

Hope in the Midst of Despair

(By Sorpong Peou)

Can there be any hope in the midst of deep despair? This is one of the most important questions in life one can always ask. My short answer is simple: hope exists where life is.

It's always hard to combat one of life's horrible enemies: despair. There are reasons why this deadly adversary can conquer our spirits, cast a dark shadow over our souls, and compel our ship of life to sink to the lightless bottom of the deepest sea.

The Coronavirus is one deadly pandemic that can easily drive us into despair, if it continues to get its dangerous way as some past deadly viruses got theirs. When on its path of destruction, the Black Death (1346-53) left millions dead and countless others sorrowful and enduring the pain of despair.

We live in a fallen world, where despair often finds its way into our lives, but each of us can always do something to fight back and win. We first need to remind ourselves that our world was not created to be trapped in permanent despair.

The storm of life never lasts, and there is always a blue sky behind all darkest clouds. The coldest winter always gives way to warm spring. The sun always sets, but its rise is fully assured. These are constant reminders to us that life is fragile but unconquerable - a masterpiece of God's creation.

God's precious creatures are resilient. The human race has been ruined and put to the test by endless tragedies such as deadly diseases, pandemics and plagues as well as wars and violence, but continues to survive and thrive. We need to reflect on the fact that even animals survive in the depths of oceans and seas.

Hope is a matter of choice: if we choose the way of hope, we shall win our constant battle against its enemy. We shall prevail in our hope, at the time when our vessel of life is battered hard against the rocks and waves or the storms and hurricanes.

My greatest hope is one that ultimately rests on the promise that our Creator is our most-trusted Refuge. When I was still a little child, I would always run back into the house when lightning struck from the sky down. Now I learn to run into the arms of God when despair arrives on my door step.

Let me share this biblical verse with you: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalms 46: 1).

Let us help bring hope to where despair has the upper hand.