

## 誰能使我們與基督的愛隔絕呢？（羅馬書第八章）

馮鄺綺詩

### 1. 神為我們締造了甚麼條件，叫誰也不能使我們與基督的愛隔絕呢？（8:1-17）

「因為賜生命聖靈的律，在基督耶穌裏釋放了我，使我脫離罪和死的律了。律法既因肉體軟弱，有所不能行的，神就差遣自己的兒子，成為罪身的形狀，作了贖罪祭，在肉體中定了罪案，使律法的義成就在我們這不隨從肉體、只隨從聖靈的人身上。因為，隨從肉體的人體貼肉體的事；隨從聖靈的人體貼聖靈的事。體貼肉體的，就是死；體貼聖靈的，乃是生命、平安。」（8:2-6）

- a. 我是否已經接受了神兒子為我所作的贖罪祭，叫我成為「在基督耶穌裏就不定罪」（8:1）的人？
- b. 我是否已經接受了「賜生命聖靈的律」（參約翰福音 3:5），並且願意成為「不隨從肉體、只隨從聖靈」的人？
- c. 一個「不隨從肉體、只隨從聖靈」的人，他的生活行為有甚麼特徵？你可有追求/活出那些特徵？（參加拉太書 5:22-23，提摩太後書 1:6-7，以賽亞書 11:2）

### 2. 在現實環境中，我們真能勝過各樣患難困苦嗎？（8:18-30）

- a. 在羅馬書 8:22, 23, 26 節，保羅提及 3 個「歎息」（和合本）：
  - i. 「一切受造之物一同歎息，勞苦，直到如今」（8:22） - 因外在環境受着「敗壞的轄制」（8:21），對信徒造成患難困逼
  - ii. 我們自己「心裏歎息」（8:23） - 我們自己內心感到軟弱和難過
  - iii. 聖靈親自用「說不出的歎息」（8:26）替我們禱告 - 聖靈體恤我們的軟弱，感同身受，知道我們在困難中「不曉得怎樣禱告」（8:26），便以祂自己的大能扶助我們

保羅述及這 3 個不同的「歎息」，可有令你得著安慰？可有鼓勵你更想追求/倚靠聖靈的同在？

- b. 「我們得救是在乎盼望；只是所見的盼望不是盼望，誰還盼望他所見的呢？但我們若盼望那所不見的，就必忍耐等候。」（8:24-25）

我們所「盼望」的是甚麼？（參彼得前書 1:3-5）這盼望可有加給你「忍耐等候」的平安和力量？

### 3. 靠著基督的愛，過得勝有餘的生活（8:31-39）

「誰能使我們與基督的愛隔絕呢？難道是患難嗎？是困苦嗎？是逼迫嗎？是飢餓嗎？是赤身露體嗎？是危險嗎？是刀劍嗎？」（8:35）

「然而，靠着愛我們的主，在这一切的事上已經得勝有餘了。因為我深信無論是死，是生，是天使，是掌權的，是有能的，是現在的事，是將來的事，是高處的，是低處的，是別的受造之物，都不能叫我們與神的愛隔絕；這愛是在我們的主基督耶穌裏的。」（8:37-39）

- a. 說出上述經文中所指出的 7 個困難和 10 個肯定。
- b. 在你我的生活中，有哪些困難能超出這 “7+10” 的範疇？
- c. 以下經文中的「誰」，所指的可能是誰？
  - 神若幫助我們，「誰」能敵擋我們呢？(8:31)
  - 「誰」能控告神所揀選的人呢？有神稱他們為義了。(8:33)
  - 「誰」能定他們的罪呢？有基督耶穌已經死了...(8:34)
  - 「誰」能使我們與基督的愛隔絕呢？(8:35)今日這個「誰」可有恐嚇你，阻撓你，攪擾你，分散你的注意力，令你不能充分領受基督的愛？
- d. 保羅在 8:24 說「得救是在乎盼望」，並且是「盼望那所不見的」(8:25)，卻在 8:37 又說：「在这一切的事上已經得勝有餘」(present perfect tense 現在完成式)，你認為他的理由是甚麼？你能衷心認同他的說法嗎？
- e. 「萬事都互相效力，叫愛神的人得益處」(8:28)，你可曾經歷過？這與不讓任何人、任何事、任何權勢、任何處境隔絕我們與基督的愛，及過「得勝有餘」的生活有甚麼關係？

#### 4. 回應神的愛

「原來基督的愛激勵我們；因我們想，一人既替眾人死，眾人就都死了」  
(哥林多後書 5:14)

「...但知識是叫人自高自大，惟有愛心能造就人。若有人以為自己知道什麼，按他所當知道的，他仍是不知道。若有人愛神，這人乃是神所知道的。」(哥林多前書 8:1-3)

基督給予我們不能隔絕的愛，我願意以愛回應祂嗎？我要如何付諸實行呢？

## 耶和華萬軍嘅統帥要我哋：檢討自己嘅景況，重建聖殿

潘悅豪

主題經文：哈基書（哈該書〔和合本〕）

### 背景

聖殿，特別在舊約時代，象徵著上帝與以色列子民的關係。在先知哈基的時代，當時以色列民蒙上帝憐憫，得以從經歷背離上帝、亡國、聖殿被毀，以及被擄的環境中被釋放，返回耶路撒冷重建家園及聖殿。可是，自他們被釋放的十數年間，聖殿的重建工程一直進展緩慢，連根基也未建成。因此上帝打發先知哈基，要求子民檢討自己的景況，努力重建聖殿，重建與上帝的關係。（重建聖殿詳情參看以士喇書）

在新約，上帝揀選世人作祂的子民，更應許賜聖靈入居信徒心中。保羅進一步教導我們：「你哋〔信徒〕係上帝嘅殿，上帝嘅靈住喺你哋裏。」（哥林多前書 3:16）。因此，讓我們代入昔日以色列子民的情景，藉著上帝感動先知的說話，一同檢視我們的屬靈景況，同心建造／重建／修整／擴建這個藏在我們心裡的聖靈的殿。

1. 檢討自己的景況：你哋中有冇人重記得以前嘅聖殿〔屬靈生命〕幾嘍華麗〔強壯〕？現在點樣呢？睇來唔係一文不值咩？（哈基書 2:3）

1.1 以下那一個情境最能形容你現在的屬靈景況？請分享你的經歷及感受。

- a. 尚未與上帝真正建立過關係
- b. 失去初時愛主的心（啟示錄 2:2-4）
- c. 按名是生，實際是死（啟示錄 3:1-2；提摩太後書 3:5）
- d. 不冷不熱（啟示錄 3:15-17）
- e. 堅守主道，至死盡忠（啟示錄 2:9-10； 3:8-11）

1.2 舊廣東話聖經把「檢討自己的景況」譯作「定心參想吓你嘅路途」。既然我們已經知道自己的景況，你我是否已走上建造／重建／修補／擴建聖靈的殿的路途？

- a. 現在不是重建／建造聖殿〔與主建立關係〕的時候（哈基書 1:2）
  - 完全福音的教導我不陌生，但我怎樣才能感受到上帝的愛，以至我覺得有迫切需要求聖靈（再次）入居？
  - 我仍有不願拆毀的藉口（如私慾或工作／學業／家庭／人際關係等的人生優先），以致未能全心追尋救恩／靈命奮興，建立／重建與上帝的關係。
  - 在世的目標一個又一個，你會感到真正的滿足嗎？你是否要達成所有人生目標才去追尋救恩？
- b. 工程受阻：我有立心建立／重建與上帝的關係，追尋聖靈施洗／復興，卻總是播種多，收成少（哈基書 1:6；馬太福音 13-18-23），仍未（再次）得嘗主恩。
- c. 已在修補，但屢需重修：我曾得著聖靈施洗，曾在主的愛中奠下美好根基，但因著生活重擔／引誘／安於現狀，屬靈根基時好時壞，常常需要修補，鮮有向上建造。
- d. 不斷扎根生長，建立信心（歌羅西書 2:6-7）

## 2. 建造（重建）聖殿：現在你哋要上山採伐木材，重建聖殿（哈基書 1:8）

2.1 細數神恩，認定上帝豐盛的慈愛，如在山下看到山上有大量上等樹木，可作建造材料。

2.2 悔改自潔，與神（重新）立約（尼希米記 9:1-3; 38; 以士喇書 10:1-3; 17; 44）

- a. 認罪悔改是歸回上帝，重新建造的基礎
- b. 在以色列民回歸故土的年代，他們以甚麼態度向上帝認罪悔改？
- c. 回顧自己向上帝的認罪，我們是否大多只是口頭上的認罪，還是真正覺得愧對天父，致有「心好似被刮」（使徒行傳 2:37）的感覺，並產生悔改的行為？試分享你的經驗。

2.3 倚賴聖靈，向上建造（撒迦利亞書 4:6-7）

- a. 若聖靈的殿〔基督徒〕沒有聖靈居於其中，還稱得上是聖靈的殿〔基督徒〕嗎（哥林多前書 3:16-17；羅馬書 8:9 下）？
- b. 得著聖靈施洗後，如何不會令聖靈擔憂，反與上帝更加親近？你的經驗如何？
- c. 你如何靠賴聖靈跨越如大山般的屬靈障礙，令你更堅心向主？

2.4 聽話而實行，如以上好材料建屋在磐石上，經得起考驗（路加福音 6:47-48；哥林多前書 3:11-15）

- a. 我們日常以甚麼態度去學習聖經？是閱讀（Read），還是研讀（Study）？
- b. 我們日常如何藉禱告向神支取力量，過得勝生活？
- c. 我們如何實踐所學的教訓，從而增強我們對主的信心，堅固屬靈基礎？你的經驗如何？

## 3. 同心建造，教會復興，廣傳天國福音（以弗所書 4:4-16）

3.1 為甚麼需要同心建造？同心的基礎是甚麼？同心的目標是甚麼？

3.2 試分享一些同心為主工作／傳福音／代禱／互相扶持的深刻經歷，當中如何更激發你愛主的心？

3.3 建造每每包含除舊更新，當被其他信徒基於愛心直接指出自己的軟弱時，你的經驗如何？有甚麼感受？（哥林多後書 7:8-11）

### 總結

所羅把伯、約書亞，同此地嘅人民呀，我—你哋嘅耶和華再三勸你哋，要剛強，要努力工作，因為我—萬軍嘅統帥與你哋同在。你哋從埃及出來時，我曾與你哋立約，答應要常與你哋同在。我現在仍然與你哋同在，所以唔使害怕。呢座新建嘅聖殿要比舊嘅更華麗；我必俾我子民在嗰處過繁榮安定嘅生活。（哈基書 2:4-5, 9）

## 我時刻需要聖靈

張姚穎詩

「你們祈求就給你們，尋找就尋見，敲門就為你們開門… 你們雖然不好，尚且知道拿好東西給兒女。何況天父、豈不更將聖靈賜給求他的人嗎？」(路加福音 11:9-13)

「你們既靠聖靈入門，如今還靠肉身成全嗎？你們是這樣的無知嗎？」(加拉太書 3:3)

「我們若是靠聖靈得生，就當靠聖靈引導行事。」(加拉太書 5:25)

### 1. 聖靈如「火」

- 聖父：因為我們的上帝是烈火(希伯來書 12:29)  
聖子：在路上，祂和我們說話，給我們講解聖經的時候，我們的心豈不是火熱的嗎？(路加福音 24:32)；上帝呀，我對祢的聖殿大發熱心，如火燃燒！(約翰福音 2:17)  
聖靈：好像火燄，散開停在每個人身上(使徒行傳 2:3)
- 「火」有什麼特性？
  - 火的光能照出黑暗
  - 火的熱能使人溫暖，更能燒淨雜質、去蕪存菁
  - 火要先點燃自己，才能蔓延開去燒旺周遭的人
- 思考問題(1)：我自覺需要被煉淨嗎？我最大的罪性、軟弱、阻隔是什麼？
- 燈臺的燈要在耶和華面前經常點著(利未記 24:1-4)；殷勤不可懶惰，要心裏火熱，常常服事主(羅馬書 12:11)
- 思考問題(2)：我有沒有心裏火熱的經驗？請坦誠分享你在過往一年對於親近神的「冷熱程度」。

### 2. 聖靈如「風」

- 風隨意吹，你聽見風的響聲，卻不曉得從哪裡來，往哪裡去；凡從聖靈生的，也是如此。(約翰福音 3:8)
- 「風」有什麼特性？
  - 風是流動的空氣
  - 不能直接看見，卻聽得到、感受得到
- 思考問題(1)：聖靈怎樣改變了你的心、情緒、行為，以至性格？
- 鷹展開雙翼、順風飛翔；但那等候耶和華的，必從新得力，他們必如鷹展翅上騰，他們奔跑卻不困倦，行走卻不疲乏。(以賽亞書 40:31)
- 福音的種子，也是靠賴如風一樣的聖靈傳開的
- 思考問題(2)：我們如何能夠明悉主的心意，並順之以行？請分享你的生活例子(從工作、家庭、健康、感情、交友、教會事奉、傳福音等範疇)。

### 3. 聖靈如「水」

- 信我的人，就如經上所說：從他腹中要流出活水的江河來。耶穌這話是指著信他之人，要受聖靈說的。(約翰福音 7:38-39)
- 從聖殿流出的泉水(以西結書 47:1-12)
- 「水」有什麼特性？
  - 水有不同功能，如潔淨、解渴、滋潤、使東西浮起

- 思考問題：我要怎樣才能實踐深入神奧？請分享你如何追尋與主更親密的關係的經驗。

#### 4. 其他有關聖靈的比喻

- 聖經還有其他有關聖靈的比喻：
  - 鴿子（路加福音 3:22；約翰福音 1:32）
  - 全副軍裝的寶劍（以弗所書 6:17b）
  - 十個童女油燈的油（馬太福音 25:1-13）
  - 以利沙吩咐窮寡婦盛滿空器皿的橄欖油（列王紀下 4:1-7）等
- 事實上，上帝所賜的聖靈是無限的（約翰福音 3:34），聖經用這些今世有限的物質來作出比喻，是為了讓我們更具體和生活化地明白和認識聖靈的重要

#### 總結

- 正如人類生存不能沒有空氣、水、火等基本元素，基督徒亦不能沒有聖靈
- 基督徒（我）時刻需要聖靈，才能克勝私慾、對抗魔鬼、持守聖潔、奔走天路，並有主賜的力量去傳福音，以至最終能得勝見主，得主稱為良善忠心的僕人

**23 July 2018 (Monday)**

## **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? (Romans 8)**

Elsie Kwong

### **1. What conditions has God created for us, such that no one shall separate us from the love of Christ? (8:1-17)**

*“... because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.” (8:2-6)*

- a. Have I already accepted the sin offering that the Son of God had sacrificed for me, such that “*there is now no condemnation*” as I am “*in Christ Jesus*” (8:1)?
- b. Have I already accepted “*the law of the Spirit who gives life*” (see John 3:5), and am I willing to be a person who “*does not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit*”?
- c. What are the characteristics of the life and behaviours of someone who “*does not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit*”? Have you ever strived for/ practised those characteristics? (see Galatians 5:22-23, 2 Timothy 1:6-7, Isaiah 11:2)

### **2. Can we really overcome trouble and hardship in real life situations? (8:18-30)**

- a. Paul mentioned about 3 “groans” at Romans 8:22, 23 and 26:
  - i. “... *the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.*” (8:22) – suffering from “*bondage to decay*” due to external factors, thus creating trouble and hardship for believers.
  - ii. We ourselves “*groan inwardly*” (8:23) – we feel the weakness and sadness within our hearts.
  - iii. The Spirit himself intercedes for us through “*wordless groans*” (8:26) – the Spirit emphasizes with our weaknesses, knowing that we “*do not know what we ought to pray for*” during our hardship (8:26), as such He supports us with His mighty power.

Are you consoled by the 3 “groans” mentioned by Paul? Does that encourage you to seek for/ depend on the presence of the Holy Spirit?

- b. *“For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.”* (8:24-25)

What is our “hope” (see 1 Peter 1:3-5)? Has such hope given you the peace and power to persevere and wait?

### 3. **More than conquerors through Him who loved us (8:31-39)**

*“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?”* (8:35)

*“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (8:37-39)

- a. Name the 7 difficulties and 10 assurances mentioned in the above verses.
- b. Is there any other difficulty in our lives which is beyond the above “7+10” scope?
- c. Who might be the “who” mentioned in the verses below?
- If God is for us, “who” can be against us? (8:31)
  - “Who” will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. (8:33)
  - “Who” then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died ...’ (8:34)
  - “Who” shall separate us from the love of Christ? (8:35)
- Is this “who” now threatening you, obstructing you, troubling you, diverting your attention, such that you cannot fully receive the love of Christ?
- d. Paul said in 8:24 that *“in this hope we were saved”*, and that *“we hope for what we do not yet have”* (8:25), but then he went on to say in 8:37 (Contemporary English Version) that *“in everything we have won more than a victory”* (present perfect tense). What do you think was his reasons in saying so? Do you whole-heartedly agree with what he said?
- e. “...God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him” or “... all things work for the good of everyone who loves God” (8:28). Do you have such experiences? How is that related to: (i) not letting any persons, matters, powers, or situations separate us from the love of God, and; (ii) leading a life that is “more than conquerors”?



#### **4. Responding to God's love**

*"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died." (2 Corinthians 5:14)*

*"... But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. But whoever loves God is known by God." (1 Corinthians 8:1-3)*

Christ gives us a love that cannot be separated. Am I willing to respond to Him? How should I put it into practice?

**24 July 2018 (Tuesday)**

**This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: Look at what's happening to you ... rebuild the house of the Lord" (New Living Translation)**

Eliot Poon

**Main verses: Haggai**

**Background**

House of the Lord (God's temple), especially in Old Testament times, symbolized the relationship between God and the Israelites. During prophet Haggai's times, the Lord had compassion on the Israelites. Having experienced rebel against the Lord, subjugation of the nation, destruction of God's temple, and exile, they were finally set free from their plights and were allowed to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild their houses and God's temple. However, during the 10 odd years after they had been set free, the progress of rebuilding God's temple was sluggish – not even the foundation had been completed. As such, God sent prophet Haggai, and asked His people to evaluate their situations, to rebuild God's temple diligently, and to rebuild their relationship with God (see Ezra for details of rebuilding God's temple).

In New Testament times, God chooses everyone as His people, and even promises to send the Holy Spirit to dwell in the hearts of the believers. Paul further teaches us this: "... *you yourselves (believers) are Gods' temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst*" (1 Corinthians 3:16, NIV). As such, let us put ourselves in the shoes of the Israelites in the olden days, and with the help of God-breathed prophecies, let us evaluate together our spiritual situations, and let us join hands in building/ rebuilding/ repairing/ expanding this Spirit's temple in our hearts.

**1. Evaluate our situations: "*Does anyone remember this house – this Temple (spiritual life) – in its former splendour (strength)? How, in comparison, does it look to you now? It must seem like nothing at all!*" (Haggai 2:3, NLT)**

**1.1 Which of the followings best describe your current spiritual situation? Please share your experiences and feelings.**

- a. I have not yet truly developed a relationship with God.
- b. I have forsaken the love I had at first (Revelation 2:2-4)
- c. I have a reputation of being alive, but I am dead (Revelation 3:1-2; 2 Timothy 3:5)
- d. I am neither cold nor hot (Revelation 3:15-17)
- e. I keep the command to endure patiently, and am faithful even to the point of death (Revelation 2:9-10; 3:8-11)

**1.2 "Look at what's happening to you" is translated as "give careful thought to your ways" in NIV Bible. Now that we know our situations, have we**

already embarked on a journey to build/ rebuild/ repair/ expand the Spirit's temple?

- a. *"The time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord (to build our relationship with the Lord)."* (Haggai 1:2, NLT)
  - I am no stranger to the teachings of the Full Gospel, but how could I feel God's love, such that I could feel the urge to seek the Holy Spirit to dwell in me (again)?
  - I still have excuses for not tearing apart (my old self) (e.g. sinful desires or life priorities such as work/ study/ family/ relationships etc.), such that I am not yet able to seek wholeheartedly salvation/ spiritual revival, or to build/ rebuild our relationship with God.
  - In chasing one after another worldly goals, are you really satisfied? Are you going to seek salvation only after you have achieved all your life goals?
- b. Disruption to the work: I have made up my mind to build/ rebuild my relationship with God, seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit/ revival, but still I have planted much but harvest little (Haggai 1:6; Matthew 13:18-23), I have yet to taste (once again) God's grace.
- c. In the progress of repair, but needs to do so frequently: I have once received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and have once laid done a good foundation in God's love, but due to life's burdens/ temptations/ complacency, my spiritual foundation is sometimes good and sometimes bad, and is in need of frequent repair; there is hardly any upward building.
- d. Rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith (Colossians 2:6-7)

**2. Build (rebuild) God's temple: *"Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house"* (Haggai 1:8, NLT)**

2.1 Count your blessings, firmly believe in God's abundant love, just like seeing from below large amount of high-quality wood in the mountain, which can be used for building materials.

2.2 Repent and make yourselves clean, make (remake) a covenant with God (Nehemiah 9:1-3; 38; Ezra 10:1-3; 17; 44)

- a. Confess and repent: these are the basics for returning to the Lord and rebuilding our spiritual lives.
- b. During the times when the Israelites returned to their land, what was their attitude in confessing and repenting to God?
- c. Reviewing our confessions to God, are we just doing mere verbal confessions, or are we really remorseful and ashamed to face our Father in heaven, such that we are *"cut to the heart"* (Acts 2:37),

and bring about repentant behaviours? Please share your experiences.

2.3 Depend on the Holy Spirit, build upward (Zechariah 4:6-7)

- a. If the Holy Spirit does not dwell in “the Spirit’s temple” (Christian), could it still be called “the Spirit’s temple” (Christian) (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; Romans 8:9)?
- b. Having received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, how do we make sure that we do not grieve the Holy Spirit, and even make ourselves closer to God? What is your experience?
- c. How do you overcome spiritual obstacle as great as mighty mountain by depending on the Holy Spirit, making you more steadfast in God?

2.4 Hearing God’s words and put them into practice: it is like building your house on rock with good materials – our spiritual lives will stand the test of time (Luke 6:47-48; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

- a. What is our daily attitude in learning the Bible? Are we reading, or are we studying?
- b. How do we get strengths from God through our daily prayers, and lead a victorious life?
- c. How do we put into practice the teachings that we have learned, so as to strengthen our faith in God and spiritual foundation? What is your experience?

**3. Building together, reviving the church, spreading the Gospel of the Kingdom of God (Ephesians 4:4-16)**

- 3.1 Why do we need to build together? What is the basis for being of the same mind? What is goal for being of the same mind?
- 3.2 Share your memorable experiences of working together for God/ spreading the Gospel/ praying for others/ supporting each other. How do these experiences spur you on loving God more?
- 3.3 More often than not, building would involve getting rid of the old to make room for the new. When other believers pointed out our weakness directly out of love, what was your experience? How did you feel? (2 Corinthians 7:8-11)

**Conclusion**

*‘But now be strong, Zerubbabel,’ declares the Lord . ‘Be strong, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land,’ declares the Lord , ‘and work. For I am with you,’ declares the Lord Almighty. ‘This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.’ ‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”’ (Haggai 2:4-5,9)*

## 25 July 2018 (Wednesday)

### **I need the Holy Spirit every moment**

Carol Yew

*' ... Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ... If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'*" (Luke 11:9-13, NIV)

*'Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?'* (Galatians 3:3, NIV)

*'Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.'* (Galatians 5:25, NIV)

#### **1. Holy Spirit as "fire"**

- **The Father:** *'for our "God is a consuming fire."*' (Hebrews 12:29)
- **The Son:** *"Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"* (Luke 24:32)  
*"Zeal for your house will consume me."* (John 2:17)
- **The Holy Spirit:** *'They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.'* (Acts 2:3)
- What are the characteristics of "fire"?
  - Its light can shine in the darkness
  - Its heat can give warmth to others, and can purge impurities
  - It must first be ignited before it can spread its fire to others
- Question to ponder (1) : Do I feel a need to be purified? What are my greatest sinful desire, weakness and obstacle?
- The lamps on the lampstand before the Lord must be kept burning continually (Leviticus 24:1-4); *'Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.'* (Romans 12:11)
- Question to ponder (2) : Have we experienced our hearts burning within us? Please share frankly how "hot" or "cold" our relationship with God is in the past year.

#### **2. Holy Spirit as "wind"**

- *'The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.'*" (John 3:8)
- What are the characteristics of "wind"?
  - It is moving air
  - It cannot be seen directly, but it can be heard and felt.
- Question to ponder (1) : How has the Holy Spirit changed your thoughts, emotions, behaviours and characters?
- Soaring on wings like eagles, gliding downwind: *'but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.'* (Isaiah 40:31)

- The seed of Gospel is also spreaded out by the windlike Holy Spirit.
- Question to ponder (2) : How could we understand God's thoughts and follow accordingly? Please share examples in your daily lives (e.g. work, family, health, relationship, friendship, church service, spreading the Gospel, etc.)

### 3. Holy Spirit as “water”

- *'Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive...'* (John 7:38-39)
- Water coming out from the temple (Ezekiel 47:1-12)
- What are the characteristics of “water”?
  - Water has different functions, such as cleansing, quenching thirst, moisturising, making things float.
- Question to ponder: How do I put into practise being deeper in the mystery of God? Please share your experiences in seeking a closer relationship with God.

### 4. Other metaphors of the Holy Spirit

- There are other metaphors of the Holy Spirit in the Bible:
  - Dove (Luke 3:22; John 1:32)
  - Sword in the whole armour of God (Ephesians 6:17b)
  - Oil in the lamps of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13)
  - Olive oil that filled the empty jars as Elisha ordered the poor widow (2 Kings 4:1-7) etc.
- In fact, God gives the Spirit without limit (John 3:34). Such limited worldly things are used in the Bible as metaphors of the Holy Spirit so that we can get a more specific and lively knowledge and understanding of the importance of the Holy Spirit.

### Conclusion

- Just as human beings cannot survive without elements such as air, water and fire, Christians cannot sustain their spiritual lives without the Holy Spirit.
- Christian (I) need the Holy Spirit every moment in order to conquer my sinful desire, confront against Satan, keep myself holy, run the road to heaven, and preach the Gospel with the power from God, so that I will see the Lord victoriously, and be praised by the Lord as a good and faithful servant.