



# Lessons on HOPE

## AFTER A DISASTER

It has been almost half a year into 2020 and many of you might feel overwhelmed with the effects of Covid-19 on yourselves and your loved ones. You might even feel that half of 2020 has already been wasted by quarantines, lockdowns, circuit-breakers, and widespread economic disruption. Many have contracted Covid-19 or know someone who has. Some have even lost their jobs and are unable to find a new income source due to the state of the economy.

As I look upon the direct and indirect effects of Covid-19 on the global and intimately personal scales,

JOSHUA HO, 11.15AM SERVICE

I am reminded of the life lessons I took away from my Geohazards learning trip to Japan in 2018 as part of my university studies. During that trip,

we were brought to various localities in Fukushima Prefecture that were affected by the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami. This was a major disaster that resulted in over 15,000 deaths, 6000 injuries and 2,500 people missing.

One of the many localities we visited was Arahama, Sendai. Standing on high ground and surveying the surroundings, I was shocked that even after seven years, the landscape still looked like a disaster zone. There were even some remnants from the 2011

disaster in the form of houses in a state of perpetual abandonment and ruin. Such a scene might be what you think your life looks like now.

Throughout my trip, I also saw many towns and communities recovering from the disaster. I had the honorable opportunity to hear firsthand from survivors of the disaster themselves about how they mustered up their personal and community spirits to rebuild and revitalize their hometowns. I personally think that we Christians could borrow some of this community spiritedness in reaching out to the last, the lost and the least, both within and outside our Christian communities. That way, we can allow the light and peace of Christ to bind us together as we weather the tempest of Covid-19 together, and also radiate His comforting presence into the lives of those who have yet to know Him and are experiencing days of intense darkness.

Back at Arahama, the mast shape memorial somehow reminded me of the Cross on Calvary. I drew a parallel in how this new memorial acts as a symbol of hope and recovery for the locals with the Cross of Jesus Christ acting as a symbol of universal hope of redemption from the more damaging effects of sin and evil.

The memorial near the Sendai Arahama Elementary School denoting the 13.7m tall wave that devastated the once lively seafront town.

So whilst you might feel that a tsunami has just swept over your life, rest assured that you can cast your eyes upon the Cross and find your everlasting



Above: View of Arahama township with ruins (2018)  
Below: A model of what Arahama township looked like prior to the 2011 Tsunami



hope in Christ for He says in John 14:27 (NIV) - **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”**



The memorial near the Sendai Arahama Elementary School denoting the 13.7m tall wave that devastated the once lively seafront town.

**PRAYER:** Lord, during this very difficult pandemic, we pray for Your comforting presence to descend upon us who feel as if their lives have been devastated

by a tsunami. We pray that You would unite us in Your Son, Jesus Christ as we seek to radiate Christ’s love to those who truly need it this season. May Christ’s eternal sacrifice on the cross be the source of our everlasting hope. For the glory of Your Name, Amen.



Joshua Ho