 9 April)

As we learn from the prophet Joel, the unprecedented plague and disaster is a wakeup call to pause and discern what God is saying to us. While we cry out to God to stop the spread of the COVID-19, we must also be careful not to miss the deep heart issues God is revealing and addressing. The call from Joel is for a season of fasting, lament, brokenness and prayer. So in response, we encourage CPC members to observe 21 days of prayer and fasting, starting on Friday 20 Mar and concluding on Thursday 9 Apr, the day before Easter. To fast simply means to “abstain” from something. We recommend the following two types of individual fasts:

Solid Food Fast

A solid food fast is where an individual may drink juice and water, but chooses not to eat solid food. Drinking water while fasting for several days can be therapeutic for your body.

Partial Fast

A partial fast is where you choose to abstain from certain foods and drinks instead of complete abstinence of food or drink. You could go on a Daniel fast where meat and other rich foods are avoided in favour of vegetables and water.

Some Guidance for Fasting:

1. If you are new to fasting, you could start with a partial fast or one meal fast. Others may choose to fast from television, social media or shopping. This will help you free up some time to spend in prayer and reflection.
2. We fast and pray to humble ourselves and purify our worship. In fasting, we are not trying to get something from God, but rather seeking to realign our hearts' affections with His.
3. Prepare yourself for mental & physical discomforts such as impatience, crankiness, headache. These are not signs to stop fasting. Your body is working to cleanse itself of impurities.
4. Take time to pray and read the Word. Distractions & discouragement may come in but recognise we have strength through Christ.
5. Have a clear target for prayer focus. Use the 12pm and 7pm synchronise prayer guide.
6. Expect to hear God's voice in the Word, dreams, visions and prophetic revelations. Daniel prepared himself to receive revelation through fasting (Daniel 10:1,2).
7. During the fast, journal or write down what the Lord is speaking for the church and for yourself.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

✝ **Mission collection** this Sunday is for **Tachang Church Building Fund**.

All donations can be made via the following 3 ways:

1. Cash
2. Cheque (issued to "Covenant Presbyterian Church", kindly write on the back of the cheque "MC-TCBF")
3. PayNow / QR code - Kindly enter in the remarks column as "MC-TCBF"



UEN: T12SS0164D

✝ **EASTER Sunday, 12 Apr Infant Baptism & Transfer of Membership.** Do pick up the application form on Level 1 outside Church Office and hand in by **29 Mar** to Hope/Hazel.

✝ **Tithing Going Digital**

In addition to the regular cash and cheque collection for the tithe, we will be launching **Digital Tithing** in Apr 2020! As with regular tithing, a personal **Tithing Number** will be needed. If you need a Tithing Number (for new tither) or if you had forgotten your Tithing Number, please approach Hope or Hazel, or submit a request via our website. Stay tuned for more details coming up.

✝ **Service E-Bulletin Online**

We are pleased to announce that our Sunday Bulletin can also be found on our website.



Worship Time

English Services	9am & 11am
Chinese Service	9.30am
Chinese Saturday Service	10am
Sri Lankan Service	2pm
Discovery Group (English)	9.30am - 11am
Sunday School for K1 to P6	11am - 12.30pm
Crèche for Nursery & below	11am - 12.30pm
Youth & Young Adult Fellowship	11.30am - 1.30pm



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Pastoral Staff

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Rev Abel Lee	9678 3205
Rev Henry Wong	9680 0679
Rev Christina Ong	9697 3911
Ps Lai Mui Fong	8183 3394
Pr Chin Yoke Fen	9247 9377
Pr Lionel Neo	9736 5245
Pr Keith Wong	9295 2452
Ps Susantha	8397 6351

Sri Lankan Service

Rev Christina Ong	9697 3911
Ps Susantha	8397 6351

Chinese Service

Rev Abel Lee	9678 3205
Pr Chin Yoke Fen	9247 9377

CareWorks Community Services

Rev Henry Wong	9680 0679
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Gladiolus Place

Michelle Tan	6348 5674
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Ministry Team Leaders

Missions

Ho Chung Tat	9736 2690
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Creche

Kong Soh Lian	9179 0263
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Children

Jeremy Png	9006 4264
Andrew Lim	9737 7303
Zheng Shao Kai	9109 3835

GB / BB

Pr Neo Shi Wei	9736 5245
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Hospitality

Jenny Ho	9789 4895
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Young Working Adult & Young

Married

Rev Henry Wong	9680 0679
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Youth and Young Adult (YaYA)

Pr Keith Wong	9295 2452
Audrey Wong	9126 5329

Freedom & Wholeness

Alfred & Jenny Koay	9856 8733
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Worship

Ryan Kong	9752 9260
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Chinese Seniors Alpha Course

Pr Chin Yoke Fen	9247 9377
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Day Alone with the Lord

Ps Lai Mui Fong	8183 3394
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