An English expression with a similar meaning is “It never rains, but it pours,” which means events, especially unfortunate ones, come together or occur in rapid succession.

“禍不單行” is part of a longer saying: “福無雙至，禍不單行” (fu2 wu2 shuang1 zhi4) (huo4 bu4 dan1 xing2), which means “good fortune does not come in pairs, and disasters do not come alone.”

Another Chinese expression that vividly describes the predicament of having a bad situation aggravated by another is “屋漏偏逢連夜雨” (wu1 lou4 pia1 feng2 lian2 ye4 yu3) - the roof is leaking and it has been raining night after night!

Terms containing the character “單” (dan1) include:

- 單位 (dan1 wei4) - a unit
- 單純 (dan1 chun2) - pure, innocent
- 單身 (dan1 shen1) - without spouse
- 單方面 (dan1 fang1 mian4) - unilateral, one sided