



**11 June 2020**  
**Midweek Encouragement**

*Lamentations 3:19-24 (ESV)*

<sup>19</sup> *Remember my affliction and my wanderings,  
the wormwood and the gall!*

<sup>20</sup> *My soul continually remembers it  
and is bowed down within me.*

<sup>21</sup> *But this I call to mind,  
and therefore I have hope:*

<sup>22</sup> *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;<sup>[a]</sup>  
his mercies never come to an end;*

<sup>23</sup> *they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.*

<sup>24</sup> *"The LORD is my portion," says my soul,  
"therefore I will hope in him."*

In his televised address to the nation on Sunday June 7, PM Lee did not try to downplay the magnitude of the repercussions of COVID-19 on Singapore but said, *"The next few years will be a disruptive and difficult time for all of us."* Yet with the assurance that his government will help Singapore emerge stronger, he said, *"But despite these immense challenges, I say to you: Do not fear. Do not lose heart."*

The book of Lamentations was written at a time when Israel faced much grief and suffering because Jerusalem had been destroyed and the people taken into Babylonian captivity. In verses 19-20, the writer pours out his anguish at the bitter afflictions that he and his people are going through and as he *"continually remembers"* the afflictions, his soul despairs and is brought low.

But from verse 21, the writer changes the focus of his thoughts. Having been brought low, he now looks up and shifts his focus to God. He remembers the steadfast love of God that never ceases. He remembers God's mercies that are new every morning. He remembers the greatness of God's faithfulness. And the result of this shift in focus is that hope arises within him. When he meditated on the truth of who God is, faith arose, and despair turned to hope.

We can and must do likewise in times like this.

It is interesting that the last time there was such a series of national broadcasts was in March 1968, when then PM Lee Kuan Yew and some of his ministers spoke shortly after the British announced their withdrawal from Singapore. (The Straits Times, Jun 8 2020)

Has not God been faithful to us since the time we were birthed as a nation? Has not His mercy and grace been upon us to prosper us to what we have become today? Has He not in His steadfast love given our early and current leaders wisdom and foresight to lead us and will He not continue to do so as we humble ourselves and pray for our national leaders and for Singapore?

On a personal level, if the challenges you are facing feels overwhelming, follow the example of the writer of Lamentations and turn your focus to God. Turn to the Word of God. There are countless passages that reveal how faithful God is and reminds us that every day God gives fresh mercy and grace to His people. Through the resurrection of Christ, we are a people who have been born again to a living hope. Christ in us, the hope of glory! Come to Jesus daily, feed on His word and strengthen yourself in the Lord.

Let us also consider how we may encourage one another so that we can come out of this season stronger and more resilient. Though, we still cannot meet physically, we can keep in touch and check on the well-being of our relatives and friends. Parents, do not assume your children are shielded from this turmoil, ask them how they are feeling, listen to them with empathy and pray for them.

If you know of someone who is feeling fearful in these uncertain times, will you ask the Lord for a word for them, then speak those words of comfort and courage to them and pray for them? Or if you know of someone facing bread and butter issues, will you give as the Lord leads or even go the extra mile to find help from other means to meet their need?

May we, who abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, live in such a way that God is glorified!

**God's love and peace be with you**  
**Sabrina Ng**