

THE DARKNESS & SHADOW OF GOD

*"How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings."
Psalm 36:7*

REFLECTION

"2021 will be lived under the long shadow of COVID-19," reads the headlines of the Straits Time Opinion article dated January 17. The article highlighted the following fact: "Even as news of effective vaccines cheers the world, the reality is that the journey to a post-COVID-19 world will be long drawn, and the months ahead will remain darkened by the scourge of the pandemic." (Chua Mui Hoong, ST Associate Editor).

Darkness and shadows are often used as imageries of foreboding doom and gloom. Furthermore, darkness implies that light is blocked and clarity is obscured. So what is up ahead, like the future, will be difficult to interpret and likely to be dismal and dampened. In addition, to imply that the shadow is "long" and "long drawn" means that hardship would for some time.

The Bible has something to say about darkness and shadows. Darkness is a creation of God. In Amos 5:8 God says that it is He who "turns midnight into dawn and darkens day into night." In fact in Luke 23:44-46, it is God who caused the sun to stop shining at noon and darkness to come over the land until three in the afternoon while Jesus was on the cross. In Psalm 139:12, God says the darkness is as light to Him. Our Sovereign God rules over the darkness and the powers of evil. God often used the cover of darkness to protect and deliver His people. e.g. the great Exodus of Israel (Exodus 12:31), David's escape from murderous Saul (1 Sam 19:10), the night escape to Egypt by Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus (Mat 2:14) and the many miracles of how God delivered the disciples in Acts from prison and near death. Shadow on the other hand is a symbol of God's protection. In Psalm 91:1 God says: "Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty."

While the journey to a post-COVID-19 world will not be anytime soon, Jesus is the all-powerful Light of the World. We can take refuge under the shadow of His protective wings. Let the cover of God's shadow be our protection and deliverance during this global pandemic crisis. Let all believers keep steady in the faith during these dark times, relying on the Lord like Isaiah called the people to do so,

"Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the voice of his servant, who walks in darkness and has no light, yet trusts in the name of the Lord and relies upon his God?"

PRAYER

God our Father, the darkness is as light to You. You are Light of the World. We take refuge in the shadow of Your wings, knowing that Your deliverance and protection are upon us always even as we pray to You. Amen.

SUPPLICATION

- Thank God for the prompt arrival of vaccines against COVID-19. Pray for the continual production and distribution of the vaccines to be made available to more people, especially for those in poorer countries. Pray that the vaccines be effective in immunizing many against this virus. Pray that the people will be educated about being immunized and not be unduly fearful or worried. Pray against further viral mutations and a resurgence of cases already happening worldwide.
- Thank God for more than 1.5 million people have received their first jab thus far. Pray for the setup of more vaccination centres in all the 24 HDB towns and polyclinics so as to take on greater capacities. Pray against any side effects of the vaccines. Pray against misinformation leading to hesitancy and rejection of the vaccination.
- Thank God for governmental bodies and help agencies for cushioning the blow of COVID-19 for those affected by loss of jobs and income. Thank God for support packages to affected industries and care packages to affected individuals. Thank God for non-profit organizations like *The Food Bank Singapore* and *ItsRainingRaincoats* for their initiatives to help the elderly, low-income families and migrant worker communities. Thank God for the many F&B businesses, social enterprises and SME's that distribute regular meals to the hungry and needy.

*God made darkness His covering,
His canopy around him
— the dark rain clouds of the sky.
Psalm 18:11*

If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly contact the pastoral care team via:

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