

the
Harvest

Matthew 9:35-38

40 - Day FAST & PRAYER
7 AUG - 15 SEPT 2018

Adult Version

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CONTENTS

- page 05 **Matthew 9:35-38 (ESV)**
- page 06-07 **The Meagre Harvest**
- page 08 **A Note from the Secretary General of NECF**
- page 09-10 **40-Day Prayer & Fasting! - God's Heart & Vision**
- page 11 **Seize the Opportunity**
- page 12-13 **How to Maximize the Use of this 40-Days Fast & Prayer Booklet?**
- page 14 **Preface for Day 1-5: Harvest & Beholder**
- page 15-19 **Day 1-5**
- page 20 **Preface for Day 6-10: Harvest & Compassion**
- page 21-25 **Day 6-10**
- page 26 **Preface for Day 11-15: Harvest & the Gospel**
- page 27-31 **Day 11-15**
- page 32-33 **Preface for Day 16-20: Harvest and Sign & Wonders**
- page 34-38 **Day 16-20**
- page 40-41 **Preface for Day 21-25: Harvest & Prayers**
- page 42-46 **Day 21-25**
- page 47-48 **Preface for Day 26-30: Harvest and the Word**
- page 49-53 **Day 26-30**
- page 54 **Preface for Day 31-35: Harvest and Discipleship**
- page 55-59 **Day 31-35**
- page 60 **Preface for Day 36-40: Harvest and Mission**
- page 61-65 **Day 36-40**
- page 66 **Acknowledgement**



Matthew 9:35-38

35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.

36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

The Lord of the Harvest is building His Bride who will

- be sensitive towards the broken world, with eyes that see the needy and the poor (v36 When he saw the crowds,... because they were harassed and helpless...).
- be compassionate towards the unsaved souls, with hearts that feel the pain and the lost (v36... he had compassion on them...).
- continue to share and reach out in all towns and villages, with feet that go with the shoe of Gospel (v35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages... proclaiming the good news of the kingdom...).
- reveal God's glory and power through submission & obedience to Him, with hands that perform signs & wonders, healing & deliverance (v35... healing every disease and sickness).
- trust Him in fervent and consistent prayers, with passion that asks for workers of the Lord's harvest (v38 Ask the Lord of the harvest...).
- take root in the Word of God, with faith that proclaims the whole counsel of God (v35 ...teaching in their synagogues...).
- go beyond as mere instructors but fathers who nurture their next generations, with the love of Christ that disciples by shepherding God's flock (v36-37 ...like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples...).
- give unconditionally to enhance the work of the Kingdom/global missions, with hope that gives by sending off workers to the harvest fields (v38... to send out workers into his harvest field).

The Meagre Harvest

In the second year of King Darius, the prophet Haggai recorded the rebuilding of the foundations of the temple. Due to challenges and opposition, the returnees were discouraged and distracted and turned their attention to building their own homes, leaving the temple unfinished. They argued that, “The time has not yet come, to rebuild the house of the Lord” (Haggai 1:2).

God was not convinced. A fully built and fully functional temple was the sign that God was among His people, at the centre of their life together, and Lord over everything they did. The temple came first. There could never be a right time to delay building the temple.

God had an answer for them. We read in Haggai 1:3-6, “Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?” Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. You have sown much, but harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.”

God zeroed in on the problem - “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?” (v4)

God described their homes as “paneled”, probably meaning luxurious. God’s point is that, they have beautiful, comfortable homes and they did all that while His house was still in ruins. How then can anyone of them say the time is not right to finish the house of God?

God had brought these people back from captivity and they had begun to rebuild the temple but never got beyond laying the foundations. In time, their gratitude to God, their interest in His priorities, and their devotion to the Lord wore off. Self-interest surfaced and misplaced priorities overtook their lives.

Then it became inconvenient to do God’s work because they had another agenda which had their wishes and needs put on top of the list. So the word of God through Haggai was, “Consider your ways!” (v5)



Today's Church in Malaysia is no different. In almost every building project, and venture to expand, we hear of His people moaning - "the economic climate is not robust, the cost of living has gone up, the ringgit is weakening, etc." But yet we seem to be able to buy or renovate our own houses, go on tours, buy new cars and the list seems almost endless.

In Haggai's days, God then spoke of the fruitlessness and failure that had surrounded them. In just one verse (v6) Haggai listed five disasters that happened repeatedly: "You have sown much, but harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes."

They had seed, but no matter how much they planted, their crops were small. They had food, but they constantly felt hungry. They had wine, but it lacked potency. They wrapped themselves in clothes, but still they shivered. They earned money, but never had enough to buy what they needed.

The NIV captures it succinctly, "You have planted much, but harvested little" (v6a).

Nothing was working like it should. There was a vacuum in their lives and futility in their labours.

Is this the sad state of our lives, the Church and the nation because we have found it inconvenient to do God's work?

Is the harvest poor because of our lack of interest and devotion to the Lord and His work? Are our priorities grossly misplaced? Are the fruitlessness and failure God's discipline?

Yes, we want to focus on and even sincerely pray for a "mighty harvest," but it's foolish to do so, without considering our ways.



A Note from the Secretary-General of NECF

It is time again to devote ourselves to fast and pray for the nation this year, beginning from 7th August to 15th September. This will be our 18th National 40-Day Fast and Prayer.

As we continue to intercede for the various national issues such as the proposed RUU355 private bill, the unsettled case of Pastor Raymond Koh, the gradual erosion of religious liberty and the recent 14th National General Election, we must not forget or neglect the main reason of Christ's mission as well as our purpose on earth, that is, the harvest of souls.

On this matter, Matthew 9:35-38 says that Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Matthew 28:19-20 further states the Lord's final command to His disciples before His ascension, i.e., "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

In the coming 40-Day Fast and Prayer, we would very much like to remember and refocus on our primary purpose pertaining to the harvest while at the same time in pursuit of a free and transformed nation.

May God's grace extend to save many on earth, as we echo Paul's exhortation to Timothy and the Church in Ephesus that "petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

May the journey of this 40-Day Fast & Prayer enrich your spirituality in a way like never before!



40-Day Prayer & Fasting!

God's Heart & Vision

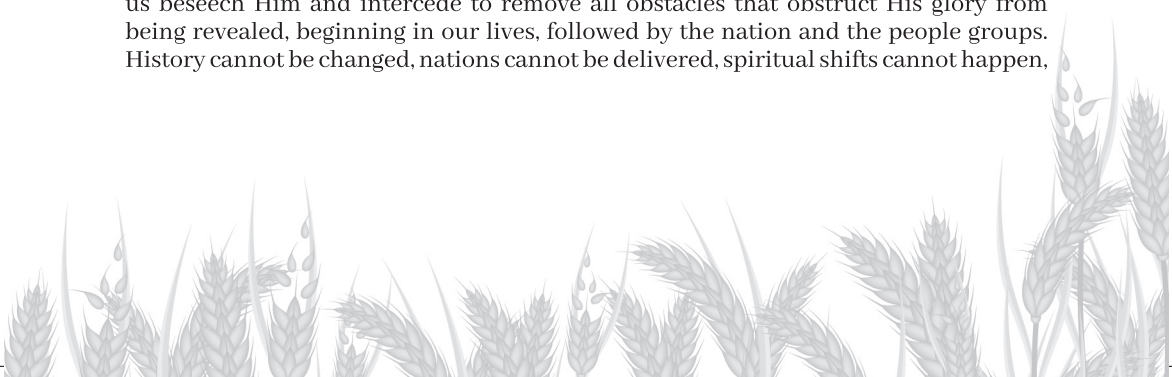
“I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” Rev 7:9-10

Since the fall of creation, God has longed to restore, redeem and align human hearts and nations back to the fullness of His will and purposes, reconciling all things back to Himself. Through Christ's death on the cross, the grand vision of Revelation 7:9-10 becomes a reality! We need to hold onto this compelling grand vision of multitudes standing before His throne. We, His Body, are His instruments now as it has been through the ages. The question is whether we have this compelling vision of God's heart which was possessed by many great men of God?

To name a few, such as Apostle Paul, John Knox, John Wesley, Charles Finney, William Booth or John Sung. Their life of prayer and sense of mission inspire and impact us and this flame of passion and vision for the lost needs to be ignited in our hearts so that the destiny of this nation and people groups will be reconciled back to Him.

We may be nameless, ordinary men and women of God, but He has deposited the power of the Holy Spirit in us who is able to do abundantly, far beyond our mind can comprehend for us to live and to do His will. God specializes in the ordinary, weak and broken people to reflect His power and glory to the nations. It is time to lay down our lives, our brokenness, rights, position and reputation for the glory of the Lamb of God. This vision and passion for our great God is the fire that once consumed those great men of God and it is this FIRE that we need now to consume us. We need to come to the place where He is our ONE and ONLY passion - CHRIST and CHRIST ALONE! What we need are not mere soulish prayers, but prayers flow out from our hearts, which are changed, transformed, birthed with passion, motivated with love and compassion and aligned to His will, so that His Kingdom will come to bring spiritual awakening and revival.

With this grand vision in God's heart, let us join Him and rise up like never before to be His instruments, watchmen and messengers to prepare the way of the Lord. Let us beseech Him and intercede to remove all obstacles that obstruct His glory from being revealed, beginning in our lives, followed by the nation and the people groups. History cannot be changed, nations cannot be delivered, spiritual shifts cannot happen,



blindness cannot be removed, hearts cannot be opened until and unless individuals and the corporate body of God take heed to the call to stand in the gap through prayer and fasting and through living holistic and authentic lives according to His kingdom's principles and values. We are His walking epistles, shining His light in the midst of darkness!

The nation is at a crossroad. Multitudes are in the valley of decision. Let us set apart this time and season to seek Him wholeheartedly. Let us align our hearts to Him so that our prayers will also be aligned for His kingdom to come, His will to be done! This should not only be for this 40-Day Fast and Prayer season. We are in it for the long haul. So let us stand to be counted for His eternal purposes, here on earth as it is in heaven!



Seize the Opportunity

When we see an opportunity to improve our circumstances, we would act quickly and resolutely as we fear the loss of the given chance. Jesus Christ has reminded us to be prudent and shrewd for the right reason. “We must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work” (John 9:4). Day speaks of light where one can toil and work to achieve one’s ends while night alludes to cessation of tasks, and in a sense, a separation from God’s presence. We desire the light of salvation to shine in places of darkness where men dwell in ignorance of His grace and mercy. Jesus’s words remind us to seize every opportunity to reach out to the lost and to defeat the works of the enemy that come to rob, steal and destroy.

Evangelism entails the teaching of the Gospel and making known of the truth that sets mankind free from condemnation. Paul described his evangelistic ministry as a teaching ministry. Evangelism aims to convince hearers into believing the gospel truth that sets them free from bondages of the enemy, moving them from darkness to light. It is not just a task of data transfer from a state of unknowing into a state of knowing, but rather a process of listening to the needs and demands of people, hearing their objections to spiritual truth and practising gentleness and compassion on souls at stake. Its main objective is to enable someone to put his complete faith and trust in Jesus and repent of his lifestyle of unbelief and sin.

Evangelism is designed for the church and the church is designed for evangelism. Christians cannot and should not exist for themselves but to live a life in the light of reaching out to the lost. A healthy church with the culture of evangelism has the key to display the gospel. It must be undergirded with love and unity. Jesus said, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:35). The love we have for one another is the evidence that we are truly Christ’s disciples. When His people are one, the world knows that Jesus is the Son of God.

We can put our hands on the plough of evangelism when we not only pray for non-Christian friends to be saved, but also be intentional about sharing our faith and by giving into evangelistic missions. The act of giving goes hand in hand with the work of evangelism and is given equal paramount importance. Surely your act of giving would certainly not go unnoticed by our Father in heaven.

Our charity collection in 2018 is designated for initiatives that promote evangelism and leadership development in local churches. You may choose to fast a meal or more in this time of nationwide fast and prayer and channel the amount saved to our charity collection, by transferring the amount to NECF’s (National Evangelical Christian Fellowship) Public Bank (Account No. 3078972807) as individuals or as a church. Please send us your bank slips via fax (no. 03-7729 1139) or email (prayer@necf.org.my). Do indicate the amount you have set aside for “40-Day Fast and Prayer Charity Purpose”. May God bless you richly in your days ahead.

How to Maximize the Use of this 40-Day Fast & Prayer Booklet?

The prayer booklet is formatted in eight blocks of 40 days which aims to guide you to intercede for all the states of the nation and to seek God. It is also to encourage you to initiate a small accountability group. In a small group you can track your journey of fasting and praying with each other, and be able to share your encounter with God to one another. More significantly, it is a journey of character molding with each other through spiritual discipline.

“Whatever they are, if character has not been developed according to the Word of God, it will crack under those circumstances. Whether it is riches or wealth, hard times, great fame or trials, your character will fail. Character is not built in isolation. It is built by interaction with people and through things God has allowed to happen to you and in you.” John Mulinde (Pursing God’s Destiny).

How to Begin?

1. Before we begin, pray for direction to recruit a small accountability group.

You can consider the following: -

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketplace |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends (Recruit 2-5 people) | <input type="checkbox"/> School/College/University |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals | <input type="checkbox"/> others _____ |

2. Choose a leader in your group and initiate a WhatsApp group/chat group to encourage one another and to track on each other’s progress.

3. The group is encouraged to meet each other once a week or regularly pray together using the day to day prayer guide in this booklet. Look for a place that is available during lunch hour where your group could meet up and commit in prayers.

4. Keep a daily journal to record God’s encounter and share your stories or testimonies with one another in the accountability group. Your life experiences in encountering God will encourage each other to complete the 40 days’ journey.

5. Set aside your meal expenses for the charity contribution and bank the money into NECF’s bank account at the end of the 40 days.

Format of the Eight Blocks in this Booklet

1. Each block of 5 days' prayer booklet guide comes with a panoramic "Preface". It contains brief information prayer of the states in the nation. The data is given for you to pray over the land.
2. The highlighted states in the map serve as a visual aid for you to declare blessings upon the land.
3. In each day of the blocks, there will be Scripture given as a guidance for you to pray.
4. 10 chapters/day of Bible Reading is given daily to enable you to saturate your mind with the Word of God. As you read the 10 chapters, take the S.O.A.P. approach and journal your understanding to know who God is?
(S=Scripture; O=Observe; A= Apply; P=Prayer)
5. In your accountability group, you can creatively mobilize your group to put to action as the Lord compels you to do something for Him.

Dates for Corporate Celebration - all are welcome

- Find out from your church pastors about the 40-Day Fast and Prayer Launch. In Klang Valley, the launch will be held on 1st August 2018 in Full Gospel Assembly Kuala Lumpur.
- Malaysia Day Prayer Rally will be held in Full Gospel Tabernacle Subang Jaya on 16th September 2018.

Preface for Day 1-5: Harvest & Beholder

14

Eyes that See (the needy and the poor)

The Lord of the harvest is building His Bride who will be sensitive towards the broken world.

1. Focusing on the Northern States (Perlis & Kedah)



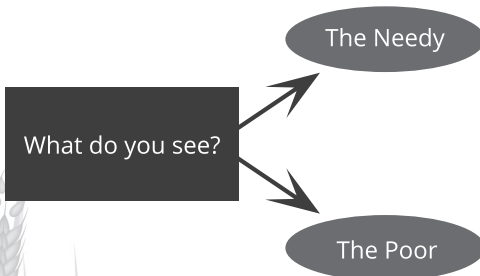
Perlis: 225,876 (Malay:88%; Chinese: 8%; Indian: 1.5%; Others: 2.5%).

Perlis is the smallest state, its ruler is called 'Raja', and not "Sultan". The capital city is Kangar, and the royal town is Arau. Perlis is closely related with, and originally, a part of Kedah.

Kedah: 1,880,783 (Malays: 77.5%; Chinese: 13.5%; Indians: 7%; Others 2%).

Traditionally known as "the Rice Bowl of Malaysia". Kedah is one of the oldest states. Sultan Sallehuddin ibni alMarhum Sultan Badlishah is the Sultan of Kedah and Alor Star is the capital. Kubang Pasu district is known as Education Valley in the state, as many institutions are located there including the University Utara Malaysia (UUM).

2. Who are the needy and the poor?



Begin to List Down the Needy

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Begin to List Down the Poor

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Lord, Open Our Eyes to See!

Matthew 9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Jesus' ministry began with compassion. His compassion was stirred as he met the people. Every day, we meet people at school, at work, in the neighbourhood, etc. We also have multiple social media communication platforms that keep us "in touch" with others. Yet, let's consider – on what level are we connecting?

When Jesus saw people, his compassion for them was stirred because "he saw ... they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." Let's not be distracted or limited by the externals – looking merely at what people eat, drink and wear, where they go and with whom. To have Jesus' compassion, we need to look beyond the superficial and see into the heart as Jesus did in his encounters with people – the Samaritan woman at the well, or blind Bartimaeus by the roadside. Ordinary encounters become supernatural, with life-changing consequences.

Needy people are all around us. There are crowds of them. Ministry to the needy and poor is not the job of a selected few. Spend a moment in the Lord's presence to reflect if we have become too busy with our own needs and forget others. Perhaps we have been focusing on unimportant things or we have viewed work among the needy as a work we are not "called" to do. Let the Lord open our eyes to see the true needs of people we will meet today.

Pray for the Heads & Governments of Perlis & Kedah

- **Rulers with Godly Fear**

Psalm 2:10-11 Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

- **Fairness in Judgment & Enforcement**

Isaiah 1:17 learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

Translate Our Compassion into Prayer

Matthew 9:37-38 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Any gardener knows that a good crop will be wasted if it is not harvested on time. We were told that the harvest of needy people is "plentiful", but there are insufficient workers. The risk of people being lost for eternity is real.

The first thing Jesus told his disciples was to pray. We are to pray to "the Lord of the harvest". We acknowledge, firstly, that the harvest belongs to God. When we start by praying, "Lord, this person belongs to You", we recognize his precious worth before God. We relinquish all our wrongful attitudes toward him – any sense of superiority or uncaring attitudes concerning his life and destiny. We repent of any unforgiveness and choose to offer grace instead, because God has extended His forgiveness to him by the blood of Jesus.

Secondly, we ask the Lord of the harvest to "send out workers" into His harvest field. At this juncture, we are reminded of the prophet Isaiah, who encountered God who desires to send: "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." (Isaiah 6:8)

As we respond to Him, let's recognize that He wants to send out "workers". Be prepared to work alongside others, to face the challenges that work involve, and to glean the satisfaction that comes from being workers in God's harvest field.

Pray for the Land of Perlis & Kedah

- **Comfort over the Poor & Needy**

Psalm 9:17-18 the wicked shall return to Sheol, all the nations that forget God. For the needy shall not always be forgotten, and the hope of the poor shall not perish forever.

- **Safety of the Land**

Proverbs 10:9 Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.

Growing in Our Compassion

*Luke 10:29 But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus,
"And who is my neighbor?"*

Read Luke 10:25-37. A priest, a Levite and a Samaritan, each of them “saw” a man who had been robbed and left half dead. But they responded in very contrasting ways. The factor that distinguished them was: compassion.

The priest and Levite were Jewish religious leaders who could have been expected to act rightly by their knowledge of the law. However, they repulsed the half-dead man by passing “on the other side”.

The religious leaders of Jesus’ day were merciless and Jesus denounced this lack of mercy, just as He told the Pharisees, “Now go away and learn the meaning of this verse of Scripture, ‘It isn’t your sacrifices and your gifts I want – I want you to be merciful.’ For I have come to urge sinners, not the self-righteous, back to God.” (Matthew 9:13, TLB)

Let’s come before the Lord and examine ourselves. Do we lack compassion? Do we see the needs of people but fail to respond? Is our concern for others dependent only on what they can offer us in return? Perhaps we will act, but only if it is convenient. James 2:14-17 is clear, “So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

We do not grow in compassion when our “Christianity” is only a religious event. Legalism produces self-righteousness, the enemy of compassion and mercy. It does not lead to eternal life. We need to know God’s Word and constantly allow it to change and renew our minds (Romans 12:1-2). Let’s put aside mere rituals, and seek to experience God’s presence and truth in a real, powerful way.

Pray for the People of Perlis & Kedah

- **Minority People Group: Kensiu**

Psalm 97: 9 For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

(Kensiu: A small aboriginal tribe with 300 people in Kedah and one of the earliest peoples in Malaysia. They are plagued with alcoholism and glue-sniffing.)

- **Keep Themselves Away from Worthless Pursuits**

Proverbs 12:11 Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.

Going an Extra Mile for the Needy

Luke 10:33 "But a Samaritan ... came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion."

Read Luke 10: 25-37. Unlike the Jewish religious leaders, the Samaritan's first response to what he "saw" was, compassion. That moved him to halt his travel, and used his personal resources to save the half-dead man. This was done possibly at risk to himself (there could be robbers hiding nearby). He even accounted for the extra care the man might have needed. It was highly inconvenient and messy. It cost effort and money.

To the Jews listening to the parable, Jesus' reference to the Samaritan was a kick in their pants. They despised Samaritans as half-breeds who did not have right knowledge of the law. They resented them for opposing their forefathers in the rebuilding of the temple. Yet, here was a Samaritan, doing the exact thing God desired, revealing their utter indifference and hypocrisy!

Let's take some time to be quiet before the Lord. Have we considered that many non-believers have shown greater compassion for the needy and poor, like the Samaritan in the parable? Have we become blinded by resentment and prejudice against certain people that we refuse to see them with the eyes of Jesus?

Ponder if we have allowed theologies, traditions or unimportant debates to distract us from the main thing that Jesus is concerned with – touching people's needs and leading them to faith in Him? Perhaps we are struggling with the Lord over His rightful authority and calling over our lives. If so, we need to repent, receive His forgiveness, and allow His love and truth to guide us.

Pray for the Families of Perlis & Kedah

- **Children's Respect towards their Parental Guidance**

Proverbs 6:20 My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching.

- **God's Covering & Protection over the Youth**

Psalms 1:1-3 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Go and Be Someone's Neighbour

Luke 10:34 "He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine."...

Read Luke 10:25-37. Yesterday, we saw how the Samaritan "went" the extra mile to save the half-dead man on the road, instead of passing by like the Jewish religious leaders.

Remember how the Samaritans were despised and rejected by the Jews. Does this Samaritan in the parable remind us of someone else? We may think of our compassionate Lord Jesus who did not want to leave us to die in our sins, but "came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15). When Jesus came to us, He too was despised and rejected. Yet, He completely finished the work of laying down His life for us at the cross. He went the extra mile!

Now pause for a moment and ask: Which character in the parable do I identify with the most?

By the close of the parable, Jesus changed the focus of the original question put to Him, "And who is my neighbour [the one I am to love]?" Instead of defining who we are to love, He asked us to be the kind of compassionate neighbours our hurting world needs: "Go and do likewise."

Like the Samaritan, and indeed like Jesus Himself, we are to live a lifestyle that moves toward the needy, instead of expecting them to come to us. If you have ever wondered what God's will is for you, consider the answer in the words of Jesus: "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21). Jesus came to minister to the needy people and bring them salvation through faith in Him. He is sending us right now to do the same.

Pray for the Church of Perlis & Kedah

• Testimony of the Church

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

• The Church will be a Lighthouse to All

Matthew 5:15-16 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Preface for Day 6-10: Harvest & Compassion

20

Hearts that Feel (the pain and the lost)

The Lord of the harvest is building His Bride who will be compassionate towards the unsaved souls.

I. Focusing on the Northern States (Penang & Perak)



Penang



Perak

Penang: 1,471,523 (Malay: 43%; Chinese: 45.5%; Indian: 10.5%; Others: 1%). "The Pearl of the Orient", Georgetown in Penang Island, is the main commercial hub with a fascinating collection of old buildings, and each bearing the stamp of different foreign influences in its colorful historic heritage and has been accorded listing as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 2008. Penang is the third largest economy state in Malaysia. The current Chief Minister is Chow Kon Yeow.

Perak: 2,283,290 (Malay: 54.2%; Chinese: 30.4%; Indian: 12.4%; Others: 3%). It is the second largest state in Peninsular Malaysia. It was renowned for its tin mines in the past, where it brought a large influx of Chinese migrants to Perak. Ipoh is the capital city, and characterized by many old buildings of historical value. Pasir Salak in Perak Tengah, the center district in Perak, is where JWW Birch, the first British Resident of Perak, was killed in 1875, a year after the Pangkor Treaty. This rebellion sowed the seeds of nationalism, which manifested itself in the form of opposition to colonialism and the formation of the Malay Union, thus igniting the flame of independence.

2. Do you "feel" for those who are in pain and the lost?

Jesus feels
for those in
pain and the
lost!

Identify the most
neglected group...

Put a in the appropriate box/es that you find most neglected to pray and reach out to them.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Malay | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Bumiputera |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orang Asli | <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |

The Harassed and Helpless

Matthew 9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

What comes to our mind when we see the words “harassed and helpless”? Will we think of the poor? The refugees? Don’t be caught surprised! The rich could be the poor and the settled ones could be the refugees. We are often trapped under the state of being “harassed and helpless”.

The unrighteousness, the troubles, the hunger, the loneliness, the feeling of unsettledness, etc., in the world, is indeed, overwhelming.

The depression, the chronic diseases among the youngsters, the breaking-down of families, the suicidal cases, and all kinds of post-modernism ideologies, create an unknown burden with a sense of fear and frustration on us.

Just take the basic life necessities for example. Why do we (especially the young people) emphasize more on our feelings and the building up of our self-image and identity when we buy clothes or a watch? The sense of one’s identity is purely determined by our feelings, and the attractiveness of commodities is so unsearchable yet people are drawn to it. One has to seek happiness from this life. But how about life of eternity and spiritual satisfaction?

Are we aware of this outward action which is driven by a desire to shake away from the old belief and tradition? Does the basis of our self-image derive from God? Are we secure because we are children of God? Do we act with sober judgment? Does our pursuit on spending overtake our desire for God?

We need compassion under this kind of harassment and helplessness. “For they know not what they do.”

Pray for the Heads & Governments of Penang & Perak

- **Wisdom to Govern Their States**

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

- **Love Justice and Refuse Bribery**

Proverbs 29:4 By justice a king builds up the land, but he who exacts gifts tears it down.

Acts of Compassion

Colossians 3:12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

We are in an age of endless worries and concerns. God commands His people to be compassionate and kind, clothed with the virtues of humility, meekness and patience. Otherwise, our compassion is unsustainable.

What is compassion? It is giving others something they do not deserve. Justice is giving something others deserve. Hence, justice is rightfully doing what needs to be done whereas compassion is giving without reasons. It makes compassion a hard practice for us.

God had compassion on us by sending His One and Only Son to demonstrate for us real compassion when He saw our inward brokenness. We are enlightened and we have tasted the heavenly gift. Hence, we are not supposed to remain as people who keep only the laws, and who concern only with our own holiness. God wants us to reveal His attributes. As we look around, we discover the practice of compassion is found everywhere.

- Making home for the homeless elderly and taking care of their daily needs. Helping them with their welfare application. Do this without expecting reward.
- Visiting the sick in hospitals, organizing mobile and voluntary clinics, caring for the AIDS patients, running centers housing patients and their families. Practice kindness.
- Assisting the handicapped by providing skills training, life courses, education, etc. Show compassion to the underprivileged.
- Giving counsel to the youth by reshaping their self-image, breaking free from suicidal thoughts and providing them vocational training. We need real meekness and patience!
- Organizing inspirational and sex education talks as well as Christian Fellowship in schools, to empower the students to be holy and beloved children of God.

We give thanks and pray for the ministries in the Body of Christ. They stabilize our nation by laying tiles and bricks and they are people who have established firmly the Kingdom of God!

Pray for the Land of Penang & Perak

• Healing from Historical Wounds

Jeremiah 33: 6 Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them and reveal to them abundance of prosperity and security.

• Cleansing from Defilement and Idolatry

Zechariah 13:1-2 On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness. "And on that day", declares the LORD of hosts, "I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more. And also I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness."

More than Meeting our Basic Needs

Isaiah 49:10 they shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them.

Man has basic needs of food and shelter. But some people are deprived of all these basic needs. Some people are not properly clothed because of all kinds of unrighteous practices and unequal distribution of resources.

All these things do happen in main cities that are flourishing as well as subordinate cities or towns everywhere.

Ministries were established as God's people witness these scarcities:

- Helping the poor: single-parent, families in dire needs, poor communities, and Orang Asli living below the poverty level.

- Street ministries: Distribute food and daily necessities to the homeless. Open centers for the homeless to take a bath and to do laundry.

- Food bank: Provide families with food.

God has compassion for His people, and He allows them to live and to have lives. God's food is the One who comes from heaven, the One He gives to the world. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

Our prayer is that these recipients will come to know God, who has compassion for them and who lead them to the stream of living water. They will understand that God's desire for them is more than living on in this life.

Pray for the People of Penang & Perak

- **Minority People Group: Semai & Temiar**

Jeremiah 31:34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

(Semai & Temiar: Aboriginal tribes in Perak. Government development projects do improve their lives, yet many more community development projects still need to be done to alleviate their marginalized status.)

- **Forsake Idolatry and Seek the Truth**

Acts 17:29-30 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,....

The Creation of God Reveals His Compassion

Isaiah 63:7 I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

We enjoy daily the creation of God like the sun, the air, the water and the produce of the land. But not necessarily everyone, even the highly educated, realize that fact and learn to appreciate the gifts of God. Their lives become a pursuit of futility.

We have to tell people who do not understand, whether they are informed or ignorant. The earliest Orang Asli did not do fish farming, they fished from the river. They did not grow fruits, but climbed trees for it. They picked up fruits that fell to the ground. They did not farm wild boars but hunted them. They did not have bee-hives but obtained honey from the honeycomb on the tree.

All these bring to mind a verse from the bible. "You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth" (Psalm 104:14). Food is a solid evidence of God's presence and His provision. It comes in all kind of flavors, and everyone is well fed and satisfied.

God sent his servants to show them there is a Creator who is almighty, good and awesome, so that they learn to give thanks to the Father for His wonderful creation and ingenious design. The Orang Asli is inseparable from their land, and God has not forgotten them.

Let men find no excuse, for God's invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, which are clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made, shall advance His Gospel.

Pray for the Families of Penang & Perak

- **Marital Faithfulness and Commitment**

Hebrews 13:4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.

- **Mutual Love & Respect Between Husband & Wife**

Ephesians 5:33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Comfort & Affliction

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

What is “comfort”? The dictionary defines it as “consolation” or “a state of physical ease”, which is a kind of “gentle empathy” that strengthens the receivers.

People often base their feeling on their experiences. Thus, it is not easy to possess such kind of “gentle empathy”. It is an ability to comfort others when we have personally gone through the troubles ourselves with the comfort we received from the Holy Spirit. It is more than feeling and sharing the pains, but strengthening and encouraging each other because of the common experiences we have encountered. Therefore, there is a very positive element about the meaning of “affliction”.

Jesus is not spared from affliction. “For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” It is indeed a source of strength helping us to overcome suffering, for there is hope amidst our affliction. Who needs our comfort?

- The dying: Provide an environment of rest and spirit cultivation for patients with terminal illness as well as for their families. Share the Gospel with them.
- Migrant workers and refugees: Provide them meeting places, learning centers, health care and shelters for refugee children. Teach their women at home to do craftwork, and ease them from feeling lost in a foreign land, so that they know God cares for them and He does not neglect them.
- Disaster relief: Distribute goods and materials. Wash or rebuild houses. Instruct people with the knowledge of disaster prevention. Enter the interiors to assist with disaster relief (especially when the lives of Orang Asli are affected). Assist in fund raising, etc.

Pray for the Church of Penang & Perak

• Living in the Covenantal Love of God

Isaiah 58:9-12...If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.

• Be the Channels of Comfort & Strength

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.



National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF) Malaysia

32, Jalan SS2/103, 47300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, MALAYSIA.

Tel: +603-7727 8227 | Fax: +603-7729 1139

Email: enquiries@necf.org.my

Website: www.necf.org.my