Prayer Emphasis Week

10 - 16 March 2024





- Wednesday, 13 March 2024 | 8pm@ CCC & Damansara Heights
- Saturday, 16 March 2024 | 8am@ CCC

PRAYER EMPHASIS WEEK (MARCH 10-16)

Our God is a Waymaker, Miracle Worker, Promise Keeper and Light in the Darkness. Just as He made a way through the sea and even a road in the wilderness for the children of Israel, He is more than able to make a way for us in all circumstances, both individually and corporately as a church. Even when we can't see what He is doing, He is working to part the waters, not just to make a way for us but to make His way to our hearts and to set us apart for a deeper communion with Himself.

Our focus is not on the way, but the Waymaker. Together as the Calvary family, we want to seek the Waymaker in a time of concerted prayer and fasting during this special week of prayer.

Through our corporate prayer and fasting, we are believing God for:

- Personal breakthroughs and opportunities to reach out to our loved ones, especially during this Easter season
- The fulfillment of His will and purpose for Calvary Church during this period of transition to a pluralistic governance

Make every effort to come out for the prayer meetings in church during this week of prayer. Let's seek God for a fresh outpouring of His Spirit as we unite our hearts in fervent prayer!

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever (Ephesians 3:20-21, NKJV).

MAXIMISING YOUR FAST

Biblical fasting refers to an abstinence from food for expressed spiritual purposes. It is an act of humbling ourselves before God and expression of our whole-hearted desire to seek God by setting aside the legitimate appetites of the body to concentrate on prayer.

Fast Options

NORMAL FAST

Abstinence from all food and drink except water for a specified period of time.

DANIEL FAST

Restricted diet, usually abstinence from meat or a certain kind of food (Daniel 10:3).

ABSOLUTE FAST

Total abstinence from food and water for a short period of time, not more than three days (Esther 4:16).

How to Fast

- 1. Decide on the fast option you are most comfortable with. If this is your first time, begin with a meal fast.
- 2. As part of the spiritual preparation, ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and reveal to you any unconfessed sin that may hinder your prayers.
- 3. Devote the time you would normally eat to prayer, worship and reading God's Word.
- 4. Follow this 7-day prayer guide using the spiritual compass S.A.C.R.E.D to help you pray more effectively.
- 5. Take time to listen and hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to you.
- 6. Seek the Holy Spirit's empowerment as you intercede for various needs in the prayer guide. Besides praying with your mind, pray with your spirit (1 Corinthians 14:15) using the prayer language you received when you were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

- 7. Besides food, you may consider fasting from things that distract you from your spiritual activity e.g. cell phone, social media etc.
- 8. Break your fast gradually and wisely. Conclude your time of fasting with praise and thanksgiving to God.
- 9. Unite with the Calvary family in a concerted time of prayer:
 - Wednesday (March 13) 8pm @ CCC and CCDH
 - Saturday (March 16) 8am @ CCC

Ezra 8:23

So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

Fasting is important, more important perhaps, than many of us have supposed. . .when exercised with a pure heart and a right motive, fasting may provide us with a key to unlock doors where other keys have failed; a window opening up new horizons in the unseen world; a spiritual weapon of God's provision, 'mighty to the pulling down of strongholds.'

~ Arthur Wallis

Is fasting ever a bribe to get God to pay more attention to the petitions? No, a thousand times no. It is simply a way to make clear that we sufficiently reverence the amazing opportunity to ask help from the everlasting God, the Creator of the universe, to choose to put everything else aside and concentrate on worshiping, asking forgiveness, and making our requests known - considering His help more important than anything we could do ourselves in our own strength and with our own ideas."

~ Edith Schaeffer

DAILY PRAYER GUIDE (MARCH 10-16)

S.A.C.R.E.D is a spiritual practice that acts as a compass to re-orient our soul in relation to God.

- S Stillness to know God
- A Attentiveness to hear God
- C Cruciformity to surrender to God
- R Revelation to see God
- E Examine to return to God
- D Doxology to thank God

It helps us to find our way - the Way - through life's journey and navigate through pounding storms with an internal calm and peace that is anchored and unwavering.

Just as God parted the waves and made a way of escape for the children of Israel in their flight from slavery in Egypt, there is a Red Sea Road through every impossible situation we encounter. God is creating a Way through all our hard places.

The story of the Exodus foreshadows our deliverance into a new way of life, a new way of being – out of bondage from Egypt to bonding with Jesus, the Waymaker.

Read Exodus 14-15 as we set out to follow the spiritual compass, S.A.C.R.E.D. Set aside undistracted time each day. Be open to the work of the Holy Spirit. The Waymaker is right there with you. More than just making a 'way through' for you, He is making a way to your heart.

Note: The S.A.C.R.E.D. compass is based on the book, Waymaker, written by Ann Voskamp.

MARCH 10 STILLNESS TO KNOW GOD

13 And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. 14 The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

Exodus 14:13-14 (NKJV)

What a momentous celebration it was for the Israelites as they marched out of Egypt boldly (Exodus 14:8), free at last from Pharaoh's yoke! The moment of triumph was short-lived when they realised that Pharaoh had wasted no time in rallying his troops, chariots and horsemen to pursue after them. Terrified, they cried out to the Lord and started blaming Moses for taking them out of Egypt. Moses responded by assuring them that the Lord would fight for them and all they needed to do was to "stand still."

Stillness is a difficult posture when we are confronted with danger and opposition. Or when we are compelled to push our way through to make things happen under the pressure of stress, worry, anxiety and fear. We can only be still when we are not driven by our own expectations – expectations of the way our lives should go, the way our lives should be. It is not the hard roads that slay us in our relationship with God; what slays us is the expectation that this road is not what we hope it would be.

Stillness invites us to ask the question, "What's in my way and what can I do about it?" When there's no agitation of the soul, there can be a revelation of God. Still hearts see God and defiantly trusts amidst the storms.

Where are you in your life right now? God wants you to name the place, see the circumstance and acknowledge what you are feeling now (circle what applies).

Fear AnxietyConfusionUnbeliefAngerInjustice DisappointmentGriefApathyRestlessnessRelief Delight

So, what is the obstacle in your way today? What are you trying to push past, push down, or run away from? What are the expectations that are driving your agitation, your discontent, your life?

Stop striving, running or hiding. Surrender your feelings, your challenges and your expectations to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to quiet your soul. Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10). Now in your stillness, what do you hear God saying about you and your situation?

PRAYER

Personal

God's wisdom to discern when to "stand still" (Exodus 4:13-14) and when to "move forward" (Exodus 14:15).

Calvary Church

The New Constitution

- Rich anointing upon Interim Senior Pastor Petrina Guneratnam, the pastoral team and board of deacons as they lead the church forward in the transition to a pluralistic church governance.
- Divine wisdom upon the Constitution Task Force in the finalization of the New Constitution to be presented to church members.

- Commitment and dedication of all who are involved in the production of the Easter presentation, "Love's Finest Hour."
- Good health, excellent team spirit, smooth running of rehearsals, wisdom and creativity in putting together the different aspects of the musical presentation.

MARCH 11) ATTENTIVENESS TO HEAR GOD

10 And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the Lord. . . 15 And the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward."

Exodus 14:10, 15 (NKJV)

As the Israelites stood at the edge of the Red Sea, with Pharaoh's army behind them and the vast, impassable sea before them, a sense of overwhelming fear came upon them. They saw no hope. . .no way of escape. Before the people, Moses was full of faith. He had confidently assured them of God's deliverance (Exodus 14:13). Now before God, he cried out in desperate prayer. In response, the Lord said to him, "Why do you cry to Me?" Stop praying, move on and go forward."

Where we focus our attention determines our direction. If we fix our eyes on the problem even while praying to God, we will miss out on what He is saying to us and what He wants to do. Pay attention to problems, and you end up spending your one life on problems. Pay attention to God, and you are spending your life on Love Himself. The reality is, what you pay attention to is what you're spending your life on. Are you paying attention to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? If not, what are you paying attention to? We need to move from listening to our own thoughts to listening to the Waymaker's ways.

When you find yourself on a path you wouldn't choose, you've got to keep paying attention to the One who never stops paying attention to you. Realising that God has chosen you is the first step in paying attention to who God is. Where there's chosenness, there is not aloneness. Deuteronomy 7:7-8 (ESV) expresses how God feels about His people, "It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord [hesed] loves you." *Hesed* is the forever covenantal, unconditional, unwaveringly loyal, eternal attachment love of God. Isaiah 54:10 reinforces this love, "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing [hesed] love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

You did not choose God. He chose you. He chose to [hesed] love you. There is no choice you or anyone can make that has the power to make you unchosen.

Pause and reflect. Pay attention to:

- The ways in which God is reaching out to you with His hesed-love.
 Rejoice in His love for you.
- The questions God might be asking you Who do you say I am? What are you believing about Me that's not true? What do you want? Where are you going? Take time to answer the questions He is asking you. It might give you the answers you are seeking.

PRAYER

Personal

Bring before the Lord the most pressing thoughts and concerns that keep spiraling back to you during this period. Spend some time praying in tongues and allow the Holy Spirit to help you in your weakness and intercede on your behalf (Romans 8:26-27).

Calvary Church

The New Constitution

- Divine wisdom upon Interim Senior Pastor Petrina Guneratnam and the deacons in the preparations leading up to the EGM.
- Timing of EGM, good turnout, spirit of love and unity to prevail.

- Effective and widespread publicity and favour with the media.
- Active and enthusiastic participation of Calvarites in inviting potential believers to the musical presentation.

MARCH 12 CRUCIFORMITY TO SURRENDER TO GOD

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided, 22 So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Exodus 14:21-22 (NKJV)

Cruciformity is what we see Moses embodying at the edge of the Red Sea, when he was caught between a rock and a hard place – a dead end with no way out. And the Lord said to him, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground" (Exodus 14:15-16). Moses had a choice – to stretch out his hand and believe that the Waymaker will make a way. Or let his hands hang down because it made no sense.

The exodus out of slavery in Egypt and through the Red Sea began with hands raised, arms stretched out in humble surrender to the way of the Waymaker. After that came One greater than Moses, whose outstretched hands on the cross in cruciform surrender to the will of the Father would result in the greatest act of redemption and deliverance of God's elect from the bondage of sin.

Cruciformity is what transforms. To be cruciform is to form our life into the shape of a cross and conform to the image of Christ. It is to live with our arms outstretched, reaching upward to God in cruciform surrender to His will and arms reaching outward to people. Cruciformity is our sacred identity, the form of our new identity in Christ, the form of our never-failing security.

What if the question is never "What's the way out of this?" or "What can I get out of this?" but "What way can I be in this?" The "way through" happens when we stop focusing on how to get out of something and focus on what we can get out of this to become more Christ-like.

What do you need to surrender today so you can live cruciform and be conformed to the likeness of Christ?

Sins
 Entanglements
 Bad attitudes
 Will and desire

Dreams and ambitions
 Present and future concerns

People

Take time to surrender each of the applicable aspects to the Lord in prayer.

PRAYER

Personal

Through the act of your surrender, ask the Holy Spirit to bring about spiritual transformation and strengthen your witness for Christ. Stand in the gap for loved ones and friends that you are seeking to reach.

Calvary Church

The New Constitution

- Clear and effective presentation of the new Constitution in the meeting with members running up to the EGM and at the EGM.
- The Calvary family will be of one mind, one heart and purpose in flowing with the direction that God is leading the church.

- Calvarites will avail themselves to serve in the various ministry aspects viz. ushers, greeters, intercessors, altar workers, security and other areas. Pray for team cohesion and effectiveness.
- Rich anointing upon the musical presentation and the preaching of the Word by Associate Pastor Richard Yun.

MARCH 13 (REVELATION TO SEE GOD

19 Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, 20 coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long.

Exodus 14:19-20

As the Israelites stood between the Red Sea in front of them and the Egyptian army hot in pursuit behind them, this is what they saw in the dark: a pillar of cloud in the night that brought light to them and darkness to the Egyptians. Nehemiah 9:12 describes it this way, "By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take."

God still does that today. Like a pillar of cloud-fire that once led the children of Israel, God gives His children now the Holy Spirit as a Guide. If the Israelites ever needed a sign that the Waymaker was making a way, it was the pillar of cloud-fire. Today, the Spirit-inspired Word is a sign for all time, a certain revelation of God that illuminates our mind and makes known His ways to us.

The real danger in the dark is when we turn from our dependence on God and start to curve inward toward self – self-sufficiency, self-protection, self-comfort, self-interest etc. Instead of looking for revelation in the dark, we start looking for relief. We're wired for attachment, for dependence on God, but our tendency to curve toward self can turn the direction of our dependence toward destructive things, or things that may not be beneficial. When we start seeking some guick relief more than God-revelation, we can get lost in a long addiction. All addiction is an attachment in the wrong direction.

What are some ways you "self-soothe" instead of seeking God for a revelation or solution? What does it look like for you to move through your pain and darkness - from being in bondage to bonding with God?

My Pain/Challenge

Self-Soothing Solution

How I can Bond with God in These Places

For example:

I am so stressed out at work and with family

Binging Social media Gaming Be still in His presence Turn to His Word Pay attention to His hesed-love

PRAYER

Personal

Surrender your "attachments" to God. Ask for a fresh revelation and experience of His hesed-love so that you won't fall for "lesser loves."

Calvary Church

The New Constitution

- Spirit of wisdom and understanding in discerning God's will for Calvary Church and in affirming the New Constitution and the first Church Council.
- Openness to embrace change and sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit during this period of transition.

- Excellent turnout and clear presentation of the gospel through the Easter story.
- A powerful move of the Holy Spirit resulting in a bountiful harvest of souls, return of the prodigals, healing and deliverance.

MARCH 14 EXAMINE TO RETURN TO GOD

30 So the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. 31 Thus Israel saw the great work which the Lord had done in Egypt: so the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and His servant Moses.

Exodus 14:30-31

After every man, woman and child had walked through the waves and crossed over safely to the other side, Israel reflected on what God had done and examined how the hand of God had forged an impossible way. Awe, wonder and fear filled their hearts. Now they were ashamed of their distrust and murmurings that led them to guarrel with His servant Moses and talk about returning to Egypt.

Perhaps, part of the way out of hard places is to examine our hearts because there's no exodus without an examination. The word "exodus" in English is adopted from the Greek exodos, which literally means "the road out." How can we know the Way without examining the way we are on? Sometimes, we don't even know we've turned the wrong way till we're down the road a long way. Even then, the Waymaker can make a way out – this is the work of a good and kind God. He never ever, ever stops making a way to your heart.

David examines his own soul in relation to the Waymaker in Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT), "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." This is how he stays in the Way and remains attached to the Waymaker. Jesus Himself asked His disciples to examine their own hearts out in the middle of a storm, "Why are you so afraid?" (Mark 4:40). He knows that our fears can ignite fight-or-flight responses and masguerade like something else altogether. Fear can wear different masks: anger, control, self-harm, perfectionism, procrastination, etc.

God knows no question may matter more than asking ourselves why we are so afraid, because fear is about losing what we love. When we want what we want too much, our love for what we want can 'outsize' our love for God. Jesus asks us to explore what we are so afraid of, so that we can identify what we are loving more than Him.

What are you afraid of losing? (Circle what applies).

■ Ambition■ Reputation■ Health■ Wealth■ Comfort

RelationshipsApproval of others______

Sharing your fears with your Father regulates your fears. Let His perfect love cast out every fear (1 John 4:18).

PRAYER

Personal

Meditate on God's promise in Romans 8:31-39. Personalise and confidently proclaim aloud, "Who shall separate us [me] from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are [I am] more than conqueror(s) through him who loved us [me]" (vs. 35, 37).

Calvary Church

The New Constitution

- Calvarites will recognize their God-given role in the church and seek to run alongside the new leadership to fulfil God's vision for Calvary Church to be a fountain head church.
- Alertness to the schemes of the enemy and diligence in preserving the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3).

- Freedom and spontaneity of those present in the musical presentation to respond to the altar call.
- Fine weather, good turnout and rich anointing upon the Easter Sunrise service. Pray for a fresh encounter with the risen Christ.

MARCH 15 DOXOLOGY TO THANK GOD

1 Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying: "I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! 2 The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God. and I will exalt Him.

Exodus 15:1-2

In a matter of days, the Israelites went from abject terror to astonishing adoration. After seemingly endless hours of walking through the depths of the Red Sea, they finally arrived at the other side exhausted, but exhilarated beyond words. They broke out in a doxology led by Moses. Miriam and the women, who remembered to grab, of all things, their timbrels in the midnight flight from Egypt, danced and sang to the Lord (Exodus 15:20-21).

A habit of thankfulness is always our exodus (the road out) out of bitterness. Christ-exaltation always leads to some kind of exodus. God withholds no good way from us. There is a way He is making across the sea of your soul when He allows you to walk through the waves. If He ceases the hard winds and the storm, you will miss the miracles of many Red Sea Roads. Thanks be to God that deserts are not places of despair—deserts are sacred spaces of divine dialogue. Unless you give thanks for the "hard gifts", you've miscounted the gifts. Pause and reflect. What "hard gifts" can you give thanks to God for? Name them.

No matter the days we feel down or we feel like we're lost in the wilderness, we can choose to wear a habit of gratitude - because thanksgiving gives us a way out of entitlement, judgment and control management.

The exodus from Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea is the single greatest act of salvation in the Old Testament where God delivered His people from slavery and led His redeemed into a new way of life, a new way of being. It was a foreshadow of what was to come in the New Testament – it prefigured the greater spiritual reality of God's redemption of His people from slavery to sin through the work of Christ. The exodus is continually recalled in the book of Psalms to bring Israel to remembrance of God's saving work. The psalmist calls Israel to "Come and see the works of God; He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men. He turned the sea into dry land; they went through the river on foot. There we will rejoice in Him" (66:5-6, NKJV).

As God's elect who have experienced His awesome works in our lives and crossed through many Red Sea roads, shall we not call to remembrance the divine grace extended to us through the sacrifice of Christ and rejoice in our salvation, the greatest of God's gifts to us? Break forth in your own doxology.

PRAYER

Personal

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you cultivate an attitude of gratitude at all times and to seek God's face before His blessings.

Calvary Church

The New Constitution

- Thank God for the capable leadership of Interim Senior Pastor Petrina Guneratnam, the unity and dedication of the pastoral team and deacons in leading the church forward during this transition.
- Praise God for the diligent Constitution Task Force, committed church staff, ministry leaders and ministry team members who serve faithfully with a joyful heart. Thank God for His continual blessings upon the congregation and the church.

- Thank God for the privilege and His enablement to stage the Easter musical presentation yearly and to be a blessing to the community.
- Praise God for the lasting fruits of the past musical presentations that have seen many added to the church. Thank Him in advance for what He is going to do in and through this Easter presentation.

MARCH 16 UNDIVIDED DEVOTION TO GOD

16 This is what the LORD says - he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters, 17 who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick: 18 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 19 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

Isaiah 43:16-19

In the third month after leaving Egypt, the Israelites camped at Mount Sinai where God established a covenant with them. The Lord spoke through Moses, "You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:4-6). Israel was to be a light to the nations, displaying the nature and character of God through their obedience to His commandments.

Israel struggled with the mission. Time and again, they were unfaithful. They assimilated the pagan practices of the surrounding nations and did evil in the sight of the Lord. God sent prophet after prophet to call them to repentance and to warn them of the impending judgement. But stiff-necked Israel refused to listen despite God's discipline. Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord forewarned that Israel would fall to Assyria and Judah would be taken away into Babylonian captivity for 70 years before their return from exile.

Isaiah 43 is prophetically addressed to Israel as they find themselves mired in the desperate circumstances of captivity and exile, stuck between the past and the future. In vs. 16-17, we see the classic rehearsal of Israel's redemption from Egyptian bondage followed by the assurance that God is going to do something so startling in the future that Israel is commanded to forget the former things. Israel must remember God's great work on their behalf in the exodus. But they must forsake and forget the past, with all its discouragement and defeat, and move on to what God has for them in the future. If Israel remains stuck in the sin and failure of the past, they will miss out on the new thing God has for them. Without a doubt, the return to Israel from exile in Babylon would be fraught with many hazards and challenges. But even then, the Waymaker promises that He would make a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland because of His hesed-love for Israel. Though undeserving, they remain chosen.

As the Israelites discovered, it is only in being bonded to God that they are free from bondage. Though they crossed the Red Sea, they did not leave Egypt behind. Because they were still "attached" to Egypt, they were not free to live out their calling as a kingdom of priests. How often would God need to "divide" some Red Sea for us, before we have an undivided heart? What did we leave behind in the cross-overs?

PRAYER

Personal

Make Psalm 86:11 your prayer, "Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name."

Calvary Church

The New Constitution

- Readiness to embrace the new things that God wants to do as the church moves toward the period of transition and change.
- Calvary Church will be a Jesus generation, an equipping institution and a sending church, fulfilling God's call to be a fountain head church and to be a blessing to the nation and beyond.

- Calvarites will be ready to disciple their loved ones and friends who made a decision for Christ and help them integrate into church life.
- A fresh encounter of God's love for all involved in the Easter presentation that will fuel an even greater passion to serve Him and to seek the lost.



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